Faculty Name: Robert Badra, M.A., M.Div., Instructor

Office Hours: By appointment

Phone Numbers:
Office: 269/488-4381
Home: 269/372-6469
E-Mail: bbadra1579@aol.com

Class Meeting/Time: 6-9pm Mon June 28 – August 16

Required Texts: *Living Religions*, 7th ed, 9780136141051 Author: Fisher

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**Siena Heights University Mission Statement**

The mission of Siena Heights, a Catholic University, founded and sponsored by the Adrian Dominican Sisters, is to assist people to become more competent, purposeful, and ethical through a teaching and learning environment which respects the dignity of all.

**Course Description**

Students are introduced to fundamental religious principles as they are expressed primarily in the lives of Indigenous, Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, Jewish, Christian and Muslim peoples. The focus will be on the various ways in which people of diverse religious traditions and histories strive to live together with mutual respect and peace in a world of pluralism dominated by empiricism and pragmatism

**Course Outcomes**

Students will strive to assess and integrate the foundational religious principles of diverse, living communities of faith. Our method will focus on the history of the major paths of faith that have been around at least 500 years. We will take the path of history in the hope of learning something about ourselves from that distant mirror. We will attempt to see ourselves reflected in all the paths of faith, sharing as they do the common ground of our humanity. We may come to see our humanity as the one, true faith. We will celebrate this humanity with no other purpose than to see more clearly the human side of every path of faith, acne and all.
Siena Heights University Program Outcome Statement

Graduates of Siena Heights University will have gained the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to continue developing as self-respecting adults; and will be capable of:

- Making sense of their daily work and personal lives
- Taking appropriate actions
- Realizing that their search for final answers must be lifelong

General Education Learning Outcomes

Students will be conversant with the ideas, content, and methods of various disciplines. They will reflect on the wisdom of religious traditions in understanding the meaning of life and also better recognize the diversity and interdependence of cultures.

Learning Strategies

I will look for signs that you were in class, read your text, and that you are alive. Being alive is important. Being alive means that you are capable of tolerance, compassion, understanding, humor, insight, pain, self-criticism, connection-making, challenge, and change. Should you want to e-mail me, use my home e-mail: bbadra1579@aol.com

Assessment Strategies

Read the primary source, Living Religions, by Mary Pat Fisher, according to the suggested reading schedule in the Course Itinerary. There will be one take-home exam based on class presentations and the text. The Quests found in this syllabus constitute your exam. There are eight quests.

Grading Policy and Scale

As mentioned, the eight quests found in this syllabus constitute your exam. The exam is worth 100 points at its best. Between 90 and 100=A. Between 80 and 89=B. Between 70 and 79=C. Fall below C level and you drown!

Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance and class participation are necessary for successful completion of the course. A student who does not attend regularly will normally experience considerable difficulty. While attendance will not directly be a major consideration in the determination of the final grade, it will be used to influence the grade in marginal situations.

You have the responsibility to contribute toward the learning process in the class for the benefit of yourself and other class members. Expected contributions include arriving to class with assignments completed to the best of your ability, entering into class discussion, and posing questions about course material you do not adequately understand.
**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

**A. Definition**
Academic dishonesty is unethical behavior which in any way violates the standards of scholarly conduct. It includes such behaviors as cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing, submitting the same or essentially the same papers for more than one course without the consent of all instructors concerned, misappropriating library materials, or the destroying of or tampering with computer files. Also included in academic dishonesty is knowingly or intentionally helping another to violate any part of this policy. Plagiarism is the failure to give credit for the use of any material from outside sources, including the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to: verbatim use of a quote without quotation marks and adequate documentation; submission of a paper, prepared by another person, as one’s own work; using the ideas, facts, words, photographs, pictures, graphics, or data of someone else and claiming them as your own; or not documenting ideas, facts, words or data gathered during research.

**B. Student responsibility**
Students should familiarize themselves with the complete Siena Heights University Academic Dishonesty Policy, which can be obtained from the SHU Undergraduate Catalog 2008-2010 on the website. Students are not excused from adherence to the policy even if they have not read it.

**Academic Accommodations (Disability Statement)**

Siena Heights University is committed to providing a learning environment that benefits all students. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, all reasonable accommodations will be made to meet the documented needs of students. The Siena Accommodations Policy for Students with Disabilities requires a student to provide written documentation of his/her disability to the Academic Advising Office. If you require special accommodations, it is your responsibility to notify each instructor during the first two weeks of the semester. (See page 194 of the SHU Undergraduate Catalog 2008-2010 – available on the SHU website)

**Course Schedule**

Class meets from 6:00pm to 9:00pm every Monday from June 29 to August 17  Room No. TBD
Assignment List

1. Monday June 28---Read Chapter One, Chapter Two. Introductory Remarks.  
   Storyline: Sources of Religion Humanly Speaking  
2. Monday July 5---Read Chapter Three. Storyline: Hinduism  
3. Monday July 12---Read Chapter Five. Storyline: Buddhism  
5. Monday July 26---Read Chapter Eight. Storyline: Judaism  
7. Monday August 9---Origins of Christianity Continued  

Academic and Professional Integrity

Siena Heights University expects its students to use resources with consideration for ethical concerns and legal restrictions. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized qualities of a scholar and of a competent, purposeful and ethical individual. Siena Heights University expects its students to honor these principles. Academic and professional integrity refers to the representation of one’s self and one’s work honestly while demonstrating respect for the accomplishments and contributions of others. Penalties for plagiarism and copyright infringement are at the discretion of the course instructor.
Quests

1. Listen to your notes. Listen to your reading. Let these move you. Then relate what you discover within your notes, within your reading, to the world of your life experiences. Let these connect you to the sources and objects of religion humanly speaking. This Quest relates to the somewhat primitive origins of religion. Did you find any contemporary points of identification with those origins? Are we still somewhat primitive? What did you learn about your own humanity in this Quest? Reflect.

2. Listen to your notes. Listen to your reading. Let these move you. Then reflect upon the Hindu gods and goddesses and some of the beliefs of Hinduism. What can we in the West learn from India? Can we identify with any Hindu truths? What did you learn about your own humanity in this Quest?

3. Listen to your notes. Listen to your reading. Let these move you. Pope John Paul II told the Catholics of Thailand that they are better Christians because of their Buddhist roots. What Buddhist connections do you see with Christian beliefs and practices? Did any similarities surprise you? Are there underlying lessons each may offer the other? Are you recognizing a common ground shared by all religions through their humanity? What did you learn about your own humanity in this Quest? Reflect.

4. Listen to your notes. Listen to your reading. Let these move you. Reflect upon the intuitive nature of religion as found in the Orient. What did you learn about your own humanity in this Quest?

5. Listen to your notes. Listen to your reading. Let these move you. What sense of Judaism did you have before the course and what sense of Judaism do you have now? Napoleon once asked Tallyrand for one good reason to believe in God, to which the latter replied, “The Jews, my Lord, the Jews.” As you reflect, what did you learn about your own humanity from this Quest?

6. Listen to your notes. Listen to your reading. Let these move you. Reflect upon the Christian synthesis, that is to say, what ingredients, humanly speaking, shaped Christianity? What seeds of the future shape(s) of Christianity were planted in the first five centuries of its history? Explore the human element in this synthesis. As you explore, what did you learn about your own humanity from this Quest?

7. Listen to your notes. Listen to your reading. Let these move you. What synthesis, what ingredients helped shape Islam? Explore the human element in this synthesis. As you explore, what did you learn about your own humanity from this Quest?

8. With that sense of humor, which is that sense of perspective, achieved by those who have climbed mountains and snorkeled with the humpback whales, having glimpsed at the shambles of the past and seen the present more clearly, what questions hover over the chaos and the tranquility of your mind and heart, questions to which you have no answer?