



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

REL 110 World Religions

Term: June 15 - July 16, 2020

Instructor: Nate Bulthuis

Home Institution: St. Joseph's University (Philadelphia, PA)

Email: TBD

Class Hours: Monday through Thursday, 120 minutes each day (2,400 minutes in total)

Office Hours: To be determined

Teaching Assistant: TBD

Email: TBD

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

Location: WEB

Credit: 4 units

Course Description:

Religious beliefs and practice have been and remain a dominant force in human culture. This course is intended to be a general introduction to the origin, history, beliefs, and practices of religious traditions originating in India (Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism), China (Confucianism, Taoism), and Japan (Shintoism), as well as the major Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, including Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, and Islam, including Sufism and Shiism), indigenous or oral religious traditions, and new religious movements. Ideally, students should exit this course with a sense of what religion is and the methods by which academics in the field of religious studies examine it, as well as how various religious adherents understand the world and their place within it. We will also think seriously throughout this course about the role that these religions do play, and should play, in the modern world. Because of the breadth and depth of religious practices, the course can provide only a summary introduction to various faith traditions. But it should equip students to understand what motivates and underpins various faiths, and allow them to gain an understanding of them regardless of their own religious background and beliefs.

Course Goals

The proximate goal of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the history, beliefs and practices of the world's major religions, as well as the methods by which scholar engage in the academic study of religion. The expectation, however, is that such an

understanding will allow students to engage individuals of different religious perspectives in an open and productive manner.

Required Textbooks

IWR: Oxtoby, Willard. *A Concise Introduction to World Religions*, 3rd edition. Oxford University Press, 2011. ISBN: 978-0199008551

ST: Novak, Philip. *The World's Wisdom: Sacred Texts of the World's Religions*. HarperOne, 2011. ISBN: 978-1269365352

Hesse, Herman. *Siddhartha*. Bantam, 1982. ISBN: 978-0553208849.

Assignments

Grading will be determined by short quizzes at the beginning of some lectures (1 per week), an essay, and two exams.

Quizzes (Cumulative) 300 pts

Essay 200 pts

A 4-5 double-spaced response to Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*. Write the essay in the form of a letter to Siddhartha's son, explaining to his son what truth about life Siddhartha believed he had discovered, and how your own views agree with / differ from those of Siddhartha.

Exam 1 250 pts

Exam 2 250 pts

Grading Scale

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

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

Class Rules

Students are expected to study the lecture having **read** to material assigned for the day, and to be prepared to **engage in active discussion** about that material, especially during the "Discussion Day" for each week, where we engage with primary texts from a faith tradition. Students should also be ready to follow standard academic rules about academic dishonesty (or "plagiarism").

Course Schedule

The planned schedule is subject to change as the course progresses.

Date	Notes	Class Material + Activity	Topics
Week 1			
Day 1		IWR, "About Religion" (optional)	Introduction: What is Religion?
Day 2		IWR, "Indigenous Traditions"	Oral Religious Traditions
Day 3		IWR, "Hindu Traditions"	Hinduism I: Origins
Day 4		ST, "Hinduism" + Discussion Day	Hinduism II: Beliefs and Practices
Week 2			
Day 1		IWR, "Jaina Traditions" & "Sikh Traditions"	Jainism and Sikhism
Day 2		IWR, "Buddhist Traditions"	Buddhism I: Origins
Day 3		ST, "Buddhism" + Discussion Day	Buddhism II: Beliefs and Practices
Day 4		IWR, "Japanese Religious Traditions"	Shintoism
Week 3			
Day 1	Essay	IWR, "Chinese Religious Traditions"	Introduction to Chinese Religions
Day 2		ST, "Confucianism" + Discussion Day	Confucianism
Day 3		ST, "Taoism" + Exam Review	Taoism
Day 4	Exam 1		
Week 4			
Day 1		IWR, "Jewish Traditions"; ST, "Judaism"	Judaism
Day 2		IWR, "Christian Traditions"	Christianity I: The Early Church
Day 3		ST, "Christianity"	Christianity II: Roman Catholicism
Day 4		ST, "Christianity" + Discussion Day	Christianity III: Protestantism
Week 5			
Day 1		IWR, "Muslim Traditions"	Islam I: Origins
Day 2		ST, "Islam" + Discussion Day	Islam II: Beliefs and Practices
Day 3		IWR, "New Religions" + Exam Review	New Religions and Movements
Day 4	Exam 2		