



**CAMOSUN COLLEGE**  
**School of Arts & Science**  
**Department of Humanities**

**REL-102-D01**  
**World Religions of the East**  
**Winter 2021**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

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The course description is available on the web @ <http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/web/rel.html>

□ Please note: This outline will not be kept indefinitely. It is recommended students keep this outline for their records, especially to assist in transfer credit to post-secondary institutions.

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**1. Instructor Information**

<b>(a) Instructor</b>	Dr. Stephen Fielding
<b>(b) Office hours</b>	By email or scheduled video chat on Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:00 pm, or by appointment
<b>(c) Location</b>	D2L
<b>(d) Phone</b>	250-370-3390 (messages only) <b>Alternative:</b> _____
<b>(e) E-mail</b>	FieldingS@camosun.bc.ca
<b>(f) Website</b>	<a href="http://camosun.ca/learn/school/arts-science/bios/Fielding-Stephen.html">http://camosun.ca/learn/school/arts-science/bios/Fielding-Stephen.html</a>

Growing up in a railway family, I spent my childhood moving around, 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 10-year-old girl and ~~little stinker~~ 5-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.

**2. Intended Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Explain the contexts/historical settings in which Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Chinese religions, and Shintoism arose.
2. List major dates, events, and places central to each.
3. Describe the historical linkage/relationships among them.
4. Summarize their major beliefs, teachings, ideals, and practices.
5. Explain variations/splits/divisions in each tradition.
6. Analyze their similarities/differences.
7. Compare/contrast each religion's view of the others.
8. Evaluate their relationship to and impact on the world today.

### 3. Required Materials

(a) Texts

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

### 4. Course Content and Schedule

**Lectures:** The lectures will appear on D2L course site as video and/or audio PowerPoint files every Wednesday at 11:30 am

**Seminars:** Each week, students must upload their seminar contributions every Thursday before 11:59 pm (midnight). They will respond to others' posts before the next evening at 11:59 pm (midnight).

The lectures aim to follow a similar structure to the textbook. It should also be noted that the course delivery format is asynchronous, meaning that it is not in real time. However, "visits" from local religious leaders may take place live, in which case they will be recorded for students who wish to view them at a later time.

Read actively the assigned textbook readings for each lecture, ideally having guide questions beside you (the question that 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. These 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 are often 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.

#### **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 30 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 preset questions on D2L and then explore the readings themselves.

My role in the online seminar discussions is primarily as an observer and occasional moderator, if required. I read and thoughtfully consider every post and might contribute my own comments from time to time.

General Seminar Format: The Seminar includes the following

- a) Your own reaction to that week's readings (i.e. What did you learn? What surprised you? What unanswered questions do you now have about this religious tradition?
- b) Respond to 2 of the pre-set questions on D2L. This is done at the same time as a)
- c) The following night: Respond to 2 other students' threads.

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

## **Order of Participation:**

**All postings should be made in the “Discussion” link for that day’s webpage (On the D2L Course Page, Go to My Tools → Content → Select the Week on the left (eg. Week 1) You will see a Seminar Discussions link further down the page). Your first day’s postings should start a thread; the second day’s postings (your responses) should be made on other students’ threads.**

### **Thursday before 11:59pm (midnight)**

1. Contribute your initial 100-word “first impressions” post. Some suggested questions to guide your response: What did you learn? What surprised you? How is the story, idea, value, claim, belief or practice in this passage similar or different to those in other religious traditions? What questions do you have?
2. Then answer 2 of the prescribed questions I’ve provided on D2L. Each one must be a minimum of 50 words

### **Friday before 11:59pm (midnight)**

3. React/add to 2 other students’ threads from the day before. Your response can be to their initial “first impressions” post and/or to their answers to the prescribed questions. Each one must be a minimum of 50 words

### **What you should do**

In your responses, I need to see thoughtful consideration of the scriptures and other sources you read, communicated effectively to the other students.

You are welcome to mention what was interesting, clear or unanswered, and what made (or did not make sense) to you. Don’t worry: if something doesn’t seem to make sense to you, there are probably other students feeling the same way. Everyone is on a learning path here. In your posts, feel free to include your own questions for other students, as long as they relate to the material. Great dialogue and debate always starts with a thought-provoking question. “Comparison” is one of the highest forms of analysis. I strongly encourage you to look for similarities and differences in the great Eastern religious traditions, and perhaps also consider how they compare and contrast to the western secular society in which most of us live. As we move further into the semester, you will be better able to compare themes in one religious tradition (eg. the afterlife/lives, nature, reality and illusion, views on food, the nature of the Divine, principles to live by, good and evil, etc.) with ones we’ve already studied.

### **What you should not do**

I do not want to see mere congratulatory responses to other students’ contributions, such as “Josh, you did a great job and clarified everything for me.” This is a poor attempt at participation, akin to a Facebook “like.” The result will be a very poor grade. Make sure that you write an informed response that adds richness to the discussion or debate. It’s okay to compliment someone (and right so, because many of you have fascinating things to say!), but make sure to follow up your virtual high-five with your own contribution. Also, try to avoid “going into the weeds,” so to speak. Keep on topic as much as possible. It is okay to meld some personal experience into your postings, but first speak to the assigned reading material. For your participation mark, you are assessed primarily on the quality of your interpretations and grasp of the course readings.

### **Important Dates at a Glance**

Wed. January 13 @ 11:30 am	First Online Lecture Released
Wed. February 3 @ 11:30 am	Test 1: Intro/Hinduism Released (due next day at 11:59 pm)
Wed. March 17 @ 11:30 am	Test 2: Jainism/Buddhism/Sikhism Released (due next day at 11:59 pm)
Wed. April 14 @ 11:30 am	Test 3: Daoism/Confucianism/Shinto Test Released (due next day at 11:59 pm)

## Lecture and Seminar Schedule (subject to change)

### WEEK 1: Why are there Religions?

Read Textbook Chapter 1

January 13 Lecture: Introduction, Religious Symbols

January 14-15 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](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

January 20 Lecture: Basics of Hindu Thought and Practice

January 21-22 Seminar: Discussion of Hinduism 1

### WEEK 3: Hinduism Part 2

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

January 27 Lecture: Hindu Sacred Scriptures, The Epics, and their Impact on South Asian Values and Culture

January 28-29 Seminar: Discussion of Hinduism Part 2

### WEEK 4: Test Week and Hinduism Seminar 3

February 3-4 **Test #1 on Introductory Lecture and Hinduism**  
Released at 11:30 am on Wed. September 30  
Due before 11:59 pm (midnight) on Thurs. February 4

February 5 Seminar: Discussion of Hinduism 3. Yoga in the West.

\*Note: Due to the test, you will not have to post responses on Thursday evening  
Instead, select and respond to three (3) of the assigned questions for this week  
before Friday at 11:59 pm (midnight). Minimum 75 words each.

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 5: Jainism**

Read Textbook Chapter 9

February 10 Lecture: Understanding Jainism

February 11-12 Seminar: Discussion of Jainism

**WEEK 6: READING BREAK**

**WEEK 7: Buddhism Part 1**

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

February 24 Lecture: Buddhist Teachings and Philosophy

February 25-26 Seminar: Discussion of Buddhism 1

**WEEK 8: Buddhism Part 2**

March 3 Zen Buddhism, Guest Presentation by Rev. Doshu Rogers

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

March 4-5 Seminar: Discussion of Buddhism 2

**WEEK 9: Sikhism**

Read Textbook Chapter 8

March 10 Lecture: Sikhism in History, its Principles, and Practices

March 11-12 Seminar: Seminar: Discussion of Sikhism 1

**WEEK 10: Test Week and Seminar on Enlightenment**

**Test #2, on Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism**

Released at 11:30 am on Wed. March 17

Due before 11:59 pm (midnight) on Thurs. March 18

March 19 Seminar: What does it Feel Like to be Enlightened?

\*Note: Due to the test, you will not have to post responses on Thursday evening. Instead, select and respond to three (3) of the preset questions before Friday at 11:59 pm (midnight). Minimum 75 words each.

**WEEK 11: Daoism**

Read Textbook, the first half of Chapter 11 (finish next week)

March 24 Lecture: Daoism

March 25-26 Seminar: Discussion of Daoism

**WEEK 12: Confucianism**

Finish Reading Chapter 11

March 31 Lecture: Confucianism

April 1-2 Seminar: Discussion of Confucianism

**WEEK 13: Shinto and Japanese Religion**

Read Textbook Chapter 12

April 7 Lecture: Shinto, the *Kami*, and Japanese Culture

April 8-9 Seminar: Discussion of Shinto and Japanese Religion

**WEEK 14: Test Week and Comparative Religion Seminar**

No Textbook Readings this week

April 14-15 **Test #3, on Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto  
Released at 11:30 am on Wednesday April 14  
Due before 11:59 pm (midnight) on Thursday April 15**

April 16 Seminar: Reflecting on the Great Eastern Traditions

\*Note: Due to the test, you will not have to post responses on Thursday evening. Instead, select and respond to three (3) of the preset questions before Friday at 11:59 pm (midnight). Minimum 75 words each.

**5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)**

Test 1: Intro, Hinduism,	20 percent
Test 2: Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism	30 percent
Test 3: Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto	20 percent
Seminar Participation	30 percent

**(a) Assignments (none)**

**(b) Online 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 four online tests, spread across the semester schedule.

Each test consists of:

- i) Short Answer and Multiple Choice questions, which will require you to revisit your lecture notes and textbook readings.
- ii) Reflection and Application 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**— This is no mid-term exam or final exam in REL 102

\*An exception for a missed or late seminar contribution may require a medical certificate.

## 6. Grading System

- Standard Grading System (GPA)
- Competency Based Grading System

## 7. Recommended Materials to Assist Students to Succeed Throughout the Course

## 8. College Supports, Services and Policies



### Immediate, Urgent, or Emergency Support

If you or someone you know requires immediate, urgent, or emergency support (e.g. illness, injury, thoughts of suicide, sexual assault, etc.), **SEEK HELP**. Resource contacts @ <http://camosun.ca/about/mental-health/emergency.html> or <http://camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence/get-support.html#urgent>

### College Services

Camosun offers a variety of health and academic support services, including counselling, dental, disability resource centre, help centre, learning skills, sexual violence support & education, library, and writing centre. For more information on each of these services, visit the **STUDENT SERVICES** link on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/>

### College Policies

Camosun strives to provide clear, transparent, and easily accessible policies that exemplify the college's commitment to life-changing learning. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of College policies. Policies are available on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/>. Education and academic policies include, but are not limited to, Academic Progress, Admission, Course Withdrawals, Standards for Awarding Credentials, Involuntary Health and Safety Leave of Absence, Prior Learning Assessment, Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal, Sexual Violence and Misconduct, Student Ancillary Fees, Student Appeals, Student Conduct, and Student Penalties and Fines.

### A. GRADING SYSTEMS <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html>

The following two grading systems are used at Camosun College:

#### 1. Standard Grading System (GPA)

Percentage	Grade	Description	Grade Point Equivalency
90-100	A+		9
85-89	A		8
80-84	A-		7
77-79	B+		6
73-76	B		5
70-72	B-		4
65-69	C+		3
60-64	C		2
50-59	D		1
0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0

## 2. Competency Based Grading System (Non GPA)

This grading system is based on satisfactory acquisition of defined skills or successful completion of the course learning outcomes

Grade	Description
COM	The student has met the goals, criteria, or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.
DST	The student has met and exceeded, above and beyond expectation, the goals, criteria, or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.
NC	The student has not met the goals, criteria or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.

## B. Temporary Grades

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html> for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
I	<i>Incomplete</i> : A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.
IP	<i>In progress</i> : A temporary grade assigned for courses that are designed to have an anticipated enrollment that extends beyond one term. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course.
CW	<i>Compulsory Withdrawal</i> : A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement.