

# COURSE SYLLABUS



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

CLASS SECTION: D01

TERM: F2021

COURSE CREDITS: 3

DELIVERY METHOD(S): Online Asynchronous

Camosun College campuses are located on the traditional territories of the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. We acknowledge their welcome and graciousness to the students who seek knowledge here.

Learn more about Camosun's [Territorial Acknowledgement](#).

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For COVID-19 information please visit <https://legacy.camosun.ca/covid19/index.html>.

*Camosun College requires mandatory attendance for the first class meeting of each course. If you do not attend, and do not provide your instructor with a reasonable explanation in advance, you will be removed from the course and the space offered to the next waitlisted student.*

## INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

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NAME: Dr. Stephen Fielding

EMAIL: [fieldings@camosun.bc.ca](mailto:fieldings@camosun.bc.ca)

OFFICE: Y320

HOURS: In person or via Collaborate on Mondays and Wednesday 12:30 to 1:20. Or by appointment.

### Instructor Bio:

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 11-year-old girl and ~~wild animal~~ almost 6-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

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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

### CO-REQUISITE(S):

Not Applicable

### EXCLUSION(S):

Not Applicable

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES / OBJECTIVES

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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.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS & RECOMMENDED PREPARATION / INFORMATION

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### (a) Textbook

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

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

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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 noticed is

required. Deadlines can be reviewed on the [CAL exams page](http://camosun.ca/services/accessible-learning/exams.html). <http://camosun.ca/services/accessible-learning/exams.html>

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

**Seminars:** Each week, students must upload their seminar contributions every Wednesday 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 pre-set 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.

\*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.**

### **Wednesday 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

### **Thursday 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**

Tues. September 7 @ 11:30 am	First Online Lecture Released
Tues. September 28 @ 11:30 am	Test 1: Intro/Hinduism Released (due next day at 11:59 pm)
Tues. October 26 @ 11:30 am	Test 2: Jainism/Buddhism Released (due next day at 11:59 pm)
Tues. November 9 @ 11:30 am	Test 3: Sikhism Released (due next day at 11:59 pm)
Tues. December 7 @ 11:30 am	Test 4: 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

Sept. 7 Lecture: Introduction, Religious Symbols

Sept. 8-9 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

Sept. 14 Lecture: Basics of Hindu Thought and Practice

Sept. 15-16 Seminar: A Discussion of Hinduism 1

### WEEK 3: Hinduism Part 2

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

Sept. 21 Lecture: Hindu Sacred Scriptures, The Epics, and their Impact on South Asian Values and Culture

Sept. 22-23 Seminar: A Discussion of Hinduism Part 2

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

Sept. 28 **Test #1 on Introductory Lecture and Hinduism**  
Released at 11:30 am on Tues. September 28  
Due before 11:59 pm (midnight) on Wed. September 29

Sept. 30 Seminar: Discussion of Hinduism 3. Yoga in the West.

\*Note: Due to the test, you will not have to post responses on Wednesday evening Instead, select and respond to three (3) of the assigned questions for this week before Thursday 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

October 5 Lecture: Understanding Jainism

October 6-7 Seminar: A Discussion of Jainism

### **WEEK 6:**

#### **Buddhism Part 1**

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

October 12 Lecture: Buddhist Teachings and Philosophy

October 13-14 Seminar: A Discussion of Buddhism 1

### **WEEK 7:**

#### **Buddhism Part 2**

October 19 Zen Buddhism, Tentative Date for Guest Presentation by Rev. Doshu Rogers

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

October 20-21 Seminar: A Discussion of Buddhism 2

### **WEEK 8:**

#### **Test Week and Seminar on Enlightenment**

Read Textbook Chapter 8

October 26 Test #2, on Jainism and Buddhism  
Released at 11:30 am on Tuesday October 26  
Due before 11:59 pm (midnight) on Wednesday October 27

October 28 Seminar: What does it Feel Like to be Enlightened?

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

**WEEK 9: Sikhism**

November 2 Lecture: Sikhism in History, its Principles, and Practices

November 3-4 Seminar: A Discussion of Sikhism

**WEEK 10: Test Week. No seminar due to Remembrance Day**

November 9 Test #3, on Sikhism

**WEEK 11: Daoism**

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

November 16 Lecture: Daoism

November 17-18 Seminar: A Discussion of Daoism

**WEEK 12: Confucianism**

Finish Reading Chapter 11

November 23 Lecture: Confucianism

November 24-25 Seminar: A Discussion of Confucianism

**WEEK 13: Shinto and Japanese Religion**

Read Textbook Chapter 12

November 30 Lecture: Shinto, the *Kami*, and Japanese Culture

December 1-2 Seminar: Discussion of Shinto and Japanese Religion

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

No Textbook Readings this week

December 7 **Test #4, on Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto**  
Released at 11:30 am on Tuesday December 7  
Due before 11:59 pm (midnight) on Wednesday December 8

December 9 Seminar: Reflecting on the Great Eastern Traditions

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

EVALUATION OF LEARNING

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DESCRIPTION	WEIGHTING
Test #1. Introduction and Hinduism	20 %
Test #2. Jainism and Buddhism	20 %
Test #3. Sikhism	10 %
Test #4. Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto	20 %
Seminar Participation	30 %
TOTAL	100%

If you have a concern about a grade you have received for an evaluation, please come and see me as soon as possible. Refer to the [Grade Review and Appeals](#) policy for more information.

<http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.14.pdf>

**(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**— There is no mid-term exam or final exam in REL 102

#### SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

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

#### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

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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.

#### SUPPORTS AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

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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 <http://camosun.ca/students/>.

Academic Advising	<a href="http://camosun.ca/advising">http://camosun.ca/advising</a>
Accessible Learning	<a href="http://camosun.ca/accessible-learning">http://camosun.ca/accessible-learning</a>
Counselling	<a href="http://camosun.ca/counselling">http://camosun.ca/counselling</a>
Career Services	<a href="http://camosun.ca/coop">http://camosun.ca/coop</a>
Financial Aid and Awards	<a href="http://camosun.ca/financialaid">http://camosun.ca/financialaid</a>
Help Centres (Math/English/Science)	<a href="http://camosun.ca/help-centres">http://camosun.ca/help-centres</a>
Indigenous Student Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/indigenous">http://camosun.ca/indigenous</a>
International Student Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/international/">http://camosun.ca/international/</a>
Learning Skills	<a href="http://camosun.ca/learningskills">http://camosun.ca/learningskills</a>

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Library	<a href="http://camosun.ca/services/library/">http://camosun.ca/services/library/</a>
Office of Student Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/oss">http://camosun.ca/oss</a>
Ombudsperson	<a href="http://camosun.ca/ombuds">http://camosun.ca/ombuds</a>
Registration	<a href="http://camosun.ca/registration">http://camosun.ca/registration</a>
Technology Support	<a href="http://camosun.ca/its">http://camosun.ca/its</a>
Writing Centre	<a href="http://camosun.ca/writing-centre">http://camosun.ca/writing-centre</a>

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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.

## COLLEGE-WIDE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, REQUIREMENTS, AND STANDARDS

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### Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The College is committed to providing appropriate and reasonable academic accommodations to students with disabilities (i.e. physical, depression, learning, etc). If you have a disability, the [Centre for Accessible Learning \(CAL\)](#) can help you document your needs, and where disability-related barriers to access in your courses exist, create an accommodation plan. By making a plan through CAL, you can ensure you have the appropriate academic accommodations you need without disclosing your diagnosis or condition to course instructors. Please visit the CAL website for contacts and to learn how to get started:

<http://camosun.ca/services/accessible-learning/>

### Academic Integrity

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.13.pdf> for policy regarding academic expectations and details for addressing and resolving matters of academic misconduct.

### Academic Progress

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/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 <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.2.pdf> for further details about course withdrawals. For deadline for fees, course drop dates, and tuition refund, please visit <http://camosun.ca/learn/fees/#deadlines>.

### Grading Policy

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.5.pdf> for further details about grading.

## Grade Review and Appeals

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.14.pdf> for policy relating to requests for review and appeal of grades.

## Mandatory Attendance for First Class Meeting of Each Course

Camosun College requires mandatory attendance for the first class meeting of each course. If you do not attend, and do not provide your instructor with a reasonable reason in advance, you will be removed from the course and the space offered to the next waitlisted student. For more information, please see the “Attendance” section under “Registration Policies and Procedures” (<http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/procedures.html>) and the Grading Policy at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.5.pdf>.

## 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. Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.8.pdf> to learn more about the process involved in a medical/compassionate withdrawal.

## Sexual Violence and Misconduct

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 or misconduct 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 and Misconduct Policy: <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.9.pdf> and [camosun.ca/sexual-violence](http://camosun.ca/sexual-violence). To contact the Office of Student Support: [oss@camosun.ca](mailto:oss@camosun.ca) or by phone: 250-370-3046 or 250-3703841

## 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 <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.5.pdf> to understand the College’s expectations of academic integrity and student behavioural conduct.

**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.