

COURSE SYLLABUS



COURSE TITLE: REL-102-World Religions of the East

CLASS SECTION: 001

TERM: W2025

COURSE CREDITS: 3

DELIVERY METHOD(S): Face to face

Camosun College respectfully acknowledges that our campuses are situated on the territories of the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Kosapsum) and WSÁNEĆ peoples. We honour their knowledge and welcome to all students who seek education here.

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

NAME: Dr. Stephen Fielding

EMAIL: FieldingS@camosun.ca

OFFICE: Y320

HOURS: In person or via Zoom on Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30-2:30. Or by appointment

Instructor bio:

I spent my childhood moving around central Canada, from Niagara Falls to Fort Erie, Sarnia, and finally, Winnipeg. I've also lived in Vancouver, Toronto, and Rome, Italy. I completed my Bachelor's degree at the University of Winnipeg, followed by a Master of Arts from Simon Fraser University and Ph.D. from the University of Victoria.

I have taught History and Religion at four colleges and universities and published research on a wide range of topics, including immigration, multiculturalism, sport, gender, religion, and ethnic food. My wife is from Italy and we are parents of a 14-year-old girl and wild-monkey 9-year-old boy.

An understanding of the world's religious traditions, particularly of their similarities and differences, is critical to the development of a person's worldview and grasp of their place in the diverse human landscape. I am looking forward to exploring Religions of the East together this semester.

As your course instructor, I endeavour to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me. Camosun College is committed to identifying and removing institutional and social barriers that prevent access and impede success.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

An introductory survey of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Chinese religions, and Shintiosm, this course explores the sources, beliefs (including representative texts), and practices of these religions. The

traditions of each will be studied in their cultural and political contexts from both historical and contemporary perspectives.

PREREQUISITE(S):

One of:

C+ in English 12

C in Camosun Alternative

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES / OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course a student will be able to:

Explain the contexts/historical settings in which Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Chinese religions, and Shintoism arose.

List major dates, events, and places central to each.

Describe the historical linkage/relationships among them.

Summarize their major beliefs, teachings, ideals, and practices.

Explain variations/splits/divisions in each tradition.

Analyze their similarities/differences.

Compare/contrast each religion's view of the others.

Evaluate their relationship to and impact on the world today.

REQUIRED MATERIALS & RECOMMENDED PREPARATION / INFORMATION

(a) Textbook

Roy C. Amore, Amir Hussain, and Willard G. Oxtoby, *A Concise Introduction to World Religions*, 4th ed.

COURSE SCHEDULE, TOPICS, AND ASSOCIATED PREPARATION / ACTIVITY / EVALUATION

The following schedule and course components are subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Students registered with the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) who complete quizzes, tests, and exams with academic accommodations have booking procedures and deadlines with CAL where advanced notice is required. Deadlines can be reviewed on the [CAL exams page](https://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning/academic-accommodations-exams). <https://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning/academic-accommodations-exams>

Lectures: Mondays 10:30-12:20

The lectures aim to follow a similar structure to the textbook. Read actively the assigned textbook readings for each lecture, ideally having guide questions beside you (These are the questions you consider as you read the material or the ones provided in the textbook), and always be aware of the major themes of each chapter. The themes are listed in the textbook on the first page of every chapter. Students who do the required readings each week and view the lectures will gain a stronger understanding of eastern world religions, be more likely to enjoy the course, and be well positioned for success.

As mentioned, on certain occasions during the semester, leaders from our local religious communities (i.e. a Buddhist priest) will visit the class for an online presentation. These visits are a highlight of the course because they generate interactive and personable discussions with a practicing expert in the faith. As such engagements can be arranged, the lecture schedule and content will change accordingly.

Seminars: Wednesdays 10:30-11:20 (Section A) or 11:30-12:20 (Section B)

During a seminar, we will discuss assigned materials, primarily the textbook chapters dedicated to a religious tradition. You are strongly recommended to take notes as you read and to write down questions that arise as you encounter and explore the religious belief systems. One or two students will facilitate each discussion (see below for more information).

Detailed Instructions about the Seminars

The seminar component of the course is critically important to the student (and instructor) learning experience, which is reflected in its weighting as 20 percent of your final grade. During the seminars, you will discuss and sometimes debate the assigned seminar materials. These are mostly based on the textbook chapters, sometimes in addition to other sources (eg. Scripture excerpts) made available on D2L

As part of your seminar preparedness, I strongly recommend that you first read the pre-set questions on D2L and then explore the readings themselves. For weekly course instructions and details, go to the D2L Course Site — My Tools — Content

*Students who miss three or more seminars will forfeit their entire participation grade.

Important Dates at a Glance

Mon. January 6	First Class
Mon. February 3	Test 1: Introduction, Hinduism, and Jainism
Mon. March 10	Test 2: Buddhism and Sikhism
Wed. April 9	Last Class (a seminar)
TBD	Final Exam

Lecture and Seminar Schedule (subject to change)

WEEK 1: Why are there Religions?

Read Textbook Chapter 1

Mon. Jan. 6 Lecture: Introduction, Religious Symbols

Wed. Jan. 8 Seminar: Eastern versus Western Perspectives (no advanced readings)
View and Discuss the Ted Talk by Devdutt Pattanaik, "East v. West: The Myths that Mystify," (18:26),

Link: https://www.ted.com/talks/devdutt_pattanaik_east_vs_west_the_myths_that_mystify

WEEK 2: Hinduism Part 1

Read Textbook, Chapter 7 to page 338

Mon. Jan. 13 Lecture: Basics of Hindu Thought and Practice

Wed. Jan. 15 Seminar: A Discussion of Hinduism 1

WEEK 3: Hinduism Part 2

Read Textbook, the rest of Chapter 7 (from page 339 to the end)

Mon. Jan. 20 Lecture: Hindu Sacred Scriptures, The Epics, and their Impact on South
Asian Values and Culture

Wed. Jan. 22 Seminar: A Discussion of Hinduism Part 2

WEEK 4: Jainism

Read Textbook Chapter 9

Mon. Jan. 27 Lecture: Understanding Jainism

Wed. Jan. 29 Seminar: A Discussion of Jainism

WEEK 5: Test Week and Seminar on Yoga

Mon. Feb. 3 **Test #1: Introductory Lecture, Hinduism, and Jainism**

Wed. Feb. 5 Seminar: Yoga in the West.

Seminar Readings

1. "To Some Hindus, Yoga has lost its way," *NPR News*
<https://www.npr.org/2012/04/11/150352063/to-some-hindus-modern-yoga-has-lost-its-way>

2. Read Samantha Bahan, "A Spiritual Profit for Western Yogis? The Spiritual Significance of Postural Yoga for Religious 'Nones'" *The Arbutus Review* (2016). Section I. Introduction Section on p. 68-69, Section II on 73 to the bottom of p. 75, and IV. Conclusion on p. 78. Link is on D2L.

WEEK 6:

Buddhism Part 1

Read Textbook Chapter 10, to page 474 Subheading "Cultural Expressions"

Mon. Feb. 10

Lecture: Buddhist Teachings and Philosophy

Wed. Feb. 12

Seminar: A Discussion of Buddhism 1

WEEK 7:

Reading Week (no class)

WEEK 8:

Sikhism

Read Textbook Chapter 8

Mon. Feb. 24

Lecture: Sikhism in History, its Principles, and Practices

Wed. Feb. 26

Seminar: A Discussion of Sikhism

WEEK 9:

A Return to Buddhism.

Read Textbook, the rest of Chapter 10 (page 474 to end)

Mon. Mar. 3

Special Guest David Reid of the Shambhala Centre

Wed. Mar. 5

Seminar: A Discussion of Buddhism 2

WEEK 10:

Test Week and Seminar on Enlightenment

Mon. Mar. 10

Test #2: Buddhism and Sikhism

Wed. Mar. 12

Seminar: What does it Feel Like to be Enlightened?

Reading:

John Horgan (no, not *that* John Horgan), "What does it Feel like to be Enlightened?" *Scientific American*, November 13, 2017.

WEEK 11: Taoism
Read Textbook, the first half of Chapter 11 (finish next week). The chapter combines Taoism and Confucianism into one discussion.

Mon. Mar. 17 Lecture: Taoism

Fri. Mar. 22 Seminar: A Discussion of Taoism

WEEK 12: Confucianism
Finish Reading Chapter 11

Mon. Mar. 24 Lecture: Confucianism

Wed. Mar. 26 Seminar: A Discussion of Confucianism

WEEK 13: Shinto and Japanese Religion
Read Textbook Chapter 12

Mon. March 31 Lecture: Shinto, the *Kami*, and Japanese Culture

Wed. Apr. 2 Seminar: Discussion of Shinto and Japanese Religion

WEEK 14: Review and Comparative Religion Seminar
No Textbook Readings this week

Mon. Apr. 10 **Course Summary and Final Exam Review**

Wed. Apr. 12 Seminar: Reflecting on the Great Eastern Traditions

EVALUATION OF LEARNING

DESCRIPTION	WEIGHTING
Test #1: Introduction, Hinduism, and Jainism	30 %
Test #2: Buddhism and Sikhism	25 %
Final Exam: Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and Comparing the Great Eastern Traditions	25 %
Seminar Participation	20 %
TOTAL	100%

(a) Assignments (none)

(b) Tests – In the span of fourteen weeks, REL 102 covers a remarkable number of religions and their traditions, philosophies, and practices. To simplify this venture, the course material is organized into two (2) tests and a final exam.

Each test and the final consists of:

- i) Short Answer and Multiple Choice questions, which will require you to revisit your lecture notes and textbook readings.
- ii) Long Answer Questions. The purpose of these paragraph-style inquiries is to encourage the student to go well beyond identifying and reciting the course material to apply their growing understanding of Eastern World Religions. More specifically, these questions will test your knowledge of the key religious concepts, practices, and systems by asking you to compare and contrast them and/or imagine how followers of a religious tradition will respond to certain contexts.

(c) Exams— As noted, there is a final exam in REL 102.

***Please do not make travel plans for April until after the final exam schedule is released.**

SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

Religion courses are part of Camosun's Department of Humanities. Website:
<https://legacy.camosun.ca/learn/subjects/humanities/>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Enrolment at Camosun assumes that the student will become a responsible member of the College community. As such, each student will display a positive work ethic, assist in the preservation of College property, and assume responsibility for their education by researching academic requirements and policies; demonstrating courtesy and respect toward others; and respecting expectations concerning attendance, assignments, deadlines, and appointments.

A short note about academic honesty:

All work that a student completes in REL 102 must be their own and an original composition. Copying from the internet, printed sources, or another student is a serious misconduct. See the Camosun Calendar 2015-6 (pp. 32-39) for full policies and penalties with regards to plagiarism, cheating, and other unacceptable student conduct.

SUPPORTS AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Camosun College offers a number of services to help you succeed in and out of the classroom. For a detailed overview of the supports and services visit camosun.ca/services.

Support Service	Website
Academic Advising	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/academic-advising
Accessible Learning	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning
Counselling	camosun.ca/services/health-and-wellness/counselling-centre
Career Services	camosun.ca/services/co-operative-education-and-career-services
Financial Aid and Awards	camosun.ca/registration-records/financial-aid-awards
Help Centres (Math/English/Science)	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres
Indigenous Student Support	camosun.ca/programs-courses/iecc/indigenous-student-services
International Student Support	camosun.ca/international
Learning Skills	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills
Library	camosun.ca/services/library
Office of Student Support	camosun.ca/services/office-student-support
Ombudsperson	camosun.ca/services/ombudsperson
Registration	camosun.ca/registration-records/registration
Technology Support	camosun.ca/services/its
Writing Centre	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills

If you have a mental health concern, please contact Counselling to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. Counselling sessions are available at both campuses during business hours. If you need urgent support after-hours, please contact the Vancouver Island Crisis Line at 1-888-494-3888 or call 911.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with all College policy regarding academic integrity; which is about honest and ethical behaviour in your education journey. The following guide is designed to help you understand your responsibilities: <https://camosun.libguides.com/academicintegrity/welcome>

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.13.pdf> for Camosun's Academic Integrity policy and details for addressing and resolving matters of academic misconduct.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Camosun College is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a documented disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) and register as early as possible. Please visit the CAL website for more information about the process of registering with CAL, including important deadlines:

<https://camosun.ca/cal>

Academic Progress

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2023-02/e-1.1.pdf> for further details on how Camosun College monitors students' academic progress and what steps can be taken if a student is at risk of not meeting the College's academic progress standards.

Course Withdrawals Policy

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.2.pdf> for further details about course withdrawals. For deadline for fees, course drop dates, and tuition refund, please visit <https://camosun.ca/registration-records/tuition-fees#deadlines>.

Grading Policy

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.5.pdf> for further details about grading.

Grade Review and Appeals

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.14.pdf> for policy relating to requests for review and appeal of grades.

Medical / Compassionate Withdrawals

Students who are incapacitated and unable to complete or succeed in their studies by virtue of serious and demonstrated exceptional circumstances may be eligible for a medical/compassionate withdrawal (see

Medical/Compassionate Withdrawals policy). Please visit <https://camosun.ca/services/forms#medical> to learn more about the process involved in a medical/compassionate withdrawal.

Sexual Violence

Camosun is committed to creating a campus culture of safety, respect, and consent. Camosun's Office of Student Support is responsible for offering support to students impacted by sexual violence. Regardless of when or where the sexual violence occurred, students can access support at Camosun. The Office of Student Support will make sure students have a safe and private place to talk and will help them understand what supports are available and their options for next steps. The Office of Student Support respects a student's right to choose what is right for them. For more information see Camosun's Sexualized Violence Policy: <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.9.pdf> and camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence-support-and-education.

To contact the Office of Student Support: oss@camosun.ca or by phone: 250-370-3046 or 250-370-3841

Student Misconduct (Non-Academic)

Camosun College is committed to building the academic competency of all students, seeks to empower students to become agents of their own learning, and promotes academic belonging for everyone. Camosun also expects that all students to conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to a positive, supportive, and safe learning environment. Please review Camosun College's Student Misconduct Policy at <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.5.pdf> to understand the College's expectations of academic integrity and student behavioural conduct.

Looking for other policies?

The full suite of College policies and directives can be found here: <https://camosun.ca/about/camosun-college-policies-and-directives>

Changes to this Syllabus: Every effort has been made to ensure that information in this syllabus is accurate at the time of publication. The College reserves the right to change courses if it becomes necessary so that course content remains relevant. In such cases, the instructor will give the students clear and timely notice of the changes.