INTRO TO WORLD RELIGIONS
REL 1103.23123
MWF 11:30-12:20
LSW 103
spring 2019

Instructor: Justin Rice,
Teaching Assistant Professor
Office: 242 Murray Hall
Office Hours: M 12:30-2:00,
& by appointment
Email: justin.rice@okstate.edu
Phone: (405) 744-0439

Overview: Major world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam with the goal of understanding the general nature of religion and its various dimensions.

Texts:
[A] The World’s Religions by Smith (available through the university bookstore).
[C] Various handouts, slides and videos on Brightspace (D2L).
[D] Six orange scan trons (green scan trons will not be accepted)

Structure of the Course: It would be to your benefit to consult Brightspace (D2L) on a daily basis. Announcements will be given in the News section. All of the reading assignments are posted in the Content section, as are all of the additional materials for the course; lectures will follow the order and structure of the readings as they appear in this section. I will also post videos in this section that will help explain the material. The dates of the quizzes are listed in D2L’s Calendar. Finally, all grades for the semester are recorded in the Grades portion of D2L, so that you may keep track of your progress throughout the semester.

As indicated above, you have a TA assigned to you. The discussion post assignments will be graded by your TA. If you need to make contact with general questions about the course that
are not explained in this syllabus, reach out to your TA via email or office hours. If your TA cannot meet at a time that works for you, reach out to your professor.

In both class and discussion post room, students are expected to engage in reasoned discourse that takes into account opposing views, and they must be able to separate issues and positions from the persons advocating them. Philosophy and religious studies are best done through civil discussion. Each student will be expected to treat one another with respect and tolerance. We will not abide rude and disrespectful behavior.

Course Requirements:

Discussion Posts: 240 points total. As stated above, every few weeks I will provide 1-3 prompt options, and you will respond to one of them (for a total of 4 posts). Each post is worth 60 points. Unless otherwise stated, posts should be between 425-450 words. See grading rubric below.

Quizzes: 240 points total. You will have 6 quizzes; each quiz is worth 40 points. Quizzes will be taken in class. All quizzes will be some combination of T/F, multiple choice, matching, or fill-in-the-blank. You will need an orange scantron for each quiz you take. To be prepared for the discussion posts and quizzes, complete all required materials for the respective units, such as the readings and any other required materials (slides, videos, etc.). If it’s required material, it’s likely to be on a quiz.

Final Exam: 100 points total. Please note that the final exam will be comprehensive. The exam will be some combination of T/F, multiple choice, matching, or fill-in-the-blank. You will need an orange scantron for the final. The final will be taken in class on Wednesday, May 8*, from 10:00-11:50pm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion posts</th>
<th>240 pts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>240 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>120 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>600 pts</td>
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* Grading Scale: A = 600-540 B = 539-480 C = 479-420 D = 419-360 F = Below 360

NOTE: To calculate your grade at any given time in the semester, simply add up the points you have earned and divide that total by the total number of points offered at the time of your calculation. For example, if you have earned 42 out of 50 points, you would divide 42 by 50 and get .84 (which is 84 percent or a ‘B’). Since all grades will be posted on D2L, you can do this calculation whenever you like.
### Grading Rubric for Discussion Posts:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Above Average</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Not Adequate</th>
<th>Failing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50-45</td>
<td>44-40</td>
<td>39-35</td>
<td>34-30</td>
<td>29-0</td>
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<td>Meets the length requirement. Clearly answers the question while connecting it to and analyzing the assigned material (readings, videos, podcast, etc.). Can explain the concepts in question without either endorsing or attacking them. Superb spelling and grammar.</td>
<td>Meets the length requirement. Demonstrates a capacity to grapple with the material, though the student’s writing may be a bit vague or ambiguous. More than three spelling or grammar errors.</td>
<td>Meets the length requirement. Some understanding of the material, but the fundamental question is not answered in depth. Perhaps enough bias to muddy your discussion. More than four spelling or grammar errors.</td>
<td>Word count only comes to 75% of the assigned length. Lack of understanding of the lecture, no connection with the eastern religions. Perhaps enough bias to muddy your discussion. Numerous spelling or grammar errors.</td>
<td>Either a complete failure to turn in the assignment, or meet the length requirement by 50%. Perhaps all opinion, no critical thinking about the issue at hand. Numerous spelling or grammar errors.</td>
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**Discussion Posts:**

Discussion posts are essential since they enhance the interactive dialogue needed in such a course as ours. The style of writing required for your posts will vary somewhat; a few will require self-reflection, some posts will be argumentative/persuasive, while others will simply be descriptive/informative. Some of your posting assignments will require you to respond to the posts of your peers. In these cases, students are required to respond to their classmates’ posts in a meaningful way.

Prior to making a post, you should complete all reading and viewing assignments relevant to your topic. All of your posts must include your original writings. **DO NOT** copy and paste the writings of other students (or websites) into your posts – this is considered plagiarism. You may **only** quote the textbook or the other required materials (no outside sources), but any quotations must be cited. It is also important not to quote too much (some people attempt to fill up their posts primarily with quotes – this will cost you points).

Regarding citations, simply insert parentheses with the quoted work, with page number (when applicable); the format of citation shown immediately below will extend to slides, handouts, and podcasts. For instance:

**Example #1:** Joe uses a brief *quote* from page 10 of the textbook. At the end of the quotation he inserts: (Smith, pg. 10)

**Example #2:** Lulu uses an *idea* from one of the required videos named, “Buddhism”. At the end of the sentence she credits the video for the idea by inserting: (Buddhism, video)
Discussion Board Etiquette:

- Make an effort to be engaged throughout the week
- REFRAIN FROM USING ALL CAPS. IT IS CONSIDERED SHOUTING
- Respect others' opinions. If you disagree with what another has said, post your thoughts in an objective, respectful manner. Do not make remarks that can be taken personally
- Reflect upon the text you have entered before posting
- Keep the discussion within the scope of the course material
- Communication should be grammatically correct. Adhere to correct sentence structure, grammar, and spelling conventions
- Before you respond to a threaded message, read all the messages related to that message that have been previously posted.

Policies:

Email: Please allow up to two business days for an email response from me. Make sure you provide your first and last name in the email. Importantly, when you email me, you must state the name of the course in the subject line of the email. Failure to follow these requirements will likely result in a delayed response to your email.

Electronic Devices: Absolutely no electronic devices may be used in class (cell phones, computers). The first time a student is found using a device, they will be warned. However, each subsequent offense will cost the student 20 points per infraction.

Extra Credit: I do not offer extra credit. If you are having a hard time in class, come see me during my office hours or make an appointment with me.

Late Work: Regarding missed assignments, we accept work only from those students who have a genuine, school sanctioned emergency. We require some official form of documentation (note from a doctor, funeral program, etc.). If you miss an assignment, send the official documentation to your TA. If the TA can verify the documentation, she will then send the student makeup instructions and details on how to complete the assignment. Otherwise, we will not accept late work - no exceptions!

Students with Physical or Learning Disabilities: If you need special accommodations the University will try to make appropriate arrangements. These arrangements will need to be made ahead of time through the Student Disability Services Office, 315 Student Union (phone: 744-7116)

Academic Integrity: All written assignments will be electronically checked for plagiarism. If I discover academic dishonesty of any kind, I will seek the appropriate punishment. The University has a syllabus attachment available online that provides information about the official academic integrity policy, important deadlines, and University resources:

http://osu.okstate.edu/acadaffr/aa/PDF%20Files/SYLATFA.pdf

Please Note: I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus. If any major changes are made (i.e., the due date of an assignment being moved), they will be announced in class and on Brightspace/D2L.