

# Pitt State Pathway

(Undergraduate Course Numbers through 699)

Please check only one:

- Course is **currently** a “General Education” course
- Course is listed in the current catalog, but is **NOT** a “General Education” course
- New course that is **NOT** listed in the current catalog and has **NOT** been legislated through PSU Faculty Senate and/or KBOR
- A. Submission date: **December 18, 2018**
- B. Department: **HPSS**
- C. College: **Arts and Sciences**  
If two or more Colleges, please indicate which Colleges will be involved in teaching the course:  
**Click or tap here to enter text.**
- D. Name of faculty member on record for the course (may be Coordinating Professor or Chair):  
**Bonnekessen**  
*(As faculty of record, I verify all sections agree to address the Core or Essential Studies Element and corresponding Learning Outcome as indicated below.)*
- E. Course prefix: **PHIL**
- F. Course number: **231**
- G. Credit hours: **3**
- H. Title of course: **World Religions**  
Is this a change in the title of the course? **No**  
*(If “Yes,” a Revision to Course form will need to be completed and uploaded to the Preliminary Briefcase and will go through the legislation process.)*
- I. Will this course require a new course description? **No**  
*(If “Yes,” please insert new course description here. A Revision of Course form will need to be completed and uploaded to the Preliminary Briefcase and will go through the legislation process.)*  
**Click or tap here to enter text.**
- J. Does this course include a co-requisite laboratory course: **No**  
If “Yes”, please provide the co-requisite course name and number:  
**Click or tap here to enter text.**
- K. Will this course be available on-line: **No**  
If “Yes”, please provide a detailed explanation: **Click or tap here to enter text.**
- L. Semester(s) course will be offered (choose all that apply): **Fall and Spring**
- M. Prerequisite(s): **none**
- N. Co-requisite(s) —other than lab course named above: **none**

O. Select the *Pitt State Pathway Core Element* or *Essential Studies Element* based on the identified Learning Outcome to be covered in the course (choose only **one** set):  
 (Refer to definitions, hierarchy, and rubrics in the *Pitt State Pathway* document)

Select Only One Element

- Communication
  - **Written Communication** ..... 
    - Students will communicate effectively.
- Communication
  - **Verbal Communication** ..... 
    - *Students will communicate effectively.*
- Quantitative/Analytic Methods and Scientific Literacy
  - **Quantitative/Analytic Methods** ..... 
    - *Students will analyze data logically.*
- Global Understanding and Civic Engagement
  - **Human Experience within a Global Context** ..... 
    - *Students will explore global systems conscientiously.*
- Global Understanding and Civic Engagement
  - **Human Systems within a Global Context** ..... 
    - *Students will explore global systems conscientiously.*
- Global Understanding and Civic Engagement
  - **Natural World within a Global Context** ..... 
    - *Students will explore global systems conscientiously.*
- Personal and Professional Behavior
  - **Wellness Strategies** ..... 
    - *Students will model productive behaviors purposefully.*

P. Will the course address a **Companion Element**? **Yes**  
 (Refer to definitions, hierarchy, and rubrics in the *Pitt State Pathway* document.)

If “Yes,” please select one: Diverse Perspectives within a global context

Q. What is the highest anticipated level of student achievement for the stated learning outcome(s) common across all sections of the course? Note: Sample assessment strategies will be submitted on the representative syllabus. Milestone II  
 (Refer to definitions, hierarchy, and rubrics in the *Pitt State Pathway* document.)

R. Please submit course syllabus as an attachment, highlighting the following items: course objectives related to Learning Outcome(s), assessment strategies (e.g. exams, course project, etc.), and assessment tool(s) to be used to measure student achievement.

**Legislative Process**  
**Authorization and Notification Signatures**  
(Electronic signatures accepted)

**Department Chairperson** ..... Approved  Not Approved   
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chairperson Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
20. Dec., 2018  
Date

**Faculty Senate General Education Committee** ..... Approved  Not Approved   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Senate General Education Chairperson Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Faculty Senate** ..... Approved  Not Approved   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Senate Recording Secretary Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Note: Each College curriculum representative will notify their respective College and Department(s) of the completion of the approval process.

\*Originating Department: Please **complete** the entire form, acquire the Chairperson's signature, and save as **PSP.ABC123.Form**. Save the syllabus to be attached as **PSP.ABC123.Syll**. Email the completed form and attachments to [psupathway@pittstate.edu](mailto:psupathway@pittstate.edu).

Naming convention: <b>PSP.ABC123.Form</b> PSP = Pitt State Pathway. ABC123 = Course abbreviation and number
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## Syllabus for *World Religions*, PHIL 231 Pittsburg State University

Professor: Don Viney  
email: [dviney@pittstate.edu](mailto:dviney@pittstate.edu)

Office Hours:  
Office:

### Course Description

Nonsectarian in approach, *World Religions* is a survey and comparative study of the dominant religious traditions that have shaped human thought and culture from antiquity to the present. Religions studied include Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism (or Daoism), Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each of these religions has produced long-lived literary traditions, often in more than one language. Each of the religions has either had a world-wide influence, crossed international boundaries, or thrived in different cultural and linguistic settings. The study of religion in pre-literate cultures and of religion outside these traditions is not discouraged, but it is peripheral to the course. Each religion is treated with a sympathetic but critical attitude. The primary goal is to *understand*, as far as possible, by seeing the world through the historical and philosophical lenses of the tradition being studied.

### Course Requirements and Grading

*Instructor's philosophy of grading:* Grades are *not* given on the basis of the work done, the amount of work done, or the tuition paid. Grades are awarded by the instructor and earned by the student on the basis of *merit*. Students are neither clients nor customers and university degrees cannot be legitimately traded, sold, or purchased. A grade of A represents outstanding work; B means work of high quality; a grade of C is awarded when a student shows a basic grasp of the material; D is for work of substandard but passing quality; F means failure.

1. Students are responsible for *all* material covered in class, whether or not the student attends the class. Attendance is mandatory if one desires to obtain the full benefit of the course. Assignments, quizzes, and tests will regularly be posted on Canvas.

2. The final grade is composed of quizzes and exams—each will be announced at least one class day in advance. Very often, the quizzes cover the reading assignments. The final grade is figured as a percentage of the total points earned on quizzes (90% and above = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; 59% and below = F). There will be quizzes over each religion covered. **Extra credit** is included in each quiz or exam; there are no other extra credit opportunities.

3. Students should comport themselves in ways consistent with the learning environment of a university classroom. Examples of behaviors that are inconsistent with the learning environment include: reading extraneous material, talking on a cell phone, texting, playing computer games, speaking out of turn, persistent whispering, noisy interruptions, and low and mean personal attacks. The instructor reserves the right to penalize misbehavior by deducting points from quizzes or, in extreme cases, by dismissing the offending student(s) from class.

### Required Text and Course Outline

Donald W. Viney, *World Religions: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives*; (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishers, 2016). [The author makes no royalties from the sale of this work.]

The order of topics studied and the associated readings are as follows:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings from Viney</b>
Introduction	Preface (pp. ix-xiii); Introduction to Religion (pp. 1-37)
Hinduism	Hinduism (pp. 39-61)
Jainism	Jainism (pp. 63-72)
Buddhism	Jainism (pp. 73-100)
Chinese Religion	Confucianism (pp. 101-122) Taoism (pp. 123-136) Zen Buddhism (pp. 136-150)
Western Monotheism	Transitions, East to West (pp. 151-157)
Zoroastrianism	Zoroastrianism (pp. 159-176)
Judaism	Judaism (pp. 177-217)
Christianity	Christianity (pp. 219-269); <i>supplementary material on Canvas: "Knowing About Jesus" and "Mormon History"</i>
Islam	Islam (pp. 271-317)
<i>Supplementary Material of General Interest (On Canvas)</i>	<i>Science and Religion: Lessons from History</i> <i>Religion and Atheism</i>

*World Religions: Historical and Philosophical Perspectives* includes a general glossary (pp. 319-324) and important concepts and names in each religion are printed in **bold type**.

### **Academic Misconduct/Scholastic Dishonesty**

Any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work, is disruptive of proper class order, or that involves the misrepresentation of your own work, will result in penalties up to and including dismissal from the course with a failing grade. Scholastic dishonesty and academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing (which means presenting the work of another as one's own work); submitting the same or substantially the same paper to meet the requirements of more than one class without the consent of all of the instructors involved; depriving another student of necessary course materials; interfering with another student's work; or disruptive classroom behavior. For the full PSU Official policy on academic integrity see attached syllabus supplement.

### **Notice of Nondiscrimination**

Pittsburg State University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, ancestry, genetic information, or disabilities. Address inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies to Director of Institutional Equity/Title IX Coordinator, 218 Russ Hall, 620-235-4189 or [equity@pittstate.edu](mailto:equity@pittstate.edu).

### **Certificate of International Knowledge and Experience (IKE)**

This course counts towards the academic component of the Certificate of International Knowledge and Experience (IKE). The IKE program promotes international knowledge and encourages student international experiences. The IKE certificate consists of three components of international experience – Study Abroad, Academic Courses, and Co-Curricular programming. A student may complete any two of the components to fulfill the certificate requirements. Students completing IKE by choosing to include the Academic Courses component will also receive a notation on their academic transcript. For more information see: <http://www.pittstate.edu/department/ike/international-knowledge-and-experience/ike-faqs.dot>

### **World Religions and General Education**

#### **PSU Pitt State Pathway Outcomes**

PHIL 231: World Religions is part of the PSU Pitt State Pathway. It fulfills the requirement for the element Human Systems within a Global Context.

Humans have developed complex systems that structure interaction. It is important to understand how and why these systems developed, change through time, vary by location, and are interconnected at all levels (local/regional/global), and the implications of that interconnectedness. Competency in this element means:

- *Analyzing* the structure, development, and change of human economic, political, social and/or cultural systems over time;
- *Analyzing* the individual's role and responsibility to society at all levels;
- *Evaluating* how human systems are interconnected at all levels.

Upon completion of this course, students will accomplish the following:

- *Analyzes* human organizational systems using a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives (Mastery II).

Companion Element: Diverse Perspectives in a Global Context

Valuing different perspectives and analyzing the interrelationships between them leads to global respect and understanding. Competency in this element means:

- *Applying* multiple perspectives to personal, social, cultural, disciplinary, environmental, race, ethnicity, gender, nationhood, religion, or class interactions;
- *Analyzing* connections between worldviews, power structures, or experiences of multiple cultures in a historical or contemporary context;
- *Analyzing* issues of diversity (i.e. religious, racial, sexual orientations, gender, or disabilities).

Upon completion of this course, students will accomplish the following:

- *Analyzes* the role of multiple worldviews and power structures in addressing significant global problems (Milestone II)

### **Kansas Board of Regents Outcomes**

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

1. Identify principal texts, central religious figures and ideas of major world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of beliefs, practices, and values of major world religions.
3. Describe historical narratives and cultural expressions of major world religions.
4. Analyze concepts and issues basic to the study of major world religions in a comparative framework.
5. Assess the implications of the varieties of religious experience in a world of religious diversity.
6. Summarize key characteristics and definitions of religion.

### **Assessment**

Assessment will consist of exams (short essay) and in-class quizzes (multiple choice, true/false)

Answer two questions. Please note: *your answers are stronger to the extent that you can provide specific examples of the concepts you are discussing*

1. Huston Smith does not discuss Zoroastrianism in his text. In class I argued that textbooks in world religions should devote more space to this religion if only because of its importance to Judaism and Christianity. Explain.

2. Compare and contrast Zoroastrian and Jewish responses to the problem of unjust suffering. In other words, what theodicies might one distill from these two religions. (Hint: the book of Job in the Bible and the event of the Holocaust are relevant to answering this question).

3. The film *The Chosen* provides a number of examples of the diversity within Judaism concerning such topics as the study of Torah, marriage, secular culture, and the founding of a Jewish state. Explain.

4. A theme of the lectures on Christianity was that, from its very inception, Christianity has not been one thing, but many things. Explain.

5. What is the synoptic problem? What is the relevance of this problem for answering the question Jesus put to his disciples “Who do men say that I am?”

6. Did Jesus have a sense of humor? Discuss the importance of this question for ideas about Jesus and, more generally, for scriptural interpretation.

7. Explain, *in your own words*, the five pillars of Islam.

8. Compare and contrast Muslim and Christian views towards the *Qur'an* and the Bible. The answer should include not only Muslim views about the *Qur'an* and Christian views about the Bible, but also Muslim views about the Bible and Christian ideas about the *Qur'an*.

9. Compare and contrast Muslim and Christian views towards Muhammad and Jesus. The answer should include not only Muslim views about Muhammad and Christian views about Jesus, but also Muslim views about Jesus and Christian ideas about Muhammad.

### *Exam on Eastern Religions*

Instructions: Answer *one* question from each part, a total of **two** questions (25 points each).

#### Part I

1. In class I told the story of the woman from Madras, India who, in the morning burned incense to Lord Krishna, on her way to the market gave oblations at the Buddhist temple, and in the afternoon said Hail Mary prayers at the Catholic church. In what way(s) do her actions exemplify a typically Indian approach to spirituality?

2. Hindus use the image that there are many paths to the top of the mountain. What do the various elements of this image represent and what are the expressions that the Hindus use to talk about them? For instance, for what is the top of the mountain a metaphor? What does reaching the top of the mountain represent? What are the various paths?

3. The wisdom of the Upanishads is summed up in the phrase *Tat Tvam Asi*. What does this mean? What are Shankara's, Ramanuja's, and Madhva's interpretations of this phrase?

4. Hindu ideas about the relation of God to Scripture strike people from Western traditions as strange. Explain with reference especially to the orthodox schools Mimamsa, Vedanta, and Nyaya.

5. What is the typical Hindu view of the relation of language to ultimate reality? In your answer make reference to the concepts Saguna Brahman, Nirguna Brahman, Satcitananda, and Maya.

#### Part II

6. Buddhism and Jainism are heterodox schools of Indian religion. What does this mean? Explain the particular ideas that bring these religions into tension with traditional approaches to spirituality in India.
7. Robert Neville says that where atheistic or nontheistic religions are concerned their atheism or nontheism is not the most important fact about them. Discuss this statement in connection with *two* of the following religions: Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, or Confucianism.
8. In some ways, Chinese religion is every bit as syncretistic as religion in India—recall Huston Smith's statement that Chinese are Taoists in their private lives, Confucians in their family lives, and Buddhists at death. Explain.
9. Buddhism and Jainism found similar solutions to the problem of who could be a member of their religious communities. Each religion began with an itinerant founder who had a group of followers who vowed celibacy and poverty in search of enlightenment, yet each religion was eventually adopted by people with families and with livelihoods. What were the elements that led to this transformation?
10. Taoism and Confucianism had decidedly different reactions to the *Ming Chia*. Explain by reference to (a) the distinction between *yu-ming* and *wu-ming* and (b) the Confucian emphasis on the rectification of names. (Be sure to include in your answer an explanation of the *Ming Chia*).