VĒRITAS
UNIVERSIDAD

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS & SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES

Course Title: **Major World Religions**
Course code: **THEO 3150**
Total contact hours & credits: 48 hours 3 credits
Pre-requisites: None

Course Description

This course will touch base on the major world religions, such as Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and more. We will focus on the dialogue and discussion of the following aspects: origins and mythology, main beliefs, concepts of God, sacred texts, rituals, main differences and similarities.

This is a theoretical-practical course and it seeks to clarify the following question:

How to recognize the characteristics of the major World Religions to understand the main beliefs in order to promote respect and tolerance among their differences?

In order to respond the query, we will study the following generative topics:

• Main concepts

• Prehistoric Beliefs

• Ancient and Classic Religious

• Mythology

• Rituals
• Moral Beliefs
• Sacred Texts
• Conflicts and History

The course will promote the following skills:

Along the course, the following skills will be fostered:

   • The ability to identify the main values of the major world religions.
   • The ability to develop the need to have an open dialogue that can promote tolerance and
        respect among different beliefs.
   • The ability to cultivate a critical thinking and comprehension of the religious background.
   • The ability to adopt an overall clean perspective of the main world religions.

Values and attitudes

- Teamwork and leadership
- Systemic thinking
- Logical and communicative intelligence
- Problem solving
- Learning how to learn
- Empathic and reliable negotiation

Competencies, criteria and evidence

At Veritas University competencies are reflexive and integrated actions that respond to the professional profile and to context issues ideally and ethically through the integration of abilities, skills and knowledge. What follows are the discipline and core competencies and their correspondent key competencies and evidence of learning for this course. What follows are the discipline and core competencies and their correspondent key competencies and evidence of learning for this course.

Competencies	Key competences	Evidence of learning
Discipline Recognizes the characteristics of the major World Religions to understand the main beliefs in order to promote respect and tolerance among their differences.	Identifies the main characteristics and values of the major world religions.	Reading comprehension Reports Class discussions Religions Catalogue
	Cultivates a critical thinking and comprehension of the religions.	Oral Presentations Research Report Field Trips
	Adopts an overall clean perspective of the main world religions	Research Report Religion Catalog
Core/Generic		

Integrates knowledge, skills and attitudes to learn continuously and through one´s life pursuing an efficient development in the knowledge-based society.	Learning to learn	Research report
Builds the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to learn how to communicate orally and in written form in the different disciplines that make up the curriculum.	Communicate thoughts of the discipline orally, in an iconic way, and in written form.	Class discussion
Integrates the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to learn teamwork and leadership techniques.	Execute teamwork and leadership.	Problem Resolution Project
Integrates the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to learn interpersonal communication techniques.	Relate well to others Manage and solve conflicts Negotiate reliably and empathetically Speak responsibly Listen attentively	Research Project

Content
Unit I : Introduction
A. Concepts
  1. Religion
  2. Animism
  3. Mythology
  4. Polytheism
  5. Monotheism
  6. Religion Dimensions

B. Prehistoric Beliefs
  1. Xam San
  2. Ainu
  3. Sami
  4. Baiga
  5. Native Australia

6. Quechua
7. Chewing
8. Pawnee
9. Dogon

C. Ancient and Classic Religions
1. Babylonia
2. Egypt
3. Zoroastrism
4. Confucianism
5. Taoism
6. Greek Religion
7. Roman Religion
8. Shintoism
9. Viking Religion
10. Precolombian

Unit 2: Hinduism
A. The Vedas
B. The Upanishads
C. Dharma Shartras
D. Bhagavad Guita
E. Yoga Sutras
F. Bhakti

Unit 3: Buddhism
A. Sidarta Gautama
B. The Middle Path
C. Canon Pali
D. Ashoka
E. Mahayana
F. Tibetan Buddhism
G. Zen Buddhism

Unit 4: Judaism
A. The Tora
B. The Second Isaias
C. Death Sea Scrolls
D. Talmud

Unit 5: Christianity
A. Jesus
B. First Christians
C. Christian Persecution
D. Nicea

E. Saint Agustin
F. Letran
G. Saint Thomas
H. The Reform
I. Protestantism

Unit 6: Islam
A. Muhammad
B. Coran
C. The Five Pilars
D. The Iman

Unit 7: Other Religions
A. Santeria
B. Rastafari
C. Wicca
D. Cao Dai
E. Bahaism
F. Mormones
G. Taoism
H. Jainism
I. Shintoism

Methodology

The methodology utilized in this course is conceived as an analysis and synthesis process that will use each activity to obtain an understanding of the major world religions. The oral presentations, the reading comprehension of articles, the field trips and the religion catalog will serve to corroborate learning. Sharing with other students and providing bases for the importance of religion in the world today will serve to develop the competency based education skills of learning to learning, investigation, comparison, communication and teamwork.

Teamwork is promoted through class discussion, presenting techniques, and the resolution of a problem, where learning is developed via teacher guidance. Individual work like essays allow to practice skills of analysis, reflection and synthesis. The role of the teacher will be as a moderator and facilitator of the learning and teaching process, allowing the build-up and auto-regulation of the learning from the students.

Learning strategies

The following learning strategies will be executed:

- Research Project

Learning through a research project "A different religion of the Modern World" will allow student to do a profound analysis of a less influencing religion practice today. They should develop a written report and use at least 4 scholar resources to develop these studies and present their conclusions to their classmates.

- Reading Comprehension Report
 Students will exercise the capacity of critical thinking, and oral and written expression through the presentation of reports and oral presentations about reading resources.

• Oral Presentations
Individual and group presentations of the results of analysis and research of almost all activities will develop in students the ability to communicate orally and graphically to demonstrate knowledge assimilated through assignments.

- Religion Catalog
Students will develop the ability of comparison and contrast by creating a Major World Religion Catalog where they will summaries the main characteristics of each religion.

Educational resources

In order to guarantee good development of the course, therefore to guarantee learning, the following resources are available: an updated bibliographic database, multimedia equipment that students can use for their individual presentations; whiteboards and other school equipment for weekly sessions, and readings provided by the educator. All of these complement the suggested projects and provide the students with higher possibilities of knowledge own ship. Most of the lessons will take place in the classroom.

During independent work periods students will be able to attend the institution.

A campus library, study rooms, and computer labs are available for the students´ independent work time. Free Wi-Fi connection for students, educators, and staff is provided on campus, which gives students the possibility to work not only in the library or computer labs, but also around campus. The online learning resource platform (Canvas) in provided with the sources, assignment, calendar and grading of the class. https://veritascr.instructure.com/profile

Learning evaluation

In order to make the course or program better, competencies based evaluation compiles and evaluates evidence by taking into account feedback providing pre-established criteria. The course evaluation must be aligned with the competencies and the teaching methodology. There is a rubric for each evaluation resource. Even though the rubric grants a grade, it is also a quantitative and qualitative description of the students´ performance. The rubrics include the core and discipline key competences.

RUBRICS	PERCENTAGE VALUE
Research Project Group Work • A different religion of the Modern World (Santeria, Rastafari, Wicca, Cao Dai, Bahaism, Mormones, Jehovahs Witnesses, Taoism, Jainism, Shintoism)	20%
Oral Presentations (10% each) -Prehistoric Beliefs (Xam San, Ainu, Sami, Baiga, Native Australia, Quechua, Chewing, Pawnee, Dogon) -Ancient and Classic Religions (Babylonia, Egypt, Zorastrism, Confucianism, Taoism, Greek Religion, Roman Religion, Shintoism, Viking Religion, Precolombian)	20%
Oral Reading Comprehension Report (2 per student)	20%
Field Trips (2 visits to religious temples)	10%
Major World Religion Catalogue (Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam)	30%
Total	100%

Rubrics

Rubric to evaluate a Research Project

A research project ***A different religion of the Modern World*** will allow student to do a profound analysis of other religions that are practice today and are not part of the major world religions. Choose one of the following: Santeria, Rastafari, Wicca, Cao Dai, Bahaism, Mormones, Jehovahs Witnesses, Taoism, Jainism, Shintoism

1. The following topics should be included in the report:

    a. Research the origin and history of the religion (where, when, who and how)

    b. Main moral beliefs and rituals

    c. God

    d. Sacred Texts

    e. Spiritual leaders

    f. Number of Adepts

    g. Political, social and cultural influence and conflicts

2. A <u>written report</u> will be presented including:
    a. Cover, Table of Content, Introduction (with the objectives and main ideas, including the Thesis Statement) all contents developed in chapters and a conclusion.
    b. A bibliography (APA format) will be included with at least 4 scholarly resources. Quotes should be correctly cited (APA Format).
    c. Use Arial 12 font in 1.5 spacing.
3. Oral presentation:
    a. Length of the presentation: 30 minutes
    b. Visual Aid: Powerpoint. Add videos, images, maps and reading resources that can help you in the presentation.

    c. Add a question for class mate and teacher that can open to discussion

    d. Every member of the group should present.

Indicator	Excellent	Good	Insufficient	%	Observations
<u>Thesis Statement:</u> Clearly and concisely states the paper's purpose in a single sentence which is engaging and thought provoking.	2	1.35	0.65	2	

Introduction: engaging states the main topic and previous the structure of the paper.	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Content: All the topics are provided in a clear, complete analytical way..	5	3	1	5	
Organization Structural Development of the Idea: logical and subtle sequencing of ideas through well developed paragraphs. Each paragraph has thoughtful supporting detail sentence that develop the main idea	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Conclusion: engaging and restates the thesis	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Bibliography and citation: in APA format at least 4 resources.	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Team Work The team works in a collaborative fashion and shows tolerance, conflict resolution, and respect towards partners. *This point will be evaluated by the students, not the teacher.	2	1.35	0.65	2	

| Oral Presentation evaluated by class mates
There is mastery of concepts and these are transmitted effectively, and expressed with visual aids, (powerpoint, videos, music, among others). The presentation is fluent.	3	2	1	3	
Total				20	

Rubric to evaluate Oral Presentation

The oral presentations will promote the ability to communicate orally and graphically to demonstrate knowledge assimilated through assignments by presenting a Prehistoric Belief or Religion and an Ancient or Classical Religion.

<u>Description:</u>
 A powerpoint with 10 slides will be presented with the following information:

1) Origen and brief historic overview
2) Main beliefs
3) Mythology and deities
4) Rituals
5) Sacred Texts
6) Main Spiritual leaders
7) Endurance and influence

Indicator	Excellent	Good	Insufficient	%	Observations
<u>Content:</u> General concepts, and information required was included in the presentation	4	2.5	1	4	

Contributions and Critical Thinking: Consistent, serious and convincing personal contributions are presented on the presentation.	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Bibliography and citation: in APA format at least 3 resources.	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Oral Presentation There is mastery of concepts and these are transmitted effectively. Expressed with visual aids, presentation is fluent and professional.	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Total				10	

Rubric to evaluate Reading Comprehension Report

The analysis of two reading resources (chosen by the students). The analysis is going to be represent in class using the following criteria:

 1) main purpose of the article and key question

 2) main ideas and arguments (most important information)

3) Critical analysis of the thoughts and ideas offer by the author (point of views, inferences, assumptions and implications)

4) If the document accomplish it purpose. (main conclusion)

A visual aid as powerpoint is going to be used to present the analysis.

Indicator	Excellent	Good	Insufficient	Points	Observations

Summary: Determines main purpose and key questions; main ideas and arguments.	4	2.5	1	4	
Critical thinking of the information: Gives personal opinion, support and opposite arguments to the information presented by the author and analysis of point of views, inferences, assumptions and implications.	4	2.5	1	4	
Oral Presentation: There is mastery of concepts and these are transmitted effectively. Expressed with visual aids, presentation is fluent and professional.	2	1.35	0.65	2	
Total				10	

Rubric to evaluate a Field Trip

Students will visit two religious institutions or temples. Before the visit, students will prepare 3 questions to be ask during a visit. A report will be prepared after the visit with the following observations:

1) Main objective and outcome

2) Main ideas and topics developed during the visit

3) Observations

4) Photos

5) Evaluation of activity

6) Format (times new roman 12, 1.5 spacing, 2 pages long)

Indicator	Excellent	Good	Insufficient	Points	Observations
Being on time and attentive during the site visit activities.	1	0.65	0.35	1	
Listens respectfully and carefully to the site visit leaders, community and organizers.	1	0.65	0.35	1	
Visit Report: Develops a report with the requirements ask by the teacher.	3	2	1	3	
Total				5	

Rubric to evaluate a Major World Religion Catalogue

The creation of a catalogue will allow students to summaries the main characteristics con of the Major World Religions. Also students will be able to compare and contrast these religions developing critical thinking and adopting an overall clean perspective of the difference moral beliefs and spiritual practices around the world.

Description
A catalogue will be created including Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

The information that should be included for each religion is:
-Origen and founder (brief biography : historic and mythical perspective)
-Timeline of the history of the religion (at least 5-8 key events)
-Sacred Books and Moral Beliefs
-Rituals and religious practices
-Symbols
-Spiritual leaders and branches (brief description)
-Political, social and cultural influence and conflicts
-Adepts

Format: Use a creative way to build the catalog. It can be digital or on paper. Information should be presented in a synthetic organized manner. Use images, graphs, colors, outlines, conceptual maps, and infographics to present the information.

*Catalogues will be presented in class.

Indicator	Excellent	Good	Insufficient	Points	Observations
Information Includes the information required by the teacher for each religion. *4 points for 5 religions is every aspect is presented.	20	15	8	20	

Format Uses creativity and synthetic organization to present the information. Uses images, graphs colors and others to present the information.	5	3	1	5	
Class mates Evaluation: Creativity Design Information Organization Oral Presentation	5	3	1	5	
Total				30	

Audience

This course is structured for International Students attending the Study Abroad program at Universidad Veritas. However, courses are not exclusive to foreigners so a few native students could enroll in this course. Some of the courses are also taught in Spanish as part of our Bachelors in Sustainability Management.

Attendance

Students are only allowed a total of 2 nonconsecutive (back to back) absences. The student will fail the course if he/she has more than two absences. Students will have a 0 on any assignment evaluated in class (presentations, evaluations, field trips, etc.) if he/she is absent unless the student presents an official document no later than one week after the absence. If the student presents an authoritative report to excuse the absence, he/she must submit the missed assignment on that same day. An unjustified absence to a field trip will immediately mean losing all of the points assigned to the field trip. If an official document

is presented for the field trip absence students will have to present a research assignment to obtain 50% of the points. The only exception to this rule is when two-course field sessions collide in programming. Students can then opt for doing a research assignment not to lose any points.

Three late arrivals to class (15 minutes later) are treated as one absence. If you tend to be late for class, you will lose 25% of your total grade.

Code of conduct

Professors have the right to expel a student from the classroom should he / she:
1) Be disruptive in the classroom.
2) Behave in a disrespectful way.
3) Be under the influence of alcohol or even smell like alcohol.
4) Be under the influence of any illegal drug.
5) Hygiene problems that may disturb other students.

Electronic devices

The use of cell phones, smart phones, or other mobile communication devices is disruptive, and is therefore prohibited during class. Please turn all devices OFF and put them away when class begins. Devices may be used ONLY when the professor assigns a specific activity and allows the use of devices for internet search or recording. Those who fail to comply with the rule must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.

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Course Schedule

Weeks	Sub competency	Contents	Learning strategies
1	Cultivates a critical thinking and comprehension of the religions.	Class Welcome **Unit I : Introduction** A. Concepts 　　1. Religion 　　2. Animism 　　3. Mythology 　　4. Polytheism 　　5. Monotheism 　　6. Religion Dimensions	Course presentation and Reading the syllabus. -Organizing group assignments -Assigns reading comprehensions

2		**Unit I : Introduction**
		B. Prehistoric Beliefs
		    1. Xam San
		    2. Ainu
		    3. Sami
		    4. Baiga
		    5. Native Australia
		    6. Quechua
		    7. Chewing
		    8. Pawnee
		    9. Dogon
			-Magisterial class
			-Topic discussion
			-Oral Presentation 1

3		**Unit I : Introduction**
		C. Ancient and Classic
		   Religions
		    1. Babylonia
		    2. Egypt
		    3. Zoroastrism
		    4. Confucianism
		    5. Taoism
		    6. Greek Religion
		    7. Roman Religion
		    8. Shintoism
		    9. Viking Religion
		    10. Precolombian
			-Magisterial class
			-Topic discussion
			-Oral Presentation 2

4		**Unit 2: Hinduism** A. The Vedas B. The Upanishads C. Dharma Shartras D. Bhagavad Guita E. Yoga Sutras F. Bhakti	-Magisterial class -Topic Discussion -Individual Reading Comprehension Presentation

5		**Unit 3: Buddhism** A. Sidarta Gautama B. The Middle Path C. Canon Pali D. Ashoka E. Mahayana F. Tibetan Buddhism G. Zen Buddhism	-Magisterial class -Topic Discussion <u>Individual Reading Comprehension Presentation</u> **Field Trip 1**
6	Identifies the main values of the major world religions	**Unit 3: Buddhism** A. Sidarta Gautama B. The Middle Path C. Canon Pali D. Ashoka E. Mahayana F. Tibetan Buddhism G. Zen Buddhism **Unit 4: Judaism** A. The Tora B. The Second Isaias C. Death Sea Scrolls D. Talmud	-Magisterial class -Topic Discussion <u>Individual Reading Comprehension Presentation</u> **Field Trip 2**
7		**Unit 4: Judaism** A. The Tora B. The Second Isaias C. Death Sea Scrolls D. Talmud	-Magisterial class -Topic Discussion <u>-Individual Reading Comprehension Presentation</u>

8		**Unit 5: Christianity** A. Jesus B. First Christians C. Christian Persecution D. Nicea E. Saint Agustin F. Letran G. Saint Thomas H. The Reform I. Protestantism	-Magisterial class -Topic Discussion -Individual Reading Comprehension Presentation
9		**Unit 5: Christianity** A. Jesus B. First Christians C. Christian Persecution D. Nicea E. Saint Agustin F. Letran G. Saint Thomas H. The Reform I. Protestantism	-Magisterial class -Topic Discussion -Work on Major Religion Catalog -Individual Reading Comprehension Presentation
10		**Unit 6: Islam** A. Muhammad B. Coran C. The Five Pilars D. The Iman	-Magisterial class -Video Documentary -Work on Major Religion Catalog -Individual Reading Comprehension Presentation

11		**Unit 7: Other Religions** A. Santeria B. Rastafari C. Wicca D. Cao Dai E. Bahaism F. Mormones G. Jehovahs Witnesses H. Taoism I. Jainism J. Shintoism	-Presentation of Research Project.
12	Adopts an overall clean perspective of the main world religions	**Presentation of Catalogs**	Grades

*The course schedule could vary, depending on the advance and progress of the contents.

General Observations

The student must comply with the provisions of the CIPSS Academic Policies Regime. To consult it you must go to the Veritas website to the CIPSS page to the Home Menu and download it.