



REL 150: Introduction to Major World Religions

Fall 2023

CRNs 61046

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About This Course-

This course is an introduction to the world's major religions: Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. WCC: FGC

Student Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the following elements or dimensions: origin, doctrines, ethics, sacred literature, important figures/founders, rituals, worship, and institutions for each of the world's major religious traditions.
2. Identify the similarities and differences between two or more religions on the basis of the aforementioned dimensions.
3. Examine the relationship between religion and culture/society.
4. Question and think critically.

Global Multicultural Perspectives Focus Hallmarks (FG)

This course fulfills an FG requirement. The hallmarks of FG courses are:

1. provide students with a large-scale analysis of human development and change over time.
2. analyze the development of human societies and their cultural traditions through time in different regions (including Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania) and using multiple perspectives.
3. offer a broad, integrated analysis of cultural, economic, political, scientific, and/or social development that recognizes the diversity of human societies and their cultural traditions.
4. examine processes of cross-cultural interaction and exchange that have linked the world's peoples through time while recognizing diversity.
5. include at least one component on Hawaiian, Pacific, or Asian societies and their cultural traditions.
6. engage students in the study and analysis of writings, narratives, texts, artifacts, and/or practices that represent the perspectives of different societies and cultural traditions.

Course Format

I'm so excited you're here! This course is structured to broaden your understanding of the world's religious traditions. Each week you can expect to do the following:

1. Read my lecture notes on a specific religion.
2. Read one or two articles about that religion.
3. Answer review questions and/or complete an assignment, game, or quiz to demonstrate your knowledge of the religious tradition.
4. Watch a video clip or film about a belief or practice of that religion.
5. Discuss elements of the religion via Lulima Forums, Padlet, and Jamboards



Most tasks will be due on Thursdays by 11:55 pm. Occasionally you will have a Learning Festival to complete. I look forward to working with you!

Required Materials

All required resources are freely available. Textbook readings, my notes, and videos are all embedded in the weekly lessons in [Lulima](#). Please ensure that you have all of the following before Week 1:

Hardware/software

- Daily access to a desktop or laptop computer (**Using a smartphone or tablet is not sufficient.**) You may rent a laptop for the entire semester from the WCC library. To reserve one go to this [webpage](#).
- Reliable high-speed Internet connection
- A recent version of the [Chrome](#) or [Firefox](#) browsers (free) Please use either of these browsers when using Lulima.
- A word-processing program, such as web-based [Google Docs](#) (free with UH username and most recommended), [Word](#) (free student version), or [Pages](#) (free with Apple hardware).
- Presentation program, such as [Powerpoint](#) (free student version), [Keynote](#) (free with Apple hardware), or web-based [Google Slides](#) (free with UH username).
- [Zoom](#) video conferencing tool (free)
- [Padlet](#) account (free)
- [Adobe \(Acrobat\) Reader](#) (free)

Course Policies

Participating in our Course

While most of your coursework will be completed independent of your classmates, you will have ample opportunities to work collaboratively through Lulima Forums, Google Docs, Padlet, and Jamboards (Prior knowledge of these tools is NOT required.) We learn more when exposed to diverse viewpoints, we challenge ourselves when we have to articulate and sometimes defend our knowledge, and group activities develop a sense of community and responsibility for one another. Thus, this course prizes collaborative learning. Feel free to bounce ideas off of one another when working on an assignment or answering review questions, just be sure that your answers are not written identically!

Communication

Contacting the Instructor

You can contact me via email or through the Forums tool on Lulima. Common courtesy is greatly appreciated!- please review this syllabus to see if your question has already been answered. For other questions and communication, I will do my best to reply to you within 48 hours Monday-Friday. I do not regularly check my email on the weekends.

Attendance & Grading

Attendance/Participation

Participating in our Lulima course is very important. This course is an online, 8-week asynchronous course in Lulima that is offered in a compressed time frame, which requires you to dedicate minimally 9 to 12 hours per week to course work. Plan to login to Lulima at least three times per week to read the materials, complete assignments, and discuss the materials with your classmates. Please be sure to read all of my emails since it will be my main form of communication with you. You can read past emails by clicking on the "email archive" tab on the left menu bar in Lulima.

Late Work/ Make-up Policy

Students are provided with three virtual 'No Questions Asked' (NQA) coupons that enable them to make up an assignment, quiz, or Learning Festival up to one week past the due date. Anytime that you submit an assignment late or take a quiz or Learning Festival late, then I will automatically apply one of your NQA coupons to it. If you use all three of your NQA coupons, future late work will result in an automatic zero. Coupons may not be shared or replicated. Unused coupons will be counted toward extra credit if the student submitted all assignments, quizzes, and Learning Festivals on time.

While I talk quite a bit about god, gods, and goddesses, I certainly don't want to play one! I am not the judge of your priorities. Thus, you do not need to provide me with a doctor's note or an explanation of your personal emergency. YOU decide when you need to use a NQA coupon. However, use them wisely since no further late work will be accepted, regardless of reason, once you have used the three NQA coupons.

Grading

Assessments and Weighting:

Review Question Quizzes (weekly).....	20%
Discussion Questions: in Forums and Padlets (weekly).....	25%
Learning Festivals (3, 10% each).....	30%
Other Activities.....	25%
TOTAL.....	100%

Letter Grades and Percentage Ranges

You will receive a letter grade based on the following scale:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-69%

D = 60-69%

F = 0-59%

N= The 'N' grade indicates that the student has worked conscientiously, attended regularly, finished all work, fulfilled course responsibilities, and has made measurable progress. However, either the student has not achieved the minimal student learning outcomes and is not prepared to succeed at the next level, or the student has made consistent progress in class but is unable to complete the class due to extenuating circumstances, such as major health, personal, or family emergencies.

Descriptions of Course Tasks and Assessments

Reading and Notetaking

Each week you will read my notes and a textbook article on a religious tradition. Some weeks you will have additional articles to read. Most people's retention of the material greatly diminishes in only a day if they didn't take notes or share what they read. Note taking improves your ability to learn, understand, and remember the material. Smart note taking ensures that you are an active participant in your learning, requires you to think about what you are reading, helps you to form connections between topics, and serves as an organized, concise review for studying. There are several note taking strategies! I recommend using either the [Cornell method](#), [Mapping method](#), or the [Outlining method](#). If you Google these note-taking methods, you can find plenty of examples online. I have provided you with one guide for each.

Review Questions and Quizzes

You will answer Review Questions for each religious tradition to prepare you for the quizzes. The Review Questions help you know what is most important to focus on within my notes and the readings. Thus, I recommend reading these questions **PRIOR** to reading my notes or the textbook article. The Review Questions are available in each Laulima lesson week. Your answers to these questions are for your benefit and they do not need to be submitted to the instructor.

The answers to the review questions come from the professor's notes and the textbook readings. Merely 'googling' for the answers is unacceptable because:

1. it will either provide you with an oversimplified answer that misses the greater context (and thereby understanding!) that the notes and textbook provide you with (such as the case with question 5 of the Hinduism review questions- Krishna is actually a form of which Hindu god?) or
 2. it will provide you with too much information and it will be difficult to ascertain the most essential part (such as would be the case if you googled question 6 of the Hinduism review questions- Where does the caste system come from according to the mythological perspective?).
- Therefore, use my notes and the textbook chapter to answer the review questions. After that, feel free to conduct further research in any manner you like!

Review Question Quizzes consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Once started, the quiz cannot be paused so please be sure that you have a reliable internet connection before you begin. All questions will appear on one webpage; feel free to save whenever you like but do not click 'submit' until you have finished. Quizzes are timed except for the Syllabus Quiz. You are allowed to take each quiz two times and your highest score will be recorded.

Discussion Questions

Each week we will discuss several topics from within that week's religious tradition. You have been provided with Discussion Questions in the Laulima Lesson pages. We will discuss those questions through several different programs: Laulima Forums, Padlet, Google Docs, Google Jamboards, Flipgrid, and/or AnswerGarden. (Prior knowledge of these tools is NOT required.)

For example, here are the Discussion Questions for Judaism-

1. What can you deduce about Jewish scholarship by studying the way Talmudic text is organized on the page? See page 125 of Judaism Chapter 9
2. Is being 'Jewish' a cultural, ethnic, and/or religious identity? Explain.
3. Following the reading from Exodus on p.127 of your textbook, the author provides an interesting interpretation on what being a "chosen people" means. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
4. What is your opinion of the five Jewish responses to how and why the Holocaust occurred?
5. Sadly, genocide is not a thing of the past. Recent genocides include what happened in Rwanda and Darfur, among other places. How might genocide be prevented?

6. Answer the question on p.150 of your textbook reading: "What does this timeline of modern Israel suggest about the ability of Israel and its neighbors to coexist in the Middle East?"
7. Several pop music stars, though not Jewish, practice Kabbalah. Many non-Hindu Americans practice yoga. Are there any problems in someone participating in a practice of a religion to which they do not belong? Explain.

Learning Festivals

After each of our three units, we will have a Learning Festival. Think of this as a time in which you get to celebrate your understanding of all that you have learned! The first and third Learning Festivals are similar to exams and can consist of: short essay, fill in the blank, multiple choice, and true/false questions. You are allotted one hour and 30 minutes to complete the festival. Once started, the Learning Festival cannot be paused so please be sure that you have a reliable internet connection before you begin. You can only submit once so please double check your answers. All questions will appear on one webpage; feel free to save whenever you like but do not click 'submit' until you have finished. Learning Festivals can only be taken once. The second Learning Festival consists of a creative project. The course is organized by geographical location of origin for each religious tradition.

- Learning Festival 1 covers Hinduism, Jainism, and Theravada Buddhism (Week 4)
- Learning Festival 2 covers Daoism, Confucianism, and Mahayana Buddhism (Week 5)
- Learning Festival 3 covers Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. (Week 8)

Other Activities

There are a few additional activities to demonstrate your knowledge, work with your classmates, and/or make connections between content. These activities will be introduced to you during the relevant Lulima lesson page. Examples of activities can include: webbing, Kahoot!, Venn diagrams, collaborative Google Docs, etc.

Course Schedule

Please review the course schedule below where you will find the dates, course topics, and assessments to be completed each week.

Specific topics to be covered each week, requirements and expectations for each assignment, and additional details for each week are available in the weekly lesson plans on Lulima. The following schedule is subject to change. Should changes occur, you will be notified by email.

Most tasks are due on Thursdays by 11:55pm HST.

Week 1, Introduction to the Course and The Study of Religion

Introduce yourself in the discussion forum and respond to two of your classmates' posts.

Review and Discussion Questions- The Study of Religion

Quiz- Syllabus

Quiz- The Study of Religion

Week 2, Hinduism

Review and Discussion Questions- Hinduism

Quiz- Hinduism

Activity- Hinduism Web (Concept Mapping)

Week 3, Jainism and Theravada Buddhism

Review and Discussion Questions- Jainism and Theravada Buddhism

Quiz- Jainism and Theravada Buddhism

Activity- Google Doc Venn diagram on Mahavira and Buddha

Week 4, Learning Festival 1 and Daoism, and Confucianism

Learning Festival- Hinduism, Jainism, and Theravada Buddhism

Review and Discussion Questions- Daoism and Confucianism

Quiz- Daoism and Confucianism

Week 5, Mahayana Buddhism and Learning Festival 2

Review and Discussion Questions- Mahayana Buddhism

Quiz- Mahayana Buddhism

Learning Festival 2- Creative Option

Week 6, Judaism

Review and Discussion Questions- Judaism

Activity- Reflection on the Holocaust and Zionism

Week 7, Christianity

Review and Discussion Questions- Christianity

Quiz- Judaism and Christianity

Activity- 3 Truths and a Lie

Week 8, Islam and Learning Festival 3

Review and Discussion Questions- Islam

Quiz- Islam

Learning Festival 3: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Congratulations! You have completed the course.

Additional Information

College Policies

Academic Honesty:

Students are expected to act with personal integrity, to respect other students' opinions and property, and to help create an academic environment in which discussion is encouraged. Students are expected not to engage or tolerate acts of plagiarism: cheating, copying, fabrication of citations, or other acts of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is treated seriously in this course. If you are quoting someone verbatim, then you must use quotation marks and cite the source immediately after the quotation in parenthetical form, (author's last name, page number). If you are unsure whether or not you are citing

sources correctly, please ask me. Ignorance is no excuse. Students charged with academic dishonesty face serious consequences that range from an F grade for the assignment to an F grade for the course.

Statement on AI-generated work:

It is expected that you do your own work in this course. There is great value to thinking through the assignments individually. Writing is a wonderful tool to process the information you learn and to form your own opinions. Putting an assignment prompt into an AI app such as ChatGPT and presenting its answer as your own is plagiarism (cheating) and grounds for failing the course.

Appropriate use of AI when working on tasks in this course:



- feel free to use spell and grammar check tools such as Grammarly
- feel free to use AI recommendations for rephrasing sentences you first drafted yourself
- feel free to use AI apps to ask for clarification or additional explanation on a point you are confused by
- feel free to use AI tools to ask for source recommendations to then read and further understand a topic
- feel free to use it for brainstorming assistance and language support

Inappropriate use of AI when working on tasks in this course:



- do not use full sentences or paragraphs produced by an AI app as your own work. (This is plagiarism).
- do not have the AI answer the assignment (paper, quiz, or other course question) for you and then substitute different words for some of its words. This is patch-writing, a form of cheating.

Disabilities Accommodation:

If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Roy Inouye can be reached at 808-235-7453, royinouye@hawaii.edu, or you may stop by Hale Kako'o 106 for more information.

Title IX:

Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title IX prohibits sex discrimination; sexual harassment and gender-based harassment, including harassment based on actual or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; sexual assault; sexual exploitation; domestic violence; dating violence; and stalking. Windward Community College is committed to the pursuit of equal education. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination or gender-based violence,

WCC has resources to support you. To speak with someone confidentially, please go to: [Title IX | Woodward Community](#) to find the appropriate contact person.

Alternate Contact Information:

If you are unable to contact the instructor, have questions that your instructor cannot answer, or for any other issues, please contact the Academic Affairs Office in Alakai 121, 808-235-7422, wccaa@hawaii.edu

Services:

Windward is one of the most supportive colleges! Please don't be shy! Utilize all of the wonderful services that are available to help you succeed. For information on counseling/advising, careers and student employment, tutoring (including services such as the Writing Center, Math Lab, Speech Lab, test proctoring, Trio, etc.), HINET, peer mentors, childcare, and more please see: [Services For Students | Woodward Community](#)

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be available throughout the semester. Please contact the professor for more information. No more than two extra credit assignments can be submitted per student during the last two weeks of the semester.

Syllabus Change Policy:

Information contained in the course syllabus may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor. Updates to the syllabus will be communicated via email.

Mission Statement:

'O keia ka wā kūpono e ho'onui ai ka 'ike me ka ho'omaopopo i kō Hawai'i mau ho'oilina waiwai. Aia nō ho'i ma ke Kulanui Kaiāulu o ke Ko'olau nā papahana hou o nā 'ike 'akeakamai a me nā hana no'eau. Me ke kuleana ko'iko'i e ho'ohiki ke Kulanui e kāko'o a e ho'okumu i ala e hiki kē kōkua i ka ho'onui 'ike a nā kānaka maoli. Na mākou nō e ho'olako, kāko'o a paipai i nā Ko'olau a kō O'ahu a'e me nā hana no'eau ākea, ka ho'ona'auao 'oihana a me ka ho'onui 'ike ma ke kaiāulu — hō'a'ano a e ho'oulu i nā haumāna i ka po'okela.

Windward Community College offers innovative programs in the arts and sciences and opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of Hawai'i and its unique heritage. With a special commitment to support the access and educational needs of Native Hawaiians, we provide the Ko'olau region of O'ahu and beyond with liberal arts, career and lifelong learning in a supportive and challenging environment — inspiring students to excellence.

Secrets of Success

Secrets of Success

1. Keep up with the readings and note taking. Since the course is set up to discuss the readings, if you do not read you will feel completely lost and not have an enriching educational experience. Additionally, by completing the readings and note taking, you will be well prepared for all of the required tasks of this course.
2. Only check social media and your other favorite websites at set times each day. You're working on your computer for this course. Instagram, TikTok, Reddit, and more are only a click away. Classwork is hard! Reading streams and looking at photos is fun and easy! Oh, and that great feeling we get every time someone acknowledges



something we posted... I get it. Distraction is everywhere. Here are some things you can do to avoid temptation. Choose which recommendations can work for you given your family's needs and your specific distractions:

- a. do not leave any distracting websites open on your computer when you're completing class work.
 - b. leave your phone in the next room. I assume that if there's an emergency then someone will call me, not text. Thus, I do not go to my phone while I'm working unless it rings.
 - c. if you have a smartwatch that vibrates every time you get a notification, take it off during your work time.
 - d. designate specific times in which you allow yourself to go to your favorite websites. Whatever you tend to check out or click on incessantly, try scheduling in certain blocks of time for that activity and do not check them out at other times.
3. Stay organized. Use a planner! Put important deadlines for assignments from all of your courses' syllabi into the planner. Create a weekly schedule with your school and work hours. Be sure to schedule in blocks of time when you plan to read, study, and complete assignments.
 4. Contact me if you have any questions. Never think that your question is "too stupid" to ask. We are all on a life-long journey in which we learn and synthesize information everyday, act according to that knowledge, trust what has become reliable wisdom, and reassess other knowledge with newfound information. I'm not out to trick you; I want you to succeed! I am here to help you. Let me know how I can make this the best educational experience for you.

Let's get started!

