

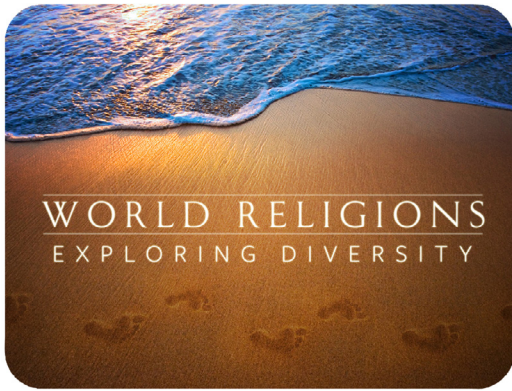


eDynamicLearning

— CAREER & ELECTIVE COURSES —



Course Syllabus



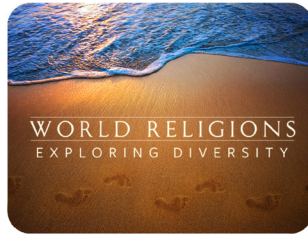
World Religions: Exploring Diversity

Course Description

Throughout the ages, religions from around the world have shaped the political, social, and cultural aspects of societies. This course focuses on the major religions that have played a role in human history, including Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Shintoism, and Taoism. Students will trace the major developments in these religions and explore their relationships with social institutions and culture. The course will also discuss some of the similarities and differences among the major religions and examine the connections and influences they have.

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Unit 1: The Study of World Religions

Unit Summary

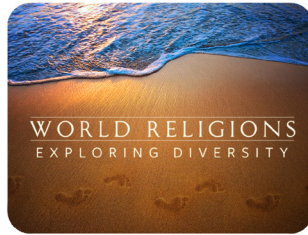
What is religion? What purposes does religion serve? Throughout history, religion has played an important role in shaping the ways that humans understand the world around them and in the organization of different societies. In this unit, we will examine what religion is and what role it plays in society. We will examine different definitions for religion, and look at some of the explanations offered to explain the development of religion.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze different definitions of the word “religion.”
- Consider how different groups of people approach religion.
- Identify characteristics that all religions have in common.
- Discuss some of the functions of religion for society.
- Learn about some of the ways to categorize religions.

Assignments

Unit 1 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 2: Hinduism

Unit Summary

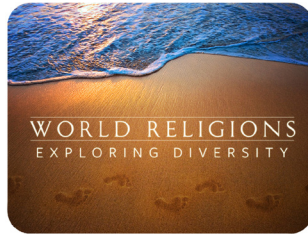
To many Westerners, the word “Hinduism” conjures up images of exotic art, meditation, and rituals. But what exactly is Hinduism? And what exactly do Hindus believe? In this unit, we will learn more about the beliefs, practices, and cultures of the most ancient of all the world’s major religions.

Learning Objectives

- Understand Hinduism’s ancient origins.
- Discuss several denominations of Hinduism.
- Identify the four objectives of Hinduism and the four paths to God.
- Name important Hindu texts and rituals.
- Recognize the influence of Hinduism on South Asian culture.

Assignments

Unit 2 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 2 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 3: Buddhism

Unit Summary

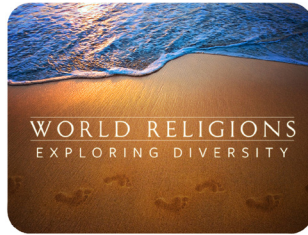
The fourth most commonly observed of the world's religions is in many ways an oddity. Many Westerners define Buddhists as "Buddha worshippers." However, the Buddha taught that he was merely a human being. He asked not to be worshipped, but merely revered as a sage and a teacher. Classical Buddhism lacks a concept of god, of ritual, and of a metaphysical realm. In this chapter we will learn what Buddhists believe, and how different kinds of Buddhists throughout the world practice their faith.

Learning Objectives

- Discuss the historical and religious figure of the Great Buddha.
- Understand the Buddha's basic teachings.
- Describe some of the basic developments that have occurred in Buddhism since the time of the Buddha.
- Identify the two primary divisions of Buddhism.
- Recognize the influence of Buddhism on different world cultures.

Assignments

Unit 3 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 3 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 4: Judaism

Unit Summary

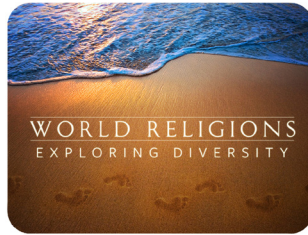
Despite its humble origins as the belief system of a small, nomadic tribe, Judaism is arguably the most influential religion in world history. While less than one percent of the earth's population is Jewish, roughly half of the people in the world practice a religion that is based upon the Jewish monotheism founded by Abraham and Moses. In this chapter, we'll learn about the origins of Judaism, the mark the Jewish people have made on world history, and Jewish life in the twenty-first century.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the origins of Judaism.
- Briefly summarize the 3,500 year history of the Jewish people.
- Identify the sacred texts of Judaism.
- Distinguish among the major divisions of modern Judaism.
- Understand the beliefs and practices of modern-day Jews.

Assignments

Unit 4 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 4 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 4 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 5: Christianity

Unit Summary

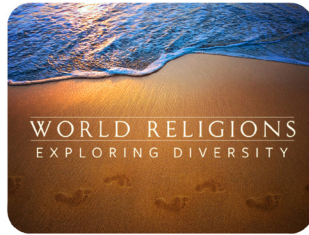
In terms of the sheer number of adherents, Christianity is the largest of the world's religions. Between one-quarter and one-third of the world's people profess to be Christian. If you live in North America, you are undoubtedly familiar with many Christian beliefs and customs, whether or not you are a practicing Christian yourself. In this unit, we will learn about the origins of Christianity and how the Christian faith spread throughout the globe. We will also study the core beliefs of the Christian religion and examine the similarities and differences among its major divisions.

Learning Objectives

- Discuss Jesus of Nazareth and other key figures in the origin of Christianity.
- Understand the basic teachings of Jesus.
- Map the spread of the Christian faith throughout Europe and the world.
- Distinguish between Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism.
- Identify Christian influences in world art and culture.

Assignments

Unit 5 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



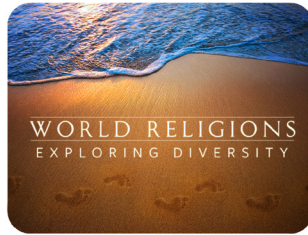
Midterm Exam

Learning Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first five units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Assignments

Midterm Exam	Exam	50 points
Midterm Discussion Assignment	Discussion	5 points



Unit 6: Islam

Unit Summary

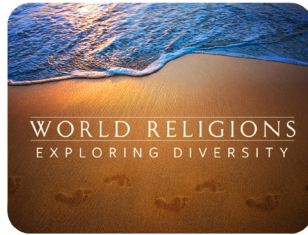
Despite its historical (and in many ways theological) connection to Christianity and Judaism, Islam is among the most controversial religions in the West—where this faith is too often linked with associations of war, terrorism, and female oppression. In this chapter we will try to get past the stereotypes and gain a more thorough understanding of the world's second most widely followed religion.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the origins of Islam.
- Discuss the life of the prophet Muhammad.
- List the Five Pillars of Islam.
- Distinguish among the major divisions of modern-day Islam.
- Understand the role of Islam in current affairs.

Assignments

Unit 6 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 6 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 7: Confucianism

Unit Summary

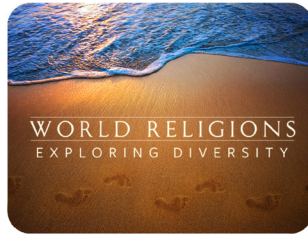
The ancient philosopher Kung Fu-tzu (known as Confucius in the West) had the greatest influence on Chinese culture of any one individual. The culture, rituals, social structure, and government of the world's largest civilization are largely based on the teachings and writings of this individual. In this unit, we will learn about the man Confucius, his teachings, and the imprint his philosophy has had on history.

Learning Objectives

- Outline the basic principles of Confucian thought.
- Recognize the influence of Confucian thought in Chinese culture.
- Learn about the sacred texts of Confucianism.
- Discuss the influence of Confucius and Mencius.
- Consider some of the rites and rituals of Confucianism.

Assignments

Unit 7 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 7 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 8: Shintoism

Unit Summary

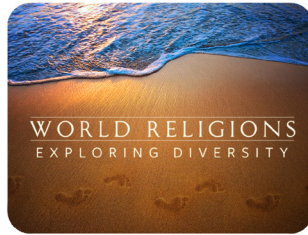
Shinto, the indigenous belief system of Japan, descends from a collection of beliefs and practices that date back to prehistoric times. Over the years, a number of global religious movements, most notably Buddhism, have made their way to Japan. To a large extent, Shinto has endured alongside these additional religions. In this chapter, we will learn more about the practice of Shinto and how Shinto has shaped the culture of Japan.

Learning Objectives

- Outline the basic principles of Shintoism.
- Learn about some of the different types of Shinto.
- Examine the common elements of Shinto shrines.
- Discuss some of the practices and rituals of Shinto.
- Consider some of the Shinto festivals and their role in the religion.

Assignments

Unit 8 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 8 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 9: Taoism

Unit Summary

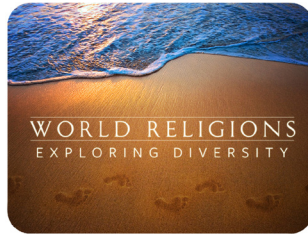
In an earlier unit, we learned how Chinese culture has been shaped through the centuries by the structure, regulations, and respect for authority that comes from Confucian thought. Taoism, with its reverence of nature, acceptance, and complacency (while discouraging power and ambition), is in many ways a stark contrast to the other major Chinese belief system, but it has had a great influence on China's culture and traditions as well. In this unit, we will learn about the history, beliefs, and practices of Taoists.

Learning Objectives

- Examine the ancient origins of Taoism.
- Identify the historic/religious figure of Lao Tzu.
- Understand the basic principles of Taoist thought.
- Learn about the different types of Taoism.
- Have a basic understanding of the rituals and customs common to Taoist practice.

Assignments

Unit 9 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 9 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 9 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 9 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 9 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Unit 10: Religion in the 21st Century

Unit Summary

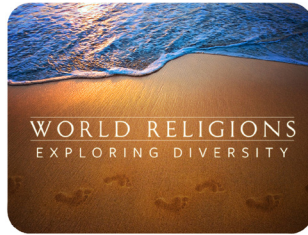
The modern world is a rapidly changing place, and this can be particularly disconcerting in the field of religion. Technological advances make our lives more convenient, but they also impose on our day-to-day lives and make many of our customs and practices obsolete. Modern science has challenged many long-held religious convictions. Rapid transportation and communication has made the world smaller—and made interactions with individuals whose beliefs are markedly different from our own almost inevitable. What do these changes mean to the practice of religion in the twenty-first century?

Learning Objectives

- Define challenges that the modern world presents to religion.
- Identify the role of religion in global politics and social policies.
- Recognize reasons why religious tolerance is more important than ever.
- Learn about the Interfaith Movement.
- Theorize about the future of religious practice.

Assignments

Unit 10 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 10 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 10 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 10 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 10 Quiz	Quiz	15 points



Final Exam

Learning Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from units six to ten in this course – the last five units. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Assignments

Final Exam	Exam	50 points
Class Reflection Discussion Assignment	Discussion	10 points