REL1010 - WORLD RELIGIONS
Semester 1, 2006
Course Outline

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Colin Wilks
Room: MC107
Ph: 49215192
Email: Colin.Wilks@newcastle.edu.au

Semester
Semester 1 - 2006
Unit Weighting
10
Teaching Methods
Lecture-Tutorial

Brief Course Description
Provides a study of the principal features of the world’s major religions through reference to key events, characters, beliefs and related phenomena. With regard to each tradition, there will be a focus on historical and contemporary features.

Contact Hours
Lecture for 2 Hours per Week for Full Semester
Tutorial for 1 Hour per Week for Full Semester

Course Objectives
At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with methodologies appropriate to the study of religions in general; demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the major beliefs, history and theological developments of the major and minor religious traditions being studied; and will have developed research, writing and information literacy skills relevant to religious studies.

Course Content
Specific subject foci will be drawn from the following religious traditions: Hinduism and Hindu-affiliated religions; Buddhism, including Theravada, Mahayana, and Zen; Islam, including Sunni and Shiite traditions, Taoism and Eastern mysticism; Judaism; Christianity and its major branches.

Course Outline issued and correct as at Week 1, Semester 1, 2006
CTS Download Date: 15 February 2006
**Assumed Knowledge** - Nil

**Callaghan Campus Timetable**

**REL1010**

**WORLD RELIGIONS**

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

Semester 1 – 2006

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00 – 13:00</td>
<td></td>
<td>14:00 – 15:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>[MCTH]</td>
<td></td>
<td>[W308]</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00 – 17:00</td>
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<td>18:00 – 19:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>[GP1-30]</td>
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<td>[GP3-18]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Plagiarism**

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs. Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty. For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link - [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/academic_integrity_policy_new.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/academic_integrity_policy_new.html)

The University has established a plagiarism detection system called **Turnitin**. When you submit assessments please be aware that for purpose of assessing them the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University;
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking);
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised. Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment: or
2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been
or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;
must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the
prescribed form. Please go to the Policy and the on-line form for further information, particularly for
information on the options available to you, at:

Changing your Enrolment

The last date to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (the HECS Census Dates) is:
For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2006

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester
and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the
last day of semester will result in a fail grade. Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second
week of semester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the
second week of semester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the School
Office. To change your enrolment online, please refer to:
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/change-enrol.html

Contact Details

Faculty Student Service Offices
The Faculty of Education and Arts:
Room: GP1-22 (G Purpose Building) - Phone: 0249 215 314

The Dean of Students
Dr Jennifer Archer, Phone: 492 15806 - Fax: 492 17151 resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except
in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance
of any approved changes to this outline.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or
chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies,
please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator. Disability
Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered
to receive this support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 49215766, or via
email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you
discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

**Online Tutorial Registration:** Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration site listed below. Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.  

**Studentmail and Blackboard:** www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/  
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check studentmail and Blackboard on a weekly basis.

**Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details**  
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

**Hard copy submission:**
- **Type your assignments:** All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length:** The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf)
- **Assignments are to be deposited in the relevant discipline assignment box at the:** School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127
- **Do not fax or email assignments:** Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments:** All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

**Penalties for Late Assignments**  
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.

**Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications:** Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student HUBS.

**Remarks**  
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being
awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at:

Return of Assignments
Where possible, assignments will be marked within 3 weeks and returned to students in class. At the end of semester, students can collect assignments from the Student HUBS during office hours.

Student Representatives
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html
Assessment Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Item</th>
<th>% Weighting</th>
<th>Word Length</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial Paper</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>500-600</td>
<td>As per Schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Essay</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>800-1000</td>
<td>March 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Essay</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1200-1500</td>
<td>May 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination

The examination will be conducted during the examination period at the end of semester and will be 90 minutes in duration. Details of the time and venue will be obtainable later in the semester.

Essay Questions

Minor Essay

What are the essential beliefs upon which Australian Aboriginal religion is founded and how are these beliefs interrelated?

Major Essay

Choose one (1) of the following six (6) questions:

1. What part did cultural context play in the rise and demise of Buddhism in India?
2. Is Buddhism just another form of Hinduism?
3. In what sense or senses can the relationship between Hinduism and Buddhism be characterised as ‘symbiotic’?
4. What are the points of doctrine, philosophy and practice on which Buddhism and Taoism concur and differ, and what is the main problem we encounter when seeking to compare the two religions in this way?
5. Trace the development of at least one form of Japanese Buddhism from its ultimate origins beneath the Bodhi tree.
Note: The emphasis here should be on doctrine, philosophy and practice rather than specific dates and persons.

Referencing in Assignments

When making use of reference material from books, articles, video recordings etc, you must acknowledge that you are making use of it by referencing it. There are numerous referencing systems that different disciplines within the university recommend to their students. If you have already started using one of these and you are comfortable with it, then stick with it. If you do not as yet have one that you are comfortable with then I would recommend the Harvard System. The Harvard system can be summarised as follows:

In the text of your assignment, whenever what you have just written is either directly quoted from or based on another author's work, insert a reference of the following form:

(Author’s surname, date of the publication, page number).

For instance: Buddha was born in 536BC (Smart, 1998, p.23).

If you are quoting the author’s actual words, you will need to enclose them within quotation marks. If you mention the author before quoting him/her you don't need to include his/her name in the reference. For instance:

According to Smart, 'Buddha was born in 536BC' (1998, p.23)

At the end of your assignment, on your ‘References’ page, you then list, in alphabetical-author-order, all the books, articles etc to which you have referred in your assignment. The format is as follows:

Author’s surname, Initials, Date of publication, Title of Book (in italics) Publisher’s Name, Place of Publication.

or, for extracts or journal articles:

Title of article (in quotation marks), Title of Book or Journal in which article appears, Publisher’s Name, Place of Publication. (If an article or section of a book is referred to, also include pages, e.g. pp.56-65.)

Some examples:


Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:


Failing to acknowledge another person’s work with a reference (and thus presenting it as if it were your own) is PLAGIARISM, and plagiarism carries severe penalties. For details of the university’s policy on plagiarism, see the web address on page 2 of this course guide.
Submission of Assignments

All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet:  

Assignments are to be deposited in the ‘RELIGIOUS STUDIES 1000 LEVEL’ box outside the School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127

Late Submissions

Extensions on assignments will be only be granted in special circumstances and at the discretion of the course coordinator. They must be applied for prior to the due date for the assessment item in question. Late work for which an extension has not been obtained will be penalised at a rate of 10% (of the item’s value) per week or part thereof. This means that if you hand in an assessment item 2 days late, and that assessment item is worth 30 marks, you will lose 3 marks. If you hand it in 8 days late you will lose 6 marks.

Reading Guide

There is no prescribed text for this course, but there are two recommended ones:


Noss’s book is a little more expensive than Smart’s and a little more detailed and comprehensive, but both are appropriate for the course. If anything, Noss’s is a little more detailed and comprehensive than a text for a 1000 level course needs to be. There are copies of both books in the campus libraries.

The campus libraries also hold many other books which deal with the world’s religions in general:


(4th edition of this book is simply titled The Religious Experience)


There are also many texts which focus on one or other of the world’s religions in particular. For instance:


Banerjee, A., Buddhism in India and Abroad, Calcutta, World Press, 1973
Hazra, K., The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995
Ling, T., Buddhist Revival in India, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980
Schuon, F., Understanding Islam London, Allen and Unwin
Zaehner, R. Hinduism London, Oxford University Press

Other Sources


This is held by the Auchmuty Library. There are two other encyclopaedias of religion held by the Central Coast Campus Library

Video Recordings: The Long Search
Judaism: The Religion of a People

CD ROMS: Religions of the World

Tutorial Program

Tutorials are an integral part of the learning process and attendance at them is compulsory. Students who miss more than 2 tutorials without good reason risk being excluded from the course.

Tutorials allow for the discussion and consolidation of material gleaned from lectures, readings and video programs, and for the introduction of additional material not dealt with in the lectures. The additional material will be introduced by students in the form of tutorial papers (details concerning the presentation of tutorial papers will be made available in the first lecture. A range of sample tutorial-paper topics are listed in the Lecture-Tutorial Schedule on the last page of the course outline.
With the exception of weeks 2, 3 and 4, students are to prepare for tutorials by reading the topic-relevant section or sections from Noss’s *History of the World’s Religions* or Smart’s *The World’s Religions* or some comparable text. There is no required reading for the tutorial in week 2. The required readings for tutorials in weeks 3 and 4 are:


These are available in electronic form through Short Loans.

**Note**: The required tutorial readings for weeks 3 and 4 are also the required readings for the first essay.

**Consultation**

I will be available for consultation on Wednesdays between 3 and 4pm in Room Mc107, by appointment at other times, or by phone or email at any time (phone 49215192; email: Colin.Wilkens@newcastle.edu.au).

**Blackboard**

RELI1010 is supported by the Blackboard online learning system.


The Blackboard site contains important information about the course, copies of lecture notes, course outline and a notice board for incidental announcements. Remember to check the site on a regular basis.
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Tutorial and Sample Tutorial Paper Topics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 22</td>
<td>Introductory Lecture</td>
<td>Introductory Tutorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Belief Systems: Religious and Secular</td>
<td>Methodology and Problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Aboriginal Religion POSSIBLE GUEST LECTURE</td>
<td>Animism, Totemism and other Indigenous Religions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Aboriginal Religion: Dreaming and Dreamtime</td>
<td>Aboriginal Religion: The Place of Time in a Timeless Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Hinduism POSSIBLE GUEST LECTURE</td>
<td>Devotional and Self-Realisational Paths to Enlightenment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>Hinduism/Buddhism</td>
<td>Caste and Reincarnation, The Four Stages of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>Buddhism POSSIBLE GUEST LECTURE</td>
<td>The Four Noble Truths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>The Religions of China: Taoism and Buddhism</td>
<td>Yin-Yang and the reconciling of opposites Zen Buddhism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mid-Semester Recess: Friday 14 April - Friday 28 April**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Tutorial and Sample Tutorial Paper Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Judaism: A Timeless God for a Time-bound People</td>
<td>Formative Events in Judaic History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Judaism-Christianity</td>
<td>The Life, Mission and Teachings of Jesus Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>The Doctrines of St Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>May 24</td>
<td>Islam POSSIBLE GUEST LECTURE</td>
<td>The Five Pillars of Islam Muhammad’s Ethics and Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Religion and Politics in Islam Diversity within Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>June 7</td>
<td>Revision and Exam Preparation</td>
<td>No Tutorial</td>
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</table>