

REL 2315 Religion in Asia

Instructor: Bhakti Mamtora
Office: Anderson 123

Email: bhaktim@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 2:00 - 3:30pm

Course Meeting Times: MAT 107 Period 4 (12:30 – 1:45pm)

Course Description

This course introduces students to the beliefs and practices of religious traditions in Asia. With an emphasis on tradition and today, the course discusses the early history and development of Asian religious traditions and encourages reflection on the contemporary relevance of those traditions. Through a reflection on religions in Asia, the course asks and addresses the following questions: (1) What constitutes a religion? (2) What are the major themes discussed in prominent texts? (3) In what ways do those themes manifest in practice?

Course Objectives

1. Understand the beliefs and practices of religions in Asia
2. Broadly sketch the history of these religious traditions
3. Discuss contemporary topics pertinent to religions in Asia through various forms of media

Evaluation and Grading Policy

1. Attendance and Participation (100 points) Attendance and participation are mandatory. A participation grade will be determined on the basis of the student's attendance, preparedness and active participation in the discussions throughout the semester. Students are expected to arrive on time. Excessive and consistent tardiness will be penalized.
2. Reading Quizzes (280 points) Seven reading quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Quizzes will contain multiple choice and short answer questions on the key themes and arguments of the reading. Make up quizzes will not be given unless the student has a valid excuse.
3. Short Paper (300 points) Students will complete one short essay due on June 3rd. The topic of the paper and the requirements will be discussed during the first week of class.
4. Final Project (320 points) To reflect on the contemporary relevance and prevalence of these traditions students will complete a final project due on June 21st. Details on the project requirements will be discussed during the first week of class.

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction & Hinduism

May 13	Course Introduction
May 14	Hinnells, Why Study Religions? King, Orientalism and the Study of Religion
May 15	Oxtoby, 29 - 42
May 16	Oxtoby, 42 - 57
May 17	Miller, <i>Bhagavad Gita</i>

Week 2 Hinduism & Jainism

May 20	Oxtoby, 57 - 74
May 21	Oxtoby, 74 - 96
May 22	TBD
May 23	Oxtoby, 159 - 173
May 24	Oxtoby, 173 - 185

Week 3 Jainism & Sikhism

May 27	No Class
May 28	Contemporary Topics
May 29	Oxtoby, 113 - 135
May 30	Oxtoby, 135 -147
May 31	Contemporary Topics

Week 4 Buddhist Traditions

June 3	Oxtoby, 199 - 224
June 4	Oxtoby, 224 - 232
June 5	Oxtoby, 232 - 248
June 6	Oxtoby, 248 - 255
June 7	Oxtoby, 255 - 273

Week 5 Chinese & Korean Traditions

June 10	Oxtoby, 281 - 298
June 11	Oxtoby, 298 - 307
June 12	Oxtoby, 307 - 333
June 13	Oxtoby, 341 - 349
June 14	Contemporary Topics

Week 6 Japanese Traditions & Islam in Asia

June 17	Oxtoby, 359 - 375
June 18	Oxtoby, 375 - 390
June 19	Clothey, 122 - 137
June 20	Lawrence, Beyond Turk & Hindu
June 21	Course Conclusion

Course Policies

1. Attendance: Attendance is required. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
Please note: If students are absent, it is their responsibility to make themselves aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.
Tardiness: If students enter class after roll has been taken, they are late, which disrupts the entire class. Two instances of tardiness count as one absence.
2. Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits plagiarism and defines it as follows:
Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8 July 2011)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

3. Classroom Behavior: Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.
4. Electronic Devices: While students may take notes on a laptop, being distracted, or causing distraction, by doing non coursework is not, and you will be required to shut down your laptop. All other electronic devices are not permitted, except as specifically announced by the instructor beforehand. You should expect to bring in copies of your notes on the reading. Texting in class is extremely rude and is not permitted.
5. Mode of Submission All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc) documents to Canvas. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered.

Student Resources

1. Disability Resource Center: The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student whom must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

2. Assistance for Students For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help students navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues.
 - a. U Matter We Care: <http://umatter.ufl.edu>, umatter@ufl.edu, 352-294-2273 (CARE)
 - b. Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu/>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261
 - c. Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575
 - d. Field and Fork Pantry: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>, located near McCarty B, 352-294-2208
 - e. Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>, multiple locations, (352) 392-1161