

# DSST® INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS

## EXAM INFORMATION

This exam was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that learned by students taking the course. The exam covers topics such as dimensions and approaches to religion; primal religions; Hinduism; Buddhism; Confucianism; Taoism; Judaism; Christianity; Islam; Shintoism; Hellenic and Roman traditions; and Scientology.

The exam contains 100 questions to be answered in 2 hours.

## EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

The following is an outline of the content areas covered in the examination. The approximate percentage of the examination devoted to each content area is also noted.

### I. Definition and Origins of Religion – 6%

- Basic dimensions of religion
- Approaches to religion

### II. Indigenous Religions – 6%

- Native north American traditions
- Native south American traditions
- Native west African traditions
- Native middle eastern traditions
- Hellenic and Roman traditions
- Shintoism

### III. Hinduism – 10%

- Historical development
- Doctrine and practice

### IV. Buddhism – 10%

- Historical development
- Major traditions
- Doctrine and practice

### V. Confucianism – 6%

- Historical development
- Doctrine and practice

### VI. Taoism – 4%

- Historical development
- Doctrine and practice

### VII. Judaism – 16%

- Historical development
- Denominations
- Doctrine and practice

### VIII. Christianity – 18%

- Historical development
- Major traditions
- Doctrine and practice

### IX. Islam – 16%

- Historical development
- Major traditions
- Doctrine and practice

### X. Religious Movements – 8%

- Before 1000 A.D.
- After 1000 A.D.

## REFERENCES

Below is a list of reference publications that were either used as a reference to create the exam, or were used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. You may reference either the current edition of these titles **or** textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference **more than one textbook** on the topics outlined in this fact sheet. You should **begin by checking textbook content against the content outline** provided **before** selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study.

Sources for study material are suggested but not limited to the following:

- A History of the World's Religions*, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2008, David S. Noss, Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, One Lake Street, Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458, [vig.prenhall.com](http://vig.prenhall.com).
- Religions of the World*, Tenth Edition, 2007, Lewis Hopfe and Mark Woodward, Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, One Lake Street, Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458, [vig.prenhall.com](http://vig.prenhall.com).

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and three incorrect options. These are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the exam. Other sample questions can be found in the form of practice exams by visiting our website at [www.getcollegedcredit.com/testprep](http://www.getcollegedcredit.com/testprep).

DSST EXAM CONTENT FACT SHEET – INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS

1. In Hinduism, the term “karma” implies
  - a. duty
  - b. predestination
  - c. action and reaction
  - d. good action
2. Vedic religion originated with
  - a. people who were indigenous to India
  - b. Aryans who came to India ca. 1500 B.C.E. from Central Asia
  - c. Persians who came to India ca. 700 B.C.E.
  - d. Greeks who came to India ca. 300 B.C.E. with Alexander the Great
3. Theravada Buddhism upholds liberation through
  - a. devotion to Brahman
  - b. one’s own moral efforts and spiritual discipline
  - c. divine intercession
  - d. worship of Buddha
4. Which of the following is NOT one of the Pillars of Islam?
  - a. Muslims are expected to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lives, if financially and physically capable.
  - b. Muslims have to seek the intercession of Muhammad to achieve paradise.
  - c. Muslims are expected to fulfill their charitable duties.
  - d. Muslims have to engage in prayer every day.
5. In the Four Noble Truths, the Buddha proclaims that the cause of suffering is
  - a. lack of proper teachers
  - b. aggression and violence
  - c. craving
  - d. original sin
6. In the Tao Te Ching, Lao Tzu indicates that the best way of living is a life of
  - a. passivity
  - b. assertiveness
  - c. natural simplicity
  - d. social commitment
7. The New Testament Gospels are primarily
  - a. complete biographies of Jesus of Nazareth
  - b. summaries of Christian ethics
  - c. proclamations of Jesus as Risen Lord and Messiah
  - d. eyewitness accounts of four apostles
8. The Covenant of Judaism refers to
  - a. ancient agreements between Israel and neighboring peoples
9. A religious observance commemorating the Exodus is
  - a. Mishnah
  - b. Passover
  - c. Yom Kippur
  - d. Rosh Hashonah
10. Which of the following Chinese figures transmitted Confucian teachings?
  - I. Mencius (Meng-zi)
  - II. Hsun tzu (Xun-zi)
  - III. Mo tzu (Mo-zi)
  - IV. Chu His (Ju Xi)
  - a. I and II only
  - b. III and IV only
  - c. I, II and III only
  - d. I, II and IV only

**CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The American Council on Education’s College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated the DSST test development process and content of this exam. It has made the following recommendations:

<b>Area or Course Equivalent</b>	Introduction to World Religions
<b>Level</b>	Upper-level baccalaureate
<b>Amount of Credit</b>	Three (3) semester hours
<b>Minimum Score</b>	400
<b>Source</b>	American Council on Education – College Credit Recommendation Service

**Answers to sample questions:** 1-C; 2-B; 3-B; 4-B; 5-C; 6-C; 7-C; 8-B, 9-B, 10-D.

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