

Introduction to World Religions (HU-136)
General Education Course outline

Department		Knowledge Group	Nil
Program	MSDS	Class	
Course code	HU-136	Academic Session/Semester	
Course name	Introduction to World Religions	Prerequisite (course name and code, if applicable):	Nil
Credit hours	2-0		

Course Synopsis	This course is designed for non-Muslim students in lieu of Islamic studies courses, offers a comprehensive exploration of the world's major religious traditions, examined through historical, textual, and contemporary global lenses. Students will engage with foundational texts, core beliefs, ritual practices, and lived expressions of religion across cultures and time periods. From Indigenous worldviews to the global transformations, the course highlights both the diversity and shared dimensions of religious life. Moreover, emphasis will also be placed on inter-religious dialogue, the role of religion in modern pluralistic societies, and its ongoing relevance in the 21st century.			
Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)	1. Describe the fundamental beliefs, historical developments, and practices of major world religions, and evaluate their roles in shaping individual lives and societies.	C-2		
	2. Demonstrate respect for different religions and understand their moral teachings to become more tolerant, empathetic, and responsible in a diverse world.	A3		
	3. Analyze the interdisciplinary approaches to examine the nature of religion, interfaith relations, science-religion dialogue, and the relevance of religion in the modern, secular, and pluralistic world.	C-4		
Instructor	Name	Office	Contact no.	Email

Mapping of General Education Attributes (GEA's) on Blooms Taxonomy

Attributes of GEA	Gratitude	Justice/Fairness	Self-restraint/accountability	Responsibility	Integrity/Truthfulness	Empathy and Compassion	Respect for others and the law	Service to Humanity
	GEA 1	GEA 2	GEA 3	GEA 4	GEA 5	GEA 6	GEA 7	GEA 8
BT level	A2	A2	A3	A3	A3	A3	A3	A3
	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

**Mapping of CLOs to PLOs
For PEC Accreditation**

	Engineering Knowledge	Problem Analysis	Design/Development of Solutions	Investigation	Tool Usage	The Engineer and the World	Ethics	Individual and Collaborative Teamwork	Communication	Project Management and Finance	Lifelong Learning
CLO's	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO 3	PLO 4	PLO 5	PLO 6	PLO 7	PLO 8	PLO 9	PLO 10	PLO 11
CLO - 1											✓
CLO - 2							✓				
CLO - 3						✓					

For NCEAC Accreditation

	Academic Education	Knowledge for Solving Computing Problems	Problem Analysis	Design/Development of Solutions	Modern Tool Usage	Individual and Teamwork	Communication	Individual and Collaborative Teamwork	Ethics	Life-long Learning
CLO's	PLO 1	PLO 2	PLO 3	PLO 4	PLO 5	PLO 6	PLO 7	PLO 8	PLO 9	PLO 10
CLO-1										✓
CLO-2									✓	
CLO-3								✓		

Week wise distribution of contents along with teaching methodology and mapping of GEA's and CLO's

Week	Topics	Teaching Methodology	GEA's	Cont. Hrs
1	Understanding Religion Definition and nature of religions. Functions and roles of religions in human life.	Case Study Method: Present real-world examples of how religion influences society or individuals. Simulated hearing and Inquiry-Based Discussions & Socratic Circles. Use open ended questions. Documentary Viewing: Watch and analyze historical documentaries.	1	2
2	Approaches to studying religion Theological Approach. Historical Approach. Sociological Approach.			2
3	Anthropological Approach. Psychological Approach. Philosophical Approach.			2
4	Religion in the Modern World Religion and secularism. Religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue. Role of religion in global politics and human rights.	Inquiry-Based Discussions: Debate religion's relevance in a globalized world. Case Study Analysis: Examine how secularism is applied in different nations in different times.	7	2
5	The Encounter of Religion and Science Historical conflicts and collaborations. Current debates on evolution, cosmology, bioethics, and artificial intelligence. Integration between science and faith.	Inquire based discussion and Problem-Based Learning/ Expert Talk or Virtual Interview: Bring in a scientist who is religious and has written about science vs. The one who is non-religious. Analyse their views in a comparative way.		2
6	Hinduism – Origins and Development The history of Hinduism. Key scriptures: Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita. Major deities and philosophical schools. Concepts of Dharma, Karma, Samsara, and Moksha.	Role play & Simulate hearing, scenarios based on teachings and values from Hinduism, including Dharma-based approaches, which emphasize duty, respect, and balance in life. Storytelling Technique: Narrate stories from ancient epics to illustrate historical evolution (e.g., Ramayana,	3, 5, 6 & 8	2

		Mahabharata).		
7	<p>Jainism</p> <p>History and origin of Jainism.</p> <p>Teachings: Ahimsa (nonviolence), Aparigraha (Non-Attachment), Anekantavada (Non-Absolutism).</p> <p>Jainism as a way of life: ascetic practices, ethical living.</p>	<p>Video Documentary + Discussion: Show how Jain monks live today—walking barefoot, sweeping paths, fasting, etc.</p> <p>Simulate hearing, scenarios based on teachings and values from Jainism, which emphasize non-attachment, respect, and balance in life.</p>	3, 5, 6 & 8	2
8	<p>Buddhism</p> <p>Life of Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha).</p> <p>The Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path.</p> <p>Historical development: Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana.</p> <p>Buddhism as a way of life (nonviolence, meditation, mindfulness).</p>	<p>Storytelling with Visual Aids: Narrate the life of the Buddha using images, storyboards, or short videos.</p> <p>Simulate hearing, scenarios based on teachings and values from Buddhism, including principles like mindfulness, compassion, right speech, which emphasize empathy, and ethical conduct in relationships.</p>	3, 5, 6 & 8	2
9	Mid-Semester Exam			
10	<p>Sikhism</p> <p>Historical context and emergence in 15th-century Punjab.</p> <p>Teachings of Guru Nanak and the 10 Gurus. Key concepts: Ik Onkar, Seva, Langar, Khalsa.</p> <p>Sikhism as a way of life: discipline, identity, community service.</p>	<p>Role play and simulate hearing and scenarios based on teachings and values from Sikhism, including principles such as selfless service, remembrance of God and welfare of all.</p> <p>Storytelling with Visual Aids: Narrate the early life and spiritual journey of Guru Nanak using images, storyboards, or short videos.</p>	3, 5, 6 & 8	2
11	<p>Judaism</p> <p>The history of Judaism: Patriarchs, Exodus, Exile, and Modernity.</p> <p>Teachings: Covenant, Torah, Mitzvot, Monotheism.</p> <p>Judaism as a way of life: Sabbath, Kosher laws, festivals.</p>	<p>Textual Analysis (Guided Reading): Examine short Torah excerpts about the Ten Commandments.</p> <p>Simulate hearing, scenarios based on teachings and values from Judaism, including principles such as justice, kindness, peace and the importance of commandments, which emphasize moral responsibility.</p>	3, 5 & 6	2
12	<p>Christianity</p> <p>The history of Christianity: Jesus Christ, Apostolic Age, Church history</p> <p>Core beliefs: Trinity, Salvation, Grace, Sacraments</p> <p>Christianity as a way of life: ethical teachings, love, service, worship</p>	<p>Simulate hearing and scenarios based on teachings and values from Christianity, including principles such as love, forgiveness, grace, humility, and the teachings of Jesus peace be upon Him, which emphasize compassion, service, and integrity in relationships.</p> <p>Documentary Clip + Discussion: Use videos about Jesus' life and early Christian communities (e.g., from BBC or National Geographic).</p>	3, 5, 6 & 8	2
13	<p>Islam</p> <p>The history of Islam: Prophet Muhammad, Qur'an, Caliphates</p> <p>Five Pillars of Islam, Hadith, Shariah, Ijma</p>	<p>Simulate hearing and scenarios based on teachings and values from Islam, including principles such as adl (justice), rahma (compassion), ihsan</p>	3, 5, 6 & 8	2

	(consensus). Islam as a way of life: daily prayer, fasting, community, ethics	(excellence in conduct), and akhlaq (morality), which emphasize duty to God, respect and kindness.		
14	Zoroastrianism The history of Zoroastrianism: Prophet Zoroaster, Persian Empire Teachings: Ahura Mazda, dualism, good thoughts/words/deeds Zoroastrianism as a way of life: rituals, fire temples, purity	Virtual Temple Tour or Image Analysis: Explore fire temples through videos or photos; discuss symbolism of fire as purity and divine light. Simulate hearing and scenarios based on teachings and values from Zoroastrianism, including principles such as asha (truth and order), good thoughts, good words and good deeds, which emphasize personal responsibility, integrity, and harmony in life.	3, 5, 6 & 8	2
15	Chinese Religions – Confucianism & Daoism History and context of: Confucian teachings i.e. filial piety, virtue, harmony and Daoist teachings i.e. Wu Wei, Dao, naturalness. As a way of life: ethics, governance, nature reverence.	Textual Reading and Analysis: Read and interpret short sayings from the <i>Analects</i> of Confucius. Simulate hearing scenarios based on teachings and values from Confucianism, including principles such as ren (benevolence), li (ritual propriety), yi (righteousness), and xiao (filial piety), which emphasize respect, social harmony, moral duty, and proper conduct in relationships.	3, 5, 6 & 8	2
16	Final Review of the Religions Comparative review of all the living religions. Common ethical themes and differences. Religion and the future of humanity.	Case studies; Group analysis moral discussions. Group presentations.		2
17	Course Revision			2
18	End Semester Exam			

Text book:

- Brodd, Jeffrey Little, Layne Nystrom, Bradley P. Platzner, Ro - Invitation to World Religions (2016, Oxford University Press).

Reference Books:

- Madhu Bazaz Wangu, Joanne O'Brien, Martin Palmer, *Hinduism*, Chelsea House Publications, 2009.
- Martha A. Morrison, Stephen F. Brown, Joanne O'Brien, Martin Palmer – *Judaism*, Chelsea House Publications, 2009.
- Ann Marie B. Bahr – *Christianity*, Religions of the World, 2004.
- Dorothy Hoobler, Thomas Hoobler - *Confucianism*, Chelsea House Publications, 2009.
- Matthew S. Gordon, Joanne O'Brien, Martin Palmer - *Islam*, Chelsea House Publications, 2009.
- Paula R. Hartz, Joanne O'Brien, Martin Palmer - *Daoism*, Chelsea House Publications, 2009.

- Paula R. Hartz, Joanne O'Brien, Martin Palmer – *Zoroastrianism*, 2009, Chelsea House Publications, 2009.
- Leslie D. Alldritt – *Buddhism*, Religions of the World, 2004.
- Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh, Joanne O'Brien, Martin Palmer - *Sikhism*, Chelsea House Publications, 2009.
- Christopher Partridge (editor), Tim Dowley (editor) - *A Brief Introduction to Jainism and Sikhism*, Fortress Press, 2018.

Assessment Methods:

Assessment		Percentage
1	Quizzes (10-15%)	10
2	Assignments (5-10%)	5
3	Class Participation (5-10%)	5
4	Term Project Report	-
5	Mid-Term Exam (25-35%)	30
6	End-Semester Exam (40-50%)	50
Total:		100

Assessment Modalities:

In addition to quizzes, midterm, and end-of-semester examinations, students may be assigned a variety of tasks designed to enhance their skills, critical thinking, and applied learning through innovative projects. These may include:

- 1) **Community Issue Analysis (Group Presentation):** In groups, students identify a pressing social issue within their community (e.g., poverty, discrimination, environmental degradation). They then analyze this issue through the teachings and ethical frameworks of a specific religious tradition, drawing connections between doctrine, values, and real-world challenges. Presentations should include both research and practical insights.
- 2) **Interfaith Dialogue Role-Play:** Students are divided into groups, each representing different religious traditions. They engage in a structured, respectful dialogue around contemporary ethical themes such as justice, war, environmental responsibility, or marriage. This activity promotes empathy, listening skills, and a deeper understanding of how various traditions approach common moral questions.
- 3) **Comparative Thematic Textual Analysis:** Students select a key theme—such as ethics, social justice, family, or suffering—and examine how it is addressed across two or more religious traditions. This involves collecting, categorizing, and interpreting relevant scriptural or theological texts, and evaluating how these insights relate to modern-day issues. The assignment strengthens analytical skills and comparative understanding.
- 4) **Sacred Space Tour:** Students choose a sacred site from any world religion—such as Mecca, the Golden Temple—and conduct in-person visit. Afterwards, create a multimedia presentation or annotated digital map that explores the site's history, architectural features, rituals, and its significance in both past and present contexts.

General Education Attributes Description:

Sr. no.	GEA's	Description of GEA's
1	Gratitude	It is the quality or feeling of being thankful and showing appreciation for

		kindness, help, or benefits received.
2	Justice/Fairness	It refers to the principle of treating people in a way that is morally right, equitable, and impartial.
3	Self-restraint/ accountability	Self-restraint is the ability to control your impulses, emotions, or desires in order to act in a calm, rational, or socially acceptable way. Accountability is the willingness to accept responsibility for your actions, decisions, and their outcomes—both good and bad.
4	Responsibility	It is the state or quality of being accountable for something within your control, power, or role—especially in terms of duty, obligation, or decision-making.
5	Integrity/ Truthfulness	Integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. Truthfulness is the habit or quality of telling the truth and being honest in words and actions.
6	Empathy and Compassion	Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. It means putting yourself in someone else’s situation and sensing what they are experiencing emotionally. Compassion goes a step further — it is feeling concern and care for others’ suffering, combined with a desire to help or alleviate that suffering.
7	Respect for others and the law	Respect for others means recognizing and valuing the rights, feelings, opinions, and dignity of other people. It involves, treating people with politeness, kindness, and consideration. Respect for the law means acknowledging and following the rules and regulations established by society to maintain order and protect rights.
8	Service to humanity	Service to humanity is the act of selflessly helping, supporting, or contributing to the well-being and improvement of other people and communities, often without expecting anything in return.

Grading Policy:

Quiz Policy: The quizzes will be unannounced and normally last for ten minutes. The question framed is to test the concepts involved in last few lectures. All quizzes will count towards the total.

Project Policy: Students will be required to develop a project during the course which should be completed towards the end of the semester. They will be graded based on project deliverables and presentation at the end. Students will work in a group/team for projects. A group of 3 or more students is recommended.

Assignment Policy: To develop comprehensive understanding of the subject, assignments will be given. Late assignments will not be accepted / graded. All assignments will count towards the total (No ‘best-of’ policy). The students are advised to do the assignment themselves. Copying of assignments is highly discouraged and violations will be dealt with severely by referring any occurrences to the disciplinary committee. The questions in the assignment are meant to be challenging to give students confidence and extensive knowledge about the subject matter and enable them to prepare for the exams.

Class participation: The students are encouraged to participate in class by asking questions to the instructor, sharing his/her thoughts about the topic under discussion, replying to instructor’s questions, and contribute to project presentation and demo.

Plagiarism: NUST maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism. While collaboration in this course is highly encouraged, you must ensure that you do not claim other people’s work/ ideas as your own. Plagiarism occurs when the words, ideas, assertions, theories, figures, images, programming codes of others are presented as your own work. You must cite and acknowledge all sources of information in your assignments. Failing to comply with the SEECs

plagiarism policy will lead to strict penalties including zero marks in assignments and referral to the academic coordination office for disciplinary action.