

RSOC 10: Asian Religious Traditions

Fall 2015 MWF 2:15pm-3:20pm

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Office Hours: Fri 9am-12pm; Wed 11am-12pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course, which fulfills the RTC 1 requirement for the core curriculum, will introduce students to the history, important teachings, and practices of the major Asian Religious traditions of East Asia, South, and Southeast Asia such as Confucianism, Daoism, Shintoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism. It will also explore the development of key theological and religious/philosophical doctrines as well as associated practices.

COURSE GOALS

1. Students will gain a basic understanding of the major Asian Religious Traditions.
2. Students will engage in comparative and dialogical reflection on these traditions. As well, students will seek to understand the relevance of their teachings and practices to the practitioners of these traditions.

DEPARTMENT GOALS

1. Students will be introduced to diverse materials and perspectives of religion and religious ideas.
2. Students will demonstrate the use of formal practices of inquiry and reflection that enable them to go beyond simple typologies to fuller engagement.
3. Students will use the materials to address issues of religions in different social and cultural contexts.

The Religious Studies departmental learning goals are embedded in the course goals.

CORE CURRICULUM LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This course fulfills Santa Clara's Core Requirement Religion, Theology, and Culture 1. Core Learning Goals: Knowledge of Global Cultures and Habits of Mind and Heart: Complexity, Critical Thinking, Religious Reflection

Core Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to describe and compare the central religious ideas and practices within one tradition as well as from several traditions.
2. Students will be able to use critical approaches to reflect on their own beliefs and the religious dimensions of human existence in different cultural contexts.

ASSESSMENT & GRADING:

Test-based Assessment (60%)

There will be two examinations, worth 30% each. These examinations will evaluate students' understanding of the South and the East Asian traditions, respectively. Each exam will ask students

to identify key terms from the traditions, explain basic concepts of each tradition (*assessing course goal #1*), and write a short essay critically reflecting upon and comparing the traditions studied (*assessing course goal and learning objective #1 and #2*)

Critical Essay (20%)

Each student will write two short papers (10% each) that will critically review two of the documentaries viewed in class. These papers will ask students to both critically assess the film, and also explore the degree to which it sheds light on the religious human existence. (*This will assess course goal #2 and core learning objective #2*).

Group Presentations (10%)

Students will use the materials to address issues of religions in certain social and cultural contexts. Please discuss with your instructor about the topics you want to present. (*This will assess course goal #2 and core learning objective #2*).

Class Participation (10%)

Active participation in class discussions is a requirement of this class. **Students will be required to prepare in advance reflections on course readings, discuss them in small groups, and present the key points of their discussions to the class. Each class day, students are required to write three thoughtful questions and present your questions to your group (you need to have clear answers to your questions). Study questions will be posted on Camino regularly.**

POLICIES

Regular attendance is required. If you must miss a class, you should inform the instructor in advance. You are responsible for making up missed work.

Disability Accommodations:

To receive academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Recourses located in Benson 216. Students must register with Disabilities Resources and provide documentation of a disability to Disabilities Resources prior to receiving academic accommodations.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism or academic dishonesty in any form (as described in the Student Conduct Code) will result in a failed grade for the project, and possibly for the course. All allegations of academic dishonesty will be reported to the department chair and Office of Student Life. For a full presentation of University policies concerning plagiarism, see:

<http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/resources/academicintegrity/>

In order to avoid the sanctions applied to cases of academic dishonesty, please make sure that you properly cite all sources that you utilize in your writing, including works that are directly quoted or paraphrased, as well as works used as a source of information. This includes both print and online sources. Your paper submissions must consist of your own writing, and any direct quotations or paraphrasing from other works must be properly cited.

ASSIGNMENTS

Papers should be either posted on Camino or emailed to me by the end of the day on the day that they are due. Later work will be penalized unless the instructor has granted an extension in advance.

Grading Scale:

94-100 A	87-89.9 B+	77-79.9C+	67-69.9D+
90-93.9 A-	83-86.9 B	73-76.9C	63-66.9D
	80-82.9B-	70-72.9C-	60-62.9D-

CLASS TEXTS

(1) **WR** Willard Oxtoby & Roy Amore, *World Religions: Eastern Traditions* (4rd ed., Oxford 2014)

(2) **RN** Randall L. Nadeau, *Asian Religions: A Cultural Perspective* (Wiley Blackwell, 2014)

(3) Excerpts from **AWS** Robert Van Voorst, *Anthology of World Scriptures: Eastern Religions*(Thomson_Wadsworth 2007)

Syllabus

Week 1 East Asian Traditions: Confucian Tradition I

We will explore the two major religious traditions of ancient China: Confucianism and Daoism. We particularly explore the historical, philosophical, ethical, divine, and cultural aspects of these two traditions.

Sept 21 Introduction to the course and its requirements

Sept 23 **RN**, *Asian Religion*, ch. 3,4, & 5

Sept 25 **RN**, *Asian Religion*, ch. 6&7; **AWS**, *Anthology of World Scriptures*, 143-149 (handouts).

Week 2 Confucian Tradition II

Step 28 **WR**, *World Religions*, 264-278

Step 30 **Daoism I**

We begin to explore the key teachings of Daoism and study the differences as well as similarities between Confucianism and Daoism. We particularly explore the spatial and temporal dimensions of *Yin Yang* cosmology in the Daoist tradition.

WR, *World Religions*, 278-288

Oct 2 **RN**, *Asian Religion*, ch. 8-10

Week 3 Daoism II

Oct 5 **RN**, *Asian Religions*, ch. 11-13; **AWS**, 162-172

Oct 7 **Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism**

We will study the interactions as well as the harmony among these three main religions in China and in Korea.

WR, *World Religions*, 296-207

Oct 9 Video: *Question of Balance*

Week 4 Hinduism I

This week, we will explore the religious tradition of ancient India, focusing upon a body of scriptures known as the Vedas. We will also explore the diversity of Hinduism and the different movements within this tradition.

Oct 12 **WR**, 28-40.

Oct 14 **WR**, 41-57, **AWS** (handouts).

Oct 16 Video: *330 Million Gods*

Week 5 Hinduism II

We continue to enrich our study of Hinduism with a survey of major topics in the contemporary Hinduism, such as the importance of devotion and worship.

Oct 19 **WR**, 81-90
Oct 21 **AR**, ch. 15-17

Oct 23 **Midterm Exam**

Week 6 Jaina Traditions

This week, we will examine the development of Jainism and its bifurcation into two sects, the Digambara and Svetambara traditions.

Oct 26 **WR**, 148-158; **AWS** 138-144
Oct 28 **WR**, 159-180
Oct 30 Video: *Frontiers of Peace: Jainism in India*.

Week 7 Sikh Traditions

This week, we will explore the founding of the Sikh tradition in India and study various groups of Sikhism as well as their teachings and practices. We also study contemporary Sikhism by viewing a documentary on contemporary Sikhism.

Nov 2 Video "World Sikhism today" (1999, 49 min)
Nov 4 **WR** 106-115
Nov 6 **AWS** 147-158

Week 8 Buddhism I

This week, we begin our study of Buddhism with an overview of the life of its founder, Gautama Siddhartha. We also study the core teachings of Buddhism as well the diversity within the Buddhist tradition.

Nov 9 **WR**, 186-196
Nov 11 **WR**, 200-211
Nov 13 Film: *Seven Wonders of Buddhist World*

Week 9 Buddhism II

Nov 16 **WR**, 211-230;
Nov 18 **WR**, 231- 260
Nov 20 **RN**, *Asian Religions*; **AWS**

Week 10 Thanksgiving (No Class)**Week 11 Shinto Tradition**

This week, we will explore the Shinto tradition as well as the integration of Buddhism and the Japanese indigenous tradition.

Nov 30 **WR**, 342-356; **AWS** 221-230
Dec 2 Presentation I
Dec 4 Presentation II

Week 12 Second Midterm (TBA)

