INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS
FALL 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELS 105-03</th>
<th>RELS 105-04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue/Thur 1:40-2:55 pm</td>
<td>Tue/Thur 3:05-4:20 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Scott Small Building 252</td>
<td>Maybank Hall 206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructor: Dr. Ian M. Sullivan
Office: 16 Glebe Street, #301
Pronouns: they/them/their or he/him/his
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-11 am
Email: sullivanim@cofc.edu
Thursdays 10-11 am
By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the major religions of the world with a dual focus on the nature of religious experience as well as the place of religion in our contemporary, globalizing world. We will spend time on South Asian religions (Hinduism, Sikhism, and Jainism), Buddhism, East Asian religions (Confucianism, Daoism, and Shintoism), Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In our historical and philosophical engagement with these traditions, we will focus in equal parts on (1) the premodern development of these religions, (2) their respective challenges from modernity and colonialism, and (3) their postcolonial evolutions, covering the spectrum from fundamentalisms to postmodern iterations. An overarching theme – among others – will be the possibility of a global ethic in a world of religious diversity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Primary objectives of the course:
1. The course aims to cultivate an appreciation for the variety of thought, practice, and values associated with many of the most dominant world religious cultures.
2. The course aims to develop a critical-analytical approach to thinking about “religion” and religious cultures around the world.
3. The course aims to help students recognize the impacts of modernity, colonialism, and globalization on the contemporary evolutions of religious traditions.
4. The course aims to help students normatively assess the roles religions have played, do play, and could play in human societies.

GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted, or valued in various expressions of human culture. This SLO will be evaluated with a 5-page analytical, interpretive, or comparative essay worth 20% of the final grade. See “Postcolonial Religions Paper” in “Assignments” below for details.
2. Students examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the humanities area under study and interpret the material in writing assignments. This SLO will be evaluated with a 5-page analytical, interpretive, or comparative essay worth 20% of the final grade. See “Postcolonial Religions Paper” in “Assignments” below for details.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will demonstrate effective writing skills with the ability to craft a persuasive argument in defense of a coherent thesis statement using and analyzing supporting evidence from primary and secondary sources. This SLO will be evaluated with a 5-page analytical, interpretive, or comparative essay worth 20% of the final grade. See “Postcolonial Religions Paper” in “Assignments” below for details.
REQUIRED TEXTS

The required text is available in the campus bookstore. The ISBN is provided for those of you who wish to purchase the texts elsewhere. Be sure to obtain the 6th edition for this class.


PDFs will be distributed online throughout the semester. You are required to bring hardcopies or electronic versions to class with you on the appropriate days. Reminders will be given in the class before they are required.

The following website is a good resource for orienting yourself in religious studies: http://www.studyreligion.org/why/index.html

ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Participation</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>93% and above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unannounced Quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write Ups (2% each + 1% bonus)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (20% each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcolonial Religions Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.9% (no +/-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.9% and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation (10% of the final grade): Class participation is essential for this course. In addition to the attendance and electronic device policies below, one must actively engage in class lectures and discussions. Two recognized forms of participation are oral participation and active listening. Oral participation involves engaging one’s classmates respectfully and thoughtfully in dialogue during lectures, inquiries, and small group exercises. Active listening involves respectfully and thoughtfully attending to comments and suggestions from one’s classmates during lectures, inquiries, and small group exercises.

Unannounced quizzes (15% of the final grade): These will occur randomly throughout this semester at the beginning of class (so don’t be late!) and will total 15% of the final grade. The quiz question for each day will be taken from the review questions provided for that day’s assigned reading. I will provide review questions in class before the reading is due.

You must provide your own paper for the quizzes. Quizzes cannot be made up if the absence or tardiness is unexcused. These quizzes are meant to make sure everyone is prepared for class so that our discussions are lively and fruitful. This is an easy 15% of your grade if you do the reading, take notes, and get to class on time.

Write Ups (2% each with a 1% bonus; 15% of the final grade): The reading assigned for the final day of each module is approximately half of a typical reading assignment. This space in your workload is meant to allow for independent research into contemporary iterations of that tradition. In other words, given the lighter reading load, I’m expecting everyone to turn to the internet (see handout for reliable online sources) and share with the class something contemporary about some branch of that tradition. Each Write Up should be 1-2 pages double-spaced and submitted to me electronically prior to class. You should bring a hardcopy or an electronic copy with you to class. If at the end of the semester you have submitted all Write Ups on time with satisfactory completion of the assignment, you’ll receive a 1% bonus toward your final grade.
The Write Ups are meant to serve as the groundwork and inspiration for your final Postcolonial Religions Paper (see below), so read with this task in mind each module.

Exams (20% each; 40% of the final grade): The exams will be each cover a selection of our religious traditions. The first exam will cover Indigenous as well as Asian religions. The second exam will cover the Abrahamic religions. You will be assessed on mastery of key terms and concepts anatomically, physiologically, and surgically. In other words, the exams are your opportunity to show you know what is going on (anatomy), how it works (physiology), and how it might work differently in different conditions (surgery) for each tradition. The exam will be manageable if you keep on top of the readings throughout the semester, take notes during class, and engage fully during lectures and community inquiries. *It is not possible to begin exam preparations during the week of the exam and still do well.*

Postcolonial Religions Paper (20% of the final grade): Due online during the final exam period (see schedule below for section due dates). This paper draws from the Write Up assignments due at the end of each module and will compare at least two religious traditions on some contemporary issue or in terms of some contemporary phenomena. At least one Asian/Indigenous and one Abrahamic tradition must be represented in the paper. You are expected to draw from all relevant readings from our course readings (citations are expected) as well as to bring in outside sources. Each paper must utilize at least one (1) primary text for each tradition analyzed and at least three (3) secondary sources total from beyond our assigned readings. This paper should reflect on the impact modernity and colonialism had on the formation of these contemporary religions as well as on the implications these contemporary religions have on our understanding of the role and value of religion in our increasingly globalized and postmodern world. See handout for more details.

All written work will be graded for argumentative content and checked with originality software (see section below on academic honesty).

Paper topics are due by email by Thursday, November 8th. Before that date, everyone should meet with me briefly to workshop their topic. The paper topic email should include a 150-200 abstract of the project as well as a list of outside sources. Our culminating discussion on the final day of class will draw from the work we are doing on these papers. It is expected that everyone will have a working draft of their papers with them in class that day.

COURSE POLICIES

This Is a Safe Space: This class is structured around interactive lectures, discussions, and community inquiries in order to bring philosophical issues to life. This will mean, at times, sharing our own narratives and experiences (if one so desires) in order to assess the validity and desirability of certain normative judgments and perspectives. Ultimately this will result in our developing our own intellectual and critical voices that we can bring out into the world with us. For this to work, however, we must have a space and a community in which we feel safe enough to make mistakes and are strong enough to move forward together in the learning process. On the first day of class, we will have an open discussion of what a safe space means for us and we will sign a Safe Space Pledge promising to maintain that space for ourselves and each other over the course of the semester.

Accessibility and Support Services: I take your education very seriously, and I will make every effort to accommodate any disabilities or special needs that may affect your learning or performance.

If you require special arrangements for attending class or doing assignments, please speak with me as soon as possible. Please also apply for accommodation services at the Center for Disability Services / SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104 ([http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu](http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu)).

If you or someone you know would like to discuss confidential information about health or mental health care, please visit the following College of Charleston websites:

For Student Health Services generally: [http://studenthealth.cofc.edu/health-wellness/index.php](http://studenthealth.cofc.edu/health-wellness/index.php)
For mental health generally: [http://studenthealth.cofc.edu/health-wellness/mental-health.php](http://studenthealth.cofc.edu/health-wellness/mental-health.php)
For mental health emergencies: [http://counseling.cofc.edu/crisis/index.php](http://counseling.cofc.edu/crisis/index.php)
Anyone who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students office for support (http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/student-food-temp-housing-asst/index.php). Furthermore, please notify me by email or in person if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

**Attendance:** The participation portion of the final grade (10%) will be determined primarily through a daily sign-in sheet. Each of you is responsible for signing in for each class meeting. If you are late and arrive after the sign-in sheet has been returned to me, be sure to sign in immediately after class. This is your only record of attendance and cannot be negotiated at the end of the semester. Be sure you sign in every day.

Absences for valid reasons will always be accommodated and will not affect your final grade so long as communication is kept open. This means contacting me about the absence before the class period for which you will be absent or, if there is an emergency, contacting me as soon as possible once the situation is stable. Missed assignments must be completed within two (2) school days of returning to campus unless explicit written permission for an extension is granted.

Because this class is designed around interactive lectures and group discussions, consistent attendance is paramount. More than three (3) unexcused absences will result in a 0% for participation for the semester.

**Course Communication:** The best way to reach me is by email (sullivanim@cofc.edu). I will check this account routinely between 9 am and 5 pm on weekdays throughout the semester. If you email during the weekend or in the evening, I’ll respond the next weekday at the latest.

Please swing by my office this semester! I’m always excited to talk shop or just chat outside of class. Office hours are from 10 to 11 am on Wednesdays and Thursdays, but I’m often in my office Monday through Thursday if I’m not in class. If you have a scheduling conflict with the listed office hours, I am more than happy to meet by appointment at another time. If you wish to schedule a meeting outside of office hours, be sure to contact me the day before you’d like to meet at the latest. I cannot guarantee meetings scheduled by email the day of, though I will do my best to coordinate with you if the situation arises.

When emailing me, always use your College of Charleston account. This is a policy meant to protect your privacy. Your CoC account is the only account I can verify as yours and therefore is the only account to which I’ll respond.

**Assignment Extensions:** All written assignments are due by the date and time listed in the schedule below in bold. For every 24-hour period beginning the minute after the deadline, late papers will suffer a 10% deduction. Extensions will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances and even then only on a case-by-case basis. All extensions must be cleared with me no later than 24 hours prior to the deadline. Extensions will not be granted within 24 hours of the due date unless they are required in accordance with the attendance policy above. Any and all extensions required due to a documented disability will of course be accommodated. If in doubt about whether an extension will be permissible, please contact me.

**Electronics:** All electronic devices must be silenced or turned off during class, with the following exceptions: (1) electronic devices required due to disability or another similarly significant situation (please clear these with me at the beginning of the semester); (2) laptops and tablets used for taking notes or reading electronic copies of the class text.

Laptops and tablets used for note-taking and e-reading are a privilege. If one opts to use a laptop or tablet for these purposes, the following activities are strictly prohibited: internet browsing, video and audio streaming, messaging, social media curating, reading or writing for other classes, and the like. Your facial expressions and your body language change noticeably when engaging in these activities instead of listening and taking notes. We’ll all notice. Violation of this policy will result in a loss of participation points for the class period. Repeated violations will result in the loss of electronic device privileges for the remainder of the semester.

No electronic devices of any sort are permitted during community inquiries.
**Recording and Dissemination:** Recording and disseminating class lectures, discussions, and materials is prohibited without my prior permission. See the safe space policy above.

**Writing Tutors:** Some of your work this semester will be written. Please don’t hesitate to utilize the Writing Lab’s resources, including the help of a writing tutor. More information can be found at this website: [http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/](http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/)

**Academic Integrity:** Failing to indicate when material is taken from someone else is academically dishonest and will not be tolerated. All work you hand in must be your own and the proper attribution of ideas and language must be done with care. A copy of the College of Charleston Honor Code can be found at [http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studiant handbook/index.php](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studiant handbook/index.php). Any instance of plagiarism, cheating, or the like, will result in a failing grade for the assignment and will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. Repeat offenses or egregious first offenses will result in a failing grade for the course and be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. I will make use of online plagiarism detection services, and your papers will be archived in their database. If you have any questions about this policy please come talk to me. For more information on academic integrity and how to maintain it: [http://libguides.library.cofc.edu/academicintegrity](http://libguides.library.cofc.edu/academicintegrity)

**Concerns Regarding the Course:** You are encouraged to discuss concerns regarding the course with me as soon as they arise. I’d like this semester to be as pleasant and productive for everyone as possible, and the sooner I am aware of concerns the sooner I can address them. If you are more comfortable pursuing a concern with someone else, please contact Dr. Elijah Siegler, Chair of the Department of Religious Studies (sieglere@cofc.edu).

---

**SCHEDULE**

*Schedule subject to change. Pay attention to announcements in class, and if you are absent one day, be sure to check in with a classmate regarding any changes to the schedule.

**All readings followed by “(PDF)” will be made available through our course website.

---

**MODULE 1: COURSE INTRODUCTION AND INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS**

Tuesday, Aug. 21: Syllabus; Introduction to World Religions  
**Due:** *World Religions Today (WRT) pp. 3-32*  
Optional: Henry Rosemont’s *Rationality and Religious Experience*

Thursday, Aug. 23: The Origins of Indigenous Religions  
**Due:** *WRT pp. 35-48*  
Optional: SEP – “Colonialism” (PDF)

Tuesday, Aug. 28: Contemporary Indigenous Religions and Discussion  
**Due:** *WRT pp. 49-63*  
**Due:** Write Up #1  
Optional: SEP – “Postmodernism” (PDF)

---

**MODULE 2: SOUTH ASIAN RELIGIONS**

Thursday, Aug. 30: Premodern Classical Hinduism  
**Due:** *WRT pp. 261-84*

Tuesday, Sept. 4: Postclassical Hinduism and Modernity  
**Due:** *WRT pp. 281-301*
Thursday, Sept. 6: Postcolonial Hinduism
   Due: WRT pp. 301-315

Tuesday, Sept. 11: Contemporary Hinduism and Discussion
   Due: WRT pp. 321-331
   Due: Write Up #2

MODULE 3: BUDDHISM

Thursday, Sept. 13: The Formative Era of Buddhism
   Due: WRT pp. 337-355

Tuesday, Sept. 18: Premodern Classical Buddhism
   Due: WRT pp. 356-374

Thursday, Sept. 20: Modernity and Postcolonial Buddhism
   Due: WRT pp. 374-398

Tuesday, Sept. 25: Postcolonial Buddhism and Discussion
   Due: WRT pp. 398-408
   Due: Write Up #3

MODULE 4: EAST ASIAN RELIGIONS

Thursday, Sept. 27: The Formative Era of East Asian Religions
   Due: WRT pp. 413-435

Tuesday, Oct. 2: Classical East Asian Religions and Modernity
   Due: WRT pp. 436-452

Thursday, Oct. 4: Postcolonial East Asian Religions
   Due: WRT pp. 453-472

Tuesday, Oct. 9: Postcolonial East Asian Religions and Discussion
   Due: WRT pp. 473-482
   Due: Write Up #4

EXAM #1: INDIGENOUS AND ASIAN TRADITIONS

Thursday, Oct. 11: Exam – Indigenous and Asian Traditions (Modules 1-4)

MODULE 5: JUDAISM

Tuesday, Oct. 16: The Formative Era of Judaism
   Due: WRT pp. 67-86

Thursday, Oct. 18: Classical Judaism and Modernity
   Due: WRT pp. 87-109

Tuesday, Oct. 23: Postcolonial Judaism and Discussion
   Due: WRT pp. 110-121
   Due: Write Up #5

MODULE 6: CHRISTIANITY
Thursday, Oct. 25: The Formative Era of Christianity  
**Due:** WRT pp. 125-147

Tuesday, Oct. 30: Classical Christianity and Modernity  
**Due:** WRT pp. 148-171

Thursday, Nov. 1: Postcolonial Christianity and Discussion  
**Due:** WRT pp. 171-180  
**Due:** Write Up #6

*Tuesday, Nov. 6: Fall Break – No Class*  
**Due:** WRT pp. 487-517 on Globalization in preparation for paper topic selection

---

**MODULE 7: ISLAM**

Thursday, Nov. 8: The Formative Era of Islam  
**Due:** WRT pp. 183-204  
**Due:** Paper Topics and Bibliographies

Tuesday, Nov. 13: Classical Islam  
**Due:** WRT pp. 204-223

Thursday, Nov. 15: Modernity and Postcolonial Islam  
**Due:** WRT pp. 223-249

Tuesday, Nov. 20: Postcolonial Islam and Discussion  
**Due:** WRT pp. 249-256  
**Due:** Write Up #7

*Thursday, Nov. 22: Thanksgiving – No Class*

---

**EXAM #2: ABRAHATIC TRADITIONS AND CULMINATING DISCUSSION**

Tuesday, Nov. 27: Exam – Abrahamic Traditions (Modules 1, 5-7)

Thursday, Nov. 29: Culminating Discussion – Religion(s) in Our Contemporary World  
**Due:** Working draft of final paper under revision

*Thursday, Dec. 6: Final Exam Period for Section 3 – No Meeting*  
**Due:** Submit final papers online by 4 pm

*Tuesday, Dec. 11: Final Exam Period for Section 4 – No Meeting*  
**Due:** Submit final papers online by 4 pm