

Revised: Fall 2011
Fall 2012
Fall 2013
Fall 2014
Fall 2015
Fall 2016

REL 231

Religions of the World I

COURSE OUTLINE

Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

REL 231 studies religions of the world with attention to origin, history, and doctrine. The course focuses on Eastern Traditions, including Hinduism and Buddhism.

What is religion and how do different cultures define and express religious beliefs, values, and practices? This course examines these, and other, questions from a non-western perspective by introducing students to the fundamentals of several Eastern religious traditions including Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Shinto.

- We examine the ancient roots and modern manifestations of each tradition by tracing the oral and written history and development of religious elements such as the holy, myth/sacred story, sacred texts, ritual, symbol systems, organizational patterns, ethics, and sacred communities.
- We study the impact of modernization and modern scholarship on the scriptures, customs, and beliefs of Eastern religious traditions.
- Additionally, the course explores and compares issues of social, cultural, and religious diversity that arise in the global context of our religiously pluralistic contemporary world.

Semester Credits: 3 Lecture Hours: 3

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Course Outcomes:

By the close of the course, the student should:

1. possess an understanding of the basic origins, history, and doctrines of the world's major religions.
2. be able to discuss the significant differences and similarities between the major religions of the world.
3. possess a respect for the diversity of religious expression.

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Required Materials:

1. Textbooks
2. Internet access
3. Blackboard

Textbook:

1. Malloy, Michael, *Experiencing the World's Religions: Tradition, Challenge, and Change*, 6th Edition. ISBN # 978-0-078-03827-3.

The following supplementary materials are available: None

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Topical Description:

- Hinduism
- Sikhism
- Jainism
- Baha'i
- Buddhism
- Rinzai Zen Buddhism
- Soto Zen Buddhism
- Tendai Buddhism
- Pure Land Buddhism
- Nichiren Buddhism
- Confucianism
- Daoism
- Chinese Popular Religion
- Shinto

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