

## **NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY REL 237 – RELIGIONS OF THE EAST (3 CR.)**

### **Course Description**

Studies major religious traditions originating in India and East Asia, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Daoism and Shinto. Examines origins, values, ethics, teachings, and practices. **This is a Passport and UCGS transfer course.** Lecture 3 hours. Total 3 hours per week.

**Please Note:** Credit will not be awarded for both REL 237: Religions of the East and REL 231: Religions of the World I.

### **General Course Purpose**

REL 237 introduces students to the origins, teachings, organization, and practices of Eastern religious traditions with an emphasis on their role in motivating, shaping and inspiring their adherents through myths, rituals, symbols, ethical teachings, and religious experiences.

### **Course Prerequisites/Corequisites**

None.

### **Course Objectives**

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

#### **Civic Engagement: Cultural and Social Understanding**

- Respectfully engage with people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds.
- Appreciate the value of religious diversity in the world and in the local community.
- Discuss the historical and ideological connections among the religions studied.

#### **Critical Thinking**

- Analyze the complex relations between religion and society/culture in various historical and contemporary contexts.
- Compare and contrast recurring themes in the religions studied such as mysticism, loving devotion, reincarnation, and ultimate liberation.
- Professional readiness
- Positively interact and cooperate with others in a mutually supportive environment (work, school, community).
- Be a model of tolerance and respect for others.

#### **Hinduism**

- Identify and define relevant terminology such as dharma, karma, samsara, moksha, yoga, guru, varna, etc.
- Explain the Brahmanic origins of Hinduism.
- Summarize the basic beliefs, practices, and ethical teachings of Hinduism.
- Identify, and discuss the symbolism and relationships between, some of the more popular deities of Hinduism.
- Discuss and interpret passages from some Hindu texts (e.g. the Bhagavad Gita).

#### **Jainism**

- Identify and define relevant terminology such as asceticism, jiva and ajiva, ahimsa, tirthankara, etc.
- Identify the founder and explain the origins of Jainism.
- Summarize the basic beliefs, practices and ethical teachings of Jainism.

### **Sikhism**

- Identify and define relevant terminology such as guru, khalsa, the Five K's, etc.
- Identify the founder and summarize the origins and historical development of Sikhism.
- Summarize the basic beliefs, practices and ethical teachings of Sikhism.

### **Buddhism**

- Identify and define relevant terminology such as The "Middle Way," Buddha, dharma, Sangha, nirvana, bodhisattva, lama, mandala, monasticism, Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana, Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, etc.
- Identify and outline the life of the founder of Buddhism.
- Summarize the basic beliefs, practices, and ethical teachings of Buddhism.
- Discuss the spread and diversification of Buddhism over time.
- Explain the significance of meditation, chanting, rituals and other practices of various "schools" of Buddhism.
- Discuss and interpret passages from some Buddhist texts (e.g. the Dhammapada).

### **Religion and Philosophy in China, including Daoism and Confucianism**

- Identify and define relevant terminology such as Dao, wu wei, filial piety, ren/jen, etc.
- Discuss the origins of Taoism and Confucianism.
- Summarize the basic beliefs, practices, and ethical teachings of Taoism and Confucianism.
- Discuss and interpret some of the sacred writings of Taoism and Confucianism (Tao Te Ching and The Analects of Confucius)

### **Shinto**

- Identify and define relevant terminology such as kami, Jinja, Amaterasu, etc.
- Explain the origins and significant historical developments of Shinto as the indigenous religion of Japan.
- Summarize the basic beliefs, practices, and ethical teachings of Shinto.
- Identify some of the sacred places and objects that are important to the Shinto Religion.

### **Major Topics to be Included**

- Hinduism
- Jainism
- Sikhism
- Buddhism
- Religion & Philosophy in China, including Daoism and Confucianism
- Shinto