



**University of International Business and Economics  
International Summer School**

**REL 110 World Religions**

**Term: May 29 – June 29, 2017**

**Instructor: Christian Van Gorder**

**Home Institution: Baylor University**

**Email: [Chris.Van.Gorder@baylor.edu](mailto:Chris.Van.Gorder@baylor.edu)**

**Class Hours: Monday through Thursday, 120 minutes daily (2,400 minutes in total)**

**Teaching Assistant: TBD**

**Email: TBD**

**Discussion session: 2 hours each week**

**Total Contact Hours: 64 contact hours (45 minutes each, 48 hours in total)**

**Credit: 4 units**

**Course Description**

This course provides an introduction to the world's largest faith traditions. Our goal is to gain, as far as is possible, a participant's appreciation of what is cherished by adherents of these traditions. After an introduction describing the methods, history, and controversies in the academic field of religious studies, we will examine – through a phenomenological lens - the rituals, ceremonies, teachings, beliefs and worldview assumptions of adherents of the Religions of India (Jainism, Hinduism, Sikhism), Religions of China, Australasia and the Pacific Islands, Buddhism, Shinto, Religions of Persia/Iran, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Issues of religion and violence and religious responses to social issues – such as environmentalism, sexism, and poverty – will also be discussed.

**Course Goals**

The goals of the course are to aid students in their future interactions with adherents of other faith traditions and to provide them with an accurate historical, creedal and experiential introduction to the worldview assumptions and religious experiences of adherents of various traditions. In addition to a sense of basic “literacy” of terms and major historical events and personages in the development of these traditions, students will also be encouraged to reflect on the centrality of religious faith for many worldwide and explore possible roles for religion in social progress.

***Required Texts (Bring required texts to class when discussed)***

- ✧ Coelho, Paulo **The Alchemist**.
- ✧ Molloy, Michael. **Experiencing the World Religions**.
- ✧ Novak, Philip, **The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions**, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995.

## Attendance

Students will be strictly held to the attendance policies of UIBE and are strongly advised to be aware of this policy. For example, only absences approved by the UIBE attendance policy will be accepted without penalty.

## Grading Policy

For Written Assignments -You'll be graded on these criteria:

- ✧ Induction: Are the conclusions in writing based on concrete evidence?
- ✧ Accuracy: Are inferences drawn have clear relation to texts consulted?
- ✧ Originality: Is your writing fresh and do you properly cite other sources?
- ✧ Depth: Are issues probed w/thoroughness & focus? Do not simply "re-tell."
- ✧ Organization: Does your writing show a logical procession?
- ✧ Relative thoroughness: Is writing as complete as possible?
- ✧ Clarity: Have you expressed ideas with directness? No page-limit "filler."
- ✧ Format: Have you double-spaced, typed, and proofread all work? Did you avoid sexist language? Is your name/page # on each page? Did you include a cover-sheet with your name/student I.D./Time of class?
- ✧ Late Work is not accepted. Any plagiarism or cheating will not be tolerated and will result in **FAILING THE ENTIRE CLASS**. Final grades are not reviewable; ask any questions at all before grades are submitted.

## Assignments

- ✧ A 5-7 page (double-spaced)- Response to Coelho book (100 points) Write in the form of a letter to author and tell how your own views relate to/differ from the themes of the book. Ask questions. Include cover page/name each page.
- ✧ Midterm Test (worth 100 points)
- ✧ Final Examination (100 points)

A Note about Inclusive Language: Inclusive language recognizes that language can exclude or marginalize women. Ways to write with more inclusive language include using the plural form, omitting pronouns, using formal style or using compound words (he/she). One can also use articles in place of pronouns, repeat nouns, use the passive voice or use specific examples.

## Grading Scale

Assignments and examinations will be graded according to the following grade scale:

- A 90-100
- A- 85-89
- B+ 82-84
- B 78-81
- B- 75-77
- C+ 72-74
- C 68-71
- C- 64-67
- D 60-63
- F below 60



## **Course Hours**

The course has 20 class sessions in total. Each class session is 120 minutes in length for a total of 2,400 minutes of class time. The course meets from Monday to Thursday.

## **Class Rules**

Turn cell phones to vibrate and DO NOT text in class. If you need to check your phone/email/send a text leave the room. Texting in class, talking in class, late arrivals or early departures will result in points lost from final (without appeal). Computers for note-taking is fine but no hand-held devices are allowed in class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave class to aid other students learning.

## **Tentative Course Schedule**

Monday May 29: Introduction  
Discussion of the Syllabus

Tuesday, May 30: Religions of India, I  
Reading: Molloy Chapter on Hinduism

Wednesday, May 31: Religions of India, II  
Reading: Novak Chapter on Hinduism – Bring book to class

Thursday, June 1: Religions of India, III  
Reading: Molloy Reading on Jainism and Sikhism

Friday, June 2: Review of Religions of India, Film

Monday, June 5: Religions of Japan/Korea  
Reading/Discussion of the Molloy Chapter on Japanese Religion  
Assign. #1- Write 2-5 p. response to Coelho Book–Write a Letter to Author

Tuesday, June 6: Buddhism, I  
Reading: Molloy Chapter on Buddhism

Wednesday June 7: Buddhism, II  
Reading: Novak Chapter on Buddhism – Bring book to class

Thursday, June 8: Test One

Friday, June 9: Test Return/Review

Monday, June 12: Religions of Native America, Australasia, Oceania “Oral Religions”  
Reading/Discussion of the Molloy and Novak Chapter on Oral Traditions

Tuesday, June 13: Religions of China, I  
Reading: Molloy Chapter on Religions of China

Wednesday, June 14: Religions of China, II - Taoism  
Reading/Discussion of the Readings: Novak Chapter –Taoism – Bring book to class

Thursday, June 15: Religion of China, III - Confucianism

Reading/Discussion of the Readings: Novak Chapter on Confucianism - Bring book to class

Friday, June 16 – Judaism, I - Guest Presenter/Film, TBA

Monday, June 19: Judaism, II

Readings: Molloy Chapter on Judaism

Tuesday, June 20: Judaism, III

Readings: Novak Chapter on Judaism – Bring Book to Class

Wednesday, June 21: Christianity – (The First Thousand Years), I

Reading: Molloy Chapter on Christianity

Thursday, June 22: Christianity–(The Catholic Church–From St. Peter to Pope Francis), II

Video Excerpt: The Catholic Church

Reading: Novak Chapter on Christianity – Bring Book to Class

Friday, June 23: Christianity, III – Religion and Violence

Armenia/Terrorism in God's Name - Northern Ireland/Christians in Today's Middle East

Monday, June 26: Islam, I

Reading: Molloy Chapter on Islam

Tuesday, June 27: Islam, II

Reading: Novak Chapter on Islam – Please Bring Book to Class

Wednesday, June 28: Islam, III

Thursday, June 29: FINAL EXAMINATION/ Assignment - TBA

Readings: Molloy Chapter on New Religious Movements