

PHIL 24: COMPARATIVE WORLD RELIGIONS: EAST

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Summer 2022
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Demonstrated proficiency in English by placement via multiple measures OR through an equivalent placement process OR completion of ESLL 125 & ESLL 249.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area I: Humanities
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify significant concepts, figures and religious thinkers from the eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism Taoism, Chan, Zen etc.)
- Identify and explain historically important religious concepts from the eastern religions.

Description

Origin, history and significant ideas of the world's major Eastern religions. Particular focus on practice and concepts in Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Identify the historical development and cultural context of each religion.
- Examine the philosophic underpinnings expressed in religious mythology of each religion.
- Analyze artistic expressions of religious concepts.
- Examine and evaluate a variety of religious scripture from the Eastern traditions.
- Compare and contrast the components of the major Asian religions.

Course Content

- Understand the nature and definition of religion
 - Philosophic understanding
 - Metaphysical and ontological concepts in Asian religion
 - Ethical implications of these religions
 - Practical dimensions of religious study
 - What are the religious practices and how do they influence culture and art
 - Affective aspects

- How does the spiritual life affect practitioners
 - What are the accounts of those who have reached the highest levels of understanding and practice in each religion
- Hinduism as the most internally diverse religion
 - Polytheism and henotheism in the Vedas
 - Upanishads and non-dualism
 - Understanding the absolute identity of Brahman and Atman
 - Discussion of the many gods of Hinduism as a reflection of the Saguna Brahman
 - Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu as a triptych representation of Brahman
 - The divine feminine as reflected in Hinduism through Lakshmi, Parvati and others
 - Discussion of the various Yogas
 - Jnana Yoga
 - Bahkti Yoga
 - Karma Yoga
 - Raja Yoga
 - Buddhism
 - Legend of the Siddhartha Gautama
 - Dharma: Teachings of the Buddha
 - Non-permanence
 - Non-self
 - Suffering
 - Four noble truths
 - Eightfold path
 - Nirvana
 - Theravada vs. Mahayana
 - Threefold Body of the Buddha
 - Many Buddhas
 - The nature of the Bodhisattva
 - Vajrayana
 - Mandalas
 - Mantras
 - Tantric sexual practice
 - Confucianism
 - Early sources of Chinese traditions
 - Shang Dynasty
 - Chou Dynasty
 - Warring States period
 - Rise of philosophy
 - Substance of Confucian thought
 - Confucius and Mencius
 - Jen (human-heartedness)
 - Chun Tzu (superior person)
 - Rectification of names
 - Wen (arts of peace)
 - Li (ritual)
 - Elementary and Great Learning
 - Taoism
 - Lau Tzu and Chuang Tzu
 - Substance of Taoist school
 - Non-being and non-duality
 - Chi

3. Yin and Yang
4. Wu-wei (non-doing)
- f. Chan/Zen
 - i. Non-duality in Zen Buddhism
 1. Taoist influence
 - ii. Non-reliance on words
 1. Flower Sermon
 - iii. Zen practice
 1. Koans
 2. Zazen
 3. Consultation with Roshi
 4. Walking meditation
 - iv. Writings
 1. Parables and writings
 2. Contemporary writings

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

- a. Reading of secondary texts and primary scripture of the various religions
- b. Analysis essays examining passages from religious scripture
- c. Examinations including various testing measures including short answer questions and essay
- d. Reflection essay on a visit to a place of worship

Discipline(s)

Philosophy.

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught as an online distance learning section, students and faculty need ongoing and continuous internet and email access.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Tests

Participation in class discussions

Oral reports

Written reports

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture

Discussion

Cooperative learning exercises

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Noss, David S., and Blake R. Grangaard. [A History of the World's Religions, 14th ed.](#) 2018.

Smith, Huston. [The World's Religions.](#) 2009.

Chan, Wing-Tsit. [A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy.](#) 1969.

Radhakrishnan, Servapali, and Charles A. Moore. [A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy.](#) 1967.

The dates on the Chan and Radhakrishnan texts are quite old; however, the texts anthologized therein are old enough to be measured in millennia. Both have yet to be improved upon in terms of quality and comprehensiveness. The most recent edition of the Smith text is from 2009; however, the book remains a classic introduction to the central concepts in the world's religions for undergraduate students.