

**Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary**  
*Fall Term 2011*

**TH4703      Hinduism and Buddhism (3 credits)**

**Meeting Time:**      Monday 6:00 – 8:50

**Instructor:**            Terry C. Muck

**E-Mail:**                terry.muck@asburyseminary.edu

**Office Hours:**        before/after class or as scheduled

**Room:**

**Phone:** 859-858-2145

**Office:** MC314, Asbury Sem.

**Course Description**

In this course, students study the origin, history, and basic tenets of Hinduism and Buddhism. Students also study the way these religions are practiced today, and the impact each is having on the world. Students learn basic religious study skills, and engage in research projects in one or more of these religions.

**Required Texts**

Kim Knott. *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, 2000. (140 pages)

Damien Keown. *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, 1996 (140 pages)

*The Bhagavad Gita*. Juan Mascaro, trans. Penguin, 1962. (122 pages)

*The Dhammapada*. Glenn Wallis, trans. Modern Library, 2007. (202 pages)

Henepola Gunaratana. *Mindfulness in Plain English*. Wisdom, 2002. (198 pages)

James Coleman. *The New Buddhism: The Western Transformation of an Ancient Tradition*. Oxford, 2001. (220 pages)

**Assignments**

1. Attendance, participation in course, showing evidence of having read and comprehended the assigned readings. (10 percent of grade: 10 points)
2. Complete two written exercises:
  - a. Report on visit to Hindu Temple (10 percent of grade: 10 points)
  - b. Report on visit to Buddhist center (10 percent of grade: 10 points)
3. Quiz: 500 word summaries of Hinduism/Buddhism (10 percent of grade: 10 pt)
4. Paper (30 percent of grade: 30 points)
5. Final Examination (30 percent of grade: 30 points)

All assignments must be completed/turned in to professor to receive passing grade.

Grade Scale: A = 100-90 points; B = 89-80 points; C = 79-70 points;

D = 69-60 points; F = 59 or fewer points.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will be able to write 500 word summaries of each of the two religious traditions studied during the semester, demonstrating knowledge of the history, core beliefs, and practices of each religious tradition.
2. Students will be able to do field research into a religion's worship practice.
3. Students will be able to interview people about their religious beliefs.
4. Students will be able to compare and contrast discrete elements of religious belief systems other than their own.

**Reminders:** Students are expected to (1) use inclusive language in all aspects of this course; (2) review Louisville Seminary's policy on plagiarism; and (3) follow the Chicago Manual of Style (as reflected in Turabian) in the form of all written assignments.

### **Exercises, Quiz, Paper, Exam**

Exercise #1 - A Three View Visit. Write three, one page (typewritten, double spaced) descriptions of a Hindu religious service/place of worship you have attended recently. One of the descriptions should be from the insider's stance, one from a reporter's stance, and one from a specialist's stance (for the latter, choose the viewpoint of the psychologist, the sociologist, or the philosopher). See Muck, How To Study Religion, pp. 31-43.  
Due October 31.

Exercise #2 - A Three View Visit. Write three, one page (typewritten, double spaced) descriptions of a Buddhist religious service/place of worship you have attended recently. One of the descriptions should be from the insider's stance, one from a reporter's stance, and one from a specialist's stance (for the latter, choose the viewpoint of the psychologist, the sociologist, or the philosopher). See Muck, How To Study Religion, pp. 31-43.  
Due November 7.

Quiz: On November 28 students will be given 40 minutes to write two 500 word essays, one a summary of the history, beliefs, and practices of Hinduism and one a summary of the history, beliefs, and practices of Buddhism.

Paper: Students will write a 15 page paper (typewritten, double spaced, 12 point type, 1-inch margins) on some aspect of Hinduism or Buddhism, and/or its relationship to Christianity and Christians. On October 10 students will hand in to the professor a 100-200 word summary of the paper they propose to write. The completed paper is due on December 5

Final Examination: Details and schedule TBA.

## Class Sessions

### **Sept. 12 - Introduction, India, Hinduism**

Read: Knott, *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction*

### **Sept. 19 - Hinduism: The Basics**

### **Sept. 26 - Buddhism: History and Teachings**

Read: Keown, *Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*

### **Oct. 3 - Anatta: The Signature Doctrine**

### **Oct. 10 - The Spread of Buddhism**

### **Oct. 17 - The Bhagavad Gita**

Read: *The Bhagavad Gita*, Juan Mascaro, trans.

October 24 - FALL BREAK

### **Oct. 31 - The Dhammapada**

Read: *The Dhammapada*, Glenn Wallis, trans.

Exercise #1 due

### **Nov. 7 - Buddhist Practice**

Read: Gunaratna, *Mindfulness in Plain English*

Meditation Practicum

Exercise #2 due

### **Nov. 14 - Hinduism Today: Hindutva**

Nov. 21 (No Class, AAR)

### **Nov. 28 - Buddhism Today**

Read: Coleman, *The New Buddhism*

Quiz: 500 word summaries

### **Dec. 5 - Conclusions**

Research Paper due