

PHIL 1120 WORLD RELIGION I (3 credit hours)

Elmira College

SPRING 2025

Required Text:

1. David S. Noss, Blake R. Grangaard, *A History of the World's Religions*, 14th Edition, 2018, Routledge.
2. Roy C. Amore, Amir Hussain, and Willard Oxtoby, *World Religions: Eastern Traditions*, 5th edition, Oxford University Press.

Supplemental readings might be included to illustrate or expand on textbook readings.

Pre-requisites: None.

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the major religious traditions of Eastern cultures, focusing on their historical development, core beliefs, rituals, texts, and practices. Through a detailed study of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Shinto, students will explore the philosophical, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of these traditions. Special emphasis is placed on the interplay between religion, culture, and society, as well as the role of Eastern traditions in shaping global perspectives on spirituality and ethics.

Course Objectives and Goals

- Understand the historical origins, beliefs, and practices of Eastern religious traditions.
- Analyze key texts and teachings within their cultural and historical contexts.
- Compare and contrast the philosophies and rituals across Eastern traditions.
- Assess the impact of these traditions on societal and cultural developments.
- Reflect on the relevance of Eastern spiritual and ethical ideas in the modern world.
- Develop an appreciation for the diversity and interconnectedness of Eastern traditions.

Evaluation of Performance

Your grade will be based upon your performance on exams, assignments, and participation.

4 Homework	10%
2 Discussion	20%
2 Essays	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	93% and above	B-	80 - 82%	D+	67 - 69%
A-	90 - 92%	C+	77 - 79%	D	63 - 66%
B+	87 - 89%	C	73 - 76%	D-	60 - 62%
B	83 - 86%	C-	70 - 72%	F	59% or below

Withdrawal Policy: Please see Elmira College Bulletin for information on this policy.

Academic Honesty: Please read the section on Academic Honesty in the [Code of Conduct](#). Briefly, academic dishonesty includes: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. Ask if you have any questions on whether something constitutes as academic dishonesty. All work must be original and new. Past assignments from current or other courses will not be accepted. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. It will result in zero on the assignment, and a report will be filed with the school. Continued practice will result in failure of the class. Institutional penalties may also apply with repeated acts of academic honesty.

Student Responsibility:

- It is your responsibility to keep track of assignments and due dates.
- You should ask questions concerning assignments and lectures, if you need any clarifications.
- If you are struggling in class, have concerns, and/or unsure about expectations, please stop by during office hours or make an appointment for another time.

Tentative Schedule of Topics

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Tasks & Evaluations</u>
Some Primal and Bygone Religions	Chapter 1	
The Religions of South Asia	Chapter 2	Homework 1
Early Hinduism: The Passage from Ritual Sacrifice to Mystical Union	Chapter 3	
Later Hinduism: Religion as the Determinant of Social Behaviour	Chapter 4	
Jainism: A Study in Asceticism	Chapter 5	Homework 2
Buddhism in Its First Phase	Chapter 6	
The Religious Developments of Buddhism	Chapter 7	Discussion 1
Sikhism: A Study in Syncretism	Chapter 8	
The Religions of East Asia	Chapter 9	
Native Chinese Religion and Daoism	Chapter 10	Essay 1
Confucius and Confucianism: A Study in Optimistic Humanism	Chapter 11	Midterm Exam
Shinto: The Native Contribution to Japanese Religion	Chapter 12	
The Religions of the Middle East	Chapter 13	Homework 3
Zoroastrianism: A Religion Based on Ethical Dualism	Chapter 14	
The Religious Developments of Judaism	Chapter 15	
Christianity in Its Opening Phase: The Worlds and Work of Jesus in Apostolic Perspective	Chapter 16	Homework 4
The Religious Development of Christianity	Chapter 17	

Islam: The Religion of Submission to God: Beginnings	Chapter 18	Discussion 2
Current Issues in Eastern Traditions	Chapter 19	
Religion and Politics	Chapter 20	
Bioethics	Chapter 21	
Gender and Sexuality	Chapter 22	Essay 2
Religious Diversity	Chapter 23	Final Exam