

**WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER COLLEGE**  
**LIBERAL ARTS DIVISION**  
**GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE**

PHI Course Prefix	205 Course Number	Religions of the World Course Title	3-0 (Lec-Lab)	3 Semester Hours
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Introduces the teachings, practices, social structures and histories of the religions of India (mainly Buddhism and Hinduism), and China and Japan (mainly Confucianism, Shinto and Taoism), and of the Middle East (mainly Christianity, Islam and Judaism). IAI H5 904N

**TOPICAL OUTLINE**

- I. Introduction to the Study of Religion
- II. Types: Four Traditional Ways of Being Religious
  - A. Personal Apprehension of a Holy Presence
  - B. Sacred Action: Myth and Ritual
  - C. Harmony with Cosmic Law
  - D. Mystical Insight through Spiritual Discipline
- III. Traditions
  - A. Religions of India
    1. Hinduism
    2. Buddhism
  - B. Religions of China and Japan
    1. Taoism
    2. Confucianism
    3. Shinto
  - C. Religions of the Middle East
    1. Judaism
    2. Christianity
    3. Islam

**METHODS OF PRESENTATION**

1. Lecture
2. Discussion
3. Small group work
4. Student presentations
5. Student debates
6. Slides/movies
7. Visiting speakers

**STUDENT OUTCOMES:** (Upon successful completion of this course, *the student should be able to...*)

1. Identify and characterize the basic ideas, founders, places of significance, key events, central texts, practices and/or institutions of five or more different religious traditions.
2. Compare and contrast at least three methods of studying religion.
3. Explain the significant theological and historical differences between the major religious traditions.
4. Examine and interpret the important sacred texts from the major religious traditions.
5. Explain and evaluate the primary forces of change among religious traditions, such as modernization and secularization.
6. Experience (virtually or first-hand) contemporary manifestations of these religions such as worship services or meditation sessions in the service of the above outcomes.
7. Write a minimum of 3000 words of college-level writing in support of the above outcomes.

### METHODS OF EVALUATION

1. Quizzes
2. Exams (may be oral)
3. Written reading responses
4. Debates
5. Homework
6. Class activities
7. Participation
8. Field research project

### POSSIBLE TEXTBOOKS/INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Nielsen, *Religions of the World*

Smith, *World Religions*

Ellwood, Robert S. and Barbara S. McCann, *Many Peoples, Many Faiths*

Brodd, et al., *Invitation to World Religions*

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