



Westside High School
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES
MR. CHRISTMAN
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ROOM A151

COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS

Welcome to Comparative Religions. This information sheet is issued to you to inform you of the goals, expectations, and standards I have for you for this course. I hope to foster cooperation and understanding between you, your parent(s)/guardian(s), and me this school year so that we together can maximize your educational experience, and so that you can successfully navigate this course.

Why take Comparative Religions? The purpose of this course is to:

- *Assess the various approaches to the study of religion including theological, ethical-philosophical, historical, psychological and sociological;
- * Analyze the role of individual and collective ritual in the development of cultural consciousness;
- *Investigate commitment and participation in religious activity;
- *Assess the influence of religion on culture;
- *Identify and examine commonalities found in all religions.

CLASS ROOM MATERIALS

Materials needed for the class **EVERY DAY**:

- Notebook (any type is acceptable)
- a Writing Utensil (i.e. pencil, and/or pen)

TESTS/PROJECTS

Tests will typically be administered at the end of each unit, covering the chapter(s) we have just studied. Tests will comprise 50% of your total grade. The style and frequency of tests, however, is subject to change. The tests can/will typically consist of:

- **Multiple Choice Questions.**
- **Short-Answer Items.** These will require the student to write a general, but *thorough* description of a particular person, place, or thing in the unit that we have just completed studying.
- **Essays.** These are large expositions that the student will write to explain *in detail* the cause(s) and effect(s), and importance of a particular event, movement, etc. of the World's major religions. The essay must be clear and cover *ALL* important aspects of the subject matter.

Some tests may be pop tests. You must be prepared to be tested every day of class. This means that you must have read and studied the material covered in class every day. Pop tests may be of whatever format the teacher designates.

HOMEWORK

Homework will comprise 25% of your total grade. Homework will exist typically in two forms: reading and written.

Reading Homework will be required every night, with the exception of a day of a test. The student will need to read the section(s) of the chapter and/or the chapters and class notes that the teacher has covered in the class lecture that day.

Written Homework will be required at any time the teacher deems appropriate. The homework will typically be essay in format. The student is responsible for completing the homework the night before it is due. Doing homework in class the day that it is due, or turning the homework in late may result in a large number of points being taken off of the homework grade. Copying someone else’s homework or failing to turn in homework will result in a “0” for that particular grade.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students may make up tests and homework when they bring in an excuse that meets with the guidelines of an excused absence as stated by the Richmond County Board of Education. The missed work must be made up in a timely manner as directed by the teacher. Work missed due to an unexcused absence may not be allowed to be made up; consequently, the grade(s) missed as a result of the unexcused absence could result in a “0” for those grades.

CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADE/IN-CLASS WORK

Students are eligible to receive a class participation grade that will be counted as a grade at the end of a nine weeks grading period. Class participation will be based on a rubric, which is displayed below. It comprises 25% of your grade. Students not performing to the standards of the rubric may be denied the extra grade that a good Class Participation can provide. Failing class participation grades for a nine weeks’ period may not be counted. The teacher reserves the right to make changes in the rubric or use another rubric when and if it becomes necessary.

GRADING RUBRIC

A general grading rubric for each assignment is listed on the back of this syllabus. The teacher will use this rubric in grading each student’s assignment. The teacher reserves the right to make changes in the rubric or use another rubric when and if it becomes necessary.

DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM

The rule for classroom discipline is simple: Work hard, study hard, do the right thing. If the student does not do the things, the student will be punished in an appropriate manner determined by the teacher/Westside High School policy, and Richmond County Board of Education policy.

Again, I am pleased to have you in my class and look forward to our school year. I believe we will have a productive school year if we all work hard toward our goals. I will make myself available to all of you anytime that you need me.

In CHRIST,

Mr. Christman
(Westside High School—Class of 1986)

I, _____, parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____, have received, read, and understand the contents of the syllabus for Mr. Christman’s Comparative Religions course.

Signed _____

Date _____

**TEST ESSAY/HOMEWORK ESSAY GRADING RUBRIC
FOR
COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS
MR. CHRISTMAN

WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL**

<i>SCORING</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>
100-90	Contains a well-developed thesis focused on the question which guides the development of the essay throughout. Presents an effective analysis and explanation and demonstrates understanding of the complexity of the topic. Effectively uses all or a substantial number of outside source material and interprets them correctly; uses many accurate details from the time period and interprets them correctly. Supports thesis with substantial and relevant outside information. May contain insignificant errors that do not hinder argument or organization.
89-79	Contains a consistent, well-developed thesis which addresses the question. Clear explanation of the differences or similarities of the topic of the issue; some imbalance is acceptable. Effectively uses some outside source material or uses detail to support interpretation. Includes insignificant outside information. Errors do not interfere with the comprehension.
78-70	Presents a limited, confused, or poorly developed thesis; weak organization and writing. Describes differences or similarities in a general or simplistic manner, may cover only part of the topic. Ineffective use of outside source material—briefly cites or quotes outside material in a “laundry list” presentation of information; interprets outside material incorrectly. Contains little outside information that is not relevant or is inaccurate. May contain major errors.
69-BELOW	Contains no thesis or a thesis that does not address the topic Exhibits inadequate or inaccurate understanding of the question. Contains little or no understanding of outside source material or ignores them completely. Contains inappropriate or no outside information. Includes numerous errors both major and minor. <i>The assignment was not submitted to the teacher in a timely manner.</i>
0	PLAGIARISM, CHEATING OF ANY FORM ON THE ASSIGNMENT

**CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADE RUBRIC
FOR
COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS
MR. CHRISTMAN
WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL**

- 100**
- *Demonstrates excellent preparation; has analyzed the unit well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readiness, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.).
 - *Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of case material, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further.
 - *Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc.
 - *Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement.
- 90**
- *Demonstrates good preparation: knows discussion topics and unit facts well, has thought through implications of them.
 - *Offers interpretations and analysis of unit/chapter material (more than just facts) to class.
 - *Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion.
 - *Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement.
- 75**
- *Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.
 - *Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the discussion or unit/chapter), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class).
 - *Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called upon.
 - *Demonstrates sporadic involvement
- 50**
- *Students talk during class to other students without permission of the teacher
 - *Students do other class work other than Comparative Religions in this class
 - *Students sleep in class
 - *Students do not take notes consistently in class
 - *Students do not pay attention consistently in class
 - *Students eat or drink in class
 - *Students use cell phone, I-Pod, "Walkman", CD player, camera, or any other non-authorized electronic device in class.
 - *Students are disrespectful to anyone in class
 - *Students disrupt the class in any form