

Welcome

Welcome to REL2300: Introduction to World Religions!

Please read this Course Syllabus thoroughly, as well as all important course deadlines below the Syllabus.

Refer to this syllabus throughout the semester for any course related questions.

Once you have read through this entire Syllabus and the [Start Here section](#), please complete the [Syllabus Quiz](#).

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

Course Information

Course: REL2300, Introduction to World Religions

Credits: 3 credit hours

Course Term: Fall 2014

Class Meeting Time: NONE (but pay attention to strict deadlines, as outlined below)

Prerequisite Knowledge: none

Instructors: Dr. Vasudha Narayanan, Prea Persaud, Sarah "Moxy" Moczygemba, Jodi Shaw

Online Office Hours: (available to answer emails and monitor discussions) Dr. Narayanan: 2:00 - 4:00 pm Wednesday, Moxy: 6:00 - 8:00 pm Monday & Wednesday, Prea: 10:00 - 12:00 pm Tuesday & Thursday, Jodi: 12:00 - 2:00 pm Tuesday and Thursday

Telephone Office Hours: By appointment only (please email to set up)

Please contact your instructor and TA using the Conversations (Inbox) tool in Canvas. For information on how to do this view the following [Conversations](#) section of the [Student Guide](#).

Course Goals

When you complete this course, you will be able to:

- Explain basic world views, rituals, and beliefs of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Chinese religions, Japanese religions, Indigenous Religions, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.
- Problematize the category of religion and identify your own working definitions.
- Identify the social, political, and cultural factors that come into play in the formation and understanding of a given religion.
- Equipped with this knowledge of different religious traditions, and the contexts in which they thrive, identify your own vantage point, as well as engage with different cultures and countries in an informed, respectful manner

****All module level learning objectives are provided within the individual modules throughout the course.**

Course Readings and Required Texts

- [A Concise Introduction to World Religions: Second Edition](#)-Edited by Willard G. Oxtoby and Alan F. Segal. Oxford University Press 2011.

Purchase or access to one of the following films:

- Kundun
- Persepolis
- Fiddler on the Roof
- Princess Mononoke
- Lagaan

**** Other supplemental materials, such as videos will be provided on this course website.**

Instructional Methods

There are readings, videos, and other materials for each course module, but this course is designed to be as interactive as possible. As a member of this class, you will be required to contribute to weekly discussion posts and responses based on the material each week. Quizzes will also test your basic comprehension of the material in each course module. The deadlines for all assignments and quizzes are clearly stated in Canvas (in the Calendar and below this Syllabus). You will take a midterm and final exam, and you will complete a final paper.

Course Requirements and Policies

Quizzes

Weekly quizzes will be administered in Canvas. You can access them in the Modules tool, in the Module pages, or through Assignments. The first quiz is a quiz covering your syllabus and Start Here section. You are responsible for completing your quizzes by 11:59 pm on the due date. Quizzes are non-cumulative.

Once you have completed the readings and discussion and viewed the lectures for that week, make sure you study this material thoroughly. After you've studied the material, you should be ready to take the quiz. The quiz is timed, so it is necessary for you to know all the material prior to starting the quiz (**i.e., there will not be enough time to look up each answer in your notes, so you should prepare as if your notes were not available to you**). You will have 10 minutes to complete each quiz.

If you are still taking the quiz when the quiz due date passes, you will not be allowed to finish your quiz - it will auto-submit. Thus, you **MUST** take the quiz **BEFORE** the deadline listed. No makeups are allowed, except for medical or family emergencies, however there will be two opportunities for extra credit.

****If you have any trouble with your quiz, you must contact the UF Computing Help Desk immediately at 352-392-4357 option 2. Once you have done so, email your instructor and TA immediately with the details of your problem along with your Help Desk ticket number.**

Before taking your first quiz, view the [Canvas video tutorial on taking quizzes](#).

Online Discussion Postings

Every week students are expected to post a minimum of two responses/reflections to the online course discussion forums in Canvas. These forums are only available to the instructors and other students enrolled in the course. One post will be a reflection to the course readings and/or lectures required for that week. The other will be a response to a fellow classmate. The student should feel free to compose posts on a topic that most interests him or her from the readings and/or videos for that week. A few example topics will be made available to students should selecting a topic prove too difficult.

****Note:** You must cite both one of the videos and the text in your initial post. This is not required in the follow up response, however.

For credit, the reflection post must be made by Wednesday at 11:59 pm. Follow up responses must be made by Friday at 11:59pm (unless specified otherwise in the Due Dates below). All posts should be articulate, well thought out and adhere to the rules of grammar, punctuation and spelling of the English language. Two posts must meet the minimum requirement of 100 words each (200 words total). Additional posts beyond these two can be of any length. Additionally, all posts should be courteous, academic and non-aggressive. Rude and demeaning online behavior will not be tolerated for any reason and could adversely affect your grade. While students may certainly be critical, such critical responses and observations should be presented in a professional and academic manner. Students are encouraged to make multiple (relevant) posts, although this is not mandatory. These discussion posts will comprise 25% of your overall grade for the course. You can use audio, video, and/or written mediums of communication in the discussion section.

Before completing your first discussion post, view the [Canvas tutorial on posting to discussions](#).

Final Paper

You will be required to write a final paper in this course. For this final assignment, students will write a 6-8 page analytical paper that discusses a film in which one of the world religions covered in this course plays a prominent role. The goal of this assignment is for students to demonstrate their understanding of a religious tradition, to articulate how that tradition influences the lives and worldview of believers, and to examine the ways in which religion appears in popular culture. In their papers, students should reconcile themes and concepts in the course with the religion's presentation in the film. This paper is worth 15% of your total grade.

Midterm Exam

This course will conduct a midterm exam that will be administered online via Canvas. The exam will only cover concepts in the first half of the class (Modules 1-7), and the questions will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, true/false, matching and so forth. Once started, students will have 40 minutes to complete the midterm exam. The midterm exam will comprise 25% of your overall grade for the course. Additional details on the midterm exam will be provided later in the semester. All course activities will be conducted via Canvas (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>).

Final Exam

This course will conduct a final exam that will be administered online via Canvas. The exam will only cover concepts in the second half of the class (Modules 8-11), and the questions will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, true/false, matching and so forth. Once started, students will have 45 minutes to complete the final exam. The final exam will comprise 25% of your overall grade for the course. Additional details on the final exam will be provided later in the semester. All course activities will be conducted via Canvas (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>).

Course Technology

Frequent access to a computer with a good broadband connection is required. See the [Start Here](#) section for details on the technology used in the class.

University Policies

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the [Dean of Students Office](#). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the [UF Student Honor Code](#).

Grading Breakdown

Quizzes: 10%

Discussion Reflection/Response Postings: 25%

Final Paper: 15%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Final Exam: 25%

Please see the [Assignments](#) tool for the points value of each assignment. Grades will be made available in the [Grades](#) tool shortly after each assignment is graded.

Grading Scale

GRADE	POINTS
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D/PASS	65-69
F/FAIL	64 and below

For more information about UF's minus grade system visit: <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>