

Religion 211 – Religions of the Eastern World

Instructor: Dr. Jay Valentine

Office: Loree 130

Office Hours: Email for an appointment.

Tuesdays 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Email: jay.valentine@rutgers.edu

Section 2

Tuesday/Thursday 2:50 PM - 4:10 PM

College Avenue Campus – Frelinghuysen Hall A4

Section 3

Monday/Wednesday 3:20 PM - 4:40

Livingston Campus – Beck Hall 253



Course Description

The focus of this course is to explore humanity's religious achievement and religious impulse. We will consider the meaning and end of religion, its dimensions and functions in society and in the individual. Using the tools of the humanities and the social sciences, we seek to analyze general scriptural sources, religious communities and rituals. The vehicles for our investigation will be the religions of India and China. This course, therefore, also serves as an introduction to Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. Successful completion of this course will provide students with a critical understanding of these six traditions, which together have influenced approximately half of the world's population, and will foster a mature sensitivity to them. We will explore the major ideas and practices of these traditions, considering the cultural, historical, political and material contexts in which they were conceived and expressed. The course evaluates EuroAmerican theories of religion in light of Asian religious expressions.

Curriculum Requirements

This course meets the following SAS core curriculum requirements:

- h. Understand the bases and development of human and societal endeavors across time and place.
- i. Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.
- k. Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science.
- l. Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors.

I will assess your mastery of these skills through your quizzes, response papers, and exams.

Required Text

Poceski, Mario. *Introducing Chinese Religions*.

Embree, Ainslie T. *Sources of Indian Tradition, Vol. 1: From the Beginning to 1800 (Introduction to Oriental Civilizations)*.

Sakai: Readings drawn from many other sources will be posted to Sakai.

Students are required to do all of the readings for the course in advance of the dates for which they are assigned. **Bring assigned readings to every class.**

Course Grading Requirements

If you foresee a problem fulfilling any course requirement, see the instructor without delay. You may ask about your progress at any time.

| <u>Grading Requirements</u> | <u>Percentages</u> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Quizzes | 20% |
| Classroom Assignments | 20% |
| Midterm Exam | 20% |
| Final Exam | 30% |
| Attendance & Participation | <u>10%</u> |
| | 100% |

Quizzes (20%) Students will be administered regular quizzes. Some will be announced, but others will not. The intention is to ensure that students are keeping up with the readings and engaging them intellectually while also retaining information discussed in lectures. Most often the questions from the quizzes also appear on the final exam study guide. Students may also be asked to write 1-2 page response papers that assess comprehension of class subjects.

Classroom Assignments (20%) There will be regular assignments during class. Students will receive points for active participation in and completion of the assignments.

Midterm Exam (20%) There will be a midterm exam that covers the first half of the semester in detail. A study guide will be provided before the exam.

Final Exam (30%) There will be a comprehensive final exam for this class. A study guide will be provided, and the last class will include a review session. The exam will consist of a combination of long-answer and essay questions.

Attendance/Participation (10%) Attendance and participation are required. Ten points of your final grade will be based on your informed and thoughtful participation in class, which will reflect not only your attendance, but also the quality of your preparation.

In accordance with University policy, if you expect to miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Such reporting does NOT EXCUSE your absence.

Because students learn more and retain more when they attend class, students are required to attend lectures and discussions. Aware, however, that illnesses, family crises, and such can make even the most diligent student miss class, the professor allows 3 absences without penalty. The 3 absences are not recommended, should be used only when you NEED to, and are NOT negotiable. Do not use up three absences just because they seem like a free pass and then expect a fourth absence to be excused when you are ill or have an emergency.

For every absence beyond three, your total grade for the course will drop 1/3 of a grade-point (e.g., from A to B+, from B+ to B, from B to C+, and so on).

In general, if you don't show up for a quiz or an exam, it's a zero for the exam and an absence (set up a buddy-system wake-up for exam days!). Exams are re-scheduled only if I receive advance notification from you (you email me before class, notifying me that you're ill), and you receive advance approval from me (I email you back before class and say you can make it up later). Do not contact me later that day or the next day and expect to make up the exam.

Promptness: Being late interrupts the professor and your classmates, inconveniences those who must move to let you sit down, and generally causes problems for other people. Because all of us run late sometimes, you are allowed to be **moderately late up to three times during the semester without penalty.**

Your fourth late arrival will be treated as an absence, as will any subsequent late arrivals. Please note that **I will not make exceptions for late arrivals caused by work schedules, campus bus schedules, or parking problems.** If you arrive after the roll has been called, you must talk to me after class is over. If you arrive more than 40 minutes after the class begins you are welcome to attend but you will be marked down as absent rather than late for that class.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity – Familiarize yourself with Rutgers policies and materials concerning academic integrity and plagiarism at the following sites:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources>

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. Any student found to have committed or aided the offense of plagiarism will be subject to penalties in accordance with the policies of the university.

Use of Electronic Equipment – Please turn off all mobile phones, computers, and other electronic devices before class. Points will be deducted from your participation grade if you are found using electronic devices during class. If you must use a computer, tablet, or e-reader for electronic readings, please sit in the first two rows of the classroom. Recording devices are not permitted and therefore you are not permitted to post any content from this class without the express permission of the professor.

Grading System: A=100-90, B+=89-85, B=84-80, C+=79-75, C=74-70, D=69-60, F=59 and below. Incompletes, i.e., "T" grades, will not be given under normal circumstances.