



Class Information

Day and Time: T 8-10:30

Room Number: E205

Contact Information

Instructor Name: J. Scott Bridger, PhD

Instructor Email: sbridger@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: 214-818-1323

Instructor Office Hours: M 8:30-10:30 AM; 1:15-2:15 PM and TR 10:30-11:00 AM

Course Description and Prerequisites

An examination of religious belief systems found in the major world religions. The functional goal is to understand such belief systems in order to develop effective evangelistic strategies. (Prerequisite may be taken concurrently or waived upon request: EMS 205)

Course Objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge of the world's major religious traditions, including their basic beliefs, rituals, and practices.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how different faith traditions shape their adherents' lived experiences.
- Demonstrate understanding regarding how the world's major religious traditions answer the four basic worldview questions: (1) How did it all begin? (2) What has gone wrong? (3) What is the solution? (4) What will the future hold?
- Visit the sacred places of other religious traditions.
- Acquire skill in directing your conversations with people from different religious backgrounds towards a thoughtful and meaningful presentation of the gospel.

Required Textbooks

Farhadian, Charles E. *Introducing World Religions: A Christian Engagement*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2015. ISBN: 9780801032349

Fernando, Ajith. *Sharing the Truth in Love: How to Relate to People of Other Faiths*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Discovery House, 2014. ISBN: 9781627070744.

Hazen, Craig James. *Five Sacred Crossings*. Eugene, Or.: Harvest House, 2008. ISBN: 9780736921961.

Course Requirements and Assignments

- A. **CLASS PARTICIPATION (10%):** This course requires a number of offsite visits to sacred sites (scheduled during class time) as well as activities in the classroom. Active attendance is required and absences will negatively impact your grade. Even “excused” absences will negatively impact your grade since you cannot participate if you are not present. Additionally, students are required to read the **Craig Hazen novel** and be prepared to discuss it on the designated days and **answer in-class questions** as part of your participation grade.
- B. **FARHADIAN CHAPTER DEFINITIONS (25%):** For the Farhadian book, students are to read the chapters listed in the schedule. As students encounter new concepts, terminology, names, and dates, they are to select at least 15 important ones from each chapter to record. These can be either a word-for-word definition or short 1-3 sentence explanations. The definitions are to be uploaded to Canvas by the due date in **PDF format**. No cover page is necessary, but students should put their name and the chapter from which they are drawing the definitions at the top of the page. These are due **at midnight** on the evening before we discuss the material in class. There will be **no** make-ups for any reason; however, of the 10 you submit, your lowest grade for this assignment will be dropped.
- C. **FERNANDO CONTENT SUMMARIES (25%):** For the Fernando book, students are to read the assigned chapter(s) and write a content summary (see the schedule below). Each summary is to be **1-2 single-spaced** pages (maximum) and should be uploaded by the due date in **PDF format**. No cover page is necessary, but students should put their name and list the chapters they’re summarizing at the top. The goal of this assignment is to summarize concisely and in narrative format the content of what is written using the student’s own words. These are due **at midnight** on the evening before we discuss the material in class. There will be **no** make-ups for any reason; however, of the 10 you submit, your lowest grade for this assignment will be dropped.
- D. **MID-TERM EXAM (10%):** A mid-term exam covering the first half of the course will take place via Canvas during the designated week in the schedule. It will include definitions from the Farhadian chapters, lecture content, and student reflections on the sacred visits. It is **open book/open note**.
- E. **SACRED VISIT REPORTS (20%):** During the course of the semester, we will visit roughly 5-7 sacred religious sites in DFW. These visits will be scheduled during class time and students are responsible for their own transportation to/from the sites. The professor will notify students via Canvas regarding where and when we will meet. Usually, prior to the visit, we will meet at a nearby coffee shop to go over the religious tradition and the assigned reading. Students should monitor their email regularly and make sure to arrive at the sites on time. Late arrivals will be considered **absent**. **Prior** to the visits, students are to read the guidelines found in “**A Guide to Visiting Non-Christian Worship Spaces**” (located in Canvas at the bottom of the home page). Students should be prepared to report on your visits by answering **all seven** of the Sacred Visit questions for **every visit** we make during the semester. These questions can be found in Canvas and students should answer them there during the designated week. Your reports must be submitted **by midnight on the evening prior to the class session following the visit** (see the schedule below). There will be **no** make-up reports; however, of the 5-7 visits we do during the semester, your lowest report grade will be dropped.
- F. **FINAL EXAM (10%):** A final exam covering the second half of the course will take place via Canvas during the designated week in the schedule. It will include definitions from the Farhadian chapters, lecture content, and student reflections on the sacred visits. It is **open book/open note**.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to/from the sacred sites we will be visiting during the semester during class time.

Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to attend every class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades.

Grading Scale

Assigning grade definitions (i.e., above average, average, below average) is optional. Please delete the last column below if not assigning definitions. Additionally, delete these instructions when completing syllabus.

			Grade Definitions (optional)
A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour	
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour	
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour	
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour	
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour	
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour	
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour	
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour	
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour	
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour	
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour	
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour	

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their professors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the grade was assigned, or the "I" will become an "F."

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the professor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Resources and Support

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. Pastoral and certified counseling services are also

available to Criswell students. Appointments are scheduled through the Dean of Students, at deanofstudents@criswell.edu.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, go to the library website, or email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu.

Writing Center: Students are encouraged to consult with writing tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence by practicing techniques of clear and effective writing. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Writing Center located on the first floor near the Computer Lab, or they can schedule an appointment by emailing writingcenter@criswell.edu or calling 214.818.1373.

Course Outline/Calendar

WEEK	CLASS DATE	TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS FD=Farhadian Definitions; F=Farhadian; CS=Content Summary; A=Ajith Fernando; Hazen=Hazen Novel	DUE DATE
WEEK 1	1/21	Introduction to the Course	
WEEK 2	1/28	The Persistence of Religion FD #1: F (1) CS #1 A (Preface, 1-2)	Midnight 1/27
WEEK 3	2/4	Hinduism FD #2: F (2) CS #2: A (3-4)	Midnight 2/3
WEEK 4	2/11	Buddhism FD #3: F (3) CS #3: A (5-6) Visit Report #1 – Hindu Temple	Midnight 2/10
WEEK 5	2/18	Jainism FD #4: F (4) CS #4: A (7) Visit Report #2 – Buddhist Temple	Midnight 2/17
WEEK 6	2/25	Read Hazen Book & Work Ahead (no class)	
WEEK 7	3/3	Sikhism FD #5: F (5) CS #5: A (8)	Midnight 3/2
WEEK 8	3/10	Mid-Term Exam Visit Report #3 – Sikh Temple	Midnight 3/9
WEEK 9	3/17	SPRING BREAK	
WEEK 10	3/24	Taoism and Confucianism FD #6: F (6)	Midnight 3/23

		CS #6: A (9) Hazen Book Discussion (chs. 1-7)	
WEEK 11	3/31	Judaism FD #7: F (7) CS #7: A (10-11)	Midnight 3/30
WEEK 12	4/7	Christianity FD #8: F (8) CS #8: A (12) Visit Report #4 - Jewish Synagogue	Midnight 4/6
WEEK 13	4/14	Islam FD #9: F (9) CS #9: A (13) Visit Report #5 - Orthodox Church	Midnight 4/13
WEEK 14	4/21	New Religious Movements FD #10: F (10) CS #10: A (14) Visit Report #6 - Mosque	Midnight 4/20
WEEK 15	4/28	Hazen Book Discussion (chs. 8-15) Visit Report #7 - Bahai'i Temple	Midnight 4/27
WEEK 16	5/5	Wrap-up	
WEEK 17	5/12	Final Exam	Midnight 5/12