Course Syllabus

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 (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 2021
Class Meeting Time: NONE (but pay attention to strict deadlines, as outlined below)
Prerequisite Knowledge: none
Professor: Dr. Vasudha Narayanan **Teaching Assistants:** Michael Schuster, Deng Zheyuan

Please contact your instructor and TAs using the Conversations (Inbox) tool in Canvas. For information on how to do this view the following **Conversations (http://guides.instructure.com/s/2204/m/4212/c/23875) section of the **Student Guide (http://guides.instructure.com/s/2204/m/4212)** . If needed, office hours are available at the student's request.**

If you are unable to view the pictures on Canvas using the Safari browser try switching to Google Chrome.

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: Fourth Edition-Edited by Roy C. Amore, Amir Hussain and Willard G. Oxtoby. Oxford University Press 2019. ISBN-13: 9780190919023

** **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. Please see the **Modules** tab to view all videos, readings and other course materials. 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 and are worth **20%** of your overall grade.

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 an opportunity for extra credit.

**If you have any technical issue regarding your quizzes and other assignments, 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.

Please do not contact your TA without the help desk ticket number.

Before taking your first quiz, view the **[Canvas video tutorial on taking quizzes (https://vimeo.com/75056435)](https://vimeo.com/75056435)** .

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 posts should be within your assigned group. 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 reference 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 the deadlines indicated on the syllabus. Follow up responses must be made within the 48 hours before the reflection post's deadline.

All posts should be articulate, well thought out and adhere to the rules of grammar, punctuation and spelling of the English language. Each of your **initial posts** should be at least **250 words**. They should be respectful, well written, and carefully edited and should exhibit your analytical thinking. The **second response post** should be between **100-200 words** and follow the same guidelines about

respect and grammar as the first post. 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 **30%** of your overall grade for the course. You can use audio, video, and/or written mediums of communication in the discussion section.

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

Before completing your first discussion post, view the **Canvas tutorial on posting to discussions (https://vimeo.com/75056432)** .

Project

You will be required to complete a fieldwork project for this course. The project consists of several parts including a 6-8 page reflection paper which summarizes your findings. The purpose of this assignment is *not* to convert you to any particular tradition but for you to experience a different religious tradition in ways that cannot be explained through a textbook or video. It also gives you the opportunity to learn about the different cultures and traditions that are available in your community. It is advised that you begin this project as soon as possible because unlike similar observation papers, this paper includes several parts. This paper is worth **20%** of your total grade. **No late papers will be accepted**, However, students with extenuating circumstances and with permission from the instructor may turn in a late paper. Late papers will be deducted half a grade off for each day the paper is past due and for a maximum of two days, after which papers will not be accepted.

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 **15%** of your overall grade for the course. 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 40

minutes to complete the final exam.The final exam will comprise **15%** 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/** (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** (http://dso.ufl.edu/drc/) . 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 (https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/)** .

Note on Plagarism

All written assignments including discussion posts and papers must include the proper method of citation from the citation style of your choosing. Please see **https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/ (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)** for more information on how to cite your work. Please go through the **preventing plagiarism guidelines**.

Grading Breakdown

Quizzes: 20%
Discussion Reflection/Response Postings: 30%
Final Paper: 20%
Midterm Exam: 15%
Final Exam: 15%

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

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Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
	📝 **Course Introduction**	

Fri Aug 27, 2021	**Discussion** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759444)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Aug 29, 2021	📝 **Syllabus Quiz** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759432)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 3, 2021	📝 **Welcome to the Course!** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759445)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 5, 2021	📝 **Course Introduction Quiz** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759419)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 10, 2021	📝 **Hinduism Discussion #1** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759443)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 12, 2021	📝 **Hinduism Quiz #1** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759423)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 17, 2021	📝 **Hinduism Discussion #2** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759442)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 19, 2021	📝 **Hinduism Quiz #2** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759425)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 24, 2021	📝 **Jainism & Sikhism Discussion** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759441)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 26, 2021	📝 **Jainism Quiz** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759433)	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **Sikhism Quiz** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759422)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 1, 2021	📝 **Buddhism Discussion** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759440)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 3, 2021	📝 **Buddhism Quiz** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759426)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 8, 2021	📝 **Chinese Religions Discussion**	due by 11:59pm

(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759439)

Sun Oct 10, 2021

📝 **Chinese Religions Quiz**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759427)
due by 11:59pm

Fri Oct 15, 2021

📝 **Japanese Religions Discussion**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759438)
due by 11:59pm

Sun Oct 17, 2021

📝 **Japanese Religions Quiz**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759431)
due by 11:59pm

Sun Oct 24, 2021

📝 **Midterm**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759428)
due by 11:59pm

Fri Oct 29, 2021

📝 **Judaism Discussion**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759437)
due by 11:59pm

Sun Oct 31, 2021

📝 **Judaism Quiz**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759430)
due by 11:59pm

Fri Nov 5, 2021

📝 **Christianity Discussion #1**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759436)
due by 11:59pm

Sun Nov 7, 2021

📝 **Christianity Quiz #1**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759421)
due by 11:59pm

Fri Nov 12, 2021

📝 **Christianity Discussion #2**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759435)
due by 11:59pm

Sun Nov 14, 2021

📝 **Christianity Quiz #2**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759429)
due by 11:59pm

Mon Nov 29, 2021

📝 **Islam Discussion**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759434)
due by 11:59pm

Tue Nov 30, 2021

📝 **Islam Quiz**
(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759420)
due by 11:59pm

Fri Dec 3, 2021

📝 **Indigenous Religions Discussion**
due by 11:59pm

(https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4849193)

Sun Dec 5, 2021	📝 **Indigenous Religions Quiz** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4849253)	due by 11:59pm
Thu Dec 9, 2021	📅 **University of Florida GatorEvals – Spring 2021** (https://ufl.instructure.com/calendar? event_id=2118819&include_contexts=course_435389)	11:59pm
Fri Dec 10, 2021	📝 **Extra Credit** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759446)	due by 11:59pm
	📝 **World Religions Final Project - Site Visit** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759447)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Dec 15, 2021	📝 **Final Exam** (https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/435389/assignments/4759424)	due by 11:59pm