



Beijing Jiaotong University

2020 Summer Session

REL 110 World Religions

Course Outline

Term: June 29-July 24, 2020

Class Hours: 8:00-9:50 (Monday through Friday)

Code: REL 110

Instructor: Job Chen, Ph.D.

Home Institution: Clemson University

Office Hours: By Appointment

Email: zhuoc@clemson.edu

Credit: 4

Class Hours: This course will have 52 class hours, including 32 lecture hours, 8 lecturer office hours, 8-hour TA discussion sessions, 4-hour review sessions.

Course Description:

Religious beliefs and practice have been and remain a dominant force in human culture. This course is intended to be a general introduction to the origin, history, beliefs, and practices of religious traditions originating in India (Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism), China (Confucianism, Taoism), and Japan (Shintoism), as well as the major Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), indigenous or oral religious traditions, and new religious movements. Ideally, students should exit this course with a sense of what religion is, as well as how various religious adherents understand the world and their place within it. We will also think seriously throughout this course about the role that these religions do play, and should play, in the modern world. Because of the breadth and depth of religious practices, the course can provide only a summary introduction to various faith traditions. But it should equip students to understand what motivates and underpins various faiths and allow them to gain an understanding of them regardless of their own religious background and beliefs.



Course Objectives:

The proximate goal of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the history, beliefs and practices of the world's major religions. The expectation, however, is that such an understanding will allow students to engage individuals of different religious perspectives in an open and productive manner.

Required Textbooks:

Oxtoby, Willard. *A Concise Introduction to World Religions*, 3rd edition (Oxford University Press, 2011).

Novak, Philip. *The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions*. HarperOne, 2011.

Grading & Evaluation:

Grades will be distributed as 90-100%=A, 80-89%=B, 70-79%=C, 60-69%=D; and below 60% = F.

- In-class pop quizzes (10%) – will be multiple choice questions given regularly in the beginning of class to cover materials recently studied.
- First exam (25%) – will be 50 multiple choice questions given in the beginning of week 2 to cover all materials previously studied.
- Midterm exam (25%) – will be 50 multiple choice questions given in the beginning of week 3 to cover all materials previously studied.
- Final exam (40%) – will be 80 multiple choice questions given in the end of week 4 to cover all materials previously studied.

Course Schedule:

Week1

Session 1: Introduction: What is Religion?

Session 2: Oral Religious Traditions

Session 3: Hinduism I

Session 4: Hinduism II

Session 5: TA Review



Week2

Session 1: First Exam and Recap

Session 2: Jainism and Sikhism

Session 3: Buddhism I

Session 4: Buddhism II

Session 5: TA Review

Week3

Session 1: Midterm Exam and Recap

Session 2: Shintoism

Session 3: Confucianism

Session 4: Taoism

Session 5: TA Review

Week4

Session 1: Judaism

Session 2: Christianity

Session 3: Islam

Session 4: TA Review

Session 5: Final Exam