

# REL 2300 World Religion Fall 2015

## Instructor

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Online Office Hours MWF 9-10 AM and by appointment

## Teaching Assistants

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Joshua McKinley

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Online Office Hours M 2-5 PM and by appointment

## Course outcomes

- Understand basic worldviews, rituals, and beliefs of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Chinese religions, Japanese religions, Indigenous Religions, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.
- Students will have problematized the category of religion and be able to finesse their own working definitions of the concept.
- Students learn about the social, political, and cultural factors that come into play during the formation and understanding of different religions.
- Equipped with this knowledge of different religious traditions, and the contexts in which they thrive, students will better understand both their own vantage point, as well as be able to engage with different cultures and countries in an informed, respectful manner.

## Course Materials

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
- A Serious Man

- Princess Mononoke
- Lagaan

## **Assessments**

### **Mid-term Exam: 15 Points**

Modules covered before mid-semester

### **Final Exam: 15 Points**

Modules covered after mid-semester

### **Weekly Quizzes: 20 Points**

Every week you will have an online quiz that covers week's readings. The questions will be multiple choice and true or false. These quizzes are intended to ensure that you are keeping up with the material in the course, and will be available only until midnight of their due dates. More details will be available in the quiz link on Canvas.

### **Discussion Board/Participation: 30 Points**

We believe that you as the student will learn a great deal in this course if you take an active role in it. In order to get the most out of your learning experience, you need to go beyond passive regurgitation of material. You will be expected to digest the material from the lectures and the readings. In order for us to monitor this, you will be expected to post your reflections on each weeks content. **YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE TWO POSTS PER WEEK.** For the first post, please answer the questions posted in the coordinating discussion forum. To respond to this question, students must cite the weeks reading and at least one of the videos in their initial post. In the second post, students will respond to another student's initial post and are encouraged to use course resources. Each of your initial posts should be approx. 250 words. They should be respectful, well written, and carefully edited and should exhibit your analytical thinking. The second response post should be approximately 100-200 words and follow the same guidelines about respect and grammar as the first post. These will be graded pass/fail. All posts are due by 11:59 p.m. EST on the days found on the syllabus. These due dates, and any deviation from them, are noted in the course schedule below as well as in the due dates PDF.

Please be warned that glaring factual inaccuracies will result with you receiving a 0 for that particular discussion response.

### **Paper: 20 Points**

For their 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.

## **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

Grade A is reserved for work that is exceptional in quality, for work showing keen insight, understanding and initiative. (Note: No A+ grades).

Grade B is for work that is consistently superior, for work showing interest, effort and/or originality.

Grade C is a respectable grade that reflects consistent daily preparation and completion in a satisfactory manner of all work required in the course. A minimum "C" average (2.00) is required for graduation.

Grade D is below the average necessary for meeting graduation requirements and ordinarily is not accepted for transfer by other institutions. A grade of a "D-" is the lowest passing grade.

Grade F is failing.

## **Course Rules**

### **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to uphold the academic honor code of the University of Florida. Any student found in violation of this code will be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible. Students should take care in correctly citing all sources consulted during research. More information about the honor code can be found here:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcode.php>

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students in need of special accommodations must register with the UF Student Disability Resource Center and provide the instructor with documentation to ensure that the student has adequate opportunity to reach their full potential. More information on disability accommodation at the University of Florida can be found at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/current.php>

## **Course Schedule**

### Weeks 1 and 2- Intro to the Course and Module 1- Intro

- Syllabus Quiz Monday August 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Student Introduction Post Monday August 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 1 Wed August 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Friday September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

### Week 3-Module 2- Hinduism (Labor Day)

- Response 3 September Wed 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 4 September Friday 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday September 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

### Week 4-Module 2-Hinduism

- Response 5 September Wed 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 6 September Friday 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday September 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

### Week 5-Modules 3 and 4- Jainism and Sikhism

- Response 7 September Wed 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 8 September Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Jainism Quiz Friday September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Sikhism Quiz Friday September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

### Week 6- Module 5- Buddhism

- Response 1 Wed September 28<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Friday September 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday September 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

### Week 7- Module 6- Chinese Religion

- Response 1 Wed October 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Friday October 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday October 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

### Week 8- Module 7-Japanese Religion (Homecoming)

- Response 1 Tuesday October 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

- Response 2 Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 9- Midterm

- Wednesday October 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 10- Module 8- Indigenous Religion

- Response 1 Wednesday October 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Friday October 28<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday October 28<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 11- Module 9- Judaism

- Response 1 Wednesday November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Friday November 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday November 4<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 12- Module 10- Christianity -Veterans Day

- Response 1 Tues November 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Thursday November 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Thursday November 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 13 Module 10- Christianity

- Response 1 Wed November 16<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Friday November 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday November 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 14-Thanksgiving

Week 15-Module 11-Islam

- Extra Credit Monday November 28<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 1 Wed November 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Response 2 Friday December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST
- Quiz Friday December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 16- Partial Week

- Paper due Wednesday December 7<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 p.m. EST

Week 17- Finals

- Final due by Wednesday December 14<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 p.m. EST