

Assessment Plan

Western Michigan University

Comparative Religion

Mission Statement: The Program in Comparative Religion is designed to give students: an understanding of the nature and role of religion in human societies, both past and present, both non-Western and Western; a grasp of the various methods used by scholars to describe and explain religion, and the means to assess achievements of these methods as well as develop new methods for increasing their knowledge of religious thought and practice; and an opportunity for raising questions about the present and future significance of religious thought and practice.

Outcome: Knowledge A

Students should be familiar with the principal stories, practices, values, and institutions of at least two religious traditions.

Outcome Status: Active

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
REL 1000: Religions of the World Course grade. Assessment Method Category: Course Grade	Grade of CB or better.		Yes
REL 1000: Religions of the World Diagnostic exam administered at the beginning of course (ungraded) and as part of final exam (graded): 1. True or false: Religious studies is the same as theology? 2. Name a sacred text of Hinduism. 3. Name the holy book of Islam. 4. Orthodox means: Old-fashioned; Correct belief; Original tradition; Moral. 5. Origins of rituals are often explained by which dimension of religion? Mythical; Ethical; Institutional; Material. 6. The First Amendment of the Constitution says two things about religion, each in its own "clause." What are the two religion clauses of the First Amendment? Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure	Percent improvement for each question from beginning of course to final.	Each semester.	Yes
REL 3130: Religion in America Diagnostic exam administered at the beginning of course (ungraded) and as part of final exam (graded). Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure	5: Outstanding 4: Very Good 3: Good 2: Acceptable 1: Unacceptable	Each semester course is offered.	Yes

Related Courses

* REL 1000 - Religions of World

Outcome: Knowledge B

Students must demonstrate knowledge of the history of the study of religion.

Outcome Status: Active

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
REL 2000: Introduction to Religion Graded exams and papers.	5: Outstanding 4: Very Good 3: Good	Each semester the course is offered.	Yes

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active

Assessment Method Category:
Course Grade

2: Acceptable
1: Unacceptable

Related Courses

- * REL 1000 - Religions of World
- * REL 2000 - Introduction to Religion

Outcome: Knowledge C

Students must demonstrate an ability to apply basic cross-cultural categories in the study of religion.

Outcome Status: Active

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
REL 3080	Students were evaluated on their ability to answer the question thoroughly, concisely, and coherently demonstrating both a knowledge of the material, and awareness and sensitivity to diverse viewpoints.	Each semester the course is offered.	Yes
<p>Students were given the following comprehensive essay question as part of the final exam. The question was distributed well before the exam date and was to be typed and turned in. Students were to keep the question in mind as they studied throughout the semester. The week before the exam was due one class session was dedicated to a discussion of this and other essay questions on the exam. The process of repetition, discussion and research worked well. Students did very well on this question. As can be seen they scored on average higher than they performed on average in the class.</p> <p>THE QUESTION</p> <p>You're at dinner with friends and one of them, knowing you have just taken a course on Japanese religions, asks you to explain religion in Japan. You don't have all night, so you choose the 2-3 themes/issues you think best answer your friend's question. What would those themes be? In other words, based on everything covered in the course what 2-3 points would you use to introduce Japanese religions? Why would you choose them? You must draw supporting evidence from the readings and lectures.</p> <p>Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure</p>			

Related Courses

- * REL 1000 - Religions of World
- * REL 3080 - Japanese Religion

Outcome: Skills A

Students should have critical thinking skills appropriate to the field.

Outcome Status: Active

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
<p>REL 3000: Writing About Religion</p> <p>Three short papers (a book review, textual analysis, and comparative analysis) demonstrating ability to analyze texts and construct an argument. The evaluation of each paper is based on quality of argument, depth of analysis, appropriateness of organization, and clarity of style.</p> <p>Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure</p>	<p>90-100 Outstanding 80-89 Good 70-79 Adequate 60-69 Needs Improvement But Shows Progress 0-59 Very Weak</p>	Each semester course is offered.	Yes
<p>REL 3000: Writing About Religion</p> <p>Final paper and presentation demonstrating ability to research a topic of choice, select an appropriate critical approach, construct a meaningful argument, and present ideas coherently to a peer audience. The evaluation of the final paper and presentation is consistent with previous papers; therefore, improvement from the short papers to the final paper and presentation shows students' overall improvement in course.</p> <p>Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure</p>	<p>90-100 Outstanding 80-89 Good 70-79 Adequate 60-69 Needs Improvement But Shows Progress 0-59 Very Weak</p>	Every semester course is offered.	Yes
<p>REL 3030: Chinese Religions</p> <p>Assessment of Performance on Primary Source Analysis Project in REL 3030 Chinese Religion</p> <p>Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure</p>	<p>5: Outstanding 4: Very Good 3: Good 2: Acceptable 1: Unacceptable</p>	Each semester the course is offered.	Yes
<p>REL 3050: Christian Tradition</p> <p>Level of achievement and/or improvement of performance from first to second "Primary Source Analysis Paper" in REL 3050 The Christian Tradition.</p> <p>Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure</p>	<p>5: Outstanding 4: Very Good 3: Good 2: Acceptable 1: Unacceptable</p>	Each semester course is offered.	Yes
<p>REL 3080: Japanese Religions</p> <p>Students were given the following comprehensive essay question as part of the final exam. The question was distributed well before the exam date and was to be typed and turned in. Students were to keep the question in mind as they studied throughout the semester. The week before the exam was due one class session was dedicated to a discussion of this and other essay questions on the exam. The process of repetition, discussion and research worked well. Students did very well on this question. As can be seen they scored on average higher than they performed on average in the class.</p> <p>THE QUESTION</p> <p>You're at dinner with friends and one of them, knowing you have just taken a course on Japanese religions, asks you to explain religion in Japan. You don't have all night, so you choose the 2-3 themes/issues you think best answer your friend's question. What would those themes be? In other words, based on everything covered in the course what 2-3 points would you use to introduce Japanese religions? Why would you</p>	<p>Students were evaluated on their ability to answer the question thoroughly, concisely, and coherently demonstrating both a knowledge of the material, and awareness and sensitivity to diverse viewpoints.</p> <p>On a scale from 0-5 with 5 being the highest score:</p> <p>5 = 60% 4 = 21% 3 = 05% 2 = 14% 1 = 0% AV= 4.26</p>	Each semester the course is offered.	Yes

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active

choose them? You must draw supporting evidence from the readings and lectures.

Assessment Method Category:

Course-Embedded Measure

Related Courses

- * REL 3000 - Writing About Religion
- * REL 3030 - Chinese Religion
- * REL 3050 - Christian Tradition

Outcome: Skills B

Students should be proficient in field-appropriate comparative methodologies.

Outcome Status: Active

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
REL 2000: Introduction to Religion Graded exams and papers. Assessment Method Category: Course Grade	5: Outstanding 4: Very Good 3: Good 2: Acceptable 1: Unacceptable	Each semester course is offered.	Yes

Related Courses

- * REL 2000 - Introduction to Religion
- * REL 3000 - Writing About Religion

Outcome: Skill C

Students should have writing skills appropriate to the field.

Outcome Status: Active

Means of Assessment			
Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
REL 3000 Three short papers (a book review, textual analysis, and comparative analysis) demonstrating ability to analyze texts and construct an argument. The evaluation of each paper is based on quality of argument, depth of analysis, appropriateness of organization, and clarity of style. Assessment Method Category: Course-Embedded Measure	90-100 Outstanding 80-89 Good 70-79 Adequate 60-69 Needs Improvement But Shows Progress 0-59 Very Weak	Each semester course is offered.	Yes
REL 3000: Writing About Religion Final paper and presentation demonstrating ability to research a topic of choice, select an appropriate critical approach, construct a meaningful argument, and present ideas coherently to a peer audience. The evaluation of the final paper and presentation is consistent with previous papers; therefore, improvement from the short papers to the final paper and	90-100 Outstanding 80-89 Good 70-79 Adequate 60-69 Needs Improvement But Shows Progress 0-59 Very Weak	Every semester course is offered.	Yes

Means of Assessment

Assessment Method	Criterion	Schedule	Active
-------------------	-----------	----------	--------

presentation shows students' overall improvement in course.

Assessment Method Category:

Course-Embedded Measure

REL 3050: Christian Tradition	5: Outstanding 4: Very Good 3: Good 2: Acceptable 1: Unacceptable	Each semester the course is offered.	Yes
Assessment of writing performance and improvement on two Primary Source Analysis Papers in REL 3050 The Christian Tradition			

Assessment Method Category:

Course-Embedded Measure

Related Courses

* REL 3000 - Writing About Religion

* REL 3050 - Christian Tradition