San Joaquin Delta College
Credit Course Outline

Department Number: Rel. 14B  90603
Submitted by: Mr. Fred Jantz
Hum. 14B  86788

Title of Course: Great Religions of the Western World
Student Units: 3

Prerequisites: Reading Level II

Catalog Statement: This course is a survey of the historical development and essential beliefs of the major
religions of the Western world. Primary emphasis is on the major phases of development and
comparative insights among the great religions of the world. Course work consists of readings,
lectures, and discussions in the areas of ancient religious beliefs, Mesopotamian religions, Graeco-
Roman religions, Teutonic religion, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (UC, CSU)

This course is _____XX____ is not ________________ associate degree appropriate.


Computer Support Needs: None
Learning Resource Needs: None

Prerequisite Skills: None
Corequisite Skills: None

Advisory Skills: None
Limitations on Enrollment: None

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

General Goals:
Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an increased awareness of the religious heritage of humanity.
2. Demonstrate an improved understanding of the great religions of the Western world.
3. Demonstrate a knowledge of the great ideas and values of Western religions.

Specific Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Evaluate the dominant ideas and values inherited from and exhibited in the Western religions.
2. Identify those aspects of modern American culture in which Western spiritual wisdom has had an
   impact or in which such spiritual thinking could have value.
3. Compare and contrast the various Western religions with a view toward deepening or re-
   examining his or her own religious or secular beliefs.

COURSE OUTLINE:

I. Religion in Prehistoric and Primal Cultures
   A. Stone Ages: Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic
   B. Characteristics of religion in primal cultures
   C. Case studies
II. Mesopotamian Religions
   A. Sumero-Akkadian pantheon
   B. Divination and astrology

III. Religion of Greece
   A. Homeric pantheon and Hesiod’s *Theogony*
   B. Greek household religion
   C. Athenian Festivals
   D. Mystery religions: eleusinian mysteries
   E. Dionysiac cult

IV. Religion of Rome
   A. Religion of the home
   B. Religion of the state
   C. Etruscan influence
   D. Imperial cult

V. Teutonic Religion
   A. The Celts and the Druids
   B. Fertility rituals
   C. The sagas

VI. Zoroastrianism: Historical Overview
   A. Ahura Mazda
   B. Angra Mainyu
   C. Amesha Spentas
   D. Shaoshyant – Zurvanism

VII. Judaism: Historical Overview
   A. Semitic background
   B. Mosaic law
   C. The prophets
   D. Babylonian exile
   E. Rabbinic Judaism

VII. Christianity: Historical Overview
   A. Life of Jesus
   B. Teachings of Jesus
   C. Early proselytizing: Paul et al
   D. Divisions within Christianity: Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, etc.
   E. Doctrinal orientations

IX. Islam: Historical Overview
   A. Life and teachings of Muhammad
   B. Five pillars of Islam
   C. Divisions within Islam: Sunni, Shia, Sufism, etc.
   D. Islamic expansion

Evaluation:
The student will be graded my multiple methods of evaluation which require the student to demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills, such as examinations which include essay questions, quizzes, problem-solving exercises, and a research project. A final exam is mandatory.