Introduction to

Hinduism and Buddhism

AP/WM649

Fall 2017, Monday 2-5pm
Instructor: Dr. Kevin Xiyi Yao
Office Hours: TBA

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Course Website: Log into sakai.gcts.edu and click on the tab labeled “AP/WM 649 HA-15”.

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 doing so, students will formulate a Biblical approach to non-Christian religions or theology of religion, and become aware of some key issues and ongoing debates about evangelism among Hindu and Buddhist populations.
Class Format is diverse and interactive. It includes lecture, discussion, presentation, and possible field trip. Students’ participation is highly valued and encouraged.

Requirements

(Please hand in hard copies of all your papers. The first journal is exceptional.)

A. Two Integration Journals (35%): summarizing lectures, readings, and personal reflections. It should be double-spaced, 8-10 pages for each.

Due Dates: The First Journal: 10/23 (submitted to Dr. Yao by email)
The Second Journal: 12/19

B. Research Project and Presentation (40%): each student should choose a subject related to the topics of this course, and do research on it:

- Each student should choose his or her own topic and methods, and must submit one page project proposal specifying the topic and its significances, goals and methods, and listing the primary sources. All proposals need to be approved by the professor. Due Date: 10/02
- 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 can be introductory, apologetic or evangelistic.
- In Week 14 each student is required to present the results of his or her studies to the whole class for 25 minutes in one class session, including presentation and Q & A time. Each student can design the format of his or her presentation, and employ any auditory / visual or multi-media aids to articulate their points.
- Each student should prepare and submit a file containing:
  1. A 3-5 page, double-spaced introduction of the project topic, its significances, and goals of the project
  2. The materials of any kind, relevant to the topic, which support his or her points
  3. A five page, double-spaced conclusion summarizing the main ideas and points of the project.

File Due Date: 12/19

OR

You can choose to write a term paper, instead of project. The topics need to be pertinent to the contents of this course, and interesting to you and relevant to your future ministry. Your topic should be approved by the instructor.

- Length: 15-20 pp, double-spaced, including footnotes and bibliography as needed. You are also required to give a presentation.

Term Paper Topic Due Date: 10/02
Term Paper Due Date: 12/19

C. Field Project (20%): During Week 7-9, each student is required to visit a local Buddhist or Hindu temple or center, and write a report (6-8 pages, double spaces). In this report, you should describe the institutions you visit, tell your experience and impression, and reflect on Christian attitude and approach toward that community. Due Date: 11/13

D. Reading of the Sources and Class Participation (5%) We will read some key Hindu and Buddhist texts and discuss them in class. Students are expected to participate actively.

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*


*Additional articles and chapters may be distributed to students.*

**Schedule, Topics and Required Readings**

*(Please pay attention to six weeks with expanded class hours)*

**Week 1 (09/11)**

**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
• Lopez, 9-11

Week 2 (09/18, 2-5:30pm) - 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 (09/25, 2-5:30pm) - Hinduism II:
• The pantheon of the Hindu gods: Brahmann, 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;
• Contemporary controversy: Insider Movement

Readings:
• Ellinger, ch. 3,4, 5
• Jacobs, ch.3.5.6
• Fowler, ch. 5.6.7.9.10
• Kraemer, ch.V, “Hinduism.”
• Thomas, M.M., 49-62.
• Howell, 407-420.

Week 4 (10/02, 2-5:30pm) - Buddhism I:
• The Buddha; the Buddhist worldview: the four noble truths I: The human predicament
  *The solutions: The four noble truths II: Karma, Rebirth
Readings:
- Harvey, 3-5, 64-94
- Smith, ch 1-5
- Strong, 87-103

Project or Term Paper Topic Due

Week 5 (10/09-13): Reading Week:

Readings:
- Tennent, Part 1
- Frykenberg, ch.7

Week 6 (10/16) Hinduism III:

Guest Speaker: Dr. Bobby Bose

Week 7 (10/23) Field Project

First Journal Due (submitted to Dr. Yao by email)

Week 8 (10/30) Field Project

Week 9 (11/06) - Reading Week:

Readings:
- Tennent, Part 2

Week 10 (11/13) - Buddhism II:
  *Nirvana;
  *Morality, wisdom, poverty, and celibacy

Readings:
- Smith, ch. 6
- Strong, 104-110, 111-126
- Harvey, ch. 6,8

Field Visit Report Due

Week 11 (11/20, 2-5:30pm) - Buddhism III:
• Historical developments: Hinayana and Mahayana; Cross-Cultural Spread.
• Buddhism as a world religion: The case of the East Asia
• Popular forms of Buddhism;
• The gods; Rites and festivals;

Readings:
• Harvey, 5-28
• Smith, ch 7-10
• Harvey, ch.3,4,5.9

Week 12 (11/27, 2-5;30pm) - Buddhism IV:
• The diversification of the Buddhist tradition in the world today;
• Contemporary revivals and reforms.
• 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:
• Smith, ch. 13-18
• Richards, 79-89, 137-149, 154-167

Week 13 (12/04, 2-5:30pm)  Buddhism V:
*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
• Newbigin, 149-159.

Week 14 (12/11) - Presentations

12/19: The Second Journal Due;
Term Project File or Term Paper Due
*All topics and required readings are subject to change without notice.

Selected Bibliography

Studies of Hinduism:


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


**Studies of Buddhism:**


Morreale, Don ed., *The Complete Guide to Buddhist America*, Boston, MA:


**Christians and Hindus / Buddhists:**


