

Instructor	Year	Semester	Course Number	Course Title	Section
Dr. Matthew Crippen	2021	Winter	GS35780	World Religions and Cultures	01

**Instructor Contact Information: matthewjcrippen@gmail.com**

**Office Hours: Available daily by Appointment**

### **1. Course Description & Objectives**

Certain preoccupations are primary in human existence and thus a part of people's experience no matter where they are in the world. For such reasons, the great mythologist Joseph Campbell conjectured that stories, artistic works, religious practices and philosophical systems from varying cultures exhibit similar and reoccurring archetypes. In this course, we will survey a range of culturally-based ideas, and look for what is shared between them. However, we will also endeavor to see the uniqueness of each and the separate histories that have led to different cultural experiences.

The general aim of this course is to cultivate an appreciation for the value and diversity of human legacies, while building bridges of common understanding. Some specific attention will be paid to the synthesis of multiple traditions in South Korea, which has the unusual distinction of celebrating its religious-philosophical heritage on its currency, its flag and even in its system of linguistic characters. It is hoped that pursuing these goals will promote tolerance and cross-cultural appreciation that will be personally enriching and prepare students for professional life in the global environment.

### **2. Texts**

Almost all readings are public domain, and will be distributed to students by the instructor.

### **3. Requirements & Grading**

#### Grading

1. Tests, (25%), (25%), (30%) = (80%)
2. Online assignments, quizzes and/or discussions (20%) are not meant to be onerous, but are intended to encourage students to keep up with assigned work, and should, if taken seriously, prepare you for tests.

### Attendance, Late Assignments and Missed Tests

This is an online course. Though lectures will be recorded, it is essential to keep up with the weekly schedule, and in order to encourage this, there will be weekly small assessments such of quizzes and short written assignments. Instructions will be posted regularly on Blackboard and emailed to you. Major tests will be held during regular class hours and you are required to take them then.

Missed tests and assignments **will be graded 'F.'** Exceptions will be made in the case of bereavement, medical emergency or for other serious reasons, but **supporting documentation may be required.**

### Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is "submitting material that in part or whole is not one's own," or submitting "work without properly attributing the correct sources of its content." Cheating is defined as "using unauthorized notes, aids, or information on an examination; altering graded work prior to its return to a faculty member"; or "allowing another person to do one's work." Plagiarism, cheating and other breaches of academic integrity **will not be tolerated.** All suspected cases **will be** reported to university authorities, and all verified incidents, no matter how small, will result in failure for the entire course. It is your responsibility to know and adhere to the standards of academic integrity.

### Students with Disabilities

Please contact me if you have special needs because of a learning or physical disability or because of a medical or psychological challenge. If you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating the classroom and/or building in an emergency, please make me aware so that the university can develop a plan to assist you.

### Non-Discrimination

The instructor does not discriminate against any student because of age, gender, ethnicity, appearance, religion, political view, disability, national origin or lifestyle choices. The same is expected from students. We want to create a space for open and respectful intellectual exchange.

### Note on Grading

Please note that grades are awarded on the basis of merit, not need. I accordingly ask you not to tell me what grade you need, and I insist that you do not ask me to arbitrarily raise your grade. Little worth doing is easy, so you should be prepared for a demanding course. Please note at the same time that I encourage you to set up office appointments for help achieving the grade that you want; and that I gladly give high grades when warranted, and if you put the requisite effort in, there is no reason you should not do well.

## Syllabus

<b>4. Tentative Schedule</b>		
<b>Week No.</b>	<b>Topics and Activities</b>	<b>Assignments and Other Instructions</b>
<b>Week 1</b>	Thinking tools and introduction	
	<b>Unit 1: Indigenous Thought and New World Experiences</b>	
<b>Week 2</b>	Transcendentalists and Revolutionary Thinkers	
<b>Week 3</b>	Chief Red Jacket	
<b>Week 4</b>	Chief Joseph	
<b>Week 5</b>	Indigenous Ideas about ancestors and land and pragmatic ideas about mind	
<b>Week 6</b>	Review	Test 1
	<b>Unit 2: Africa and the African Diaspora</b>	
<b>Week 7</b>	Ubuntu Traditions	
<b>Week 8</b>	Africapitalism	
<b>Week 9</b>	Fredrick Douglass	

<b>Week 10</b>	W. E. B. Du Bois	
<b>Week 11</b>	Review	Test 2
	<b>Unit 3: Looking East</b>	
<b>Week 12</b>	Upanishads and Vedas	
<b>Week 13</b>	Bhagavad Gita	
<b>Week 14</b>	Buddhism	
<b>Week 15</b>	Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism	
<b>Week 16</b>	Islamic Philosophy	
<b>Final Exam Week</b>	Voluntarily Review	Test 3