

Religion 103 Course Syllabus
Religions of the Eastern World - Online
Spring 2015 / 3 Credits

Instructor Information

Chelsea Nordby

Office Hours: By appointment.

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Course Description

Surveys cultures and religions of the eastern world with a focus on the teaching of compassion and tolerance in these religions. Includes understandings of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Sikhism. *We will be relying on our critical thinking skills to approach each subject and source from an academic standpoint. Please keep this in mind throughout our discussions and in your research papers.*

Course Learning Outcomes

- Articulate an awareness of the varieties of religious expression and the dynamic nature of religious traditions.
- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of the core tenants, practices, and institutions of Eastern religious traditions within their historical and contemporary contexts.
- Analyze the interaction of religious traditions with political, economic, social, and cultural institutions, groups, and individuals.

Learning Activities

Interactive Lecture/ Discussion

Watching and Commenting on Film, DVD, and PowerPoint Presentations

Group-learning activities

Self-directed Reading (Text and Moodle), Writing, and Research

Prerequisite Course(s):

Reading 90 and Writing 115 or above are *strongly* recommended.

Required Text:

Molloy, Michael. *Experiencing the World's Religions*, 6th edition. New York, NY. McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Course Requirements

The final grade in this class will be determined by performances on assignments and activities shown below.

- **Reading/ Writing/ Online Participation:**
 - *Forum Discussions / Weekly writing assignments* (10 points per week, 100 points total): Each week you will write a short essay on the assigned readings and the lecture commentaries. You will be answering questions on the material and adding your own personal thoughts. You will then reply to two of your classmates' forum discussion posts. Click on the assignment or forum for each week and follow the instructions. It is your responsibility to carefully read the 'forum post guidelines' PDF at the top of the course page and each week's specific instructions.
 - *Schedule:* Unless otherwise stated, weekly Learning Modules can be accessed by 8pm the Friday before (Ex. Week 2 learning modules will be posted by Friday evening of week 1). Assignments and discussions need to be completed by Thursday at 8pm of each week.
- **Quiz & Exams:** A short quiz will be given the beginning of the second week of the term, worth 15 points. There will be 2 exams, a midterm and a final. These will be given over the course of the term using a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay-type questions.
- **Research Paper:** During the 5th week of the course, a 4-5 page research project will be due. This will be worth 100 points. Instructions are posted below the syllabus at the top of the course page.

Grading

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the total number of points earned divided by the total possible points (see chart below). It is possible that the total number of points will change during the term (to include extra assignments, snow days etc.). I reserve the right to curve the grading scale positively if deemed necessary.

Work	Points available	Your points
Discussion Forum Work (100), Short Quiz (15)	~115	
Exam 1 (Midterm)	~150	
Research Paper	100	
Exam 2 (Final)	~ 100	
Extra credit	(+8)	
Total:	~ 465	

Extra Credit

If you are struggling in the class, and are worried about your final grade, there will be up to 8 points available for extra credit. If you have questions about your choice of activity / program you will use (or, if you have an idea of your own), please do not hesitate to ask me. *I hope you take advantage of the extra credit opportunities offered for this course. This is your chance to experience religion and the ongoing dialogue about religion happening presently in our community -- which can be easily accessed by the curious-minded! (1 each, 8 points available)*

Attend a lecture / event (5 points): If you would prefer to attend a lecture or event *about* Eastern religion / philosophy. I will accept a 2-page, double-spaced paper outlining the main points of discussion and your thoughts on the subject. Please get approval for your choice of event before turning in an extra credit report.

Listen to a Podcast (3 points): You may enjoy streaming a radio program or watching a documentary while earning extra credit. I will accept a full 1-page, double-spaced, paper outlining the main points of discussion and your thoughts on the subject.

On Being, hosted by Krista Tippett

onbeing.org

(Click on *Archive*, pick a program that interests you personally. This is one of my favorite radio programs.) Please choose a program that coincides with the course material (i.e. topics that discuss forms of Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, etc. etc.).

Philosophy Talk, hosted by Ken Taylor and John Perry of Stanford University

<http://www.philosophytalk.org/>

Subscribe free to podcast in itunes, or, click on *past programs*. These are not all specifically related to Eastern religions *per se*, so here are a few that will meet the religion requirement: Morality and the Self; William James; Confucius; Zen; Atheism and the Well-Lived Life; Worship; Gandhi; The Root of All Evil?; Worship; Challenges to Free Will; Believing in God; The Problem of Evil; The Existence of God.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week/Class	Textbook Readings	Material to be covered:	Exams / Homework due dates/ Documentaries
<u>Week 1</u> Mar 30- Apr 5	Ch. 1 p. 5-7; 26-28 Ch. 2 p. 39-63	Introduction / Religious Studies / Indigenous Traditions	See forum guidelines, syllabus, e-mail etiquette, research project handouts at top of course page
<u>Week 2</u> Apr 6-12	Molloy pp. 73-93	Hinduism	Monday & Tuesday: Short Quiz: Indigenous Traditions, Rel. Stud.
<u>Week 3</u> Apr 13-19	Molloy pp. 94-118	Hinduism	
<u>Week 4</u> Apr 20-26	Molloy pp. 123-146	Buddhism	
<u>Week 5</u> Apr 27- May 3	Molloy pp. 146-177	Buddhism	Research Project Due Tuesday, April 28th at 11pm – no exceptions
<u>Week 6</u> May 4-10	Molloy pp. 181-203	Jainism / Sikhism	Midterm Study Guide Handout
<u>Week 7</u> May 11-17	Study for midterm	Midterm: Indian Religions <i>Religions of the far east</i>	Monday & Tuesday: Midterm: Indian Religions
<u>Week 8</u> May 18-24	Molloy pp. 205-226	Daoism / Confucianism	
<u>Week 9</u> May 25-31	Molloy pp. 227-252	Daoism / Confucianism	Extra Credit Due
<u>Week 10</u> June 1-7	Molloy pp. 255-277	Shinto	Study Guide: Final
<u>Finals Week</u> June 8-14	Review for Exam	Review for Exam	Monday & Tuesday: Final Exam: Religions of China and Japan!

Class Policies:

Plagiarism: I reserve the right to issue an “F” grade for an assignment or the entire course if a student is found to have cheated or plagiarized. I do not allow students to re-write research papers for a higher grade. All direct quotes *and* information from outside sources must be cited within the text *and* in a bibliography or reference page. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism. If you are unsure, please seek help in the writing lab.

READ ALL Inclusive community / constructive discussions: This material is inherently interesting, but it can also be a sensitive subject to discuss. As a class we must welcome participation, open discussion, and insight from all. Please remember to keep an open mind, and be respectful to me as your instructor and to your peers. The field of religious studies is incredibly vast and we simply do not have time to delve deeply into each topic. You are expected to engage positively, and even critically, with the material presented. However, using online class forums to complain or to be consistently negative towards another’s traditions or culture will not be tolerated. I reserve the right to delete posts if necessary.

Late work: I do not accept late work (research papers, exams, weekly assignments etc). I do not allow students to re-take exams, or to re-write research papers (this is why the calendar is so specific). Please talk to me in the case of severe medical emergencies.

E-mail: Read the e-mail etiquette guidelines posted at the top of the course. I will respond to your e-mails within **2 business days**. Please plan accordingly.

College Policies:

Disability Services: Students who may need accommodations due to documented disabilities, who have medical information which the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in an emergency, should speak with the instructor during the first week of class. If you have not accessed services and think you may need them, please contact Disability Services, 917-4789.

Institutional Withdrawal / Waitlist Policy: Students who do not log on to the course by Tuesday at 12pm may be dropped from the course in order to allow for wait-listed student enrollment. Also, students who do not participate in week 1’s discussion boards will be dropped from the course. If you are on the waitlist, and wish to take the course you must e-mail me your intent to take the course by Tuesday at 12pm in order to be added if there is room.

Drop Policy: Students are responsible for knowing the last day to drop the course for a full refund. Also, be aware of the last day to officially withdraw from this course for transcripts to show a ‘W.’

Incomplete Grades: You may be eligible for an ‘Incomplete’ grade if you have finished 90% of the class work. Should you receive an ‘Incomplete,’ all course work must be finished by the end of the next term. Please contact the instructor prior to term’s end with appropriate documentation for requesting an ‘Incomplete.’