



# World Religions

# **SECTION I: Course Overview**

**UNH Course Code: REL310** 

Subject Areas: Religious Studies, Cultural Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Philosophy, and History

Prerequisites: None

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

**Recommended Credits:** 3

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course gives students an understanding of contemporary global religious traditions and their impact within their societies. This course firstly introduces major western & eastern religions in a global context, especially in Europe and North America. Students will explore and analyze the origins, development, central teachings, devotional practices, institutions, and cultural expressions of world religions such as Aboriginal Spirituality, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and more. This course will include visits to historical and contemporary religious sites to embrace opportunities for interaction across cultures.

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Critically trace the basic history of major religious traditions
- Compare the influences of different religions on society
- Develop interpersonal skills to engage in respectful and fruitful dialogue with other religions

# **SECTION II: Instructor & Course Details**

#### INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

NAME: TBD

**CONTACT INFORMATION: TBD** 

TERM: TBD

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class will meet twice weekly for approximately 90 minutes each session. All students are expected to arrive on time and be prepared for the day's class session.

CEA enforces a mandatory attendance policy. You are therefore expected to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions, including any field trips, site visits, guest lectures, etc. that are assigned by the instructor. The table below shows the number of class sessions you may miss before receiving a grade penalty.

ALLOWED ABSENCES – SEMESTERS		
Courses Meeting X day(s) Per Week	Allowed Absence(s)	Automatic Failing Grade at X <sup>th</sup> Absence
Courses meeting 2 day(s) per week	2 Absences	<sup>8th</sup> Absence

For every additional absence beyond the allowed number, your final course grade will drop down to the subsequent letter grade (ex: A+ to A). As a student, you should understand that the grade penalties will apply if you are marked absent due to tardiness or leaving class early. In the table below, you will find the grade penalty associated with each excessive absence up to and including automatic course failure.

ATTENDANCE DOCKING PENALTIES				
Absence	1 <sup>st</sup>	$2^{\mathrm{nd}}$	$3^{\mathrm{rd}}$	8th
Penalty	No Penalty	No Penalty	1 Grade Docked	Automatic Failure
HIGHEST POSSIBLE GRADE AFTER ATTENDANCE PENALTIES				
Grade	A+	A+	A	F

CEA does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. As such, no documentation is required for missing class. Similarly, excessive absences, and the grade penalty associated with each, will not be excused even if you are able to provide documentation that shows the absence was beyond your control. You should therefore only miss class when truly needed as illness or other unavoidable factors may force you to miss a class session later on in the term.

# **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

If possible, CEA courses will include a variety of experiential learning activities that will take you out of the classroom and allow you to explore your local, host city, as well as bring the local community into the classroom. These activities may include field studies, guest lectures and/or activities offered through our Academically Integrated Cultural Activities Program (AICAP). Some of these activities may be delivered in a virtual format.

#### **Field Studies:**

• Visit to Fundacion Tres Culturas – F3C

• Another field study may be confirmed during the course.

Guest Speakers: TBD

#### **AICAP Activities:**

The AICAP activities selected for this course were chosen for their relevance to the course's learning objectives. While these activities may not be mandatory, you are highly encouraged to attend. Please check the Forms of Assessment section to find out if AICAP activities are related to any specific form of assessment.

- Revisiting the Three Cultures Overnight excursion to Granada
- Mosaic of Cultures Day excursion to Córdoba
- Breaking Out in Iberia Overnight excursion to Lisbon

## **GRADING & ASSESSMENT**

The instructor will assess your progress towards the above-listed learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted and will count towards your final grade. The following section (Assessment Overview) will provide further details for each.

Class Participation	15%
Oral Presentation	20%
Independent Learning Activities	10%
Research Paper	20%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	15%

The instructor will calculate your course grades using the CEA Grading Scale shown below. As a CEA student, you should understand that credit transfer decisions—including earned grades for courses taken abroad—are ultimately made by the your home institution.

CEA GRADING SCALE			
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70 - 10.0	97.0 – 100%	4.00
A	9.40 - 9.69	94.0 – 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00 - 9.39	90.0 - 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70 - 8.99	87.0 - 89.9%	3.30
В	8.40 - 8.69	84.0 – 86.9%	3.00
B-	8.00 - 8.39	80.0 - 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70 - 7.99	77.0 – 79.9%	2.30
С	7.40 - 7.69	74.0 – 76.9%	2.00
C-	7.00 - 7.39	70.0 – 73.9%	1.70
D	6.00 - 6.99	60.0 - 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00 - 5.99	0.00 - 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal	N/A	0.00
INC	Incomplete	N/A	0.00

#### ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Your course instructor will provide further details and instructions during class time.

<u>Class Participation (15%)</u>: Student participation is mandatory for all courses taken at a CEA Study Center. The instructor will use the rubric below when determining your participation grade.

CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADING RUBRIC		
Student Participation Level	Grade	
You make major & original contributions that spark discussion, offering critical comments clearly based on readings, research, & theoretical course topics.	<b>A+</b> (10.0 – 9.70)	
You make significant contributions that demonstrate insight as well as knowledge of required readings & independent research.	<b>A/A-</b> (9.69 – 9.00)	
You participate voluntarily and make useful contributions that are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	<b>B+/B</b> (8.99 – 8.40)	
You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	<b>B-/C+</b> (8.39 – 7.70)	
You make limited comments only when prompted and do not initiate debate or show a clear awareness of the importance of the readings.	<b>C/C</b> - (7.69 – 7.00)	
You very rarely make comments and resist engagement with the subject. You are not prepared for class and/or discussion of course readings.	<b>D</b> (6.99 – 6.00)	
You make irrelevant and tangential comments disruptive to class discussion. You are consistently unprepared for class and/or discussion of the course readings.	<b>F</b> (5.99 – 0.00)	

Virtual class participation will be measured by (a) how often students log in the course, (b) their performance and attitude in mandatory live sessions, and (c) how significant their contributions to the virtual discussions are; students should be ready to offer critical comments clearly based on readings, research, & theoretical course topics.

<u>Oral Presentation (20%)</u>: You will be required to offer a oral presentation on a subject assigned at the beginning of the course. This presentation is designed to synthesis the most important ideas or debates surrounding the session. Both content and form will be considered.

Independent Learning Activities (10%): You will have to complete one assignment based on one of the co-curricular *Experiential* activities recommended for this course or any other independent learning activity. This assignment consists in a 500-word reflection on the AICAP or independent learning activity, summing it up, analyzing it in the context of the course and connecting it to relevant courses, facts, and findings. The decision about which options you choose must be taken in accordance with the instructor, who will give you further guidelines. Alternative assignment proposals made by the student may be considered.

Mid-Term Exam (20%): The mid-term exam is designed to establish and communicate to you the progress you are making towards meeting the course learning objectives listed above. The questions are comprised of questions & exercises that assess your abilities in key areas of competency, the amount of information you master, the accuracy of the information you present, and the significance you ascribe to the facts & ideas you integrate across your study in this course.

Research Paper (20%): This 2000-word project, to be handed in one week before the end of the semester, must be related to the course contents and is always subject to approval by the instructor. The paper will develop and evaluate your ability to elaborate on a defined topic in the context of this course integrating your acquired knowledge and know-how. Following academic practice, all sources should be cited and a full bibliography should be included.

Final Exam (15%): The final test is designed to establish and communicate to you if you met the course learning objectives listed above. It is comprised of questions and exercises that test your abilities in three important areas of competency: the amount of information you master; the accuracy of the information you present; and the significance you ascribe to the facts and ideas you have integrated across your study in this course.

# PARTICIPATION POLICY

Participation is required at all regularly scheduled class sessions, including any field trips, site visits, guest lectures, etc. that are assigned by the instructor. In compliance with NECHE and UNH accreditation requirements, CEA instructors compile regular attendance records for every course and take these records into account when evaluating student participation and overall course performance. When students do not participate, they undermine their ability to make progress toward the stated learning objectives of the course, as well as miss an opportunity to strengthen relationships with faculty and classmates.

Late arrivals or early departures from class can result in being marked absent. Additionally, in accordance with US accreditation standards and immigration requirements, students must maintain a full-time course load in order to preserve their student status for the duration of the semester. As part of its commitment to student success, CEA will connect with students who demonstrate a pattern of non-participation to understand their reasons for missing class. CEA may warn, place on probation, or dismiss from courses, programs, activities and housing any student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress or full-time student status.

# **WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS**

In conformity with CEA policy, all students are expected to spend at least two hours of time on academic studies outside of, and in addition to, each hour of class time.

#### SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require any special accommodations or have any special learning needs, please submit a request using CEA's *Special Accommodations Form* to the onsite CEA academic staff by the end of the first week of classes for full consideration. See Section III.B.CEA Policies below for additional details.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

Reading assignments for this course will come from the required text(s) and/or the selected reading(s) listed below. All required readings—whether assigned from the text or assigned as a selected reading—must be completed according to the due date assigned by the course instructor.

**I. REQUIRED TEXT(S):** You may take out on a loan the required text(s) from the CEA Library. The required text(s) are listed below:

Oxtoby, W.G. et al. (eds.), A Concise Introduction to World Religions (Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2019, 4th ed.).

**II. SELECTED READING(S):** The selected readings for this course are listed below. You will not need to purchase these readings; the instructor will provide access to these selected readings to you.

500 BC, Buddha, The Word (The Eightfold Path), The Four Noble Truths, in: https://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/buddha2.htm

Hitchens, C. (ed.), *The Portable Atheist: Essential Readings for the Nonbeliever* (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2007), p. XIII-XXV.

Smart, N., The Religious Experience (New York et al: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1997, 4th ed.), p. 3-21.

The Bhagavadgîtâ with the Sanatsugâtîya and the Anugîtâ, in: The Sacred Books of the East (1882), in: https://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/sbe08/index.htm

Yang, M., Postcoloniality and Religiosity in Modern China, in the following link

#### RECOMMENDED READINGS

The recommended reading(s) and/or text(s) for this course are below. These recommended readings are not mandatory, but they will assist you with research and understanding course content.

Burke, T.P., The Major Religions: An Introduction with Texts (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, 2nd ed.).

Cassidy, E., Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue (New York: Paulist Press, 2005).

Coogan, M.D. (ed.), World Religions (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003).

DiNoia, J.A., *The Divinity of Religions: A Christian Perspective* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992).

Dupuis, J.S.J., Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001).

Eliade, M., The Sacred and The Profane: The Nature of Religion (New York: Harcourt, 1987, first published 1957).

Espín, O. & Nickoloff, J.B. (eds.), An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2007).

Friesen, J.W.. Aboriginal Spirituality and Biblical Theology: Closer than You Think (Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises Ltd, 2000).

Griffiths, P.I., Christianity through Non-Christian Eyes (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990).

Harari, Y.N., Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind (London: Harvill Secker, 2014).

Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes or modification to this syllabus as needed

Hawking, S. & Mlodinow, L., The Grand Design (New York: Bantam, 2010).

Hick, J., The Rainbow of Faiths: A Christian Theology of Religions (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003).

Hitchens, C. (ed.), The Portable Atheist: Essential Readings for the Nonbeliever (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2007).

Johnston, B., The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway (Vancouver, BC: Key Porter Books, 1995).

Knitter, P., Introducing Theologies of Religions (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2005).

Markham, I.S., A World Religions Reader (Malden: Blackwell, 2000, 2nd ed.).

Otto, R., The Idea of the Holy: an Inquiry Into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational, (Pantianos Classics, 2012, first published 1917).

Samartha, S.J., Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Inter-religious Relationships (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981).

Smart, N., The Religious Experience (New York et al: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1997, 4th ed.).

Smith, H., The World's Religions (New York: Harper One, 2009, 50th anniversary ed.).

Stark, R., Why God? Explaining Religious Phenomena (West Conshohocken: Templeton Press, 2017).

Van Voorst, R.E. (ed.), Anthology of World Scriptures (Cengage Learning, 2013, 8thed.).

Yang, M., Postcoloniality and Religiosity in Modern China, in:

http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.930.280&rep=rep1&type=pdf

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In order to ensure you success abroad, CEA has provided the academic resources listed below. In addition to these resources, each CEA Study Center provides students with a physical library and study areas for group work. The Academic Affairs Office at each CEA Study Center also compiles a bank of detailed information regarding libraries, documentation centers, research institutes, and archival materials located in the host city.

- UNH Online Library: As a CEA student, you will be given access to the online library of CEA's School of Record, the University of New Haven (UNH). You can use this online library to access databases and additional resources while performing research abroad. You may access the UNH online library <a href="here">here</a> or through your MyCEA Account. You must comply with <a href="here">UNH Policies</a> regarding library usage.
- **CEAClassroom Moodle**: CEA instructors use Moodle, an interactive virtual learning environment. This web-based platform provides you with constant and direct access to the course syllabus, daily schedule of class lectures and assignments, non-textbook required readings, and additional resources. Moodle includes the normal array of forums, up-loadable and downloadable databases, wikis, and related academic support designed for helping you achieve the learning objectives listed in this syllabus. The ceaClassroom website is located here: <a href="https://www.ceaClassroom.com/">https://www.ceaClassroom.com/</a>

During the first week of class, CEA academic staff and/or faculty will provide you with your Moodle credentials. They will also help you navigate through the many functions and resources Moodle provides. While you may print a hard copy version of the syllabus, you should always check Moodle for the most up-to-date information regarding this course. The instructor will use Moodle to make announcements and updates to the course and/or syllabus. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to all Moodle materials and that you monitor Moodle on a daily basis in case there are any changes made to course assignments or scheduling.

• Online Reference & Research Tools: The course instructor has identified the resources below to assist you with understanding course topics. You are encouraged to explore these and other avenues of research including the databases available via the UNH online library.

The Internet Sacred Text Archive:

The largest freely available archive of online books about religion, mythology, folklore and the esoteric on the Internet. The site is dedicated to religious tolerance and scholarship, and has the largest readership of any similar site on the web.

http://www.sacred-texts.com/index.htm

#### ARDA:

The Association of Religious Data Archives ARDA "strives to democratize access to the best data on religion. Founded as the American Religion Data Archive in 1997 and going online in 1998, the initial archive was targeted at researchers interested in American religion. The targeted audience and the data collection have both greatly expanded since 1998, now including American and international collections and developing features for educators, journalists, religious congregations, and researchers. Data included in the ARDA are submitted by the foremost religion scholars and research centers in the world."

http://www.thearda.com/

Full text Theology Journals Online:

Blume Library, St. Mary's University

http://library.stmarytx.edu/acadlib/subject/theology/theoejrn.htm

Concise Dictionary of Religions:

http://people.ucalgary.ca/~nurelweb/books/concise/

#### Sacred sites website:

An informative website on sacred topology aimed at the general public that includes an image gallery and a scholarly bibliography for many of the locations covered.

http://sacredsites.com/

Aboriginal links international:

A link to websites of various indigenous religions organized geographically

http://www.bloorstreet.com/300block/aborintl.htm#4

The Website of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue:

http://www.vatican.va/roman\_curia/pontifical\_councils/interelg/index.htm

The Wabash Center's Internet Guide to Religions:

A selective, annotated guide to a wide variety of electronic resources of interest to those who are involved in the study and practice of religion, including syllabi, electronic texts, electronic journals, web sites, bibliographies, liturgies, reference resources, and software. The purpose of the Guide is to encourage and facilitate the incorporation of electronic resources into teaching.

https://atla.libguides.com/wor

# Religious Worlds:

An internet resources about religion and religious traditions for scholars and students.

http://virtualreligion.net/vri/

University of Calgary Religious Studies Web Guide:

Additional scholarly websites with resources arranged according to religious group provided by the University of Calgary.

http://people.ucalgary.ca/~lipton/subject.html

# Scholarly websites devoted to a particular religious tradition, for instance:

# Islam and Islamic Studies Resources:

http://islam.uga.edu/

Academic Jewish Studies Internet Directory:

http://www.jewish-studies.com/

Internet Resources for the Study of Christianity:

http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~jtreat/rs/resources.html

Finally, scholarly articles can be accessed online from the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Religion, and other journals available via the JSTOR database.

# Course Calendar World Religions

SESSION	Торісѕ	ACTIVITY	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS
1	Course Presentation - The syllabus, the course and their details	General overview and discussion	Ensure textbooks
2	Defining religion - Approaches to the study of religion -Categories of religion - A definition	Lecture and Discussion	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 3-25 Smart, The Religious Experience, p. 3-21
3	Religion Today  - Impact of secularism & globalization of religion (general)	Discussion Group activities: to be religious today, religion in our own lives	Think about your own religious life or traditions you preserve
4	Judaism - Historical development - Central teachings - Institutions - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Oral Presentation  Lecture and  Discussion	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 81-134
5	<b>Judaism</b> - Diversity - Anti-Semitism	Discussion  Group activities	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 81-134
6	Christianity - Historical development - Central teachings - Institutions - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Oral Presentation  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 141-167, 182- 187, 197-202
7	Christianity - Diversity	Documentary viewing: Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela  Lecture and Discussion	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 167-182, 187- 197

8	Islam - Historical development - Central teachings - Institutions - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Oral Presentation  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 209-268  Qur'anic recitation:  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnwJuUGZ- Lk&feature=related
9	Islam - Islam in the modern World - Islam and Western Culture	Discussion  Group activities	Prepare: Internet research on Islam and politics
10	Indigenous Religions - Introduction - Aboriginal Spirituality	Documentary viewing: Aboriginal Dreamtime  Lecture and Discussion	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 29-33, 74-77
11	Native Indigenous Religions	Oral Presentation  Documentary viewing: Native American  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 33-74
12	Hinduism - Historical development - Central teachings - Institutions	Oral Presentation  Documentary viewing: Religions of the World - Hinduism  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 273-329 "The Bhagavad Gita" (see on Moodle)
13	Hinduism - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Discussion  Group activities	Prepare: Internet research on Hinduism and diversity within practice
14	Synthesis	Group discussion Field Study F3C	Prepare review for mid-term exam

15	Midterm		
16	Buddhism - Historical development - Central teachings - Institutions - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Oral Presentation  Documentary viewing: Buddhism  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 373-432 "The Four Noble Truths" (Moodle)
17	Vajrayana Buddhism Tibetan Buddhism	Lecture and Discussion	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 407-432
18	Buddhism FIELD STUDY 1	Visit to Buddhist Temple	Buddha, The Word (The Eightfold Path), The Four Noble Truths, in: https://www.sacred- texts.com/bud/buddha2.htm
19	Jainism - Historical development - Central teachings - Institutions - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Oral Presentation  Documentary viewing:     Jainism  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities:     comparison to other     religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 337-369
20	Sikhism - Historical development - Central teachings - Institutions - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Oral Presentation  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 437-469
21	Confucianism  - Historical development  - Central teachings  - Institutions  - Devotional practices  - Cultural expressions	Oral Presentation  Documentary viewing: 5 relationships of confucianism  Lecture and Discussion  Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 473-504, 525-528

		Oral Presentation	
22	Daoism (Taoism)  - Historical development  - Central teachings  - Institutions  - Devotional practices  - Cultural expressions	Documentary viewing: Daoist ritual for Prosperity; Tai Chi; The Mysterious Taoist Temple Lecture and Discussion Group activities: comparison to other religions	
		Oral Presentation	
		Lecture and Discussion	
23	New Religions - Religions	Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Secol World Religions p. 573-612
- Sects - Cults	Research Papers and Independent Learning Activity Papers to be handed in	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 573-612	
24	New Religions - Religions - Sects - Cults	Lecture and Discussion Group activities: comparison to other religions	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 573-612
25	Criticism to Religion - Philosophical - Scientific	Lecture and Discussion	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, pp. 610-611 Hitchens, The Portable Atheist, p. XIII-XXV.
26	Criticism to Religion - Philosophical - Scientific	Lecture and Discussion	Oxtoby & Segal, World Religions, p. 610-611 Hitchens, The Portable Atheist, p. XIII-XXV.
27	Comparative Overview - Central teachings - Institutions - Devotional practices - Cultural expressions	Discussion  Group activities: comprehensive comparison	Review course
	Review	Review	
28	FINAL EXAM		

# **SECTION III: CEA ACADEMIC POLICIES**

The policies listed in this section outline general expectations for CEA students. You should carefully review these policies to ensure success in your courses and during your time abroad. Furthermore, as a participant in the CEA program, you are expected to review and understand all CEA Student Policies, including the academic policies outlined on our website. CEA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. For the most up to date policies, please review the policies on our website.

Class & Instructor Policies can be found here CEA Study Center Academic Internship Policy can be found here General Academic Policies can be found here