

**(NOTE: THIS IS ONLY A DRAFT OF THE SYLLABUS AND DOES NOT CONTAIN ALL OF THE INFORMATION THAT WILL BE ON THE FINISHED SYLLABUS. THIS DRAFT WILL GIVE YOU A GOOD IDEA OF THE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE CLASS. THE FINAL SYLLABUS WILL BE POSTED ON THE CANVAS SITE FOR THE CLASS BEFORE THE START OF THE 2021 SUMMER SEMESTER)**

**Introduction to Asian Religions: Phil 204**

**Summer 2021 - Online course**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The course will offer a philosophical examination of the primary religious traditions of Asia, with emphasis on Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. The primary purpose of the course is to familiarize the student with the significant philosophical concepts of each religion and to engage with these traditions in a philosophical dialogue that enables us to understand their contributions to our understanding of the nature of the human self, the nature of reality, and the nature of the divine. Although we will examine differences between views and critique philosophical argumentation, there is no intention to disparage or endorse any particular belief system.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** 1) *Awakening: An Introduction to the History of Eastern Thought*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Patrick Bresnan, ISBN: 978-0-205-24298-6. 2) Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, Shambhala, ISBN: 978-1590305461

Other required reading assignments will be posted on D2L under the “content” tab.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES:** To complete this course, you will need basic word processing skills, the ability to send and receive email, and a straightforward understanding of how to access and browse websites, including our course site on Desire2Learn (D2L). **Be sure to check your UWM email account DAILY as well as the course D2L site.** This is the only means of communication I have with you and I will frequently send out clarifications, instructions, and study aids via these two methods.

**ONLINE ETIQUETTE:** Because students do not meet the professor or their classmates face-to-face in online classes it is imperative that we establish clear guidelines for appropriate behavior and etiquette. All of your communication, whether via email or the D2L discussion boards, must be respectful, courteous, and professional, exactly as if you were in an in-class environment. All of your writing should be as professional as possible. **Review and edit your writing before posting.** Do not write in “text-speak,” do not write as if you are posting on social media, and do not use unnecessary jargon. Be respectful towards the views of other’s. **Intellectual violence will not be tolerated and will result in a significant lowering of your grade and/or more serious disciplinary actions.**

**TIME MANAGEMENT:** For those of you who are unfamiliar with online classes, it is imperative that you establish good time management skills immediately at the start of the semester. Online classes demand that you schedule plenty of time for the completion of all readings and requirements. **Do not wait until the last minute to complete the assignments.** You need to approach this course like you would a regular in-class course, where you assign a certain amount of hours **each day** to studying and reading for the course.

**CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR/TA:** We are always happy to assist you in any way possible and to discuss any questions or concerns. Please note that it is your responsibility to contact us in a timely manner. All emails will be answered within a 24-hour period on business days and within a 48-hour period



**INCOMPLETES:** Please see: [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S\\_31\\_INCOMPLETE\\_GRADES.pdf](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_31_INCOMPLETE_GRADES.pdf)

### **GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS AND UWM SHARED LEARNING GOALS**

**GER Statement: Learning Outcomes for this Course:** This course meets the UWM General Education Requirements in the division of the Humanities. All Humanities courses have the following learning outcome: 1) *“Students will be able to identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge.”* This course satisfies this outcome by presenting a philosophical inquiry into the major religious traditions of Asia, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Course material will explore the underlying metaphysical, ethical, and epistemological theories underlying these traditions and explore ways in which they contribute to our understanding of the nature of reality, the nature of the human self, and the nature of the divine.

In addition, this course addresses the following two learning outcome: 2) *“Students will be able to respond coherently and persuasively to the materials of humanities study through logical analysis and argumentation”*; 3) *“Students will be able to apply diverse humanistic theories or perspectives to other branches of knowledge or to issues of universal human concern.”*

The course satisfies outcome no. 2 by requiring students to analyze philosophical concepts and theories and to compare and contrast competing metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical theories. The course satisfies outcome no. 3 through philosophical analysis of the primary religious traditions of Asia and by relating them to theories and issues that are of universal philosophical, spiritual, and existential concern.

**GER Assessment: Assignment(s) Used to Measure Learning Outcomes:** Outcome no. 1 will be assessed via quizzes and exams. Outcome no. 2 will be assessed through discussions, essay questions on exams, and essays. Outcome no. 3 will be assessed through discussions and essays.

**UW Shared Learning Goal:** The aforementioned assignments also assess the student’s ability to accomplish the second of the UW System’s Shared Learning Goal for all student’s: *“Critical and creative thinking skills including inquiry, problem solving, and higher order qualitative reasoning.”*

### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**(This schedule is from the Spring 2018 version of the class. It is included here so that you can get an idea of the material and what is expected in the class. The schedule for this summer will, of course, look rather different as we need to cover the material in a shorter amount of time).**

**Readings for each module are marked by a letter symbol**

**Module 1 - January 22 to January 28 - Introduction to philosophy and philosophy of religion**

A) Intro / Syllabus - What is philosophy? **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

B) Philosophy of religion / Religious diversity **(Reading, PowerPoint, and audio lecture on D2L)**

**Module 2 - January 29 to February 4 - India and the Vedas and the philosophy of the Vedas**

A) *Awakening* chapter 1 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

B) *Awakening* chapter 2 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 3 - February 5 to February 11 - Introduction to the Upanishads**

A) *Awakening* chapter 3 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Assignment week 1 - February 12 to February 18**

A) EXAM 1 - Available February 15 at 12:00pm - Due by February 18 at 11:59pm **(Study guide available on d2l)**

B) WRITING ASSIGNMENT 1 - Due by February 18 at 11:59pm

**Module 4 - February 19 to February 25 - Bhagavad Gita**

A) *Awakening* chapter 4 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 5 - February 26 to March 4 - Ashtanga Yoga**

A) *Awakening* chapter 5 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 6 - March 5 to March 11 - Introduction to Buddhism**

A) *Awakening* chapter 9 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

B) *Awakening* chapter 10 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Assignment week 2 - March 12 to March 18**

A) EXAM 2 - Available March 15 at 12pm - Due by March 18 at 11:59pm **(Study guide available on d2l)**

B) WRITING ASSIGNMENT 2 - Due by March 18 at 11:59pm

**SPRING BREAK - NO WORK DUE MARCH 19 to 25****Module 7 - March 26 to April 1 - Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism**

A) *Awakening* chapter 11 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

B) *Awakening* chapter 12 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 8 - April 2 to April 8 - Confucianism**

A) *Awakening* chapter 13 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 9 - April 9 to April 15 - Daoism**

A) *Awakening* chapter 14 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 10 - April 16 to April 22 - Buddhism in China / Chan Buddhism**

A) *Awakening* chapter 16 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

B) *Awakening* chapter 18 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 11 - April 23 to April 29 - Zen Buddhism**

A) *Awakening* chapter 19 **(PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

B) "Will you sit with me" **(Reading, PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Module 12 - April 30 to May 6 - Zen and Christianity**

A) "Zen and the Birds of Appetite" **(Reading, PowerPoint and audio lecture on d2l)**

**Assignment week 3 - May 7 to May 13**

A) EXAM 3 - Available May 10 at 12pm - Due by May 13 at 11:59pm **(Study guide available on d2l)**

B) WRITING ASSIGNMENT 3 - Due by May 13 at 11:59pm