

# ROWAN UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

**PROPOSAL TITLE:** World Religions I

**CHECK APPROPRIATE:**  UNDERGRADUATE     GRADUATE     SEMESTER HOURS

**SPONSOR(S):** D Ashton, J Grace

**DEPARTMENT/TELEPHONE #**

**CHECK ONE:**  COURSE     MINOR PROGRAM     CONCENTRATION     SPECIALIZATION  
 ACHIEVEMENT CERTIFICATE     CERTIFICATION PROGRAM     MAJOR PROGRAM

DJEFF  
FEB 05 1998

<p><b>Step #1 (Department)</b></p> <p><u>10/24/97</u> Approved (Date)  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved (Date)</p> <p><u><i>David Allaway</i></u>          Dept. Curriculum Chr.</p> <p><u>10/24/97</u>          Reviewed (Date)</p> <p><u><i>David Allaway</i></u>          Dept. Chr.</p>	<p><b>Step #2 (Receipt)</b></p> <p>SCC# <u>97-98-229</u>  <u>2-5-98</u></p> <p>_____          Date Received Senate</p> <p>_____          Senate Curriculum Chr.</p>	<p><b>Step #3 (School)</b></p> <p>Reviewed Date: <u>1/27/98</u></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend to Approved  <input type="checkbox"/> Recommend NOT to Approve</p> <p>Forward for Open Hearing:  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WITHOUT Reservations  <input type="checkbox"/> WITH Reservations:</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p><u><i>Joy Hultenbury</i></u>          School Committee Chr.</p>
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**Step #4 (Academic Dean):**  Recommended     NOT Recommended     Conditionally Recommended (See Comments)

Comments:

Dean Signature/Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Step #5 (Senate Curriculum Committee):** Open Hearing Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by Curriculum Committee Date \_\_\_\_\_

Returned to Sponsor(s) for the following reason:

**Step #6 (Senate)** Date announced/voted on at Senate \_\_\_\_\_ If voted on:  Approved     NOT Approved

Date forwarded to Executive Vice President/Provost \_\_\_\_\_

Senate Curriculum Committee chair Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROPOSAL FOR THE COURSE "WORLD RELIGIONS I"

### I. Details

- A. Course title: World Religions I
- B. Sponsors: Dianne Ashton, Philosophy/Religion  
James H. Grace, Philosophy/Religion
- C. Credit Hours: 3
- D. Course Level: 200
- E. Curricular Effect: This course will be required of all students majoring in Religion and Philosophy with an emphasis in Religion Studies. It will also fulfill General Education requirements for all other students at Rowan University. In addition, it is a Multicultural/Global course.
- F. Prerequisites: none.
- G. Implementation:
  1. Time: Fall semester, 1998.
  2. Scale: At least two sections of this course will be offered every semester, depending on student demand.
- H. Adequacy of:
  1. Staffing: The Philosophy/Religion Department presently has two members who are qualified to teach this course. It is expected that other current or new members will teach this course in the future.
  2. Library Facilities and Holdings: The Philosophy/Religion Department has over the past ten years ordered many books and periodicals that relate to this course. With these, and future additions, the Library's collection will continue to suffice for the purpose of a course on this topic.
  3. Space Needs: Two or more classrooms with blackboards and seating for thirty will be needed every semester.

### II. Rationale

1. World Religions I, in its focus upon religious traditions largely unfamiliar to undergraduates, will introduce students to understandings of faith that have been and still are an integral part of world cultures and civilizations. As the various peoples on our planet move closer to each other, it is imperative that students learn about the world views and value perspectives of their neighbors in the emergent global village.

2. From its inception the academic study of religion has been interdisciplinary in its methodology, reflecting the truism that knowing is a wholistic activity, involving the knower and many modes of inquiry. Students who take this course will thus have the opportunity to integrate what they have previously learned in the humanities, the social sciences, and the hard sciences into their study of religion.

3. It has been our experience that Rowan undergraduates bring to our courses many questions about religion. World Religion I will enable them to know and reflect upon a variety of "answers" to their questions as well as new kinds of questions that emerge from studying unfamiliar religious traditions.

### III. Essence of the Course

- A. Course Objectives: A student who successfully completes this course will be able to complete the following tasks:
1. Explain the major characteristics of Indigenous and Bygone Religions.
  2. Identify both the similarities and differences that exist among the religions originating in South and East Asia.
  3. Compare the beliefs, scriptures, and rituals of one religion studied in this course(e.g., Hinduism)with those of a dominant faith in American society(e.g., Christianity).
  4. Explain how historical and cultural factors both influence and are influenced by religious traditions and values.
  5. Discuss the impact of science and technology on the religions of South and East Asia.
  6. Present an informed and reflective discussion on the future prospects of religions studied in this course.
- B. Topical Outline/Content
- A. Religion in Indigenous Cultures
1. Beginnings: religion in prehistoric cultures
  2. Characteristics of Indigenous religions today
  3. Case Study: The Dieri of Southeast Australia
  4. Case Study: The BaVenta of South Africa
- B. Bygone Religions
1. Mesopotamia
  2. Greece and Rome
  3. Scandanavia
- C. Early Hinduism: From Ritual Sacrifice to Mystical Union
1. Religion in the Vedic Age
  2. Brahmanism, Caste, & Ceremonies
- D. Later Hinduism: Determinant of Social Behavior
1. Changes in Brahmanism: The Four Goals and Three Yogas
  2. Karma Yoga: the ordered society
  3. Jnana Yoga: the Upanishads
  4. Bhakti Yoga: the way of devotion, The Bhagavad-Gita
  5. Epics, Puranas, and Deities
  6. The Devotional Life

- E. Buddhism's First Phase: Moderation in World Denial
  - 1. Life of Siddhartha Gautama
  - 2. The Four Noble Truths/The 8-Fold Noble Path
  - 3. The Rise of the Theravada School
- F. Buddhism's Development: Flexibility and Diversity
  - 1. Spread in India and Southeast Asia
  - 2. Origin and Message of the Mahayana School
  - 3. Mahayana in China and Japan
  - 4. Tibetan Buddhism
- G. Native Chinese Religion and Taoism
  - 1. Primal Religion in China
  - 2. Taoism as a Philosophy: The Tao Te Ching
  - 3. Taoism as Magic and Religion
- H. Confucius and Confucianism
  - 1. Confucius and his Analects
  - 2. Neo-Confucianism
  - 3. The State Cult of Confucius
  - 4. Religion in China Today
- I. Shinto and Japanese Culture
  - 1. The Shinto Myth
  - 2. History and Development
  - 3. State Shinto and the Warrior
  - 4. Shinto Today: Shrine, Domestic, and Sectarian

C. Evaluation and Grading: At the discretion of the instructor students may be evaluated on the basis of examinations, journals, class participation, research projects, and other written assignments.

D. Course Evaluations: SIRs and peer review as well as students' qualitative assessments presented at the end of the course regarding what they liked most or least about i) the course, ii) the instructor, iii) the material used, e.g., texts, tests, audio-visuals, etc. Students will also be asked to provide suggestions to improve the course.

E. Consultations: The following persons have been consulted informally about the content and structure of this course: Dr. Harry Steele, Marshall University; Dr. Beatrice Tomlinson, Bates College; Dr. Muriel Schwartz, Indiana University(PA).

F. Additional Information: Selected Bibliography

Codrington, Robert H. The Melanesians: Studies in their Anthropology and Folklore.

Durkheim, Emile. The Elementary Forms of Religious Life.

Eliade, Mircea. Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy.

Frazer, James G. The Golden Bough.

Malinowski, Bronislaw. Magic, Science, and Religion.

Tylor, E.B. Primitive Culture.

Pritchard, Jas. B., ed. Ancient Near Eastern Texts.

Rose, H.J. Ancient Greek Religion.  
Ferguson, J. The Religions of the Roman Empire.  
MacCulloch, J.A. Celtic and Scandinavian Religions.  
Basham, A.L. The Wonder That Was India.  
Dasgupta, S. Hindu Mysticism.  
Hopkins, Thomas J. The Hindu Religious Tradition.  
Brockington, J.L. The Sacred Thread: Hinduism in its  
Continuity and Diversity.  
O'Flaherty, Wendy D. The Hindu Myths.  
Sarma, D.S. The Renaissance of Hinduism.  
Zimmer, H. Philosophies of India.  
Burt, E.A., ed. The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha.  
Coomaraswamy, A.K. The Living Thoughts of Gotama Buddha.  
Thomas, E.J. History of Buddhist Thought.  
Conze, E. Buddhism: Its Essence and Development.  
Spiro, Medford. Buddhism and Society.  
Ch'en, Kenneth. Buddhism in China.  
Anesaki, M.A. A History of Japanese Religion.  
Kapleau, Philip. The Three Pillars of Zen.  
Thompson, Laurence. Chinese Religion.  
Waley, Arthur. Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China.  
Bellah, Robert. Tokugawa Religion.  
Earhart, H. Byron. Religion in the Japanese Experience.

G. Catalog Description

200 Level

No Prerequisites

WORLD RELIGIONS I 3 s.h.

This course will focus primarily upon the major faiths of South and Far Eastern Asia: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto. Some attention will also be given to religions of bygone civilizations and contemporary indigeneous peoples.