COURSE OUTLINE:

Catalogue Number: HS 90  
Course Title: History of Religion

Section Number: 6510

Instructor: John J. Barrett  
Year: 2004

Semester: Fall  
Class Meeting Times: Mondays 6:00 - 9:00 P.M.

Classroom: Orient 136

Office Location: Orient 117  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Office Telephone: 631-548-2579  
E-Mail: barretj@sunysuffolk.edu

I) Objectives Of The Course:

Hans Kung, of the University of Tubingen in Germany, has stated that, “Peace among religions is the prerequisite for peace among nations.” This course seeks to engage students in furthering the process of peace among peoples by increasing their understanding of the religious traditions that provide meaning, direction and ethical stance for most of the people of the world, including an increasingly diverse Long Island.

Our approach to this task is fourfold:

1. After a brief introduction to the historical study of religions, we will construct an outline that will guide our study of these traditions. This outline will include:
   a. Historical origins
   b. Foundational Individuals and Communities
   c. Scriptural Texts
   d. Liturgical Traditions
   e. Personal and Societal Ethical Values
   f. Eschatology

2. Using this outline we will read some of the Scriptural Texts and inquire into the following religious traditions:
   a. Judaism
   b. Christianity
   c. Islam
   d. Hinduism
   e. Buddhism
   f. Taoism/Confucianism

3. We will then turn our attention to three specific questions that connect these traditions with our
contemporary historical experience:
  a. Fundamentalism
  b. Spirituality Without Religion
  c. Religion and Violence

4. The course will conclude with Student Presentations reflecting further inquiry and study of the following topics and their connection to one of the traditions studied in the course:
   a. The role of Women
   b. Mysticism
   c. Religion and Science
   d. Religious Dialogue
   e. Approaches to Sexuality, Love and Marriage
   f. Definitions of the Good Life
   g. Understandings of Salvation
   h. Neighbor Love
   i. Martyrdom

At the end of the course student participants should be able to accomplish the following:

1. understand the truth claims of each of these religious traditions
2. have a deeper understanding of some of historical points of challenge and/or conflict between these traditions and their perception of the world in which they exist.
3. be able to recognize both similar historical development as well as shared approaches to wisdom, prayer and ethics
4. be better equipped to engage in religious dialogue with those encountered in daily life who are members of these traditions
5. make some original and significant contributions to world peace by their participation in civil society and the political process.
6. have their own world views and life journeys enriched by the knowledge they have acquired in this course

II) **Procedures For Accomplishing These Objectives:**

1. Through class presentations and guided readings of texts, students will explore a survey of the foundational ideas used in comprehensive systems of ethics.
2. Each class will consist of three foci:
   a) recitation of assigned textual reading and colloquy with the instructor and other students;
   b) presentation of thematic material; and,
   c) discussion of the ethical questions raised by the class presentation.

III) **Student Requirements For Completion Of The Course:**
1. Reading of assigned text and reference material.
2. Participation in class discussions.
3. Submission of a term assignment. (See Addendum)
4. Completion of Examinations. (See Addendum)

IV) **Grading Practices:**

The Final Grade will be determined by the following criteria:
1) Examinations (40%): Five will be held. The lowest mark will be dropped. No substitute examinations will be offered.
2) Term Assignment (40%)
3) Attendance and Class Recitation: (20%) Absences and lateness will be deducted from this mark.

VI) **Rules Concerning Student Absence and Lateness:**

**Attendance Policy (As stated in the Faculty Handbook):**

"The College expects that each student will exercise personal responsibility with regard to class attendance. All students are expected to attend every class session of each course for which they are registered. Students are responsible for all that transpires in class whether or not they are in attendance. The College defines excessive absence or lateness as more than the equivalent of one week of class meetings during the semester. Excessive absence or lateness may lead to failure in a course or removal from the class roster. A student may be removed from the class roster by an instructor at any time when in the judgment of the instructor absence has been excessive or when other valid reasons exist."

Any special circumstances that might compromise the learning process should be communicated to the instructor in anticipation of occurrence or as soon as possible so that a review of a student's participation in the course can be initiated.
VI) **Textbook:**


VII) **Outline Of Topics To Be Covered:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/13 Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How We will Proceed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/20 Judaism</td>
<td>241-279</td>
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<td>Judaism</td>
<td></td>
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<td>9/27 Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>280-332</td>
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<td>Christianity</td>
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<td>10/18 Islam</td>
<td>333-370</td>
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<td>72-115</td>
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<td>11/1 Hinduism</td>
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<td>11/8 Buddhism</td>
<td>127-155</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taoism/Confucianism</td>
<td>169-202</td>
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<td>11/22 Taoism/Confucianism</td>
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<td>Spirituality W/O Religion</td>
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<td>Religion and Violence</td>
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<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>Conclusion</td>
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