Nota Bene: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. It is up to the student to keep up with any announced changes in the schedule of assignments and readings.

Readings:

2. R.K. Narayan, *The Ramayana*
3. Other readings: posted on Vista, or online

1. **Course description**: “Origins of the Great Traditions” is a systematic examination of four centers of civilization in Eurasia during their defining moments. The course focuses on India’s transcendental world view, China’s classical philosophies, the Judaeo-Christian-Islamic outlook, and the emergence of a Latin-European culture in the West. The content emphasizes cross-cultural influences and connections.

   The course aims at enabling students to gain an understanding of the historical circumstances that gave rise to the major traditions of the Eurasian world. It further aims at familiarizing the students with some of the major texts that are at the core of the Great Traditions, and at the development of the skill of historical analysis using primary sources.

   The lectures are designed to provide an overview of course themes. However, the reading and understanding of major primary texts is an important objective of this class, and since the discussion of these texts in class occupies such a central place, much of the course content will depend on students and their degree of preparation.

2. **Learning outcomes**: After taking this course, the student should have achieved

   - A deepened and informed understanding of Great Traditions and their genesis fostered by...
   - A sustained and intense engagement with key primary texts that inform these Traditions
   - An appreciation of the connections, interactions, differences and commonalities of these Traditions
   - Improved ability to analyze, assess, and interpret primary sources.

3. **Course requirements**:
Read this syllabus carefully, and keep up with possible revisions or modifications announced during the course.

Most of the handouts for this course will be made available through WebCT-Vista; it is the student’s responsibility to *print and bring these materials to class*, to keep up with the calendar and possible revisions of the syllabus posted on Vista.

The students are expected to come to class prepared, i.e. they must be able to discuss the assigned readings. Overall class participation plays a role in the determination of the final grade.

The expectation in this course is that students and instructor treat each other with the respect they themselves want to be accorded.

Absence from an exam will result in a zero grade. In case of a medical or other emergency, contact me before or on the day of the exam, and submit the proper documentation. Missing the deadline for submitting a paper will result in a deduction of one letter grade for each day of lateness.

You are permitted one absence; otherwise, each unexcused absence from class causes an automatic reduction of the ten points for participation by one half point.

There will be a number of quizzes on the reading assignments

There will be three exams on the collective readings and the topics discussed in class.

Every student will visit a site relevant to one of the great traditions and write a three page reflection paper on his/her experience. These sites may include churches, synagogues, and mosques (preferably outside the student’s own religious tradition). The reflection paper will count as 10% of the student’s final grade.

You will write a research paper on a topic that falls within the area of the “Great Traditions” studied in this course. Guidelines for the paper will be given separately. Early in the semester, you must submit your proposal for the paper topic, which must be approved by the instructor. The paper should be 6-8 pages in length, typed, grammatically correct, and complete with appropriate citations and bibliography. The paper is due on November 30.

Arrive promptly; if you have to leave class early, tell the instructor at the beginning of class. *Turn off cell phones* – in case of an anticipated emergency, please set to vibrate and inform the instructor. Please do not use laptops in class, except in the first two rows.

Grade distribution: letter grades are assigned as follows: A=91-100; B=81-90; C=71-80; D=61-70; F=0-60.

Your grade is broken down as follows:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site visit report (reflection paper)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
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Final exam | 20
Participation | 10
Total points | 100

- Academic integrity: No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s).

4. Course schedule (readings, exam and other important dates in italics; “A/O”=Andrea/Overfield).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 17</td>
<td>General introduction; use of primary sources</td>
<td><em>A/O P1-P14 (Prologue: “Primary Sources and How to Read Them”)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>*Review of A/O P1-P-14</td>
<td>August 24</td>
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<td>Indian civilization: history – Hinduism</td>
<td>India: religion and caste</td>
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<td>*A/O 44-48; 65-73; 180-183</td>
<td>*A/O 48; 71-73</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 29</td>
<td>Hindu epic</td>
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<td>*The Ramayana</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>India: Buddhism; Jainism; conclusion</td>
<td>August 31</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*A/O 294-301 (Multiple Voices VI, Buddhism in China)</td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Reading: A/O 87-101; Laozi &amp; Confucius: selections posted</td>
<td>*A/O 74-79; 143-149; 183-190</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 12</td>
<td>Daoism, Confucianism, Legalism</td>
<td>September 7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>*Reading: A/O 87-101; Laozi &amp; Confucius: selections posted</td>
<td>China’s style of civilization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Reading: A/O 87-101; Laozi &amp; Confucius: selections posted</td>
<td>*A/O 30-37; 133-137; 87-101</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>China’s Great Traditions: conclusion</td>
<td>September 14</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*A/O 116-125 (Multiple Voices II, Healing in China, India, and Greece)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 19</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1 (bring Blue/Green Book)</strong></td>
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| September 21 | Family of Abraham: The Judaeo-Christian tradition: genesis and history  
* * *  55-64; 83-86; 194-197                                                         |                                                                                                                                                       |
| September 26 | Judaism continued                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                       |
| September 28 | Family of Abraham: early Christianity  
* * *  197-207 (#s 41-43)                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 3   | The Christian tradition, continued  
* * *  A/O 213-221 (Multiple Voices IV: One or Many Christianities?)                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 5   | Family of Abraham: The Islamic tradition: backgrounds and history  
* * *  A/O 222-239                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 10  | [Midpoint] The Islamic tradition, continued: divisions; role of women; Al-Andalus; Families of Abraham, conclusion                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 17  | **Exam 2 (bring Blue/Green Book)**                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 24  | Greco-Roman tradition (continued)  
* * *  A/O 240-247 (Multiple Voices V: Islam and Unbelievers)  
* * *  Readings: Plato, Cave Metaphor; Tacitus, Annals of Imperial Rome: See Vista                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 26  | No class –professor at conference                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 31  | Greco-Roman (conclusion): Stoicism; Law                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                       |
| November 2  | Medieval christendom: the medieval tradition  
* * *  Readings: A/O 302-312; 317-322                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                       |
| November 7  | Western Europe continued  
* * *  Reading: Einhard, Life of Charlemagne (Vista)                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                       |
| November 9  | Middle Ages-from the Carolingians to the High Middle Ages  
* * *  Readings: Abelard, *Sic et Non* (fragment): [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/Abelard-SicetNon-Prologue.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/Abelard-SicetNon-Prologue.html); Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (selection, see Vista) |                                                                                                                                                       |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 14</td>
<td>High Middle Ages&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>The Story of Abelard’s Adversities</em> (Vista)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Site Visit Reports due&lt;br&gt;The medieval synthesis&lt;br&gt;Reading: <em>The Story of Abelard’s Adversities</em> (Vista)</td>
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<td>November 28</td>
<td>Site Visit Reports due&lt;br&gt;Research/writing day – professor available for consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 30</td>
<td>Site Visit Reports due&lt;br&gt;The Great Traditions c. 1500 (readings: TBA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 5</td>
<td>Site Visit Reports due&lt;br&gt;Great Traditions c. 1500: conclusion/ review for Final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Site Visit Reports due&lt;br&gt;Final Exam (bring blue/Green Book)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>