

THE MANY NAMES OF GOD

SAL280-AU8

School for Adult Learning, Summer, Session 1, 2008

May 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, June 5th

Thursdays, 6:00 – 9:45pm.

Facilitator:

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Personal Statement to the student: It is my goal that you will find this course informative, challenging, thought provoking, and memorable. You will need to be prepared to challenge stereotypes and social constructs, bringing an open mind to the information learned and classroom discussions as they develop over the next five weeks. I hope you are as excited to go on this journey as I am.

Required Text:

Understanding Religion in a Global Society, Richter, Rapple, Modschiedler, Peterson; Thomson Wadsworth Press, 2005.

ISBN 13-0-534-55995-3

Online Resources at www.thomsonlearning.com

Purpose and Rationale: Rarely a day goes by that each of us is not reminded of the existence of different faith traditions that make up our world. Even more interesting is the many different names they use to refer to an “Ultimate Source,” or “God.” To some, this awareness may instill a sense of anxiety or fear. They may even wonder if these many names are referring to the same “God” or are they, in fact, vastly different.

The purpose of this course is to examine concerns such as these in a safe academic environment. To accomplish this, the student will be exploring concepts such as: what does religion mean?; what do different traditions mean when they say “God?”; in what way are the holy texts (scriptures) different?; how is salvation determined?; and, how do the different traditions actually practice their faith? Using knowledge gained through research, the student will attempt to critically assess the information and apply it to their own previous experiences.

The rationale for this process is to challenge the student to venture beyond cultural stereotypes, developing an understanding of what other traditions mean when they say “God” or “Ultimate Source,” thereby becoming more culturally competent as we live and exist in a world of many “living faiths.”

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

1. Identify and define the idea of “God” or “Ultimate Source” in at least five major faith traditions.
2. Explain the meaning of “salvation” as it applies to these traditions.
3. Explain how the concept of pluralism is demonstrated in these traditions.
4. Recognize and define the relevance of symbols in these traditions.
5. Critically analyze and explain to what extent holy texts are used among these traditions.
6. Summarize the evolution of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* as a result of globalization.
7. Critically compare and contrast the differences in worship.

Methodology: This course will be an academic study of the significance of the name of the “Ultimate Source” or “God” in several major faith traditions and their resulting faith tradition. To accomplish this, the student is responsible for staying current on reading and written assignments, while also engaging in critical analysis and discussion in the classroom. 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 the UIndy library.

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. 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)	20 points (4 points each night)
Digging for the Truth	20 points
Presentation	20 points
Participation (5 nights)	15 points (3 points each night)
Create your own Tradition Research	25 points
Total points possible	100

Participation: Worth 15 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 20 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. You will be graded on syntax and grammar. Your first journal should be a reflection on what your expectations are for this course and how you felt about the first assigned reading.

Create Your Own Tradition Research Paper: Worth 25 points (Due the final night – June 5th) Each student will be responsible for turning in a research paper covering the process they used to create their own “faith” tradition. While your final product will be in this format, the tools you use to create your “faith” may be varied. It is this and the resulting product that you will discuss in your paper. This is to be a research paper – **not a reflection paper**. The student is expected to develop a bibliography citing no less than five reputable sources. The research papers are to be no less than **four** pages in length (title and bibliography pages **are not** included in the total.) A more detailed guideline and grading rubric will be handed out the first night.

Presentation: Worth 20 points (Due the final night – June 5th) Students are expected to give a short presentation (10 – 15 minutes) on the topic chosen for their research paper. The presentation is the student’s opportunity to demonstrate to the class the meaning of their new found “faith tradition” and how they decided on the specific components of that tradition. The student is encouraged to use creative methods of doing the presentation so as to address one of the learning goals of UIndy – that of Creativity. A more detailed guideline and grading rubric will be handed out the first night.

Digging for the Truth Exercise: Worth 20 points (Class time – May 22nd) Each student will be given an “expedition” topic that they will be investigating on their own using the resources in our campus library. This includes the library databases, scholarly compilations, journal articles and monographs. Students **CANNOT** use the internet for this exercise. The student will have two hours to research and “dig” for information about their topic. At the end of the two hours, the students will prepare a summation in hand written form and we will then regroup to present our information in a juried forum. The summation papers will be turned in at the end of class. The expedition topics will be handed out the night of the exercise.

Grading:

100-95	A
90-94	A-
85-89	B+
80-84	B
76-79	B-
71-75	C+
66-70	C
61-65	C-
57-60	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
49 or below	F

May 8th:

Read Introduction and chapters: 1 – 2 prior to the first class
Orientation, Introduction, and Course Expectations
Muddy Waters!
Lecturette
Exercise (time permitting)
Debrief

May 15th:

Housekeeping
Read chapters 3 – 4 – 5 prior to class
Muddy Waters!
Lecturette
Exercise (time permitting)
Debrief

May 22nd:

Housekeeping
Read chapters 7 – 9 - 10 prior to class
Muddy Waters!
Digging for the Truth at the Library
Debrief

May 29th:

Housekeeping
Read chapters 11 – 12 prior to class
Muddy Waters!
Lecturette
Exercise (time permitting)
Debrief

June 5th:

Housekeeping
Read chapter 13 – prior to class
Muddy Waters!
All Research papers due
Presentations
Wrap-up

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