

CUYAMACA COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 170 – INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY

3 hours lecture, 3 units

Catalog Description

This course will provide an introduction to the Christian religion, with a focus on the history of its development. Its scriptures, rituals, and beliefs will be examined, as well as important persons, groups, and events which have developed among the Roman, Orthodox, and Protestant communities of Christianity.

Prerequisite

None

Course Content

- 1) The Origins of Christianity
 - a. Ancient Judaism and the Roman Empire: the setting for Jesus
 - b. The Jesus of the Canonical and Gnostic Gospels
 - c. The Historical Jesus
 - d. The Apostles
 - e. The Diversity of the Early Churches
 - f. Emergence and Growth of the Imperial State Churches
 1. The Council of Nicea and the Repression of “Heretics”
 2. Growth of the Papacy
 3. The Churches East and West
- 2) Medieval Christianity
 - a. The Early Middle Ages
 1. The Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire
 2. The Great Schism: Official Division of the Western and Eastern Churches
 3. Eastern Christianities, with a focus on Western Asian churches
 - b. The Middle Ages
 1. High Authority of the Papacy
 2. The Crusades
 3. The Papacy: Issues and Problems
 4. Origins of the Protestant Reformation
- 3) The Protestant Reformation and Catholic Counter-Reformation
 - a. Protestant Reformation
 1. Germany: Martin Luther and Lutherans
 2. Switzerland: Zwingli, Calvin, and the Reformed Churches
 3. Switzerland: Anabaptists
 4. England: The Church of England
 - b. The Catholic Counter-Reformation
 1. The Council of Trent
 2. The Jesuits and Other New Monastic Communities
- 4) Modernity and Christianity
 - a. Christianity in the United States

- b. Modernists and Fundamentalists
- c. Pentecostals
- d. Christianity in Africa and Asia
- e. Christian Nationalism
- f. Christianity and Social Justice
 - 1. Black Liberation Theology
 - 2. The Open and Affirming (ONA) Coalition
 - 3. Peace Churches
 - 4. Unitarians, Universalists, and the Unitarian Universalist Association

Course Objectives

- 1) Explain the major historical developments in the Christian experience.
- 2) Explain the varieties of Christian theology, both in the intellectual and every-day traditions of the religion.
- 3) Explain the important rituals of Christianity.
- 4) Explain the important ethical expectations of Christian life.
- 5) Compare and contrast the various interpretations of the figure of Jesus in Christian history.
- 6) Contrast the fundamental differences between the Roman, Orthodox, and Protestant forms of Christianity.
- 7) Explain the influence and power of the Papacy, historically and today, as it relates to politics, war, and society.
- 8) Contrast the "liberal" and the "conservative" responses to modernity found in today's Christianity.
- 9) Explain the focus on social justice that some forms of Christianity emphasize.

Method of Evaluation

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system.

- 1) Class participation/work
- 2) Written assignments
- 3) Field Trips
- 4) Group Projects
- 5) Presentations
- 6) Papers and essays
- 7) Quizzes and exams
- 8) Journals

Special Materials Required of Student

None

Minimum Instructional Facilities

Smart classroom

Method of Instruction

- 1) Lecture
- 2) Multimedia presentations
- 3) Group discussions
- 4) Field trips/field observations
- 5) Student presentations
- 6) Guest speakers

7) Instructional videos

Out-of-Class Assignments

- 1) Short essays and written assignments
- 2) Written homework assignments (worksheets, journals, etc.) that summarize and/or reflect upon the assigned reading materials or instructional videos
- 3) Research papers
- 4) Projects or presentations

Texts and References

- 1) Required (representative examples):
 - a. Molloy, Michael. *The Christian Experience: An Introduction to Christianity*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.
 - b. Dowley, Tim. *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, 2nd ed. Fortress , 2013.
 - c. Weaver, Mary Jo. *Introduction to Christianity*, 4th ed. Belmont: Thomson/ Wadsworth , 2009.
- 2) Supplemental: None

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- 1) Interpret how the social, cultural, and historical context of religious traditions inform their respective beliefs, values, and practices.
- 2) Analyze and apply the beliefs, values, and practices of religious traditions to students' own lives, identities, and experiences.
- 3) Analyze how religions are used to contest, assert, or mediate social and cultural power related to race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and/or nationality.
- 4) Develop an argument or thesis statement related to religious studies and support that argument with reliable evidence.