WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

HAWAII CAMPUS

SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES

Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement: Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

Course Title and Number: THST 4340 HI01 New Religious Movements

Term: Fall 2: 2026 Collaborate Course

Instructor: Dr. Brent Schlittenhart

Contact Information: Office: 808-488-8570; Home: 808-234-6960; Cell: 808-551-2263; schlittenhartb@wbu.edu; or schlittenhartb@yahoo.com; Please use the wbu.edu email for primary correspondence.

Office Hours, Building, and Location: The professor is available at 4 PM before class and 30 minutes after class. The professor is also available by appointment at other times. Office Location is 599 Farrington Highway, Kapolei, HI 96707.

Class Meeting Time and Location: Thursday (5:30 PM-8:30 PM) at Kapolei. The location in American Samoa is TBD. Collaborate will be set up 30 minutes prior to class.

Catalog Description: Introduction to the history and thought of religious or spiritual groups founded after 1800, which evidence deviant beliefs and/or practices from established denominations and religions; major attention on Latter-Day Saints, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, New Age Movements, and other groups which have a significant presence in the United States.

Prerequisites/Co-requisites: RLGN 1301 and RLGN 1302

Required Textbook(s) and/or Resource Material:

Title	Editor/Author	Publisher	Ed	Year	ISBN
The Kingdom of the Cults Handbook: Quick Reference	Walter Martin	Bethany House		2019	9780764232718 E-text

Guide to Alternative Belief Systems	Jill Martin Rische				9781493421817

This course includes an Automatic eBook. Should you wish to purchase a print copy remember to opt out by the due date.

Other Books and Periodicals: Student will also need a Bible of any translation recognized by mainstream Christianity. The professor may provide additional articles and websites for you to read throughout the course of the term.

Course Outcome Competencies: Students will:

1. Describe the origins, development, essential doctrines, and present status of new religious movements in America.
2. Explain the appeal of such groups to the American people.
3. Formulate a method that facilitates dialogue with persons affiliated with religious cults and sects

Attendance Requirements—External Campuses

Students enrolled at one of the university's external campuses should make every effort to attend all class meetings. All absences must be explained to the instructor, who will then determine whether the omitted work may be made up. When a student reaches that number of absences considered by the instructor to be excessive, the instructor will so advise the student and file an unsatisfactory progress report with the external campus executive director/dean. Any student who misses 25 percent or more of the regularly scheduled class meetings may receive a grade of F in the course. Additional attendance policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the university's attendance policy.

(WBU Hawaii/American Samoa Addendum) Students who miss the first class meeting without providing a written explanation to the instructor will be automatically dropped from the roster as a "no-show." Students who know in advance that they will be absent from the first class meeting and who wish to remain in the class must inform the instructor in order to discuss possible arrangements for making up absences.

The student is responsible for turning in all required assignments. If a student misses a class when an exam is given, arrangements must be made by the student with the professor to take the exam. Tardies and/or early departures will also count towards an individual's attendance record.

Academic Honesty (Plagiarism): Link to Statement on Academic Integrity

Generative AI tools permitted in specific context and with proper citations.

a. Students are allowed to use, reference, or incorporate generative AI tools into specific assignments for this course. When used, students must properly cite the generative AI tool in their submitted work.
b. While there is no true substitute for direct help and instruction for your instructor, students may be allowed to use generative AI tools to provide further explanations

of course content, readings, and other assignments. Any use of generative AI tools to help further explain or translate content must be properly referenced and cited.

c. Specific parameters for generative AI usage are provided by the instructor.
d. Any use of generative AI tools outside of the approved instructor parameters will be considered a form of plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

AI can be used in the research paper assignment for gathering resources for your research, producing your bibliography, assistance in formatting the paper, and providing ideas for your paper. Grammar checking and spell-checking software can be used to assist in making corrections to your paper. AI cannot be used to write your paper. Other than grammar and spell-checking the use of AI needs to be documented in your bibliography as a source.

Disability Statement: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Disability Services Coordinator and Academic Coach serves as the coordinator of students with disabilities and must be contacted concerning accommodation requests (office (806) 291-1057. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:

1. The student will read the assigned readings and meet once a week with the professor for dialogue on the weekly subject matters.
2. The student will take a midterm and a final exam. Material will come from the assigned readings and class notes.
3. Each student will write a research paper on founders, key leaders, or key beliefs of one of the new religious movements in the texts. The paper needs to include a title page, and a bibliography in addition to the 5-8 pages of text and requires a minimum of ten sources. Use 1 inch margins for the papers, 10 or 12 New Times Roman font, and double space the body of the paper. In addition to submitting the paper to the professor the body of the paper needs to be submitted through safe assignment in Blackboard. The best way to do this is in order to keep the formatting correct is to make separate word documents (one for the title page; 1 for the body of the paper, and 1 for the bibliography).
4. Each student will read the lecture notes on Blackboard and submit postings to the Discussion Board forums on the assigned weeks. The student posting needs to be a minimum of 175 words. Students need to read all other student postings and make a student response to at least one other student posting. The student response needs to be a minimum of 150 words. There will be one grade for each discussion board forum which includes both the student posting and student response.

Resources:

The student should request many resources through the WBU main campus library and have them mailed directly to his/her home. The student should also access the journal and e-book databases from the WBU main campus library as possible sources for research. The Bible does not count as one of your minimum resources but follow the style guide for footnoting a reference, when referencing a study note from the *NIV Study Bible* use the form for one general editor. **START YOUR RESEARCH EARLY!**

Course Evaluation:

University Grading System

A	90-100	I	INCOMPLETE**
B	80-89	Cr	FOR CREDIT
C	70-79	NCr	NO CREDIT
D	60-69	WP	WITHDRAWAL PASSING
F	BELOW 60	WF	WITHDRAWAL FAILING
		W	WITHDRAWAL

** A grade of incomplete is changed if the work required is completed prior to the last day of the next eight-week term, unless the instructor designates an earlier date for completion. If the work is not completed by the appropriate date, the I is converted to a grade of F. An incomplete notation cannot remain on the student's permanent record and must be replaced by the qualitative grade (A-F) by the date specified in the official University calendar of the next regular term. An incomplete turned to a qualitative grade will be indicated by the notation I/grade on the student transcript.

Procedure for computations of final grade

1. Midterm exam:	25%
2. Final exam:	25%
3. Research Paper:	25%
4. Discussion Board Average:	25%

Late assignments will not receive full credit and will usually receive a five point minimum reduction.

Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

Tentative Schedule: Course Outline and Calendar

Week 1 10/15/2026 Introductory Issues and Understanding Worldviews
Required Reading: Martin Chapters 1-3
Required First Assignment Due 10/17
Blackboard Discussion 1: Student Posting due 10/20 Student Response due 10/22

Week 2 10/22/2026 Spiritism, Theosophy; Wicca; Church of Satan
Required Reading: Martin Chapters 7-8, Appendix A
Blackboard Discussion 2: Student Posting due 10/27 Student Response due 10/29

Week 3 10/29/2026 Mormonism
Required Reading: Martin Chapter 6
Blackboard Discussion 3: Student Posting due 11/3 Student Response due 11/5

Week 4 11/5/2026 Christian Science, Unification Church; Unity School of Christianity
Required Reading: Martin Chapters 5, 11, 12, 13
Midterm Exam Due 11/12/2026

Week 5 11/12/2026 Jehovah's Witnesses
Required Reading: Martin Chapter 4
Discussion Board 4: Student Posting Due 11/17 Student Response due 11/19

Week 6 11/19/2026 Scientology; New Age Movement; UFO Cults
Required Reading: Martin Chapters 14, Appendix B
Discussion Board 5: Student Posting Due 12/1 Student Response due 12/3

11/26/2026 Thanksgiving No Class

Week 7 12/3/2026 Miscellaneous; Cults View of Jesus; Cult Evangelism
Required Reading: Martin Chapters 17-18
Research Paper Due

Week 8 12/10/2026 Final Exam Due and Discussion

Additional Information:

Method of Instruction: Lecture/Split level: This is a Hybrid Class and will have online work. The student will need to have internet access.

Classroom Disruption

Students who disrupt a class will be directed to leave immediately and report to the external campus executive director/dean or dean of students, who will discuss with the student the cause of the disruption. The student will return to the class only with permission of the executive director/campus dean or dean of students and faculty member involved.