

Religion 103 Course Syllabus
CRN: 42851
Religions of the Eastern World
Spring 2018 / 3 Credits
Monday and Wednesday
2:30- 3:50
NSH-209

About this Class:

This is our agreement with one another. I will generally follow this course outline, but might make changes if needed. I want you to succeed in this class and have a good time learning what I think is a very exciting subject. Religion is often very subjective, which is why it is important that we keep an open mind and respectful tone with one another. Remember, this class is much like the practice of religion; it has much to do with what you put into it. Also, I hope that this class will be a dialogue, not my monologue. Your input and participation is expected!

Instructor Information

Matt Gordon

Office: IA 220 (Albany campus)

Mondays and Wednesdays, 1-2 PM or by appointment. It is a good idea to email, call or text if you want to stop by and see me. I am on campus before class on those days, but may be at the library or the coffee shop, not in my office. My schedule is flexible and I can usually find a time to meet before class or other times during the week.

Instructor website: <http://goo.gl/qikjrs> You will find syllabus updates, classroom notes, my slides, and other helpful information on this site.

gordonm@linnbenton.edu -- a word about email: Please use your linnbenton email address for correspondence with me. The college takes your privacy seriously and I'm not allowed to share any information unless I know for sure it is you and the way to do this is by using your linnbenton email.

541-714-3521 – call or text, I will usually respond the same day.

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.

Required Reading:

Fisher, Mary Pat (2014). *Living Religions, Ninth Edition*. New York, NY. McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Novak, Philip (1994). *The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions*. New York, NY. HarperCollins Publishers.

Course Requirements

Class Participation: Show up to class, stay awake, and participate in discussions.

Quizzes: There will be a total of five quizzes, five questions each. You will be allowed to drop the lowest grade of one (this is not an opt-out option, you still need to take all five quizzes.). HINT: If you know the answers to the “review and discussion questions” and “key terms” sections at the end of each chapter of Fisher’s book, you will do well on the quizzes.

Mid-Term: The mid-term will reflect your understanding of our course work up to this point, the study of religion in general and Indian religions. This mid-term will be mostly multiple choice with a few essay questions.

East Meets West Presentation: This research presentation will engage your critical thinking skills to explore eastern practices in western culture. This project can be done as an individual project or a group project with a maximum of 4 students per group. I strongly encourage you to do this as a group project. Students will be expected to give a 15 – 20 minute presentation. Students are encouraged to use multi-media, artwork or other visual tools to make their presentation more dynamic. Some examples might include: a presentation on the American Buddhist Church, a presentation on American yoga's connection with Eastern practice, new age spiritualities that engage meditation as practice, the Free Tibet movements on college campuses, a presentation on the Baha'i in the U.S., how the Unitarian Universalists incorporate Eastern religious practices in their faith traditions, Eastern religion centers of practice in the Pacific Northwest (i.e., Sikh temples, Zen Centers, etc). Students are encouraged to seek out "local experts" when doing their projects. Sign-ups for projects will be passed out the week after our mid-term.

Final Exam: The final exam will reflect your understanding of the entire course and is designed to engage your critical thinking skills. This final will be mostly essay questions with a few multiple choice questions.

Grading

(see above for descriptions)

Class Participation – 10%

Weekly Quizzes – 20 %

105 – 90 = A

East Meets West Presentation – 25 %

89 -80 = B

Mid-Term – 25 %

79-70 = C

Final Exam—25 %

69 – 60 = D

=105 % (this allows some flexibility if there any deficiencies in your work)

Below 60 = F

Course Schedule

(NOTE: I reserve the right to change, add or delete, so please come to class)

| Date | Read Before Class | In Class | Exams, Projects, Quizzes |
|------------------|---|--|--|
| Wed, April 4 | | Syllabus, Class Overview, Introduction to Eastern Religions, Timelines | |
| Monday, April 9 | Fisher: 1-31 <i>Website: Pew Research on Religion</i> —link on my instructor website | Definitions and perspectives, lenses for studying religion | |
| Wed, April 11 | Fisher, 71-119 | Hinduism | Quiz #1- Religious Responses |
| Monday, April 16 | Novak: <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> , 29-40 | Hinduism | |
| Wed, April 18 | Fisher, 121-135 | Jainism | Quiz #2- Hinduism |
| Monday, April 23 | Novak: <i>Legend of the Buddha's Life</i> , 49-62 Fisher: 137-149 | Buddhism, Key Concepts | |
| Wed, April 25 | Fisher: 150-157 Novak: <i>Core Doctrines</i> , 65-77 | Branches of Buddhism: Theravada | |
| Monday, April 30 | Fisher: 157-186 | Branches of Buddhism: Mahayana and Vajrayana | |
| Wed, May 2 | Fisher: 188-207 | Contemporary Buddhist Practices Daoism | Quiz #3- Buddhism Mid-term review guide |

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| Monday, May 7 | MID-TERM EXAM | | |
| Wed, May 9 | Fisher: 207-220 | Confucianism | SIGN-UP for Class Presentations |
| Monday, May 14 | Novak: <i>Confucianism</i> , 110-133 Novak: <i>Tao Te Ching</i> , 145-174 | Confucianism Tao Te Ching | |
| Wed, May 16 | Fisher, 222-240 | Shinto | Quiz #4- Daoism and Confucianism SIGN-UP for Class Presentations |
| Monday, May 21 | Fisher, 242-245 | Shinto, Zoroastrianism | Quiz #5- Shinto |
| Wed, May 23 | Fisher, 434-456 | Sikhism | |
| Monday, May 28 | NO CLASS- Memorial Day Holiday! | | |
| Wed, May 30 | Novak: <i>Creation Myths and Sacred Time, Sacred Space</i> , 331-354 | Myth and Story Class Presentations | |
| Monday, June 4 | <u>No reading for this day</u> | Class Presentations | |
| Wednesday, June 6 | <u>No reading this day</u> | Class Presentations Final Exam Review | Final Exam Study Guide Posted |
| FINAL EXAMS | <u>Final Exam on Wednesday, June 13 at 3 PM in our classroom</u> | | |

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.

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.

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.

Technology and devices in the classroom: There is no need to use your phone, tablet, computer, or other technological devices in the classroom. All of my slides will be posted online. Study guides for exams and quizzes will be given. Our class will be very interactive, engaging, and discussion focused and technological devices are distracting to our process.

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 participate in week 1's discussion boards by Thursday at 8pm will be dropped from the course. There are no waitlist spots in this course.

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.'