



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

**REL 110 World Religions**

**Term: October 26 - November 20, 2020**

**Instructor: Thomas Michael**

**Home Institution: Beijing Normal University**

**Email: maike966@gmail.com**

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

**Office Hours: To be determined**

**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 the religious traditions of the West, including Judaism and Christianity, and the East, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism. 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. 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 religions in order to gain an understanding of them regardless of their own religious and cultural backgrounds 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 scholars 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.

**Course reading materials:**

Will be made available in class by the instructor.

Textbook readings: Brodd, Jeffrey, et. al. *Invitation to World Religions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Oxford University Press, 2019.

**Grading Policy:**

Final course grades will be determined by attendance and 6 exams. The total scores for each will be factored together. Students must follow standard academic rules about academic dishonesty (or “plagiarism”).

**Grading Scale:**

A	92-100	C+	75-77
A-	88-92	C	70-74
B+	86-87	C-	65-69
B	82-85	D	60-64
B-	78-81	F	below 60

**Course Schedule** (subject to change as the course progresses):

Part One: Western religions (2 weeks)

Unit #1: Introducing World Religions

-IWR: selections from Chapter 1

-Exam

Unit #2: Judaism

-Source Texts: selections from the Jewish Bible

-IWR: selections from Chapter 11

-Exam

Unit #3: Christianity

-Source Texts: selections from the Gospels

-IWR: selections from Chapter 12

-Exam

Part 2: Eastern Religions (2 weeks)

Unit #4: Hinduism

-Source Texts: selections from Upanisads, Bhagavad Gita

-IWR: selections from Chapter 4

-Exam

Unit #5: Buddhism

-Source Texts: selections from Dhammapada, Lotus Sutra

-IWR: selections from Chapter 5

-Exam

Unit #6: Daoism and Confucianism

-Source Text: selections from Daodejing, Analects

-IWR: Chapter 8

-Exam