

Religion in Asia

Religion 211

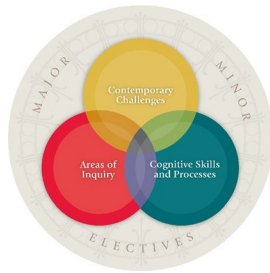
Tuesday and Thursday 5:40 – 7:00 PM

Spring 2024

Professor: Dr. Ernest B. Brewster (Department of Religion)
Phone: 848-932-6849; 848-932-9640 (Department Administrator)
E-Mail: ebrewster@rutgers.edu
Location: Dr. Ruth M. Adams Building, Room 208
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:45-1:45PM in Hickman Hall, Room 130.
Please let me know, in advance, when you will be coming in during office hours. Zoom appointments will be available upon request.

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the academic study of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. During the semester we will survey the foundational aspects of the doctrine and praxis of these five Asian traditions. The course is organized around an exploration of thematic issues that are central to each tradition. For example, our study of Hinduism will center around themes of sacrifice, wisdom, law and devotion, and our survey of Jainism will focus on themes of asceticism and benevolence. Lectures and supporting readings will explore the development, spread, and transformation of religious traditions, texts, and practices, while focusing on the confluence between religions, culture, and society.



This course fulfills the following core curriculum learning goals of Rutgers University: **[HST], [AHo] or [AHP]**

Philosophical and Theoretical Issues: Arts and Humanities

Students will examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.

Course Readings and Structure:

Please note that this course will not utilize a textbook and that all required readings will be available on Canvas. Most of the assigned readings will be drawn from primary sources that have been selected to illustrate the themes that will be presented in the lectures. As the principal content of this course will be delivered through lectures, a full engagement in this course will require consistent attendance and careful note-taking.

The course is organized into three sections that focus on the histories of:

- (1) Hinduism and Jainism
- (2) Buddhism
- (3) Confucianism and Daoism.

Each of the three sections of this course are sub-divided into individual “topics” that are related to larger themes that are central to each of the five religions. There will be two weekly lectures, and required readings that pertain to each topic. After the completion of each topic there will be a quiz. After the completion of each of the three sections, there will be an exam covering the content of that section. More specifically, there will be exams at the end of the section on Hinduism and Jainism, at the end of the section on Buddhism, and at the end of the sections of Confucianism and Daoism.

Please refer to the course outline below for a full visualization of course structure.

Course Outline and Readings:

- Please read or watch the assigned materials before or during the week listed.
- Please note that all materials are available on Canvas, and that you need not purchase any texts for this course.

Tuesday, January 16	Course Introductions	
SECTION ONE: HINDUISM AND JAINISM		
HINDUISM		
Thursday, January 18:	Historical Background of Hinduism (Brāhmaṇical Traditions)	
Tuesday and Thursday, January 23 and 25	SACRIFICE Readings: Selections from <i>The Rigveda</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).	Quiz 1: Available from Jan 25 at 7:00 PM, Due by Jan 29, 11:59 PM
Tuesday and Thursday, January 30 and February 1	WISDOM Readings: Selections from <i>The Early Upaniṣads</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).	Quiz 2: Available from Feb 1, 7:00 PM, Due by Feb 5, 11:59 PM

Tuesday and Thursday, February 6 and 8	LAW Readings: Selections from <i>The Law Code of Manu</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).	Quiz 3: Available from Feb 8, 7:00 PM, Due by Feb 12, 11:59 PM
Tuesday and Thursday, February 13 and 15	DEVOTION Readings: Selections from <i>The Bhagavad Gītā</i> (New York: Bantam, 2004).	Quiz 4: Available from Feb 15, 7:00 PM, Due by Feb 19, 11:59 PM
JAINISM		
Tuesday and Thursday, February 20 and 22	ASCETICISM Readings: “The Destruction of Karma” (<i>Sūtrakṛtāṅga</i> 1.2.3); “On Exertion” (<i>Sūtrakṛtāṅga</i> 1.8); “The Path” (<i>Sūtrakṛtāṅga</i> 1.11) Mahāvīra’s renunciation (excerpted from “Life of Mahāvīra,” <i>Kalpa Sūtra</i> ch. 5 translation Jacobi pp. 257-262)	Quiz 5: Available from Feb 22, 7:00 PM, Due by Feb 26, 11:59 PM
Tuesday and Thursday, February 27 and 29	BENEVOLENCE Readings: Story of Neminātha from Hemacandra’s <i>Tales of the Sixty-Three Great Persons</i> Story of Meghākumāra (<i>Jñātadharmakathā</i> chapter. 1) “Practical Right Conduct,” chapter 4 of Kundakunda’s <i>Niyamasāra</i>	Quiz 6: Available from Feb. 29, 7:00 PM, Due by March 4, 11:59 PM
SECTION TWO: BUDDHISM		
Tuesday and Thursday, March 5 and 7	PERFECTION Readings: <i>The Golden Deer Jataka</i> <i>The Discourse on the Noble Quest</i> (introductory pages 1-2 optional)	Quiz 7: Available from March 5, 7:00 PM, Due by March 8, 11:59 PM

<p><u>TAKE HINDUISM AND JAINISM EXAM</u> EXAM 1: Available from Monday, March 4, 7:00 AM; Due by Friday, March 8, 11:59 PM</p>		
Tuesday and Thursday, March 12 and 14	Spring Recess (no class)	
Tuesday and Thursday, March 19 and 21	GHOSTS Readings: Selections from the <i>Vimānavatthu and Petavatthu</i> , in <i>The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon: IV</i> (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2005).	Quiz 8: Available from March 21, 7:00 PM, Due by March 25, 11:59 PM
Tuesday and Thursday, March 26 and 28	VOWS AND SPELLS Reading: Excerpt from the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> , translated by Tsugunari Kubo and Akira Yuyama (Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2007)	Quiz 9: Available from March 28, 7:00 PM, Due by April 1, 11:59 PM
<p><u>TAKE BUDDHISM EXAM</u> EXAM 2: Available from March 28, 7:00 PM, Due by April 3, 11:59 PM</p>		
<p>SECTION THREE: CONFUCIANISM AND DAOISM</p>		
Tuesday and Thursday, April 2 and 4	VIRTUE Readings: Selections from Confucius/Kongzi (translated by Brian Van Norden in <i>Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy</i> [Hackett, 2001])	
Tuesday and Thursday, April 9 and 11	RITUAL Readings: Selections from Mencius/Mengzi (translated by Brian Van Norden in <i>The Essential Mengzi</i> [Hackett, 2009])	Quiz 10: Available from April 11, 7:00 PM, Due by April 15, 11:59 PM

Tuesday and Thursday, April 16 and 18	<p>SIMPLICITY</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Selections from Zhuangzi (translated by Paul Kjellberg in <i>Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy</i> [Hackett, 2001])</p>	
Tuesday and Thursday, April 23 and 25	<p>ALCHEMY</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Selections from Laozi's <i>Dao De Jing</i> (in James Robson, <i>Daoism</i> [New York: Norton, 2015]) Selections from Ge Hong's <i>Traditions of Divine Transcendents</i> (in Robert Ford Company, <i>To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth</i> [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002]).</p>	<p>Quiz 11:</p> <p>Available from April 25, 7:00PM,</p> <p>Due by April 29, 11:59 PM</p>
<p><u>TAKE CONFUCIANISM AND DAOISM EXAM</u></p> <p>EXAM 3: Available from April 30, 7:00 AM, Due by May 5, 11:59 PM</p> <p>Exam 3 is the final assessment for the semester.</p> <p><u>This course does not have a final exam.</u> If you see a final exam scheduled for this class on the Rutgers Final Exam Schedule, please disregard.</p> <p>Thank you!</p>		

Course Requirements:

I. Reading, Participation, and Workload

Most readings for this course are from primary sources, composed at different times and in different places across Asia over an approximately 3000-year period. An effort has been made to keep the readings relatively brief, so that you will be able to read them once before the associated lecture and preferably once again after the associated lecture, and before each quiz, to facilitate full comprehension. As noted above, this course does not utilize a textbook. Therefore, close attention to the content of lectures is crucial to success in this course.

II. Attendance

Consistent attendance is essential for this course as nearly all of the information for student assessment will be presented in lectures. Dr. Brewster reserves the right to evaluate students on their attendance and unexcused absences may result in a reduction of a final grade.

Student Assessment:

I. Assessment is based on student performance on quizzes and exams.

All quizzes and exams in this course are online, open book, and open note. It is important to read each question carefully. Although some questions may appear complex, Dr. Brewster does not try to “trick” students with ambiguously worded questions — interpret them literally!

Quizzes and exams cover all content presented in lectures or readings.

The questions on exams and quizzes will be drawn from a large, randomized pool of questions, ensuring that no two students receive an identical assessment. However, all questions have been calibrated to ensure a standard level of difficulty for all students.

Quizzes and exams are time-limited. When you begin a quiz or exam, you will have a certain window of time to complete the quiz or exam. When you begin a quiz or exam, please ensure that you have completed your review of material and have adequate time to complete the assessment and have a stable internet connection, as it will not be possible to pause, restart, or retake an assessment.

There is no final exam for this course.

II. Quizzes (55% of final grade)

Quizzes are associated with individual topics. Each quiz will contain 5 questions to be answered within 20 minutes.

Quizzes will become available for students to take on Canvas at the end of each topic (by or before 5:00 PM) and will close within 72 hours.

Each quiz is worth 5 percentage points of the final grade. There will be 11 quizzes throughout the semester.

III. Exams (45% of final grade)

Exams are cumulative and cover all content in each of the three sections of the course.

There are three exams, held during the week following each section of the course. During the weeks when exams are held, there will be no other coursework (such as lectures, readings, or quizzes) — only the exam.

Exam 1 (on Hinduism and Jainism) contains 20 questions to be answered within 60 minutes. Exam 1 is worth 20 points of the final grade.

Exam 2 (on Buddhism) contains 15 questions to be answered within 45 minutes. Exam 2 is worth 15 points of the final grade.

Exam 3 (on Confucianism and Daoism) contains 10 questions to be answered within 30 minutes. Exam 3 is worth 10 points of the final grade.

Each exam will become available to students by 5:00 PM on Sunday during the week they are held, and will close at 11:59 PM on the following Friday.

IV. Review of Assessments

Given the online format of assessments, Dr. Brewster will not automatically release correct quiz or exam answers to students via Canvas. If a student would like to review their answers, please make an appointment with Dr. Brewster.

Course Policies

I. Academic Integrity

Familiarize yourself with Rutgers policies and materials concerning academic integrity and plagiarism at the following site: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. Any student found to have committed or aided the offense of cheating or plagiarism is subject to penalties in accordance with the policies of the University. Cheating on quizzes or exams will result in failure of the quiz/exam and possibly failure of the course.

II. Digital Transmission of Course-Related Content and Work

All course-related content is legally protected by copyright, and is solely owned by Dr. Brewster. You may not reproduce or transmit readings, audio, video, lecture slides, quiz/exam questions, or any course-related content via the internet or otherwise. Discussion of this class online (e.g., on social media) requires the prior approval of Dr. Brewster. Sharing any course-related content may constitute a violation of academic integrity as well as copyright policies, and may result in failure of the course.

Grading System	
A	100–90
B+	89–86
B.....	85–80
C+	79–76
C.....	75–70
D	69–60
F	59 and below

Incompletes will not be given under normal circumstances.

Numerical grades are rounded to the nearest whole number letter grade equivalent: for example, 89.5 is rounded to 90 (= A), but 89.4 is rounded to 89 (= B+). There are no exceptions.

III. Grades

All grades are final and will not be changed upon request.

Grades on assessments will be released to Canvas Gradebook as soon as they are available.

If you have concerns about your grade for the course, please ensure that you contact Dr. Brewster early in the semester to discuss strategies for improvement.

****IMPORTANT**:** Cumulative course grade averages as reflected in Canvas Gradebook (under Grades > Assignments and Grades > Total) are automatically generated by the platform and are for informational purposes only. Please be aware

that if you fail to submit an assessment, your “zero” grade for that assessment may not be reflected in your course average until final grades are calculated at the end of the semester. That is, if you have outstanding assignments—for example if you have failed to submit one or more quizzes or exams—the cumulative course grade on Canvas may not accurately reflect your actual cumulative course grade.

IV. Extra Credit

There will be one or two extra credit opportunities during the semester.

V. Office Hours

If you would like to speak about any aspect of the course, or review answers on a quiz or exam, please attend office hours at the times noted above.

VI. Contacting Dr. Brewster

Please contact Dr. Brewster using the messaging function on Canvas. For details on this functionality, see: <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/documentation/general/sending-messages-in-canvas/>.

VII. Course Announcements

All course-related announcements will be transmitted by Dr. Brewster to students via Canvas > Announcements.

Some of these announcements may be important, so please make sure that you are receiving and reading them.

Texts, Lecture Slides, and Syllabus

All course readings and lecture slides may be found posted in PDF format under the associated topic on Canvas > Modules organized by date. Lecture slides will be uploaded promptly following each class meeting.

A pdf of the syllabus will also be posted on the course homepage on Canvas.

*Please note that the syllabus may change over the course of the semester. You will always be able to find the most recent updated version of the syllabus on the course homepage on Canvas.

Technical Requirements and IT Support

All assessments (quizzes and exams) for this course will be held online via Canvas. Course materials (syllabus, readings, lecture slides) will be distributed via Canvas. It is therefore a requirement that students have ready access to Canvas either on a personal computer or tablet or via an on-campus computer lab. For locations see: <https://it.rutgers.edu/new-brunswick/new-brunswick-computer-labs/>.

Any students unable to access course material or complete assessments online via Canvas should speak with Dr. Brewster as soon as possible to request accommodations.

If you require technical support with Canvas, please do not email Dr. Brewster, since he is likely unable to assist. Rutgers has a dedicated staff of skilled IT professionals ready to assist with any questions. For email and phone contact information, visit: <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/canvas-help/>.

Some Student-Wellness Services on Campus:

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

[http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling services/counseling/](http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling%20services/counseling/) Health Services: 848-932-7402

Counseling Services: 848-932-7884

Counseling services are offered through Counseling, Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS), our university mental health support service. We develop an individualized action plan for each student based on your unique needs and the range of resources available at CAPS, within the university, and in the surrounding community. Services include crisis intervention, individual therapy, group therapy, a variety of workshops, alcohol and other drug assistance programs, psychiatric care (medication management), and community referrals.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

<http://vpva.rutgers.edu>

<http://endsexualviolence.rutgers.edu>

848-932-1181 (24/7)

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance is committed to creating a community free from violence. We provide services designed to raise awareness of and respond to the impact of interpersonal violence and other crimes. Through a combination of direct service, education, training, policy development, and consulting to the University and broader community, we serve as a critical voice in changing prevailing beliefs and attitudes about violence.

Disability Services

<http://ods.rutgers.edu>

The Office of Disability Services provides reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Our team strives to provide the necessary tools, resources and support for individuals with disabilities to become responsible decision-makers and self-advocates in charge of their own future.

Special Needs and Disability Statement

If you have any special needs or a disability that requires any special accommodation to fulfill any course requirements, you need to provide acceptable documentation to the Office of Disability Services. That office will then make arrangements as needed with me.

Be sure to take advantage of the many academic support services Rutgers offers through a variety of Learning Centers. Go to <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/about-us> for more information. If, at any point, you experience anything impacting your performance or ability to participate in this class, please reach out to me. Please also see the academic, health, and mental wellness resources searchable at <https://success.rutgers.edu/> for further support.

Consult this syllabus regularly. It contains all the foundational information you need to know. It is also very important that you keep up regularly with all materials on Canvas, especially any announcements I may post from time to time. Please set your notifications appropriately so that you do not miss anything. Consult with the OIT Help Desk (833-648-4357) for Canvas help.