**Dr. Adam Wells**

**Wiley 004**

**276-944-6150**

[**awells@ehc.edu**](mailto:awells@ehc.edu)

**Office hours: 1-3 M**

**1:30-3:30 T,Th**

**Religion 212: Asian Religions**

This course offers an in-depth survey of Asian religions, focusing on the interpretation of primary texts in their historical, theological and philosophical contexts. The first unit of the course will cover the religions of Southeast Asia. Beginning with the Brahmanical tradition, we will trace the development of Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. The second unit of the course will examine the religions of East Asia: Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and Zen and Chan Buddhism.

**COURSE GOALS:**

1. Students will become acquainted with the historical context, (a-)theology, philosophy, and major texts of Asian religions.
2. Students will develop an appreciation for the diversity of Asian religions.
3. Students will sharpen their close reading, writing and analytical skills.
4. Students will be able to relate Asian religious traditions to their own tradition (whether that tradition be religious, secular, or otherwise).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. Embree, Ainslee T., ed. *Sources of Indian Tradition*. Vol. 1. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988
2. De Bary, William Theodore, ed. *Sources of East Asian Tradition*. Vol 1. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
3. Esposito, Fasching and Lewis (eds.), *Religions of Asia Today*. Oxford: OUP, 2015.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. 2,500 word research paper (20%). (Due 11/24)
2. Presentation based on research (10%)
3. Two group projects (30%). (9/15-22 and 10/8-15)
4. Pop presentations (10%)
5. Midterm (10%) (10/22)
6. Final exam (20)% (12/12)

**Research Paper (20%)**

You will write one major research paper. More information will be given in class.

**Presentation Based on Research Paper (10%)**

You will present the results of your research to the class during the last week of the course. More information about the presentations will be given in class

**PBL Group Projects (30%)**

See PBL Handout

**Pop Presentations (10%)**

Two or three times during the semester you will be called upon to give a 7-10 minute presentation on the reading for the day. When I call on you for your presentation, you will be expected to summarize the main points of the reading, generate discussion, raise some questions, state your own opinion, explain why you think the reading is relevant (or not, as the case may be), bring in what you know from other classes, etc. You are not required to do each of these things, and you—like I—should expect that your peers have done the reading and do not need to have everything explained to them. This is your chance to hone your analytical reading skills (close reading requires taking notes, reflecting, etc.) and to steer the conversation in a direction you find interesting. Each student will have at least two opportunities to present to the class.

The grade for these “pop presentations” will be A, C, or F: If you’ve clearly done the reading and put thought into your presentation, you will receive an A. If you’ve done the reading but your presentation is somehow lacking, you will receive a C. If you clearly haven’t done the reading, you will receive an F.

**Midterm (10%)**

**Final Exam (20%)**

**SCHEDULE OF READING ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Unit I. India**

*Week 1* (8/27)

Introduction

Week 2 (9/1-9/3)

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 3-31.
2. **Moodle:** Edward Said, *Orientalism* (selections)

Week 3 (9/8-9/10)

The Vedic Period

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 77-92
2. **Embree**, Chs. 1 and 2

Week 4-5 (9/15-9/25)

Project 1: Upanishads

Jainism

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 92-95
2. **Embree:** pp. 41-75

*Week 6* (9/29)

Later Hinduism and Sikhism

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 95-141

*Week 7*-8(10/6-10/15)

Early Buddhism and Project 2: The Four Noble Truths

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 169-198
2. **Embree**: 100-114
3. **Project 2**

Week 9 (10/20-10/22)

Expansion of Buddhism

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 199-224
2. **Midterm Exam – 10/22**

**Unit II. China and Japan**

*Week 10* (10/27-10/29)

Early Chinese religion and Confucianism

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 257-271
2. **De Bary**, Chs. 3 and 6.

*Week 11* (11/3-11/5)

Daoism and Shinto

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 275-281
2. **De Bary,** Chs. 5 and 14
3. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 281-283
4. **De Bary,** Chs. 42-43

*Week 12* (11/10-11/12)

Evolution of East Asian Religions

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 283-345

*Week 13* (11/17-11/19)

Islam in Asia

1. **Rel of Asia:** pp. 347-369
2. **Embree,** pp. 383-391**,** 447-460, 483-488

*Week* *14* (11/24-26)

11/24: **Research Paper Due**. Class canceled – Prof. will be away at a conference.

11/26-29: Thanksgiving Break

*Week 15* (12/1-12/3)

Student Presentations

*Week 16* (12/8)

Catch-up and Review.

**FINAL EXAM 12/12.**

**GENERAL GRADING RUBRIC:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Lower Numerical Cutoff** | **Description** |
| A | 94 | Exceptional work that shows creativity and careful analysis of material. A-level work is sophisticated, well-written, and free from errors in grammar and spelling. |
| A- | 90 | Shows exceptional mastery of concepts, and goes well beyond requirements. |
| B+ | 87 | Work in the B-range is above average. B level work may be excellent work with several small errors or flaws. It is solid work, and shows significant command of concepts. |
| B | 84 |  |
| B- | 80 |  |
| C+ | 77 | Work in the C-range is average and satisfactory. It fulfills the criteria of the assignment, but does not display the same level of analysis, comprehension, and/or creativity as B and A-level work |
| C | 74 |  |
| C- | 70 |  |
| D | 60 | Work in the D-range is substandard. It may have major flaws, or show little mastery of major or minor concepts. |
| F | 0 | Work in the F-range shows no mastery of relevant material. F-level work fails to complete requirements or is otherwise unacceptable. |

\*\*Letter grades are equivalent to a numerical score 1 point above the lower numerical cutoff. For example, an A paper is equivalent to a numerical score of 95

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**:

During your college years, by responsible class attendance you can establish a reputation for reliability that will help your professors to write good reference letters for jobs or programs of graduate study. I value faithful attendance highly, as an indication of your commitment to the course goals.

You are allowed TWO excused absences. You may request that an absence be excused for an appropriate reason such as sickness, a medical appointment, athletic competition, dangerous driving conditions, etc. An excused absence is based on an email request from you (**not** on a note from a nurse, a list from a coach, or your telling me why you missed class). **Before or right after any** **absence, please email me, giving the date and the reason that you missed class, if you want me** **to consider excusing the absence.** **If you do not email me before or soon after your absence, I will assume that it is unexcused**. Unexcused absences will reduce your course average by 2 points for each such absence.

**More than 5 absences will result in an automatic F.**

**There are no exceptions to this attendance policy regardless of individual circumstances.**

**PARTICIPATION POLICY:**

Informed participation is expected. You should be physically and mentally present and engaged in every class! Your learning process will be helped immensely by participating actively in the course, so don’t be afraid to ask questions, or engage your peers (and me) in discussion. Be bold!

Non-participation (e.g., sleeping, eating your lunch, staring off in the distance for extended periods of time, disruptive behavior and so forth) will negatively impact your course grade.

**COMPUTER AND CELL PHONE POLICY:**

A successful class requires the active participation of everyone involved. Cell phones are distracting and disruptive; they are detrimental to both individual learners and the class as a whole. Consequently, the use of cell phones in class is strictly forbidden, unless I specifically ask you to use them. Turn them off before class begins—off, not vibrate! I will give you one warning per semester, after which I will deduct one point from your final grade for every violation of this policy. If I see your cell phone during an exam or quiz, you will automatically receive a ZERO on that exam or quiz.

The use of laptops in class is likewise prohibited unless I ask you to use them, or unless you have a documented accommodation from the Powell Resource Center.

**POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

The Emory & Henry College Honor Pledge is as follows:

I understand that Emory & Henry is a community built on trust. Therefore, as a member of this community, I am committed to tell the truth and to maintain the sanctity of other people’s property, including computer data/access. I will abstain from all fraud in academic work. I will neither give nor receive aid on any form of test or assigned work where such aid is prohibited, nor tolerate this conduct in any member of the Emory & Henry Community. I will deal responsibly with such acts when I observe them. By my conduct and influence, I will endeavor to build a high standard of honesty and truthfulness in all academic work.

Any evidence of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment or failure of the course (at my discretion). Academic dishonesty includes such acts as receiving improper assistance on tests and quizzes. For writing assignments, academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, which is work copied or paraphrased from another source without proper citation, copied from your own work for other classes, or written or revised by someone else. If you refer to another source, you need to give credit directly to that source when you quote directly and when you paraphrase. Any incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported and dealt with in adherence to the College’s Honor System procedures.

**EMAIL POLICY:**

I would much rather meet with you in person than correspond via email. However, I will make every effort to be available to you by email. I will answer student emails for one hour, between 2:30 and 3:30, each workday. If you do not receive a response from me within two working days (note: that does not include weekends), feel free to send me a reminder. I often get 30-50 emails per day. It is very easy to overlook one. Keep in mind that I do not have time to answer complex questions by email. If your query requires an answer of more than a few sentences, you should come by my office.

**How to Get the Most Out of This Course**

As with any course, what you invest will determine your return, not simply in the grade you earn but in the knowledge and perspectives you take with you. Things to do, more or less in order of importance, are:

1. **Keep up with the assignments**. There is a good deal of reading in this course, and more than in the ordinary 200-level course. Stay current with the reading assignments. If you fall behind you will have a hard time catching up.

2. **Prepare conscientiously for class discussions**. Read closely the texts assigned, ponder the questions provided, make notes, and be ready to participate in discussion in a thoughtful and well-informed manner.

3. **Take advantage of the office hours of the instructor**. My office hours are for your benefit. They provide opportunities for you not only to ask questions and obtain clarifications, but also to get to know me and to let me get to know you.

4. **Familiarize yourself with the specialized vocabulary of the academic study of religion**. There are many technical terms and fifty-cent words: learn what they mean and how to pronounce and spell them. To this end, you should freely and frequently consult the glossary provided at the back of the textbook.

5. **Make use of resources beyond those required for reading or purchase**. There are many, many commentaries, dictionaries, concordances, etc. Don’t be afraid to consult outside sources! (Our reference librarians will be glad to help you with this!)