

**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

**Course Outline:**

9/8	Homo Religiosus: The religious propensities of humankind
9/15	Vedic Religion and the Upanishadic reformation(B: 17-27, 32-58; S: 12-26, 63-75)
9/22	The Bhagavad-gita and Popular Hinduism (B: 27-31, 58-91; S: 26-50, 75-77)
9/29	Buddha's teaching (B: 105-134, 142-148; S: 99-119)
10/6	Mahayana Buddhism (B: 148-155; S: 111-139)
10/13	The Confucian vision (B: 483-491, 498-529; S: 154-193)
10/20	Daoism (B: 533-574; S: 196-218)
10/27	Instructor absent
11/3	<b>Mid-term; First paper due</b>
11/10	Abraham and the Early Patriarchs (B: 219-230, 235-332; S: 271-310)
11/17	The prophetic tradition (B: 333-345)
11/24	Jesus' teaching (B: 385-412; S: 330-335)
12/1	Jesus' teaching revised (B: 412-434; S: 336-346)
12/8	Mohammed's teaching (B: 437-469; S: 221-266); <b>Second paper due</b>

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

**Comments:**

There shall be no ringing cell phones 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.