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MW 723 Religions of India

Terry C. Muck

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Spring 2004

MW723 Religions of India

Meeting Time: Tuesday 4:00 – 6:00
Instructor: Terry C. Muck
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E-Mail: terry_muck@asburyseminary.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday afternoon, 2:00 – 4:30; before and after class;
e-mail; special appointment.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, students study the origin, history, and basic tenets of the religions of India. Focus will be placed on the major world religions of Hinduism and Buddhism, but in order to understand them in their context we will also study Jainism, Sikhism, and the indigenous religions common to this geographical area. Special attention will be paid to the way these religious traditions of India relate to one another (and to indigenous folk religions) in both their historical and modern contexts. Students learn basic religious study skills and will visit a Hindu or Buddhist temple.

II. COURSE GOALS

- A. Students will articulate the core teachings of Indian religions, describing them in ways agreeable to representative adherents of those religious traditions;
- B. Students will develop tools of analysis enabling them to research the history, beliefs, and practices of religious traditions;
- C. Students will create missiological approaches to people of Indian religious backgrounds;
- D. Students will experience Indian religions in their local, practiced form, developing skills of participant observation and empathetic learning.

II. TEXTBOOKS

- Embree, Ainslie ed.. Sources of Indian Tradition, 2 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. 941 pages.
- Wolpert, Stanley. A New History of India. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. 484 pages
- Bhagavad Gita, Juan Mascaro, ed. New York: Penguin, 1962. 122 pages.
- Dhammapada, Irving Babbitt, ed. New York: New Directions, 1965. 61 pages.
- Terry C. Muck. The Mysterious Beyond: A Guide to Studying Religion. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1993. 162 pages. An introduction to religious studies methodology. (Book provided by instructor)

III. ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class attendance (10 percent)
2. Two visit reports (10 percent each)
3. A mission strategy paper on either Hinduism or Buddhism (40 percent)
4. Final Exam (40 percent each)

IV. CLASS SCHEDULE

February 17: A Religious Recipe: Methodological tools needed for the study of Indian religion

February 24: Constructing a Religious Profile
Wolpert, 3-225

March 2: Indian Indigenous Religion and Worldview
Wolpert, 226-456

March 9: Hinduism
Embree, 1-199

March 16: How Hinduism Interacts
Embree, 203-378

March 23: Bhagavad Gita
Gita, 1-122

April 6: Buddhism
Embree, 381-510

April 13: How Buddhism Interacts
Hay, 1-127

April 20: Dhammapada
Dhammapada, 1-121

April 27: The Sects
Hay, 128-274

May 4: Christianity in India
Hay, 275-411

May 11: Emerging Buddhisms