This course surveys the central beliefs and patterns of life of living religious traditions of Asia. It will focus particularly on the basic texts or narratives of these traditions, on their essential histories, and on the concepts of humanity, the world, and the divine that are distinctive of each. In addition, the course will explore not only what people believe religiously but also what they do religiously. Part of the course, therefore, will consider the ways of life, forms of social action, and rituals practiced by different communities. Not all Asian traditions can be included in a one-semester survey. The traditions chosen have large numbers of adherents, have particular historical significance, and represent different cultural areas.

By the end of the course, students will have a understanding of the basic histories and orientations of the major religious traditions originating in Asia.

Written Assignments and Attendance:

Written assignments comprise three interpretive essays on primary texts assigned in the course, a midterm exam, and a final exam. The final exam will include an interpretive essay on a fourth primary text. The exam is scheduled on Saturday, December 13, 2:00-5:00 pm. Please do not make travel arrangements to leave Austin before that date since we are not able to change the time of the final.

The final grade for written work will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three essays</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
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We allow up to three unexcused absences. Beyond that number, one point for each unexcused absence may be deducted from the ten points for attendance. On the other hand, vigorous and informed participation in class discussions can help a grade, especially a marginal one. Other factors, such as a student's progress or effort in the course, may also help final grades for the class.

Grading:
This class uses a grading scale of 93-100 A, 90-92 A-, 87-89 B+, 83-86 B, 80-82 B-, 77-79 C+, 73-76 C, 70-72 C-, etc.

**Posted Materials:**
Assignments, handouts, and some additional materials will be posted on Canvas. You can access the Canvas website for this course from [http://canvas.utexas.edu/](http://canvas.utexas.edu/)

**Special Needs:**
At the beginning of the semester, students with disabilities who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Service for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office. Students may contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY, [http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability](http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability)

**Academic Honesty:**
Be careful not to copy the work of peers or to use material without proper attribution. Nothing can be more disastrous for your grade or for your college record than to be found to have violated the University rules on academic honesty. Students who violate these rules are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course or dismissal from the University or both. If you have any questions about properly utilizing sources, check with the TA or instructor.

**Global Cultures Flag:**
This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. All the assignments in this course will concern the practices, beliefs, and histories of Asian cultural groups, both past and present.

**Certificate Program in Core Texts and Ideas:**
This course counts towards the Certificate Program in Core Texts and Ideas, a 6-course sequence in the great books, ideas, and controversies. The program is open to students in all majors and colleges. For more information, visit [http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/coretexts/](http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/coretexts/) or email the academic director, Professor Lorraine Pangle, at lorrainepangle@austin.utexas.edu.
Religious Holy Days:
By UT policy, you must notify the instructor of your pending absence at least two weeks prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you miss an examination or an assignment in order to observe a religious holy day, we will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Required Texts:
R. K. Narayan, tr., *The Ramayana*
Patrick Olivelle, tr., *The Buddhacarita: Life of the Buddha* (on Canvas)
Burton Watson, tr., *Zhuangzi: Basic Writings*
Hiroaki Sato, tr., *Basho’s Narrow Road: Spring and Autumn Passage*

With the exception of Olivelle, *The Buddhacarita*, all the above books will be available on reserve at the PCL. Note that there are electronic versions of *Zhuangzi* and *Basho’s Narrow Road* available through the library. Additional assigned readings will be available on the Canvas site.

The following schedule is subject to change according to the unfolding dictates of *karma* and the shifting course of the *Dao*. Any changes will be announced in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>HINDUISM</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>August</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; the Traditional Hindu World</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The Traditional Hindu World</td>
<td>Oxtoby, 3ed. pp. 30–105, 4ed. 30–103</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Story of Rāma</td>
<td><em>The Ramayana</em></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The Story of Rāma</td>
<td><em>The Ramayana</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Story of Rāma</td>
<td><em>The Ramayana</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
10 Images of Beauty: Kṛṣṇa
   “Baby Kṛṣṇa,” “Kṛṣṇa/Kāliya,” “Kṛṣṇa/Clothing,” “Rāsalīlā”

12 Images of Power: Śiva and Devī
   “Brahmā,” “Śiva/Sages,” “Durgā”

15 Images of Power: Śiva and Devī
   Essay on The Ramayana.

**ISLAM IN SOUTH ASIA**

17 The Unity and Diversity of Islam
   Renard, Seven Doors to Islam, “Foundations”

19 Islam in South Asia

**BUDDHISM**

22 Introduction to Buddhism

24 The Buddha’s Life
   Jātaka stories, Buddhacarita (The Life of the Buddha)

26 The Buddha’s Life
   Buddhacarita (The Life of the Buddha)

29 The Four Noble Truths
   Selection from E. Conze, Buddhist Scriptures: “The Questions of King Milinda”

*October*

1 The Four Noble Truths
   Selection from J. Strong, The Experience of Buddhism: “The Path”

3 The Four Noble Truths

6 The Four Noble Truths
   Selection from J. Strong, The Experience of Buddhism: “Meditation”

8 Mahāyāna: Bodhisattvas

10 Mahāyāna: Buddhas
   Essay on The Life of the Buddha

13 Mahāyāna: Emptiness
   “The Heart Sūtra”

15 Mahāyāna: Mind Only
17 Vajrayāṇa
20 Vajrayāṇa
22 Midterm Exam

CHINESE TRADITIONS

24 Themes in Chinese Religion
   Oxtoby 3ed. pp. 256–294, 4ed. 264–304
27 The Confucian Tradition
   “The Metal-Bound Coffer” “Filial Exemplars”
29 The Confucian Tradition
   “Mencius”
31 The Daoist Tradition
   Zhuangzi

November

3 The Daoist Tradition
   Zhuangzi
5 The Daoist Tradition
   Daodejing Book I, pp. 157-177
7 Religious Daoism
10 Buddhism in China
   “Mulian”
12 Buddhism in China
   Essay on Zhuangzi

JAPANESE TRADITIONS

14 Shintō
   Film: “Man, Gods, and Nature in Japan”
17 Shintō
19 Shintō

21 History & Religion in Japan
   Oxtoby 3ed. pp. 338–362, 4ed. 351–379
24 History & Religion in Japan
26 Folk Transformations
December

1 Z D Zen  Basho’s Narrow Road

3 Z D Zen  Basho’s Narrow Road

5 Z D Zen  Basho’s Narrow Road

Final Exam: Saturday, December 13, 2:00-5:00 pm