



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

MADN-HIS

12 August 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR Cadets Enrolled in HI 391

SUBJECT: Syllabus for HI 391, World Religions, AY 2018-01

1. Introduction: Welcome to the historical study of “world religions”. Religion(s), broadly defined, have influenced on our world since pre-history, and a solid intellectual foundation in the development and beliefs of several of the world’s religions will undoubtedly serve you well in your future careers as Army officers. This syllabus explains the objectives and requirements of the course, describes the methods and standards of evaluation, and provides a schedule of lessons.

2. Scope: HI 391 examines the development of the world’s religions from approximately 3000 B.C.E. to the present. There will be three major blocks of instruction for the course:

- a. Block One examines the history of religious traditions from approx. 3000 B.C.E.-700 C.E. This block begins with a study of prehistoric religions followed by the “classics” such as Roman religion. We then move to Asia where we will grapple with the religions and philosophies of the orient before moving to the Middle East and exploring the beginnings of classical narratives of monotheism. Finally, we will begin the exploration of “meta-religion” looking at the role of the state in managing religion. The block will end with a WPR.
- b. Block Two will focus on Islam. The block focuses on Islamic Civilization from approx. 700 C.E.-1700 C.E. We will read a scholarly monograph *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil’s Resurgence, from the Middle East to America* that explores themes of gender in Islam. The block will end with a WPR.
- c. Block Three, The Modern World, will take cadets through the present. After closing the loop on the development of Eastern religions, the main focus of this block is the development of Christianity from the crusades through the present and the rise of modern alternative religions.

3. Goals:

- a. Analyze the role of human beliefs, ideas, values, and actions as they interact in specific historical contexts.

- b. Analyze how and why individuals and groups have pursued religious goals in different historical and cultural settings.
- c. Demonstrate knowledge of key historical figures, events, and developments in the history of the world's major religions from their ancient origins to the present.
- d. Use historical evidence to assess the dynamics of change—its causes, processes, and consequences—specifically as it relates to religious belief systems and values and interactions between religion and power structures.
- e. Identify and explain conflicting points of view and evaluate ambiguous evidence.
- f. Identify and explain causal relationships, linkages, and patterns within the context of religious history and draw informed conclusions based upon critical analysis.
- g. Understand the role played by religion in shaping a society or culture's moral and ethical principles.
- h. Understand the relationship between religion and societal and cultural ideas about gender and sexuality.
- i. Cadets taking this course as an integrative experience will demonstrate an understanding of how historical actors anticipated and responded to the uncertainties of a changing technological, social, political, and economic world.

4. Objectives: HI 391 is designed to meet the above-stated goals by providing you with an overview of the origin and history of the world's major religions, both ancient and modern. The course will also offer you a conceptual apparatus with which to analyze, compare, contrast, and assess the world's religions from both within and outside the perspective you have already developed. The following objectives will assist you in the pursuit of the course goals:

- a. Analyze and explain the historical development of religion and the creation of world religions.
- b. Analyze how religions historical and cultural setting influenced its origins and subsequent development.
- c. Analyze how each of the world's religions has reflected and influenced (intentionally and unintentionally) the culture(s) in which it played and/or now plays a role, from its inception to its present form, and whether it served as an agent of continuity or change.

- d. Analyze the reasons for and process of the spread and schism of various religions.
- e. Recognize the similarities and differences among the world's religions, both from each religion's own perspective and from the perspective of those of other faiths (or no faith).
- f. Synthesize and logically organize information found in readings, in group discussions, and in lectures.
- g. Develop an enhanced sense of cultural awareness of a variety of religious ideas, beliefs, and practices.
- h. Demonstrate creative, critical, and evaluative thinking and writing skills.

5. Reading Materials.

a. Course texts:

- (1) Nigosian, S.A. *World Religions: A Historical Approach*. Fourth Edition. Boston: Bedford, 2008.
- (2) Lane, James. *Meta-Religion: Religion and Power in World History*. Oakland: The University of California Press, 2014.
- (3) Ahmed, Leila. *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence, from the Middle East to America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

- b. On occasion, you may be required to read a scholarly article or primary source. The instructor will provide access any such materials as needed.

6. Writing Requirement. In order to develop your abilities to identify and explain different points of view, analyze conflicting and/or ambiguous evidence, establish causal relationships, and identify historical patterns and trends, you will write an analytical essay on a topic of interest to you in order to answer a clearly identified historical question. Your topic must be approved by the instructor. At a minimum, you must use at least four secondary sources, one primary source, and one scholarly article in your analytical essay. Failure to meet the basic requirements regarding sources for this paper will result in a significant point deduction on your final grade. The text of your paper must be at least 1500 words in length, *excluding* the title page, bibliography, and footnotes. Your paper will not exceed 1800 words in length. The analytical essay is worth 250 points, or 25% of your course grade. In accordance with the Dean's [Documentation of Academic Work](#), fully document your paper using Chicago-style footnotes. The Department of History's [Style and Formatting Guide](#) provides examples of proper formatting. Remember to document all words, facts, and ideas that are not

your own, including assigned readings. Not requiring documentation is “common knowledge” as defined in the *Little, Brown Handbook*: “commonsense observations” as well as “major facts of history, such as... dates.” As the *Little, Brown Handbook* cautions, however, “interpretations of facts” are not common knowledge and therefore require documentation. Your final analytical essay will be due NLT 1600 hrs on Lesson 34 (specific date to be determined by fall academic calendar). All writing requirements must be properly documented in accordance with the Chicago Manual of Style, the Department of History Style and Formatting Guide, the Dean’s Documentation of Academic Work, and the *Little, Brown Handbook*.

7. Integrative Experience. Each cadet taking HI 391 as an integrative experience (IE) will write an analytical essay that demonstrates an understanding of how historical actors anticipated and responded to the uncertainties of a changing technological, social, political, and economic world. The analytical essay process is still worth 300 points (the same as for non-IE papers), and your grade on that paper will reflect my assessment of your success in accomplishing the IE. Note that cadets taking HI 391 as their integrative experience *must* meet with me no later than Lesson 10 in order to describe how their respective papers will accomplish the requirements of the IE. Please plan on this meeting taking approximately 30 minutes.

8. Grading Policy. Performance on daily writs and in-class briefings, two Written Partial Reviews, one Writing Requirement, and a Term End Examination will determine your course grade.

a. Grading Standard:

A+	97-100%	B	83-86.9%	C-	70-72.9%
A	93-96.9%	B-	80-82.9%	D	67-69.9%
A-	90-92.9%	C+	77-79.9%	F	Below 67%
B+	87-89.9%	C	73-76.9%		

b. Graded Requirements: The 1000 points allocated for HI 391 are organized as follows:

	<u>%</u>	<u>Points</u>
Instructor Points	15	150
Written Partial Review 1	15	150
Written Partial Review 2	15	150
Essay Proposal	5	50
Writing Requirement	25	250
TEE	25	250
 TOTAL	 100	 1000

c. A grade of less than 50% on the TEE or on the final analytical essay may result in course failure.

MADN-HIS

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- d. Failure to turn in a major graded requirement (Writing Requirement) will result in course failure.
- e. A late submission for any writing requirement will receive a 10% penalty per day unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor and may result in a negative Cadet Observation Report.

10. I can be reached by phone at 938-5605 or by email at james.martin@usma.edu. My office is on the first floor of Thayer Hall, room TH146.

Encl:
HI 391 Schedule of Lessons

//original signed//
JAMES R. MARTIN
CPT, SC
Instructor