



**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LIBERAL ARTS
MPU3353 RELIGIONS IN MALAYSIA
JANUARY - APRIL 2025**

Course title	: Religions in Malaysia
Course code	: MPU3353
Credit hours	: 3
Pre-requisite	: Nil
Lecturer	: Abd.Latiff Jamaludin
Guest Lecturer	: Dr Norani Abu Bakar

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course addresses the need for a better understanding among the multiracial societies in Malaysia by providing an overview of some of the major religions practiced in this country. It covers wide varieties of discussions pertaining to religions belief and ways to foster harmony peaceful coexistence with regards to Malaysian citizens.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Identify the meaning, characteristics, and key principles of religion.
2. Describe the historical development of religions in Malaysia.
3. Demonstrate understand the various characteristics, principles, and practices of various religions.
4. Create an awareness among students on the various principles and practices as to promote harmonious society in Malaysia.
5. Reflect on their own values and visions of a meaningful life through interreligious dialogue and explore how diverse traditions contribute to human flourishing. *

(* - Added in conjunction with Yale Life Worth Living elements)

GRADING:**Midterm****A- Group Assignment (30%)**

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|------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Written Report + Proposal | 15% |
| 2. Presentation & video | 15% |

B- Individual (30%)

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| 1. Exercise/quiz+ | 10% |
| 2. Midterm | 20% |

Final Examination	40%
Total	<u>100%</u>

CONTENT:**1) Study of Religion: What it is all about?**

- What is religion?
- The necessity of religion.
- Key characteristics and categories of religion.

Religions in Malaysia

- General overview of pluralistic religious values in Malaysia.
- Terminologies related to the study of Religions.

Religion and Sejahtera Life (Life Worth Living)

- Framework of 4 Phases of Life: (1) auto-pilot (2) effectiveness (3) self-awareness (4) self-transcendence

2) Introduction to Christianity:

- Jesus Christ, His birth, life and death
- Beliefs and practices
- Key concepts of Christianity
- Christians across the globe

3) Introduction to Buddhism

- Life of Gautama Buddha
- Beliefs and practices
- Buddhist across the globe

4) Introduction to Hinduism

- Beliefs and practices – karma, reincarnation
- Hindus across the globe

5) Introduction to Sikhism

- Life of Guru Nanak
- Beliefs and practices
- Sikhs across the globe

6) Introduction to Islam

- Life of Prophet Muhammad
- Beliefs and practices
- Muslims across the globe

7) Towards a Harmonious Religious Engagement

- Engagement Levels: personal, community and global
- Definitions “Plurality” and “Pluralism”
- Prospects and challenges

MAIN TEXT:

Dworkin, R. (2013). *Religion without God*. Harvard University Press.

Billington Ray. (2002), *Religion Without God*. London: Routledge.

Volf, Croasmun, McAnnally-Linz. (2023). *Life Worth Living: A Guide to What Matters Most*. London: Rider, Penguin Random House

SUPPORTING TEXT:

Brackney, W. H. (2010). *Studying Christianity*. Continuum International Publishing Group.

Ellwood, R. S., & McGraw, B. A. (2002). *Many peoples, many faiths: Women and men in the world religions* (8th ed.). Pearson Education.

Gruzalski, B. (2000). *On the Buddha*. Wadsworth.

Idris, F. (2022). The misconceptions of religious pluralism and religious plurality held by Muslims in Malaysia. *TAFHIM: IKIM Journal of Islam and the Contemporary World*, 15(1), 1–24.

Kamaruzaman, K. O. (2010). *Religion and pluralistic co-existence: The Muhibbah perspective*. IIUM Press.

Mohd Asri Zainul Abidin. (2010). *Islam in Malaysia: Perceptions and facts*. Matahari Books.

Molloy, M. (2012). *Experiencing the world's religions: Tradition, challenge and change* (6th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Mohammed, R., & Hussain, D. (Eds.). (2003). *Islam: The way of revival*. Revival Publications.

Schliesser, C. (2023). *On the significance of religion for the SDGs: An introduction*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003332275>

Sri Rahula, W. (1959). *What the Buddha taught*. Oneworld Publications.

The Holy Bible, New International Version. (2011). Zondervan. (Original work published 1973)

VanArragon, R. J. (2010). *Key terms in philosophy of religion*. Continuum International Publishing Group.

CLASS POLICIES:

- **Readings**

- Students are **highly advised** to read related materials including main and supporting texts before class. Even though only one main text is suggested in this syllabus, students are encouraged to refer to other development texts as well as supplement reading materials such as journal, magazines and newspaper.

- **Lecture & discussion**

- Class lectures and discussion will include materials from the main text along with supplementary information from other sources. Discussion can serve to clarify lectures and readings as well as introduce interesting examples from real life situations. Students are encouraged to **ask questions** and **highlight related concerns** before, during, or after class. In addition to both methods, students will be exposed to different related concepts and principles through different learning activities.

- **Assignments**

- A **detailed guideline** for assignments will be given and discussed accordingly in class. Students are advised to **follow this guideline** properly so as to benefit most from doing the assigned tasks as well as to avoid from losing crucial marks.

- **Tests and final exam**

- Tests and exam will mainly cover various concepts, perspectives, contexts and issues discussed throughout the semester and will be based on understanding. **Critical analyses as well as applied aspects** are the main strength of these assessments. **These assessments are merely meant to fulfill half of the requirement and not a real projection of student's full comprehension on the subject matter.**

- **Professionalism**

- This aspect consists of three main components; **attitude, attendance and participation.**
 - **Attitude** – It includes effort, respect and punctuality. Failure to show these commitments may affect professional attitudes.
 - **Attendance** – Regular class attendance is expected and it's very important, as the class recommended materials do not always cover lectures and discussion. Lecturer must be informed in advance via emails (latiff@ucsiuniversity.edu.my) whenever students are unable to attend classes and tutorials. Thereafter, relevant documentation must be produced **to avoid from being barred, as the system will automatically do so based on your attendance.**
 - **Participation** – Participation in class is essential in the learning process. Students are expected to contribute actively to class discussion in one way or another through careful listening to others' ideas as well as expressing own ideas

- **YOU** are ultimately responsible for your work in this class. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what we discussed and what notes were given out.
 - It is **IMPERATIVE** that you keep up with the readings and assignments and come prepared to be an active, informed and respectful participant in all class discussions.
 - **ALL BEEPERS & CELL PHONES MUST REMAIN IN 'OFF' OR 'SILENT' MODE DURING CLASS.**
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- **Consultation hours**
 - Students may consult the lecturer regarding any queries related to the subject. However, **do take note on the specific hours allocated for consultation. It is strongly advisable for students to come and consult during this time. If it is not possible to conform to the time due to the urgency, students can communicate with the lecturer via email.**
 - **Consultation hours: Please email: latiff@ucsiuniversity.edu.my**
Other days/time by appointment only.