

Religion 211: Religions of the Eastern World
Spring 2013
Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:50-4:10 PM
Scott Hall 116

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Office Hours: Wed 2-3pm & by appointment
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Course Description

This course presents an introductory survey of several major Asian religious cultures: Brahmanism/Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Islam, and Christianity. It emphasizes the close reading, analysis, and discussion of selected primary texts that have played, and continue to play, a prominent role in the history of these traditions. Lectures explore the internal diversity of these religious cultures and their historical and contemporary interplay and expressions in different Asian contexts.

Course Requirements:

I) Participation and Attendance 20% (ongoing assessment)

Please read closely and reflect on all readings assigned for the day before coming to class, and be prepared to participate actively in classroom discussion. As a general guideline: if you do not regularly contribute to classroom discussion—e.g. by raising at least one question in each class—you will not receive a grade higher than a C.

Attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will result in a 5% reduction in your final grade. Excused absences require a note from Office of the Dean of Students.

II) Quizzes (30%)

There will be three major quizzes throughout the semester. Shorter, unannounced pop quizzes over daily readings may also be given from time to time.

III) Response assignments (30%)

Each student is required to complete and hand in three 2-page response assignments.

These response assignments entail

a) preparing a detailed critical response (approximately 1 page) to the main points of the day's reading;

b) formulating and articulating *no less than two* compelling discussion questions (approximately 1 page) about the reading or related lecture material.

There are four different response assignment groups (A, B, C, and D). Students will sign up for their group in class on Jan 22. For days on which your assignment is due (see below), please come to class prepared to present and discuss your response.

IV) Final Paper (due 5pm May 10) 20%

Students will write a final 4-5 page paper for this course, due May 10 at 5pm. We will discuss further guidelines and strategies for this project in class.

To submit: please upload your paper as an attachment in .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf format to the “assignments” folder in Sakai whereupon it will be screened for originality by TurnItIn. Note that you should not need to visit the TurnItIn site and create an account for this purpose, although you may receive an email asking you to do so. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Please prepare this and all written assignments in 12-pt Times New Roman font and double-spaced US Letter page format.

Course Policies:

i) Academic Integrity

Familiarize yourself with Rutgers policies and materials concerning academic integrity and plagiarism at the following sites:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources>

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. Any student found to have committed or aided the offence of plagiarism will be subject to penalties in accordance with the policies of the University.

ii) Use of electronic equipment

Please turn off all mobile phones, computers, and other electronic devices before class. If you must use a computer, tablet, or e-reader, for reading electronic readings please sit in the first two rows of the classroom. Recording devices are not permitted.

iii) Blogging, Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, etc. and posting course-related content online or in public forums

You may not reproduce or transmit lecture notes, audio, video, or **any** course-related content online or in any other public forum. Blogging, tweeting, or posting about this class in any public forum requires the prior approval of Dr. Lammerts. Failure to obtain prior approval may constitute a violation of academic integrity as well as copyright policies.

iv) Grading System

A=100-90, B+=89-87, B=86-80, C+=79-77, C=76-70, D=69-65, F=64 and below. Incompletes, i.e., “T” grades, will not be given under normal circumstances.

v) Office hours and appointments

Please send me an email if you intend to meet with me during office hours, or if you would like to schedule an appointment to meet at another time throughout the week.

Required Texts

Barbara Stoler Miller, trans., *The Bhagavad Gita: Krishna's Council in a Time of War* (Bantam Classics, 1986)

Valerie Roebuck, trans., *The Dhammapada* (Penguin, 2010)

Śāntideva, *The Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Oxford, 1996)

Brian W. Van Norden, ed. and trans., *The Essential Mengzi* (Hackett, 2009)

Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching* (Penguin, 1979)

Additional readings marked with an asterisk will be available in electronic form on Sakai > Resources. Please note that further supplementary readings may be assigned during the semester.

Course Outline and Readings

Jan 22. Introduction

Jan 24. Vedic Religion and Ritual in Ancient India

read: *Goodall, *Hindu Scriptures*, 3-17 (Selections from the R̥g-veda)

Jan. 29. Film: Altar of Fire

Jan. 31. Upaniṣads and the Dharma Literature

read: **The Law Code of Manu*, 13-24, 155-79.

Feb 5. Bhagavadgītā

read: BhG 1-6

Feb 7.

Group A: BhG 1-6

Feb 12. Bhagavadgītā

read: BhG 7-12

Group B&C: BhG 7-12

Feb 14.

read: BhG 13-18

Group D: BhG 13-18

Feb 19.

Film: Loving Krishna

Feb. 21. Quiz 1

Feb. 26. Buddha(s)

read: **Dhammacakkappavattanasutta*

read: Extract from the Gāndhāri Dhammapada (Dhp 83-88)

read: Dhp 14

Feb 28.

read: Dhp, all

Mar 5.

read: Dhp, all

Mar 7.

Group A: Dhp 22, 9

Group B: Dhp 25, 5

Group C: Dhp 12, 21

Group D: Dhp 10, 19

Mar 12. Mahāyāna and Mantranaya

read: Bodhicaryāvatāra, vi-xxvi, 3-44

Mar 14.

read: Bodh. 44-74.

March 16-24 Spring Break

Mar 26.

read: Bodh. 75-143.

Mar 28.

Quiz 2

April 2. Chinese Religions and Confucianism

read: Mengzi 1A

April 4.

read: Mengzi 1B-2B

Group A: Mengzi 2A

April 9.

read: Mengzi 5A-7B

Group B: Mengzi 6A

April 11 Taoism: Alchemy and Transformation

read: Tao Te Ching, 1-37

Group C: TTC 1-37

April 16. No class.

April 18.

Read Tao Te Ching 38-81

Group D: TTC 38-81

April 23.

Film: Bored in Heaven

April 30. Islam and Christianity: Conversion and Colonialism

*Anthony Reid, "Islamization and Christianization in Southeast Asia: The Critical Phase, 1550-1650." In Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era: Trade, Power, and Belief, ed. Anthony Reid, 151-179. Cornell, 1993.

*Vicente Rafael, "Confession, Conversion, and Reciprocity in Early Tagalog Colonial Society." Comparative Studies in Society and History 29, 2 (Apr., 1987): 320-339.

May 2.

Quiz 3

May 10.

Final Paper due 5pm via Sakai