



INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN RELIGIONS

RELI 1303, May Term 2017
Daily 10:00-12:00, 1:00-3:00; Location: TBD

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introductory overview of the major religious traditions of Asia. The course focuses on the religious and cultural trends expressed in South Asia (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism) and East Asia (Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism). Students will explore these traditions from the contexts of their origins through the historical developments and spread throughout Asia and the West.

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Lindquist is an Associate Professor in Religious Studies and Director of Asian Studies at SMU. He teaches the expanse of Asian religions, specializes in Sanskrit religious literature and Hinduism, and has lived in India over 6 years.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course satisfies

- Level 1 of the Pillar requirement of the UC for "Philosophical and Religious Inquiry and Ethics" (PRIE)
- Level 1 of the Pillar requirement of the UC for "Historical Contexts" (HC)
- Proficiency and Experience requirement for "Human Diversity" (HD)
- Proficiency and Experience requirement for Global Engagement (GE)

Through tests, papers, and discussions, students who successfully complete this course will be able

—to describe and explain some of the general features and principal theoretical methods of one of the fields of philosophy, religious studies,

or ethics (PRIE).

—to summarize the major continuities and changes that took place over time in a defined historical period(s) (HC).

—to identify key events, actors, and evidence involved in a defined historical period(s) (HC).

—to demonstrate an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, or political conditions of identity formation and function in human society, including the ways in which these conditions influence individual or group status, treatment, or accomplishments (HD)

—Students will gain an enhanced awareness of personal values and attitudes pertaining to global identity and commitment through engagement with other societies and cultures (GE).

TEXTS (required; available at bookstore)

—Esposito, J. *Religions of Asia Today*, Oxford, 2011 or 2014 (RAT on reading schedule)

E-texts

There are occasional readings from outside the textbook. These will be distributed via Canvas (= C on reading schedule) or you will be pointed to where to acquire them (such as a website or the university online resources). It is your responsibility to be familiar with Canvas.

Multimedia

As the visual is central to Asian religious experience, this class utilizes PowerPoint presentations and, occasionally, video material. All of this material constitutes *required* material for exams.

ASSIGNMENTS

Quizzes: Daily quizzes are conducted at the very start of each class. Quizzes consist of multiple choice and T/F questions. Should you arrive late or leave class after a quiz is administered, you forfeit taking the quiz.



Papers: Three field-trip response papers (2-3 pages each). Papers are due in class two days after a visit.

Criteria will be passed out and discussed in class. If you miss a class fieldtrip, you must attend an appropriate venue on your own.

Exam: Two exams are scheduled during the course. Both exams consist of short answers and a longer essay. The second exam is not cumulative, but covers the material from the midpoint until the end of the course.

Participation: Attendance and participation in the class activities and discussion is required.

POLICIES

Grades (including +/- where appropriate)

A range = 90-100; B range = 80-89; C range = 70-79; D range = 60-69; below 60 = F

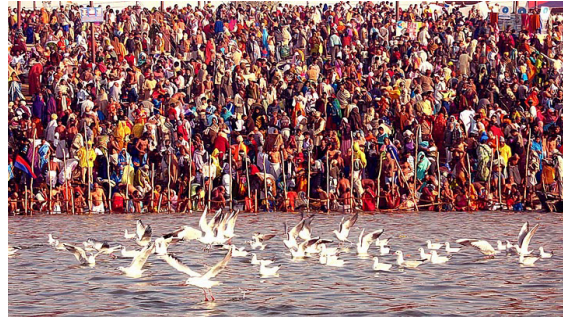
Grades: You grade will be based on quizzes (20%), field-trip response papers (10% each = 30%), midterm (20%), final exam (20%), and attendance and participation (10%).

Late Penalties

There will be no make-up exams or quizzes for this course. If you miss an exam or quiz, you will receive a "0" for that item, except in the case of documented medical emergency. Late assignments are docked ONE-FULL GRADE FOR EACH 24 HR PERIOD LATE.

Attendance

Attendance is taken twice during the day, at the beginning of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session. Missing a session without a documented medical excuse = automatic 1% deduction in participation grade (full day = 2%).



Honor Code:

Any academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, or misrepresenting yourself carries a severe penalty. It is up to you to know the rules and to seek clarification if you are unsure about anything. Ignorance is no excuse! See:

www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL_05_HC.asp

Disability Accommodations

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations.

Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit www.smu.edu/alec/dass. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

No electronic devices of any kind (computer, cellphone, etc.) are permitted to be used during the class period, unless there are special accommodations established with DASS.

Date	Topic	Required Reading
Day One May 18th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Introduction to Asia and the Study of Religion •1-3: Historical Frames 	<p>(1) Locate Asian countries on a map: India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Japan, China, the Koreas. Map tool at http://tinyurl.com/3lry8p</p> <p>(2) <i>RAT</i> 3-36</p>
Day Two May 19th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Early Hinduism •1-3 Modern Hinduism 	<p>(1) See video clip and discussion on "Rosetta Stone for the Indus Script?" at http://tinyurl.com/k3k7u3n</p> <p>(2) <i>RAT</i> pp. 77-123</p>
Day Three May 22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Diaspora and Global Hinduism •1-3 Visit Hari Krishna Temple 	<p>(1) <i>RAT</i> pp. 123-164</p> <p>(2) Take the virtual tour of Radha Madhav Dham (Austin, TX) at http://radhamadhavdham.org/</p> <p>(3) "American Hinduism" and accompanying video from Harvard University's <i>Pluralism Project</i> at http://tinyurl.com/glza9sh</p>
Day Four May 23rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Early Buddhism •1-3 Modern Buddhism 	<p>(1) 10-12: <i>RAT</i>, pp. 169-211</p> <p>(2) 1-3: <i>RAT</i> pp. 211-224</p>
Day Five May 24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Diaspora and Global Buddhism •1-3 Visit Soka Gakkai 	<p>(1) <i>RAT</i> pp. 224-252</p>
Day Six May 25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12: Review, Catch-up •1-3: Exam 	
Day Seven May 26th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Early Jainism •1-3 Modern Jainism 	<p>(1) J. Long, <i>Jainism: An Introduction</i>, pp. 1-56 (C)</p> <p>(2) Bahubali comic book (C)</p>

Day Eight May 30th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Early Sikhism •1-3 Modern and Global Sikhism 	(1) E. Nesbitt, <i>Sikhism</i> , pp. 1-65 (C)
Day Nine May 31st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Chinese Traditions •1-3 Modern China 	(1) 10-12 <i>RAT</i> pp. 257-294 (2) 1-3 <i>RAT</i> pp. 294-305
Day Ten June 1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10-12 Global Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism • 1-3 Visit International Buddhist Progress Society 	(1) <i>RAT</i> pp. 305-342
Day Eleven June 2nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-12 Review; Catch-up • 1-3 Exam 	

*Grade Definitions!*¹

Individual criteria are applied differently if the essay is an in-class essay or a take-home essay. Broadly speaking, I am less concerned with grammar/spelling or overall structure with an essay taken in class (where time is limited) and more concerned with completeness and detail. For a take-home essay or paper, however, grammar and spelling are very important, but I am most concerned with analytical skill, the ability to construct an argument, and ingenuity in writing (both in style and in the creativity of the argument).

A = Outstanding. Such a grade indicates that not only did the student completely address the question, but did so with rigor and clarity of thought. For a take-home essay or paper, this means that there were little to no errors in grammar/spelling and that structurally and stylistically the essay flowed really well. The introduction and conclusion were clear as was the development of the body of the paper. Such a paper is "tight" (i.e., well-structured, builds on itself, and does not introduce tangential or irrelevant material). In general, A's indicate that there is little I would have wanted changed for the assignment, but I may give comments for the student to further think about.

B = Very good. Such a grade indicates that the student clearly thought about the assignment and was able to execute the assignment with diligence and forethought. In general, though, a B indicates that, while the student did very good work, there were some areas in need of improvement. Depending on the nature of the assignment, this might be that there were structural or grammatical problems that made it difficult for me to understand in places. The student may not have proofread closely enough (for a take-home) or it may contain factual errors or generalities. Intro and conclusion are good, but could be improved.

C = Good. This is similar to the 'B' description, but the number of problems are more extensive (i.e., significant grammatical or structural problems, adding irrelevant material or new material inappropriately, too many generalities, etc.). For a take-home assignment or paper, there is little or no flare to the writing and there are some problems with the logic of the argument. This indicates the student needs to meet with me as well as with people at the Writing Center: <http://smu.edu/alec/wc.asp>

D = Minimally adequate. It is clear that the student did not fully understand the material or the assignment. Further, grammatical/structural problems make a D essay quite difficult to follow. There are usually far too many generalities and a lack of a clear argument. A grade of a 'D' should serve as a warning to the student that he/she definitely needs significant help outside of the class.

F = Unsatisfactory and unworthy of credit. This either indicates that the assignment was not done or what was done was simply unacceptable for any number of reasons.

Pluses (+) and minuses (-) are given to show relatively how close to the above criteria your assignment is (A- means just short of an A, while a B+ means an outstanding B, etc.).

¹ *Note: if you wish to discuss your grade(s) you must do so in my office hours or by appt. I do not discuss grades after class or via email because of privacy issues.*

Abbreviations used in essay marking:

gram. = Grammatical error.

w.c. = Word choice. A particular word or phrase is improper in a particular context or has connotations that were probably not (or should not have been) intended.

sp. = Spelling error. Sometimes the word will simply be circled.

awk. = Awkward. Something is wrong in the phrasing. It may be a grammatical or word-choice problem or both. Sometimes replaced with a '??' if I simply can't understand what is being said.

irrel. = Irrelevant. Introducing non-necessary or distracting material (sometimes indicated by "off topic").

l.c. = Lower case (i.e., remove capitalization).

u.c. = Upper case (i.e., capitalize word).

idio = Idiomatic. Characteristic of spoken language, but inappropriate in a formal essay (such as contractions, slang, etc.).

inapp. = Inappropriate. This may include introducing stereotypes, unnecessary or inappropriate value judgments, etc.

ital. = Italicize the word.

¶ = Need to break a paragraph into two or more paragraphs.

run-on = Run-on sentence. A sentence is too long and should be broken down into two or more sentences.

too gen. = Too general. Indicates a statement is lacking in necessary detail or, worse, is simply a stereotype.

exp. or explain = Enter into more detail on a particular topic.

! = Indicates shock (or horror) at a serious typographical mistake (i.e. "In Vedic India, fertility rites were very, very impotent" -- important!). This means you **MUST** work on your proofreading.

Other marks: other marks are self-explanatory (i.e., crossing something out means to delete it). Other comments will be written out in full, but if you have difficulty in understanding any of them, please come and talk to me.

At the end of every essay, you will find a couple sentences evaluating the essay as a whole. Should you wish for further comments, please come and see me.