

Asian Religions

REL 2315 Section 0248
Spring 2015

Professor: Phillip Green
Office: Anderson Hall 123

Email: psgreen@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Fridays 10:45-12:45
(Or By Appointment)

Course Meetings: MWF Period 3 (9:35 – 10:35)
Course Location: TURL 2318

Course Description

Asian Religions introduces the student to the history, worldviews, teachings, and practices of some of the world's major Eastern religious traditions. The course will provide introductory overviews of Hindu, Buddhist, Jaina, Sikh, and various Chinese, Korean, and Japanese traditions. No prior background or knowledge of these traditions is assumed. Throughout the course, these traditions will be examined from a historical perspective in which the student will be expected to engage in critical and comparative reflection and analysis. By the end of the course, the student will be able to identify important figures, locations, tenets, and practices of the Eastern traditions examined.

Required Texts

WR Oxtoby, Willard, et. al. (2014) World Religions: Eastern Traditions. Ontario: Oxford University Press.

AWS Van Voorst, Robert (2007) Anthology of World Scriptures: Eastern Religions. Belmont: Wadsworth/Cengage.

Grading Breakdown

Participation: 15%
South Asian Traditions Exam: 20%
East Asian Traditions Exam: 20%
Weekly Short Responses: 10%
Compare/Contrast Paper: 15%
Final Exam: 20%

Evaluation

Grades will be computed based on the percentages given above according to the following grading scale:

A: 100–93 A-: 92–90
B+: 89–87 B: 86–83 B-: 82–80
C+: 79–77 C: 76–73 C-: 72–70
D+: 69–67 D: 66–63 D-: 62–60
E: 59 or below

For more information about UF's minus grade system visit:

<https://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

Participation

The student's active participation is a critical part of the learning process. Active participation, therefore, comprises 15% of your grade. Examples of active participation include (but are not limited to): coming to class prepared to answer questions regarding homework assignments and readings, participating in class discussions, and contributing to other in-class group activities. As your presence is required for active participation, both attendance and tardiness affect your participation grade (see **Attendance and Tardiness** below). A roll sheet will be distributed at the beginning of each class.

South Asian and East Asian Exams

There will be two in-class exams during the semester consisting of identifications and short answer responses. One will focus on the South Asian traditions covered during the first half of the course, and the other will focus on the East Asian traditions examined in the second half of the course. Each exam is worth 20% of your grade. **The South Asian traditions exam will be administered on 2/27/2015 during week 8 of the course. The East Asian traditions exam will be administered on 4/06/2014 during week 14 of the course.**

Weekly Short Responses

Every Friday the student will prepare a short written response to one of the discussion questions listed in the week's reading for either **WR** or **AWS**. These responses should be between 150–200 words (maximum 500 words, or roughly two double-spaced pages). The responses will be checked for accuracy and effort in order to gauge understanding of course material. All responses must be composed using complete sentences and checked for spelling. Outlines and other types of abbreviated write-ups are not acceptable. Responses are simply graded as completed or not completed. All responses are due at the beginning of Friday's class meeting. Student's wishing to save paper may email their responses as a Word or PDF attachment as long as the email is received before class begins on Friday.

Compare/Contrast Paper

Students will write one 1000 word essay (4~5 pages double-spaced, 12 point font) that focuses on comparing and contrasting two primary reading sources, two types of practices found in one

or more Asian traditions, two types of doctrine/tenets, or two aspects of two separate Asian traditions the student finds particularly interesting. This paper accounts for 15% of your final grade. A hard copy of this paper is **due at the beginning of class on 4/17/2015**. Papers received after the first five minutes of class on 4/17/2015 will receive a 5 point penalty for each day after the due date the paper is not received. Under no circumstances will papers be accepted after 5:00 pm on 4/22/2015 (the last day of class). Students may submit an electronic copy of the paper (Word or PDF), but the same deadline applies. Additional details on this assignment will be provided later in the semester.

Final Exam

A two hour final exam will include multiple choice questions, identifications, and essays. The last week of class will be devoted to review and questions in order to help you better prepare for the exam. The final exam accounts for 20% of your final grade. The final exam is scheduled for **Thursday, April 30th, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.** in our regular classroom.

Attendance and Tardiness

Attendance is mandatory, and you are expected to come to each class session prepared by having read the required readings *prior* to class so that you may participate in any class discussions and/or activities. This is not a courtesy on your part; it is a *requirement* for the course that comprises the core of your participation grade. Students are also expected to arrive to class on time. That is, students should be ready to begin class at the appointed time (9:35). Tardiness is not only disrespectful to your instructor and fellow students, it also adversely affects your participation grade.

Three total unexcused absences are permitted. For each additional unexcused absence, 2 points will be deducted from your participation grade, and 1 point will be deducted for every episode of tardiness. Leaving class early without the professor's permission and disrespectful behavior (examples: talking during lectures, sleeping, answering cell-phones, text-messaging, reading the paper, surfing on your laptop, and rudeness to the professor or fellow students) will result in deductions just like an unexcused absence.

Make-ups and/or late assignments will *only* be allowed/accepted if valid excuses for missed classes are submitted in writing and in a timely manner, along with pertinent documentation (such as note from a doctor). Written excuses for planned absences (such as participation in athletic events or religious observances, for example) must be submitted in advance.

For more on UF's attendance policy visit

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Academic Honesty

Guidelines for academic honesty at the University of Florida can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx#honesty>

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the guidelines detailed at the above sites and adhere to them.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a disability must register with the office of the Dean of Students:
<http://accessibility.ufl.edu/>

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to modification)

Wed. 1/07 Class Introduction

Fri. 1/09 Class Introduction Continued: About Religion
WR 4–24
AWS 1–20 (This reading can be done over weekend)

Part I: South Asian Traditions

Hindu Traditions (1/12–1/23)

Indus Valley Culture; Vedic Traditions

Mon. 1/12 WR 28–40

Wed. 1/14 AWS 30–38

Fri. 1/16 AWS 38–53

Mon. 1/19 NO CLASS, MLK DAY

Classical Hinduism; Practices, Rituals, and Arts

Wed. 1/21 WR 41–69

Fri. 1/23 AWS 54–65

Mon. 1/26 WR 69–96

Jaina Traditions (1/28–1/30)

Overview and Early History

Wed. 1/28 WR 148–160

AWS 131–138

Major Developments and Practice

**Fri. 1/30 WR 160–178
AWS 138–144**

Buddhist Traditions (2/02–2/18)

Life of the Buddha

**Mon. 2/02 WR 186–198
AWS 78–86**

Foundational Teachings

**Wed. 2/04 WR 198–204
AWS 86–91**

The Buddhist Community

**Fri. 2/06 WR 204–206
AWS 94, 98–99, 102–109**

Early Buddhist Traditions

Mon. 2/09 WR 206–217

Mahāyāna

**Wed. 2/11 WR 217–223
AWS 92–93, 101–102**

Merit, Relics, Images, and Other Practices

**Fri. 2/13 WR 241–245
AWS 109–114**

Vajrayāna; Tibetan Buddhist Traditions

**Mon. 2/16 WR 232–238
AWS 114–115, 118–119**

Buddhism in the Modern World

Wed. 2/18 WR 246–251, 254–257

AWS 122–124

Sikh Traditions (2/20–2/25)

Overview and Early Years

Fri. 2/20 WR 106–118

Texts, Doctrine, and Practice

**Mon. 2/23 WR 118–131
AWS 150–160**

Sikhism in the Modern World

**Wed. 2/25 WR 131–142
AWS 160–162**

EXAM

Fri. 2/27 South Asian Traditions Exam

Spring Break 2/28–3/07: NO CLASSES

Part II: East Asian Traditions

Chinese & Korean Traditions (3/09–3/20)

Confucianism Part I

Mon. 3/09 WR 264–278

Confucianism Part II

Wed. 3/11 AWS 169–186

Daoism

**Fri. 3/13 WR 278–288
AWS 199–213**

Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism

Mon. 3/16 **WR 223–232, 288–295**
AWS 120–122

Wed. 3/18 **WR 295–321**
AWS 186–189, 214–217

Korean Traditions

Fri. 3/20 **WR 322–332**

Japanese Traditions (3/23–4/03)

Early Years, Spiritual Agents

Mon. 3/23 **WR 342–355**

Buddhism and Shinto

Wed. 3/25 **WR 355–367**

Fri. 3/27 **AWS 222–230**

Zen Buddhism

Mon. 3/30 **Optional: WR Review 230–231**

Wed. 4/01 **AWS 116–117**

Christianity, Modernity, and Nationalism

Fri. 4/03 **WR 367–375**

EXAM

Mon. 4/06 **East Asian Traditions Exam**

Part III: Select Southeast Asian Traditions

Early Cambodia and Other Parts of Southeast Asia (4/08–4/10)

Wed. 4/08 **Readings TBA**

Fri. 4/10 **Readings TBA**

Part IV: Current Issues

Current Issues and Select Readings (4/13–4/17)

Mon. 4/13 WR 382–398

Wed. 4/15 Lecture Only

**Fri. 4/17 Lecture & Discussion Only
Compare/Contrast Paper Due (By Beginning of Class)**

Review

Mon. 4/20 Review and Final Exam Prep

Wed. 4/22 Review and Final Exam Prep (Last Day of Class)

Final Exam: Thursday, April 30th, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. in our regular classroom.