

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY & COMPARATIVE RELIGION  
VISVA-BHARATI  
SANTINIKETAN**

**SYLLABUS FOR B.A. (HONS.) PROGRAMME / CURRICULUM IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION  
(2017)**

**SCHEME FOR CHOICE BASED CREDIT SYSTEM**

Each course has 50 marks including internal assessment of 10 marks. Credit: As stipulated by the University Administration

Semester	Core Course (14) Each Course involves 6 Credits	Ability / Skill Enhancement Course (4) Each Course involves 2 Credits	Discipline Specific Elective DSE (4) Each Course involves 6 Credits	Generic Elective GE (4) Each Course involves 6 Credits
SEM-I	C-01: Hinduism: Origin and Development	Compulsory Course		GE-01: Philosophy of Religion – I
	C-02: Islam: Origin and Development			
SEM-II	C-03: Sikhism: Origin and Development	Compulsory Course		GE-02: Philosophy of Religion – II
	C-04: Jainism: Origin and Development			
SEM-III	C-05: Buddhism: Origin and Development	SEC-03: Methodology and Data Collection for the Study of Religion		GE-03: Tribal religions – Religion of Santals
	C-06: Christianity: Origin and Development			
	C-07: Significant Religious Themes – I			
SEM-IV	C-08: Hinduism – Textual Study	SEC-04: Field Study and Dissertation		GE-04: Folk Religious Traditions of Bengal
	C-09: Islam – Textual Study			
	C-10: Significant Religious Themes – II			
SEM-V	C-11: Jainism – Textual Study		DSE-01 & 02	
	C-12: Sikhism – Textual Study			
SEM-VI	C-13: Buddhism – Textual Study		DSE-03 & 04	
	C-14: Christianity – Textual Study			

**SEMESTER-I****C-01: HINDUISM: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. Indus Valley Period: Traces of elements of Hinduism
2. Vedic Period: Oral and Written tradition of Vedas – Rituals – Sacrifices – Gods of Vedas – Upanisads – Atheism
3. Epic and Puranic Period: Composition of the Mahabharata and Ramayana and major Puranas- Dharma Sastras - Vaishnavism, Saivism, Saktism- yoga literature
4. The Medieval Period: Bhakti –development of religious cults –devotional literature- Tantric literature
5. The Modern Period: Renaissance Hinduism – Hinduism as a world religion

**Text:**

1. Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, Cambridge University Press, 2004 (Selections)

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Trevor Ling, *A History of Religion – East and West*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1968.
2. E.O. James, *History of Religions*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1957.
3. John B. Noss, *Man's Religions*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1962.
4. David N. Lorenzen, *Who Invented Hinduism? – Essays on Religion in History*, Yoda Press, New Delhi, 2008.

**C-02: ISLAM: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. Origin of Islam: Social-Political Circumstances of Arabia during 7<sup>th</sup> Century C.E. – The Life of Prophet Mohammed – Caliphates
2. Medieval Period: Spread of Islam – Sufism – Islam in India
3. Modern Period: Islam in the Modern World – Modern Religious Movements (India and Abroad) – Partition – Problems associated with Religious Majority and Minorities in Indian Context

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Trevor Ling, *A History of Religion – East and West*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1968.
2. E.O. James, *History of Religions*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1957.
3. John B. Noss, *Man's Religions*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1962.
4. *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
5. Masudul Hassan, *History of Islam*, Vols. I & II, Kitab Bhawan, New Delhi.
6. K. Ali, *A Study of Islamic History*, Adam Pub & Dist., New Delhi.
7. Md. Sirajul Islam, *Sufism and Bhakti – A Comparative Study*, CRVP, Washington, 2004.
8. M. Mujeeb, *Islam in India*, Kitab Bhawan, New Delhi.

**GE-01: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION – I**

1. Proofs for the Existence of God
2. Proofs against the Existence of God
3. Problem of Evil

**Text:**

1. Hick, John. *Philosophy of Religion*, Chapters 2, 3 and 4.
2. Bhattacharya, Gopika Mohan, *Studies in Nyaya Vaisesika Theism*, Sanskrit College, Kolkata, 1961. (Selections).

**SEMESTER-II****C-03: SIKHISM: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. Socio-Politico-Religious Background of Punjab during 15<sup>th</sup> Century – Impact of Bhakti Movement and Sufism
2. Ten Gurus: Their Lives and Contributions – The Living Guru – Khalsa
3. Banda Singh Bahadur – Maharaja Ranjit Singh
4. Nirankari, Namdhari, Singh Sabha Movements – Siromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee – Akali Movement – Sikh Nationalism – Dera Panths

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Trevor Ling, *A History of Religion – East and West*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1968.

2. E.O. James, *History of Religions*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1957.
3. John B. Noss, *Man's Religions*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1962.
4. Kushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs, (I & II Vols.)*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

#### **C-04: JAINISM: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. Rise of Jainism: Socio-Political Situations
2. Early Jainism: Thirthankaras – Parsvanatha – Mahavira and His Life and Teachings
3. Svetambara and Digambara Sects
4. Archaeology and Jain Art – Cave Beds – Monuments
5. Jains in Modern context

##### **Suggested Readings:**

1. Trevor Ling, *A History of Religion – East and West*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1968.
2. E.O. James, *History of Religions*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1957.
3. John B. Noss, *Man's Religions*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1962.
4. Sinclair Stevenson, *The Heart of Jainism*, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1970.

#### **GE-02: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION – II**

1. Religious experience
2. Religious language and meaning
3. Conflicting Truth Claims of Different Religions

##### **Texts:**

1. James, William. *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Pp. 485-501, 512-15.
2. Hick, John. *Philosophy of Religion*, chapters 7 and 9.

##### **Suggested Readings:**

1. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, book1.Q12 articles 1-12
2. Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *The Faith of Other Men*
3. Tillich, Paul. *The Dynamics of Faith*, Pp.41-54.
4. Murty, K. Sachidananda, *Revelation and Truth (Selections)*.
5. Brain Davis, *Philosophy of Religion*, Oxford University Press, New York.

### SEMESTER-III

#### **C-05: BUDDHISM: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. Rise of Buddhism: Socio Political Situations: Tribal Republics, Kshatriya Clans – Buddha – Life and Teachings
2. Early Buddhism: Impact of Asoka – Buddhist Councils – Development of Doctrines – Development and Division of Monastic Traditions – Elaboration of Hinayana Tradition
3. Mahayana and Vajrayana Traditions – Buddhist Impact on Popular life
4. Neo-Buddhism and Ambedkar Movement – Buddhism and the Minorities in Sri Lanka and Myanmar

##### **Suggested Readings:**

1. Trevor Ling, *A History of Religion – East and West*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1968.
2. E.O. James, *History of Religions*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1957.
3. John B. Noss, *Man's Religions*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1962.
4. T.W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism – Being a Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gautama, The Buddha*, Low Price Publications, Delhi, 2010.
5. Pande, G.C. *Studies In the Origin of Buddhism*, Delhi, 1967.
6. Humphreys, C. *Buddhism*, London, 1974.

#### **C-06: CHRISTIANITY: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. Origin of Christianity: Socio-Political Circumstances during the time of Jesus – The life of Jesus – Early Christians
2. Romans and Christianity: Constantine and Christianity – Development of Christian Literature – Catholicism – Beginning and Growth of Christian Monasticism – Crusades
3. Modern Period: Renaissance and Christianity – Enlightenment and Christianity – Martin Luther and Protestantism – Colonialism and Christian Evangelism – Liberation Theology
4. Christianity and India: St. Thomas – Syrian Catholics – Caste and Conversion – Dalit Theology

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Trevor Ling, *A History of Religion – East and West*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London, 1968.
2. E.O. James, *History of Religions*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1957.
3. John B. Noss, *Man's Religions*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1962.
4. *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Vol. 1–9*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

**C-07: SIGNIFICANT RELIGIOUS THEMES – I**

1. Concept of God and Divine
  - a. Introduction to Concept of God: Gnosticism – Agnosticism – Naturalism – Polytheism – Monotheism – Pantheism – Panentheism – Atheism
  - b. Folk Religious Beliefs: Male Gods – Goddess Worship – Fertility Principle
  - c. Concept of God in different religions and systems of thought
2. Concept of Soul and Human
  - a. Concepts of Soul in Tribal (Primitive) Religions: Theoretical Elaborations: Animism, Totemism, *Mana*
  - b. Varieties of the Origin and Destiny of Soul – Internal Soul: Breath, Saliva, Blood, Vital Organs of the Body, Sexual Potentials – External Souls: Shadow, 'Double' – Powers of Soul
  - c. Concept of soul and human in different religions and systems of thought
3. Salvation and/or Liberation
  - a. Liberation as Individual and Social
  - b. Salvation and/or Liberation in different religions and systems of thought – Idea of Grace

**Texts**

1. (Ed.) Mircea Eliade, *Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 1 – 14*, (Selected Articles), Macmillan Publishing Company, New York.
2. (Ed.) James Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. I – XII*, (Selected Articles), T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1974.

**SEC-03: METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION**

1. Sampling
2. Methods of Collection of Data
3. Tools for Collection of Data
4. Field Work
5. Processing Data

**Texts:**

1. C. R. Kothari, *Research Methodology – Methods and Techniques*, New Age Publications, 2014.
2. O. R. Krishnaswami, *Methodology of Research in Social Sciences*, Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai, 2001.

**GE-03: TRIBAL RELIGIONS – RELIGION OF SANTALS**

1. Structure of the Santal society
2. Supernatural spirits and power
3. Seasonal rites and festivals
4. Life-cycle rites
5. Magic and Witchcraft

**Text:**

1. J. Troisi, *Tribal Religion: Religious Beliefs and Practices among the Santals*, Manohar, 2000.

**SEMESTER-IV****C-08: HINDUISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. Katha Upanishad (Selections)
2. The Bhagavad Gita, Chapter: 2 – Samkhya yoga
3. Diana L. Eck, *Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey From Bozeman to Benaras*, Penguin books, 1995. (Ch-3: The many names of God: The Habit of Oneness and the challenge of many, Darshana: Point of view, The naming of God, Mahatmya: the greatness of each God, Trimurti: the many forms of each God, Ishtadevata: the chosen God)

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Mittal, Sushil & Gene Gene Thursby. "On Hinduism and Hinduisms: The Way of the Banyan" in *Hindu World*, Routledge
2. Hopkins, Thomas. *The Hindu Religious Tradition*.
3. Kinsley, David. *Hindu goddesses: Vision of the Divine Female in the Hindu Religious Tradition*.
4. Narayanan, Vasudha. "The Hindu Tradition" in Oxtoby, *World Religions: Eastern Traditions*.
5. Radhakrishnan, Sarvapalli (Tr.). *The Principal Upanishads*.
6. Sivaraman, Krishnan. *Hindu Spirituality: Vedas through Vedanta*.
7. Clayton, A.C. *The Rig Veda and the Vedic Religion*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.
8. Leslie, Julia. *Roles and Rituals for Hindu Women*
9. David N. Lorenzen, *Who Invented Hinduism? – Essays on Religion in History*, Yoda Press, New Delhi, 2008.

#### C-09: ISLAM – TEXTUAL STUDY

1. The Holy Quran: 1: 1-7; 59: 22-24; 112: 1-4; 17: 23-40; 31:13-30
2. The Hadith: From Nisar Ahmed: The Fundamental Teaching of Quran and Hadith, part-1: Pp.80-83, 90-92, 95-98, 100-102, 104-107
3. Masadul Hasan: History of Islam, Vol. 1 (Life of Prophet Mohammad: Meccan period ), Pp. 46-62

##### Suggested Readings:

1. Ayoub, Mahmoud. *The Quran and its Interpreters*. Albany: SUNY Press, c1984.
2. (The) Holy Quran (trans. By A. J. Arberry).
3. Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis*.
4. Yusuf Ali (Tr.), *The Holy Quran*, Mecca.

#### C-10: SIGNIFICANT RELIGIOUS THEMES – II

1. Concept of World
  - a. Status of World and its Objects in Tribal (Primitive) and Folk Religious Beliefs
  - b. Status of World and its Beings in different religions and systems of thought
2. Incarnation and Avatara
  - a. Concept of Incarnation or Avatara in Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Puranic Traditions
3. Miracles and Supranormal Powers
  - a. Distinction between Magic and Miracle
  - b. Notion of Miracle in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hindu Puranic Traditions and Popular Beliefs
4. Role of Intermediaries in Religions
  - a. Role of Intermediaries in Tribal (Primitive) Religious Beliefs: Shamans, Magicians
  - b. Role of Intermediaries in Folk Religious Beliefs: Priests and People Possessed of Deities, Cultic Figures
  - c. Role of Intermediaries in Religions: Judaism: Rabbi – Christianity: Pope, Saints and Priests – Buddhism: Bhikkus and Bhikkunis – Vedic and Vedantic Traditions: Acharya – Bhakti tradition: Guru and Sants – Sikhism: Guru

##### Texts

1. (Ed.) Mircea Eliade, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 1 – 14, (Selected Articles), Macmillan Publishing Company, New York.
2. (Ed.) James Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. I – XII, (Selected Articles), T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1974.

#### SEC-04: FIELD STUDY AND DISSERTATION

Paper consists of 50 marks having 40 marks for external examiner for examining the written submission and viva-voce (30+10) and 10 marks for the internal examiner. The submission should not exceed 50 pages.

#### GE-04: FOLK RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OF BENGAL

1. Bengali Brata Rituals
2. The Bauls of Bengal
3. Possession culture in Adivasi and Folk traditions

##### Texts:

1. June McDaniel. *Making Virtuous Daughter's and Wives: An Introduction to Women's Brata Rituals in Bengali Folk Religion* (selections).
2. R.M. Sarkar, *Bauls of Bengal (selections)*
3. June McDaniel, *Offering Flowers, Feeding Skulls*, OUP (selections)

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Upendranath Bhattacharya, *Banglar Baul O Baul Gaan*
2. Sudhir Chakraborty, *Baul Fakir Katha*
3. Shaktinath Jha, *Bastubadi Baul*

**SEMESTER-V**

**C-11: JAINISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. The Heart of Jainism: Sinclair Stevenson (selections)
2. Tattvartha Sutra: Umasvati (Pp. 91-147)
3. Collected Papers on Jain Studies: Padmanabh S. Jain (Pp.3-19 & 199-215)

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Dundas, Paul, *The Jains*.
2. Jain, Sagarmal, *Jain Spirituality*
3. Jaini, Padmanabh S, *The Jaina Path of Purification*
4. -----*Collected papers on Jain Studies*
5. Narayanan, Vasudha, "The Jain Tradition", in Oxtoby, *World Religions: Eastern Traditions*.
6. O'Connell, Joseph T. (ed.), *Jain Doctrine and Practice: Academic Perspectives*.
7. Umasvati, *That Which Is: Tattvarthasutras*.
8. Wagle, N.K. and Olle Qvarnstrom (Eds.), *Approaches to Jain Studies: Philosophy, Logic, Rituals and Symbols*.

**C-12: SIKHISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. Moolmantra and Japuji from Guru Granth Sahib
2. Ravidas' Begampura from Guru Granth Sahib
3. Daljeet Singh – *The Sikh Ideology*

**Texts:**

1. Manmohan Singh (Tr.), *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, (Vol. I and II), Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, 2006
2. Daljeet Singh, *The Sikh Ideology*, Guru Nanak Foundation, New Delhi, 1984.

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Daljeet Singh and Kharak Singh, *Sikhism – Its Philosophy and History*, Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh, 2008.
2. N. Muthu Mohan (Ed.), *South Indian Studies in Sikhism*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 2004.

**DSE-03 & 04**

**TAOISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. Origin-Belief-Practices-Holy Texts-Sacred Places
2. Dao De Jing

**Suggested Readings:**

1. *Sources of Chinese Tradition* compiled by Theodore De Barry,
2. Ling-Tsit Cham, Burton Watson, Ch. 4 (Taoism)
3. Jennifer Oldstone-Moore, *Understanding Taoism*, Duncan Baird Publishers, London, 2003

**JUDAISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. The Torah: Genesis: Ch 1 & 2 ( Creation and Fall); Exodus: Ch 3 & 14 (Exodus and Exodus Narrative)
2. The Prophets: Isaiah 42 & 43 (Songs of the Servants); Hosea Ch 1 & 2 ( Marriage symbolism)
3. The Psalms: Psalms 27, 42-43 ( Fearlessness, Lament in exile)
4. Shlomo Sand – *Mytherritory*

**Texts:**

1. *The New Orford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1989.
2. Shlomo Sand, *The Invention of the Land of Isreal – From Holy Land to Homeland*, Verso, London and New York, 2014.

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Heschel, Abraham Joshua. *The Prophets*. New York: Harper and Row, 1962
2. Neusner, Jacob. *Early Rabbinic Judaism*, Leiden, 1975
3. Segel, Allen. 'Judaism' in *World Religions: Western Traditions*, edited by W.G. Oxtoby, New York, Oxford University Press
4. Smith, Huston. *The Soul of Christianity: Restoring the Great Traditions*, Harper San Fransisco, 2005.
5. Unterman, Alan. *Jews: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, Boston, 1981.
6. Weingreen, J. *From Bible to Mishna*, New York, 1976.

**SPECIAL TEXT (INDIAN)**

**Text:** Rabindranath Tagore: *The Religion of Man*

**Des-04: CRITIQUE OF RELIGION – I**

**Text:** G.P. Deshpande (Ed.), *Selected Writings of Jotirao Phule*, Leftword Boks, Delhi, 2002.

**SEMESTER-VI**

**C-13: BUDDHISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. Jatakas (Selections)
2. Dhammapada (Selections)
3. Buddhist India: T. W. Rhys Davids (Ch 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16)

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Amore, Roy & Julia Ching. "The Buddhist Tradition", in Oxtoby edited *World Religions: Eastern Traditions*.
2. Fausball V. *Ten Jatakas: The original Pali Text with a Translation and Notes*, Bibliolife, 2009.
3. Davids, T. W. Rhys. *Buddhist India*, Delhi: Low Price Publications.
4. Richard, H Robinson. *The Buddhist Religion*
5. Warder, A. K. *Indian Buddhism*
6. Zurcher, E. *Buddhism: Its Origin and Spread in Words, Maps and Pictures*.

**C14: CHRISTIANITY – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. The Gospel according to Luke: Ch 2, 4, 6, 10: 25-37, 14, 23, 24.
2. The Acts of the Apostles: Ch 2, 15: 1-35, 17: 16-34.
3. The Letters of Paul: 1 Corinthian, Ch 13-15.
4. Peniel Rajkumar: *Reading for Liberation – Revisiting Christology*

**Texts:**

1. *The New Orford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1989
2. Peniel Rajkumar, *Dalit Theology and Dalit Liberation – Problems, Paradigms and Possibilities*, Ashgate Publishing Company, Burlington, 2010.

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Cross, F.L. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1957.
2. Gilson, Etienne. *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, New York: Random House, 1955.
3. Kung, Hans. *On being a Christian (trans. From German by Edward Quinn)*. New York: Doubleday, 1976.
4. Lewis, C.S. Mere. *Christianity*, London: Bles, 1952.
5. Oxtoby, Willard G. "The Christian Tradition", in his edited volume, *World Religions: Western Traditions*, New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1996.
6. Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.
7. Ruether, R. AND E. McLaughlin (Eds.). *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979.

8. Zernov, N. *Eastern Christendom: A study of the Origin and Development of the Eastern Orthodox Church*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson; New York: Putnam, 1961.

**DSE-05: CONFUCIANISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. Life and Teaching of Confucius – Confucian Ethics – Superior Man (Junzi) – Rectification of Names – Heaven (Tien)
2. *The Analects* (Selections)

**Suggested Readings:**

1. *Sources of Chinese Tradition* compiled by Theodore De Barry.
2. Ling-Tsit Cham, Burton Watson, Ch. 2 (Confucious)
3. D.C. Lau, Confucius: *The Analects*, Penguin Books, 1979, (Ch- Introduction)

**DSE-06: ZOROASTRIANISM – TEXTUAL STUDY**

1. Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism by Mary Boyce. 1984. (Introduction)
2. The Sacred Books of the East, Vol. 4, Introduction by James Darmesteter
3. The Avesta: The Gathas (all the 17 Hymns)
4. The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Zoroastrianism (2015): Chap. 10: The Parsis by John R. Hinnells; and Chap. 22: Rituals by Michael Stausberg and Ramiyar P. Karanjia

**DSE-07: SPECIAL TEXT (WESTERN)**

**Text:** Rudolf Otto. *The Idea of the Holy*, Oxford University Press, 1958. (Selections from the Chapters I to IX, XIV, XVII, XXI)

**DSE-08: CRITIQUE OF RELIGION – II**

**Text:** Vasant Moon (Ed.), *Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 4*, Education Department, Govt of Maharashtra, Bombay, 1987.

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