



RELS 3304– Summer 2023 (8-week)
Instructor: Kenneth Bass, Ph.D.

COURSE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Class Location:

- ONLINE

Class Duration:

- 6/05/2023-7/28/2023

Office Hours: EMAIL me to set up an appointment: Zoom or by Phone (254-913-8412)

Email:

- Kenneth.Bass@tamuct.edu
 - Please direct all course communication through Canvas. If you have a general question, you can email me directly.
 - When emailing, always identify yourself and what course you are in. In general, when communicating electronically you should use complete sentences and be very clear about what you are asking or saying to avoid miscommunication.
 - I check Canvas at least once a day. These are the two best ways to reach me.
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MODE OF INSTRUCTION AND COURSE ACCESS

This course is a 100% online course and uses the TAMUCT Canvas Learning Management System:[<https://tamuct.instructure.com>] **We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.**

Students can access Canvas on the Texas A&M-Central Texas website: www.tamuct.edu. Log in with your TAMUCT issued ID and your password. If you have difficulty using Canvas, contact Help Desk Central 24/7 by phone at (254) 519-5466 or live chat at <http://hdc.tamu.edu>.

Username: Your MyCT username (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)

Password: Your MyCT password

Technology Support.

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [<http://hdc.tamu.edu>]

Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.

Canvas Support

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

STUDENT-INSTRUCTOR INTERACTION

This is an online class. Most communication between the instructor and students will be via Canvas and email and all students are able to schedule a telephone conference or WebEx meeting.

I will check and reply to student emails on a daily basis – students should expect a response within 24 hours when an email is sent during normal business hours M-F. Any deviations from this will be announced on Canvas. Checking Canvas frequently is important as this is where any class announcements will be posted.

It is HIGHLY recommended that you go into your “settings” in Canvas, select “notifications”, and elect to receive emails when announcements are made. You are responsible for obtaining information in a timely manner.

My preferred method of electronic student interaction is via Canvas. All students should identify the class they are in, use proper salutations and signatures, identify a question, be succinct, and maintain professionalism in any correspondence. Additionally, students should check the syllabus before asking questions that are likely answered in the syllabus.

You should generally expect a response within 24 hours. I do make exceptions for exams when I check messages more frequently. If you send a message on weekend, I may reply but please do not expect a reply until the following Monday unless it is during an exam

COURSE INFORMATION

I. Catalog Description: World Religions. (3-0)

Study the philosophical, ethical, and social dimensions of the religions of the world. Special emphasis on the major world religions, but lesser-known religions will be explored to gain a broad view of the diversity of religious experience and tradition.

II. Expanded Course Description:

This course will provide you with the tools to critically evaluate World Religions in general. This course is designed, in part, to provide you with the tools needed to reach

your own conclusions based upon the available research. In addition to a normal textbook, you will also be critically evaluating academic articles to assist you in developing a healthy understanding of World Religions.

III. Course Objectives:

This course presents an overview of the history of development, beliefs and practices of several major world religions. Specifically, you should leave class with a thorough understanding of several aspects of world religions, including the following areas:

1. The role that pre-modernity, modernity, and postmodernity have played and continue to play in the development of world religions.
2. Various but specific practices, beliefs, and ways of being that are realized by the religions of the world.
3. The different ways religion can be related to the State
4. The moral concerns of world religions.
5. The arrival and development of new religious traditions in the past one hundred years.
6. A specific focus of this class will be on the way different world religions understand forgiveness.

IV. Required Textbooks:

Esposito, John L. et.al. *World Religions Today*. 7th ed. New York: Oxford University Press. 2022.

V. Recommended Reading

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.

Struck, W., & White, E. B. *The elements of style*. (Any edition will do.)

REQUIRED COURSE WORK

I. 8 Quizzes 20 pts each (160 points)

There are 8 quizzes throughout this course that will cover the textbook. Each quiz is due on the Sunday of the week it is posted. You will have 30 minutes for each quiz and 1 attempt.

II. 8 Discussion posts and responses (160 points)

The discussion posts will involve a specific question posed for each chapter. You will write a response to the question of at least 500 words and then respond to at least one classmate's post. Use academic sources for your response and be sure to CITE your sources, including page numbers – always.

III. Research Paper (100 points)

In collaboration with your professor, design a research topic that you can investigate in a 5-page paper. Full details are in the Canvas module entitled "Research Paper"

IV. 2 Exams 100pts each (200pts)

There will be a mid-term and a final exam. Each exam will include questions of different types: true/false, multiple choice, and short answer.

*******PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF DUE DATES AND TIMES...EVERY SEMESTER STUDENTS LOSE POINTS FOR NOT POSTING ON TIME*******

Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion:

Final course grades will be assessed on the following scale:

Assignment	Points	My Grade
Quizzes	160 points	
Discussion Post/Response	160 points	
Research Paper	100 points	
Exams	200 Points	
Total	620	
558-620 points	A	
496-557 points	B	
434-495 points	C	
372-433 points	D	
<371 points	F	

At the end of the semester there will be NO curve and no extra points given. It is up to YOU to ensure you have the grade you want.

VI. Posting of grades

All grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book

OTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE COURSE

I. Late assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted.

II. Supplementary Material: Additional information may be given that supplements the topics to be addressed. This supplementary material is designed to broaden the educational experience and create more variety to the usual lecture/discussion format of class presentations. You are responsible for all information in the supplementary material.

III. Extra Credit: Extra credit will be at the discretion of the instructor.

IV. Note: I will ONLY accept assignments that are submitted properly: through Canvas. Do not email or send me a message with an attachment. You MUST submit the assignment in the appropriate location within the assignments section. Communication is very important. Contact me with any questions about any part of the course. Stay on top of your grade – know what is going on! I am available to talk. You can text me or email me to set up a time to chat via phone or Zoom.

V. Posting of Grades: All student grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book and students should monitor their grading status through this tool.

VI. Module Organization: Since this is an 8-week course, we will cover approximately one chapter per week.

COURSE CALENDAR

Subject to revision, if necessary, during the semester

*******Note: additional reading assignments may be assigned throughout the semester, you will be notified via instructor announcements*******

V. Course Outline and Assignment Schedule

6/5	Introduction Ch 1 (pages 3-33)	Quiz1 and Discussion 1 due 6/11 by 11:59 p.m.	Week 1
6/12	Indigenous Religions Ch 2 (pages 35-65)	Quiz 2 and Discussion 2 due 6/18 by 11:59 p.m.	Week 2
6/19	Judaism Ch 3 (pages 67-111)	Quiz 2 and Discussion 3 due 6/25 by 11:59 p.m.	Week 3
6/26	Christianity Ch 4 (pages 113-171)	Quiz 4, Discussion 4, and Mid-term Exam due by 7/2 at 11:59 p.m.	Week 4
7/3	Islam Ch 5 (pages 173-261)	Quiz 5 and Discussion 5 due by 7/9 at 11:59 p.m.	Week 5
7/10	Hinduism Ch 6 (pages 263-337)	Quiz 6 and Discussion 6 due by 7/16 at 11:59 p.m.	Week 6
7/17	Buddhism Ch 7 (pages 339-417)	Quiz 7 and Discussion 7 due by 7/23 at 11:59 p.m. Research paper due by 7/23 at 11:59 p.m.	Week 7
7/24	Ch 9 Globalization (pages 491-522)	Quiz 8, Discussion 8, and Final Exam due by 7/28 at 11:59 p.m.	Week 8

Important University Dates

<https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/academic-calendar.html>

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

SafeZone provides a public safety application that gives you the ability to call for help with the push of a button. It also provides Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate emergency information quickly via push notifications, email, and text messages. All students automatically receive email and text messages via their myCT accounts.

Downloading SafeZone allows access to push notifications and enables you to connect directly for help through the app. You can download SafeZone from the app store and use your myCT credentials to log in. If you would like more information, you can visit the SafeZone website [www.safezoneapp.com].

To register SafeZone on your phone, please follow these 3 easy steps:

1. Download the SafeZone App from your phone store using the link below:
 - O iPhone/iPad: [<https://apps.apple.com/app/safezone/id533054756>]
 - O Android Phone / Tablet
[<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.criticalarc.safezoneapp>]
2. Launch the app and enter your myCT email address (e.g. {name}@tamuct.edu)
3. Complete your profile and accept the terms of service

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete the [Drop Request](#) Dynamic Form through Warrior Web.

[<https://dynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com/casAuthentication.ashx?InstID=eaed95b9-f2be-45f3-a37d-46928168bc10&targetUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fdynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com%2FSubmit%2FForm%2FStart%2F53b8369e-0502-4f36-be43-f02a4202f612>].

Faculty cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed. Once you submit the completed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University-Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. All academic misconduct concerns will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more [information regarding the Student Conduct process](#), [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a report](#), [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0].

Academic Accommodations

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations, please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information, please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717) Canvas page (log-in required) [https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717]

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/pregnant-and-parenting-students.html]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf) online, please visit the website [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both virtually and in-person. Student success coaching is available online upon request.

If you have a question, are interested in becoming a tutor, or in need of success coaching contact the Warrior Center for Student Success, Equity and Inclusion at (254) 501-5836, visit the Warrior Center at 212 Warrior Hall, or by emailing WarriorCenter@tamuct.edu.

To schedule tutoring sessions and view tutor availability, please visit [Tutor Matching Services](https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT) [https://tutormatchingservice.com/TAMUCT] or visit the Tutoring Center in 111 Warrior Hall.

Chat live with a remote tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Writing Center

University Writing Center: Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (A&M–Central Texas) is a free service open to all A&M–Central Texas students. For the Spring 2022 semester, the hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday in Warrior Hall 416 (with online tutoring available every hour as well) with satellite hours available online only Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. and Saturday 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via [WCOOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor by making an appointment via [WCOOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC, need any assistance with scheduling, or would like to schedule a recurring appointment with your favorite tutor.

University Library

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 400,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 96,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place virtually through WebEx, Microsoft Teams or in-person at the library. [Schedule an appointment here](https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956) [https://tamuct.libcal.com/appointments/?g=6956]. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas

suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

OPTIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Wellness and Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html].

Behavioral Intervention

Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. You can complete the [referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2) online [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](https://www.tamuct.edu/bit) website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/bit]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5805.

Copyright Notice.

Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

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