

LSC Use Only Proposal No:	UWUCC Use Only Proposal No: 11-766	Senate Action Date: App 3/20/12
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Curriculum Proposal Cover Sheet - University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

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Check all appropriate lines and complete all information. Use a separate cover sheet for each course proposal and/or program proposal.

1. Course Proposals (check all that apply)

New Course Course Prefix Change Course Deletion
 Course Revision Course Number and/or Title Change Catalog Description Change

Current course prefix, number and full title: RLST 100 Introduction to Religion

Proposed course prefix, number and full title, if changing: _____

2. Liberal Studies Course Designations, as appropriate

This course is also proposed as a Liberal Studies Course (please mark the appropriate categories below)

Learning Skills Knowledge Area Global and Multicultural Awareness Writing Across the Curriculum (W Course)
 Liberal Studies Elective (please mark the designation(s) that applies – must meet at least one)

Global Citizenship Information Literacy Oral Communication
 Quantitative Reasoning Scientific Literacy Technological Literacy

3. Other Designations, as appropriate

Honors College Course Other: (e.g. Women's Studies, Pan African)

4. Program Proposals

Catalog Description Change Program Revision Program Title Change New Track
 New Degree Program New Minor Program Liberal Studies Requirement Changes Other

Current program name: _____

Proposed program name, if changing: _____

5. Approvals	Signature	Date
Department Curriculum Committee Chair(s)		10/24/11
Department Chairperson(s)		10/25/11
College Curriculum Committee Chair		12/12/11
College Dean		12/14/11
Director of Liberal Studies (as needed)		2/23/12
Director of Honors College (as needed)		
Provost (as needed)		
Additional signature (with title) as appropriate		
UWUCC Co-Chairs		3/6/12

Received
 FEB 23 2012
 Liberal Studies

Received
 DEC 15 2011
 Liberal Studies

RLST 100

Syllabus of record

I. Catalog Description

RLST 100 Introduction to Religion

3 class hours

0 lab hours

3 credits

(3c-01-3cr)

Prerequisite: None

An introduction to the academic study of religion through an examination of various dimensions of religious expression and traditions. Will cover such areas as problems about definition of religion; approaches to the study of religion; the goals, language, and rituals of religion; cases of religious experience; faith, disbelief, and alternatives to religion; religion and the sociocultural context.

II. **Course Outcomes and Assessment (Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes – EUSLO)**

Objective 1:

Identify a variety of methods employed in the academic study of religion and demonstrate knowledge of the various dimensions of religious experience, belief, expression and tradition.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes 1:

Informed Learners

Rationale:

Through lectures, online resources and assigned readings students will acquire basic knowledge of the interdisciplinary approach to the study of religion. Assigned readings and lectures will emphasize the various ways in which religious studies scholars come to understand and find meaning in religious experience, belief and practice and the wide range of possible approaches to the study of religion and its connection to human culture. Students will be asked to identify and critically compare these methods from readings, videos and news clips in class discussion, tests and quizzes.

Objective 2:

Define and demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts and theories of the nature of religious, experience, practice and belief and apply these concepts and theories reflectively in their understanding of the origins and diversity of religious phenomena.

Expected Student Learning Outcome 1 and 2:

Informed and Empowered Learners

Rationale:

Through the reading and lecture assignments students will study the many theoretical perspectives that have evolved from the research methods and learn how the dialogue among the proponents of these perspectives has provided insights into the nature of religious experience, practice and belief. Through writing assignments, exam questions and in class exercises in applying the critical methods on an appropriately introductory level, the students will be encouraged to join and participate in this scholarly dialogue in class discussions. Further, they will be required to show basic facility in applying diverse methods in their forum postings on current news.

Objective 3:

Judge and critically evaluate social issues relating to religion.

Expected Student Learning Outcome 1 and 3:

Informed and Responsible Learners

Rationale:

Through assigned readings, class discussions, and online resources, students will be encouraged to become aware of the immense impact thought, practice and experience has on cultural norms ranging from the arts, politics, medicine, international affairs and the law to ethical and moral issues that face us individuals in a democratic society. Submission of responses to exam essays and the online news forum will encourage critical responses to current events with religious implications. Assigned projects in experiential learning including visits to local religious places of worship, interviews with members of other religions, campus lectures, and online resources will encourage students to consider how they can become active participants in this fundamental aspect of citizenship

Objective 4:

Discuss and consider how implicit and explicit religious beliefs impact their own lives in relationship to others.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes 3:

Responsible Learners

Rationale:

Experiential learning projects will encourage direct observation and interaction with religious individuals and communities holding diverse views on controversial issues. Assigned reports on these experiences will focus student inquiry on the necessity of becoming aware of and understanding the consequences of their actions and attitudes on both the local and global community and the physical world.

III. Typical Course Outline (Actual outlines may vary with instructor but will include some of the following areas)

- a. The nature of study of religion
 - i. Approaches to the study of religion (3 Hours)
 - ii. Problems of definition (2 Hours)
 - iii. Issues concerning the origins of religion (3 Hours)
 - iv. The roots and causes of religious experience (3 Hours)
 - v. Religious traditions (3 Hours)
 - Exam 1 (1 Hours)
- b. The conceptual dimensions of religion
 - i. God, scripture, sacred stories, evil and human destiny (3 Hours)
 - ii. Symbolism, conversion, myth and ritual (3 Hours)
 - iii. Understanding religious knowledge (3 Hours)
 - iv. Arguments for God’s existence (3 Hours)
 - Exam 2 (1 Hour)
- c. Religion and the Socio-cultural context
 - i. Individuals and the community (3 Hours)
 - ii. Patterns and varieties of faith (3 Hours)
 - iii. Religions and specific social issues: hunger, women and minorities, modernization, pluralism, secularism, violence, etc. (3 Hours)
 - iv. Disbelief and alternatives to religion (3 Hours)
 - v. The future of religion (2 Hours)
 - vi. Final Exam (2 Hours)

IV. Evaluation Methods

Two major written exams during the semester <i>The exams will be a combination of short answer and multiple choice</i>	40%
A final exam	20%
News of the week reports through participation in in online forum <i>Students will assess and critically evaluate the impact of current events on social, cultural and religious life through postings to online forums and in class reports.</i>	15%
Group or individual experiential learning project <i>Students will apply theoretical models to their observations of religious thought, practice and ritual in local settings</i>	25%
Total	100%

V. Grading Scale

A: 90% or above B: 80-89% C: 70-79% D: 60-69% F: Less than 60%

VI. Undergraduate Course Attendance Policy

The IUP attendance Policy will be followed.

VII. Required Textbook and Supplemental Books

Below are several adequate options for required textbooks:

Deming, Will. *Rethinking Religion*. Oxford, 2005.

Kessler, Gary. *Studying Religion: An Introduction Through Cases*, McGraw Hill, 2007.

Livingston, James. *Anatomy of the Soul: An Introduction to Religion*, Prentice Hall, 2008.

Monk, Robert. *Exploring Religious Meaning*, Prentice Hall, 2003.

Rodriquez, Hillary and John S. Harding. *Introduction to the Study of Religion*, Routledge, 2008

Supplemental Books

The following books are examples of possible choices that could be used as supplemental books:

Bender, Sue. *Plain and Simple*. HarperOne, 1991.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Future of an Illusion*. CreateSpace, 2011.

Robbins, Thomas and Susan J. Palmer, eds. *Millennium, Messiahs, and Mayhem: Contemporary Apocalyptic Movements*. Routledge, 1997.

Turner, Victor, *From Ritual to Theatre*. PAJ Publications, 2001

Van de Wetering, Janwillem. *The Empty Mirror*. St. Martin's Griffin, 1999.

VIII. Bibliography

Arnal, William E. "Definition." In *Guide to the Study of Religion*. Edited by Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon. London: Continuum, 2000.

Bayes, Jane H., and Nayereh Tohidi, eds. *Globalization, Gender, and Religion: The Politics of Women's Rights in Catholic and Muslim Contexts*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.

Berger, Peter L., ed. *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington, DC/Grand Rapids: Ethics and Public Policy Center/Eerdmans, 1999.

Beyer, Peter. *Religion and Globalization*. London: Sage, 1994.

Boyer, Pascal. *Religion Explained*. New York: Basic Books, 2002.

Casanova, José. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Dark, K. R., ed. *Religion and International Relations*. New York: St. Martin's, 2000.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.

Durkheim, Émile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Translated by Karen Fields. New York: The Free Press, 1995.

Esposito, John L., and Michael Watson, eds. *Religion and Global Order*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000.

Fitzgerald, Tim. *The Ideology of Religious Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Haynes, Jeff. *Religion in Global Politics*. New York: Longman, 1998.

Hopkins, Dwight N., Lois Ann Lorentzen, Eduardo Mendieta, and David Batstone, eds. *Religions/Globalizations: Theories and Cases*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.

Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Johnston, Douglas, and Cynthia Sampson, eds. *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Kessler, Gary. *Studying Religion: An Introduction Through Cases*, McGraw Hill, 2007.

- Kurtz, Lester. *Gods in the Global Village: The World's Religions in Sociological Perspective*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge, 1995.
- Lerner, Natan. *Religion, Beliefs, and International Human Rights*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000.
- Lincoln, Bruce. *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Livingston, James. *Anatomy of the Soul: An Introduction to Religion*, Prentice Hall, 2008.
- Mack, Burton. *Christian Myth: Origins, Logic, and Legacy*. London: Continuum, 2001.
- Masuzawa, Tomoko. *The Invention of World Religions, or How the Idea of European Hegemony Came to be Expressed in the Language of Pluralism and Diversity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- McCutcheon, Russell T. *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Mische, Patricia M., and Melissa Merklung, ed. *Toward a Global Civilization?: The Contribution of Religions*. New York: Lang, 2001.
- Morris, Brian. *Anthropological Studies of Religion: An Introductory Text*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Orsi, Robert. *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them*. Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Peterson, Derek, and Darren Walhof, eds. *The Invention of Religion: Rethinking Belief in Politics and History*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001.
- Robertson, Roland, and William R. Garrett, eds. *Religion and the Global Order*. New York: Paragon House, 1991.
- Rodriquez, Hillary and John S. Harding. *Introduction to the Study of Religion*, Routledge, 2008
- Roof, Wade Clark, ed. *World Order and Religion*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991.
- Saler, Benson. *Conceptualizing Religion: Immanent Anthropologists, Transcendent Natives, and Unbounded Categories*. Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1993.
- Smith, Brian K. *Reflections and Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Smith, Jonathan Z. "Classification." In *Guide to the Study of Religion*. Edited by Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon. London: Continuum, 2000.

Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *The Meaning and End of Religion*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1991.

Stenski, Ivan. *Thinking About Religion: An Historical Introduction to Theories of Religion*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2006.

van der Leeuw, Gerardus. *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*. 2 vols. Translated by J. E. Turner. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.

Weber, Max. *The Sociology of Religion*. Introduction by Talcott Parsons and translated by Ephraim Fischhoff. Boston: Beacon Press, 1993.

Wiebe, Donald. *The Politics of Religious Studies*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.

IX. Summary of the Proposed Revisions

- d. Description change to match catalogue
- e. Revision of course objectives
- f. Addition and expansion of other items to the syllabus including attendance policy, assessment resources, supplemental books and an updated bibliography.

X. Rationale for proposed revisions:

- a. Minor changes to match catalogue
- b. The objectives have been updated to meet the requirements for the Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes
- c. These revisions reflect changes in the expectation for a syllabus of record and newer academic resources available since the last version of this syllabus.

XI. Sample Assignment for Liberal Studies Course.

Assignment: News of the week reports through participation in an online forum.

This assignment requires students to read and critically assess current news dealing with religious issues and conflicts and then apply their knowledge of differing religious perspectives and critical methods to the issue at hand.

Sample Forum Question:

The BBC reported last summer -- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10611398> --that the French legislature has voted to outlaw women wearing the Islamic Burka and Niqab (religious veils that cover the body and face) saying such garb is a form of oppression of women. Other types of Islamic veils that do not cover the face are legal. (This article is quite good because it distinguishes and names different kinds of veils) The ban was upheld in September by the French Senate and is now, I believe, law. Please read the article and then comment on the following question:

Do you think that such a law would or should be passed in the USA? Why or why not?

I. Rubric for “News of the Week” Postings

I am looking for responses to questions or issues that are three or four paragraphs long. (Around 500 words.) The basic goal is to encourage you to think and ponder in writing challenging and, perhaps, controversial ideas that come up in the study of religion. There will usually be no “right” or “wrong” answer. Rather I am looking for a thoughtful response that shows you have read the material, considered the issue from different religious perspectives and critical methods and considered possible answers to the questions I ask.

You must respond to the prompts I publish on the forum page. I will not grade forum posts that are not responses to the questions I pose.

90% -100%

Response shows the student has read and fully understood the assigned readings. The response addresses the question fully. The response is critical, thoughtful and considers different possibilities in addressing the issue. The response is also creative, interesting, and possibly controversial enough to challenge other responses.

80%-90%

The response shows the student has read and thought about the assigned readings. The response is critical and thoughtful, with some creative and possibly controversial ideas. The response addresses the assigned question to a large degree.

70%-80% .

The response shows the student has read the assignment and thought about some aspect of the issues presented. The response makes a few good points but may lack controversy.

65%-70%

The response shows the student has read the assignment and understood some of the points made. The response addresses at least some of issues but only briefly.

60%-65%

The response shows the student has read the assignment but needs to reread for better understanding. The student does not address the issue or question raised.

XII. RLST 100 Liberal Studies Approval Questions.

1. This is an introductory course that can be taught by any and all members of the Religious Studies Faculty. At least once a year, the full faculty will discuss options and resources to meet the departmental guidelines, and exchange and evaluate instructor syllabi and potential innovations in resources and media.

2. This course will include the perspectives of African-Americans, Native Americans, other racial and ethnic minorities and women. The study of religion by its very nature is inherently multicultural and global. Supplemental readings, such as Sue Bender's *Plain and Simple* dealing with both women's issues and secular clashes with religious life styles in contemporary society, or Victor Turner's *From Ritual to Theatre* that analyzes the both the individual and culture influences of work, play, religious performance and the sacred with examples from American, European, and African societies will emphasize the recognition and appreciation of ethnic and cultural difference.

3. The course includes a requirement for another book in addition to the primary textbook. There are a plethora of possibilities for this requirement including religious autobiographies ranging from Augustine's *Confessions*, to Pascal's *Pense'es*, to Van de Wetering's *The Empty Mirror*, or books that offer secular critiques of religious perspectives such as Freud's *The Future of an Illusion*.

4. This is an introductory course in religious studies intended for a general audience with little or no formal knowledge of religion. Given the general lack of instruction in public schools about religion and the unfortunate mass of misinformation in the media and general public, the course has as its primary function a broad introduction to religious issues and scholarship. For this reason, while the course should be helpful for beginning majors, its primary audience is the non-major who wishes to broaden their knowledge of religion in general.

Please describe how you are defining your standards for these objectives and how you will determine they have been met by students.

As class size grows the opportunities for effective assessment beyond quizzes and exams become more challenging. One way to meet this challenge will be to require students to participate in

experiential learning projects both in small groups and individuals and report their findings to the class as a whole. These projects may include visits to religious sites, observation of religious practices, reports on religious news of the week, interviews of members of religious faiths, and exploration of online resources. The utilization of online forums and peer responses to student work may also be included in the evaluation process. Student reports will be judged on the thoroughness, objectivity and critical skills exhibited in the reports. Actual methods of evaluation will vary from instructor to instructor.