

# **Cities of god:**

## **Ancient World Religions and Philosophy**

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**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday 11am-12noon and 1:20pm to 2:30pm; Tuesday 9am-10am, and Thursday 12:20-1:20, ***OR BY APPOINTMENT*** (Please do feel free to contact me to find a time to come by as needed!)

### **Course Description:**

The pre-Modern world has had an enduring influence on global culture and politics, for most of the major world religions crystallize before the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE. This course will examine the origins of major systems of belief around the world, with special attention to the political and cultural contexts in which they grew. In addition, the course will explore the origins of philosophical thinking in Greece and China, and consider the relationship between religious and philosophical ideas. The course will further explore in what ways religion and ideas are indigenous to a region and in what ways they are global. Finally, we will be meeting the Content Standards for World Studies as developed at IMSA.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. To create an educational setting that is conducive to the free exchange of ideas and information. This will not only facilitate the student's understanding of the material, but will create a better all-around thinker. The same will apply to the development of written and research skills.
2. To understand the numerous forces that contributed to the creation of World civilizations, whether directly or indirectly.
3. Where possible, to identify recurring themes in history and examine them.
4. To develop skills as a historian through the analysis and evaluation of historical material.
5. To look at the topics presented from both a Positivist and Historiographic viewpoint.

### **Course Evaluation:**

Quizzes	25%
Class Participation	25%
Papers and Projects	40%
Creation Poster	10%

**FYI: Class Participation:** This category represents two potentials for a grade. The first is the traditional effort to demonstrate knowledge of materials by verbal answers to questions or additions to discussions. If you have read the material this can even

be seen from offering effective questions. But you will be required to speak during class. The second opportunity will come in a number of short, often written assignments that are due in class and will be graded for this category and will include timelines, maps, or notes.

### **Student Expectations:**

#### **Absences and Lateness (Tardy):**

Class is mandatory (as per the Handbook). Any unexcused absence will result in “no credit” for that class period. Anyone late up to ten minutes will receive a “tardy” report and after ten minutes, an “absent” one. Please, as is humanly possible, do not be late. If you have a good reason for being more than ten minutes late, still come to class and we can discuss it after the period, but *never* during. If you do not have a good excuse, be honest about it.

There is also no automatic right to make-up a quiz or hand in a late assignment. Make-ups will be allowed, and late assignments accepted, only with a valid excuse. All work missed due to illness must be finished within a week of your return or will not count. Example of a valid excuse: An illness requiring medical care, a family crisis, a pre-arranged/approved attendance at a school function, or in the case of accidental dismemberment.

#### **Assignment Policy:**

*All assignments are due in class the day assigned.* Period. There really are *no* good computer excuses. All short assignments that fall under class participation must be turned in that class period, no later. Failure to have materials in hand will result in no credit. Papers and projects are due in class or will suffer a late penalty. Any paper turned in by the end of the day will lose one full letter grade. If turned in by the end of the second day, they lose another full letter grade, and after the third day the assignment will not be accepted at all (you receive a zero). This rule is not negotiable except in the case of recognized illness or having to leave IMSA for an emergency. Finally, for all late work, it is your responsibility to find me and give it to me, not just to “leave it on my chair.”

#### **Class Room Decorum:**

Each student is expected to behave in a civilized and scholarly fashion toward his or her peers. Respect will be shown for those speaking and in addressing differences. Also, *no headgear* (i.e. baseball caps or bandanas) will be worn during the class period. Phones will not be permitted (if you have it, turn it off and put it away). If your phone or device goes off during class, I will take it, and you can get it from me

the following day, in my office. Finally, sleep is an issue at IMSA. Don't do it in my class or you will be told to stand, or worse, leave.

If you are caught "IM"ing in *any* fashion, so Facebook, Tumblr, etc, you will be given a "0" for the day. That is a "first" warning. The second time you will be asked to leave the classroom and be given an "unexcused absence." Please take this seriously, as three unexcused absences will result in withdrawal from the course. *Seriously*. The best solution for this is that you close all non-class associated windows on your screen.

### **Assigned Readings, etc:**

The reading assignments are given in detail and are listed on the day they are due. Failing to read them will undermine your ability to participate and undermine your grade on pop quizzes. Projects and written assignments will be injected into the schedule and are therefore not listed. However, all assignments will be given with ample time to complete.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Due to the limits of time here at IMSA, there will be the temptation to pass off other people's work as your own. In a culture where the value of ideas is rarely in their value for their own sake, it is crucial to appreciate them at an institution that thrives on developing new ones. All of the work you turn in for this course should be your own. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams in their book *The Craft of Research*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) explain:

"You plagiarize when, intentionally or not, you use someone else's words or ideas but fail to credit that person. . . . You plagiarize even when you do credit the source but use its exact words without using quotation marks or block indentation. . . . You [also] plagiarize when you paraphrase a source so closely that anyone putting your work next to it would see that you could not have written what you did without the source at your elbow."

Claiming as your own the work of others, in whole *or in part*, will result in an immediate failure (here no credit) for the assignment and referral to Keith McInstosh for disciplinary action. See the IMSA Student Handbook for specific details and be sure to refer to the IMSA [Chicago Style](#) website for written assignments. Such activity can result in being dismissed from IMSA, so if you are in doubt, come see me.

**Assigned Text:**

“Text” assignments will be given through the online resource ABC-CLIO, which I will discuss.

Champion and Short, *The World's Great Religions*.

Homer, *Iliad*.

Plato, *The Last Days of Socrates*.

Cicero, *On the Good Life*.

**Schedule:**

Please note this is a rough notion of coverage with dates. Much of how we will move forward we be on the Moodle page rather than here.

**August****UNIT 1: Introduction to Course****UNIT 2: Polytheism: The *Iliad* and Greek mythology****UNIT 2: Hinduism****UNIT 3: Taoism****UNIT 4: Judaism****UNIT 5: Confucianism and Legalism****UNIT 6: Buddhism****UNIT 7: Greek and Hellenistic Philosophy****UNIT 8: Christianity****UNIT 9: Islam****UNIT 10: Religion After**