

- 0. Mottoes
- 1. Instructor
- 2. Contact Information
- 3. This Course within Degree Progress
- 4. Course Description

- 5. Course Goal
- 6. Course outcomes
- 7. Course Methods and Questions
- 8. The Syllabus as Agreement
- 9. Approach and conduct

- 10. Meetings and Study
- 11. Textbooks and Resources
- 12. Assignments/Milestones-Grade Components
- 13. Grading Scale
- 14. Course Assignment Calendar

CENTRAL BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

C-RP511

**MINISTRY IN A PLURALISTIC WORLD**

2018 Easter Term

**0. MOTTOES**

- He who knows one religion knows none. — *Max Müller*
- The plurality of religious traditions and cultures has come to characterize every part of the world today. — *Diana L. Eck*
- The History of Religions is not merely an historical discipline, as for example, are archeology and numismatics. It is equally a total hermeneutics being called to decipher and explicate every kind of encounter with the sacred, from prehistory to our own day. — *Mircea Eliade*
- Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our being as humans, and the catastrophe toward which this world is headed — be it ecological, social, demographic or a general breakdown of civilization — will be unavoidable. — *Václav Havel*
- PDF becomes the most popular religion



**1. INSTRUCTOR**

The Rev. Vern Barnet, DMn.— Vern Barnet founded the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council in 1989 and has remained active in interfaith activities ever since. At the University of Chicago Divinity School, he studied with Mircea Eliade, then considered the foremost scholar of religious phenomenology. Barnet was ordained in 1970 as a Unitarian Universalist minister and served parishes in Rockford, IL; Meadville, PA; and Overland Park, KS. He is an active Episcopalian layman.

Following 9/11, he chaired the Jackson County survey of the 5-county area to assess and recommend ways to improve understanding of religious diversity. He has been honored by Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, interfaith, and civic groups.

From 1994 to 2012, he wrote the weekly “Faith and Beliefs” column for The Kansas City Star. He was one of four editors of the 740-page *The Essential Guide to Religious Traditions and Spirituality for Health Care Providers* (originally published in 2013 by Radcliffe).

He has previously taught as an adjunct instructor at the Saint Paul School of Theology, Ottawa University, Avila University, the Unity Institute Ministerial School, and the Central Baptist Theological Seminary. The bio sketch on [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org) appears by entering his name. A fuller résumé is found at [www.cres.org/vern](http://www.cres.org/vern).

## 2. CONTACT INFORMATION

- Mail: Vern Barnet, PO Box 45414, Kansas City, MO 64171
- Desk phone (best number) 816 753 1633; messages accepted
- Filphone (no emails), texts in emergency 816 679 1633
- Best contact method: email: vbar-net@cbts.edu
- To alert me to an urgent CBTS email, write vern@cres.org.
- My goal is to respond weekdays within 24 hours.

## 3. THIS COURSE WITHIN DEGREE PROGRESS

- Pillar: Contextualization
  - The Contextualization pillar relates to being humanly sensitive and professionally competent. The contextualization pillar complements the interpretation pillar by “helping students become aware of the influence of contexts on religious meanings and in religious practices.”
  - GOAL. To cultivate competencies Christian leaders need for managing the ongoing vitality and relevance of faith traditions amid varied settings
  - OUTCOMES. Students completing this course are expected to show these outcomes from the Contextualization Pillar, specifically:
    - 1. Demonstrate consciousness of the particularities that shape faith and practice in a given contextual setting
    - 2. Participate appropriately in the encounter of contexts
    - 3. Engage human processes with inten-

tionality to produce social and systemic change

- Students taking this course are presumed to have these outcomes already from the Formation Pillar, specifically:
  - 1. Craft a “rule for life” for spiritual, personal, and professional development.
  - 2. Demonstrate habits of mind and practice for thinking, being, and doing the work of ministry.
  - 5. Apply moral theories to situations of valuational conflict in life and ministry.

- Students taking this course are presumed to have these outcomes already from the Performance Pillar, specifically:
  - 2. Communicate clearly and with integrity in ways that are appropriate to particular audiences.

- Thread: Society—Religious Pluralism / Global/Cross Cultural

- Prerequisites:
  - C-CH501 Christian Heritage I
  - C-CH502 Christian Heritage II

- Successors:
  - C-MS511 Missional imagination
  - C-LD521 Foundations of Leadership and Innovation
  - C-LD522 Practice of Leadership and Innovation

## 4. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course prepares the student to exercise Christian ministry in contexts and among populations that include many lived religions, including persons claiming no religion.

## 5. COURSE GOAL

The learner will appreciate people of faith traditions other than one's own, respect the convictions and practices of those persons, and develop relationships that nurture genuine sharing and cooperation among these communities. The student also will learn to lead a Christian faith community in ways that model and foster understanding, relationship, and cooperation with individuals and groups of other faith traditions.

## 6. COURSE OUTCOMES

The learner will:

<1>. Articulate the relevance of spiritual practice to modern life, including global issues that pose significant challenges to humanity's common future.

<2>. Demonstrate a healthy sense of one's place within the broad spectrum of religious history.

<3>. Articulate the role of religious components of his/her faith (including sacred language and writings, myth, metaphor, narrative history, theological suppositions, etc.) as sources of personal and cultural conflict and strategies for minimizing or resolving the distrust and tensions and for building more positive and cohesive relationships with persons of other faith traditions.

<4>. Demonstrate sympathetic appreciation of the breadth and depth of spiritual experience, appropriate awareness of the diversity within and among religious communities, and basic skills to enter dialog with persons of other faith traditions.

<5>. Participate in the shared community of multi-faith (pluralist) ideas and integrate the intellectual, theological, personal, and emotional aspects of those ex-

periences.

*These outcomes include both knowledge and skills.*

## 7. COURSE METHODS and QUESTIONS

To achieve these outcomes, we explore the questions listed under sections A, B, and C below, in multiple ways, including using scholarly, sacred, and popular texts. Each question may be particularly useful in achieving the outcome whose number appears in <angle brackets>.

- Classroom/synchronous discussions are essential,
- along with journal entries reflecting on the previous class session and particularly addressing the designated syllabus question discussed,
- a term reflection paper, and
- fieldwork planned early in the course and reported later in the term.

Often the designated questions will promote four stages of learning: *initiation, interaction, investigation, and internalization.*

Assessment is detailed below.

Do not be misled by what might appear to be a logical sequence of questions. Features of the course — such as my growing understanding of my own faith in my personal life, what I know today about another religion, my developing skills in communication, and ability to work with others — interpenetrate and mutually characterize each other. This means questions considered early in the course sequence may be reconsidered in the light of further study.

Perhaps for the student, a key question is this: ***Can I be both committed to my own faith and open to others? — and if so or if not, what does that mean for my ministry?***

## **A. DISCOVERING PRESUPPOSITIONS ABOUT OTHER FAITHS**

0. Getting acquainted: Our backgrounds, travel and other experiences, and perspectives as we approach this course. <1>

1. What meanings do terms such as *belief, dialogue, epiphany, evil, holistic, mission, myth, pilgrimage, religion, ritual, sacred, sacrifice, scripture, secular, spirituality,* and *worship*, have for us and today's society? <1, 3>

2. What attitudes have scholars identified as ways folks approach faith perspectives other than their own? <3>

3. What does "pluralism" mean? What are its theoretical, practical, and personal meanings? How does it apply to the local community and the "global village"? <3>

4. Where are we aided and challenged by other traditions? How might our own and other traditions address environmental, personal, and social disorders? <1>

## **B. LEARNING ABOUT OTHER FAITHS**

1. How do sociological, historical, phenomenological, and other methods of studying religions differ, and how do they help us understand another's faith? <2>

2. What are the basic structures, texts, facts, practices, and variations of other faiths? <3, 4>

3. How do faiths compare and contrast? <4>

4. What is more, and what is less, useful for each of us today? <2, 3>

## **C. ENCOUNTERING FOLKS OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS**

1. What are the basic styles and purposes of interfaith engagement? What are the significant interfaith organizations and programs affecting the student's community? <4>

2. How do I discover my community's faith complexion and my opportunities within it? <4, 5>

3. What issues with boundaries arise and how can they be negotiated? <4, 5>

4. What do we learn about ourselves as we learn about others? Can I be committed to my own faith and respectful and open to others? If so or if not, what does that mean for my ministry? <5>

## **8. THE SYLLABUS AS AGREEMENT**

This syllabus constitutes an agreement for this 3-credit class. However, since this is the first time this course has been taught, it is subject to adjustment, and *student comment on the course design is particularly and eagerly welcomed so that its design can be improved for future instruction.*

## **9. APPROACH AND CONDUCT**

Graduate students energetically take charge of their own learning by questioning, challenging, investigating, and integrating what they learn into their lives. Theological education in our time favors process learning.

Students will observe the student handbook. Of course students are expected to honor each other's experiences with appropriate confidentiality. Original work is expected except when acknowledged otherwise. In emergency situations, late work may be accommodated if obligations to fellow students can be met.

Harassment and disrespect are not vocational, academic, or spiritual values and cannot find a place in the School's environment. Special care may be given to those outside the School who become part of the field work for the course.

Written material should appear in professional style. Guidance may be found in handbooks such as Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed., Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN: 0-226-82337-7, ebook ASIN is BOOBXQ41GO.

Academic policies in the current academic catalog are incorporated in this course.

## 10. COURSE MEETINGS AND STUDY

Twelve hybrid class meetings of 3.75 hours are scheduled Mondays May 7 through July 23 between 6 pm and 9:45 pm. Additional small group sessions may be arranged as part of the 11.25 hours expected preparation and study time each week. The term requirements must be met by July 30.

## 11. TEXTBOOKS and RESOURCES

The instructor will explain why each resource item is important to the scope of the course and how it is best used given the limitations of time so the student can better prioritize one's own learning. Portions of texts not listed as required in <11a> may be introduced to the student through hand-outs or described by the instructor, and students are responsible for encountering them as well. The reason for an unusually long list of supplementary resources is that studying the context for ministry today requires many angles to see it and its changing characteristics.

### 11a. REQUIRED TEXTS FOR THIS COURSE

- Daniel S. Brown, Jr., ed. *Interfaith Dialogue in Practice: Christian, Muslim, Jew*. Rockhurst University Press, 2012. ISBN-10: 1886761329 Paperback \$25.94-\$30, used from \$7 on Amazon. Read chapters 4 and 5.
- Diana L. Eck. *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. HarperSanFrancisco, 2001. ISBN-10: 0060621591; Paperback (2002) \$10.43, used from \$1.25 on Amazon, also Kindle.
- Bud Heckman, ed. *InterActive Faith: The Essential Interreligious Community-Building Handbook*. Skylight Paths, 2008. ISBN 13:978-1-59473-237-9 Hardcover \$16.94 new on Amazon; paper, used, and Kindle also available.
- Richard P. Olson. *Side by Side: Being Christian in a Multifaith World*. Judson Press, 2018. ISBN 9780817017903 Paperback \$16.99 on Amazon, and Kindle also available.
- Stephen Prothero. *God Is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World—and Why Their Differences Matter*. HarperOne, 2010. ISBN 978-0-06-157127-5 Paperback from \$8.88, used from \$2.87, also Kindle on Amazon.

### 11b. RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- Catherine L. Albanese. *America: Religions and Religion*, 5th Edition. Wadsworth, 2012. ISBN-10: 1133050026. \$149.95 to \$57.85 on Amazon.
- Georges Bataille. *Theory of Religion*, tr. Robert Hurley. Zone Books, 1992. ISBN-10: 0942299094, Hardcover from \$25.59, Paperback \$19.59, used from \$5.69.

- Robert N. Bellah. *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age*. Belknap Press, 2011. ISBN-10: 0674061438, Kindle \$20.37, Hardcover \$37.59, Used from \$15.00 on Amazon.
- Peter L. Berger. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Anchor; Reprint edition, 1990. (Originally published 1967.) ISBN-10: 0385073054 Paperback \$14.31, Kindle \$9.99 on Amazon.
- Joseph Campbell. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. New World Library; Third edition, 2008. ISBN-10: 1577315936, paperback \$15.60 from Amazon. (First edition published by Princeton University Press, 1949).
- Wendy Doniger (O’Flaherty). *Other People’s Myths: The Cave of Echoes*. Macmillan, 1988. ASIN: B01B9917PW, \$128.07, used paper from \$15.18 on Amazon.
- Mircea Eliade. *The Sacred and The Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Publisher: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987. (Original English publication, 1957.) ISBN-10: 015679201X. Hardcover \$250.00, Paperback \$7.99 - \$9.84, Kindle from \$9.35 on Amazon.
- S. Mark Heim. *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*. Orbis Books, 1995. ISBN-10: 1570750408 Paperback \$23.32, used from \$1.40 on Amazon.
- Anton Jacobs. “Religious Awe & Critical Thought.” Text of remarks April 7, 2013 for The Community of Reason, the University of Missouri - Kansas City. <http://www.communityofreasonkc.org/essays-in-science-and-philosophy/religious-awe-critical-thought-by-anton-k-jacobs/>
- Steven Jeffers, Michael E. Nelson, Vern Barnet, Michael C. Brannigan. *The Essential Guide to Religious Traditions and Spirituality for Health Care Providers*. CRC Press, 2012. ISBN-10: 1846195608. Hardcover \$188.95, Kindle 179.50 on Amazon. The instructor will provide relevant pages (7-16) without charge.
- Elizabeth A. Johnson. *Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God*, Chapter 8 “Generous God of the Religions.” Continuum, 2007. ISBN-10: 1441174621, Paperback \$22.51, used from \$2.99, also on Kindle \$14.01 on Amazon.
- Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. *An Introduction to the Theology of Religions: Biblical, Historical & Contemporary Perspectives*. InterVarsity Press, 2003. ISBN-10: 083082572X Used from \$5.98 Amazon.
- Paul F. Knitter. *Introducing Theologies of Religions*. Orbis Books, 2002. ISBN-10: 1570754195. Paperback \$16.09 on Amazon.
- Tomoko Masuzawa. *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. The University of Chicago Press, 2005. ISBN-10: 0226509885, Hardcover \$675.00, Paperback \$29.76, Kindle \$16.74 from Amazon.
- Stuart M. Matlins, ed., Arthur J. Magida, ed. *How to Be a Perfect Stranger: The Essential Religious Etiquette Handbook*, 4th Edition. SkyLight Paths, 2006. ISBN-10: 159473140332, Paperback from \$9.48, used from \$6.25 on Amazon.
- Roger Schmidt. *Exploring Religion*, 2nd Edition. Cengage Learning, 1988. ISBN-10: 0534088740. \$25.00 to \$5.49 on Amazon.
- Philip Novak. *The World’s Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World’s Religions*. HarperOne, 1994. ISBN-10: 1269365355, Paperback \$10.70, used from \$1.25 on Amazon.
- Ninian Smart. *Reasons and Faiths: An In-*

*Investigation of Religious Discourse, Christian and Non-Christian*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958, reissued in 1965. ASIN: B000LOEXN. from \$14.99 on Amazon.

- Wilfred Cantwell Smith. *Towards a World Theology: Faith and the Comparative History of Religion*. Westminster Press, 1981. ISBN-10: 0664213804, from \$26.17 on Amazon.
- Owen C. Thomas. *Attitudes Toward Other Religions: Some Christian Interpretations*. S.C.M. Press, 1969. ASIN: B000FJ49WG. Used from \$17.49 on Amazon.

#### 11c. **SAMPLE ON-LINE RESOURCES**

- [www.worldreligions.ca](http://www.worldreligions.ca) — Encounter World Religions Centre, an interfaith organization near Toronto offering concentrated experiences at various faith sites.
- [www.theinterfaithobserver.org](http://www.theinterfaithobserver.org) — a national periodic electronic magazine
- [www.pluralism.org](http://www.pluralism.org) — the site for Harvard's Pluralism Project
- [www.cres.org/pubs/HistoryofIFC.htm](http://www.cres.org/pubs/HistoryofIFC.htm) — a local "case study" of an interfaith organization and organizational models
- <http://www.sacred-texts.com/> — a multi-faith resource including some secular literature like the plays of Shakespeare and the Greek tragedians

#### 11e. **CULTURAL SOURCES**

News sources and community events with obvious religious significance may command class attention as they may relate to course goals. Art, music, and other

cultural offerings may provide experiences to help the student approach and understand materials in this course of study.

For example, in Kansas City, the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art currently offers two special exhibitions — *The Art of Calligraphy Across Asia* (including sacred writing from Buddhist, Islamic, and Christian traditions) through July 8, and *Islamic Art: Global Connections and Exchange, Part 2*, through June 17 — in addition to its permanent collection of art from many traditions.

Another example from Kansas City: the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council's annual "Table of Faiths" dinner, this year with the theme, "To Know and Be Known: Our Sacred Aim, Responsibility, and Desire," is scheduled May 8, 5:30-8:30, with speaker Nate Phelps, son of homophobic Pastor Fred Phelps of the Westboro Baptist Church, which gained infamy from their protests at soldiers' funerals around the United States.

Various interfaith programs are held throughout the year in Kansas City. Throughout the term, email announcements of interfaith events will be forwarded to the student to demonstrate the multi-faith context in which ministry now may be offered. Students elsewhere may check in their localities.

#### 11e. **LECTURES, HAND-OUTS, AND GUESTS**

The instructor may introduce topics with brief lectures. He will provide hand-outs which will accumulate on Moodle and later be listed in the revised syllabus. Expert guests may visit the class or be made available to students for consultation.

## 12. ASSIGNMENTS/MILESTONES — GRADE COMPONENTS

Specific milestones are listed with the course calendar below, keyed to each of the 12 sets of questions

- addressed in class,
- in the journal,
- in the term paper, and
- the learning from the project/activity.

● **12x2=24 points** — *Class and on-line participation and acuity.*— Each student will be assessed on the basis of the student's preparation for, and keen and appropriate participation in, the discussion topic.

● **12x2=24 points** — *Weekly journal.*— Each week the student post (on Moodle forum-style) a reflection of about 500 words on some issue or issues important to the student arising from the last class session or relating in some other way to this course. This journal entry is due two days following class.

Other students are urged to respond to classmates. Topics and questions from this process may become part of the discussion at the next class session.

Students' comments to classmates may be *EXTENSIVE* or simply notes like —

- *Glad you raised this point!*
- *We need to discuss this in class.*
- *My experience leads me another way.*
- *Thanks for writing so well.*
- *I hadn't thought of that!*
- *This is a real problem for me.*
- *Here's a resource you might find helpful . . . .*
- *I feel exactly the same way.*
- *Please expand on what you said about . . . .*
- *What would you do in this situation . . . ?*
- *Have you considered . . . ?*

● **26 points** — *Term paper.*— At the end of the term, using both resources to which the student has been introduced, the stimula-

tion of classroom discussion, the student's reflection, and research and activities, the student will demonstrate how the goals in section 7 of this Syllabus have been met using material in answering the twelve questions for the course under section 8.

● **26 points** — *Project or activity.*— Using the circumstances of the student's locality, the student will develop a significant interfaith relationship or project and report on it orally in class and in writing.

## 13. GRADING SCALE

Using the point system in section 12 above, grades for the course will be awarded as following:

- **96-100** = (A) Exceeds expectations for achievement of learning outcomes for this course; creative; original.
- **91-95** = (A-) Meets expectations discernibly better than expected for achievement of learning outcomes for this course; excellent.
- **86-90** = (B+) Meets expectation marginally better than expected for achievement of learning outcomes for this course; good.
- **81-85** = (B) Meets expectations for achievement of learning outcomes for this course; satisfactory.
- **75-80** = (B-) Meets expectations *with concerns* — only minimally achieves the learning outcomes for this course and evidences the identified deficiencies; marginally acceptable.
- **below 75** = (F) Does not meet expectation — fails to meet the learning outcomes for this course and the level for graduate work.

## 14. COURSE CALENDAR

**see next three pages**



## CALENDAR by week — Class session activities

Schedule for text readings due by session:

- A2:** Heckman Introduction, Part 1
- A3:** Heckman Part 2
- A4:** Heckman Part 3+
- B1.** Prothero
- C1.** Eck, Olson, Brown (chapters 4 and 5)

*Each week presents two milestones as the student explores the session question (1) in class and (2) in the reflection paper. The term paper and the project/activity are major milestones.*

### A. DISCOVERING PRESUPPOSITIONS ABOUT OTHER FAITHS — AND OUR OWN

The first third of the course prepares the student with categories and intellectual tools, and challenges the student to articulate one's spiritual practice with them. <1, 2, 3>

#### 6. COURSE OUTCOMES :

The learner will:

<1>. Articulate the relevance of spiritual practice to modern life, including global issues that pose significant challenges to humanity's common future.

<2>. Demonstrate a healthy sense of one's place within the broad spectrum of religious history.

<3>. Articulate the role of religious components of his/her faith (including sacred language and writings, myth, metaphor, narrative history, theological suppositions, etc.) as sources of personal and cultural conflict and strategies for minimizing or resolving the distrust and tensions and for building more positive and cohesive relationships with persons of other faith traditions.

<4>. Demonstrate sympathetic appreciation of the breadth and depth of spiritual experience, appropriate awareness of the diversity within and among religious communities, and basic skills to enter dialog with persons of other faith traditions.

<5>. Participate in the shared community of multi-faith (pluralist) ideas and integrate the intellectual, theological, personal, and emotional aspects of those experiences.

*These outcomes include both knowledge and skills.*

**A0. Getting acquainted: Our backgrounds, travel and other experiences, and perspectives as we approach this course. <1>**

Live introductions. Review syllabus.

**A1. What meanings do terms such as *belief, dialogue, epiphany, evil, holistic, mission, myth, pilgrimage, religion, ritual, sacred, scripture, sacrifice, secular, spirituality, and worship* have for us and today's society? <1, 3>**

In-class non-graded written quiz on terms; discussion. Remarks on 4C's of religion (Schmidt), sacred (Eliade, Bellah, Bataille), religion (WC Smith, Masuzawa), myth (Eliade, Campbell). *Handout Unity mag article.*

**A2. What attitudes have scholars identified as ways folks approach faith perspectives other than their own? <3>**

COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS ON STUDENTS' REVIEWS OF LAST SESSION; **HEREAFTER: "STUDENTS' REVIEWS."** Remarks on American history, peculiarities. Discuss Unity mag item. *Handout "Pluralism" from Eck with questions.*

**A3. What does "pluralism" mean? What are its theoretical, practical, and personal meanings? How does it apply to the local community and the "global village"? What are the "theologies of religion"? <3>**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Review Heckman2. Discuss Pluralism Handout. *Handout Jeffers, pp 7-16.* Schemes by Race, Eck, H Smith, Knitter, Hick, Heim, etc. Review Heckman1.

**A4. Where are we aided and challenged by other traditions? How might our own and other traditions address environmental, personal, and social disorders? <1>**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Review Heckman3. Discuss Jeffers, *Remarks on "sacred" in world religions, Eliade.*

#### NOTES

May 7

May 14

May 21

May 28

## CALENDAR by week — Class session activities

Schedule for text readings due by session:

**A2:** Heckman Introduction, Part 1

**A3:** Heckman Part 2

**A4:** Heckman Part 3+

**B1.** Prothero

**C1.** Eck, Olson, Brown (chapters 4 and 5)

*Each week presents two milestones as the student explores the session question (1) in class and (2) in the reflection paper.*

*The term paper and the project/ activity are major milestones.*

### B. LEARNING ABOUT OTHER FAITHS

This middle third of the course focuses on gaining knowledge of the world's religious complexion and one's locale's , and one's place in it; to talk about these effectively. <1, 2, 3>

**6. COURSE OUTCOMES :** Although class sessions focus on selected faiths in Prothero, the student is responsible from the entire book for the four questions.

The learner will:

<1>. Articulate the relevance of spiritual practice to modern life, including global issues that pose significant challenges to humanity's common future.

<2>. Demonstrate a healthy sense of one's place within the broad spectrum of religious history.

<3>. Articulate the role of religious components of his/her faith (including sacred language and writings, myth, metaphor, narrative history, theological suppositions, etc.) as sources of personal and cultural conflict and strategies for minimizing or resolving the distrust and tensions and for building more positive and cohesive relationships with persons of other faith traditions.

<4>. Demonstrate sympathetic appreciation of the breadth and depth of spiritual experience, appropriate awareness of the diversity within and among religious communities, and basic skills to enter dialog with persons of other faith traditions.

<5>. Participate in the shared community of multi-faith (pluralist) ideas and integrate the intellectual, theological, personal, and emotional aspects of those experiences.

*These outcomes include both knowledge and skills.*

**B1. How do various [sociological, historical, phenomenological, and other] methods of studying religions differ, and how do they help us understand another's faith? <2>**

June 4

N O T E S

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. [[*Remarks on Berger, Jacobs or classroom guest.*]]

Prothero: Introduction, Islam, Christianity, Confucianism.

**B2. What are the basic structures, texts, facts, practices, and variations of other faiths? <3, 4>**

June 11

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Prothero: Hinduism, Buddhism, Yoruba Religion. *Remarks on Novak and "world scriptures."*

**B3. How do faiths compare and contrast? <4>**

June 18

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Prothero: Judaism, Daoism, Atheism. *Remarks about the "nones" and "Civil Religion."*

**B4. What is more, and what is less, useful for each of us today? <2, 3>**

June 25

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Students assess the faiths they know something about with respect to environmental, personal, and social problems, opportunities.

## CALENDAR by week — Class session activities

Schedule for text readings due by session:

**A2:** Heckman Introduction, Part 1

**A3:** Heckman Part 2

**A4:** Heckman Part 3+

**B1.** Prothero

**C1.** Eck, Olson, Brown (chapters 4 and 5)

*Each week presents two milestones as the student explores the session question (1) in class and (2) in the reflection paper.*

*The term paper and the project/activity are major milestones.*

### C. ENCOUNTERING FOLKS OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

The final third of the course develops formational and practice opportunities <4, 5>

#### 6. COURSE OUTCOMES :

The learner will:

<1>. Articulate the relevance of spiritual practice to modern life, including global issues that pose significant challenges to humanity's common future.

<2>. Demonstrate a healthy sense of one's place within the broad spectrum of religious history.

<3>. Articulate the role of religious components of his/her faith (including sacred language and writings, myth, metaphor, narrative history, theological suppositions, etc.) as sources of personal and cultural conflict and strategies for minimizing or resolving the distrust and tensions and for building more positive and cohesive relationships with persons of other faith traditions.

<4>. Demonstrate sympathetic appreciation of the breadth and depth of spiritual experience, appropriate awareness of the diversity within and among religious communities, and basic skills to enter dialog with persons of other faith traditions.

<5>. Participate in the shared community of multi-faith (pluralist) ideas and integrate the intellectual, theological, personal, and emotional aspects of those experiences.

*These outcomes include both knowledge and skills.*

**C1. What are the basic styles and purposes of interfaith engagement? What are the significant interfaith organizations and programs affecting the student's community? <4>** July 2

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Brown chapters 4 and 5. *Remarks on Interfaith activities, programs, organizations (educational, social, humanitarian, judicatorial, scholarly, devotional, etc).* Case studies: 9/11, Prayer Breakfasts. Student announcements of field work plans.

**C2. How do I discover my community's faith complexion and my opportunities within it? <4, 5>** July 9

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. *Remarks on Matkins.* Handout Observer articles on public prayer and stealing another's faith. Students prepare interfaith prayer for next session.

**C3. What issues with boundaries arise and how can they be negotiated? <4, 5>** July 16

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Discuss *Observer* handouts, share interfaith prayers, whether/how a church should offer a seder during Passover/Holy week, circumcision & cliterectomy, other issues.

**C4. What do we learn about ourselves as we learn about others? Can I be committed to my own faith and respectful and open to others? If so or if not, what does that mean for my ministry?** July 23

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Fieldwork reports and comments. Confessional-style, comfort-permitting, of attraction/repulsion/disinterest/etc in other faiths and level of commitment to one's own.

July 30 completion

#### NOTES

**A. DISCOVERING PRESUPPOSITIONS ABOUT OTHER FAITHS (AND OUR OWN)**

*The first third of the course prepares the student with categories and intellectual tools, and challenges the student to articulate one's spiritual practice with them.*

**A0. Getting acquainted: Our backgrounds, travel and other experiences, and perspectives as we approach this course..**

Live introductions. Review syllabus.

**A1. What meanings do terms such as *belief, dialogue, epiphany, evil, holistic, mission, myth, pilgrimage, religion, ritual, sacred, scripture, sacrifice, secular, spirituality, and worship* have for us and today's society?**

In-class non-graded written quiz on terms; discussion. Remarks on 4C's of religion (Schmidt), sacred (Eliade, Bellah, Bataille), religion (WC Smith, Masuzawa), myth (Eliade, Campbell). *Handout Unity mag article.*

**A2. What attitudes have scholars identified as ways folks approach faith perspectives other than their own?**

COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS ON STUDENTS' REVIEWS OF LAST SESSION; **HEREAFTER: "STUDENTS' REVIEWS."** Remarks on American history, peculiarities. Discuss Unity mag item. *Handout "Pluralism" from Eck with questions.*

**A3. What does "pluralism" mean? What are its theoretical, practical, and personal meanings? How does it apply to the local community and the "global village"? What are "theologies of religion"?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Review Heckman2. Discuss Pluralism Handout. *Handout Jeffers, pp 7-16.* Schemes by Race, Eck, H Smith, Knitter, Hick, Heim, etc. Review Heckman1.

**A4. Where are we aided and challenged by other traditions? How might our own and other traditions address environmental, personal, and social disorders?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Review Heckman3. Discuss Jeffers, *Remarks on "sacred" in world religions, Eliade.*

**B. LEARNING ABOUT OTHER FAITHS**

*This middle third of the course focuses on gaining knowledge of the world's religious complexion and one's locale's, and one's place in it; to talk about these effectively. Although class sessions focus on selected faiths in Prothero, the student is responsible from the entire book for the four questions.*

**B1. How do sociological, historical, phenomenological, and other methods of studying religions differ, and how do they help us understand another's faith?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. *Remarks on Berger, Jacobs.* Begin discussion of Prothero: Islam, Christianity, Confucianism.

**B2. What are the basic structures, texts, facts, practices, and variations of other faiths?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Continue Prothero discussion: Hinduism, Buddhism, Yoruba Religion. *Remarks on Novak.*

**B3. How do faiths compare and contrast?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Conclude Prothero discussion: Judaism, Daoism, Atheism. *Remarks about the "nones" and "Civil Religion."*

**B4. What is more, and what is less, useful for each of us today?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Students assess the faiths they know something about with respect to environmental, personal, and social problems, opportunities.

**C. ENCOUNTERING FOLKS OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS**

*The final third of the course develops formational and practice opportunities*

**C1. What are the basic styles and purposes of interfaith engagement? What are the significant interfaith organizations and programs affecting the student's community?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Review of Brown. *Remarks on Interfaith activities, programs, organizations (educational, social, humanitarian, judicatorial, scholarly, devotional, etc).* Case study: *Sept 11, 2002.* Student announcements of field work plans.

**C2. How do I discover my community's faith complexion and my opportunities within it?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. *Remarks on Matkins. Handout Observer articles on public prayer and stealing another's faith.* Students prepare interfaith prayer for next session.

**C3. What issues with boundaries arise and how can they be negotiated?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Discuss *Observer* handouts, share interfaith prayers, whether/how a church should offer a seder during Passover/Holy week, circumcision & cliterectomy, other issues.

**C4. What do we learn about ourselves as we learn about others? Can I be committed to my own faith and respectful and open to others? If so or if not, what does that mean for my ministry?**

STUDENTS' REVIEWS. Fieldwork reports and comments. Confessional-style, comfort-permitting, of attraction/repulsion/disinterest/etc in other faiths and level of commitment to one's own.