



**Center for International Programs and Sustainability Studies**

**Course name: Major World Religion**

**Course code: THEO 3150**

**Total contact hours: 48**

**Pre-requisites: Presential modality**

### **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.

### **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.

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

**How to promote respect and inclusion for the major World Religions according to their main beliefs and 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.

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.

Among the **values** and **attitudes** that will be promoted among students are the following:

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

### **COMPETENCIES, CRITERIA AND EVIDENCE**

The competencies for the Veritas University are reflexive and integral actions that respond to the professional profile and to the problems of the context, with suitability and ethical

commitment, integrating the know-how, and the knowledge to know in a perspective of improvement.

Competencies	Key competences	Evidence of learning
<b>Discipline</b> Analyzes the characteristics of major World religions to promote their respect and tolerance, considering their differences and main beliefs.	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, according to their main beliefs.	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	Communicate thoughts of the discipline orally, in an iconic way, and in written form.	Class discussion

form in the different disciplines that make up the curriculum.		
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

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Unit I: Introduction**

#### A. Concepts

1. Religion
2. Animism
3. Mythology
4. Polytheism
5. Monotheism
6. Religion Dimensions

#### B. Prehistoric Beliefs

7. Xam San
8. Ainu
9. Sami

10. Baiga
11. Native Australia
12. Quechua
13. Chewing
14. Pawnee
15. Dogon

### C. Ancient and Classic Religions

16. Babylonia
17. Egypt
18. Zoroastrism
19. Confucianism
20. Taoism
21. Greek Religion
22. Roman Religion
23. Shintoism
24. Viking Religion
25. 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 Pillars
- D. The Iman

## **Unit 7: Other Religions**

- A. Santeria
- B. Rastafari
- C. Wicca
- D. Cao Dai
- E. Bahaim
- 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.

## 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 ownership. 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) is provided with the sources, assignment, calendar and grading of the class.

<https://veritascr.instructure.com/profile>

## LEARNING ASSESSMENT

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. and the details will be provided in **CANVAS LMS**. 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
Oral Presentations (15% 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)	30%
Oral Reading Comprehension Report (2 per student)	20%
Major World Religion Catalogue (Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam)	30%
Field Trips (2 reports)	20%
Total	100%

## **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

The following learning strategies will be developed:

### **1. 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.

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 accomplishes it purpose. (main conclusion)

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

Indicator	Excellent	Good	Insufficient
Summary: Determines main purpose and key questions; main ideas and arguments.	4	2.5	1
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
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
Total	10		

## 2. 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.

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.

Description:

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

### 3. 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.

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 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.

#### 4. 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)

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Regarding classes:**

1. Students are only allowed a total of two (2) nonconsecutive (back-to-back) class absences. A student shall fail the course if more than two absences are registered.
2. Three late arrivals to class (within the first 15 minutes) are treated as one absence. Attending class 30 minutes late without an official justification will also count as an absence.
3. In the case of an absence from any assignment evaluated in class (presentations, evaluations, field trips, etc.) a student will be given a grade zero unless an official document is presented within one week of the absence.
4. If a student presents an official document to excuse the absence, the missed assignment is to be presented on that same day.

### **Regarding field trips:**

5. An unjustified absence on a field trip will immediately result in the loss of all points assigned to that specific trip. However, if an official document justifying the absence is presented, 50% of the assignment points may be obtained on presentation of a complementary research assignment, to be agreed upon with the professor, within one week of the field trip.
6. An absence on a field trip may be justified should two course field trips coincide. In such a case, and in order to avoid losing points, students shall be able to opt for carrying out a research assignment.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Professors have the right to expel a student from the classroom should he / she/ they:

1. Be disruptive in the classroom.
2. Behave in a disrespectful way.
3. Be under the influence of alcohol or even smells like alcohol.
4. Be under the influence of any illegal drug.
5. Shows hygiene problems that may disturb other students.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

The use of cell phones, smartphones, 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. Using devices while the professor or other peers are lecturing, or presenting is perceived as a lack of interest and disrespectful.

Those who fail to comply with the rule must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. If situation happens again, 10 points will be deducted from the final participation grade.

### **CIPSS PROGRAM POLICIES**

The student must comply with the provisions of the CIPSS Program Policies available on the Canvas platform.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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**CHRONOGRAM**

Weeks	Sub competency	Contents	Learning strategies
1	Cultivates a critical thinking and comprehension of the religions.	Class Welcome  <b><u>Unit I : Introduction</u></b> A. Concepts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Religion</li> <li>2. Animism</li> <li>3. Mythology</li> <li>4. Polytheism</li> <li>5. Monotheism</li> <li>6. Religion Dimensions</li> </ol>	Course presentation and reading the syllabus. -Organizing group assignments -Assigns reading comprehensions
2		<b><u>Unit I : Introduction</u></b> B. Prehistoric Beliefs <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Xam San</li> <li>2. Ainu</li> <li>3. Sami</li> <li>4. Baiga</li> <li>5. Native Australia</li> <li>6. Quechua</li> <li>7. Chewing</li> <li>8. Pawnee</li> <li>9. Dogon</li> </ol>	-Magisterial class -Topic discussion <u>-Oral Presentation 1</u>



3		<p><u>Unit I: Introduction</u></p> <p>C. Ancient and Classic Religions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Babylonia</li> <li>2. Egypt</li> <li>3. Zoroastrism</li> <li>4. Confucianism</li> <li>5. Taoism</li> <li>6. Greek Religion</li> <li>7. Roman Religion</li> <li>8. Shintoism</li> <li>9. Viking Religion</li> <li>10. Precolombian</li> </ol>	<p>-Magisterial class</p> <p>-Topic discussion</p> <p><u>-Oral</u></p> <p><u>Presentation 2</u></p>
4		<p><u>Unit 2: Hinduism</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. The Vedas</li> <li>B. The Upanishads</li> <li>C. Dharma Shartras</li> <li>D. Bhagavad Guita</li> <li>E. Yoga Sutras</li> <li>F. Bhakti</li> </ol>	<p>-Magisterial class</p> <p>-Topic Discussion</p> <p><u>-Individual</u></p> <p><u>Reading</u></p> <p><u>Comprehension</u></p> <p><u>Presentation</u></p>

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

7		<p><b><u>Unit 4: Judaism</u></b></p> <p>A. The Tora</p> <p>B. The Second Isaias</p> <p>C. Death Sea Scrolls</p> <p>D. Talmud</p>	<p>-Magisterial class</p> <p>-Topic Discussion</p> <p><u>-Individual</u></p> <p><u>Reading</u></p> <p><u>Comprehension</u></p> <p><u>Presentation</u></p>
8		<p><b><u>Unit 5: Christianity</u></b></p> <p>A. Jesus</p> <p>B. First Christians</p> <p>C. Christian Persecution</p> <p>D. Nicea</p> <p>E. Saint Agustin</p> <p>F. Letran</p> <p>G. Saint Thomas</p> <p>H. The Reform</p> <p>I. Protestantism</p>	<p>-Magisterial class</p> <p>-Topic Discussion</p> <p><u>-Individual</u></p> <p><u>Reading</u></p> <p><u>Comprehension</u></p> <p><u>Presentation</u></p>

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

11		<p><b><u>Unit 7: Other Religions</u></b></p> <p>A. Santeria  B. Rastafari  C. Wicca  D. Cao Dai  E. Bahaism  F. Mormones  G. Jehovahs Witnesses  H. Taoism  I. Jainism  J. Shintoism</p>	-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.**