Please read the following course syllabus carefully, especially the course dates, times and location. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to communicate with the IDEAL Program office, your academic advisor, or the instructor.

The IDEAL degree-completion program is designed with the adult learner in mind. Adult learners approach learning with specific goals, want to be able to directly apply new learning to their work and personal lives, and tend to learn best when the coursework is problem-centered so that they are actively engaged in the learning process. In addition, adults bring rich and varied experience to the classroom, which becomes a valuable learning resource for other students.

The IDEAL Program assumes joint responsibility in the learning process. The activities and assignments in the courses build on the shared experience of all learners in each class. This is why each student’s preparation, participation and interaction in class activities and discussions are critical to the success of each course. The accelerated format of each course requires a significant amount your time outside the course to prepare for and complete the course assignments. This varies between students and courses; however, students typically spend nine-twelve hours per week on course material.

To participate in the IDEAL Program, it is expected that you will do the following:

1. Participate in and complete the online orientation prior to your first online course.
2. Obtain the required course materials prior to the course start date.
3. Login and participate in your course a minimum of three times per week.
4. Complete all assignments to the best of your ability.
5. Participate in the class discussions and demonstrate respect and consideration to the instructor and other students when they express themselves in discussion.
6. If you have any technical difficulties, you must contact the Office of Distance Education immediately at ubonline@bridgeport.edu.

If you cannot perform these six expectations, it is recommended that you drop the course. We look forward to your academic success in each course and the ultimate completion of your degree.
Course No. & Title: WREL 216 DL1, Philosophy of World Religions
Semester and Term: Summer 2015
Day and Dates: May 4 – June 26, 2015
Time: Online
Campus Location: Online Learning

Course Description: This course explores the phenomenon of religion, religious thinking, and religious experience from a philosophical perspective. A central theme of these explorations is the question of unity and diversity among the world religions. By focusing on what the various traditions have in common, we will try to construct a framework of comparative analysis. On the other hand, by enhancing our appreciation of the diversity of religious expression and experience, we will challenge the limitations of traditional conceptions of religion. In particular we will focus on such areas of common interest as the nature of ultimate reality, the essence of religious experience, the question of evil, the relationship between religion and morality, the content of the good life, and the image of the sage or holy person who exemplifies the pinnacle of religious fulfillment.

Instructor: Dr. Claude Perrottet
Email: claude@bridgeport.edu

Required Textbook: none required. All material will be made available online during the course.

Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course students should have:

1. Gained insight into key philosophical and religious themes that are common to the major world religions, and learned to understand how they contribute to religious identity and diversity.
2. Gained basic knowledge of the worldviews of the world's major religions, their differences, conflicts, and points of agreement.
3. Developed the ability to think both empathetically and critically about conflicting religious claims.
4. Learned to formulate their insights and opinions, as well as the result of their research, in a structured way corresponding to the standards of academic writing.
Assignments:

Requirements (course work) and grading:

1. **Participation in the online discussion** on suggested themes and answering questions, demonstrating that the student has read the assigned material and become seriously involved in the process of reflecting on the issues (25%).
   - Participation in the discussion will be graded based on: quality of the reflection, relevance to the topic, amount of input, and timeliness. **Postings submitted after the given deadline will not be considered.**
2. **Two brief essays** on topics to be announced (25%).
3. **Online exam** (covering basic notions and issues introduced during the course); instructions will be given in advance (25%).
4. **Final project:** each student will be given the opportunity to select one document or article available online on a relevant topic that has not been directly addressed during the course and write a brief essay including: a summary of contents, an analysis, and a personal evaluation. This should be submitted in the form of a 2500 word paper (25%).

Important points to consider:

1. This course is an academic course about the philosophy of religion. It is not a theology course, neither is it aimed at promoting or challenging any personal beliefs.
2. Accordingly, students should be prepared to investigate and study the material from a non-polemical and non-apologetic perspective. This means: the purpose of this course is not to be a platform for the promotion of personal beliefs or the rejection of opposing views, though passion and personal conviction are expected to be part of the story! First, however, everyone should approach the given material (the positions of world religions and great scholars on issues related to religion) with an attitude of empathy, i.e., be prepared to “walk a mile in their moccasins.”

**SCHEDULE**

**Week 1 (May 4 – May 10)**

- General introduction – What is the Philosophy of Religion?
- What is Religion?
Week 2 (May 11 – May 17)

- Diverse views of ultimate reality
- Can we prove that some kind of ultimate reality exists?

Assignment (reflection paper): – to be explained.

Week 3 (May 18 – May 24)

- Religious experience - what is it and what does it prove?

Week 4 (May 25 – May 31)

- Why do suffering and evil occur?
- Salvation, enlightenment and related notions: similarities and differences.

Assignment (2nd reflection paper): – to be explained.

Week 5 (June 1 – June 7)

- How are religion and morality related?

Week 6 (June 8 – June 14)

- Are we immortal?

  Online Exam (to be explained)

Week 7 (June 15 – June 21)

- Do faith and religion conflict?
- What is the meaning of religious language?

Week 8 (June 22 – June 27)

- Humanism, science, and miracles
- Are all religions true?
- Conclusion

Final Paper due
Note:

See the Weekly Agenda under Assignments for specific details about procedures for each week. It is recommended that you print a copy of each week's agenda to use as a reference.

The instructor reserves the right to make minor changes to the syllabus as needed and to make final decisions by using his own judgment.

**Description of Weekly Sessions:**

See the Weekly Agenda under Assignments for specific details about procedures for each week. It is recommended that you print a copy of each week's agenda to use as a reference.

**Letter Grading Scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Points Earned</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>100-94</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>76-74</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-90</td>
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<td>73-70</td>
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<td>89-87</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>69-67</td>
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<td>63-60</td>
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<tr>
<td>79-77</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
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ACADEMIC POLICIES

Attendance Policy
Course attendance via online participation is an integral part of the online academic experience; therefore, students are expected to be participative in all course activities and discussions. If an absence is unavoidable, the student should communicate with the instructor. Arrangements should be made at that time for submission of any missed assignments.

IMPORTANT:
- An absence (lack of participation) in any week of the course, will drop the final grade by one letter grade (for example if a student earns a grade of “B” in the course, the final grade would be a “C”).
- An absence of two or more weeks will be cause for a failing grade.

Drop Procedures
To drop a course, you must complete and submit a Schedule Change Request Form. The form can be accessed at the IDEAL Course Schedule webpage: http://www.bridgeport.edu/academics/continuinged/ideal-academic-degree-programs-and-certificates/ideal-course-schedule/.

Please print and complete the form and fax the form to the IDEAL Office: 203-576-4537. Prior to dropping a course, the student should contact their IDEAL Academic Advisor to understand the implications to financial aid and/or degree plan progress.

Please review the drop fees and tuition refunds at the Academic Calendar; accessed at the IDEAL Course Schedule webpage (same link above).

Cell Phones
Cell phones must be turned off (or placed on “vibrate”) while in the classroom. A cell phone call is disruptive and disrespectful to the other students in the class.

Academic Dishonesty
The IDEAL program prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is normally defined as, but not limited to, the following two categories:

Cheating – Using inappropriate sources of information in an assignment or on a test. The following are examples of cheating taken from real student experiences:

Case #1: A student is enrolled in an introductory psychology course. He has co-workers who have taken the same course. As the end of the course approaches, he wonders how he will find the time to get the research paper finished, and asks one of his co-workers for help. His co-worker hands him a research paper that he submitted in a similar course. The student makes minor modifications to the paper, and submits it under his own name.

Case #2: A student enrolled in a humanities course is unsure about how to structure an essay. She is doing research on the World Wide Web, and comes across an essay written by a student from another university. Using her computer mouse, she copies and pastes the essay into her word processor. She goes to great lengths to re-word the paper in her own style, but essentially leaves the content and organization the same.
Plagiarism – Intentional as well as unintentional failure to acknowledge sources as well as the use of commercially available so-called “research papers” without full recognition of the source. Presenting as one’s own, the ideas, words, or products of another. The following are examples of plagiarism taken from real student experiences:

Case #3: A student is conducting research for a Civil War research paper. He has reviewed work on the Internet. Finding helpful information, he has summarized his findings without citing his sources. He believes that minor paraphrasing is all that is necessary.

Case #4: A student is writing a paper that requires her to address specific topics and problems in the assigned course textbook. She takes the information directly from the textbook with slight modification, without giving any citation. She thinks that since it is the course textbook, she doesn’t have to use quotations or citations.

Academic dishonesty applies to all courses, assignments or exams completed by students and submitted as their own original work, whether in person or by electronic means. The University does not tolerate cheating in any form. It is a serious breach of conduct with serious consequences. Instructors have the right to determine the appropriate penalty for academic dishonesty in their own courses; generally, however, such acts will result in a failing grade for the assignment and/or the course. The penalty for subsequent acts of academic dishonesty may include expulsion.

More information on how to recognize plagiarism can be found at this site:  
http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/plagiarism_test.html

Ethics Statement of Confidentiality
An integral component of an IDEAL course is student and faculty expression of personal experiences for the purpose of facilitating coursework. Students enrolled in the program are expected to honor confidentiality as it pertains to student disclosure. Shared information, comments, or opinions expressed by another student or the faculty member during the course of classroom discussion should never be used in a manner which is intended to humiliate, embarrass, harass, damage, or otherwise injure other students in their personal, public, or business lives. In addition, confidentiality must be upheld by not disclosing any information that would identify any particular individual.

ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

The Academic Resource Center is available for IDEAL students seeking help in their studies. The Center is staffed by writing professionals and peer tutors. More information can be found at:  
http://www.bridgeport.edu/pages/2209.asp  The Center is located on the 5th Floor of the Wahlstrom Library. Make an appointment or walk-in: Telephone: 203-576-4290. Online Tutoring is available at: www.etutoring.org. To use this free service you must have a UBNet account.

Obtaining a UBNet Account
Every registered student should obtain a UBNet Account. The account allows you to access MyUB; the portal for grades, library services, Canvas online learning system. Also, the account allows you access to computers in the Library and computer labs, and provides an email
account in which the University sends out information. Go to: http://www.bridgeport.edu/ubnet - Click on “New UBNet Account” and follow the instructions.

The @bridgeport.edu email address is the official email the University uses to send information to you. You can have your bridgeport.edu email forwarded to any other private email account you use. Following the activation of your UBNet account (takes 24 hours), login at: http://www.bridgeport.edu/email and click on “forwards” at the top of the page. Follow the directions to forward email messages to your other account.

Learning Management System (LMS) - Canvas
For all courses that use Canvas, you can access Canvas through the portal by using the myUB link. Faculty post class documents on Canvas e.g. syllabus, power points, discussion questions, case studies, current event articles, papers, reports etc. (save some trees). All students have access, and can download and copy the documents.
Canvas Tutorial For Students: https://bridgeport.instructure.com/courses/985903
For assistance contact the UB Help Desk at 203-576-4606 or email helpdesk@bridgeport.edu
https://bridgeport.instructure.com/courses/829447/

Accessing Your Grades & Schedule Online
The WebAdvisor online information system allows students to search for available classes, check grades, view semester class schedule and verify your personal profile. Grades are generally posted 2-3 weeks following the end of a course. To access WebAdvisor, login in to MyUB and follow the WebAdvisor menu on the right. If you are carrying a financial balance, access to WebAdvisor will be restricted.

Using the Library
Access to the Digital Library is through MyUB. On the MyUB home, in the central column, click on “myEureka Digital Library.” Research tools available:
- Search for books held at the library.
- Search the online databases for your academic field; business, counseling, human services, psychology, etc.
- Send questions to the Reference Librarian for assistance in research topics and searching strategy.

Using Computers
Open access computer labs are available at three locations:
- Bridgeport – 1st floor of the Wahlstrom library. Check library hours of operation at: http://www.bridgeport.edu/library.
- Stamford – Room D; Check open hours at: http://www.bridgeport.edu/stamford
- Waterbury – Computer Lab; Check open hours at: http://www.bridgeport.edu/waterbury
Course Cancellations
Any emergency necessitating the canceling of courses will be announced by the University through the Emergency Notification Telephone Line, (203) 576-4159. Please call this number for information on course cancellations. Also, information will be posted under “Latest News” on the UB home page, (www.bridgeport.edu). Canceled classes will be made up either the week following the end of the course or in consultation between the instructor and the students as to day and time availability. Course cancellations are also announced on television and radio stations.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeport Campus Security</td>
<td>(203) 576-4911</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ubsecurity@bridgeport.edu">ubsecurity@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursar</td>
<td>(203) 576-4692</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sfs@bridgeport.edu">sfs@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashier</td>
<td>(203) 576-4682</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sfs@bridgeport.edu">sfs@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>(203) 576-4568</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sfs@bridgeport.edu">sfs@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>(203) 576-4635</td>
<td><a href="mailto:registrar@bridgeport.edu">registrar@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Notification Phone</td>
<td>(203) 576-4159</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDEAL Office</td>
<td>(203) 576-4800</td>
<td><a href="mailto:idealinfo@bridgeport.edu">idealinfo@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
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CAMPUS CONTACT INFORMATION

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<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeport</td>
<td>126 Park Avenue</td>
<td>(203) 576-4800</td>
<td><a href="mailto:idealinfo@bridgeport.edu">idealinfo@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
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<td>Bridgeport, CT 06604</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stamford</td>
<td>5 Riverbend Drive</td>
<td>(203) 358-0700</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ubstamford@bridgeport.edu">ubstamford@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stamford, CT 06750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterbury</td>
<td>84 Progress Lane</td>
<td>(203) 573-8501</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ubwaterbury@bridgeport.edu">ubwaterbury@bridgeport.edu</a></td>
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Directions to IDEAL Campus locations: http://www.bridgeport.edu/pages/2260.asp

To fill out your financial aid report to the Federal Government, please go online to www.fafsa.ed.gov. The school code for the University of Bridgeport is 001416. Federal Student Aid Information: 1-800-433-3243.