

COURSE DESCRIPTION
IPI5/716 Encountering Other Religions: A Jewish Perspective
Vancouver School of Theology SUMMER 2020

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PURPOSE:

The objective is to gain a sense of how we relate to other religion besides the extremes of pluralism or rejection. This is a crucial task in our era of religious diversity, globalization and post-secularism. The narrative of the class starts with the global trajectories created by the Vatican document Nostra Aetate which lead to a series of positions called inclusivist, exclusivist, and pluralist. From there we will explore commonality, comparative theology, and appreciation. We conclude with thinking about religious diversity and the manyness of religious life as enrichment of one's own faith.

EXPECTATIONS AND COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

- *The objective is to gain a sense of how we relate to other religion besides the extremes of pluralism or rejection.
- * Gain a sense of how Christianity and Judaism might conceive its relationship to other religious traditions.
- *Gain a theological appreciation for the religious manyness of the world
- * Contrast the non-soteriological questions of Judaism with the Christian questions of salvation.
- *Discuss the need to move beyond tolerance to encounter, hospitality, and mutual learning.
- * Compare Muslim and Asian perspectives as reflected through the Jewish textual tradition.
- * Discuss the crucial task in our era of religious diversity, globalization and post-secularism.
- *Create a space for further work in reconciliation.
- *Explore the forefront of interfaith and interreligious work

FORMAT All courses offered in VST 2020 Summer School will only be available through distance learning, using Zoom for class sessions and Canvas, VST's online course platform, for course resources. All classes will be recorded on Zoom for password protected viewing by class participants only.

Zoom software requires minimum computer system requirements such as an internet connection – broadband wired or wireless, a camera and a microphone. For details please refer to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-Requirements-for-PC-Mac-and-Linux>. Students unfamiliar with Zoom will be provided basic support by VST. For reference see

<https://vst.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Zoom-Manual-for-Students.pdf>. Students will also be provided with basic support for accessing Canvas.

Work in the course consists of daily 3-hour Zoom classes that may include lectures and various in-class online discussions and small group exercises that will be accomplished through Zoom. All courses also include required readings to be completed before the course starts. As well various assignments may include papers or exercises during the week, and one or more final papers due by August 31 for Certificate and Basic Degree students. All papers will be submitted to the instructor via email or as the instructor specifies.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Books

Paul Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (Orbis Books, 2002) (Pluralist Catholic)

Alan Brill, *Judaism and Other Religions* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2010, pb 2014) (Inclusivist-Universal and/or Post-Liberal Jewish) When you read the chapters do not get lost in the details. I have less expensive copies for sale. The publisher switched owners and quadrupled the price.

Required Articles Online:

A.J. Heschel, *No Religion is an Island* (available online - **to be read for the 1st class**)

Book Selections: -- these will be posted to Canvas

Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*. Continuum, 2002 (first edition) chapters 1, 3,

Alan Brill, *Judaism and World Religions* selections

Alan Brill, *Rabbi on the Ganges: A Jewish Hindu Encounter* – selections

I will be sending various handouts to you based on class discussion. I will also give links to short youtube videos.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Attendance:** All students taking the course for Certificate or Degree credit must participate synchronously in all class sessions via Zoom. Auditors are encouraged to participate synchronously, but may request to watch class recordings asynchronously. 100% attendance is required of Certificate and Degree students.
2. **Readings:** All students including auditors are expected to do all the required readings.
3. **Class participation:** All synchronously participating students are expected to participate in all class discussions and activities. These will be set up via the Zoom technology.
4. **Certificate students:** Certificate students are required to hand in 5-6 pages of writing that demonstrates the ability to thoughtfully engage the material and reading for the class and gives a personal reflection on the reading and material covered.

5. **Basic degree students** (Diploma; MA; M.Div): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 1500-1875 words/6-8 pages.
6. **Advanced degree students** (Th.M): are required to do any required oral assignments during the course itself and submit any combination of written assignments totaling approximately 3750-4250 words/15-17 pages.

Further details about assignments will be provided on the course syllabus.

7. **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Abdullah, Arif Kemil. *The Qur'an and Normative Religious Pluralism: A Thematic Study of the Qur'an*. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2014.

Ariarajah, S. Wesley. *Your God, My God, Our God: Rethinking Christian Theology for Religious Plurality*. World Council of Churches, 2012

Clooney, Francis X. *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning Across Religious Borders*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Idem, *His Hiding Place Is Darkness: A Hindu-Catholic Theopoetics of Divine Absence* (Stanford University Press, 2013)

Idem, *The New Comparative Theology: Interreligious Insights from the Next Generation* (Continuum, 2010)

Cornille, Catherine. *Many Mansions?: Multiple Religious Belonging and Christian Identity*. New York: Orbis Books, 2002.

Cornille, Catherine. *The ImPossibility of Interreligious Dialogue*. New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2008.

Cracknell, Kenneth. *In Good And Generous Faith: Christian Responses to Religious Pluralism*. Pilgrim Press, 2006.

D'Costa, Gavin *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 2000

Idem, *Christianity and the World Religions. Disputed Questions in the Theology of Religions*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2009,

Idem, *Vatican II. Catholic Doctrines on Jews and Muslims*, Oxford UP, Oxford, 2014,

Dhammananda, K. Sri. *Buddhist Attitude Towards Other Religions*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Buddhist Missionary Society, 1983.

Duhan-Kaplan, Laura. *Encountering the Other: Christian and Multi-faith Perspectives* (Pickwick, 2020),

- Eck, Diana L. *Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Benares*, second edition. Beacon Press, 2003.
- Hedges Paul, *Comparative Theology*, Leiden: E. J. Brill 2018
- Idem, *Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue and the Theology of Religions*, London: SCM Press, 2010
- Heim, S.Mark. *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*. Orbis, 1995.
- Jayatileke, K. N. *The Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions*. Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1966.
- Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *An Introduction to the Theology of Religions: Biblical Historical & Contemporary Perspectives*. IVP Academic, 2003. ISBN 978-0-8308-2572-1.
- Kiblinger, Kristin Beise. *Buddhist Inclusivism: Attitudes Towards Religious Others*. Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005. ISBN 0754651339
- Largen, Kristin Johnston. *Finding God Among Our Neighbors: An Interfaith Systematic Theology*. Fortress, 2013.
- Legenhausen, Muhammad. *Islam and Religious Pluralism*. <http://www.al-islam.org/al-tawhid/vol14-n3/islam-and-religious-pluralism-dr-muhammad-legenhausen>.
- Makransky, John. *Buddhist Perspectives on Truth in Other Religions: Past and Present*. http://www.johnmakransky.org/article_04.html
- Moyaert, Marianne. *Fragile Identities Towards a Theology of Interreligious Hospitality*. 2011
- Idem, *In Response to the Religious Other: Ricoeur and the Fragility of Interreligious Encounters* Lexington, 2014
- Schmidt-Leukel, Perry, ed. *Buddhist Attitudes to Other Religions*. EOS, 2008.
- Shafiq, Muhammad & Mohammed Abu-Nimer. *Interfaith Dialogue: A Guide for Muslims*. London: IIIT, 2007.
- Shah Kazemi, Reza. *Common Ground Between Islam & Buddhism*. Fons Vitae, 2010.