American Religious Experience  
Fall Semester 2007  
Department of Theology, Walsh Jesuit High School

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**Course Description:**  
This course is will survey religion in America. Students will be introduced to the basic elements that constitute a religion. Students will then examine the role of religion in American culture and how is this similar/different from other cultures. Students will be introduced to the basic tenets of the major religious traditions that are present in North America.

**Goals and Objectives:**  
1. To grow in one’s understanding of faith, religion and theology.  
2. To gain a greater appreciation and understanding of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism.  
3. To reflect critically upon one’s own religious tradition.  
4. To distinguish between authentic faith and religious corruption.  
5. To understand the delicate balance between religion and society.  
6. To promote academic interest in the field of theology.

**Class Format:** Students have an obligation to participate in class. The class will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. Students are expected to come to class with comments, questions, concerns, and insights on the assigned readings.

**Procedure:** The student is expected to bring to class a pen, pencil, loose-leaf paper, a three ring binder, notebook, his or her student planner, and textbook.

**Required Text:** *Experiencing The World’s Religions*4th Edition (Published by McGraw Hill Higher Education)  
*Experiencing the World’s Religions* provides a clear and compelling account of religion as a diverse, lived experience by peoples around the world. Global in its coverage, the text conveys the vitality and richness of the world's religions as a living cultural wellspring that not only concerns systems of belief but how those beliefs are expressed in ceremonies, food, clothing, art, architecture, pilgrimage, scripture, and music. The text demonstrates why an understanding of the world's religions enriches our lives. In an engaging narrative emphasizing the experience of religion, the text takes students on a personal voyage through doctrines, history, the religiously inspired arts, ceremonies, and everyday expressions of belief and combines these with powerful photographs from around the globe. The text goes beyond traditional approaches to personally connect students with the vitality of the great religions and how they reach into the lives of individuals and the culture at large. This fourth edition has been thoroughly updated in both content and illustration, to address recent world events and political changes, and provide additional insight into current theory and practice.

**Class Attendance:** Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get the work for your classmates or find it the class webpage (www.schoolnotes.com).

**Policy regarding assigned work, quizzes, tests, and reading:** All assigned work is to be completed by the date assigned – late work may not be accepted. If you are absent, missed work is due on the day that you return. Quizzes and tests will be performed in class. The teacher reserves the right to give unannounced reading quizzes at any time. Extensions on assignments will only be granted for very serious reasons (such as the death of an immediate family member).
Policy regarding students with disabilities: Students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodation if needed. If you believe that you need accommodations, please see me.

Policy regarding Academic Integrity: Be honest, an honor code is in effect. The policy on academic honesty from your Student Handbook is in full effect and will be strictly enforced.

Hall Pass Privilege: Use of the hall pass is a privilege. You are required to bring your materials for class with you each day. You will not be permitted to use the pass to go to your locker. Only at the discretion of the teacher will you be permitted to use the hall pass. For example, if you must go to the dean of student’s office or visit the school nurse, I may allow you to use the pass. Requests to use the hall pass to go to the restroom should be the exception, not the norm. Abuse of the hall pass, such as using the pass under false pretenses to go to your locker, will result in your privilege being revoked permanently.

Teacher not present: In the event that the teacher is not present, everyone is to be seated. Only one student should leave the room to inform the Assistant Principal’s Office.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation: Regular and active participation is expected in this course. Students are expected to show up to class physically and mentally. One should come to class prepared to dialogue about the assigned readings. Unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your final grade by one letter grade (e.g. an absence will change the final grade from A- to B+ etc.).

10% of the Final Grade

Quizzes: Scheduled quizzes will be given during the course. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice and/or true and false, and/or fill-in and brief essay questions. The material for quizzes will come from class lectures, readings and discussions. Smaller reading quizzes may be given at any time.

15% of the Final Grade

Assignments: Assignments are due at designated times in this course. The student will be given instructions topics are distributed.

35% of the Final Grade

Exams: Periodic tests will be given. The tests will include multiple choice, true and false, and may include fill-in and essay questions. The exams will cover material from class lectures, readings and discussions.

40% of the Final Grade

Grade Calculation Formula:

Quarter Grades: The Quarter grade will be calculated by the following formula:
Tests = 40%
Assignments = 35%
Quizzes = 15%
Participation = 10%

Semester Grades: The Semester grade will be calculated by the following formula:
First Quarter Grade = 40%
Second Quarter Grade = 40%
Semester Exam = 20%
I have read and understand the class policies and procedures

Student Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Parent Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________