

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

**REL 110 World Religions**

**Term: May 24 – June 24, 2021**

**Instructor: TBD**

**Home Institution: TBD**

**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)**

**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*, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 a combination of participation, quizzes, exam, and a reflection essay.

Attendance & Participation	200 pts
Quizzes (Cumulative)	500 pts
Essay	150 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.

The essay is **due at the end of week 4**.

Final Exam	150 pts
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**Grading Scale:**

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

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

**Class Rules:**

Students are expected to come to 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”). **No handheld electronic devices** of any kind will be allowed in class. Laptops are allowed for note-taking purposes only.

**Course Schedule:**

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

Date	Notes	Class Material + Activity	Topics
<b>Week 1</b>			
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
<b>Week 2</b>			
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
<b>Week 3</b>			
Day 1		IWR, "Chinese Religious Traditions"	Introduction to Chinese Religions
Day 2		ST, "Confucianism" + Discussion Day	Confucianism
Day 3		ST, "Taoism" + Exam Review	Taoism
Day 4			
<b>Week 4</b>			
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	Essay due	ST, "Christianity" + Discussion Day	Christianity III: Protestantism
<b>Week 5</b>			
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		

### Online Possibility:

**Due to the on-going pandemic, there is a possibility that in-person courses are changed to online ones. UIBE ISS will notify the students once the decision has been made.**

If the in-person courses are to be changed to online courses, we will make a few adjustments:

1. **Lecture:** Each lecture will be uploaded on UIBE's online learning platform on a daily basis. Students are required to watch them according to the course schedule.
2. **Discussion:** There will be an open session on ZOOM every week. The attendance of the discussion is important as it is part of your final score.
3. **Office hours:** I will release the office hours once the course starts. You are very welcome to send me emails to book my time. We will have video or audio calls through ZOOM. Please be noted to book them at least 3 days in advance.