RELI1010 - World Religions
Course Outline

Course Coordinator: Dr Colin Wilks
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Semester: Semester 1 - 2008
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods: Lecture/Tutorial

Brief Course Description
Provides a study of the main features of the world's major religions through reference to key events, characters, beliefs and related phenomena.

Contact Hours
Lecture for 2 Hours per Week for the Full Term/Tutorial for 1 Hour per Week for 12 Weeks

Course Objectives
At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the methods appropriate to the study of religion and of the beliefs, history and theological developments of the religious traditions studied; and will have developed research and writing skills relevant to religious studies.

Course Content
Specific subject foci will be drawn from: Hinduism, Buddhism, including Theravada, Mahayana and Zen; Islam, including Sunni and Shiite, Taoism, Judaism; Christianity and its major branches.

Assumed Knowledge: Nil

Callahan Campus Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture and Tutorial</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>11:00 - 13:00</th>
<th>[V107]</th>
<th>Commences Week 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Or</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>16:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>[GP1-30]</td>
<td>Commences Week 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>17:00 - 18:00</td>
<td>[GP3-18]</td>
<td>Commences Week 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>12:00 - 13:00</td>
<td>[W308]</td>
<td>Commences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 1 - 2008

CTS Download Date: February 4th 2008
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/policylibrary/000608.html

The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

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- 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

Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the 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 their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Important Additional Information

Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site (where relevant). Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Special Circumstances
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments
- Preferred Referencing Style
• Student Representatives
• Student Communication
• Essential Online Information for Students
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>600-800</td>
<td>As per Schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>800-1000</td>
<td>March 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1200-1500</td>
<td>May 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination

The examination will be conducted during the examination period at the end of semester and will be 2 hours in duration. Details of the time and venue will be made available later in the semester.

Essay Questions

Minor Essay

What are the essential beliefs upon which Australian Aboriginal religion is founded and how are they interconnected in the minds of aboriginal people?

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 understood as a symbiotic one?

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 making such comparisons?

5. Trace the development of at least one form of Japanese Buddhism from its historical origins beneath the Bodhi tree.

   Note: The emphasis in the answer you provide to this question should be on developments in doctrine, philosophy and practice rather than specific dates and specific 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 different 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 quote an author’s actual words, you 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 Surname/Initials, Publication Date, Title (in italics) Publisher, Place of Publication.

or, for extracts or journal articles:

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

Some examples:


For further information: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorials/infoskills/index.html

Submission of Assignments

All ESSAYs are to be submitted (with a University coversheet http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/) at one of the Student Hubs, which are located at:

- Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
- Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
- Ground Floor, University House, City
- Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah

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 of the assessment item in question. Late work for which an extension has not been obtained will be penalised.
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 texts for the course (if anything, Noss’s is a little more detailed and comprehensive than a 1000 level text needs to be). There are copies of both texts 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 was re-titled *The Religious Experience*)

They also hold many books which focus on one or more of the world's religions in particular. For instance:

Hazra, K., *The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India*, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1995


Zaehner, R. *Hinduism*, London, Oxford University Press

**Other Sources**


This encyclopaedia is held by the Auchmuty Library, but two others are held by the Central Coast Library.

**Video/DVD Recordings:**

- *The Long Search*
- *The Story of God*

**CD ROMS:**

- *Religions of the World*

**Tutorial Program**

Tutorials are an integral part of the learning process. 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 screened documentaries, and for the introduction of additional material not dealt with in the lectures, readings and screened documentaries. The additional material will be introduced by students in the form of tutorial papers (details concerning the presentation of these papers will be discussed in the first tutorial). The tutorial-paper topics are listed in the Lecture-Tutorial Schedule on the last page of the course outline.

**Required Reading for Tutorials and Minor Essay**

With the exception of weeks 2, 3 and 4, students are to prepare for tutorials by reading the relevant section of 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 week 2 tutorial. 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 only REQUIRED readings for the first essay.

**Blackboard**

RELI1010 is supported by the Blackboard online learning system ([http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/))

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 this site on a regular basis.
## RELI1010 Semester 1, 2008: Lecture-Tutorial Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Tutorial and Tutorial Paper Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>Introductory Lecture</td>
<td>No Tutorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feb 27</td>
<td>Methodology and Problems</td>
<td>Discussion and Allocation of Tutorial Presentation Topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Australian Aboriginal Religion</td>
<td>Origins and Nature of Religious Consciousness, Animism, Totemism and other Indigenous Religions (other, that is, than Australian Indigenous Religion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>Australian Aboriginal Religion</td>
<td>The Dreaming, Dreamtime and Dreamtime Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td>Distinguishing between the Devotional and Self-Realisational Paths to Enlightenment in Hinduism, and the relevance of this distinction for the study of religion in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>March 26</td>
<td>Hinduism/Buddhism</td>
<td>Caste, Karma and Reincarnation; The Four Stages of Hindu Life and their relation to the Devotional and Self-Realisational paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>The Four Noble Truths; the Theravada and Mahayana Schools of Buddhism</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>The Religions of China: Taoism and Buddhism</td>
<td>Tibetan Buddhism, Zen Buddhism</td>
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<td>Mid-Semester Recess: Monday 14th April to Friday 25 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Apr 30</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 7</td>
<td>Judaism-Christianity</td>
<td>The Life, Mission and Teachings of Jesus Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>The Doctrines of St Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>The Five Pillars of Islam, Muhammad: his Life, Ethics and Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Muslims, Jews and Christians: Convergent and Divergent Aspects of Belief and Practice, Diversity within Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>Revision and Exam Preparation</td>
<td>No Tutorial</td>
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