IMPORTANT NOTE: This syllabus is extremely detailed because I think that classroom time should be used for actual study of course material and NOT to discuss procedures, deadlines etc. The onus is on you to carefully digest the contents of this syllabus. If you feel that there is certain information that should be included, please contact me via e-mail. To remain in the class, you must, by the last day of WEEK 2, give me an index card with your contact information as well as a signed declaration thus: I have read and understood the syllabus and agree to its conditions.

Course Description
Religious Studies 101 is an introduction to the academic study of the world's major religious traditions. We will explore diverse religious philosophies and practices in an effort to understand how they shed light on the nature, meaning, and struggles of human existence. Since this course does not seek to affirm or deny the belief systems of any of these traditions, personal religious conviction or the lack thereof will neither benefit nor hinder one's performance in the course.
RELS 101 is one of nine courses that you will take in General Education Foundations. Foundations courses cultivate skills in reading, writing, research, communication, computation, information literacy, and use of technology. They furthermore introduce you to basic concepts, theories and approaches in a variety of disciplines in order to provide the intellectual breadth necessary to help you integrate the more specialized knowledge gathered in your major area of study into a broader world picture. This course is one of four Foundations courses that you will take in the area of Humanities and Fine Arts.
Upon completing of this area of Foundations, you will be able to: 1) analyze written, visual, or performed texts in the humanities and fine arts with sensitivity to their diverse cultural contexts and historical moments; 2) describe various aesthetic and other value systems and the ways they are communicated across time and cultures; 3) identify issues in the humanities that have personal and global relevance; 4) demonstrate the ability to approach complex problems and ask complex questions drawing upon knowledge of the humanities.

Learning Objectives
- To understand the role religion plays in culture and to improve multicultural literacy
- The usage of specialist religion terminology relevant to level of study
- To be able to discuss the basic history, philosophy, and practices of major religious traditions and begin to engage in comparative studies
- To differentiate between confessional and academic studies of Religion
- Understand Religion in the American context

Course Requirements
- Demonstrated completion of required readings, workbook assignments
- Effective Classroom participation
- Internet access; unless specifically directed otherwise, you must submit all answers electronically. You must ensure that your correct address is on Blackboard.
- Successful and timely completion of all quizzes and examinations.
Required Texts
A Concise Introduction to World Religions, Willard Oxtoby and Alan Segal (Editors),
Oxford University Press, Don Mills, ON, 2007. Hereinafter referred to as “class text.”
Student Workbook Oxtoby Version

Computer and Internet Access Requirement
All announcements, grades, e-mail communication etc are posted via BLACKBOARD. You are re-
quired to have an active, working email account. Please note that HOTMAIL accounts are NOT compatible
with BLACKBOARD, and you should create a university ROHAN account. See
http://rohan.sdsu.edu/raects.html

Class Participation/Method of Instruction
You are required to attend each class fully prepared to participate in that day’s lecture. This means
that you will have completed the assigned readings and workbook exercises BEFORE each lesson, and
be able to demonstrate this during the discussion of scheduled material. I will ensure your participation
by choosing names randomly from the class roster—and the selection of your name one week
does not exempt you from being again called in the subsequent week/s.

Since I will focus on the MAJOR religions in North America, I have not scheduled discussion
on Chapter 10. Note too that for the chapter on Indigenous Religions, although I will use the material
from the workbook, you are required to read the entire chapter in the class text. This is to improve
your reading and independent analytical skills, as you will be asked about its material in the final ex-
amination.

I am available by appointment and during posted office hours to assist you. You can also seek the help of
the teaching assistant whose contact information and office hours are posted at the top of this document.

Clarification about Workbooks
Your workbook is elemental to this course and you must have it with you for every class. It has notes and
materials that are not found in the course text. It also has sample quizzes taken from the same question bank
that I will use when designing class quizzes and examinations. Since RELS 101 is a General Education
course, there is a writing requirement that you will have to fulfill. The workbook assignments are designed
with this in mind and your mark for the writing component will be determined by your performance on the
appropriate sections in the workbook. You will not that there are “writing sections” at the end of every ma-
tor topic. You MUST select one topic/question and write your answer in the space provided. This must be
done AFTER we finish the chapter, but BEFORE we start the following, i.e. you will answer the short ques-
tions BEFORE the class lectures, but you will do the writing assignment AFTER the lecture(s) when you
feel you have enough information to ably comply with the writing requirement. Since this is a high-
enrolment class, I do not expect to have the opportunity to check your books more than once. This means
that you must ensure your handwriting is legible (I will issue a zero for illegible material). If your handwrit-
ing is illegible, you may use a word-processed document, but it has to be pasted on to the required writing
area. I will NOT accept electronically forwarded answers.

Attendance and Punctuality:
Attendance and punctuality are mandatory. I do NOT take roll call, but instead, collect and mark
your workbooks on a weekly basis by random selection of names. If you do NOT respond when I call your
name, your book will not be marked, and it is possible that you will receive a zero mark for this part of your
course requirement. Since I do not base my lectures on the text only, you can be assured that each absence
will severely impact on your performance in class quizzes and examinations. If you observe religious holi-
days that are not listed in the school calendar, please inform me within two weeks of the start of the
semester so that I can schedule examinations/quizzes to accommodate you. When a guest speaker
addresses the class or a film is shown during the regular class time, you will be expected to stay for the en-
tire lecture/showing.
Class Conduct

The purpose of REL S 101 is not to discuss the “truth” of any one religion or to make you any more or less religious, but to teach you ABOUT religion in an ACADEMIC manner. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from the class. Do note that:

- You must turn off all cellular phones and pagers before entering the classroom
- You may NOT listen to IPODS during class
- You may NOT complete assignments for other courses during this class
- Only one person speaks at any given time
- You may only use laptops with my permission, and when you do so, you must sit in the first row. I have a zero tolerance policy: if you are caught playing electronic games or surfing the web without permission, I will NOT allow you further use of a laptop.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism, in the simplest definition, is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the works of others by misrepresenting the material so used as one’s own work. For the appropriate SDSU definitions and policies, please visit:
http://folsks.sdsu.edu/faculty/readyref/RRF-Plagiarism.html

Study Guides

The workbook is the best study guide. My primary goal, however, is to make scholars out of you and not just prepare you to pass examinations. As such, you must consider everything we study in class as material that you may be asked about in your examinations.

In order to assist you in your study, I will clearly list the main outlines of the discussion on the board at the beginning of each lesson. (Introduction, Early History, Development, and Worldview.) You will use these to be your guides. At the university level, I assume that you are mature enough to structure your study habits so that you maintain a constant review schedule as well as keeping up with current material.

Quizzes and Examinations

You will have one quiz, two main examinations: a midterm and a final. Please note that your final includes material for the entire semester. Exams and quizzes use matching, true/false, fill in the blank, and multiple-choice questions. Unless otherwise specified, Scantron 289 is required for all examinations and quizzes. If you register for this course on a CREDIT/NO CREDIT (CR/NC) option, do note that you must complete all assignments and obtain a cumulative 70% or higher to be issued a C.

- Exams must be taken at the times scheduled unless I am notified prior to the sitting, and the reason for requesting a change is truly urgent.
- I am NOT allowed to reschedule the final exams to earlier than the specified date.
- Due to the size of the class, I will NOT allow make-up quizzes. I also only accept SCANTRON 289, Please note that you MUST closely follow the instructions on the scantron as if you place marks in other than the designated areas, or omit filling out required spaces, the machine will reject it. I will deduct points or issue a zero for scantrons that are filled out improperly.
- If you come to class without a scantrons on a scheduled quiz day, and then have to leave the classroom to obtain one, your raw score for that quiz will be lowered by one letter grade.
- ALL QUERIES ABOUT MARKS MUST BE RAISED WITHIN SEVEN DAYS OF MARK POSTINGS ON THE GRADEBOOK FUNCTION OF BLACKBOARD.
- Do note that I hate email questions to which the answers are clearly spelled out in the syllabus. If you address such questions to me, not only will I not answer them, but I will issue you two demerit points.

REMINDER: IN THE FINAL EXAMINATION, you will be asked about all material we have studied in class as well as Chapter 10 that you must study on your own.
Change of Syllabus
This is the first time that I will use the OXTOBY/SEGAL text, and the time allocated for coverage of each chapter is only an estimate. As such, this syllabus and schedule are subject to change. The datelines you see listed are based on the most summary presentation of lessons. Extended discussions and questions could lengthen the allotted time thus delaying the start of study of the next major religion. It is your responsibility to check for announcements made if you absent yourself from any class.

Quiz and Examination Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Scheduled Date</th>
<th>Maximum Mark</th>
<th>Course Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDTERM EXAMINATION</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Introduction to and incl. Ch. 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINAL EXAMINATION</td>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Don't forget that this includes ALL material for the semester)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>245</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
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Grading Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum %=&lt;Letter Grade</th>
<th>Minimum %=&lt;Letter Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94  A</td>
<td>74  C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90  A-</td>
<td>70  C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85  B+</td>
<td>65  D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82  B</td>
<td>60  D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79  B-</td>
<td>55  D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77  C+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- During the course of the semester, you will be able to see your grade by checking the GRADEBOOK section on BLACKBOARD.
- I will only issue an Authorized Incomplete (I) when a small portion of required coursework has not been completed due to unforeseen, but fully justified reasons. You must complete the required work within one calendar year immediately following the end of the term in which it was assigned. If this is not done, you will receive an IC-Incomplete Charged Grade that will count as an F for GPA computation.
- A grade of "WU" for "Withdrawal Unauthorized" (formerly "U") indicates that you did not officially withdraw from the course, but failed to complete course requirements. For purposes of GPA computation, this grade is equivalent to an "F". If you attend a portion of a course and then, after receiving a failing average, stop attending without officially withdrawing, you will receive a final grade of "F" rather than "WU".

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at SDSU and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please bring your documentation to me during the first two weeks of class.
SCHEDULE

I. Orientation: What is Religion/Native American Religion

Week 1 (Jan 22)
Discussion of syllabus, teaching style, requirements.
Brief introduction to Religion

Week 2 (Jan 27, 29)
Possible Film
Introduction and Indigenous Traditions
Readings: Class text: 2-9; 11-58
Workbook: 1-29

II. The First of the Abrahamic Faiths: The Jewish Tradition

Week 3 (Feb 3, 5)
Defining Judaism, Origins, Development, Main Beliefs, Rituals, Different Movements/Denominations, Israel, Modernity, In America.
Readings: Class Text: Chapter 2
Workbook: 31-37

February 11: Last day to add or drop classes, change grading basis

III. The Christian Tradition

Week 4 (February 10, 12)
Your writing units on Indigenous Religions and Judaism should be complete by now (see pp. 24, 25, 33 of your workbook).
Defining Christianity, Origins, Development, Main Beliefs, Rituals, Different Movements/Denominations, Modernity, in America.
Readings: Class Text: Chapter 3
Workbook: 39-36

Week 5 (February 17, 19)
(Christianity Continued)
Feb 19: Quiz on Indigenous Religions, Judaism, Christianity, Syllabus

IV. The Islamic Tradition

Week 6 (Feb 24, 26)
Readings: Chapter 4 of class text
Workbook: 47-54

Your units up to page 46 of the workbook must be completed by now. (There will be no further reminders: now you have the pattern of when I require the writing assignments. I will check workbooks at random.

Week 7 (Mar 3, 5)
Review of any questions/problems of material covered thus far
Mar 6: Film on Religions of Asia
Also, if time permits, “The Power of Myth” Film.
V. The Hindu Tradition

Week 8 (Mar 10, 12)
Hinduism: Definitions, Origins, Development, Main Beliefs, Rituals, Different Movements/ Denominations, Indo-Pakistan Issues, Modernity, In America
Readings: Class Text: Chapter 5
Workbook: 57-67
Don’t forget to review for next week’s midterm!!! You must know the terms that are bolded in your texts as well as be familiar with the lecture material.

Week 9 (Mar 17, 19)
Hinduism: Continued

March 19: MIDTERM EXAM. PLEASE NOTE THAT QUESTIONS WILL DEAL WITH ALL TOPICS COVERED TO DATE.

VI. The Sikh Tradition

Week 10 (Mar 24-26)
Sikhism: Definitions, Origins, Development, Main Beliefs, Rituals, Different Movements/ Denominations, Khalistan, Modernity, In America
Readings: Class Text: Chapter 6
Workbook: 69-78

MAR 30-APR 3: SPRING BREAK

VII. The Jain Tradition

Week 11: (Apr 7, 9)
Jainism: Definitions, Origins, Development, Main Beliefs, Rituals, Different Movements/ Denominations, Gandhi, Modernity, In America
Readings: Class Text: Chapter 7
Workbook: 79-87

VIII. The Buddhist Tradition

Week 12 (Apr 14, 16)
Buddhism: Definitions, Origins, Development, Main Beliefs, Rituals, Different Movements/ Denominations, Famous American Buddhists, Sri Lanka, Modernity, In America
Readings: Class Text: Chapter 8
Workbook: 89-100

Week 13(Apr 21, 23)
Review/Completion of post-Spring break material

IX: Chinese Religions

Week 14 (Apr 28, 30)
Confucianism and Daoism
Readings: Class Text: Chapter 9
Workbook: 101-13
Week 15 (May 5, 7)
- Coverage of Baha’i, Mormon
- Discussion on Nature of Religion
- Readings: Class Text: Chapter 11

Week 16 (May 12)
- Wrap up. Outstanding Matters. I WILL DISCUSS HOW QUESTIONS MAY BE STRUCTURED. YOUR FINAL EXAMINATION IS CUMULATIVE AND WILL COVER ALL MATERIAL WE HAVE STUDIED THIS SEMESTER. GOOD LUCK!

May 12: Last day of classes before final examinations

Scheduled Date for Final Examination: Thursday, May 21
Time: 1300-1500 hrs; Place: Classroom