

CHRISTIANITY



REL100-AU2

School for Adult Learning, Fall, Term 1, Session 3, 2008

Thursdays: November 6th, 13th, 20th, December 4th, December 11th
(No class the week of Thanksgiving November 27th)

Facilitator:

Kathy Simpher, MTS

Office: School for Adult Learning, 788-3393

Esch Hall 103, ksimpher@uindy.edu

I would like to personally welcome each of you as we journey into the discussion of Christianity. My ultimate goal will be to establish a “safety zone” where we can interact honestly and freely. One of the key tips for success in this course is for each student to come to class fully prepared by reading the necessary resources, completing all out of class assignments, and “being there” all five nights.

Required Text:

Introduction to Christianity 4th edition, Mary Jo Weaver, Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2009. ISBN 978-0-495-09726-6

Recommended Texts:

Why Christian? For those on the edge of faith Douglas John Hall, Fortress Press, 1998. ISBN 0-8006-3130-7

Bible New Revised Standard Version (NSRV)

Purpose: This class fulfills the “Judaic-Christian Traditions Requirement” of the General Education Core as stated in the University of Indianapolis Academic Catalogue:

In fulfilling its mission to help students gain a deeper understanding of the teachings of the Christian faith and the role of religion in society, the university requires all students to take one course in the Judaic-Christian traditions. This requirement also meets the learning goals of critical thinking and historical consciousness, while providing opportunities for social inquiry and moral formation with respect to religious traditions and practices.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course students should be able to do the following:

1. Identify unifying ideas and practices of Christianity as they developed historically and as they have manifested in the lives of contemporary people.
2. Specify the issues over which Christians have divided historically, as well as those issues causing controversy today, and explain how both have contributed to the diversity of the Christian tradition.
3. Explain the development of Christianity from its beginning as a sect of Judaism into a diverse world religious tradition.
4. Make a case that explains how Christianity has influenced many of the values and ideals of Western civilization.
5. Analyze and explain the way various groups of Christians have responded to the tension between the church and the society of which it is a part.
6. Summarize the evolution of the relationship of the church to the state.
7. Assess and critique the various views and practices Christians have adopted regarding people who practice other religious traditions.
8. Make a case for the way Christian ideas, practices, and narratives have given meaning to the lives of countless individuals and empowered them to make significant changes in their lives and the lives of others.

Methodology: REL100 introduces the student to the academic study of Christianity as a diverse world religious tradition. To accomplish this, the student is responsible for staying current on reading and written assignments, while also engaging in critical analysis of how the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth have shaped and guided both the historical and contemporary manifestations of this tradition. The student should be prepared to “view” Christianity not only within its sacred/spiritual dimension, but also as it has developed in its historical and contextual manifestations. In order to accomplish this, the student will need to “step outside of” their own religion. To satisfy the academic approach, there will be objective class discussion, select readings, lectures, films, a research paper, a presentation, and a self-directed fact-finding excursion to a denomination very different from their own.

Expectations: Because this course meets only five times, attendance is crucial as your presence is necessary for good discussion and other in-class activities. The instructor reserves the right to drop students for missing class. The instructor also reserves the right to adjust course content as necessary. All work is to be turned in on time unless you make other arrangements with the instructor. Even then, late submissions will not receive full credit.

Writing: All assignments, except for those done in class, are to be completed in word processing form. All quotations, paraphrases, and/or the use of facts and ideas taken from the writings or speech of others must be correctly cited in a style in accordance with the guidelines issued by the American Psychological Association (APA.) All assignments are to be completed in standard, Times New Roman (or something similar), double-spaced, 12 point font. No written assignments will be accepted (again, unless completed in class.) Points will be deducted for grammatical errors or papers turned in late.

The University Writing Lab is also available to assist you with writing assignments. They are located in Krannert Library, 2nd floor, west end. To check on their hours, please call 788.3554.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and cheating are contrary to the ideal of academic integrity and are not tolerated. Students guilty of plagiarism or cheating are subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in the course involved or expulsion from the University. For more details, please refer to the Student Handbook available online at **my.uindy.edu** under Campus Life.

My.uindy.edu The University of Indianapolis has implemented a new web portal. Every student must have an email account to login. If you do not have an email, go to **my.uindy.edu**, on the left hand side of the screen there is a link that will assist you in setting up your email account. Once you have your email account, return to the **my.uindy.edu** portal. At the login screen, enter your email name and password. **It is imperative that the student monitor their university email account as changes, etc., will be sent to students as they are needed.**

Services for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please inform me immediately so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. Students with a disability must register with the Services for Students with Disabilities office (SSD) in Schwitzer Center 201 (317-788-3297 / www.uindy.edu/ssd) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations. You are responsible for initiating arrangements for accommodations for tests and other assignments in collaboration with the SSD and the faculty.

Point Values: Students will earn points on the following:

Reflective Journals (5 nights)	15 points (3 points each night)
First night quiz	10 points
Field Visit Report	25 points
Presentation (and research paper)	30 points (15 each)
Televangelism Project	10 points
Participation (5 nights)	10 points (2 points each night)
Total points possible	100

Participation: Worth 10 points. Class participation is strongly encouraged. Questions and the exchange of ideas aid in the adult learning process, providing the foundation for constructive, critical analysis of preconceived cultural norms. Therefore, the points assigned to participation are heavily weighted. Just “showing up” will not guarantee you all the possible points available to you during each class session.

Reflective Journals: Total 15 points. (One each week) A reflective journal response is due at the beginning of each class. These should be typed, double-spaced, and no less than two **full** pages. They are to address “ah ha moments,” concerns, changes in your perceptions, and thoughts in general about how you are processing the information learned in the course. In your writing, target specific items and discuss them thoroughly, rather than write superficial comments about multiple items. Use “I” statements as a way to stay focused on your personal reactions, but feel free to respond to anything that is said in class. Your first journal should be a reflection on your reading assignment for week one in the textbook.

First night quiz: Worth 10 points. November 6th: There will be a quiz the first night. This quiz will cover the contents of the first two chapters of the reading assignment. The necessity of the quiz is to assess whether the student has an understanding of the complexity of the beginning of the Christian movement. The quiz may be a combination of True/False, multiple choice, and short answer essay.

Field Visit Report: Worth 25 points. December 4th: Students are to attend a worship service at a Christian denomination that is very unfamiliar to them. Students may also opt to attend a Jewish worship service in a synagogue or temple. Implementing the Religion and Christianity Defined handouts, students are to critically assess how this denomination addresses issues surrounding the congregation’s highest ideals and ultimate values. The report should follow the APA style of academic writing and be no less than **three** full pages (**not** including the title and bibliography pages.) A rubric for evaluation will be handed out before the assignment is due.

Research Paper: Worth 15 points (On presentation topic - Due the final night – December 11th) Each student will be given the opportunity to randomly draw a topic the first night of class. The student will do a presentation on this topic (see below) which is the first part; and this second part is a research paper implementing the Religion and Christianity Defined handouts explaining how the topic manifests itself in today’s society. This is to be a research paper – **not a reflection paper**. The student is expected to develop a bibliography citing no less than two reputable sources. The research papers are to be no less than **three** pages in length (title and bibliography pages **are not** included in the total.)

Presentation: Worth 15 points on research topic - Students are expected to give a short presentation (10 – 15 minutes) on the topic chosen for their research paper. (This presentation will be given on the night the student has been assigned to present by the random selection of a number the first night.) This presentation should highlight the following points: What do you think is the most meaningful part of your topic? How does this translate into today’s society? What was the most interesting part of your research and why? Were there things that you had heard about before, but did not have an understanding of their origination? What were they? How much of your research came as a surprise to you and why? If not – why not? The rubric used for instructor evaluation will be handed out in class.

Televangelism Project: Worth 10 points. Due November 20th: Students are to pick a show that is televised from a self-identified Christian perspective and write an assessment covering the following questions: What is the format of the show? Is it a regular church worship service? What is the name of the evangelist and what are his/her affiliations? If a particular church sponsors it, what is it, where is it, and what are its affiliations? What is the main thing that the evangelist wants from their audience? What kind of argument do they make, and to what values do they appeal? What values would their audience have to have in order to be interested in this? What does the program offer its audience for their financial contributions? What products does this show offer for sale to its audience, and what benefits can they expect from using them? After making this assessment, the student is to bring the work into class where we will have a Point/Counter Point debate. The rubric used for instructor evaluation will be handed out in class.

Grading:

100-96	A
91-95	A-
86-90	B+
81-85	B
76-80	B-
71-75	C+
66-70	C
61-65	C-
56-60	D+
51-55	D
46-50	D-
45 or below	F

November 6th:

Read Introduction and chapters: 1 - 2 prior to the first class
Orientation, Introduction, and Topic selections
In class quiz over reading
“History of Christianity: the early years” - Documentary
Lecturette: Judaism to the 1st Century CE
Exercise (time permitting)
Reflective Paper Due
Debrief

November 13th:

Housekeeping
Read chapter 3 prior to class
Lecturette: Constantine to Charlemagne
Exercise (time permitting)
Reflective Paper Due
Presentations
Debrief

November 20th:

Housekeeping
Read chapters 4 and 5 prior to class
Televangelism Project
Lecturette: Splits, Crusades, and the Early Reformers
Presentations
Reflective Paper Due
Debrief

December 4th:

Housekeeping
Read chapters 6 and 7 prior to class
Lecturette: The Protestant Movement
Discuss / **turn in Field Assignment**
Presentations
Reflective Paper Due
Debrief

December 11th:

Housekeeping
“Modern Christianity” - Documentary
Read chapters 8, 9, and 10 prior to class
Lecturette: Issues in a Modern World
All Research papers due
Presentations
Reflective Paper Due
Wrap-up

*There are no pre-requisites for this course. Content may be adjusted as is necessary.