



Introduction to World Religions

Fact Sheet 2008

TEST INFORMATION

This test was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that which is learned by students taking the course. The school may choose to award college credit to the student based on the achievement of a passing score. The ultimate passing score for each examination is determined by the school. The school is provided with a recommended passing score established by a national committee of college faculty who teach this course. The DSST program is approved by the American Council on Education (ACE), and the ACE provides both a recommended passing score and a recommended number of credits that could be awarded to successful students. Some schools set their own standards for awarding credit and may require a higher score than the ACE recommendation. Students should obtain this information from the institution from which they expect to receive credit.

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.

Introduction to World Religions Exam Content Outline

- I. Definition and Origins of Religion – 6%**
 - A. Basic dimensions of religion
 - B. Approaches to religion
- II. Indigenous Religions – 6%**
 - A. Native North American traditions
 - B. Native South American traditions
 - C. Native West African traditions
 - D. Native Middle Eastern traditions
 - E. Hellenic and Roman traditions
 - F. Shintoism
- III. Hinduism – 10%**
 - A. Historical development
 - B. Doctrine and practice

- IV. Buddhism – 10%**
 - A. Historical development
 - B. Major traditions
 - C. Doctrine and practice
- V. Confucianism – 6%**
 - A. Historical development
 - B. Doctrine and practice
- VI. Taoism – 4%**
 - A. Historical development
 - B. Doctrine and practice
- VII. Judaism – 16%**
 - A. Historical development
 - B. Denominations
 - C. Doctrine and practice
- VIII. Christianity – 18%**
 - A. Historical development
 - B. Major traditions
 - C. Doctrine and practice
- IX. Islam – 16%**
 - A. Historical development
 - B. Major traditions
 - C. Doctrine and practice
- X. Religious Movements – 8%**
 - A. Before 1000 A.D.
 - B. After 1000 A.D.

REFERENCES

The following references were used to create exam questions and may be useful as study materials. You are not allowed to use these references in the testing center.

1. *A History of the World's Religions*, 12th Edition, 2008, David S. Noss, Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, One Lake Street, Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458, vig.prenhall.com.
2. *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.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and three incorrect options. You may want to review these samples for the type of questions that may appear on the exam.

1. 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
2. In Hinduism, the term “karma” implies
 - A. duty
 - B. predestination
 - C. action and reaction
 - D. good action
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. 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
5. 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
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 Covenant of Judaism refers to
 - A. ancient agreements between Israel and neighboring peoples
 - B. a pact initiated by Yahweh with a particular people
 - C. a contract among Jewish religious leaders
 - D. an agreement negotiated by the Hebrew people and the Egyptians
8. A religious observance commemorating the Exodus is
 - A. Mishnah
 - B. Passover
 - C. Yom Kippur
 - D. Rosh Hashonah
9. 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
10. 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.

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

CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials of the American Council on Education (ACE) has reviewed and evaluated the DSST test development process and has made the following recommendations:

Area or Course Equivalent	Introduction to World Religions
Level	Upper-level baccalaureate
Amount of Credit	Three (3) semester hours
Source	ACE Commission on Education Credit and Credentials

It is advisable that schools develop a consistent policy about awarding credit based on scores from this test and that the policy be reviewed periodically. Prometric will be happy to help schools in this effort.

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