

PURPOSE OF COURSE: The purpose of this course is to examine religious values in Judaism, and Islam through exploration of their history, practices, and values. We will also discuss Christianity in relation to these religions.

Why values?

For one, people live out their values, so the class is as much about religion and ethics as it is about what other people believe or think. As a result, you may gain a new understanding of your own and your neighbor's values. *The goal is application to real life, and better insight into issues of concern to all three religions.*

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. examine how fluidity exists between religion and culture. Religion as something embodied will be a key to understanding this flow. So, the arts will be included in study, as a means of understanding how values are embodied in all of life.
2. use basic analysis techniques of history, theology, scripture, and culture. We may discuss controversial issues by applying these skills.
3. understand the history and background of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, through readings, field work, and research. History is insightful, providing insight into philosophy, values, and practices of these religions. History also aids us in "busting" popular myths about these religions.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS: Instruction will be based on discussion and lecture. So, you need

- *to talk, write, and participate in class. We'll talk about your readings, and your reaction and questions about the material I present.*
- *attend field trips, and when possible, hear from guest speakers. All classes include an experiential learning component, which may range from looking at visual art to meditation.*

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS and LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

For this course, you are expected to:

1. Attend and participate in class discussions. *Group discussion helps re-enforce learning, and builds your small group communication skills.*

2. Complete a weekly journal entry based on your readings. *This activity aids you in becoming familiar with key terms and major issues in the study of Judaism and Islam. You will need to turn it in every week.*

Try to include:

1) A Summary of what you read – a listing of sections is fine.

2) definitions of vocabulary terms - five is usually good.

3) find the author's point/thesis (not a summary of the reading, which is done in 1).

4) add your questions and comments. They can range from “I am totally confused about..., because...” to “I read something completely different, so I'd like to know about.....”.

- It is highly recommended that you **literally quote** parts of your readings for 3 and 4 (you must use quote marks for this) so you actually deal with the material, rather than only past experience.
- A worksheet in your writing guide provides you with an example of what to include.

3. Midterm and Final – Two papers, but the final is based on the midterm.

You will also have a final presentation. It's just fine to keep all of these on the same event.

Paper One: You will Conduct at least one field work exploration event with a 5-7 page report -Refer to writing packet, which we will review in class. This will be your **MIDTERM**. *The midterm aids you in experiential learning, and gaining skills in ethnographic and anthropological study of a religious community.*

You use the MIDTERM to help create your final project, which is:

Paper Two: a paper based on your field work, plus research (@110-15 pp. double-spaced)[not a “research paper” though. All final papers must include a bibliography, and proper citation (inclusive language is also required). Research may involve investigation into an issue of controversy e.g. How was “Israel” presented at a Church Service. However, the issue must be grounded in the reality of an event. *This activity aids you in integrating your personal research and learning with established scholarship in the study of Judaism and Islam.*

Presentation: You will share your finding with the class via a **presentation**, based on your field work and research. *This activity allows you to develop your large group presentation skills.*

All papers should be single-sided, and double-spaced, using Times New Roman 12 point font.

All work should be turned in as **hard copy**, and sometimes by email to cialuna@earthlink.net (.doc format).

EVALUATION: Students will be graded on preparation for class through demonstrated knowledge of readings through contribution to group discussions and worksheets (25%-2pts each), the field research report (15 points) and the final project (20/15 points), plus attendance (15 points).

- *You must turn your work in on time. In exceptional circumstances, you may file for an extension following school policy guideline before the last class.*

Please feel free to contact me about resources, papers, writing assignments, etc. You may reach me at **cialuna@earthlink.net**, or 651/784-6147.

Until announced otherwise, any work emailed to me must be in .doc (older word) format. We will go over how to do this in class, otherwise ask someone (very easy and a good skill to have).

EXTENSIONS: According to School policy, you must complete all course work by the end of the course. Exception is made by the instructor, but written petition for extension must be approved by the instructor by the end of the final class session. Extensions (of course work) beyond the end of the semester will be approved only under extraordinary circumstances such as serious illness, family crisis, change in job hours. An extension may be granted until the end of the following semester.

Required:

Creating Judaism, Michael L Satlow – a bit on the philosophic side, but considers Judaism as “plural” and many-cultured.

Islam: A New Introduction, Daniel Brown, Blackwell Press. Still the best introduction to Islam, written by an author who grew up in Pakistan.

The Meeting of Civilizations: Muslim, Christian, and Jewish or MC, ed. by Moshe Ma’oz – essays from a seminar on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The book roughly matches our course, so we’ll read about one section per month.

Class Reader: on-line sources and articles you need to copy, covering kabbalah, the Sufis, and feminist perspectives.

The articles include but are not limited to:

Section I: Mystic traditions article

1. For the *Zohar*, translated by Daniel Matt

Introduction, by Arthur Green - <http://www.sup.org/zohar/> pdf

Translators Introduction - <http://www.sup.org/zohar/> pdf

Sample Pages from Volume 1 - <http://www.sup.org/zohar/> pdf

2. Weissler, Chava. Meanings of Shekhinah in the "Jewish Renewal" Movement

source: *Nashim*, A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues, No. 10, Fall 2005

(<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/nashim/>)

3. Coleman Barks, *The Essential Rumi*.

Section II: Feminist Studies

1. Carole Meyers, "The Drum Dance Song Ensemble" in *Rediscovering the Muses*, ed. by Kimberly Marshall. Northeast University Press, 1993, pp .49-70.

2. Miriam Peskowitz, "Engendering Jewish History" in *Judaism Since Gender*. Routledge, 1997, pp. 17-39. ISBN # 0-415-91461-2.

3. Isobel Coleman, *Paradise Beneath her Feet* – a recommended book, which will be available in the library. We will read a portion of this book.

Section III: Music and Arts

Ben Brinner, “Beyond Israelis vs. Palestinians or Jews vs. Arabs: The Social Ramifications of Musical Interaction,” *Music and Anthropology*, 8 (2004). online

Recommended basics book:

Religious Foundations of Western Civilization [RFWC], J. Neusner, ed

Living Religions or Living Religions: Western Traditions [LR], Mary Pat Fisher – used copies abound to buy or borrow. I also have several different basic intro. books to loan out.

Also consider the “very short introduction” series by Oxford University Press
Judaism: A Very Short Introduction and *Islam: A Very Short Introduction*.

Other Suggested Books: I thought it more important to provide you with a research list of recommended readings. A starter list is:

Judaism, with Feeling, Rabbi Zalman Schacter Shalomi’s book on the practice of Judaism, with insight for just about anyone with any sort of religious practice.

Living Judaism, Rabbi Wayne Dossick

No God but God, by Raza Aslan- a popular history of Islam that is a good read. Aslan has an MFA in writing, and presents his perspective as a liberal Shi’ite from Iran.
Huston Smith, *The World’s Religions*, a reliable standard.

The Essential Rumi, Coleman Barks’ beautiful renditions of Sufi poetry. It is worth the price for the sheer beauty of the poetry.

Serpent of the Nile, Wendy Buonaventura, A different side of Near and Middle Eastern Culture, looking at the history of belly dance. While the religious scholarship is questionable, the perspective provides great insight into the cultures in which Islam arose.

Playing Across a Divide: Israeli-Palestinian Musical Encounters. Oxford University Press, November, 2009. Written by ethno-musicologist Ben Brinner, a complete study of Israeli-Palestinian issues via musical collaborations.

Lila Ahmed. *Women and Gender in Islam*. Yale University Press, 1992. This is a now classic feminist study on the history of women and gender in the religion.

Fiction:

Judaism

Isaac B. Singer – almost all of his works offer a glimpse of Jewish European folklore.

Michael Chabon, *The Yiddish Policeman’s Union*.

Chaim Potok, *My Name is Asher Lev*. (I wouldn’t recommend *The Chosen*).

Rochelle Krich, The Molly Blume series

Sharon Kahn, Ruby-the-Rabbi's-Wife mysteries (or Faye Kellerman)
Joann Sfar, *The Rabbi's Cat* (a graphic novel)

Islam.

See <http://www.unc.edu/~cernst/novels.htm> for an excellent list of novels from around the world, all dealing with Islam. Highlights include:

Mesa Selimovic, *Death And The Dervish* (author is a contemporary Bosnian novelist).

Naguib Mahfuz , "Zaabalawi," in

The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces, introduced by Roger Allen (Norton, 1992),
2:1961-1965 or *The HarperCollins World Reader* (Harper Collins, 1994), 2:1620-1627.

Rachlin, Nahid. *Veils: Short Stories*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1992.

Field work: There are many wonderful ways to experience World Religions and Cultures in the area, especially relevant arts events. While we will incorporate some fieldwork into class time, you do need to go out and explore on your own. Suggestions for field observation and participation include:

Jewish Renewal Service
Klezmer Band Concerts
Middle Eastern Music and Dance Events
Sufi gatherings

Note: meetup.com is actually a great place to check for some of these events. Many are labeling themselves a meetup group, as they are seeking attendance.

And OF COURSE, visits to Mosques, Synagogues, and Churches. etc. But, do call ahead and see when it is okay to attend events.

Mosques

Islamic Cultural Community Center 2534 Central Ave NE Minneapolis, MN 55418

Columbia Heights Mosque 4056 7th St N Columbia Heights, MN 55421

Islamic Center of Minnesota 1401 Gardena Ave NE Fridley, MN 55432

Islamic Institute of Minnesota | 1460 Skillman Ave E

You may be creative about this, even going to a place like Holy Land Bakery on Central Avenue, and observing what happens, and who walks in to the story.

Holiday events abound for this semester. Consider attending them:

Jewish Holidays: *Rosh HaShanah*, Wednesday-Thursday September 8-9

Yom Kippur, Friday-Saturday, September 17-18

Sukkot, begins September 22

Simchat Torah, Friday night, October 1

Hanukkah, begins December 1

Muslim Holidays

Ramadan begins, Thursday 12 August

Eid-Ul-Fitr, Friday 10 September, **The end of Ramadan.**

Eid-Ul-Adha, Wednesday 17 November, **Festival of Sacrifice marking the day after Arafat.**

The Day of Arafat is the most important day in the Hajj ritual. This is a four day holiday

Al-Hijira, Tuesday 7 December **Islamic New Year.** Marks the migration of the Prophet

Mohammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina

Ashura, Thursday 16 December Islamic holy day observed on the 10th of the Islamic month of

Muharram. Shi'ite Muslims regard it as a major festival marking the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson, Hussein. [from <http://www.godweb.org/IslamCalendar.htm>]

You are welcome to attend all Jewish events with me in the Minneapolis/St. Paul. For more options see [Jewish Minnesota.org](http://JewishMinnesota.org)

FIELD TRIPS –

Our Class will schedule at least 2 field trips for class time. Events do not always fall on class nights, so we can schedule compensation time. For instance, Temple Israel's Simchat Torah is on Wednesday night, September 29 (though it is officially on Thursday night) . This is a great night to visit the synagogue, so we can schedule it for the class, and not meet on Thursday night. For those who can't make this night, you may go to Adath Jeshrun's Simchat Torah celebration, or to Friday night Shabbat services.

Muslim Prayer day is usually Friday. There are a few communities who have study nights on other days, and there is always daily prayer. But, it is much more difficult to find a time to visit a Masjid (mosque) for prayer time. It may be best to find a Masjid near you, but I will try and find a good field trip.

Other Possibilities.

The Dead Sea Scrolls are on display at the Science Museum in St. Paul. It may be possible that we can still arrange a tour. This will be a class decision, and we will probably need to go when there is an opening. This will cost money, but think about it – it's much cheaper than flying to Jerusalem to see the 2000 scrolls.

Minneapolis Institute of Art – A small Muslim and Jewish arts section.

Jewish Community Center - There is a small art Gallery at the Minneapolis location.

Islamic Center of Minnesota – Our neighbor in Fridley, but it is difficult to find out about any scheduled events. See <http://www.islamiccentermn.org/>;

Muslim Class <http://www.mnia.org/MNEvents>

Semester Calendar

Monday, September 13	Day and Evening Classes Begin
Thursday, September 16	First Class
October 25-29	Reading Week
Thanksgiving Break	NO CLASS November 25

December 13-17 Last Week of Classes

Last Class for us is December 16th. We will not meet for class on Tuesday, December 21 unless absolutely necessary.

Calendar

September: *Judaism Focus*

October: *Islam Focus*

November: *Mystic/Feminist Perspectives*

December: *Art in Islam/Judaism*

September

Sept 16: General Background – *Judaism and Islam: Defining the Traditions*

Presentation and Discussion: Why this course? What methods?

History, Culture, and Community as the container, considering:

- Culture/Civilization creating a system of values
- Ritual establishing metaphors of belief (theology) in motion and story/scripture
- History and Ethics

Experiential learning: How may we compare? A view of field study for examining history and culture via video viewing and analysis.

In class readings: Judaism/Islam and Christianity, in MC, Introduction, pp.1-12, reading first and last page to find the thesis, then **ONE** paragraph in depth.

What did you find? Why study these three religions in comparison? What are basic issues?

We will talk about this in class, completing your first journal entry in the process.

Sept. 23: Judaism 101 – The History of Judaism: The Bible and the Rabbis

Read: Satlow, Intro. chapters 1-2; MC chapters 1-2 Also helpful, *Living Religions*, chapter on Judaism.

Presentation and Discussion: The formation of rabbinic Judaism, The Talmud, and Temple

Experiential Learning: Reading the Talmud

JOURNALS DUE!

Sept. 30 (October 1): Judaism: Ritual - field trip – Simchat Torah (Wednesday night/Thursday Morning)

Read Satlow, chapters 6 (10), MC chapters 3-4, to prepare for the field trip.

Presentation and Discussion and Experiential learning: Field Trip experience - You may choose an alternative, but this is an excellent opportunity to begin your fieldwork.

Note: Arthur Green, a major American writer on Kabbalah will be at Temple Israel for Friday night and Saturday morning services, and also for study on Saturday and Sunday. This is worth going to. Free and open to the public, but Saturday lunch requires reservations and a small fee).

October 7: Judaism In Practice – Culture and Life

Read Satlow, chapters 4,5,(8), MC chapters 3-4.; helpful, *Judaism, with Feeling*

Presentation and Discussion: “According the Custom of the land?”

We’ll look at the Jewish community of medieval Spain, as an example of how Judaism could be in a “foreign culture” while maintaining essential values.

Experiential learning: The “Miriam Tradition”: The Rabbis and Culture in the Jewish Experience – Responsa Literature and Life.

Journals Due!

October 14 Islam 101: The Beginnings and Growth of Islam, and Texts

Read: Brown, chapters 6, then 5 and 7; MC chapters 5-6.

Also helpful, *Living Religions*, chapter on Islam.

Presentation and Discussion: What is Islam? – the Qur’an and Culture

Experiential Learning: Video on Islam

October 21: Muslim Life and Culture: Drinking Coffee, Dancing, and other Ethical Matters

Read: Brown, chapters 9-11; skim 3,4; MC chapters 7-8

Presentation, Discussion: We will discuss this when we meet again

Experiential Learning: Video, part 2 ; discuss visiting a Masjid (Mosque) over break.

Journals Due!

October 25-29:Reading Week
Field Research Report Due!

November 4 Islam, Ritual, and Art – Time for Field Trip, or Take one over the Break

Reading: Brown, chapters 9-11, reviewing the sections on ritual; Articles on Recitation of the Qur'an. Catch up on MC readings.

Presentation, Discussion and Experiential Learning: Virtual or Actual Masjid visit.

November: Other Perspectives

For this month, you choose which articles to focus on, and also which articles on MC part III which concentrates on education. The MC articles will offer a contrast between what we teach as a religion, what we learn of mystic and feminist views of Judaism and Islam.

Nov. 11: Mystic Perspectives

For this class, you will choose to specialize on other Judaism or Islam. Try and review all readings, but focus closely on ONE tradition.

Read: Check the links to The Zohar, on line, and the Weissler article. Read them, or copy and read them.; Satlow, chapter 9; MC 10

OR

Read: Reader articles on Sufi poetry, Brown, chapter on Sufis, MC 9

Presentation and Discussion: When and why did this develop?

Experiential Learning: Jewish Meditation or Sufi video

Journals Due!

November 18th Field Trip Day ? The Minneapolis Institute of Art is open this night, and does offer a small display of Islamic and Judaic art. We can also check on other possibilities, such as a Sufi event, music/dance presentation.

December 2: Feminist Views

For this class, you will choose to specialize on either Judaism or Islam. Try and review all readings, but focus closely on ONE tradition.

Read: Reader articles on Muslim women; MC 11 or 12

OR

Read- Jewish feminist articles in Reader; helpful, Satlow, chapters 7, 10; MC 11 or 12

Presentation and Discussion: What the Wives of the Prophet teach us about Women the Near/Middle East, then and now.

Experiential Learning: Rosh Hodesh Ritual

Journals Due!

Dec. 9: Music, Politics, and Current Culture ; Student Presentation

Read: Brinner article, MC 13 or 15; optional, MC 14, 16

Presentation and Discussion: Current issues in Judaism and Islam

Experiential Learning: Student presentations/preparations

Dec. 16: Review and Student Presentations

We'll discuss what you learned, and what questions you now have. You will also present your projects to the class. An oral report is fine, but you are encouraged to be creative.

Everything is due Today! Aim for completing your paper on December 9th!

