

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND THE ENVIRONMENT – Winter 2021**  
**GEOG 3911 WA: GEOGRAPHY AND RELIGION**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Brian Philip Dunn

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**Office Hours:** Mondays 10:00-11:30 am, otherwise by prior arrangement

**Course time and location:** Tuesday and Thursday, 4:00-5:30 pm, Zoom synchronous

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course explores how four living religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam – have shaped and are shaped by their physical environments. Following an introduction to the beliefs, rites and global distribution of each, students will gain an understanding of how traditions name, map and construct their world(s) through origin stories, cosmologies and traditional taxonomies of the land and its inhabitants. The meaning and impact of pilgrimage, communal rituals, and festivals are considered in light of current concerns about ecosystem burden and resource management. New possibilities are explored throughout for positive alliance and collaboration in environmental ethics and global concerns.

**COURSE SCHEDULE** (All classes will be synchronously delivered via Zoom as per course schedule. *Any changes to schedule will be announced in class with reminder sent to all by email*)

Jan 12, 14	Unit 1 Introduction	Introduction to Geography of Religions: 'Putting religion back in its place'	Chris C. Park, <i>Sacred Worlds: an introduction to geography and religion</i> (New York: Routledge, 1994), Chapter 1: "Geography and Religion", 1-30.
Jan 19, 21, 26, 28 and Feb 2	Unit 2 Hinduism	Hinduism – from Indus River origins to the Bhakti movements of the Yamuna and Ganga river systems	Wilbert M. Gesler and Margaret Pierce, "Hindu Varanasi," <i>The Geographical Review</i> 90 (2): 222-237, April 2000.
Jan 28	Term paper	Checkpoint 1	Email me your ideas and a rough plan for your term research paper See instructions posted on D2L
Feb 4, 9, 11, 23 and 25	Unit 3 Buddhism	Buddhism – from Enlightenment in the forest to Tantric power in the Himalayas and the Tibetan plateau	Dan Smyer Yü, "Sentience of the Earth: Eco-Buddhist Mandalizing of Dwelling Place in Amdo, Tibet," <i>JSRNC</i> (8.4): 483-501, 2014.
Feb 22	Term paper	Checkpoint 2	Completed outline for the term paper and rough bibliography. Due when you get back from Reading Week (Feb 15-19). See instructions on D2L.
Mar 2	Midterm	Intro plus Hinduism and Buddhism	Cumulative of all content to date

Mar 4, 9, 11, 16 and 18	Unit 4 Christianity	Christianity – Garden, temple, exile, and Promised Land. From Galilee to the Wilderness, to Jerusalem and the ‘ends of the earth’	Jason M. Brown, “Thomas Merton, Wilderness and the Sacramental Power of Place,” <i>Merton Annual</i> Vol. 29: 80-89, 2016.
Mar 23, 25, 30, Apr 6 and 8	Unit 5 Islam	Islam – From the deserts of Arabia, to the Caliphate cities of the Near East and the ‘valley’ of Kashmir.	Daniel Z. Levin, “Which Way is Jerusalem? Which Way is Mecca?: The Direction-Facing Problem in Religion and Geography,” <i>Journal of Geography</i> 101: 27-37, 2002.
Apr 13	Unit 6	Ancient and Modern intersections – religious and environmental ethics in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.	Lily Kong, “Mapping ‘New’ Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity,” <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> 25.2: 211-233, 2001.
Apr 16	Term paper	Final term paper due	Final paper to be uploaded to ‘assignments’ tab on D2L by 11:59 pm. See instructions on D2L.
Apr 16-25	Final Exam	All term material cumulative	TBD – final exam will be written online on D2L

**COURSE MATERIALS:** There is no expensive textbook to buy. You’re welcome! But... this means that the course material is everything that we cover in class lectures, all power points with lecture material and readings, all of which will be made available on D2L. The readings are only intended to be supplemental to the course material, so it is really important that you make priority of attending lectures and taking your own notes!

**EXAMS:** The midterm and final exams will be mostly multiple choice but will also include some true/false, matching-the-following and put in correct or chronological order questions as well. Content will cover any lecture and reading material cumulative up to the date of testing.

**EVALUATION:**

- Term paper checkpoint 1, rough topic outline 5%
- Term paper checkpoint 2, outline & bibliography 10%
- Midterm 25%
- Final term paper 30%
- Final Exam 30%

Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage
A +	90-100%	D	50-59%
A 1 <sup>st</sup> class standing	80-89%	E Failed	40-49%
B	70-69%	F Failed	1-39%
C	60-86%	F Academic Dishonesty	0

## MY EXPECTATIONS:

- Regular attendance, of course. Readings are only supplemental to the course material covered in the bi-weekly lectures, so it's really important that you prioritize coming to all the lectures. They'll be so interesting you won't want to miss them anyway.
- Submission of assignments is expected by class time on the date that they are due.
- There are only 3 assignment due dates (!!), so late submissions of assignments (except in the case of medical or compassionate grounds arranged with me before the due date) will lose 10% per day.

## Student Support Services:

**Enrollment Services** We provide services to the University community by providing academic information and advising to our students, producing the online calendar, scheduling classes and exams, assisting students in the interpretation of regulations, maintaining the database of student registration and student records which includes gathering and reporting final grades and academic decisions, as well as producing official transcripts and degrees. For more information, go to <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/enrolment-services>

**The Student Success Centre** The Centre has many programs and support services in place to help you achieve your academic and personal goals while studying at Lakehead University. We provide academic support through tutoring services, career exploration, co-operative opportunities and leadership development. For more information, go to <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-success-centre>

**Student Accessibility Services SAS** Advisors are available to provide assistance with the following:

- Understanding your disability
- Reviewing assessments
- Facilitating the provision of Academic Accommodations
- Arranging a Volunteer Notetaker
- Demonstrating and/or training available for assistive devices and/or software programs
- Developing Learning Strategies
- Arranging test and exam accommodations
- Collaborating with staff and faculty

For complete information, go to <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas>

**Aboriginal Services** At Lakehead, we are proud to offer a culturally supportive environment to all Aboriginal students including Status, Non-Status, Inuit, and Métis. Our aim is to help Aboriginal students to achieve success in their academic goals through a variety of support services. As well, we offer a continual welcome to all students, staff, and faculty who wish to learn more about Aboriginal culture, traditions, and teachings. For more information, go to <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/tb/aboriginal-services>

**Student Health and Counselling Centre** The Centre is an environment that facilitates physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health. In accordance with our vision, and offers medical care, mental health counselling, and clinical referrals to support

student personal, academic and professional success. The Student Health and Counselling Centre upholds:

- Knowledge, and will apply best practice and clinical expertise to promote self-care.
- Teamwork, and will collaborate with other professionals to facilitate an integrated continuum of care.
- Respect, and will maintain a professional and non-judgmental approach when providing care or addressing concerns.
- Its' Environment, and will create a setting that is professional, clean, accessible and welcoming.
- Confidentiality, and unless legally, legislatively or ethically required, will safeguard your privacy.
- Students, and will continue to seek input and advice respecting the quality and types of services provided.

For complete information, go to <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-health-and-counselling-centre>

#### **Academic Misconduct:**

##### **From the University Calendar Regulation IX partial excerpt:**

The University takes a most serious view of offences against academic honesty such as plagiarism, cheating and impersonation. Penalties for dealing with such offences will be strictly enforced. The "Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures" including sections on plagiarism and other forms of misconduct may be found on the Lakehead University Senate website. See the Code under Policies - Student Related in the University Policies at [policies.lakeheadu.ca](http://policies.lakeheadu.ca).

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

(a) The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.

(b) A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University. Students disciplined under the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures may appeal their case through the Judicial Panel.