

PHI 6767 - PHILOSOPHY OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION
Dr. Mountcastle

Course Description:

Philosophical analysis and evaluation of philosophical and religious propositions of selected world religions. Special problems include: ultimate reality, personal or beyond all distinctions, hierarchy or coalescence of values, persons, real or illusory.

Text:

Mountcastle: *Religion in Planetary Perspective*

Part I: BACKGROUND STUDY AND BOOK REPORTS

Session:

1. Introduction to the course; its aims and procedures
Religious Data in Philosophical Perspective:
 - A. Cosmic Naturalism
 - B. Spiritual Monisms
 - C. Personalistic Theisms

FIRST ASSIGNMENT: Student book reviews of previous work in the field. Select a book representing previous work in the field and prepare a class presentation that reviews the main ideas and include a critical evaluation. No written report will be required other than a short outline if desired. Examples may include:

2. Schweitzer: *The Philosophy of Civilization*
3. Otto: *Mysticism East and West*
4. Moore: *Philosophy – East and West*
5. Radhakrishnan: *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*
6. Hocking: *The Coming World Civilization*
7. Northrop: *The Meeting of East and West*
8. Slater: *World Religions and World Communities*
9. Bowker: *Problems of Suffering in the Religions of the World*
10. Hick: *Truth and Dialogue in World Religions*
11. Toynbee: *Christianity Among the Religions of the World*
12. *Other related works*

MID-TERM CHECK: (1) Select salient points of earlier work for critical comment and (2) make suggestions for furthering development of the philosophy of comparative religion. (3) Identify your topic and outline your research paper.

PART II: Discussion of Philosophical Method and Student Research Paper and Reports.

13. Categories of philosophical and theological analysis.
Problem of verifying religious truth claims.

SECOND ASSIGNMENT: Student research papers and reports that evaluate special problems. Write a research paper that develops the philosophy of comparative religion from the perspective of a problem or topic that is of special interest to you. This will be a formal paper of 6 to 8 pages that is carefully documented and includes a bibliography. Examples of topics might include the following:

14. Mystical Experiences
15. Evil and Suffering
16. Yogi Meditation and Prayer
17. Holy History and Natural Law
18. Time, Eternity and the Person
19. Finite Persons and Metaphysical Monism
- 20-31 Various Related Topics