RELI 101 (Hybrid)
Religion and Human Experience

Early Fall Session 15/11
August 17 – October 10, 2015

Course Description

Provides an objective setting to encourage students to examine religion and various religious traditions in the world, with opportunities to understand religion in the context of their own experiences. Course meets multicultural graduation requirement.

Prerequisite: None

Class Day and Time: Wednesday, 5:15 pm – 8:15 pm, Bldg 1803, RM 260B

This is a hybrid course which is defined as an online course supported by a weekly in-seat class. Our class will consist both in-seat and online instruction through various resources, discussion and homework. Please note that we will meet every week, unless otherwise noted.

You are expected to attend every class. If you know prior to the beginning of the session that you will miss more than one in-seat class, it is strongly recommended that you wait to take this course at another time.

The online portion of our course is located in D2L. You will access the course through CougarTrack.

Textbooks

ISBN: 978-0-8189-0640-4

ISBN: 978-0-06-067102-0

Textbooks for the course may be ordered from MBS Direct:

- online at http://direct.mbsbooks.com/columbia.htm
- by phone at 800-325-3252

For additional information about the bookstore, visit http://www.mbsbooks.com.

Course Overview

Welcome to Religion and Human Experience online! This is an introductory course designed to help students understand the role of religion in human experience. It will provide an objective setting to encourage students to critically examine religion and various religious traditions in the world and provide them opportunities to place that understanding in the context of their own experience. While
there will be opportunities for individuals to express their own religious beliefs and values, it should be clear that the purpose of this course is not to promote any particular religious belief or value system. Therefore, all views must be respected and given opportunity for expression throughout the session.

Each week, we will explore the basics of the major world religions and discuss the various topics generated by the study of religion. Remember, this is not an "opinion" course. A careful study of other religions may illumine your faith life, but we will expect students to be able to understand, comprehend, analyze and compare various religious traditions.

**Technology Requirements**

Participation in this course will require the basic technology for all online classes at Columbia College:

- A computer with reliable Internet access,
- a web browser,
- ability to watch an online video, such as on YouTube,
- Acrobat Reader,
- Microsoft Office or another word processor such as Open Office.

You can find more details about standard **technical requirements** for our courses on our site.

**Course Objectives**

- To understand the various ways of defining religion and the implications of each;
- To develop insight into the development of religion in personality and in social groups and societies;
- To be acquainted with characteristics of several of the major religions of the world by studying some of their beliefs and practices;
- To think critically about the connection between religion and culture and between religion and self-understanding.

**Measurable Learning Outcomes**

- Analyze possible definitions of “Religion”
- Provide a personal definition of religion that is defensible.
- Analyze implications of definition of religion on existing social practices.
- Explore aspects of religion and the socio-cultural context in which they exist.
- Express in writing the various aspects of major world religions and the connection between religion, culture and self-understanding.
- Discuss ethical standards and principles for human services practice with communities and organizations, with emphasis on ethical responsibilities to colleagues, to employers, and to the community and society.
### Grading

#### Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>360 – 400</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>320 – 359</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>280 – 319</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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#### Grade Weights

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<tr>
<th>Assignment Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>In Class Activities</td>
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<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropbox Assignments (Online)</td>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Quizzes (Online)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam (Online)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (In Class)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### Schedule of Graded Assignments

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<th>Points</th>
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<th>Due In-Seat</th>
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<tr>
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<td>In Class</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Discussion 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>In Class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Quiz 1 (Dictionary)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagiarism Quiz</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Discussion 2</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Quiz 2 (Ancient Egypt)</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Dropbox 2</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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Assignment Overview

Readings (Before Class)

All readings and lecture review should be completed prior to coming to the in-seat portion of class. In addition, these readings should be completed prior to submitting any discussions, dropbox assignments, or quizzes.

You should utilize the information from the readings and incorporate it into all assignments within the course.

In Class Activities

During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.

Discussions (Online)

Discussions are an integral part of this course and represent a significant portion of the final grade. Discussion activities are designed to help extend your learning into the real world and bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Discussion topics will be based on the chapter material defined in the weekly course schedule. You are encouraged to interact with your classmates in all discussions. Additional online discussion topics may be introduced as needed. You will need to post your initial response by 11:59 pm CT (Central Time) on Friday each week and respond to at least two classmates’ posts by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday (with the exception of Week 8 which ends on Saturday).

Although you need to respond to at least two peers, per question, I also assess the quality of your responses. “I agree,” is perfunctory, not engaging and will not receive full credit. For the benefit of all of those persons reading responses, keep your personal agendas, attitudes, and grudges in check. This course touches on some sensitive issues and sometimes responses made in public are simply uncalled for and inappropriate. This course is not the place for you to unload the ‘chips’ on your shoulders, or rant against your peers, your professor, or any other person or group. My hope is that we don’t have those kinds of exchanges this term.

Disagreement can be healthy, but only if it’s done tactfully and constructively. Conventions of professional etiquette, which include courtesy to all students, will be observed online and the equivalent will be observed in the classroom setting. Offensive, inflammatory wording and personal attacks will not be tolerated. In a diverse population as these classes are, we cannot force our personal values and beliefs on others. Civility and sensitivity are expected in all our communications.
You are not allowed to post discussions after the weekly deadline has passed. **Multiple postings made at approximately the same time of day will count as 1 post.** In the past, some students have posted three times in the hour prior to the deadline, which defeats the purpose of trying to get students to engage in a “conversation” throughout the week.

**Dropbox (Online)**

Dropbox assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate Dropbox folder by **11:59 pm CT on Sunday of the assigned week.** You submission should be in Word (.doc, .docx) or Rich Text (.rtf) format. Dropbox assignments should use proper grammar and correct spelling. Each Dropbox Assignment is worth 20 points.

**Research Quizzes (Online)**

There will be four Research Quizzes. After reading several works available in the Content area, as well as the chapters from Catoir, Smith, and other resources, you will have quizzes on the research materials. These quizzes will test your mastery of the material.

The questions are True and False, Multiple Choice and Ordering Questions (Put in Correct Order). You will have thirty minutes to complete each quiz. Quizzes can be accessed in the Quizzes area of the course. The Quizzes will be available only during the assigned time period in the week it is due. They are “open book.” Be sure to “save” after every question answered, while taking the Quizzes.

Quizzes must be submitted by **11:59 pm CT of the appropriate week.**

**Midterm Exam (Online)**

There will be a Midterm Exam worth 100 points. This exam will consist of 100 objective questions (multiple choice, true/false and ordering questions). The Midterm Exam will be taken through the Quizzes area of the course.

The Midterm Exam will become available on Wednesday of Week 4. The Midterm Exam will be due by **11:59 pm CT on Sunday of Week 4.**

**Final Exam (In Class)**

The Final Exam will be given during the final In Class session during Week 8. The Final Exam is worth 100 points and will consist of 100 objective questions (multiple choice, true/false, and ordering questions).

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1: Introduction to Religious Studies**

**Readings (Before Class)**

- Catoir: Introduction to Catoir
- Smith: Chapter 15

**In Class Activity 1**

During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.
Plagiarism Tutorial and Quiz (Online)

You must complete the Plagiarism Quiz with a score of 100% prior to beginning the course. This includes posting to discussions and submitting quizzes.

Research Quiz 1 (Online)

After finishing the readings on Catoir and Smith and doing the Class Activities, please go to the Quizzes area of the course and take this 15 question quiz. Submit the quiz **by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday**.

Discussion 1 (Online)

Respond to the following:

*Joe is very faithful and forthright in his beliefs. He holds that all things come from the volcano he has named “Ed.” Every so often Ed erupts and changes things. Joe feels that these eruptions are normal and bring balance to the world. He believes that balance is lost when people expect Ed to erupt more often or less often than Ed desires. Joe believes that we can become one with Ed after our lives end by tossing our bodies into the lava. This will help keep things in balance. Joe is the only believer. In a serious discussion, decide whether or not Joe practices religion. What elements are present and what elements are missing? What are the elements needed for Joe’s beliefs to become a “World Religion?” While there are no wrong answers, please give this some thought based on what you have learned in your introductory readings.*

Your initial post is **due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday**. You must respond to at least two classmates’ posts **by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday**.

Week 2: Prehistoric Religion, Egyptian Civilization and Passing the Faith

Readings (Before Class)

- Catoir: Chapters 1 and 2
- Smith: Chapter 3

In Class Activity 2

During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.

Research Quiz 2 (Online)

After finishing the readings on Catoir and Smith and doing the Class Activities, please go to the Quizzes area of the course and take this 15 question quiz. Submit the quiz **by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday**.

Discussion 2 (Online)

It has been said that if you are at a party and you tell someone you have a terrible disease or you are a terrorist, the conversation happily continues. But, if you tell them you are religious, an icy chill hits the air. Peter Kreeft believes that much of this is due to ignorance in the area of religious studies. His personal pet peeve is the statement: “All religions are the same deep down.” He states:

“That is simply factually untrue. No one ever makes this claim unless he is:

1. abysmally ignorant of what the different religions of the world actually teach or
2. intellectually irresponsible in understanding these teachings in the vaguest and woolliest way or
3. morally irresponsible in being indifferent to them.”

*Why would somebody say “deep down?”*
What would this “abysmally ignorant, intellectually irresponsible and morally irresponsible” person be trying to say about the human condition? Finally, are “all religions the same deep down?” Is “Deep Down” unchangeable?

Your initial post is due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday. You must respond to at least two classmates’ posts by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Research Quiz 2 (Ancient Egypt)
The Quiz will be fifteen questions, True and False and Multiple Choice, and you will have 30 minutes to complete the quiz. Submit the quiz by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Week 3: Introduction to Judaism

Readings (Before Class)
- Catoir: Chapter 3
- Smith: Chapter 11

In Class Activity 3
During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.

Discussion 3 (Online)
After reading Catoir and the "Basic Teachings of Judaism," please answer the following:
1. What is the essential key to understanding Judaism?
2. It seems that the Jews have a lot of rules. Why? How does the Exile experience impact this?
3. What can other religions learn from the Jews? What have the other religions learned from the Jews? How does this basic overview of Judaism impact your understanding of your own beliefs?

Your initial post is due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday. You must respond to at least two classmates’ posts by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Dropbox 1 (Online)
From all the readings in class so far (including up to Chapter 3 of Catoir and Chapters 3, 11 and 15 of Smith, and any additional readings you would like to include,) please formulate 20 multiple choice questions with answers. The assignment should demonstrate that you understand the information by organizing and comparing the reading assignments into questions that demand more than simple recall of information. You must include the page numbers for where you find the questions and answers. Make sure they are your own original questions and that alternative choices for the M/C questions are logical and close enough to be challenging. Each question should include at least four answer options.

Submit your questions and answers by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Week 4: Introduction to Christianity

Readings (Before Class)
- Catoir: Chapter 4
- Smith: Chapter 10

In Class Activity 4
During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.
Research Quiz 3 (Online)

After reading Catoir and other readings for the week, please go to the Quizzes area and take this quiz on the readings. You will be allowed 30 minutes.

Submit the quiz by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Discussion 4 (Online)

“At least we can say that religion has weathered the storm.”

Smith's opening line to this chapter opens the door to some interesting discussions about religions “fit” in the modern world. Nietzsche's admonition to never give up on the idea of God, while he “will perish from (his) passions” is truly revealing about the character of the man.

Only one question: What are the aspects of Christianity that has allowed it to “weather the storm(s)?” Refer to Catoir’s questions on Page 65 for some help and insights. Reminder: we are talking about the first few centuries of Christianity (surviving during the Roman Empire). Please don't answer: “Because God wanted it.” That, of course, is an answer that can be applied to any and all questions, but lacks the academic rigor that I expect in this course.

Your initial post is due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday. You must respond to at least two classmates' posts by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Midterm Exam

Your Midterm Exam will be available between Wednesday and 11:59 pm CT on Sunday in the Quizzes area of the course. The exam will cover all materials in the course so far, as well as the syllabus and Discussion 4. The Midterm Exam is worth 100 points and will consist of 100 objective questions (multiple choice, true/false and ordering questions).

The Midterm Exam is due by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Week 5: Introduction to Islam

Readings (Before Class)

- Catoir: Chapter 5
- Smith: Chapter 14

In Class Activity 5

During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.

Research Quiz 4 (Online)

After reading Catoir and the additional readings, please go to the Quizzes area of the course and take this quiz on the readings. Submit the quiz by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Discussion 5 (Online)

The Muslims consider Jews, Christians, and Muslims to be all “People of the Book.” What are the elements that tie Jews, Christians and Muslims together. Hopefully, each addition to the discussion will add and complement the proceeding answers. What theological differences are there between these great religious traditions?

Your initial post is due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday. You must respond to at least two classmates' posts by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.
**Week 6: Evaluating Macro Practice**

**Readings (Before Class)**
- Catoir: Chapter 6

**In Class Activity 6**
During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.

**Dropbox 2 (Online)**
From your readings in Catoir, up to and including Chapter 7, please formulate 20 multiple choice questions with answers. You must include the page numbers for where you find the questions and answers. Make sure they are your own original questions and that alternative choices for the M/C questions are logical and close enough to be challenging. Each question should include at least four answer options.

Submit your questions and answers **by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday**.

**Discussion 6 (Online)**
After reading the Chapter on Hinduism, think about the questions at the end of the chapter. Then, answer the following: What do you consider to be “escapist” in either religion or “the real world?” What do you do to “escape” from your day to day troubles, if anything?

Your initial post is **due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday**. You must respond to at least two classmates’ posts **by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday**.

**Week 7: Introduction to Buddhism**

**Readings (Before Class)**
- Catoir: Chapter 7
- Smith: Chapter 2

**In Class Activity 7**
During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.

**Dropbox 3 (Online)**
We have discussed some interesting concepts in this class. In a two page essay, please discuss how the following questions have impacted your ability to discuss Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism in the context of both social life, from simply discussions at a party to watching the news with others, and academic life in other classes and further studies:
- What is “religion?”
- What is “deep down?”
- What is “real?”
- What is the role of escape in religion?
- How does the physical impact religion?

This assignment is worth 20 points. Be sure to discuss all 5 religions across this assignment and be sure to cover all 5 questions in the essay.

Submit your response **by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday**.
Discussion 7 (Online)

With our course entering the final weeks, we now can look at some of the parallels and differences between the major world religions. In this discussion topic, we will begin to list some of the parallels between the major world religions. Consider geography, history, period of history, or any other factors that you can think of for this topic. Something like “Belief in God,” of course, needs to be tempered with some specifics. Try to build on one another’s posts.

Your initial post is due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday. You must respond to at least two classmates’ posts by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Week 8: The Religions of the Far East

Readings (Before Class)

- Catoir: Chapter 8
- Smith: Chapter 16 and Epilogue

In Class Activity 8

During the in-seat portion of our class, we will have various discussions and activities that will be graded. You must be present and actively participate at the in-seat class in order to receive these points.

Discussion 8 (Online)

After reading Catoir and Smith, answer this question: Are Confucianism, Taoism, and Shintoism religions? If so, why? If not, what is a religion?

Your initial post is due by 11:59 pm CT on Friday. You must respond to at least two classmates’ posts by 11:59 pm CT on Sunday.

Final Exam (Online)

Your Final Exam will be given during the final In Class session of the course. The exam will cover all materials in the course so far, as well as the syllabus and Discussion 4. The Final Exam is worth 100 points and will consist of 100 objective questions (multiple choice, true/false and ordering questions).

The Final Exam is due by 11:59 pm CT on Saturday.

Course Policies

Student Conduct

All Columbia College students, whether enrolled in a land-based or online course, are responsible for behaving in a manner consistent with Columbia College’s Student Conduct Code and Acceptable Use Policy. Students violating these policies will be referred to the office of Student Affairs and/or the office of Academic Affairs for possible disciplinary action. The Student Code of Conduct and the Computer Use Policy for students can be found in the Columbia College Student Handbook. The Handbook is available online; you can also obtain a copy by calling the Student Affairs office (Campus Life) at 573-875-7400. The teacher maintains the right to manage a positive learning environment, and all students must adhere to the conventions of online etiquette.

Plagiarism

Your grade will be based in large part on the originality of your ideas and your written presentation of these ideas. Presenting the words, ideas, or expression of another in any form as your own is plagiarism. Students who fail to properly give credit for information contained in their written work (papers, journals, exams, etc.) are violating the intellectual property rights of the original author. For
proper citation of the original authors, you should reference the appropriate publication manual for your degree program or course (APA, MLA, etc.). Violations are taken seriously in higher education and may result in a failing grade on the assignment, a grade of "F" for the course, or dismissal from the College.

Collaboration conducted between students without prior permission from the instructor is considered plagiarism and will be treated as such. Spouses and roommates taking the same course should be particularly careful.

All required papers may be submitted for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers may be included in the Turnitin.com reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. This service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site.

A plagiarism tutorial is located in the content area of the D2L website. Additionally, work that was completed in a prior course and submitted in the current course will not be accepted.

**Non-Discrimination**

There will be no discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, ideology, political affiliation, veteran status, age, physical handicap, or marital status.

**Disability Services**

Students with documented disabilities who may need academic services for this course are required to register with the Coordinator for Disability Services at (573) 875-7626. Until the student has been cleared through the disability services office, accommodations do not have to be granted. If you are a student who has a documented disability, it is important for you to read the entire syllabus before enrolling in the course. The structure or the content of the course may make an accommodation not feasible.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance for a week will be counted as having submitted a course assignment for which points have been earned during that week of the session or if the proctoring information has been submitted or the plagiarism quiz taken if there is no other assignment due that week. A class week is defined as the period of time between Monday and Sunday (except for Week 8, when the week and the course will end on Saturday at midnight). The course and system deadlines are all based on the Central Time Zone.

**Email**

All students are provided a CougarMail account when they enroll in classes at Columbia College. You are responsible for monitoring email from that account for important messages from the College and from your instructor. You may forward your Cougar email account to another account; however, the College cannot be held responsible for breaches in security or service interruptions with other email providers.

Students should use email for private messages to the instructor and other students. The class discussions are for public messages so the class members can each see what others have to say about any given topic and respond.

**Late Assignment Policy**

A hybrid class requires regular participation and a commitment to your instructor and your classmates to regularly engage in the reading, discussion and writing assignments. Although most of the communication for this course is asynchronous, you must be able to commit to the schedule of work for
the class for the next eight weeks. You must keep up with the schedule of reading and writing to successfully complete the class.

**Course Evaluation**

You will have an opportunity to evaluate the course near the end of the session. A link will be sent to your CougarMail that will allow you to access the evaluation. Be assured that the evaluations are anonymous and that your instructor will not be able to see them until after final grades are submitted.

**Additional Resources**

**Orientation for New Students**

This course is offered online, using course management software provided by Desire2Learn and Columbia College. The [Student Manual](#) provides details about taking an online course at Columbia College. You may also want to visit the [course demonstration](#) to view a sample course before this one opens.

**Technical Support**

If you have problems accessing the course or posting your assignments, contact your instructor, the Columbia College Helpdesk, or the D2L Helpdesk for assistance. Contact information is also available within the online course environment.

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<tr>
<td>800-231-2391 ex. 4357</td>
<td>877-325-7778</td>
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**Online Tutoring**

Smarthinking is a free online tutoring service available to all Columbia College students. Smarthinking provides real-time online tutoring and homework help for Math, English, and Writing.

Smarthinking also provides access to live tutorials in writing and math, as well as a full range of study resources, including writing manuals, sample problems, and study skills manuals. You can access the service from wherever you have a connection to the Internet. I encourage you to take advantage of this free service provided by the college.

*Access Smarthinking through CougarTrack under Students->Academics->Academic Resources.*