

# Intro to World Religions

## PHIL-2130

Spring 2020 Section 01 3 Credits 01/04/2020 to 05/05/2020 Modified 12/30/2019

### Description

A comparative study of the beliefs and practices of several world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This course not only explores the history of these faiths and their early doctrinal and communal development, but their place in today's world.

#### Requisites

Prerequisites:

Corequisites:

### Contact Information

#### Dr. Rosemary Kellison

Email: [rkelliso@westga.edu](mailto:rkelliso@westga.edu)

Office: TLC 2245

Phone: 678-839-5514

#### Office Hours

Tuesday, Thursday, 10:00 AM to 10:50 AM, TLC 2245

Tuesday, Thursday, 12:20 PM to 1:50 PM, TLC 2245

Tuesday, Thursday, 3:20 PM to 4:00 PM, TLC 2245

I will also have office hours every other Wednesday and some Fridays. See the Announcements on the CourseDen homepage for updates on weekly office hours.

Outside of my normal office hours, I am also happy to set up appointments to chat via voice, video, or instant message on Google Hangouts. Email me for an appointment.

### Meeting Times

Tuesday, Thursday, 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM, Pafford 208

### Materials

All readings are listed on the course calendar below and are posted in the Readings folder on CourseDen. You should complete the assigned reading (listed under the Notes heading on the Schedule) prior to arriving to class each day.

### Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- define basic concepts of the discipline of religious studies.
- describe and compare the discourse, practices, communities, and institutions of selected religious traditions.
- provide examples of both diversity and continuity within religious communities and traditions.
- analyze historical and contemporary political issues around the world in terms of their connection to religious discourse, practice, communities, or institutions.

These course-specific learning outcomes contribute to the Core Area E learning outcomes by enabling students better to:

- demonstrate understanding of political, social, and cultural dimensions of world history.
- demonstrate knowledge of the fundamental concepts of a discipline examining the social world.

These course-specific learning outcomes contribute to the departmental learning outcomes of the Philosophy Program by enabling you to:

- discuss the views of major historical figures of philosophy.
- critically analyze and explain a philosophical issue in written communications.

## ✓ Evaluation

### Breakdown

Grade	Range	Notes
A	90–100	
B	80–89	
C	70–79	
D	60–69	
F	0–59	

### Criteria

Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
Engaged Attendance	9%		<p>Regular attendance is expected in this course. I will take attendance each day. Documentation must be provided for an excused absence. After two unexcused absences, each additional absence in the semester will result in a ½-point deduction from your final course grade. Repeated late arrivals will also result in deductions. To earn an excellent grade, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• come to class on time each day and stay the entire class period.</li> <li>• avoid talking to others or engaging in other distracting behaviors.</li> <li>• be attentive and ask questions when you have them.</li> <li>• show respect for classmates.</li> </ul> <p>Your engaged attendance will be assessed three times over the course of the semester; each of these attendance periods is worth 3% of your final grade</p>
Daily Review Quizzes	36%		<p>These short, open-book, open-note quizzes consist of a few multiple-choice and/or short-answer questions. Each quiz will contain some questions reviewing what we covered in our previous class session and some questions about the new reading assigned for the present day's class session. Quizzes are intended to help you review and critically reflect on the materials, and prepare you for success on your essays. Your highest 24 (out of 28 total) quiz grades will count toward your final grade; each is worth 1.5% of your final grade. Review quizzes must be completed alone and are submitted online through CourseDen. Review quizzes are due every class day by 11 am; no late quizzes will be accepted.</p>

Type	Weight	Topic	Notes
Midterm Essays	40%		In each of these short essays, you will respond to a prompt asking you to reflect on broad themes of our course using examples from our course and references to our course readings. There are five midterm essays, but only your highest four will count toward your final grade. Each essay is worth 10% of your final grade.
Final Essay	15%		Your final essay will be formatted similarly to your midterm essays, but will be longer and will reference materials from throughout the semester.
			<i>Late essay policy.</i> A 10% deduction will be assessed immediately when an essay is late. An additional 10% deduction will be assessed for each consecutive day your submission is late. <i>To avoid a late penalty, if you need an extension for any reason, you must discuss it with Dr. Kellison in person or via email prior to the deadline.</i>

## Schedule

When	Topic	Notes
01/07/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Introduction to Course and Syllabus	
01/09/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	What Is Religious Studies?	David Chidester, "Animism"
01/14/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	What Is Religious Studies?	Russell McCutcheon, "What Is the Academic Study of Religion?"  <i>Review Quiz 1 due 11 am</i>
01/16/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	What Is Religious Studies?	Bruce Lincoln, "The Study of Religion in the Current Political Moment" ( <i>Read Part III, pgs. 5–8</i> )  <i>Review Quiz 2 due 11 am</i>
01/21/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Indigenous Religious Traditions: IRTs of Africa and Religious Adaptation (Example: Santeria)	Paxtyn Merten, "In Cuba, Santeria Flourishes Two Decades After Ban Was Lifted"  <i>Review Quiz 3 due 11 am</i>
01/23/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Indigenous Religious Traditions: IRTs of North America (Example: Lakota)	Raymond A. Bucko, "Lakota"  <i>Review Quiz 4 due 11 am</i>
01/28/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Indigenous Religious Traditions: Religious Adaptation (Example: New Age and Lakota Religion)	Johnny P. Flynn, "New Age Tragedy in Sedona: Non-Indians in the Sweat Lodge"  <i>Review Quiz 5 due 11 am</i>
01/30/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Hindu Traditions: Hindu Textual Traditions	Selections from the Upanishads  <i>Review Quiz 6 due 11 am</i>
02/03/2020 11:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Essay Due	<i>Essay 1 due 11 am</i>
02/04/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Hindu Traditions: Hindu Devotional Traditions	Selections from <i>Bhagavad Gita</i>  "Hindu Festivals" photo essay  <i>Review Quiz 7 due 11 am</i>

When	Topic	Notes
02/06/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Hindu Traditions: History of "Hinduism" and the Indian Independence Movement	Pankaj Mishra, "How the British Invented Hinduism"  Mohandas Gandhi, "The Gospel of Selfless Action"  <i>Review Quiz 8 due 11 am</i>
02/11/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Hindu Traditions: The Indian Independence Movement and the Rise of Hindu Nationalism	Mohandas Gandhi, "The Gospel of Selfless Action," cont.  Maria Abi-Habib and Sameer Yasir, "As Modi Pushes Hindu Agenda, a Secular India Fights Back"  <i>Review Quiz 9 due 11 am</i>
02/13/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Buddhist Traditions: Basic Concepts of Buddhist Texts	"The Four Noble Truths"  <i>Review Quiz 10 due 11 am</i>
02/17/2020 11:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Essay Due	<i>Essay 2 due 11 am</i>
02/18/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Buddhist Traditions: Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism	"Discourse on the Land of Bliss"  "The Flower Sermon"  <i>Review Quiz 11 due 11 am</i>
02/20/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Buddhist Traditions: Vajrayana Buddhism in Tibet and the Tibet–China Conflict	Krithika Varagur, "The Coming Fight for the Dalai Lama's Soul"  Jeffrey Barcholet, "Aflame"  <i>Review Quiz 12 due 11 am</i>
02/25/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Buddhist Traditions: The Tibet–China Conflict and Buddhist Nationalism in Myanmar	Jeffrey Barcholet, "Aflame," cont.  Hannah Beech, "Buddhists Go to Battle: When Nationalism Overrides Pacifism"  <i>Review Quiz 13 due 11 am</i>
02/27/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Jewish Traditions: Hebrew Bible Tradition and Second Temple Judaism	Genesis 12, 15, 17 excerpts  2 Maccabees 5–8 excerpt  <i>Review Quiz 14 due 11 am</i>
02/28/2020 4:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Last day to withdraw with a grade of W	
03/02/2020 11:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Essay Due	<i>Essay 3 due 11 am</i>
03/03/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Jewish Traditions: Rabbinic Judaism and Jewish Law	Dominic Pettman, "Working Around God: Technology, the Pace of Life, and the Shabbos Elevator"  <i>Review Quiz 15 due 11 am</i>
03/05/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Jewish Traditions: Antisemitism and Modern Jewish Responses	J. D. Michaelis, "Arguments Against Dohm"  Theodor Herzl, <i>The Jewish State</i> excerpt  <i>Review Quiz 16 due 11 am</i>

When	Topic	Notes
03/10/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Jewish Traditions: The State of Israel	"The Arab–Israeli Conflict" timeline  Mona Boshnaq et al., "The Conflict in Jerusalem Is Distinctly Modern"  <i>Review Quiz 17 due 11 am</i>
03/12/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Christian Traditions: Jesus and Early Christianity	Matthew 5–7 ("Sermon on the Mount")  <i>Review Quiz 18 due 11 am</i>
03/23/2020 11:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Essay Due	<i>Essay 4 due 11 am</i>
03/24/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Christian Traditions: Development of Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologiae</i> excerpts  <i>Review Quiz 19 due 11 am</i>
03/26/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Christian Traditions: The Reformation and Development of Protestantism	Martin Luther, "The Freedom of a Christian" excerpt  <i>Review Quiz 20 due 11 am</i>
03/31/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Christian Traditions: Contemporary Charismatic Christianity in the Global South	Mac Margolis, "Father Marcelo Rossi, Brazil's Celebrity Priest"  Samantha Shapiro, "The Child Preachers of Brazil"  <i>Review Quiz 21 due 11 am</i>
04/02/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Islamic Traditions: Muhammad and the Early Muslim Community	Daniel Brown, "The Life of Muhammad"  <i>Review Quiz 22 due 11 am</i>
04/06/2020 11:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Essay Due	<i>Essay 5 due 11 am</i>
04/07/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Islamic Traditions: Muslim Practices and the Five Pillars	Quran excerpts  <i>Review Quiz 23 due 11 am</i>
04/09/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Islamic Traditions: Islamic Law (Sharia)	Noah Feldman, "Why Shariah?"  <i>Review Quiz 24 due 11 am</i>
04/14/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	Islamic Traditions: Islamism and the Arab Spring	Robin Wright, "A Short History of Islamism"  <i>Review Quiz 25 due 11 am</i>
04/16/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	New Religious Movements	NRM #1 TBD by class vote: reading TBD  <i>Review Quiz 26 due 11 am</i>
04/21/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	New Religious Movements	NRM #2 TBD by class vote: reading TBD  <i>Review Quiz 27 due 11 am</i>
04/23/2020 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	New Religious Movements	NRM #3 TBD by class vote: reading TBD  <i>Review Quiz 28 due 11 am</i>

When	Topic	Notes
04/28/2020 11:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Final Essay Due	<i>Final essay due 11 am</i>

## \* Course Policies and Resources

---

### For Honors Students

If you wish to earn Honors credit for this course, you must bring the appropriate paperwork to Dr. Kellison immediately to establish an Honors contract for the course. Completed Honors contracts must be submitted by the end of the second week of classes.

### Course Policy on Academic Dishonesty

The minimum penalty for any instance of academic dishonesty in this course will be a grade of 0 on the assignment in question. Repeated instances of academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the entire course. See more information on the UWG Honor Code below (under Institutional Policies). Never hesitate to ask Dr. Kellison any questions regarding citation, quotation, or how to avoid plagiarism.

## Institutional Policies

---

### Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the [UWG Online \(https://uwgonline.westga.edu/\)](https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the [UWG Cares \(http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/\)](http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/) site. [Online counseling \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

### Academic Support

**Accessibility Services:** Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

**Center for Academic Success:** The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or [cas@westga.edu](mailto:cas@westga.edu).

**University Writing Center:** The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or [writing@westga.edu](mailto:writing@westga.edu).

### Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness,

respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

## UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

## Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

## HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: [http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional\\_information#](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information#) ([http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional\\_information](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information))

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php> (<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>)

## Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).

## Additional Items

---