



Spring 2026 Course Descriptions

RELG 1110.002: Intro World Religions

Offered: Full Term, TR 11:00-12:15 p.m.

Instructor: Michael Candelaria, mcandel@unm.edu

This course is an introduction to the academic study of religion, focusing on Hinduism, Buddhism, the Chinese Religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Attention will also be given to oral/indigenous religions and the theories of religion.

RELG 1110.004: Intro World Religions

Offered: Full Term, Online

Instructor: William Barnes, whb100@unm.edu

This course is designed to give an introduction to the basic beliefs, practices, and texts of some of the world's major religions. The class will begin with an examination of Hinduism, and then move on to Buddhism, and then Chinese religion & philosophy. After looking at these "Eastern" religions, we will examine the "Western" religious tradition, starting with Judaism, then Christianity, and finally Islam.

Course Requirements

6 on-line exams will be given for Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each will be worth **14%** of the grade. You will have a 24-hour window within which you must complete the exam. Make-up exams must be authorized by me, and this will only happen with a very legitimate excuse.

RELG 1110.005: Intro World Religions

Offered: First-Half Term, Online

Instructor: Michael Candelaria, mcandel@unm.edu

This course is an introduction to the academic study of religion, focusing on Hinduism, Buddhism, the Chinese Religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Attention will also be given to oral/indigenous religions and the theories of religion.

RELG 2110.001: Eastern Religions

Offered: Full Term, TR 9:30-10:45 a.m.

Instructor: Katherine Ulrich, kulrich@unm.edu

Eastern Religions is a thematic introduction to the religious lives of peoples of Asia (mainly in India, China, Tibet, and Japan, with cameo appearances by Sri Lanka, Korea, Nepal, and/or Siberia). We examine the deities, practices, discourses, religious specialists, and subdivisions of

the adherents of Asia's major indigenous religious traditions while examining two broad themes. The first theme is God(dess): how are sacred or special beings (gods, goddesses, buddhas, et al.) represented and worshiped in the different religions of Asia? The second broad theme is death and the afterlife: we consider practices and beliefs involving bodies, (no) soul(s), and various options for the afterlife (or immortality, in the case of Daoism). The religious traditions covered are Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Shinto, Bön, and Shamanism. Classes are mainly PowerPoint lectures with occasional films and discussions. Assessments include online weekly quizzes and three in-class exams.

RELG 2110 (009 & 010): Eastern Religions

Offered: Second-Half Term Online

Instructor: Lisa Gerber, lgerber@unm.edu

This course surveys the Eastern religious traditions of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and Shinto. We will be studying the main philosophical ideas of these religious traditions and pulling out the wisdom in these traditions. To do this, we will look at explanations of religious traditions and primary texts, art, and culture. Pulling out the wisdom in each tradition allows us to understand and appreciate other religious traditions. Through this course, you will be able to develop a solid understanding of Eastern religious traditions.

Required Texts

- Feiser J. & Powers J., (2021). Scriptures of the World's Religions: Custom Edition Eastern Religions New York: McGraw Hill Custom text: You can this book as a hardcopy through the UNM Bookstore. If you prefer an e-book, you can purchase directly with the following link:<https://www.mheducation.com/highered/custom/product/9781307698947.html>
- Nesbitt, E. (2016). Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction. Second Edition Oxford: Oxford University Press (you can also use the first edition since it is in UNM's library)
- Easwaran, E., (2004), Bhagavad Gita. Boston: Shambhala Press
- Easwaran, E. (2005) Dhammapada Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press
- Lao Tzu and Addiss, S. & Lombardo, S. translators (1993) Tao Te Ching, Indianapolis: Hackett

***Please note** that you can use any edition for the three primary texts (Bhagavad Gita, Dhammapada, and Tao Te Ching). You can find the primary texts and the Sikhism text (electronic and hardcopy) in the UNM library. This will reduce your textbook costs.

RELG 2120.002: Western Religions

Offered: Full Term, Online

Instructor: Anais Garvanian, akgarvan@unm.edu

In this class, we will focus on the three major religions of the western world: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, tracing the development of each of these religions from their origins up through modern times, and familiarizing ourselves with the major texts, movements, practices, and essential beliefs of each. By the end of this class, students should have a firm grasp of the origins, development, fundamental ideas, beliefs, rituals and practices of these three religions, and develop a sense of what each of these religions mean for the people who practice them and live by them.

RELG 332.001: Intro to Buddhism**Offered: Full Term, TR 11:00-12:15 p.m.****Instructor:** Katherine Ulrich, kulrich@unm.edu

This class is a historical survey of Buddhist practices, beliefs, institutions, and figures from the time of the historical Buddha through to the contemporary period. Approximately half the semester will focus on early and Theravada Buddhism through a close study of Buddhist scriptures from the Pali Canon and an examination of archaeological evidence from early India; the rest of the semester examines Mahayana and Tantric Buddhism in China, Singapore, Japan, Tibet, Nepal, and Siberia. Readings include both primary sources in translation and scholarly literature; classes are a combination of PowerPoint lectures and discussion, with the occasional film.

RELG 347.001: T: Islam, Political v Mystical**Offered: Full Term, MW 5:00-6:15 p.m.****Instructor:** Mozafar Banihashemi, mozafar@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 347.002: T: Latin American Thought**Instructor:** Michael Candelaria, mcandel@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 347.004: T: Catholicism and the Body**Offered: Full Term, TR 3:30-4:45****Instructor:** Stephen Gaertner, sgaertne@unm.edu

Beyond urgent questions of gender, sex and sexuality, Catholicism has always had a fraught preoccupation with the human body. Is the body a conduit for transcendent, redemptive spiritual experience? Is it an avenue for demonic temptation, sin and damnation? Does the Church encourage us to celebrate our diverse human “embodied-ness,” or rather is human physicality-the “flesh” – something to be controlled, mastered, and subdued?

Using a variety of primary and critical texts (audiovisual and print) this course will engage discursively with these relevant topics as they have manifested themselves in various ways throughout global Catholicism’s long, complicated history. Student evaluations will be based primarily on two essay assignments, a midterm exam, participation in online discussion forums and a concluding group presentation.

NOTE: This is NOT a faith-based course, so ALL curious UNM students are welcome, regardless of their creed, or lack thereof.

RELG 347.007: T: Global Curanderismo**Offered: Full Term, Online****Instructor:** Mario Del Angel Guevara, mdelangel@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 347.007: T: Religion and Bioethics**Offered: First-Half Term, Online****Instructor:** Lisa Gerber, lgerber@unm.edu

Religion, as a fundamental aspect of human life and culture, provides an essential lens for analyzing ethical issues in bioethics. This course explores the ways in which religion contextualizes health and medicine. Religious and spiritual worldviews guide people as they seek to understand meaning in health, suffering, illness, and death. Many contemporary bioethical issues (such as AI, genetic engineering, and research) are driven by technological changes. This course will situate these issues within a human search for meaning. Bioethical issues, particularly in religious traditions, are embedded in deeper questions such as what it means to be human, the implications of human enhancement, what it means to die well, and what our obligations are in caring for other people and our environment.

RELG 447.001: Sem: Evol of Rel&Hum Coal Psyc**Offered: Full Term, TR 11:00-12:15****Instructor:** Paul Watson, pwatson@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

RELG 452.001: Theories of Religion**Offered: Full Term, TR 12:30-1:45****Instructor:** Daniel Wolne, dsw1@unm.edu

This course is designed to provide an examination and critique of some of the most influential 19th, 20th, and 21st century scientific attempts to explain religion. We will begin by examining the difference between supernaturalist and scientific theories of religion. Then, we will investigate some of the major theoreticians in this subject, by reading primary sources with brief introductions by Daniel Pals. We will also look at some contemporary accounts, examining Postmodernist and Cognitive Science perspectives on religion. The goal of the class is to provide a forum where these ideas can be examined and critiqued, with an eye towards discovering how these theories might help shed some light upon (or obscure) the careful investigation of religious phenomena. Some background in comparative world religions (either REL 1110 or equivalent) is essential for this course. At the close of the course, we will evaluate the lessons learned, and finish by considering what it might mean to construct our own “mega-theory” of religion, or (possibly) conclude that all of our theorizing is doomed to be impossible/inaccurate, and slink off in intellectual disarray!