

SHAW UNIVERSITY
Divinity School
CGC 510-01 – Comparative Religion (3 credit hours)
Spring 2009

Professor: Dr. Lafayette Maxwell 489-7016 or 656-9067 (cell) e-mail address: lmaxwell@nc.rr.com
 1800 Williamsburg Rd. #19F
 Durham, NC 27707
 Leo. 301 Sat 7:30-10:00am
 Office: 204 Leonard Hall- Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:00pm-2:30pm

Mission of M.Div. and M.R.E. Degrees

The mission of the Master of Divinity Degree is to prepare persons for ordained ministry, for chaplaincy, general pastoral and religious leadership responsibilities in congregations and other settings, and to prepare some students for admission to advanced programs oriented to theological research and teaching. The purpose is consistent with the mission of Shaw University Divinity School; the Master of Divinity program focuses on leadership in the “practice of ministry,” particularly in the African American church.

The mission of the Master of Religious Education Degree is to equip persons for competent leadership in Christian Education to serve congregational ministries and other religious institutions. This purpose is consistent with the mission of Shaw University Divinity School; the Master of Religious Education Program focuses on leadership in the “practice of ministry,” particularly in the African American church.

Program Goals for M.Div. and M.R.E. Degrees

The Program Goals for the Master of Divinity Degree Program are to:

1. Provide students with an intellectual atmosphere and a comprehensive, discriminating understanding of our religious heritage;
2. Enhance student training for Christian ministry, mindful of global, and diverse cross cultural, and non-American Christianities, and interaction with other faith traditions;
3. Support students' development in the personal and spiritual capacities necessary for pastoral and religious leadership, advancing growth in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness
4. Expand programmatic activities, services, and academic programming to enhance student capacity for ministerial and public leadership

The Program Goals for the Master of Religious Education Degree Program are to:

1. Equip students with the capacity for critical and constructive theological reflection regarding the content and processes of educational ministry;
2. Help students understand the educational, social, and behavioral sciences that undergird educational practice, as well as the cultural contexts in which educational ministry occurs;
3. Assist students with personal growth and spiritual maturity; and
4. Provide skills in teaching and in design, administration, and assessment of educational programming.

Program Learning Outcomes

MRE Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	MDiv Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to articulate an understanding of the scriptural, historical, and theological traditions of particular Christian traditions and of the broader community of faith 2. Graduates will evaluate teaching and learning theories for the purpose of developing a distinctly Christian philosophy of educating God’s people; 3. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity for critical reflection on how their 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to articulate an understanding of the scriptural, historical, and theological traditions of particular Christian traditions and of the broader community of faith 2. Graduates will develop a consciousness about and a capacity to reflect critically on issues of diversity, globalization, and cross cultural concerns; 3. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity for critical reflection on how their unique personalities, backgrounds, and gifts and

MRE Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	MDiv Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
<p>unique personalities, backgrounds, and gifts and abilities relate to the ministry of Christian education;</p> <p>4. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to design and to carry out a lesson plan necessary for effective educational ministries</p>	<p>abilities relate to the role of the minister as leader, guide, and servant of the faith community;</p> <p>4. Graduates will demonstrate a capacity to create programs and have a critical voice in ministerial and public leadership</p>

Course Description:

This course is a comparative and comprehensive study of the major religions of the world. This course will discuss how these major religions are practiced in their historical and contemporary cultural context. We will examine each group’s religious faith, leadership, structure, ideologies, theology, and general life style. Through the use of lectures, discussions, assigned readings, and occasional audio-visual presentations, guest lecturers, we will gain a greater understanding of these major religious beliefs. In addition, we will look at the role of women, third-world, and cults/sects have on the climate of these major religions in general.

Student Learning Outcomes(SLO)- At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1.) Discuss the origin, leading personalities, and examine the holy book(s) of the major religions covered in this course, and analyze the tenets, rituals, worship, ethics, and life styles of these religions.
- 2.) Identify the diverse traditions of these religions to help them to better understand these religious groups and individuals when they encounter them in their everyday walk of life.
- 3.) Analyze the methodology, contexts, and the theological interpretations of the basic teachings, practices, vocabulary of the Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist, Christian and Islamic traditions.
- 4.) Engage in theological and ethical reflections on the role of cults and sects in the religious traditions of the world.

Student Learning Outcomes include the following:

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) At the completion of this course, students will be able to:	Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (Assessment Tools)	Linkage to MDiv Program Learning Outcomes <i>(PLO statement number(s) that correspond to or support the SLO)</i>	Linkage to MRE Program Learning Outcomes <i>(PLO statement number(s) that correspond to or support the SLO)</i>
1. Discuss the origin, leading personalities, and examine the holy book(s) of the major religions covered in this course, and analyze the tenets, rituals, worship, ethics, and life styles of these religions.	Exam Questions, Research Paper Group Presentations	1,2	1,3

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) At the completion of this course, students will be able to:	Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (Assessment Tools)	Linkage to MDiv Program Learning Outcomes <i>(PLO statement number(s) that correspond to or support the SLO)</i>	Linkage to MRE Program Learning Outcomes <i>(PLO statement number(s) that correspond to or support the SLO)</i>
2. Identify the diverse traditions of these religions to help them to better understand these religious groups and individuals when they encounter them in their everyday walk of life.	Exam Questions, Research Paper Class discussion	1,2,	1,2,3
3. Analyze the methodology, contexts, and the theological interpretations of the basic teachings, practices, vocabulary of the Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist, Christian and Islamic traditions.	Exam Questions, Reflection Papers	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4
4. Engage in theological and ethical reflections on the role of cults and sects in the religious traditions of the world.	Exam Questions, Class discussion	1,2,3,	1,3

The student will engage in research, critical thinking, and dialogue so that they will:

1. Appreciate and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of these comparative religions.
2. Understand the relationship between religion, culture, and the varieties of religious experiences.
3. Construct their own historical, contemporary and theological analysis of the Christian faith with other religions of the world.
4. Distinguish the role religion plays in the individual's life and in his/her society in which they live.

Use of Technology:

All students in this course are required to have regular access to email and to the internet. The Shaw Blackboard site (<http://shawu.blackboard.com>) will be heavily used in this class. All course handouts (including readings, guidelines for completing assignments, and grading rubrics) will be made available

via Blackboard. Students will also submit assignments and receive feedback using Blackboard's Digital Dropbox.

Email will be the instructor's primary mode of contacting students outside of class hours. Thus, all students must set up their email address on Blackboard. Directions for doing so are below:

1. Go to <http://shawu.blackboard.com>.
2. On the **Tools** menu on the left side of the screen, click **Personal Information**.
3. Select **Edit Personal Information**.
4. Under section 1, enter your email address.
5. Click **Submit**.
6. Click **OK**.

We will be using the following sections of Blackboard for this course:

- **Course Information:** Contains an electronic copy of the syllabus and all rubrics used to evaluate assignments for this course. Any updates to the syllabus will be made available here.
- **Course Documents:** Contains electronic versions of articles and chapters that are not in required texts (generally in PDF or HTML format). You will need to download the free Adobe Reader to access these forms (<http://www.adobe.com>).
- **Discussion Board:** Forums for your weekly postings are here.
- **Communication:** Allows you to send email to the class.
- **Tools:** Provides access to the Digital Drop Box, which you will use to submit your weekly reflection papers and other assignments.

Follow the instructions below to submit assignments via the Digital Drop Box:

1. Once you are in the course site, click the **Tools** tab on the left.
2. Select **Digital Dropbox**.
3. Select **Send File**.
4. In the **Name** box, enter *LastnameFirstname_Assignmentname*. (For example, if your name is Jane Smith and you're submitting the case study, enter SmithJane_casestudy).
5. Click the **Browse** button beside the **File** box.
6. Locate and select the file on your computer. Click **Open**.
7. Click **Submit**.

Academic Integrity:

Students in this course are expected to abide by the Shaw University Code of Conduct. The university policy on plagiarism will apply to all assignments given in this course (see Student Handbook). Plagiarism involves the intentional or unintentional representation of another person's words and/or ideas as one's own. Students are expected to cite all materials, including scriptural references, using the formats described in Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

If you need help determining whether to cite, see the guide on avoiding plagiarism at <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/index.html>

Textbook:

Young, William A., Morality The World Religions: A world view and contemporary issues

Recommended Reading:

Kimball, Charles, When Religion Becomes Evil.

Braswell, George W., Jr., Understanding World Religion.

Ford, David, The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Theology Since 1918, 3rd edition (University of Cambridge).

Hoppe, Lewis M. Jr., Religions of the World.

Turabian, Katie, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 6th edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Grading Scale

The following point system will be used for all assignments:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

A plus or minus grade (e.g., B+ or C-) is used to indicate proximity to the particular grade. At the end, all minuses and pluses will be rounded to the point that best reflects the student's progress in the course.

No grades are "given" in this course. Each student earns her/his grade.

I A student receives an "I" *only* when extraordinary circumstances (extended illness, death in the family, etc.) prevent the student from completing all the assignments before the end of the semester.

All written assignments need to conform to the guidelines in the Divinity School's "Guidelines for Written Assignments," available in the Divinity School Office. The following criteria will be used in evaluating all written assignments.

A Indicates the student has *significantly* exceeded the minimum expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted the relevant scholars and has consistently entered into dialogue with these scholars, offering his/her critique of the relevant sources. All the required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is consistently above average, with no errors in spelling or grammar.

B Indicates the student has *exceeded the minimum* expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted relevant scholars and has entered into dialogue with most of them, offering his/her critique of the sources. All the required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is above average, with no errors in spelling or grammar.

C Indicates the student has *met the minimum* expectations for the assignment. The student has consulted relevant scholars and has represented their views well, at least occasionally offering a critique of the sources. The required parts of the assignment are present, and the written presentation is acceptable, with minimal errors in spelling or grammar.

D Indicates the student *has not met the minimum* expectations for the assignment in one or more of the following ways: significant critical scholarship is not consulted; significant segments of the assignment are missing or inadequate; or the written presentation is inadequate in grammar, spelling, or format.

F Indicates the work is not acceptable for graduate-level study.

Student Classroom Decorum Expectations

To enhance student learning and an engaging classroom atmosphere, students are expected to dress and behave in a manner conducive to classroom learning. More specifically, students will avoid disruptive classroom behavior (**i. e., talking to classmates, disrespectful responses to teacher instructions; swearing; wearing clothes that impede academic learning such as but not limited to wearing body-revealing clothing and excessively baggy pants; hats/caps, and/or headdress**). Students will turn off telephones prior to entering the classroom. Students who exhibit the behaviors described above, or similar behaviors will be immediately dismissed from class at the third documented offense. The student will be readmitted to class only following a decision by the Divinity School Dean. The student may appeal the decision of the Dean to the Vice President of Academic

Affairs, and then to the President of Shaw University. The decision of the President will be final. Failure to follow these procedures will result in termination of the appeal, and revert to the decision of the Department Chair.

Course Requirements:

- 15% Write a narrative about your faith and life experiences
- 15% The study of an assigned religious faith (group project)
- 10% Visit to a temple, shrine, synagogue, mosque, etc.; write on your experience (group)
- 15% Book report, reflection papers
- 20% Mid-term exam
- 30% Final exam
- 100%

1. **Tests and Final Examination:** Two written examinations will be given during the semester covering material from the text, lectures, group presentations and other readings.

If a student fails to take an exam as scheduled, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor immediately. In order to qualify for a make up exam, the student must provide the instructor with documentation from Student Affairs, a medical professional, or an entity approved by Student Affairs. This is the only way a student will be allowed to take a make-up exam. There will be no exceptions. If the student cannot provide documentation, they will not be allowed to take the makeup exam and a zero will be given for the exam.

2. **Reflection Papers/ Book Reports:** Each student will submit two reflection papers. Topics for the papers will be assigned during the semester and are included in the syllabi. The reflection papers will be two full pages in length, will be typewritten and double-spaced. The papers will reflect your critical thinking and examination of assigned topics. Each student is expected to apply their writing skills to prepare his or her paper. Your grade will, in part, be determined by your treatment of the topic, your original, critical thinking, and your use of proper grammar and punctuation.

Subject Content Rubric

ATTRIBUTE	EMERGING	COMPETENT	EXEMPLARY
INVESTIGATE & RESEARCH	Little inquiry. Limited knowledge shown.	Explores topic with curiosity. Adequate knowledge from variety of sources displayed.	Knowledge base displays scope, thoroughness, and quality.
ANALYZE & EXAMINE	Separates into few parts. Detects few connections or patterns.	Sifts and organizes information. Detects patterns. Connects information to explain the topic.	Prospects for patterns and connections. Uses plans or models to explain the nature of the whole topic.
CONSTRUCT & SYNTHESIZE	Applies little information. Combines few facts or ideas. Needs more development.	Assembles and combines new knowledge to form a coherent whole.	Combines facts and ideas to create new knowledge that is comprehensive and significant.
REFLECT & INTERPRET	Conceives few ideas. Draws few inferences. The meaning of the topic is vague.	Uses perspectives and insights to explain relationships. Reflects real life.	Point of view reveals meaning of topic with insight into its significance. Applies to real life.

3. **Group Reports.** There will be four group reports on the major religions discussed in the class.

Group Discussion Rubric

ATTRIBUTE	EMERGING	COMPETENT	EXEMPLARY
LISTENING	Recognizes and responds to others speaking.	Uses and practices listening processes regularly.	Habitually uses listening processes.
NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION Eye contact, gestures, posture, facial expression, voice.	Comprehends some information from non-verbal cues.	Draws accurate conclusions from body language and facial expressions.	Able to recognize and use subtle non-verbal communication cues.
CO-OPERATION	Sometimes shows ability to wait to give appropriate verbal / non-verbal responses.	Usually shows ability to wait to give appropriate verbal / non-verbal responses.	Habitually shows ability to wait with openness and awareness to give appropriate verbal / non-verbal responses.
PARTICIPATION Tells thoughts, feelings, ideas so others understand.	Rarely talks during the discussion or talk is off the subject. Offers few ideas to the discussion.	Shares freely and explains with details. Makes connections to what others say.	Talk inspires others. Supports and leads others in discussion.

4. **Class Attendance:** The attendance policy printed in the Shaw University Undergraduate Catalogue will be enforced. When a student is unable to attend class, it is the student's responsibility to call the professor in advance, whenever possible. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the notes, handouts, or other material for the missed class. Students remain responsible for all assignments due during the missed class. An absence does not excuse the student from any work or due dates.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class and students not present at that time will be marked absent. Students who come in late are required to inform the instructor immediately following that class period in order to be counted late rather than absent. Once in attendance, students should not leave class without the instructor's permission.

Class attendance is mandated for all Shaw University students. Students are responsible for attending class on time and adhering to the University's Class Attendance Policy. The Attendance Policy is printed in the Shaw University Undergraduate Catalogue and shall be enforced. Each student is allowed as many unexcused absences per semester as the class meets per week.

Time Class Meets Per Week	Unexcused Absences Allowed
3	3
2	2
1	1

Students who do not exceed the allowable number of absences will receive five points as part of the total points for the final course grade.

After the allowed number of unexcused absences has been used, students will receive points as part of the final course grade according to the following table for unexcused absences greater than the allowed absences

Number Greater Than Excused Absences	Points Earned
1	4
2	3
3	2
4	1
5 or more	0

Instructor's Expectations

1. Each student is expected to come to class prepared to discuss class assignments.
2. Due to considerations of fairness, no exam make-ups will be given or late assignment accepted except in cases of documented emergency or when pre-arranged with the instructor for appropriate reasons.
3. Students are expected to follow university policies as put forth in the institution's student code of responsibilities and conduct.
4. Have proper decorum in class. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Each student's right to learn, question, and communicated must be respected by all students.
5. Phones and peppers must be muted during class. Use of such devices during class is prohibited.

Class Participation: Course enrollment indicates students' active participation in a positive manner in the learning process. Participation includes: demonstrating critical thinking, active learning, development and use of listening and speaking skills needed for career success, and the ability to engage a discipline's conversation. Such participation includes asking questions, active listening, seeking out and valuing the opinion of others, and showing respect for peers and the instructor. Participation includes evidence that the student prepares for class by reading the assigned material prior to class and by contributing to class discussions, and asking questions about the readings and lectures. Students will be assigned participation points primarily based on the Student Participation Rubric below:

Student Participation Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary 5	Outstanding 4	Satisfactory 3	Adequate 2	Unsatisfactory 1
Interaction/ participation in classroom learning activities	Demonstrates critical thinking skills, evidence that student read assigned material, asks focused and appropriate questions, always interacts, responds regularly to questions; freely volunteers opinions, initiates appropriate questions, does not dominate discussion	Demonstrates beginning critical thinking skills, some evidence that student read assigned material, often interacts in class; responds often to questions, often volunteers opinions, contributions less developed and focused contributions	Occasionally, demonstrates critical thinking skills, occasionally interacts and responds to questions when prompted, contributions not as clearly focused, contributions lack focus, rambling, or tangential, questions sometimes digressive	Rarely demonstrates critical thinking skills, rarely participates or volunteers point-of-view, provides minimal answers when called upon, does show interest in class and discussion, some evidence that material was read	Does not participate or respond to questions; almost never volunteers to contribute or provide information, little or no evidence that read assigned material or completed assignments, may be disruptive to class
Engagement in the electronic/ email learning forum	Demonstrates competency in using electronic/email, including Blackboard learning forum assignment. Completes all tasks for every assignment within allotted time, provides complete written comments related to assignments or tasks, follows directions accurately of assignment or task	Follows directions with minimal difficulty, most of time no difficulty accessing and using electronic learning forum	Misses no more than two assignments, minimal difficulty accessing and using electronic learning forums	Misses more than two assignments. Some difficulty accessing and using electronic learning forums	Never logs onto Blackboard or check email, assignments not completed, no demonstrated competency in using electronic learning forum
Professional attitude and demeanor	No disruptive classroom behavior, no cell phones or electronic devices during class, respectful and courteous to others, recognizes and respects other students' points-of-view, alert in	Rarely disruptive and disrespectful on rare occasions, alert in the classroom on most occasions, enthusiastic most of the time, no cell phones or electronic devices	Minimally disruptive and disrespectful, sometimes lethargic in the classroom	Disruptive and disrespectful, rarely enthusiastic	Not respectful and courteous, alert or enthusiastic in the classroom

	classroom, enthusiastic for work				
Punctuality	0-2 times tardy	3-4 times tardy	5-6 times tardy	7-8 times tardy	9-10 times tardy

Class Schedules

Class Date	Student Learning Outcomes <i>[list the SLO numbers (s)]</i> M.R.E	Student Learning Outcomes <i>[list the SLO numbers (s)]</i> M.DIV	Course Content or Unit	Readings	Mode of Instructional Delivery	Related Assignment	Resources	Assessment Tool <i>(instrument used to determine the achievement of the stated SLO)</i>
Week 1 Jan 17	1,3	1,2	Introduction: so what's the difference?	So What's the Difference Pgs. 1-168	Lecture Discussion	Library Assignment	The Baptist Faith Message pgs 1-152	Exam Questions
Jan 19			MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY					
Week 2 Jan 24	1,3	1,2	History of The Christian Faith: what we believe about God, the Devil, the Holly Spirit, the Bible Humankind (Sin/Salvation), the Church, the Community, and other people of Faith Report	Hand Out developed by Professor	Lecture and Class participation	History of Christianity Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	The Bible OT/NT References on the subject matter www.baptiststart.com/doctrin.htm	Write a Narrative about your experiences, faith and life
Week 3 Jan 31	1	1	Cults and Sects	Hand Out developed by Professor Father Divine pgs 1-367 Jehovah's Witness Answered Verse By Verse pgs.1-129	Lecture on a particular cult & sect. Class Reports	Kingdom of the cults Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Web sites and Library Research www.namb.net www.4truth.4truth.net	Class Participation
Week 4 Feb 7	2	2	Lecture/Discussion/Presentations: Catholicism: Its History, Doctrines, and Practices 9 –	Morality The World Religion Catholicism section	Lecture and Class Participation	Web Sites Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Hopre, Lewis M. Jr. – Religions of the World	Class Participation
Week 5 Feb 14	1	1	Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Jews/Arab conflict: The History, Religious Philosophy, Life Style, Religious Book, Doctrine	Braswell, George W., Jr., Understanding World Religion When religion Becomes Evil Pgs126-213	Lecture Discussion	Morality The World Religion Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Web Sites Research www.arab.net/palrstine/pe-jewisharab.htm www.mideasweb.org/briefhistory.htm	Class Participation
Week 6 Feb 21	4	4	Lecture: When Religion is Evil	Kimball, Charles, When Religion Becomes Evil Pgs. 1-125	Lecture Discussion	Hand Out Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Web Sites Research www.namb.net	Reflection Paper
Week 7 Feb 28	3	2	Library Research Day: Catholicism/Cults & Sects –	Morality The World Religion Catholicism section	Video Presentation	Visit a Christian Church Review	Web Sites Research www.saintaquin.com/th	Reflection paper Presentation (write on your experience) and provide a church

						previous discussions, group and class presentations	eology.html	program/bulletin
Week 8 Mar 7	2	2	Mid Term Exam: The History of Christianity, Catholicism, Sects & Cults -	N/A	EXAM	N/A	N/A	EXAM
Week 9 Mar 14	1	2	Jews/Arab Report: Presentation/Guest Lecturer	Lecturer will bring handouts and website information	Guest Lecturer	Http: www.jewis hvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/myths/mf15.html - 46k Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Web Sites Visit a Jewish Synagogue http://jbuff.com/synagogue_e_pictures.htm	Reflection paper Presentation (write on your experience) and provide a church program/bulletin
Week 10 Mar 21								
Week 11 Mar 28	3	2	Islam	Islam Section Primary Text Book.	Group Project	http://www.saudinf.com/main/b6.htm - 10k Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Web Sites Visit a Islamic Masque www.islamworld.net www.islam.com	Reflection paper Presentation (write on your experience) and provide a church program/bulletin
Week 12 April 4	1	1	Hinduism: take-home exam	Hinduism Section. Primary Text Book	Group Project	http://www.religioustolerance.org/hinduism.htm - 70k Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Web Sites Visit a Hinduism Temple www.religio usfacts.com/hinduism/index.htm	Reflection paper Presentation (write on your experience) and provide a church program/bulletin
April 10- April 19			Easter and Spring Break					

Week 13 April 25	1		Buddhism 1	Buddhism Section Primary Text Book	Group Project	http: www.buddhawebo.org/ - 8k Review previous discussions, group and class presentations	Web Sites Visit a Buddhism Temple www.brainquote.com/quotes/authors/b/buddha.html	Reflection paper Presentation (write on your experience) and provide a church program/bulletin
Week 14 May 2	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4		N/A	EXAM	N/A	N/A	EXAM-EXIT INTERVIEW
Week 15 May 4-7			Final Exam: Buddhism and Islam					
Week 16 May 8			Last Day of Class					