

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	GEC1A51
Subject Title	Self-Understanding through World Religions
Credit Value	3
Level	1
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	None
Objectives	<p>The primary focus of this subject is the ideals of personhood in different religions. Understanding how different religions from different culture worldwide articulate their ideals of personhood, should foster a sense of importance in reflections on individual's moral beliefs, meaning of life, and the goal of self-actualization.</p> <p>In this subject, the following cluster specific attributes will be emphasized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflection on individual moral beliefs - Reflection on one's own existence and the search for meaning - Explore theories of Human Nature and development - Explore spirituality - Develop a facility for systematic thinking
Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 1)</i>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Describe the significant differences between various world religions with regard to their doctrines on self and moral teachings. (b) Describe the historical significance of world religions for the development of human civilization. (c) Ask and try to answer questions concerning human life and different civilizations from historical, cultural, and philosophical perspectives. (d) Articulate and critically reflect upon his or her own religious conviction. (e) To learn to study more effectively (f) Enhance students' literacy skills in reading and writing.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus <i>(Note 2)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction: Why understand self-development through studying world religions? [1 lecture] 2. Early religious activities of the human race and the emergence of self as a religious being [1 lecture]

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The understanding of self from the Indian religions [3 lectures] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hinduism (Self as the Universe) b. Jainism (Self as Paramatman (God)) c. Buddhism in its Opening Phase (Self as emptiness) 4. The understanding of self from East Asian religions [4 lectures] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Buddhism in East Asia b. Chinese Religions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Confucianism (Self as Ren) ii. Taoism (Self as part of the grand transformation) c. Japanese Shinto (Self as part of nature) 5. The understanding of self from Near East religions [3 lectures] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Zoroastrianism (Self as existential decision maker) b. Christianity (Self as God’s creation) c. Islam (Self as God’s follower)
<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology</p> <p><i>(Note 3)</i></p>	<p><u>Lectures:</u> This subject will be taught primarily using a lecture format. To support this with an aim towards both alignment and relevancy, lectures will closely follow the assigned reading. Students will be taught how to scan the reading material before coming to lecture so that they are better prepared for the lecture and to question unclear concepts within it.</p> <p><u>Tutorials:</u> Tutorials will allow students to more directly engage the material with ready access to the teacher. Tutorials will focus on empowering students to read, actively engage, and ultimately comprehend selected textbook chapters. Tutorials will begin with a reading quiz to make sure that students are prepared for discussion on a particular text. The discussion of the tutorial will begin with the questions and comments the students asked to make in the quiz. So that the discussion begin with students’ concern instead of the instructor’s. The quizzes in tutorial make up 20% of the total grade. These will ensure that the student has fulfilled the reading requirement for ER.</p> <p><u>Individual Study:</u> Students will be expected to complete the remainder of the 35 to 45 hours required for each credit hour earned individually. Most of such effort should be devoted to reading. Since this may be an area of weakness for Hong Kong students, clear guidelines and checks will be put in place to ensure that it occurs. The emphasis in this subject on reading comprehension is designed to give the student an essential experience of empowerment in learning to study effectively.</p> <p><u>Writing and Reading instructions:</u> In order to ensure the qualities of students’ reading and writing, extensive and specific writing instruction will be given to the students. Furthermore, students are also required to attend instructional and assessment activities which assist students to acquire the appropriate writing skills and to demonstrate their</p>

	<p>understanding of the extensive text. These will be host and organized by the ELC.</p> <p><u>Assessment Feedback:</u> Since students could learn more effectively by getting timely feedback from the teacher, assessments will be conducted early and often to identify students who are having difficulty, thus allowing the opportunity to intervene. As such, grading in this subject is based on Continuous Assessment components as well as a term end quiz and a term paper.</p> <p><u>ER and EW fulfilment:</u> In order to fulfil the EW requirement, the minimum word length is 2500. The minimum word length for the first and second draft, i.e. 700 and 1500 words respectively. Students must obtain a D or above on the Writing Requirement assignment to pass the subject. This includes the 10% from the ELC and 30% or more from the CAR teacher on content. As mentioned above, ER requirement will be fulfilled through reading quizzes in tutorial with make up 20% of the total grade.</p>																																																						
<p>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</p> <p>(Note 4)</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="517 880 1441 1487"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="6">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> <th>e</th> <th>f</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Quizzes</td> <td>40%</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Tutorials</td> <td>20%</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Term paper</td> <td>30%</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. English writing (ELC)</td> <td>10%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>√</td> <td>√</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100 %</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In order to pass this subject, students must pass the writing component, i.e., attain a minimum grade "D" in the writing component.</p>	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)						a	b	c	d	e	f	1. Quizzes	40%	√	√			√	√	2. Tutorials	20%	√	√	√	√	√	√	3. Term paper	30%	√	√	√	√	√	√	4. English writing (ELC)	10%					√	√	Total	100 %						
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**Reading List and
References**

Required Reading:

Smith, Huston. (2009, Fiftieth Anniversary Edition) *The World's Religions*. San Francisco, CA : HarperOne. P.12-364.

References: (potential sources for a reflective essay as an “EW” subject)

Al-Azmeh, Aziz. (2009). **Islam and Modernities**. London; N.Y.: Verso P.

Bellwood, R.S. (2005). *Many peoples, many faith : An introduction to the religious life of humankind*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Bodhi, Bhikkhu. (2000). **The Noble Eight Fold Path: Way to the End of Suffering**. Onalaska: Pariyatti Pub.

Grant, Michael. (1994). **Jesus: An Historian’s Review of the Gospels**. N.Y.: Touchstone Pub.

James, William. (1902, 2009) *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*. Scotts Valley, CA : IAP.

Khemir, Nacer ed. (1996). **The Wisdom of Islam**. N.Y.: Abbeville Press Pub.

Liu, XiuSheng & Ivanhoe, Philip J. ed. (2002). **Essays on the Moral Philosophy of Mengzi**. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub.

Madigan, Kevin. (2015). **Medieval Christianity: A New History**. N.Y.: Yale UP.

Nivison, David S. (1996). **The Ways of Confucianism: Investigations in Chinese Philosophy**. Chicago, OpenCourt Pub.

Noss, David S. and Blake R. Grangaard. (2007, 12th Edition) *History of the World's Religions*. Upper Saddle River, NJ : Prentice Hall.

Oxtoby, Willard Gurdon. (2002). *World Religions : Eastern Traditions*. 2nd edition. Don Mills, Ont. ; New York : Oxford University Press.

Oxtoby, W.G. (2001). *World religions : Western Traditions*. Don Mills, Ont.; New York: Oxford University Press.

Penner, Myron B. (2005). *Christianity and the Postmodern Turn : Six Views*. Brazos.

Prothero, Stephen R. (2010). **God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions that Run the World and Why their Differences Matter**. :New York: HaperOne.

Smart, Ninian. (1998). *The World's Religions*. Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whaling, Frank. (2010). **Understanding Hinduism**. Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic.

Woodhead, Linda. (2004). *An Introduction to Christianity*. Cambridge;

	<p>New York : Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Woodhead, Linda, Paul Fletcher, Hiroko Kawanami & David Smith eds. (2002). <i>Religions in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformation</i>. London: Routledge.</p> <p>Kung, Hans & Ching, Julia (1989). <i>Christianity and Chinese religions</i>. New York: Doubleday.</p>
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Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.

Subject Offering Department	GEC
Cluster Area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Nature, Relations and Development <input type="checkbox"/> Community, Organization and Globalisation <input type="checkbox"/> History, Cultures and World Views <input type="checkbox"/> Science, Technology and Environment
Medium of Instruction	English
Requirements intended to fulfil	<input type="checkbox"/> China-Study Requirement (CSR) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> English Reading (ER) and English Writing (EW) <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese Reading (CR) and Chinese Writing (CW)