

SYLLABUS

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**Religion 10390**  
**Religions and the Human Community**  
Fall Accelerated Evening Term 1998  
October 5 - December 16, 1998

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**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to help foster your knowledge of major world religious traditions and to help you develop an understanding of the role religions play within the human community. It will cover the following religious traditions, as possible in both their classical and modern forms:

- Religions of the Pacific
- Religions of South Asia
- Religions of China and Japan
- Ancient Religions of the Near East
- Greek and Roman Religions
- Judaism
- Christianity
- Islam

**Course Objectives:** Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe the historical development of each world religion.
- Define many of the important terms and concepts used in world religions.
- Compare the similarities and differences in the way in which religious concepts are interpreted by different traditions.
- Discuss unique contributions made by each of the world religions.
- Discuss what religion is and how it functions in human life.

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**Class Format and Activities** This course is offered online utilizing e-mail and other internet technologies. Consequently, students are required to have access to a computer which is connected to the internet prior to registration. Students are also expected to be familiar with basic internet technology including sending and receiving e-mail and attachments, web board postings, navigating the World Wide Web, performing searches, and downloading files. Regular weekly e-mail communication with the instructor and the submission of all required assignments is important to the successful completion of the course, and collaborative electronic communication between classmates concerning course content is encouraged.

There are two required in-person meetings; an orientation meeting held at the beginning of the term and a final meeting in which a final examination will be administered at the conclusion of the term. Orientation and final meetings are held on the Chaminade University of Honolulu campus.

Specific weekly course assignments are transmitted to each class member at the beginning of each academic week (Sunday) as noted in the course schedule. Weekly course assignments will typically include: (1) reading assignments, and (2) discussion group questions posted on Sunday which require a response by each student by midnight on Friday of that week. Either the Chaminade University Web Board or e-mail will be used for discussion group questions and posting during the course of the term, as determined by the instructor. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor directly with any questions, or for clarification of assigned tasks, prior to established deadlines.

In addition to weekly readings and discussion group postings, each student is required to complete a course project in which they will design, compose and present an original image of the divine as conceptualized by a religious tradition outside of their own. One mid-term examination will be administered online, and an in-person comprehensive final examination will be administered at the conclusion of the course. At a minimum, the mid-term examination will include (1) definitions of key terms and concepts related to the religious traditions studied to that point in the course, and (2) short comparative essay questions. At a minimum, the final examination will consist of (1) student presentations of their course project, (2) definitions of key terms and concepts in world religions, and (3) reflective essay questions requiring fuller responses than those posed on the mid-term examination.

**Text:** Smart, Ninian. *The World's Religions*, 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press, 1998.

**Grading:** Satisfactory performance entails the successful completion of all of the following:

(1) Participation in weekly web board or e-mail discussions (pass/fail); (2) completion of the course project; (3) a mid-term examination; and (4) a comprehensive final examination. The weight of each of the various elements comprising the overall course grade is summarized as follows:

<b>Discussion Group Postings</b>	<b>20% (pass/fail)</b>
<b>Course Project</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Mid-Term Examination</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Final Examination</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

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90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
50 - 59	F

All grades will reflect the standards set forth in Chaminade's 1998-99 General Catalog

**Expectations:** With the possible exception of documented emergencies, there will be no extensions given on assignment due dates or the final examination without the prior approval of the instructor. Students who fail to submit assignments or comply with other requirements are advised to withdraw from the course in order to avoid a final course grade of "F". Grades of "Incomplete" will only be given in cases of documented extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control and in accordance with Chaminade University of Honolulu policies. Attendance in this class is represented by the student's weekly web board postings and submission of other assignments. Students are expected to observe the regulations concerning academic honesty published by Chaminade University of Honolulu (see Chaminade University General Catalog).

**As subjects examined during this course may touch upon topics, beliefs, and/or issues considered sensitive by some students, it is imperative that all students demonstrate courtesy and respect concerning the views, opinions, and beliefs of others**

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