

AR3067W Understanding The Different World Religions of Our Neighbours

Offered: 2018: Semester 1
[Unit offered alternatively as DM3067W]

This unit introduces a student to various religions of the world including, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Confucianism/Daoism and selected Indigenous Religions. Students will examine the historical development of these religions and spiritualities, with reference to key figures, central beliefs & practices, and their interaction with historical Western and Christian traditions. Particular attention will be paid to the beliefs and practices of religious adherents in the Australian context. During the unit students will visit places of worship and religious devotion, including temples, shrines and mosques, and participate in discussions with religious leaders and adherents about their beliefs and practices.

Upon successful completion of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. describe historical developments of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Confucianism/Daoism and selected Indigenous Religions;
2. describe the key figures of each religion and their significance for religious adherents;
3. analyse the central beliefs and practices of each religion;
4. assess the place and importance of the sacred texts for each religion;
5. compare 'popular' beliefs and practices of adherents with 'formal' beliefs and practices in each religion; and
6. discuss potential bridges and barriers for conversation, Christian witness and dialogue.

Prerequisites: Nil

Class Time: Three hours per week

Assessment: Four x 500 word summaries/overviews on each religion, including historical development, key figures, main beliefs and practices (40%)
Review of selected readings (1,000 words) (20%)
Essay on a selected religion (2,000 words) (40%)

Faculty: Ian Dicks

Recommended Reading:

* = set texts recommended for purchase

Denny, Frederick M. *An Introduction to Islam*. 4th ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2010.

Dowley, Tim. *Introduction To World Religions*, ed. C. Partridge, 4th ed., Oxford: Lion, 2014.

*Farhadian, Charles, E. *Introducing World Religions: A Christian Engagement*. Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 2015.

Gardener, D. K. *Confucianism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Hinnells, John R., ed. *The Penguin Handbook of the World's Living Religions*, London: Penguin, 2010.

Keown, Damien. *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Knott, Tim. *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Morris, Brian. *Religion And Anthropology: A Critical Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Nesbitt, Eleanor, *Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

*Prothero, Stephen. *God is Not One*, New York: Harper Collins, 2010.

Smith, Huston. *The World's Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions*, New York: Harper Collins. 1991.