

Meeting Times: Thursdays 6:30 pm to 9:20 pm **Location:** HH 139

Please contact me via the course website. I will respond within 2 – 3 days. In the rare event that 3 days have passed and you have not received a response, please re-send your question.

Office Hours: Thursdays, 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm, or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the religions of India, which include Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. It also addresses Islam, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity, which came to India through conquest, travel, or spiritual encounters. It will focus on their cultural context, significance, connections, and conflict among them, both in history and in India today.

Course Objectives for Students

1. To acquire and demonstrate familiarity with 1) key terms, 2) personages, 3) symbols, 4) texts, and 5) important spaces.
 2. By the end of this course, students should be able to outline the major debates within the study of Indic religions and assess the validity of scholarly arguments.
 3. To refine academic skills in research and clear, written articulation.
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Required Textbook

King, Richard. 1999. *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and "The Mystic East."* United Kingdom: Routledge.

Over the course of the semester, we will be reading this text together – as well as a number of academic articles which will be made available online.

Course Schedule

Class	Date	Class Topic	Reading
1.	11 th Jan.	Orientation	None
2.	18 th Jan.	The Roots of Hinduism: Vedas, Upanishads and Beyond	1) King (1999) - Introduction 2) Bloomfield - pgs. 1- 59
3.	25 th Jan.	The Shramana Movement: Jainism and Buddhism	1) King (1999) – Chapter 1 2) LeValley (2000)
4.	1 st Feb.	Jainism	1) King (1999) – Chapter 2 2) Long (2009) – pgs. 1-28
5.	8 th Feb.	Buddhism	1) King (1999) – Chapter 3 2) Kumar (2019)
6.	15 th Feb.	Bhakti and Temple worship Quiz I	1) King (1999) – Chapter 4 2) Hawley (2015)
7.	22 nd Feb.	Reading Week	
8.	29 th Feb.	Purāṇas Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, and Devi Traditions Proposal for Final Paper Due (worth 10%)	1) King (1999) – Chapter 5
9.	7 th March	Sikhism	1) King (1999) – Chapter 6 2) Syan (2014)
10.	14 th March	Islam in India Quiz II	1) King (1999) – Chapter 7 2) Suhrawrdy (2023)
11.	21 st March	Christianity in India	1) King (2009) – Chapter 8 2) Goh (2009)
12.	28 th March	Zoroastrianism	1) King (2009) – Chapter 9

			2) Rose (2012)
13.	4 th April	Review Final Paper Due	TBD

Evaluations

1. Participation: 20%

- a. **10% - Weekly in-class short-answer question:** During each class, students will be required to write a short paragraph on a prompt to be given on the day.
- b. **10% - Weekly discussion posts:** Post a comment or question you have about the reading. These are due on Wednesdays at midnight. This will help to guide class discussion on Wednesdays. The discussion page will be left open until Friday so that you can (optionally) share additional insights after class.

2. Midterm Quizzes: 40%

There will be two quizzes over the course of the semester. The first will be on February 15th, and the second will be on March 14th. Each will be a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

3. Final Paper: 40%

- a. **Proposal 10%** (Due on February 29th): Students must submit a one-page writeup that outlines the thesis of their final paper, along with a list of at least five academic sources that they intend to consult.
- b. **Final Paper 30%** (Due on April 4th): This paper should be 10 – 12 pages double-spaced. Students are expected to demonstrate familiarity with scholarly perspectives on a theme, personage, symbol, text, or religious space of their choice -- provided that it is deemed relevant to the course.

Notes:

1. The penalty for late submissions is 5% per weekday.
2. We will discuss the rubric for essays during class time.
3. A student may discuss their grade with the instructor no earlier than 48 hours after having received their feedback. After the 48-hour period, we can set up an appointment to go through your work in detail.
4. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference-database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Etiquette

Students are expected to 1) attend classes, 2) submit assignments on time, and 3) actively participate in class discussions. In order to participate, students must have completed readings prior to classes.

Please set your electronic devices to silent mode. I encourage you to be both physically and mentally present during weekly meetings. If the use of an electronic device is considered to be a distraction to others, the user will be asked to discontinue their usage.

Please be respectful of each other's points of view. The classroom is a space where all students should be free to ask questions and receive clarification.

I acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishnaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the [Haldimand Tract](#), the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.