**Andrew O. Fort Mysticism Office Hours**

**TBH 214, 257-6448 RS 30733 11 daily or by appt.**

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**Course description:** In this course, we shall examine conceptions of "mysticism" and "mystical experience," and then consider mystical dimensions of Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and some modern thinking. Our exploration will, of course, use concepts and modes of inquiry common in the academic study of religion.

**Outcomes:** Through four short papers, exercises, and a final course review and reflection, as well as class participation, you will be assessed on your ability:

To understand and analyze conceptions of "mysticism" and "mystical experience," and how they are an important aspect of the phenomenon called religion.

To comprehend ways of thinking and acting by those following various mystical traditions, and thereby some of the diversity of human experience found among cultures and peoples.

To read critically, think analytically, speak persuasively, and write effectively through the description, analysis and evaluation of various “mystical” ideas and practices.

To reflect deeply on our notions of our selves, ultimate reality, and their relationship; existential inquiry is an inevitable component of this course.

**Expectations:** You are expected to attend all classes (come on time, but come even if late), and to read (and think about) the assignments before class. Lectures and discussion are central, and demand preparation; the uninformed or absent student hinders the whole class. If you miss four or more classes, your grade can be lowered automatically unless you have a legitimate and documented excuse.

The reading load is generally not heavy, but does take time and commitment. Bring the relevant books to class; we will analyze the readings. Be ready to listen, think, question, and speak. All topics are open, but civil and respectful discourse is required. Other comments on class etiquette may be found on my eCollege/Learning Studio site.

**Assignments**: **There will be four short (c. 4 page or 1000 word) papers (15% of grade each), and a final 7-8 page course review (25%).** The papers should inform me about your reactions to the material, and will allow you to investigate the investigator (yourself). Unless you contact me beforehand, late papers will be permitted only for officially excused absences. We will also be using eCollege/Learning Studio, and you will need to post an entry **every Wednesday;** it is mandatory but individual entries are ungraded. **Class participation (including attendance and eCollege journal entries) will be 15% of grade.** I will assess both the quantity and quality of these course elements.

A=always present, contributed often (in class and journal) thoughtfully and intelligently; consistently assumed responsibility for keeping discussion going; B=almost always present, contributed mostly thoughtfully and intelligently; aided in keeping discussion moving but did not always assume responsibility; C=usually present, contributed sporadically without taking much responsibility; D=missed a number of classes, contributed occasionally; did not take ownership of class discussion.

***Grades: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60. I use +/-, and use the following grade scale: .0-.3=grade minus, .31-.74=grade, .75-.99=grade plus***

***You may check in with me about your course standing at any time.***

If you have a problem affecting your course participation, or must miss class, let me know. Also, if you have a disability which may affect your class performance, please inform me during the first week of class. Here are some policy statements:

*Disability Statement approved Fall 2007 by the Undergraduate Council / Revised Summer 2011*: Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities.  Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 1010.  Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations.  Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator.  Guidelines for documentation may be found at <http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp>.

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.

**Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) –Any act, such as cheating or plagiarism, that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the Undergraduate Catalog (Student Policies>Academic Conduct Policy Details; <http://www.catalog.tcu.edu/current_year/undergraduate/>).

Finally, feel free to see me after class or in my office.

**RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

Campus Life (257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006); TCU Library (257-7117); Center for Academic Services (257-7486, Sadler Hall 1022); Writing Center (257-7221, Reed 419); Student Development Services (257-7855, BLUU 2003); Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (257-7830, Jarvis Hall), and Counseling, Testing, and Mental Health Center (257-7863, Brown Lupton Health Center).

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

R. Ellwood, *Mysticism and Religion,* 2nd edition

F. C. Happold, *Mysticism*

E. Dimock, *In Praise of Krishna*

A. Watts, *The Way of Zen*

Ram Dass, *The Only Dance There Is*

Selected readings found on DocSharing in eCollege/Learning Studio

**DAILY CLASS ASSIGNMENTS (also check if eCollege entry is due)**

13 Jan. Introduction to course read Douthat article in DocSharing

15 Jan. Defining mysticism and mystical experience Ellwood: ix-xiii, 1-17

22 Jan. Mystical experience Ellwood: 18-33, 39-52

27 Jan. Mystical union Ellwood: 75-88, 92-103

29 Jan. Communication and techniques Ellwood: 106-12, 126-32, 134-41

3 Feb. Mysticism: society and path **FIRST PAPER DUE**

Ellwood: 146-55, 158-60, 164-66, 171-87

5 Feb. Roots of Christian mysticism Happold: 175-84, 203-17

(Plato and Plotinus)

10 Feb. Love mysticism Happold: 235-48 Ellwood: 63-67

12 Feb. Eckhart and others Ellwood: 116-23 Happold: 269-79, 314-32

17 Feb. Sts. Teresa and John of the Cross Happold: 342-66

19 Feb. " " " **SECOND PAPER DUE**

24 Feb. Hinduism: Upanisadic monism

Ellwood: 58-61 Watts: 35-41

Readings from *The Hindu Tradition* to Shankarain DocSharing

26 Feb. Hinduism: Shankara's Vedanta

*The Hindu Tradition* on Shankara and Deutsch in DocSharing

3 March Hinduism: Patanjali's Yoga Eliade, to p. 53 in DocSharing

5 March " " " Eliade, to end

**SPRING BREAK**

17 March Hinduism: devotion to Krishna

Dimock/Levertov: vii-xx, 77-9, 3-69

19 March “ “ review *In Praise of Krishna*

24 March Buddhism: the Buddha **THIRD PAPER DUE**

Watts: 29-31, 43-56

26 March Buddhism: meditation Happold: 170-3

*The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* (Thera) in DocSharing

31 March Contemplative exercise day

2 April Buddhism: Mahayana Watts: 57-69 Happold: 162-mid166

7 April Madhyamika Buddhism readings from *The Experience of Buddhism*

9 April Buddhism: the Bodhisattva

14 April Buddhism: Ch'an Watts: 77-112

16 April Zen Watts: 115-36, 142-73 **FOURTH PAPER DUE**

21 April Modern mysticism Ellwood: 67-71, 112-16

(science) Happold: 22-3, 30-4, 137-40, 394-97

23 April Modern mysticism Goleman and Smothermon in DocSharing

28 April Modern mysticism: Ram Dass

*The Only Dance There Is*, 1-41, 47-75

30 April Be Here Now in *The Only Dance There Is*,

(you can read it all, or focus on the following pages)

79-81, 89-92, 104-26, 137-9, 150-7, 166-74

**FINAL PAPER DUE** (by 3 p.m., Tuesday, May 6)

In 7-8 pages, review your experience of the course, summarize high and low points, and refer to key points in text and lecture. You must spend a couple pages discussing Ram Dass.**PAPER WRITING SUGGESTIONS**

Papers should be typed and double-spaced. A clean-looking paper will help you. Proper spelling and grammar are important, and will affect your grade.

Unless otherwise specified, your paper should focus on an idea or a few ideas which arise from reflections on the course material. Set aside some time to think about the paper before you write. Make notes of your thoughts. Review the assigned material and look for passages related to your topic. Construct an outline. Include brief but accurate summation of the relevant readings and do some self-investigation. Why are you interested in what you wrote about? After writing a first draft, check to see if you clearly state, then address, the main issue(s) or theme(s), and if your paper has an introduction and conclusion.

I am looking for clear self-expression and increased self-understanding in addition to understanding and critical analysis of textual material.

You may rewrite, and at times I will encourage you to rewrite. Remember that there is a library nearby, and that you can consult with me about research resources. If you refer to or quote course books, page numbers may be put in parentheses after references. We also have an excellent Writing Center (Reed 419, 257-7221), if you need help.

Your paper will be graded on:

1) form (presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation).

2) clarity of focus, organization, and expression.

3) utilization of course material.

4) critical reflection and personal insight.