

Fall 2008

Exploring World Religions

Shek 2022 Mendocino Off.Hrs: MW 4:30-5:30 p.m. Tel:278-5331 Email: rshek@csus.edu

Area: C3

Department: Humanities and Religious Studies **Course Number:** 140

Course Title: Exploring World Religions

Course Description:

A comparative inquiry into the nature of global religions. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam will be studied. Material and social aspects of these religions will be considered along with primary beliefs and practices. The common yearning to experience the divine and the numinous will be emphasized. 3 units.

Prerequisites: Passing score on the WPE

Learning Objectives:

- To develop an understanding of and appreciation for the diversity of the religious experience
- To identify the principal values and precepts of various religious traditions, as they are expressed in texts and in the arts
- To present the contributions and perspectives of various ethnic and religious groups as they experience the numinous

Assignments: 4 quizzes

1 mid-term
2 papers
1 Final

Texts: Huston Smith, The World's Religions
Robert Ballou, The Portable World Bible

Grading System:

Quizzes	20%
Mid-term	20%
Papers	40%
Final	20%

Grading Considerations:

Quizzes test students on their mastery of the basic vocabulary
Mid-term and Final require synthesis of knowledge and critical interpretation of religious traditions
major
Papers require students to explore common themes among religions through research on reference materials (length of each is 10 pp.,typed)

Other Evaluation: Attendance and class participation in discussion

Class Schedule:

9/3	Homo Religiosus: The religious propensities of humankind
9/10	Vedic Religion and the Upanishadic reformation(B: 17-27, 32-58; S: 12-26, 63-75)
9/17	The Bhagavad-gita and Popular Hinduism (B: 27-31, 58-91; S: 26-50, 75-77)
9/24	Buddha's teaching (B: 105-134, 142-148; S: 99-119)
10/1	Mahayana Buddhism (B: 148-155; S: 111-139)
10/8	The Confucian vision (B: 483-491, 498-529; S: 154-193)
10/15	Daoism (B: 533-574; S: 196-218)
10/22	Instructor absent
10/29	Instructor absent
11/5	Mid-term; First paper due
11/12	Abraham and the Early Patriarchs (B: 219-230, 235-332; S: 271-310)
11/19	The prophetic tradition (B: 333-345)
11/26	Jesus' teaching (B: 385-412; S: 330-335)
12/3	Jesus' teaching revised (B: 412-434; S: 336-346)
12/10	Mohammed's teaching (B: 437-469; S: 221-266) Second paper due

Writing Component: All the tests have major writing components because of the advanced studies designation of this course

Comments:

There shall be no ringing cellphones or pagers in the classroom. (They will be kept by the instructor until end of class). There shall be no food or drink in the classroom. Keep late arrivals to a minimum, and no leaving of the classroom during exams. There shall be no make-up exams without compelling reasons or advance arrangement with the instructor.