

Group Presentation: Religion in Society

Due: March 10th (First day of the last week of class)

Each group will explore applied aspects of one or more faiths as they interact with a changing world. Each group will have an opportunity to either choose from one of the topics listed on the following page or create their own topic. All topics are to be approved by the course instructor by 2/17/2014. Presentations will be graded based on the attached rubric.

Presentations must answer ALL of the following questions:

1. Which religion(s) are affected by this topic?
2. Why is the topic important to these respective religions or to society as a whole? Provide a religious context in terms of ethics, worldview, community, etc.
3. How does the topic relate to this religion's understanding of the sacred?
4. Provide a brief historical/social context for the topic. How did this come to pass?

Optional questions that may be answered:

5. Does the topic represent any changes in worldview or moral code?
6. If the topic is controversial, present any arguments 'for' or 'against' (may not be applicable).
7. What do you foresee in the future regarding this topic? How will this affect the religion(s) in question as a whole?

The following are requirements regarding the presentation itself:

- Each group member must contribute towards the presentation in order to receive full credit (speaking, writing, researching, and/or creating a visual aid).
- Each presentation must be at least 8 minutes in length and must not exceed 12 minutes.
- Visual aids are encouraged (PowerPoint, pictures, videos, posters, handouts, etc.)
- Each group must facilitate a brief question & answer period following the presentation.
- Each **individual** must provide the course instructor with a paragraph indicating the role of each group member (either printed paragraph or email).

Presentation topic examples
(Either choose one of these or create your own.
Topics MUST be approved by course instructor by Feb. 17, 2014.)

- Religious/spiritual views on medicine vs. secular understandings of medicine
- Gender roles in religions and how they are evolving
- Religious symbols in marketing and advertising
- Exploring the Pagan roots of contemporary American holidays
- The Native American Church (NAC) and the usage of peyote in ceremonies/services
- Indigenous traditions and environmental movements
- Pope Francis and transformations in the Catholic worldview
- The teaching of evolution vs. creationism in public schools
- The rise of evangelical Christianity in America
- Catholicism and the American Labor Movement (Catholic Workers, etc.)
- The role of Christianity in the American Civil Rights Movement
- Political/cultural persecution of American Muslims
- The Hajj and/or other modern religious pilgrimages
- The current conflict between Shiite and Sunni Muslims in the Middle East
- Islamic art and architecture
- The history of the Jewish state of Israel and the continuing Israel-Palestine conflict
- Traditional Jewish communities (Ex: Hasidic, Orthodox) in modern America
- The independence of India and Pakistan and their associated religious tensions
- Changing views regarding the caste system in modern India
- The river Ganges in contemporary Indian society
- Westernization of Hatha/Kundalini yoga and how it differs from traditional Hindu origins
- Confucian and Daoist influences in modern Chinese culture
- The Chinese occupation of Tibet and the Dalai Lama's government in exile
- Pacifism, religion, and the anti-war movement (Buddhism, Hinduism, Quakers, etc.)
- Zen Buddhism's influence on American jazz and poetry
- The "Fourth Vehicle" – Buddhism in the west

Group Presentation Grading Rubric

Trait:	Criteria:				Points:
	1	2	3	4	20 total
Content Did the presentation answer the required questions?	Presentation contained little to no answers to questions or applicable information	Presentation answered a few questions but on the whole was lacking in content	Presentation answered a good amount of required questions and benefited the class	Presentation answered all required questions and was extremely beneficial to the class	8 pts possible
Organization Was the presentation well organized and easy to follow?	The presentation lacked organization and had little evidence of preparation	There were minimal signs of organization and preparation	The presentation has organizing ideas but could have been much stronger with better preparation	The presentation was well organized, well prepared and easy to follow	4 pts
Presentation Did the presenters speak clearly? Did they engage the class?	Presenters did not speak clearly and were un-engaging	Presenters occasionally did not speak clearly and were often un-engaging	Presenters were often confident and mostly engaging	Presenters were very confident in their delivery and did an excellent job of engaging the class. Preparation is very evident	4 pts
Collaboration Did everyone contribute to the presentation (speaking or otherwise)?	Group members did not work together and it seems as though only one or two people worked on the presentation	Group members worked together a little bit and one or two people did not contribute to the presentation	Group members worked together significantly but one or two people did not contribute to the presentation	Group members worked together significantly and everyone contributed equally to the presentation	4 pts