



Course syllabus

Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Department of Cultural Sciences

1RK100 Religionsvetenskap, allmän kurs I, 30 högskolepoäng
The Study of Religions, general course I, 30 credits

Main field of study

Religious Studies

Subject Group

Religious Studies

Level of classification

First Level

Progression

GIN

Date of Ratification

Approved 2009-11-02

Revised 2014-05-22 by Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

The course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2014

Prerequisites

General entry requirements.

Objectives

Overall expected learning outcomes for the course as a whole

After completion of the course, students should be able to

- distinguish between a scientific approach to religion and a confessional faith perspective, and, in doing this, be able to account, in speech as well as in writing, for a view that focuses on religions' diversity and variation over time;
- account for basic concepts, dogmas, rituals, texts and ideational trends in the past and the present, within a selection of religious traditions;
- identify important issues, describe some basic methods, and apply basic terminology, as appearing in the field of religious studies;
- differentiate between religions' different roles in the past and in the present, from the point of view of communities, groups and individuals, with regard to ecological, social and cultural conditions;
- account for some religious tendencies and some ideological/philosophical alternatives to religion in a modern, globalised world.

Expected learning outcomes for module 1, *An introduction to the study of religion*

After completion of the course, students should be able to

- briefly account for and compare different scientific approaches to religious studies, and, in doing so, differentiate between a humanistic scientific view of religion, and a confessional faith perspective;
- briefly account for the major components of old Nordic religion and Zoroastrianism, such as myths, rituals, and ideologies, and relate those to social, economical, and cultural conditions;
- apply simple methods for interpretation of religious images and texts, as well as carry out source criticism of religious material;
- critically analyse religious phenomena and statements from a gender perspective.

Expected learning outcomes for module 2, *Religions in Asia*

After completion of the course, students should be able to

- briefly account, in a scientifically critical manner, for basic concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals (both past and present) in Hinduism, Buddhism and Chinese religion;
- demonstrate, in speech as well as in writing, awareness of the past and present diversity of religious expression and historical change in Hinduism, Buddhism and Chinese religion;
- analyse passages taken from religious documents associated with Asia, as well as discuss their present day applicability and relevance;
- discuss and assess fictive, journalistic, and popular-cultural works that relate to the course content;
- demonstrate ability to critically review, assess and discuss the course content and course literature from a gender perspective

Expected learning outcomes for module 3, *Judaism and Islam*

After completion of the course, students should be able to

- briefly account, in a scientifically critical manner, for basic concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals (both past and present) in Judaism and Islam;
- demonstrate, in speech as well as in writing, awareness of the past and present diversity of religious expression and historical change in Judaism and Islam;
- analyse passages taken from Jewish and Muslim religious documents, as well as discuss their present day applicability and relevance;
- discuss and assess fictive, journalistic, and popular-cultural works that relate to the course content.

Expected learning outcomes for module 4, *Christianity*

After completion of the course, students should be able to

- briefly account, in a scientifically critical manner, for basic concepts, central texts, prominent religious figures, dogmas, institutions and rituals (both past and present) in Christianity;
- demonstrate, in speech as well as in writing, awareness of the past and present diversity of religious expression and historical change in Christianity;
- analyse passages taken from Christian religious documents, as well as discuss their present day applicability and relevance;
- discuss and assess fictive, journalistic, and popular-cultural works that relate to the course content.

Expected learning outcomes for module 5, *Present day religions and ideologies*

After completion of the course, students should be able to

- briefly account for some scientific theories on the conditions and roles of religions in a modern, globalised world;
- account for some ideological/philosophical present day alternatives to religion;
- account for central concepts and phenomena in New Age spiritual movements;
- analyse passages taken from New Age spiritual documents, as well as discuss their use;
- conduct a small field study and orally present its results to others.

Content

Religious studies is an interdisciplinary subject, where humanistic scientific as well as social scientific perspectives are used.

Module 1 An introduction to the study of religion 6 credits

The course introduces basic concepts, methods and theories in the field of religious studies, and apply them to old Nordic religion and Zoroastrianism. Participation in seminars is mandatory.

Module 2 Religions in Asia 6 credits

The course presents an overview of the origins of Hinduism, Buddhism and the Chinese religions, and their development through history until the present day. Theological notions, institutions, and rituals are dealt with. Changes in religious traditions and institutions are analysed. The course focuses especially on the diversity and variability of the relevant religions. Participation in seminars is mandatory

Module 3 Judaism and Islam 6 credits

The course presents an overview of the origins of Judaism and Islam, and their development through history until the present day. Theological notions, institutions, and rituals are dealt with. Changes in religious traditions and institutions are analysed. The course focuses especially on the diversity and variability of the relevant religions. Participation in seminars is mandatory.

Module 4 Christianity 6 credits

The course presents an overview of the origins of Christianity, and its development through history until the present day. Theological notions, institutions, and rituals are

dealt with. Changes in religious traditions and institutions are analysed. The course focuses especially on religious diversity and variability. Participation in seminars is mandatory.

Module 5 . Present day religions and ideologies 6 credits

The course deals with the conditions for religious conceptualisation, religious activity, and organisation of religious groups, in a modern, secular society. Phenomena such as religious modernism, fundamentalism, and different kinds of politicized religion are discussed. The New Age spiritual scenery of today's society is analysed and discussed in relation to secularisation theories, and present day non-religious ideologies are brought up. Participation in seminars is mandatory.

New religions in today's society are analyzed and discussed against the backdrop of secularization theories. This module also deals with non-religious ideologies.

Obligatory elements in accordance with instructions from the teacher.

Type of Instruction

Forms of instruction include lectures, seminars, group exercises and study visits.

Examination

The course is assessed with the grades Fail (U), Pass (G) or Pass with Distinction (VG).

A resit is offered within six weeks (within the framework of regular terms) and the number of resits is limited to five (in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance 6 chap. 21§).

Depending on number of students, Module 1 is examined

1. orally in a group or through a take-home exam;
2. through participation in seminars; and
3. through posts in discussion forums on the relevant learning platform, on themes given by the teacher (posts are graded).

Module 2 is examined through

1. written on-campus exam;
2. participation in seminars;
3. posts in discussion forums on the relevant learning platform, on themes given by the teacher (posts are graded); and
4. participation in discussion of supplementary reading

Module 3 is examined through

1. written on-campus exam;
2. participation in seminars;
3. posts in discussion forums on the relevant learning platform, on themes given by the teacher (posts are graded); and
4. participation in discussion of supplementary reading

Module 4 is examined through

1. written on-campus exam;
2. participation in seminars;
3. posts in discussion forums on the relevant learning platform, on themes given by the teacher (posts are graded); and
4. participation in discussion of supplementary reading

Module 5 is examined through

1. written on-campus exam;
2. participation in seminars; and
3. posts in discussion forums on the relevant learning platform, on themes given by the teacher (posts are graded).

Absence from seminars in any module must be compensated for by means of written assignments.

Retake exams are offered within six weeks (within regular term dates), and the number of examinations is restricted to five (Higher education ordinance, Chapter 6, § 21).

Course Evaluation

After completion of the course, a course evaluation is conducted. A written synopsis is presented to the students; accounted for in relevant departmental bodies (including the relevant programme council); and archived by the department giving the course.

Required Reading and Additional Study Material

List of references Module 1 - An introduction to the study of religion 6 credits

Obligatory reading

Arvidsson, Stefan. *Varför religionsvetenskap?: en ämnesintroduktion för nya studenter*. Studentlitteratur. 148p. Latest edition.

Klausen, Søren Harnow. *Vad är vetenskap? Natur och kultur*. (Chapter 26) 180p. Latest edition.

Steinsland, Gro. *Fornnordisk religion*. Natur och kultur. Latest edition. (selected, ca 250p).

Stausberg, Michael. *Zarathustra och zoroastrismen*. Nya Doxa, 140p. Latest edition.

Svensson, Jonas & Stefan Arvidsson (ed.). *Människor och makter. En introduktion till religionsvetenskap*. Högskolan i Halmstad. 200p. Latest edition.

Documents

Links to on-line material are provided by the teacher.

Articles as assigned by the teacher.

List of references Module 2 - Religions in Asia 6 credits

Obligatory reading

Adler, Joseph A. *Chinese religion*. Routledge, 128p. Latest edition.

Hellman, Eva. *Hinduiska gudinnor och kvinnor. En introduktion*. Nya Doxa. 80p. Latest edition.

Jacobsen, Knut. *Buddhism*. Kultur, historia, tradition. Natur & Kultur, 318p. Latest edition.

Jacobsen, Knut. *Hinduismen. Historia, tradition och mångfald*. Natur & Kultur, 393p. Latest edition.

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (ed.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. Latest edition (selected, ca 30p).

Documents

Links to on-line material are provided by the teacher.

Supplementary reading for discussion

Readings chosen in consultation with instructor.

Articles as assigned by the teacher.

List of references Module 3 - Judaism and Islam 6 credits

Obligatory reading

Groth, Bente. *Judendomen. Kultur, historia, tradition*. Natur & Kultur. 344p. Latest edition.

Hjärpe, Jan. (ed.) *99 frågor om islam och något färre svar* Leopard. 173p. Latest edition.

Hjärpe, Jan. *Islam – lära och livsmönster*. Norstedts Förlag. 136p. Latest edition.

Otterbeck, Jonas. *Samtidsislam: unga muslimer i Malmö och Köpenhamn*. Carlsson. 229p. Latest edition.

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (ed.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. Latest edition (selected, ca 40p)

Documents

Bibel 2000. Bibelkommissionens översättning. Liber (or other). Latest edition. On line: bibeln.se.

Koranens budskap. M.K Bernström's translation. Proprius förlag AB. Latest edition. On line: www.koranensbudskap.se

Supplementary reading for discussion

Readings chosen in consultation with instructor.

Articles as assigned by the teacher.

List of references Module 4 - Christianity 6 credits

Obligatory reading

Ehrman, Bart D. *Did Jesus Exist? The Historical Argument for Jesus of Nazareth*.

HarperCollins. 361 p. Latest edition. Selections, circa 200 pages.

Rasmussen, Tarald & Einar Thomassen. *Kristendomen. En historisk introduction*.

Artos & Norma bokförlag AB. 416p. Latest edition.

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (ed.) *Religion i Sverige*. Dialogos. Latest edition (selected, ca 140p)

Documents

Bibel 2000. Bibelkommissionens översättning. Liber (or other). Latest edition. On

line: bibeln.se.

Supplementary reading for discussion

Chosen in consultation with instructor.

Articles as assigned by the teacher.

List of references Module 5 - . Present day religions and ideologies 6 credits

Obligatory reading

Hammer, Olav. *På spaning efter helheten – New Age en ny folktro?* Wahlström och Widstrand, 389p. Latest edition.

Klausen, Søren Harnow. *Vad är vetenskap?* Natur och kultur. Latest edition.

(Ch. 1 and 7; 63p)

Raudvere, Catharina & Olav Hammer (ed.) *Med gudomlig auktoritet. Om religionens kraft i politiken.* Makadam. 271p. Latest edition.

Svanberg, Ingvar & David Westerlund (ed.) *Religion i Sverige.* Dialogos. Latest edition (selected, ca 200p)

Documents

Dawkins, Richard. *Illusionen om Gud.* Pocketförlaget. 412p. Latest edition.

Hammar, KG & Ami Lönnroth. *Jag har inte sanningen, jag söker den.* Ordfront. 208p. Latest edition

Marx, Karl & Fredrich Engels. *Kommunistiska manifestet.* Nixon. 108p. Latest edition.

Articles as assigned by the teacher.