

MR. JENKINS' WORLD RELIGIONS

SYLLABUS, 2004-05

The following is an outline for World Religions. The topics covered are flexible and this outline is not meant to be exhaustive over the full year. It is expected that each question will take approximately three or four class meetings for instruction and debate. Some questions within a section may be combined. Also, each question will require a 1-2 page written response. Due dates for these essays will be announced in class and on the class webpage. After the initial three questions have been answered, some anti-papers may be assigned, in which you will answer the question in some way other than essay format, such as a collage, illustration, movie, CD compilation, etc. Additional materials and related links are available through the class' website (www.hammondhs.org/teachers/jenkins/religion.htm).

I. The Three Questions: Comparing answers among the world's religions

- A. How did we get here?
- B. What is the purpose or definition of a lifetime?
- C. What happens next?

II. Foundations and practices

- A. How does a religion get started?
- B. How do religious members practice their faith?
- C. What role do symbols and relics play in a religion?
- D. What role do rituals play in a religion?
- E. How do religious ideas spread geographically and generationally?

III. Religion as a Political Force

- A. How has religion affected the politics of the past?
- B. What role does religion have in world politics?
- C. How do members of different religious groups view each other?
- D. What role should religion play in politics?

IV. Cultural Influences of Religion

- A. How is art affected by religion?
- B. How is literature affected by religion?
- C. How is music affected by religion?
- D. How do religions incorporate the concept of time in their beliefs?
- E. How do movies shape our views of religions?
- F. How does a religion affect the daily life of its believers?

V. Advanced Topics and Debate

- A. Why do some religions endure and others disappear?
- B. What role does violence or nonviolence play in religion?
- C. How do religions handle internal and external conflict?
- D. What is the relationship between science and religion?
- E. What role should religion play in education?
- F. What will the religious landscape look like in the future?