

0101R100

Introduction to Religions

Instructor: TBA

Time: June 14, 2021-July 16, 2021

Office Hours: 2 hours (according to the teaching schedule)

Contact Hours: 60 (50 minutes each)

Credits: 4

E-mail: TBA

Course Description

This subject aims at providing students with a fundamental understanding of diverse types of religions and religious practices in today's world. At the same time, the course will examine the complex nature of religious phenomena, including religious knowledge and competing truth claims.

Required Textbook(s)

The World's Religions (50th anniversary edition).

Author: Huston Smith

Edition: 50th anniversary edition

Copyright: 1991

Publisher: Harper Collins

ISBN: 9780061660184

Status: Required

E-book Option: Amazon Kindle

Any additional material (cf. handouts, essays) will be supplied by the professor.

Prerequisites

No prerequisites

Course Goals

Religion is one of the most widespread and deeply entrenched aspects of human experience. It is also a phenomenon that has proven remarkably resistant to systematic explanation. This course is an introduction to an array of influential approaches to explaining religion and its core aspects – e.g. ritual, religious institutions and belief in the supernatural. Through this course, students will gain a deeper understanding for the diversity and complexity of religion/s as well as a basic understanding of the study of religion. By the end of the course students will possess:

1. Familiarity with the philosophy and doctrines common in many world religions, including the Roman Catholic Church, Judaism and Islam.

2. A greater understanding of the traditions and history of the Roman Catholic Church.

3. A greater understanding of the traditions and history of Judaism and Islam.

4. An in-depth understanding of the most influential people in the largest and oldest religions, including Jesus and the 12 Apostles (Catholicism), Moses, Abraham (Judaism) and Muhammad (Islam).

5. An understanding of other religions and religious practices in today's world.

Schedule/Calendar

Please note that the schedule is meant to give an overview of the major concepts of this course. Changes may occur in this calendar as needed to aid in the student's development.

The following reading assignments are to be completed before the class meeting for the day so as to be prepared to discuss the concepts therein during class time. The professor may modify this schedule due to the pace of the class, time constraints, or canceled classes.

Week 1 – Introduction, Religious Experience, Religions of the East

- Introduction to the course, what is religion/the sacred and the profane/ types of religion/defining religion

- Hinduism pp. 12-41
- Hinduism pp. 41-77
- Readings from Bhagavad Gita
- Watch documentary on Hindu Sacrifice

Week 2 – Religions of the East Continued

- Buddhism pp.82-119
- Buddhism pp. 119-149
- Confucianism pp. 154-193
- Taoism pp. 196-218
- Midterm exam

Week 3 – Abrahamic Faiths

- Judaism pp. 271-293
- Judaism pp.293-315
- Christianity pp 317-339
- Christianity pp. 339-362
- Read creation passages

Week 4 – Abrahamic faiths continued and the beginnings

- Islam pp. 221-242
- Islam pp. 242-268
- The Primal Religions pp. 365-382
- Nacerima Reading
- 5-6 page research paper due

Week 5 –Newer religions and Final Exam

- Rastafarianism readings
- Scientology readings
- Voodoo and Santeria readings
- A Final Examination pp. 384-391
- Final Exam

Grading Policy

Type	Percentage
First Exam	35%
Research paper	20%
Final Exam	35%
Class Discussion/ participation/ Homework	10%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

The instructor will use the grading system as applied by JNU:

Definition	Letter Grade	Score
Excellent	A	90~100
Good	B	80~89
Satisfactory	C	70~79
Poor	D	60~69
Failed	E	Below 60

Academic Integrity

As members of the Jinan University academic community, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic coursework and activities. Academic dishonesty, includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, i.e., misrepresenting as one's own work any work done by another; submitting the same paper, or a substantially similar paper, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of the instructors concerned; or sabotaging other students' work within these general definitions. Instructors, however, determine what constitutes academic misconduct in the courses they teach. Students found guilty of academic misconduct in any portion of the academic work face penalties that range from the lowering of their course grade to awarding a grade of E for the entire course.