

Course Syllabus

Course: AKAID – Comparative Study of Religions

Program of study: Islamic Theology

Number of ECTS credits: 6

Status of course: Mandatory

Code of course: 402

Number of classes: 3+2

Academic year: 2021/2022

Semester VII

Teacher: Prof. assis. dr. Zija Abdullahu Kontakti: e-mail: zabdullai@hotmail.com

Short description of course:

This course studies major and widespread religions in the world. The study falls in two categories: invented and revealed religions. The study will include these invented religions: Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Taoism, Confucianism and Shintoism. Revealed religions are: Judaism and Christianity. The study will provide a short account of development background for each religion, major beliefs, similarities, comparison between them and their current situation. In particular, there will be comparison between revealed religions respectively, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and will be shown common characteristics shared by these religions in terms of origin, belief, ceremony, worshipping, religions life and sects.

Goal of course:

The goal of this course is to equip students with knowledge regarding Comparison of Religions by exploring and studying major and most spread religions in the world. Also its purpose is that students develop skills and abilities to analyze various data on different religions as included in the study program so they could draw conclusions on their own. The course also will enable students to acquire and promote a sense of criticism for evaluating arguments based on facts on religions. It will train them to write and discuss about essays in a clear and argumentative style, both in written and verbal form. By the end of semester student are expected to have learnt general understanding on most dominant religions in the world like Zoroastrianism and other dominant religions in India, China and Japan. Students will learn about Christianity that has so many common things with Islam as a revealed religion. It will train them to write and discuss about essays in a clear and argumentative style, both in written and verbal form. Students will learn about Christianity that has so many common things with Islam as a revealed religion. The study will help students understand processes of development of these religions starting from their appearance until present day. By engaging in debates students will have an opportunity to realize that issues bringing the two religions together are greater in number than those dividing them. Students also will understand that there has been a positive increase of tolerance in society due to development of comparisons of religions and as such it must be advanced even more as it is in the interest of co-existence and peace in the world.

Expected learning outcomes:

By the end of semester students will be able to:

- Describe stages of development of the most the dominant religions
- Compare between different religions that they study during the course
- Discuss on these religions based on presented arguments by being objective in their approach
- Maintain attitudes of each religion as conceived by their followers
- Present critical opinion to each religion by bring in the most valuable one
- Be able to present obtained knowledge in his interreligious relations

Instruction Methodology:

- Lectures
- Analysis and interactive discussion
- Presentation of group and individual projects

- Presentation of audio and video materials

Content of course:

Week one: Introduction to syllabus, methods, organization, requirements and evaluation. General Reviews. Religion as a all-human phenomenon. Relation of religion with other sciences. Difference between philosophies and invented religions. Fruits of Islamic belief. History of Islam in the past and present. Contribution of Muslims in the study of comparative religions. Methodology of Islamic scholars in the study of religion. Study of comparative religions among Albanians. Invented religions: Religion in the ancient Persia: Zoroastrianism: 1 – Life and work of Zoroastrian. 2. Beliefs: 3 – Worshipping of Fire. 4 Holy Book. 5 – Sects. 6- Current condition of Zoroastrianism. Proposal of seminar papers' topics and essays.

Literature: Dr. Zija Abdullahu, *Comparative Study of Religions*, p. 11-42. (*In continuation we will mention only pages from this book*).

Week two: Most important religions in INDIA: Hinduism: 1 – Beliefs. 2- Worshipping and Hindus Laws. 3- Lesson of Ahimsa – avoiding of harm and violence. 4 – Sacred book of Hinduism. 5- Religions Holidays and Customs. BUDHISM: 1-Origin: Nirvana (Salvation) and disclosure of secrets. 2 – Beliefs. 3- Worshipping. 4- Holy Book. 5- Views of Buddha on wealth, work and wife. 6- Cancellation of casts. 7. Holidays and Celebrations. 8- Classification of Buddhists. 9- Messages of Buddha. 10- Causes of fast spread. 11- Opinions of Buddhists for Buddha. 12. Buddhism today. Interactive discussion on views of Buddha about wealth, work and wife and Islam opinion on such matters..

Literature: (f. 43-78)

Week three: JAINISM – 1- Origin. 2- Doctrine. 3- Beliefs. 4- Worshipping and Ceremonies 5- Holy Books. 6- Salvation Doctrines. 7- Ethical Teachings. 8-Fractions. 9- Jainism today: Sikhism: 1- Origin. 2- Beliefs. 3-Holy Book. 4- Rites of worshipping. 5-Other religions rules. 6- Celebrations. 7- Fractions. 8. Historical development of Sikh identity. Sikhism today. Debate on common aspects of Sikhism and Islam and their essential differences.

Literature: (f. 79-123)

Week four: most important religion in china: Taoism FOUNDER OF TAOISM. 2 – A PASS FROM PHILOSOPHY TO RELIGION. 3- BELIEFS. 4- BOOKS OF TAOISM. 5- RITES AND RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES. 6 - SHIFTING TO IDOLATRY. 7- TAOISM TODAY. CONFUCIANISM: 1 – ORIGIN. 2- DOCTRINE. 3- BELIEFS, 4- HOLY BOOKS, 5 – SECTS. 6- DIFFERENCE WITH OTHER RELIGIONS. 7. IMPORTANT EVENTS IN HISTORY OF CONFUCIANISM. 8- CONFUCIANISM TODAY. PROPOSAL FOR SEMINAR PAPERS' TOPICS

Literature: (f. 125-164).

Week five : Origin. 2. Penetration of Buddhism and Confucianism. 3. Beliefs. 4- Temples and Rites of Worshipping. 5- Holy Books. 6. Holidays. 7. Sects. 8- Japan Religion as a mission and occupation in the World. 9- Periods of Shintoism. Shintoism today. HEBRAISM (JAHUDISM): History of Hebraism: 1 – Origin. 2- Geographic and Demographic Position. 3 Origin of Hebrews and emigration of prophet Ibrahim to Palestine. 4- Isolation of Hebrews. 5- Transfer of prophet Jacob and his sons to Egypt. Events that took place after Israeli leaving Egypt. Entrance of Israeli sons to Palestinian land. Israeli Occupation 9- Hebrews in modern times. 10. Formation of Israeli National State. Interactive discussions on invented and revealed religions.

Literature: (p. 169-284).

Week six: Holy books of Hebraism: 1- Old Testament: Torah. 2- Christian Categorization of Old Testament. 3- Content of apocryphal books. 4. Credibility of Old Testament and Opinions about this. Islamic views on books not revealed before. 6- Talmud. Hebraic Beliefs: 1- Jahudism and name of god. 2- Concept of prophetess. 4- Concept of Promised Messiah. 5 Messy and Islamic texts. Interactive discussion about torah Talmud and Qur'an

Literature: (p. 285-322)

Week seven: Religions life in Jahudism: 1 – Definition of identity of Jahud. 2. Rules and worshipping methods. 3- Religious holidays and their periods. 4. Symbols. 5- Family life: circumvention, *Bar Micva*, funeral. Reminding box, food rules, prohibition of interest, Sects in Judaism: 1 Samaray. 2. Farsay. 3 Saduents. 4. Zelot. 5. Carait 6. Mysticism. 7 Hasidism and mysticism In Islam. 8. Judaism in Diaspora; Ashkanes, Sefards. First test. Students will be divided in two groups for this test .

Literature: (p. 325-360).

Week eight: A brief historical account of Christianity according to noble Qur'an. Life of Isa according to Qur'an. His paygamberness and miracles in Qur'an. Jesus/Isa in Christianity. Life of Jesus. Apostles of Jesus. Why did god (Jesus) die. Christianity after Jesus. Christianity and prosecutions. Debate on apostles from Islamic and Christian viewpoints.

Literature: (p. 376-398)

Week nine: Christian split. The apostle Paul. His hostility with his previous relatives. Paul receives revelation and his miracle. Paul and Hebraism. Novelty introduced by Paul in Christianity *Holy Books in Christianity*. Old Testament and its books. Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and

John. Works of apostles. Letter of Apostle Paul. Catholic letters or Christian letters. Interactive discussion to compare Christian and Islamic splits and comparison between Paul and Jesus.

Literature: (p. 400-433)

Week ten: *Christian Beliefs:* Holy Trinity. Belief in god-Father-son. Belief in god-holy spirit. Islamic views on trinity and its elements. Stance on belief on god-father, god-son and god-holy spirit. Origins of Trinity. Position of Maria/Merieme in Christianity First sin. Inheritance of first sin. God's justice. Clearing sin by believing in bloodshed. Interactive discussion on Islamic and Christian beliefs.

Literature (p. 434-465).

Week eleven: Crucifixion of Jesus. Gospels' contradictory data. Islamic concept of crucifixion. Jesus a judge in the next world. Belief in Reincarnation. Religious life of Christianity. Mysteries of Church – sacrament; baptism, communion, chrism, mystery of priests, marriage and anointing. Interactive discussion on the story of crucifixion among Muslims and Christians.

Literature: (p. 467-483).

Week twelve: Worshipping. Implores to god/Jesus. Crucifixion. Fasting. The Tenth Day. Pelegrine. Christian Holidays. Christmas. Period of Easter. Celebration of Sunday. Debate on Pelegrine and Ashura among Muslims.

Literature: (p. 484-496).

Week thirteen: Advises. Ecumenical councils. Council of Nicea (325). First council of Constantinople (381). First council of Ephesus (432), Council of Chalcedon (451), fourth council of Constantinople (869). Second council of Vatican (1962-65). Christian Sects. First split. Ebionites/ Hebrew-Christian.. Discussion on lessons of previous classes.

Literature: (f. 500-554)

Week fourteen: CHRISTIAN RELIGION SECRETS, FIRST SPLIT, EBIONITE Docetism. Monarchism. Aryanism. Monophystism, Diophystism. Discussion on Christian and Islamic religion sects.

Week fifteen: Great split of Church, orthodoxism, Chatholicism, Protestantism, Importance of Church in Christianity, Church and its elements.

Test – Students will be divided in two groups to take the final test.

Criteria and components of evaluation:

Participation and involvement in the class 10%

Seminar paper 10%

Evaluation of the first test 20%

Evaluation of the second test 20%

Final exam 40%

Total 100%

Literatura obliguese:

1. Dr. Zija Abdullahu, *Comparative Study of Religions*, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Prishtinë, 2010

Consultative literature:

1. *Kurani*; përkthim dhe komentim, përktheu: H. Sherif Ahmeti. Medinë, 1992.
2. *Bibla: Besëlidhja e Vjetër dhe Besëlidhja e Re* (Bibla katolike), përktheu: Don Simon Filipaj, Ferizaj, 1994.
3. *Dhiata e Vjetër dhe Dhiata e Re* (Bibla protestante), përktheu: ?, Tiranë, 1999.
4. *Shkrimet e Shenjta* (Bibla e Dëshmitarëve të Jehovahit), përktheu: ?, New York, 2005.
5. Abazi, Dedë, *Si na është zbuluar Zoti*, Prishtinë, 2008.
6. Alderson, dr. Richard, *Të krishterët e hershëm*, Prishtinë, 2002.
7. Boccaille, dr. Maurice, *Bibla, Kurani dhe shkenca*, Gjakovë, 1997.
8. el-Havli, dr. Muhammed Ali, *Komparacioni mes katër ungjijve*, Shkup, 2002.
9. Enciklopedia elektronike britanike "*Encyclopaedia Britannica 2011 – Ultimate Reference Suite*".
10. Farago, France, *Kishterimi, Judaizmi, Islami dhe mendimi perëndimor*, Tiranë, 2007.
11. Karabell, Zachary, *Ithtarët e librit*, përkth. nga angl. Fuad Morina, bot. Koha, Prishtinë.