

Aaron Williams  
[aawilliams@bentonvillek12.org](mailto:aawilliams@bentonvillek12.org)  
479-696-3473

## IB World Religions

### Course Description

The IB World Religions course is a systematic, analytical, empathetic study of the variety of beliefs and practices encountered in the major religions of the world. The course seeks to promote an awareness of religious beliefs in the contemporary world through the study of a diverse range of “living religions”. This course is an academic, non-devotional, and pluralistic examination of the subject.

The course consists of an introductory unit exploring the nature of religion and is followed by an exploratory study of six of the nine largest world religions in which students explore the dynamic, diverse and culturally embedded nature of religion, as well as examine the intersection of religion and the modern world.

Hinduism	Judaism	Taoism
Buddhism	Christianity	Jainism
Sikhism	Islam	Baha'i Faith

The religions are studied in such a way that students acquire a sense of what it is like to belong to a particular religion and how that influences the way in which the followers of that religion understand the world, act in it, and relate and respond to others.

The final component is the Internal Assessment, an investigative study, which provides opportunities for individual research of an aspect of the religious experience, practice or belief of a group and/or individual adherents of the student's choice. (This will count as a class grade in the EOL category)

Along with classwork, the course will include guest speakers of different faith communities.

### IB WORLD RELIGIONS AIMS

The aims of the IB Diploma Programme world religions course is to enable students to:

- promote an inquiring, analytical and empathetic approach to the study of religion
- develop an informed understanding of the diversity of world religions
- foster a respectful awareness of the significance of the beliefs and practices for the faith member
- develop an understanding of how religion affects people's lives
- promote responsible and informed citizenship.

The following three questions underpin the study of each of the world religions.

- What is the human condition?
- Where are we going?
- How do we get there?

The syllabus specification focuses on core beliefs, but these should not be seen to exclude or restrict the diversity of beliefs and practices that are present within religions.

## **WORLD RELIGIONS AND PRIOR LEARNING**

No particular background in terms of specific subjects studied for national or international qualifications is expected or required, and no prior knowledge of world religions is necessary for students to undertake this course of study.

### **Class Communication**

Please email [Mr. Williams](#) if you have any questions that you cannot answer after investigating Google Classroom, your student planner, or contacting a classmate.

### **Bentonville Schools Grading Policy**

Student's course grades will be determined entirely by their evidence of learning of course standards (100% weight). Students may also receive practice/homework grades as feedback to track their progress in this course (0% weight).

Students will also receive feedback in HAC (Home Access Center) on the achievement of learning habits at least quarterly. Learning habits assessed will be time management and engagement in learning. Students will receive marks of either DC (Demonstrates Consistently), IC (Progressing, but Inconsistent), or NY (Not Yet, Rarely, or Not Observed).

### **Unit Evidence of Learning Grades**

Exams will occur at the end of each Unit. Each exam is modeled after the International Exam scheduled in May and will consist of short and long answer open response questions.

Each unit may also contain vocabulary quizzes or other assessments of a student's learn, such as individual or group projects.

### **Late work**

Per the policy of Bentonville Public Schools, a student's grade will not reflect their behavior, but only what they know and can do. Lateness is a behavior; therefore your score will not be penalized if the work is completed late.

- Mr. Williams will announce the deadline in December and May that all work must be submitted by in order to be scored and recorded in the gradebook.

### **Tardiness and Absences**

- When you arrive late to class you miss important instruction and content. If you must be late, quietly enter class and sign in on the google form. Be sure to record your time. I will not sign attendance correction forms if you do not sign in on the form.
- Students are expected to communicate with their teacher if they anticipate missing a class in order to remain on track with their peers. If you are absent, you are still responsible for doing all assigned homework. The homework is published at the beginning of the unit on the website. All work is due as soon as you return. If you are absent on a test day, you will take the test the next class period that I see you. If a student misses a class unexpectedly, they are expected to check their Google Classroom page in order to access any materials missed. Students are expected to sign up for Flex in order to get tutoring for any material they have missed

## **Miscellaneous Information**

- Cell Phones - students will put their cell phones in their backpack and place them on the back counter when they arrive to class. Located nearby are power strips to allow you to charge your phone, so feel free to bring a cord. If you need access to your cell phone during class for a specific reason please alert the teacher before class begins.
- Bathroom Breaks - students are always allowed to use the restroom whenever they need to. You do not need to ask, but if you prefer to, the answer will always be yes. Simply sign out before you leave using the form linked at the top of the Google classroom stream.
- Recommended Materials:
  - Lined paper in a notebook or binder for note-taking
  - Black and blue pens
  - Pencils
  - Your charged Chromebook
  - Some past students like to have Sticky-Notes or tabs

**Tutoring:** Flex Time is the best time to come in for extra help if you are confused or to make up work after an absence. I am one of the student council sponsors and will occasionally have club and officer meetings, but the vast majority of my Flex Time is devoted to helping students so please sign up often. My room has an academic vibe during Flex and is not a space for messing around, so if you are just looking for a quiet place to work independently, my room is a great place to be! I am also available after school from 2:20-2:40 by appointment.