ANS 301R [#31030], R S 302 [#44485]

HISTORY OF THE RELIGIONS OF ASIA

Fall 2009

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This course surveys the central beliefs and patterns of life of living religious traditions of Asia. It will focus particularly on the basic texts or narratives of these traditions, on their essential histories, and on the concepts of humanity, the world, and the divine that are distinctive of each. In addition, the course will explore not only what people believe religiously but also what they do religiously. Part of the course, therefore, will consider the ways of life, forms of social action, and rituals practiced by different communities. Not all Asian traditions can be included in a one-semester survey. The traditions chosen have large numbers of adherents, have particular historical significance, and represent different cultural areas. There are no prerequisites for this class.

Written Assignments and Attendance:

Written assignments include four interpretive essays on the primary texts assigned in the course, a midterm, and a final. The final exam is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 9:00–12:00 noon.

The final grade for written work will be determined as follows:

Midterm	20%
Three essays	45%
Final exam	35%

Regrettably, excessive unexcused absences (beyond 4) or persistent failure to prepare the assignments on time or both can result in a reduction of one full grade. On the other hand, vigorous and informed participation in class discussions can help a grade, especially a marginal one. Other factors, such as a student's progress or effort in the course, may also affect final grades for the class.

Grading:

This class uses plus-minus grading on a straight scale of 93-100 A, 90-92 A-, 87-89 B+, 83-86 B. 80-82 B-, 77-79 C+, 73-76 C, 70-72 C-, etc.

Posted Materials:

Assignments, handouts, and some additional materials will be posted on Blackboard. You can access the Blackboard site for this course from http://courses.utexas.edu/.

Special Needs:

At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructors by presenting a letter prepared by the Service for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office. Students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

Academic Honesty:

Be careful not to copy the work of peers or to use material without proper attribution. Nothing can be more disastrous for your grade or for your college record than to be found to have violated the University rules on academic honesty. Students who violate these rules are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course or dismissal from the University or both. If you have any questions about properly utilizing sources, check with the TA or the instructors.

Required Texts:

John L. Esposito et al., *Religions of Asia Today*
R. K. Narayan, tr., *The Ramayana*
Patrick Olivelle, tr., *The Buddhacarita: Life of the Buddha* (on Blackboard)
Burton Watson, tr., *Zhuangzi: Basic Writings*
Peter Haskel, tr., *Letting Go: The Story of Zen Master Tōsui*

Additional readings are available on the Blackboard site.

Please note: as are all things, the following schedule is subject to modification.

DATE	TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT
	HINDUISM	
August		
26	Introduction and the Hindu & Buddhist World	
28	The Hindu & Buddhist World	Esposito, pp. 75-161
31	Introduction to East Asian Worldview	Esposito, pp. 245-253

September

2	Shintō: Gods & Rites	
4	Shintō	Film: "Man, Gods, and Nature in Japan"
9	Gods & Rites of Traditional India	
11	The Story of Rāma	*The Ramayana*
14	The Story of Rāma	*The Ramayana*
16	The Story of Rāma	*The Ramayana*
18	Images of Beauty: Kṛṣṇa	**Essay** on *The Ramayana*. "Baby Kṛṣṇa," " Kṛṣṇa/Kāliya," " Kṛṣṇa/Clothing," "Rāsalīlā"
21	Images of Power: Śiva and Devī	"Brahmā," "Śiva/Sages," "Durgā"
23	Meditation and Insight	

ISLAM IN SOUTH ASIA

25	The Unity and Diversity of Islam	Esposito, pp. 335-357
28	Islam in South Asia	

BUDDHISM

30	Introduction to Buddhism	Esposito, pp. 163-191

October

2	Life of the Buddha	*Jataka* stories, *Buddhacarita* (*The Life of the Buddha*)
5	Life of the Buddha	*Buddhacarita* (*The Life of the Buddha*)
7	The Four Noble Truths	"The Questions of King Milinda"
9	The Four Noble Truths	"The Path" & Esposito, pp. 192-243
12	The Four Noble Truths	"Meditation"
14	The Four Noble Truths	

16	Mahāyāna: Bodhisattvas & Buddhas	**Essay** on *The Life of the Buddha*
19	Mahāyāna: Emptiness & Mind Only	"The Heart Sūtra" "The Diamond Sūtra"
21	Vajrayāna	
23	**Midterm Exam**	

EAST ASIAN TRADITIONS

26	The Confucian Tradition	"Mencius" "Filial Exemplars"
28	The Confucian Tradition	Esposito, pp. 254-285
30	The Daoist Tradition	*Zhuangzi*

November

2	The Daoist Tradition	*Zhuangzi*
4	Mahāyāna Buddhism in China	**Essay** on *Zhuangzi*
6	New Schools of Buddhism in Japan	Esposito, pp. 285-292
9	The Confucian Revival	
11	Developments in Buddhism	
13	Chan/Zen	*Master Tōsui*
16	Chan/Zen	*Master Tōsui*
18	Chan/Zen	*Master Tōsui*
20	Entry of Christianity to East Asia	"Kirishtan Monogatari," "The Beginning of Heaven and Earth"
23	Religion and Nationalism	
25	Christianity in Modern E. Asia	
30	New Religions in Japan	Esposito, pp. 292-296, 312-321

December

2	New and Popular Religions in China and Korea	Esposito, pp. 321-333
4	East Asian Religion in the American Imagination	