BCRE32 Introduction to World Religions

Semester: A  
ECTS:  5  
Duration: 11 weeks  
Contact hours:  22  
Quota: Maximum of 10  
Prerequisite subjects: None

Module Description:

This course seeks essentially to give students an experience of religion in Southeast Asia. Emphasising the heterogeneity of religion in Asia, it will present an overview, while concentrating on Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. There will be an examination of the various cosmologies, gods and goddesses, and important concepts dharma, bhakti, samnyasa as well as the caste system. Students will engage critically with the scriptures, notably the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. The course will deal with the question of Hindu identity and the more recent politicisation of Hinduism in the Hindutva movement. The use of iconography is an important element of the course as it will help to give students an understanding of the wider cultural world of Asian religions.

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Identify and engage with several important religious traditions in Southeast Asia

Appreciate the heterogeneity of Asian religion and culture

Have a knowledge of the various cosmologies, Gods and Goddesses, and important concepts

Engage critically with the scriptures of these religions

Understand the social significance of religion in Asia

Indicative Reading:

Assessment: One 3,000 word essay

Name of Lecturer(s):

Professor Patrick Claffey