

RELS330

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Summary

Course : RELS330 **Title :** Religions of the Middle East

Length of Course : 8

Prerequisites : N/A **Credit Hours :** 3

Description

Course Description: This course is a study of the three primary religions whose origins were in and which are still practiced in the Middle East: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. For each religion, topics include history, culture, beliefs, scriptures and practices. Variations within the religions will be studied in context of their expression in the Middle East. In addition, the relationship of the three in the present day context will be studied, as well the influence of the religions on political and social situations.

Course Scope:

This course is intended to equip the novice student with a baseline understanding of issues and concepts in the major religions that factor into Middle Eastern studies. There are historical, cultural and philosophical issues at play, and it is important to recall that there is no division of church and state in the American/Western sense in Middle Eastern cultures.

Objectives

1. To better understand the three major religions of the Middle East: Judaism, Christianity and Islam
 2. To assess the interactions of the religious elements and better recognize the similarities and differences
 3. To appreciate the common history between the three religions, and be able to explain the divergent paths
 4. To understand the cultural elements of the three religions in a specifically Middle Eastern context
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Outline

Week 1: Intro to the religions

Learning Outcomes

CO-1: Explain how monotheism developed in the Middle East region.

Required Readings

As outlined in weekly lessons

Assignments

Introduction and initial question in the Forum

Week 2: Zoroastrianism

Learning Outcomes

CO-1: Explain how monotheism developed in the Middle East region.

CO-2: Describe some common roots of the four monotheistic religions.

CO-3: Define and describe each of the four monotheistic religions.

Required Readings

As outlined in weekly syllabus

Assignments

Forum Week 2 Questions

Short essay questions given

Week 3: Historical Judaism

Learning Outcomes

CO-3: Define and describe each of the four monotheistic religions.

CO-4: Identify practices and beliefs in the four monotheistic religions.

Required Readings

As outlined in weekly readings

Assignments

Forum Week 3 Questions

Week 4: Modern Judaism

Learning Outcomes

CO-3: Define and describe each of the four monotheistic religions.

CO-4: Identify practices and beliefs in the four monotheistic religions.

CO-5: Analyze the current geo-political and social complexities that affect the four monotheistic religions of the Middle East.

Required Readings

As outlined in weekly lessons

Assignments

Forum Week 4 Questions

Week 5: Historic Christianity

Learning Outcomes

CO-3: Define and describe each of the four monotheistic religions.

CO-4: Identify practices and beliefs in the four monotheistic religions.

CO-5: Analyze the current geo-political and social complexities that affect the four monotheistic religions of the Middle East.

Required Readings

As outlined in weekly readings

Assignments

Forum Week 5 Questions

Email final paper topic to professor

Week 6: Modern Christianity

Learning Outcomes

CO-3: Define and describe each of the four monotheistic religions.

CO-4: Identify practices and beliefs in the four monotheistic religions.

CO-5: Analyze the current geo-political and social complexities that affect the four monotheistic religions of the Middle East.

Required Readings

As outlined in weekly readings

Assignments

Forum Week 6 Questions

Week 7: Historic Islam

Learning Outcomes

CO-3: Define and describe each of the four monotheistic religions.

CO-4: Identify practices and beliefs in the four monotheistic religions.

CO-5: Analyze the current geo-political and social complexities that affect the four monotheistic religions of the Middle East.

Required Readings

As Outlined in Weekly Readings

Assignments

Short essay answers due

Week 8: Modern Islam

Learning Outcomes

CO-3: Define and describe each of the four monotheistic religions.

CO-4: Identify practices and beliefs in the four monotheistic religions.

CO-5: Analyze the current geo-political and social complexities that affect the four monotheistic religions of the Middle East.

Required Readings

As outlined in weekly readings

Assignments

Final Paper

Evaluation

Professional Ethics: The highest level of personal integrity is the accepted standard for this course.

Forum elements will be worth 350 points (50 points for each of seven weeks). These will be evaluated both on your initial contribution as well as your conversation and questions with others.

Each week, students will be responsible for posting an initial discussion board piece of between 250 – 500 words in response to posted questions. Each student should respond to at least two other students' postings with a substantive comment, question, or argument for debate.

Short Essays

Some key questions for you to consider as we go through the course will be given in week 2; short essays (500 – 1000 words each) will be due by week 7 of the term.

Research Paper

A scholarly research paper due at the end of week 8 that will be worth 400 points. This should be a paper approximately 2500 – 3000 words (8-10 pages) in length. References and footnotes may follow any style (APA, MLA, etc.) so long as it is applied consistently. Students may select their own topic, which should be cleared with the professor. More information will be given about the paper later in the semester.

Part of this paper will require use of the Online Library Resources of AMU/APUS.

Grading:

Name	Grade %
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Materials

Book Title: A History of God: The 4,000 Year Quest for Judaism, Christianity & Islam - The e-book is available in the APUS Online Library, link also provided in the classroom Lessons section.

Author: Armstrong, K.

Publication Info: Random House Publishing Group

ISBN: 9780345384560

Book Title: Judaism: The Basics- E-book available in the APUS Online Library, link also provided in the classroom Lessons section.

Author: Neusner, Jacob

Publication Info: Taylor & Francis Group

ISBN: 9780415401760

Book Title: No God but God, updated - the e-book is available in the APUS Online Library, link also provided in the classroom Lessons section.

Author: Aslan

Publication Info: Random House Publishing Group

ISBN: 9780812982442

Course Guidelines

This course requires a time management plan and the self-discipline to follow it. You are responsible for managing your time, completing assignments on time, completing the readings, and making inquiries as needed to complete the course effectively. This is an 8-week course, which means the material must be learned in a short period of time. This requires dedication and diligence on the part of each student.

There are weekly forum discussions and occasional assignments. All assignments must be submitted by the end of the week (Sunday, 11:55 pm, ET) they are assigned unless otherwise noted.

University Policies

[Student Handbook](#)

- [Drop/Withdrawal policy](#)
- [Extension Requests](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Disability Accommodations](#)

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