

Point Loma Nazarene University
School of Theology & Christian Ministry
Spring 2019

Point Loma Nazarene University Mission:

To Teach - To Shape - To Send
Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education
in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is
modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith.
Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community
where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

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*“The world’s religious history is a matter of the life of human beings –
with the abstractions that we concoct derivative and at best secondary.”*
Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *What is Scripture?*

Course: Theology 320. The World’s Faith Traditions.
M-W, 1:45 – 3 p.m., Wesleyan Center seminar room.

Professor: Dr. Michael Lodahl. Office – Smee 206
Office phone 849-2331, cell (858) 405-3184.

Texts: Heschel, Abraham. *The Sabbath*
Kupperman, Joel. *Classic Asian Philosophy: A Guide to its Essential Texts*, 2nd ed.
Smith, Huston. *The World’s Religions: 50th Anniversary Edition*
Mair, Victor, translator. *Tao Te Ching*
Stoler Miller, Barbara, translator. *The Bhagavad-Gita*

Catalogue

Description: This course introduces students to the convictions, writings, and practices of people in the Abrahamic (Jewish, Islamic, Sikh) and Asian (Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian) traditions from a Wesleyan theological perspective.

Objective: To introduce students to the major religious traditions, as determined by numbers of practicing adherents, in the world today. We will accomplish this through careful study of holy texts, convictions, practices and institutions of the adherents of these traditions, as well as by onsite visits to local worship and/or meditation gatherings.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to

- identify the major religious, philosophical or theological themes in the dominant expressions of the great world religious traditions named above (under 'Catalogue Description');
- describe the historical developments, key thinkers and streams of influence that have contributed to each of the above traditions;
- describe and evaluate the variety of interpretations that each of these traditions has offered of one another; and
- describe and analyze the leading Christian theological interpretations of other world religious traditions, including and especially those named above.

Course Requirements:

- 1) Consistent class / field trip attendance and participation. *You will receive 5 attendance/participation points for each session attended; after four absences, you are eligible for dismissal from the course.*
- 2) Careful and disciplined reading of assigned texts for each class session. This will be determined by the quality of interaction / discussion which you are able to contribute to the life of the class, and by any unannounced quizzes.
- 3) Three field trips to local sites of corporate worship, meditation, or religious practice. Of these three, at least one must be to a synagogue or mosque and at least one must be to an 'Asian' religious gathering / site. At least three such visits will be scheduled by the professor as potential class "field trips," but apart from those the student will be on her or his own to locate and attend such sites. If done apart from the class visits, please secure approval from the professor beforehand.
- 4) Reflection / response papers (3-4 pages typewritten) on all field trips. *These will be due within ten days of the visit.* No papers will be accepted after this span of time.
- 5) A research and reflection paper (10-12 pages typewritten) in which the student will attempt to theorize on the relationship between Christianity (or any one specific conviction or practice) and another of the religious traditions addressed in this class. Or the paper may instead address some practice or teaching from one religious tradition in relationship with another (non-Christian) tradition. In either case, the paper should reflect student awareness of the major Christian theological interpretations of other religious traditions. The paper's text and bibliography must show evidence of outside research from at least five resources and a minimum of 300 pages of reading from those sources. *This paper is due at classtime, April 25. Papers turned in later than that time will be penalized 7% for every day (or part of a day) that they are late.*
- 6) Two exams, to be taken as scheduled on course calendar.

Course Grade: Will be determined on the basis of the scheduled exams (18% each), the research/reflection paper (16%), field trip visits and response papers (12% each), and class attendance / participation, including quizzes and film notes (12%).

On Attendance

Each class day attendance is worth 5 quiz points; quizzes will vary in point total, roughly anywhere between another 5 and 15 points on any given day. Extra-credit points are added to the attendance / participation / quizzes category.

On Punctuality

On any writing assignment, if it is handed in later in the day than at classtime of the due date, it will receive a 5 point reduction (out of a scale of 100). For each day the paper is late thereafter, it will receive another 7 point reduction.

On Writing:

I cannot emphasize enough that grammar, spelling and punctuation all play a *highly* critical role in my evaluation of all your papers – and that you are *strongly encouraged* to solicit the benefits of at least one competent proofreader for your assigned papers.

Additionally, the School of Theology and Christian Ministry at PLNU is committed to the equality of women and men, including in the exercise of the gifts and graces of ministry in local church congregations. Recognizing that people have often used language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the SOTCM urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and in written work.

Other Matters:

PLNU Copyright Policy:

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy:

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic *dishonesty* is the act of presenting information, ideas, or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's efforts. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy:

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy:

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (please note that in summer school, this means two days' worth of classes!), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (our four day's worth of classes), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

Semester Academic Work Policy:

Please note that when the semester ends, so do all opportunities to work to improve your grade. No last-minute or after-the-fact appeals for extra credit will be even briefly considered.

All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should discuss options with the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of class. The ASC will contact professors with suggested classroom needs and accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the start of the semester.

Course Calendar:

Jan 8 – Introduction to the course and of ourselves; loving the ‘religious stranger’

Unit I: Asian Religious Traditions

Hinduism

9 – Kupperman, 3-22; Smith, 26-36

14 – Smith, 12-26, 37-81

16 – Kupperman, 43-59; *Bhagavad-Gita*, 21-47

(E.C. possibility: “Knowledge is the Beginning,” All Souls Episcopal, 7 p.m.)

**20 – Potential field trip visit to Krishna Consciousness Temple in P.B., 5 p.m.*

21 – B-G, 49-109

23 – B-G, 111-154

Buddhism

28 – Smith, 82-119 (and the Buddha’s first address)

30 – Smith, 119-153

(E.C. possibility: Ramallah concert, All Souls Episcopal, 7 p.m.)

Feb **3 – Potential field trip visit to Buddhist Temple on Market Street, 10 a.m.*

4 – Kupperman, 23-43; reading on Buddhist nothingness.

Confucianism

6 – Smith, 154-183

11 – Brian Bantum 1:30 – 2:20, Crill Auditorium; class will meet 2:30 – 3 p.m.
13 – Smith, 183-195; Kupperman, 76-112

Taoism

18 – Smith, 196-220; Kupperman, 113-132
20 – *Tao Te Ching*, Preface (xvii-xxii), Afterword (119-148)

***Potential field trip possibility to Taoist Center during this week.**

25 – *Tao Te Ching*, 59-105
27 – *Tao Te Ching*, 3-55

March 4 – 8 spring break

Developments in Taoism and Buddhism

11 – Kupperman, 133-179
13 – Kupperman, cont'd. Wrapping up the Asian traditions.
(Take-home midterm exam, March 14-16)

Judaism

18 – Smith, 271-316.
20 – selections from David Hartman, *A Living Covenant:
The Innovative Spirit in Traditional Judaism*

***23 – Potential field trip visit to Ohr Shalom Synagogue**

25 – more from Hartman, *A Living Covenant*
27 – Heschel, *The Sabbath*, Introduction, Prologue, & Part One (through p. 32)

Apr 1 – Heschel, Part Two (35-62)
***2 – Potential Talmud study with Rabbi Scott Meltzer**
3 – Heschel, Part Three (65-101)

Islam

***7 – Potential field trip visit to Islamic Center of San Diego**
8 – Smith, 221-270.
10 – The Qur'an's opening surat: *al-Fatihah* and *al-Baqarah* (with O. Leaman)

15 – *al-Baqarah* cont'd.
17 – Leaman 102-111; Lodahl essay

22 – Easter break continues; no class today
24 – Kupperman, 60-75

FINAL EXAMINATION
Wednesday 1:30 to 4 p.m.