Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism

AP/WM649

Tuesday and Thursday: 10:45-12:15 AM

Instructor: Kevin Xiyi Yao

Office Hours: Room GL 114, Time TBD

Byington Scholar:

Course Website: Log into sakai.gcts.edu and click on the tab labeled “AP/WM 649 HA-12”.

Course Description and Learning Objectives

With a shared origin, Hinduism and Buddhism are the belief systems of one of the largest segments of the world population, and pose one of the major religious challenges to Christianity in the past and future. This course is an introductory study for students to understand the beliefs, practices and cultural impacts of these two traditions. More specifically this course provides an opportunity for students to be able

First, To understand the beliefs and common practices of Hinduism and Buddhism;

Second, To assess their shaping influences on the worldview and the patterns of culture and life of the peoples in Asia and other parts of the world;

Third, To discover and grasp essential differences between Hinduism/Buddhism and Christian worldviews, and to evaluate the two traditions from the Christian perspectives;

Fourth, To explore the Christian missiological approaches to the traditions and mission strategy relevant in the Hindu and Buddhist contexts. By so doing, students will formulate a Biblical approach to non-Christian religions or theology of religion.
Requirements

A. Two integration journals summarizing lectures, readings, and personal reflections. It should be double-spaced, seven-eight pages for each. The first one is due on March 8th, and the second on May 3rd. (40%)

B. A group project and presentation (40%): the whole class will be divided into groups (two or three students in each) to study certain subjects related to the topics of this course:
   a. Each study group should be formed on voluntary basis. Each student needs to choose his or her study partners;
   b. Each group should choose their own topic and methods (readings, research, field trips, etc). Each group must submit one page project proposal specifying the topic and its significances, goals and methods, and listing the members of the group. Due Date: February 28th. All proposals need to be approved by the professor;
   c. The topics could be the introductions and explorations of any aspects of Hinduism and Buddhism, or their interactions with Christianity. The nature of the projects could be introductory, apologetic or evangelistic;
   d. In Week 12, 13 and 14 each group is required to present the results of their studies to the whole class, and responsible for 25 minutes in one class session, including presentation and Q & A time. Every group can design the format of their presentation, and employ any audio-video means or multi-media to articulate their points;
   e. Each group should prepare and submit a file containing (1) a five pages, double-spaced introduction of the group project topic, its significances, and goals of the project; (2) the materials of any kinds, relevant to the topic, and supporting your points; (3) a five pages, double-spaced conclusion summarizing the main ideas and points of the project. Due Date: May 3rd.

C. A book report on Christianity at the Religious Roundtable by Timothy C. Tennent. All the chapters of the book except Part 3 should be read. The length: 8-10 pp, double-spaced. The contents: summarization of the main points of the book, and students’ comments and reflections. Due Date: April 5th (20%).

Assignment and Grading Summary

Assignments should be turned in (hard copy) in class on the due date.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integration Journals:</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>March 8th, May 1st</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project and Presentation</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>February 28th, Week 12, 13, 14, May 3rd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>April 5th</td>
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**Required Textbooks**


Students are expected to read the required materials before each class session in order to facilitate class discussions.

**Other Texts Included in Readings**


Frykenberg, Robert Eric, ed., *Christians and Missionaries in India, Cross-cultural*


**Topics and Required Readings**

Week 1, **31 Jan & 2 Feb**, Course overview: syllabus;
   The Biblical view of religions and Christian approaches;
   General introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism: Their common historical past and relation; sketches of their historical developments; their current challenges to the Church.

   Readings:
   Tennent, 9-27
   Kraemer, ch. IV

Week 2, **7 & 9 Feb**, Hinduism I:
   A brief history;
   The basis of the Hindu worldview: the wheel of rebirth, Dharma, Karma, Moksha, and Nirvana.

   Readings:
   Ellinger, ch.2. 6. 9
   Jacobs, ch. 1.2
   Fowler, ch.1.
Week 3, **14 & 16 Feb**, Hinduism II:
The pantheon of the Hindu gods: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva;
The Hindu scriptures: Veda; The Hindu rites, festivals and social system (the castes).
Modern development of the Hindu influence in the West;
Christian evaluation, reflections, challenges, and evangelism among the Hindu population.

Readings:
Ellinger, ch. 3, 4, 5
Jacobs, ch.3.5.6
Fowler, ch. 5.6.7.9.10
Thomas, M.M., 49-62.
Howell, 407-420.

Week 4, **21 & 23 Feb**, Reading Week

Readings:
Tennent, Part 1
Frykenberg, ch.7

Week 5, **28 Feb & 1 Mar**, Buddhism I:
The Buddha; the Buddhist worldview: the four noble truths I: The human predicament

**The project proposal is due on Feb 28th.**

Readings:
Harvey, 3-5, 64-86
Fernando, ch.1,3,4,6

Week 6, **6 &8 Mar**, Buddhism II: The solutions
The four noble truths II: Karma, Rebirth, Nirvana

Readings:
Harvey, 86-94
Fernando, ch.7,8, 9

**The first integration paper is due on March 8th.**
Week 7, **13 & 15 Mar**, Buddhism III:
Morality, wisdom, poverty, and celibacy.

Readings:
Harvey, ch. 6,8
Fernando, ch. 10,11,13, 14

Week 8, **20 & 22 Mar** Buddhism IV:
Historical developments: Hinayana and Mahayana; Cross-Cultural Spread.
Buddhism as a world religion:
The diversification of the Buddhist tradition in the world today:
Contemporary revivals and reforms.

Readings:
Harvey, 5-28

Week 9, **27 & 29 Mar**, Reading Week

Readings:
Tennent, Part 2

Week 10, **3 & 5 Apr**, Buddhism V:
Popular forms of Buddhism;
The gods; Rites and festivals;

Readings:
Harvey, ch.3,4.5.9

The book report is due on April 5th.

Week 11, **10 & 12 Apr**, Buddhism VI:
The case of the East Asia;
Christian evaluation, reflections, challenges, and evangelism
among the Buddhist population; The religious challenges to Christian
evangelism in the 21st century; Reflections on Christian responses.

Readings:
Lim, ch.1,2
Newbiggin, 149-159.
Week 12, 17 & 19 Apr, Group Presentations

Week 13, 24 & 26 Apr, Group Presentations

Week 14, 1 & 3 May, Final Exam Week: Group Presentations

The second integration paper is due on May 1st.
The project file is due on May 3rd.

All topics and required readings are subject to change without notice.

Selected Bibliography

Studies of Hinduism


Fuller, C.J., The Camphor Flame, Popular Hinduism and Society in India, Princeton


Zaehner, R.C., *Hinduism*, Oxford University Press, ?


**Studies of Buddhism**


**Christians and Hindus / Buddhists**


