



**Centre for Comparative Religions and Civilizations
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi**

**Proposed Course Structure for the Two-Year/One-Year PG Programme
under NEP 2020**

- Two-Year PG programme is for students who have graduated with a 3-year Bachelor's degree.
- One-Year PG programme is open to students graduating with a 4-year bachelor's degree (Hons./Hons. with Research).
- The programme will integrate coursework and research components for all postgraduate students, as follows:
*****2-year PG enrolments will be required to do three semesters of coursework and one final semester of research.**
***** 1-year PG enrolments will be required to do one semester of coursework and one semester of research.**
- There is only one exit option in the 2-year PG programme, i.e. at the end of the 1st year, where the student shall be awarded a PG Diploma.
- **The courses on offer for Semesters III and IV in the Two-Year PG curriculum will be the same as those on offer for Semester I and II in the One-Year PG curriculum.**
- As per the UGC Curriculum and Credit Framework for Postgraduate Programmes 2024, **Research focus is the highlight of the PG curricula.** Thus, the first two semesters in the Two-Year PG programme will include advanced courses in the concerned subject: ranging from lecture courses with practicum, seminar-based courses, term papers, research methodology, advanced laboratory experiments/software training, research projects, hands-on-training, internship/apprenticeship projects.
- The One-Year PG programme will provide an opportunity to admitted students to carry out original study or investigation in their field of specialization on an individual and autonomous basis.

Two-Year/One-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions

Eligibility Criteria:

(A) Two-Year PG Programme

- (i) **B.A Programme** in Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities, Languages and Liberal Arts with at least 50 per cent aggregate or equivalent Grade in the qualifying Under-Graduate examinations.
- (ii) **B.Sc Programme** in any discipline of Sciences with at least 55 per cent aggregate or equivalent Grade in the qualifying Under-Graduate examinations.

(B) One-Year PG Programme

- (i) **B.A (Hons) with Research** in Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities, Languages and Liberal Arts with at least 50 per cent aggregate or equivalent Grade in the qualifying Under-Graduate examinations.
- (ii) **B.A (Hons)** in Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities, Languages and Liberal Arts with at least 50 per cent aggregate or equivalent Grade in the Under-Graduate examinations.
- (iii) **B.Sc. (Hons) with Research** at least 55 per cent aggregate or equivalent Grade in the qualifying Under-Graduate examinations.
- (iv) **B.Sc (Hons)** in any discipline of Sciences with at least 55 per cent aggregate or equivalent Grade in the qualifying Under-Graduate examinations.

**Curriculum Structure for Two-Year PG Programme
(Semesters I and II – Coursework only)**

Semester-I (Course Level 400)	Course Work		
	Nature of Course	Name of the Course (Proposed)	Credits
	Core Course 1(MCRC-401)	Understanding Religion	4
	Core Course 2(MCRC-402)	Hinduism	4
	Core Course 3(MCRC-403)	Jainism	4
	Core Course 4(MCRC-404)	Sikhism	4
	Research Methodology I (MCRC-405)	Research Methodology I	4
	Seminar Course*(MCRC-406)	Reading Primary Sources	4
Total Credits			24
Semester -II (Course Level 500)	Nature of Course		Credits (L + T)
	Core Course 1(MCRC-501)	Indigenous Faiths	4
	Core Course 2 (MCRC-502)	Judaism	4
	Core Course 3(MCRC-503)	Islam	4
	Seminar Course* (MCRC-504)	Indian Knowledge System (IKS)	4
	Total Credits		16

NOTE: Core Courses may require students to write term papers, to be submitted at the end of the semester.

*Involves student presentations on representative readings, and interactive/participatory modes of pedagogy.

Curriculum Structure for Two-Year PG Programme (Semesters III and IV)/ One-Year PG Programme (Semesters I and II)

Semester-III (for 2-year PG) Semester-I (for 1-year PG) (Course Level 500)	Course Work		
	Nature of Course		Credits (L + T)
	Core Course 1(MCRC-505)	Theoretical Orientations to the Study of Religion	4
	Core Course 2(MCRC-506)	Buddhism	4
	Core Course 3 (MCRC-507)	Christianity	4
	Seminar Course\$ (MCRC-508)	Interfaith Dialogue- Outreach Programme	4
	Research Methodology- I (MCRC-509)	Research Methodology – II	4
	Total Credits		20
Semester-IV (for 2-year PG) Semester II (for 1-year PG) (Course Level 500)	Research		
	Nature of Course		Credits (L + T)
	PG Dissertation (Written Submission) # (MCRC-510)		16
	Dissertation Presentation and Viva-Voce Exam (MCRC- 511)		4
	Total Credits		20

Note: Core Courses may require students to write term papers, to be submitted at the end of the semester.

*Involves student presentations on representative readings, and interactive/participatory modes of pedagogy.

\$ Involves field visits for Outreach Programme.

The 16 Credits of PG Dissertation will be split into different assignments. It will require the students to undertake the following assignments (with Credits indicated) as below:

- A. Literature Review and Research Questions (4 Credits)
- B. Methodology: Data Collection and Data Analysis (4 Credits)
- C. Academic Writings, Ethics, and Publication (in Workshop Mode. Evaluation based on related exercises by concerned faculty member) (2 Credits)
- D. Term Paper/Research Paper Submission (2 Credits)
- E. Dissertation Writing and Submission (4 Credits)

Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Core Course 1	MCRC-401	Understanding Religion	I	4

Course Introduction:

The course examines the nature and meaning of Religion through traditional and modern conceptualizations, while offering a nuanced understanding of 'faith', 'belief' and 'religion'. It traces the evolution of religious tradition and its oppositional relationship with the 'secular'. Religions are products of specific and particular time, space and context that invariably influence the primary trajectory of their doctrinal and philosophical developments. Hence an attempt is made to unravel the phenomenon of religious ideologies fundamentally as response to their temporal and spatial locations.

The course tries to familiarize the students with core issues of religion, viz., the idea of sacred, profane and the secular. It examines eschatological ideas and concepts that the diversity of religious traditions expounds. The course covers the diversity of religious experience and their sundry manifestations that is integral to religions.

Course Objectives:

- Introduce students to interdisciplinary tools of understanding religion.
- Familiarize learners with the key themes and aspects of religion.
- Acquaint students with the ideas of sacred, profane and the secular.

Learning Outcomes:

After the completion of the course the students will:

- Familiarize themselves with the basics of understanding of religion as a conceptual category.
- Understand the core themes and ideas associated with a range of religious systems.
- Become aware of the significance of spatial, and temporal contexts in shaping religious traditions.

UNIT - I: Conceptualizing Religion

- a) Traditional and modern understandings and definitions; Faith, Belief and Religion.
- b) The Two Aspects of Religion; Individual and Social; Essence and Manifestation.
- c) Magic, Religion and Science.

UNIT - II: Sacred, Secular and Profane

- a) Sacred, Profane, and Secular.
- b) Symbol, Sign, Myth, Taboo, Totems, Theophany, Magic, Witchcraft and Ritual.
- c) Religion and Eschatology.

UNIT - III: Contextualizing World Religions

- a) Antiquity of religious traditions; belief, subjectivity and objective evidence.
- b) Development of major World Religions.
- c) Religions as response to temporal, spatial locations, and material milieu.

UNIT - IV: Cults, Sects and Movements

- a) Revelation, Omniscience and Divine Grace.
- b) Asceticism, Monasticism, Gnosticism, and Mysticism.
- c) Cults, holy men, saints, gurus, and religious movements.

Evaluation and Assessment:

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings:

- Alban G. Widgery. 1950. *What is Religion?* London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Eric J. Sharpe. 1986. *Comparative Religion: A History*. London: Duckworth.

- Emile Durkheim. 1915. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (Trans. Joseph W. Swain). London: George Allen & Unwin
- Jan de Vries. 1967. *The Study of Religion: A Historical Approach*. New York: Harcourt.
- Joachim Wach. 1944. *Sociology of Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Joachim Wach. 1951. *Types of Religious Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- John B. Carman. 1997. *The Meaning of Religion*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Joseph M. Kitagawa (Ed.) 1967. *History of Religions: Essays on the Problem of Understanding*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Joseph M. Kitagawa. 1959. *History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Max Weber. 1963. *The Sociology of Religion*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Mircea Eliade. 1958. *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. London: Sheed & Ward.
- Mircea Eliade. 1959. *The Sacred and the Profane*. New York: Harcourt.
- W. Brede Kristensen. 1960. *The Meaning of Religion: Lectures in Phenomenology of Religion*. The Hague: Springer.
- Wilfred Cantwell Smith. 1962. *The Meaning and End of Religion*. New York: Macmillan.
- William James. 1902. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Longmans, Green.

Suggested Readings:

- A. J. Arberry. 1957. *Revelation and Reason in Islam*. London: Allen & Unwin.
 - Douglas Allen. 1978. *Structure and Creativity in Religion*. The Hague: Mouton.
 - K. Satchidananda Murty. 1974. *Reason and Revelation in Advaita*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
 - Richard Marlé. 1967. *Introduction to Hermeneutics*. New York: Herder & Herder.
 - Steven T. Katz. 1978. *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis*. New York: Oxford University Press.
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Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Course 2	MCRC-402	Hinduism	1	4

Course Introduction:

Tracing the academic exploration of Hinduism, this course opens with its philosophical foundations and spiritual goals, before moving into the study of scriptures and ritual traditions. Students will engage with the diverse schools of thought and sectarian lineages that have shaped Hindu practice, while also examining how institutions and reform movements have influenced its social and cultural presence. Attention is given not only to doctrines and texts but also to lived religion—rituals, pilgrimages, and devotional practices that animate everyday life. The course highlights how Hinduism has continually responded to questions of identity, community, and modernity, encouraging students to see religion as an evolving tradition rather than a static inheritance.

Learning Objectives:

1. To understand the core ideas and values that shape Hindu thought and practice.
2. To explore the role of scriptures, rituals, and traditions in everyday religious life.
3. To examine how institutions and reform movements have influenced Hindu society over time.
4. To appreciate Hinduism as a dynamic tradition that adapts to cultural and modern contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Able to outline the key ideas and concepts that form the foundation of Hindu thought.
2. Able to recognize the role of major scriptures and movements in shaping Hindu traditions.
3. Able to describe how institutions, rituals, and festivals reflect Hinduism in everyday life.
4. Able to relate Hindu practices and philosophies to contemporary social and cultural contexts.

UNIT – I: Philosophy and Thought

- a) Purushartha: Dharma, Artha, Kam, Moksha, Ahimsa, Atma, Parmatma.
- b) Schools: Samkhya, Yoga, Vedanta.
- c) Sectarian Traditions: Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Shaktism.

UNIT – II: Scriptures and Textual View

- a) Vedic-Rig, Sam, Yajur, Atharva
- b) Post Vedic and Puranas.
- c) Samskaras (Rites de Passage), Ashrams and Ritual prescriptions (Dharma Sutras).

UNIT – III: Institutions, Practices, Reforms and Change.

- a) Lived Religion and Rituals- Puja, Arti, Sacred Tree worship, Yatra/Pilgrimage.
- b) Brahmo Samaj, Ārya Samāj, Ramakrishna Mission
- c) ISKON, Art of Living.

Evaluation and Assessment

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings:

1. Flood, Gavin. *An Introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
2. Khanna, Madhu, ed. *Ṛta: The Cosmic Order*. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, 1994.
3. Lipner, Julius. *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*. London: Routledge, 1994.
4. Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli. *The Principal Upanishads*. New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 1997.
5. Robison, Claire C. *Bringing Krishna Back to India: Global and Local Networks in a Hare Krishna Temple in Mumbai*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2024.

6. Rodrigues, Hillary P. *Introducing Hinduism*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2025.
7. Rolland, Romain. *The Life of Ramakrishna*. Translated by E. F. Malcolm Smith. London: Allen & Unwin, 1929.
8. Rolland, Romain. *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*. Translated by E. F. Malcolm Smith. London: Allen & Unwin, 1931.
9. Saraswati, Dayananda. *Satyarth Prakash: The Light of Truth*. Translated by Chiranjiva Bharati. New Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1975.
10. Stephen Jacobs, *The Art of Living Foundation: Spirituality and Wellbeing in the Global Context* (Routledge, 2016)
11. Tripathi, Amish. *Immortal India: Young Country, Timeless Civilization*. New Delhi: HarperCollins India, 2017.

Suggested Readings:

1. Aurobindo, Sri. *The Life Divine*. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1949.
2. Dalmia, Vasudha, and Heinrich von Stietencron, eds. *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity*.
3. Eck, Diana L. *India: A Sacred Geography*. New York: Harmony Books, 2012.
4. Khanna, Madhu. *Yantra: The Tantric Symbol of Cosmic Unity*. New Delhi: Thames & Hudson, 1979.
5. Sharma, Ananya. "Text to Tech: Preserving Ancient Hindu Texts in the Digital Realm." *Journal of Digital Humanities and Culture* 12, no. 3 (2024): 45–67.
6. Tiwari, Shashi. "Aranyakas." *Vedic Heritage Portal*. Delhi University, Sanskrit Department. Updated April 22, 2026. <https://vedicheritage.gov.in/aranyakas>

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Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Core Course 3	MCRC-403	Jainism	I	4

Course Introduction:

Charting the development of Jaina studies as an academic discipline, this course provides a brief background to the rise of Jainism. The course familiarizes the students with Jain sacred texts, the beginnings of Jain sectarian division and outlines the origin and development of Jain *sangha*. Fundamental Jain philosophies and doctrines are discussed along with Jain religious practices, asceticism and devotion focusing especially on *karma*, *moksha* and *ahimsa*. Going beyond doctrinal issues the course will discuss the key issues and debate around gender and salvation.

It charts the developments within Jain tradition with regard to monastic organisation and the hierarchy within the monastic orders. The course will focus on the historical trajectory of the faith, particularly the lived tradition that highlight the richly layered and complex material and visual culture of the Jains. It shall also discuss the contemporary concerns in the scholarly study of the religion as it touches upon the modern challenges to Jainism, particularly the puzzle of caste as a lived reality and bio-ethical concerns within Jainism.

The attempt is to sensitize students to the fact that religions are not static entities, frozen forever in sacred books, but rather they evolve and change over time.

Course Objectives:

- Introduce students to the academic study of Jainism within the discipline of Indology.
- Familiarize learners with the Jain scriptures and literary traditions.
- Examine the trajectory of sectarian divergences in early Jainism.
- Undertake a sweeping survey of the development of Jain monasticism.
- Discuss the core Jain doctrines, philosophies and worldviews.
- Familiarize students with the key devotional and spiritual practices of Jainism.
- Discuss Jainism's encounter with and response to modern challenges.

Learning Outcomes:

After the completion of the course the students will:

- Get familiar with the Jain scriptural tradition, doctrines and Jain worldview.
- Become conversant with the intense sectarian rivalry within Jainism and its bearing on Jainism's development and evolution.
- Familiarize themselves with aspects and features of Jain spiritualism, devotionism and religious practices.
- Get apprised with the importance of understanding the dynamism of Jainism through its lived expressions.

UNIT - I: Introduction and Background

- a) Beginning and development of Jain Studies in the West.
- a) The Schism: *Svetambara* and *Digambara* traditions: major points of disagreements.
- b) Jain Scriptures and Literary Traditions: Canonical *Sravakcara* and Narrative.

UNIT - II: Philosophy and Worldview

- a) Cosmology and the conception of Time, illustrated didactic tales, cosmological charts.
- b) The theory of *Karma* and bondage (*tatvagnan*/Jain conception of universe and *gati*).
- c) The nature of Reality; Fatalism and theism; *Anekantavada* and *Syadvada*.

UNIT - III: Development of Jainism

- a) The *Tirthankaras*: from Rsabha to Mahavira and the lineage of Elders.
- b) Origin and development of Jain *Sangha*; royal patronage and the geographic expansion.
- c) Monasticism and its organisation; differences between *Digambara* and *Svetambara*.

UNIT - IV: Practices, Values and Principles

- a) Religious Practices, Asceticism and Devotion: *vratas* and restraints, temple worship, rituals (*avasyaka* and *pratikraman*, etc); lay-mendicant relations.
 - b) Reform and Revivalism: the rise of Jain sects (viz., *Mandimargis*, *Sthankavasis*, etc).
 - c) Jainism in diaspora; contemporary bio-ethical concerns and Ahimsa.
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Evaluation and Assessment:

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings:

- H.V.Glasenapp. 1999. *Jainism: An Indian Religion of Salvation*, Motilal Banarsidass: Delhi
- H.V.Glasenapp. 2018. *Doctrine of Karman in Jain Philosophy*, P.V. Research Institute: Varanasi.
- John E. Cort. 2004. "Jains, Caste and Hierarchy in North Gujarat", *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (n.s), vol.38, nos.1 & 2.
- John E. Cort. 2001. *Jains in the World: Religious Values and Ideology in India*, Oxford University Press: Oxford.

- John E. Cort. Paul Dundas, Knut A. Jacobsen, and Kristi L. Wiley. 2000. *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism*, Brill: Leiden.
- John E. Cort. 1990. "Models of and for the Study of Jains", *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 42-71.
- K.K. Dixit. 1978. *Early Jainism*, L.D. Institute of Indology: Ahmedabad.
- Manisha Sethi. 2012. *Escaping the World: Women Renouncers among the Jains*, Routledge: New Delhi.
- N.K. Singhi (Ed.) 1997. *Ideal, Ideology and Practice: Studies in Jainism*, Printwell Pub.: Jaipur
- Padmanabh S. Jaini. 2000. *Collected Papers on Jaina Studies*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Padmanabh S. Jaini. 1993. "Jaina Puranas: A Puranic Counter Tradition" in Wendy Doniger (Ed.), *Purana Perennis: Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts* (Doniger), State University of New York: Albany, pp. 207-249.
- Padmanabh S. Jaini. 1991. *Gender and Salvation: Jaina Debates on the Salvation of Women*, University of California Press: Berkeley.
- Padmanabh S. Jaini. 1979. *The Jaina Path of Purification*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Paul Dundas. 2002. *The Jains*, Routledge, London.

Suggested Readings:

- Brianne Donaldson and Ana Bajželj. 2021. *Insistent Life: Principles for Bio-Ethics in the Jain Tradition*, University of California Press: Berkeley (Chapters 1 and 3).
 - James Laidlaw. 1995. *Riches and Renunciation: Religion, Economy and Society among the Jains*, Clarendon Press: Oxford.
 - Lawrence A. Babb. 1996. *Ascetics and Kings in a Jain Ritual Culture*, University of California Press: Berkeley.
 - Marcus Banks. 1992. *Organising Jainism in India and England*, Clarendon Press: Oxford.
 - Manisha Sethi. 2021. "Jainism in Danger? Temple Entry and the Rhetoric of Religion and Reform in Post-Colonial India", *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 55 no.5, pp.1718-1754.
 - Paul Dundas. 2009. "Victorious Across Eternity- The Lives of the Jain Tirthankaras," in Phyllis Granoff (Ed.) *Victorious Ones: Jain Images of Perfection*, Rubin Museum of Art, pp. 17-33.
 - N.K. Singhi (Ed.) *Ideal, Ideology and Practice: Studies in Jainism*, Printwell Pub: Jaipur.
 - Phyllis Granoff and Nandita Punj (Eds.) 2025. *The Worlds of Jain Art- 17th to 21st Centuries*, Marg: Mumbai, vol. 76 no. 4.
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Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Core Course 4	MCRC-404	Sikhism	1	4

Course Introduction:

This course traces the emergence and development of Sikhism, situating it within its spiritual and scriptural context. Students will engage with the foundations of Sikh egalitarian practice, and philosophy, exploring the Guru Granth Sahib, the Khalsa tradition, and the interplay of devotional and martial ideals. Attention is given to questions of identity, reform, and community, alongside the performative dimensions of Sikh devotion expressed through kirtan, seva, and collective ritual. The aim is to highlight Sikhism as a dynamic tradition – continuously shaped by history, practice, and performance, and expressed through the lived experiences of its followers.

Learning Objectives:

1. To appreciate the historical emergence of Sikhism and its interaction with wider religious currents.
2. To become familiar with the central themes of Sikh scripture and philosophy, focusing on their spiritual and ethical dimensions.
3. To understand the evolution of Sikh identity and community through reform movements, social practices, and codes of conduct.
4. To explore the performative aspects of Sikh devotion, including kirtan, seva, ritual festivals, and collective participation.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Able to appreciate Sikhism's emergence within its broader cultural and religious context.
 2. Able to identify and discuss central themes of Sikh spiritual and ethical thought.
 3. Able to explain the historical development of Sikh identity and community life.
 4. Able to recognize how music, ritual, and collective practices express Sikh devotion in lived experience.
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UNIT – I: Origin, Early History and Foundations

- a) Context and syncretic framework – Interactions with Bhakti and Sufi traditions
- b) Egalitarianism, anti-caste and inclusivity – Guru, Gurudwara, Langar, Sangat, Pangat
- c) Community Formation – Early collective structures and practices shaping Sikh identity.

UNIT – II: Scripture, Philosophy and Thought (*Doctrine & Expression*)

- a) Guru Granth Sahib, the Gurbani and Sikh thought
- b) Miri-Piri, Martial Tradition, Five Ks of Khalsa and the Institutionalization of Khalsa
- c) Performative Traditions – Gurbani, Kirtan, Dhadi Durbar, Kirtan and Shobha Yatra.

Unit III: Identity and Community

- a) Singh Sabha Movement
- b) Rahit & Identity
- c) Authority, Institutions & Sectarian Diversity – Panj Takht and SGPC, disciplinary mechanisms (Vāhac, Tankhaiya), sectarian Deras.

Evaluation and Assessment

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings:

1. Grewal, J. S. The Akalis: A Short History. Chandigarh: Punjab Book Centre, 1996.
2. Grewal, J. S. The Sikhs of the Punjab. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
3. Kaur, Kulwinder. "Canon, Modernity and Practice of Rahit in Defining Sikh Identity." Eastern Anthropologist 69, no. 1 (2016): 37–50.
4. McLeod, W. H. Textual Sources for the Study of Sikhism. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984. Chapter 5, pp. 90–150.
5. Murphy, Anne. The Materiality of the Past: History and Representation in Sikh Tradition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

6. Nijhawan, Michael. *Dhadi Darbar: Religion, Violence, and the Performance of Sikh History*, Oxford University Press, 2006.
7. Oberoi, Harjot. *The Construction of Religious Boundaries: Culture, Identity, and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994.
8. Singh, Pashaura. *The Guru Granth Sahib: Canon, Meaning and Authority*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000.
9. Singh, Santosh Kumar. *The Deras: Culture, Diversity and Politics*. Haryana: India Viking, 2025.

Suggested Readings:

1. Dhavan, Purnima. *When Sparrows Became Hawks: The Making of the Sikh Warrior Tradition, 1699–1799*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011.
2. Mandair, Arvind-Pal Singh. *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Post-coloniality, and the Politics of Translation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
3. Mann, Gurinder Singh. "Music and the Sikh Diaspora." In *Music in Religious Cultures* edited by Jonathan Dueck and Suzel Ana Reily. London, Routledge, 2016.
4. Singh, Nikky-Guninder Kaur. *Sikhism: An Introduction*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2011.
5. Singh, Pashaura, and Louis E. Fenech, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Sikh Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

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Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits	Course Level
Research Methodology I	MCRC-405	Research Methodology I	I	4	400

Course Introduction

This course is designed to introduce the philosophical foundations of qualitative research for studying religion, with emphasis on phenomenology, hermeneutics, interpretive understanding, and critical inquiry. It examines various approaches including ethnography, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, case studies, and grounded theory. The course also addresses data collection methods such as observation, interviews, and analysis of materials and artefacts. It concludes with research ethics, focusing on copyright and plagiarism, literature reviews, and referencing styles.

Course Objectives

- To analyse the philosophical foundations of qualitative research for studying religion.
- To highlight major approaches like ethnography, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, case studies, and grounded theory.
- To scrutinize methods for collecting data like observation, interviews, and analysis of materials and artefacts.
- Develop skills in research ethics, including plagiarism, literature reviews and referencing styles.

Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Gain knowledge of the philosophical foundations of qualitative research methods in religious studies.
- Grasp the key approaches, including ethnography, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, case studies, and grounded theory.
- Explore data collection methods such as observation, interviews, and analysis of materials and artefacts.
- Understand research ethics, including how to write a research proposal, maintain copyright, avoid plagiarism, conduct literature reviews, and follow appropriate standard referencing styles.

Unit- I: Philosophical Foundations of Qualitative Research

- Hermeneutics.
- Interpretive Understanding (*Verstehe*).
- Critical theory.

Unit- II: Approaches

- Phenomenology and Ethnography.
- Narrative and Discourse Analyses.
- Grounded Theory and Case Study.

Unit- III: Data Collection Methods

- Observation.
- Interviews.
- Material and Artefacts Analysis.

Unit- IV: Research Ethics

- Copyright and Plagiarism.
- Literature Reviews.
- Referencing Styles.

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings

1. Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 6th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2022.
2. Curle, Samantha M., and Jack K. H. Pun, eds. *Qualitative Research Methods in English Medium Instruction for Emerging Researchers: Theory and Case Studies of Contemporary Research*. London: Routledge, 2023.
3. Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2000.
4. Engler, Steven, and Michael Stausberg, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2021.

5. Gournelos, Ted. *Doing Academic Research: A Practical Guide to Research Methods and Analysis*. London: Routledge, 2019.
6. Hennink, Monique, Inge Hutter, and Ajay Bailey. *Qualitative Research Methods*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications, n.d.
7. Iyadurai, Joshua. *Social Research Methods: For Students and Scholars of Theology and Religious Studies*. Chennai: Marina Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Religion, 2023.
8. Lytra, Vally. "Ethnography." In *Analysing Religious Discourse*, edited by Stephen Pihlaja. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
9. Orhan, M. "Ethnography as Heuristic Experience, Historical Research, and Multiple Method." *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 52, no. 3 (2024): 102-111.
10. Silverman, David. *Doing Qualitative Research*. New Delhi: Sage Publications Ltd., 2017.

Suggested Readings

1. Harris, Dave. *Literature Review and Research Design: A Guide to Effective Research Practice*. London: Routledge, 2019.
 2. Denzin, Norman K., and Michael D. Giardina, eds. *Qualitative Inquiry and the Politics of Research*. New York: Routledge, 2015.
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Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Seminar Course	MCRC-406	Reading Primary Sources	I	4

Course Introduction:

Any research is essentially based on what are called 'Primary Sources' which forms its bedrock, since it is on the basis of such resources that a researcher builds arguments, theorizes and puts forward a thesis. However, determining what should count, as 'Primary Source (s)' is often a tricky and knotty task. Fundamentally, "Primary sources are sources that were created *during* the 'historical' period" that is being studied or researched. All written/oral documents that existed or was created during any specific or broad historical time period could be counted as Primary source, viz., sacred texts, secular writings, archaeological findings, epigraphs, coins, philosophical treatises, manuals on architecture and art, recorded speeches/sermons, census records, newspaper reports, opinion columns, correspondences between people, diary notes, oral history, memoirs, autobiographies, paintings, photographs, architecture, landscape, etc. In short, Primary sources are those materials, texts, documents, objects, artefacts and other resources that provide us with a *first-hand* account that facilitate reconstruction of the past societies, cultures and religions, etc.

The nature of Primary source varies with the discipline in which research is carried out. History, unlike the disciplines of Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology or Psychology and Economics, deal with the past societies whose members, civilizational/cultural groups are not present to give a *first-hand* account of themselves, their times and deeds. These past societies have left for posterity a record of themselves in various forms. Unlike the historians, the sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, political scientists, economists, *et.al.*, employ a method of direct observation, ethnography, interviews, field work, data collection and analysis, etc., to build their arguments and thesis. The historians and scholars of religion must on other hand rely on the records left behind by people—texts (both sacred, non-canonical, philosophical), archaeological finds, inscriptions, etc.,—whose past we are trying to unravel. One can argue that why at all bother about using the Primary sources, when anyone can simply access the 'past' by reading an important secondary source, viz., a textbook or a monograph. However, a researcher has to be mindful of the fact that secondary sources are at best "secondary" both in nature and scope as they suffer from inherent flaws, namely subjectivity, prejudices, personal ideological, political or cultural biases, etc.,—that essentially colours a researcher's interpretation and is very likely to blemish the accuracy and objectivity of analysis. Hence, trusting such a slanted interpretation is an undesired objective of any good research. Therefore any research should be essentially built upon *first-hand* use of the Primary sources; which also needs to steer clear of the same problems of subjectivity, etc., attendant to

secondary sources.

In short, the indispensable merit of using Primary sources is that it allows the researcher to stitch together the story/narrative by using the sources/materials that was in the first place created by the very same people who we intend to study. When a researcher begins reading Primary sources, she/he stops “*learning* history and start *doing* history.”

In order to fully appreciate a Primary source, one has to explore and identify, contextualize and analyze, and finally evaluate and interpret it. Its indispensability and significance arises out of its vastness and often written nature; invariably safeguards it from tampering. Customarily, the first thing the researcher ought to know and lay bare is the nature of Primary source being used. What kind of source is it? Is it a written text, oral tradition, epigraphic or numismatic material, archaeological findings, private letters, diary, travelogue, government correspondences, state documents, etc. Since each has its own set of problems, hence it is essential to differentiate its nature since different kinds of sources require to be treated differently, both while handling its reading and analysis. For example ancient texts—mainly sacred literature—that have gone through centuries of oral transmission needs to be carefully examined with regard to what constitute the core and authentic ‘remains’ of the text. Notoriously, the oral transmission of texts invariably leads to texts going through the process of omission and commission of passages, etc. In the process a text also transforms itself from an ‘inclusivist’ to an ‘exclusivist’ document (closed to any further changes/inclusions of materials). The textual sources that are anonymous and composed/compiled over a long period of time also suffer from the problem of stitching together of diverse materials from different time period leading to a sort of inherent building of layers within text. Demarcating these layers which often reflect different material and social-cultural data require deft handling at the hands of historians, archaeologist, philologists and linguistics who identify the different strata on the basis of subtle differences in language and socio-cultural data present in a single and unified text/document.

Another thing we need to be careful about while reading Primary sources is to know the authorship of the document created/produced. Depending upon who created a source (wrote/composed/compiled) it often crucially reflects their biases, worldviews, and social cultural slants. For example almost all ancient/medieval textual sources are male authored and suffer from the problem of androcentricism; visible in male dominated and misogynistic attitude. The credibility of such sources need not be taken on face value and adjustments have to be made by the researcher. Knowing the author (with respect to gender, social, cultural, religious background, etc.) of the source is critical in figuring out the slant or coloured perspective that the source is likely to offer. While reading the source, it is not enough to know the author of the textual source, but it is equally important for the researcher to guard against reductionism and false-essentialism (especially when studying a source belonging to a religion or culture other than their own). Besides, all Primary sources should be handled without bringing in our ethnocentric attitude in order to understand the diversity, peculiarity and distinctiveness of each, as the researcher cautiously and willfully should restrain from looking at these sources through her/his cultural, social, religious prism. The rigour and quality of applying such a methodology while reading Primary sources would determine the quality of interpretation and analysis.

Contextualizing Primary source, i.e. placing it in its *historical context* is another onerous task of the researcher. The historical, political, ideological, religious, social or cultural background against which a source was created is crucial to understand the motivations and compulsions of the author and which can give us a peek view into why and how the source was created and what significant local, regional, or national events led to this source. Sometimes sources are packed with lot of narrative and descriptive information that can help to contextualize it. The historical context of the source can be juxtaposed with the author(s) of the source that can help us to think more critically and imaginatively about what he/she had to say and why they had to write/say in a certain way. For example accounts of court historians, philosophers or apologists of a religion are not expected to be critical of their political masters or own religious views, nor are rivals of faith expected to be anything but critical of their religious adversaries. For example the *Mahayana* or Jain *Digambara* tradition and their textual sources are intrinsically harsh and critical of their rivals, the *Theravada* and Jain *Shvetambara* tradition respectively. Hence reading their Primary sources is a tricky and complicated task.

Primary sources of all kinds provide us with invaluable 'factual' information. But what is supposedly 'factual' needs a careful scrutiny: things that are presented, as 'fact' may not be always accurate or true. But how do we decide whether account presented by a source is accurate and credible? A good method for verifying a source's accuracy is by counter-posing it to another source of the same historical period in order to check the accuracy and authenticity of the 'facts'. However, one needs to caution that in case a source doesn't faithfully corroborate partially or totally what other sources present, it should not be outrightly dismissed as untrustworthy, since it may still be correct/true.

Analyzing a Primary source is important to evaluate and use it in building an argument, research proposition and hypothesis/thesis. Here one has to take into account all that has been discussed above: nature of source, contextualization, author, historical frame, etc. Cumulatively the enmeshing of these facets gives us a skeletal framework on which any research is built. Partly it could be due to the way the authors of two different texts saw and presented facts; individual perspectives aid different views/descriptions/narratives, etc.

The weight of reading Primary sources and considering them as credible and reliable is determined by the weight of evidence as irrefutable, believable and valuable source of information. Even a suggestive hint of exaggeration, being spurious (as in case of epigraphs and coins, etc.), deception or being tailored by a patron should caution us against uncritically believing it. The reason(s) for accepting a Primary source must be its unblemished and irrefutable nature of evidence.

Objectives:

- To introduce students to the significance of Primary Sources for research.
- To familiarize with the method of identifying Primary source(s) for a research.
- To explore the nature of Primary sources and explain their contextualization.
- To acquaint students with the methodology of reading Primary sources.
- To develop and hone skills for a critical interpretation and analysis of Primary sources.

Learning Outcomes:

- The students would gain a broad familiarity with the diverse range of Primary sources and how these differ from Secondary sources.
 - It shall encourage students to learn how to identify the diverse types of Primary sources required for discipline specific researches.
 - The students would gain a thorough understanding of the problems and perspectives related to the nature of Primary sources.
 - The students would learn the art of examining and analysing Primary sources.
 - It shall lead to learning the method for critical evaluation and rigorous interpretation of Primary sources.
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Evaluation and Assessment:

- ❖ Two (02) mandatory Seminar Papers to be written, presented and defended.
- ❖ Each The Seminar Paper shall be on a different theme/topic of research chosen by the student or proposed by the concerned faculty member.
- ❖ The mandatory seminar paper is to be presented and defended in the Centre's Board of Examiners, comprising faculty members, before submission.

Component	Credits/Marks
Seminar Paper – I : Writing, Presentation and Defence	2 Credits (50 Marks)
Seminar Paper – II : Writing, Presentation and Defence	2 Credits (50 Marks)
Total	4 Credits (100 Marks)

Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits	Course Level
Core Course: 1	MCRC-501	Indigenous Faiths	II	4	500

Course Introduction

This course is designed to give a basic understanding of Indigenous faiths in India, focusing on localized community based Indigenous faiths like in Northeast, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Jammu and Kashmir. The course introduces the conceptualization of Indigenous faith traditions. It also explores the nature and ontology of Indigenous faiths. The course also examines various Indigenous faiths like Sarnaism, Donyi-Poloism, Heraka, Sanamahi, Bonbibi, Sonatan, Bon, Kuldevta, Bhuma, Gondi Dharma, Bhoota Kola, Toda, and Theyyam, focussing on their emergence and rituals. It sets to study the impacts of religions on indigenous faiths and their socio-cultural interactions and vice-versa across various regions in India.

Course Objectives

- To define the conceptualization, nature, scope, and ontology of Indigenous faiths.
- To explore various Indigenous faiths in India like Sarnaism, Donyi-Poloism, Heraka, Sanamahi, Bonbibi, Sonatan, Bon, Kuldevta, Bhuma, Gondi Dharma, Bhoota Kola, Toda, and Theyyam, emphasizing on their emergence and rituals.
- To study how mainstream religions impact Indigenous faiths and their socio-cultural interactions and vice-versa.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able:

- To understand the conceptualization, nature, scope, and ontology of Indigenous faiths.
- To grasp the emergence and rituals of indigenous faiths like Sarnaism, Donyi-Poloism, Heraka, Sanamahi, Bonbibi, Sonatan, Bon, Kuldevta, Bhuma, Gondi Dharma, Bhoota Kola, Toda, and Theyyam.
- To fully assess the impact of mainstream religions on Indigenous faiths and socio-cultural exchanges.

Unit- I: Understanding Indigenous Faith

- Concept and Meaning.
- Nature, Characteristics, and Scope.
- Changes and Continuity.

Unit- II: Nature and Ontology

- Belief System and Practices, Shamanism, Animism, Animatism, Naturism, and Totemism.
- Folklore, Oral Traditions, Myth, Magic, Witchcraft, and Ancestor Worship.
- Sacred Geography and Ecology.

Unit- III: Regional Diversity of Indigenous Faiths in India

- East and North-East: Sarnaism, Bonbibi, Donyi-Poloism, Heraka, and Sanamahi.
- North and North West: Sonatan, Bon, Kuldevta, and Bhuma.
- Central and South: Gondi Dharma, Toda, Bhoota Kola, and Theyyam.

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings

1. Baindur, Meera, and Tapaswi H. M. "Bhuta Kola Ritual Performances". *Asian Theatre Journal* 36, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 395–415.
2. Beteille, André. 1998. "The Ideas of Indigenous People." *Current Anthropology* 39 (2): 187–191.
3. Behera, M. C., ed. 2019. *Tribal Language, Literature and Folklore: Emerging Approaches in Tribal Studies*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications (Chapters 1, 9, 11, 12 and 14).
4. Borgohain, B., and M. Dodum. "Religious Nationalism, Christianisation and Institutionalisation of Indigenous Faiths in Contemporary Arunachal Pradesh, India." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 46, no. 5 (2023): 1008–1027.
5. Chaudhuri, Sarit Kumar. "The Institutionalization of Tribal Religion: Recasting the Donyi-Polo Movement in Arunachal Pradesh." *Asian Ethnology* 72, no. 2 (2013). Kyoto: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture.
6. Chaudhuri, S. K., and M. C. Behera, eds. 1998. *Indigenous Faith and Practices of the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh*. New Delhi and Itanagar: Himalayan Publishers.
7. Gautam, Ambrish. "Sarnaism in the Oraon Tribe of Jharkhand: An Ecological-Religious Perspective." *Critical Research on Religion* 13, no. 2 (2025): 184–203.

8. Handoo, Jawaharlal. 1989. *Folklore: An Introduction*. Mysore: Central Institute of Indian Languages.
9. Manochkumar, Janani, Rajasekaran Chandrasekaran, Usha Swaminathan, Nagaraj Nallakaruppan, Manoj Sekaran, T. N. Ravikumar, Inocencio Jr. Buot, and Siva Ramamoorthy. "Sacred Groves and Forest Conservation: Integrating Indigenous Traditions with Ecological Sustainability." *Journal for Nature Conservation* 93 (2026), pp. 127312.
10. Misra, Kamal K. "Donyi-Polo as an 'Indigenous Religion' in Arunachal Pradesh: A Facile Analysis." *Indian Journal of Anthropological Research* 2, no. 1 (March 2023): 1–11.
11. Munda, Meenakshi. "The Sarna Religion of the Oraons of Jharkhand, Also Known as 'Addi Dharam.'" *Database of Religious Philosophy*. Delhi University.
12. Niehaus, Isak. 2012. "Witchcraft." In *Anthropology*, Oxford University Press, (Introduction, Definitions, Sri Lanka and India and Southeast and East Asia).
13. Tamang, Sangay, and Pranab Kumar Pegu. "Indigenous Religions in the Eastern Himalayas: Spirit Worship and Healing." *Religions* 16, no. 9 (2025): 1123.
14. Uddin, Sufia M. "Religion, Nature, and Life in the Sundarbans". *Asian Ethnology* 78, no. 2 (2019): 289–310.
15. Vadakkiniyil, Dinesan. "Theyyam by K.K. Gopalakrishnan". *Indian Literature* 69, no. 4, no. 348 (July–August 2025): 53–55.
16. Xaxa, Virginius. "Oraons: Religion, Customs and Environment." *India International Centre Quarterly* 19, no. 1/2 (Spring–Summer 1992): 101–110.

Suggested Readings

1. Geetha, E. "The Theyyams of North Kerala: The Little Gods of Little Kingdom". *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science* 10, no. 2 (2022): 16–20.
2. Longkumer, Arkotong. "Where Do I Belong?: Evolving Reform and Identity Amongst the Zeme Heraka of North Cachar Hills, Assam, India". PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2008.
3. Mibang, T., and S. K. Chaudhuri. 2004. *Folk Culture and Oral Literature from North East India*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications.
4. Parratt, Saroj Nalini Arabam. *The Religion of Manipur: Beliefs, Rituals and Historical Development*. Calcutta: Firma KLM Private Limited. 1980.
5. Smith, John D. "The Epic of Pabuji in Western Rajasthan". *Sahapedia*. Accessed June 5, 2026. <http://www.sahapedia.org/the-epic-of-pabuji-western-rajasthan-0>.

**Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in
Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-27**

Paper No.	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Core Course 2	MCRC – 502	Judaism	II	4

COURSE INTROCTION:

This course aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Judaism by examining its themes, principles, key concepts, creed and praxis, and history. Students will be introduced to foundational and principal Jewish texts, the views of Jewish scholars over the centuries, and the religion's mystical and ethical dimensions. They will learn about the role of the cult, including festivals, and its place in the everyday lives of Jews. They will also study the key events in the history of the Jewish diaspora, and the relationship between Jews and Christians, including its link to the *Shoah*. Additionally, the course will explore the cross-cultural resonances between Judaic and Indian traditions, and the field of Indo-Judaic studies in the twenty-first century.

Some of the key questions for reflection are: What place do the study of the Torah, prayer, and mysticism have in the daily life of a Jew? What role do Jerusalem and the Temple play in the Jewish identity? Are the principles of a global ethical code evident in Judaism? What is the status of women in the Bible? How has Judaism shaped world history? What contributions have Jewish thinkers made to world thought? What is the secret of the Jewish people's resilience?

UNIT – I

- a) Core Beliefs and Principles of Judaism
- b) The History of Judaism
- c) Jewish Scriptures and Rabbinic Literature

UNIT – II

- a) Jewish Observances and Rituals

- b) Gender Roles in Judaism
- c) Judaism and Ecology

UNIT - III

- a) Jewish Literature, Philosophy, and Mysticism
- b) The Different Branches and Denominations of Judaism
- c) Jewish People in India

UNIT - IV

- a) Anti-Semitism, *Shoah*, and the Creation of Israel
- b) History of Jewish-Christian Relations
- c) History of Jewish-Muslim Relations

Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions and Civilizations– w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits	Course Level
Core Course: 3	MCRC-503	Islam	II	4	500

Course Introduction

This course is designed to explore the evolving history of the spread of Islam and its institutions, examining their multi-dimensional nature in both regional and global contexts, historically and in the contemporary era. It engages with textual, oral, and lived traditions, encouraging a rethinking of established notions and a re-examination of present-day concerns. To foster a deeper understanding of these complex phenomena, the course employs an interdisciplinary and inter-religious approach.

The curriculum presents an interconnected study of the Islamic tradition and its diversity from its inception to the present day. It seeks to contextualize the historical and etymological roots of Islam in Arabia by engaging with Greco-Roman, Assyro-Babylonian, Hebrew, native Arabian, and hieroglyphic records. The study begins with the Qur'an and its core concepts, alongside the centrality of the Prophet Muhammad and his life and times. This is followed by an examination of the post-Qur'anic period, including Tasawwuf (Sufism), and other major trends and sectarian influences. Finally, the course investigates the emergence and dynamics of the Islamic *fiqh*, ethics and humanity. The course also engages with Islam as a lived tradition, examining how beliefs and practices are interpreted, negotiated, and experienced in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

Course Objectives

- To analyze the origin and early phase of Islam, basic teachings of the Qur'an, and the compilation of Hadith.
- To explore the sectarian tradition, Sufism and Islam in South Asia.
- To assess the development of Islamic *fiqh*, ethics and humanity.
- To examine the distinction between "lived Islam" versus daily practices.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able:

- To understand the origin and early phase of Islam, basic teachings of the Qur'an, and compilation of the Hadith.
- To explain the sectarian tradition, Sufism and Islam in South Asia.
- To demonstrate the emergence of Islamic *fiqh*, and explain Islamic ethics and humanity.
- To assess the tensions between textual norms and everyday practice ("lived Islam"), and analyse the interfaith relations.

Unit- I: Introducing Islam

- Origin and Early Phase.
- Basic Teachings of the Qur'an, and Compilation of Hadith.

Unit- II: Islam as a Discursive Tradition

- Sectarian Diversity.
- Sufism and Islam in South Asia.

Unit- III: Philosophy and Thought

- Islamic Jurisprudence: Schools of Thought.
- Ethics and Humanity in Islam.

Unit- IV: Interactions and Reform

- Lived Islam.
- Interfaith Dialogue.

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings

1. Ahmed, Shahab. *What Is Islam?: The Importance of Being Islamic*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016.
2. Ali, Abdullah Yusuf. *The Meaning of the Holy Quran: New Edition with Arabic Text and Revised Translation, Commentary and Newly Compiled Comprehensive Index*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2004.
3. Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.
4. Asad, Talal. "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam." *Qui Parle* 17, no. 2 (2009): 1–30.
5. Barlas, Asma. *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2019. Chapter 3.
6. Campanini, Massimo. *An Introduction to Islamic Philosophy*. Translated by Caroline Higgitt. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004.
7. Crone, Patricia. *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987. Chapters 1–2.
8. Curtis, Edward E. "Introduction." In *Across the Worlds of Islam: Muslim Identities, Beliefs, and Practices from Asia to America*, edited by Edward E. Curtis, 1–14. New York: Columbia University Press, 2023.

9. Donner, Fred M. "Modern Approaches to Early Islamic History." In *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 1, *The Foundation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, edited by Francis F. Robinson, Pages. 625–47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
10. Editorial Board. "Re-Orient: A Forum for Critical Muslim Studies." *Re-Orient* 1, no. 1 (2015): 5–10.
11. Goldziher, Ignaz. *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*. Modern Classics in Near Eastern Studies. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021. Pages 1–66.
12. Lapidus, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*. 3rd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Chapter 1 ("The Near Eastern Environment").
13. Rahman, Fazlur. *Revival and Reform in Islam*. London: Oneworld Publications, 2003. Pages 1–206.
14. Schubel, Vernon James. *Teaching Humanity: An Alternative Introduction to Islam*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.
15. Wheeler, Brannon M. "What Can't Be Left Out: The Essentials of Teaching Islam as a Religion." In *Teaching Islam*, edited by Brannon M. Wheeler, 3–21. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Suggested Readings

1. Ahmad, Imtiaz. *Introduction to Caste and Social Stratification among Muslims in India*. New Delhi: Aakar Books, 2018.
 2. Eaton, Richard. *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003.
 3. Hallaq, Wael B. "The Formation of Islamic Law." In *Sharia: Theory, Practice, Transformations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
 4. Kennedy, Hugh. *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2016.
 5. Marranci, Gabriele. *The Anthropology of Islam*. Oxford: Berg, 2008.
 6. Rippin, Andrew. *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*. 5th ed. London: Routledge, 2016.
 7. Wegner, Judith Romney. "Islamic and Talmudic Jurisprudence: The Four Roots of Islamic Law and Their Talmudic Counterparts." *The American Journal of Legal History* 26, no. 1 (January 1982): 25–71.
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Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme
M.A. Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Seminar Course	MCRC-504	Indian Knowledge System	II	4

Course Introduction:

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is reckoned to be among one of the most ancient and continuous traditions of reproduction and dissemination of knowledge in the world. Spanning across millennia it embraces a wide and diverse range of subjects, viz., language, arts, philosophy, science, medicine, mathematics, and ecology, just to name a few. Rooted in centuries of intellectual inquiry and cultural evolution, it integrates these diverse areas of knowledge-inquiry to form a holistic, multidisciplinary framework rooted in native Indian intellectual traditions drawn from remote past.

Representing a seemingly uninterrupted tradition of production and diffusion of knowledge the facets and aspects of IKS was primarily stored and preserved through oral culture and was supplemented by written texts. Besides the classical systematized knowledge, it also includes knowledge derived from customs and practices of innumerable indigenous Indian communities and often dates back to ancient times. While emphasizing on experiential learning it aims at fostering a deep connection between knowledge and sustainable living. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in integrating these indigenous knowledge systems and creating channels for bridging ancient wisdom with modern education, research and applications. It is hoped that the IKS—spanning diverse fields of knowledge—has the potential to provide a unique viewpoint by fusing traditional wisdom with modern scientific understanding and address as well as offer a comprehensive resolution to our manifold contemporary intellectual and societal issues, concern and challenges.

The seminar course on IKS with a foundational understanding of indigenous knowledge in the fields of Humanities, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, Languages and Sciences, shall aim at laying bare the interlinked and evolutionary relationship among the various fields of knowledge. The study of IKS shall encourage a well-rounded approach to study diverse fields of knowledge and foster a deeper and incisive understanding into the roots and interface of individual disciplines of inquiry. A comprehensive understanding is absolutely critical for producing and nurturing professionals and enabling them to build upon India's extraordinary intellectual legacy.

Objectives

- Introduce the foundational concepts of Indian Knowledge Systems.
- Develop an understanding of key intellectual traditions, thoughts and ideas.
- Examine the contributions of ancient India to diverse fields of knowledge and inquiry.
- Promote critical thinking by juxtaposing traditional and modern knowledge systems.
- Encourage research on the relevance of themes of IKS in contemporary times.

Learning Outcome:

- Students would acquire a foundational understanding of different facets of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS).
- Through an interdisciplinary understanding it would encourage critical engagement with the reservoir of traditional wisdom and knowledge.
- It shall hone the skills of students to develop analytical and interpretative framework with regard to traditional knowledge.
- The students eventually will be able to appreciate the relevance of IKS in contemporary contexts and global/local challenges, viz., ethics, conflicts, health, bio-ethics, peace, etc.
- The course shall lead students to write research papers or presentations on selected themes

Evaluation and Assessment:

- ❖ Two (02) mandatory Seminar Papers to be written, presented and defended.
- ❖ Each The Seminar Paper shall be on a different theme/topic of research chosen by the student or proposed by the concerned faculty member.
- ❖ The mandatory seminar paper is to be presented and defended in the Centre's Board of Examiners, comprising faculty members, before submission.

Component	Credits/Marks
Seminar Paper – I: Writing, Presentation and Defence	2 Credits (50 Marks)
Seminar Paper – II: Writing, Presentation and Defence	2 Credits (50 Marks)
Total	4 Credits (100 Marks)

Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Core Course 1	MCRC-505	Theoretical Orientations to the study of Religion	3	4

Course Introduction:

Religion has long been a subject of inquiry across disciplines, inspiring questions about meaning, society, and human experience. This course introduces students to key theoretical perspectives that have shaped the academic study of religion, from early scientific and interpretive approaches to contemporary cultural and literary analyses. The focus is on understanding how different lenses—social, psychological, symbolic, and literary—offer distinct insights into the role of religion in human life.

By tracing the historical development of these orientations, students will see how theories evolved in response to changing intellectual climates. The course emphasizes both the diversity of approaches and their interconnections, encouraging comparative reflection.

Learning Objectives:

1. To develop an understanding of how diverse theoretical perspectives have shaped the academic study of religion.
2. To cultivate interpretive and analytical skills for engaging with religious texts, practices, and experiences.
3. To explore the role of symbols, structures, and cultural patterns in shaping religious meaning.
4. To evaluate contemporary approaches that situate religion within wider social, cultural, and intellectual contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Able to understand the main ideas behind different ways scholars have studied religion.
2. Able to use basic methods to read and interpret religious texts and practices.
3. Able to compare how symbols and structures shape religious meaning in everyday life.
4. Able to connect modern approaches to religion with wider cultural and social issues.

UNIT – I: Foundations of Religion

1. Evolutionary Theories: E.B. Tylor's animism; James Frazer's stages of religious development.
2. Functionalist Perspectives: Durkheim (religion as social cohesion); Malinowski (social functions).
3. Structuralist Approaches: Religion as symbolic and social structure.

Unit II: Interpretive & Experiential Approaches

1. Hermeneutics of Religion: Schleiermacher and Ricoeur on interpretation of texts and meaning.
2. Phenomenology of Religion: Rudolf Otto's *Idea of the Holy*; Mircea Eliade's sacred/profane distinction.
3. Symbolic Anthropology: Claude Lévi-Strauss on myths; Mary Douglas on purity, pollution, and symbolic boundaries.

Unit III: Literary and Critical Reorientations

1. Literary Approaches: Northrop Frye on religion through narrative, myth, and textual analysis.
 2. Critical Contemporary Theories: Talal Asad's critique; feminist and cultural studies perspectives.
 3. Constructivist Critiques of Religion – Timothy Fitzgerald, Warren Goldstein, Mitsutoshi Horii on the modern invention of "religion" as a category and its implications for power, culture, and scholarship.
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Evaluation and Assessment:

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings:

1. Durkheim, Émile, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Translated by Karen E. Fields. New York: Free Press, 1995.
2. Eliade, Mircea, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. New York: Harcourt, 1959.
3. Fitzgerald, Timothy. *The Ideology of Religious Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
4. Frazer, James George, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*. London: Macmillan, 1890.
5. Malinowski, Bronisław, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1948.
6. Otto, Rudolf, *The Idea of the Holy*. Translated by John W. Harvey. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923.
7. Pals, Daniel L, *Nine Theories of Religion*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022.
8. Turner, Victor, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*.

Suggested Readings:

1. Asad, Talal. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.
 2. Bell, Catherine. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
 3. Berger, Peter L. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967.
 4. Horii, Mitsutoshi. *The Category of "Religion" in Contemporary Japan: Shūkyō and Temple Buddhism*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.
 5. Smart, Ninian. *The World's Religions: Old Traditions and Modern Trends*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998
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Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Core Course 2	MCRC-506	Buddhism	III	4

Course Introduction:

The course introduces the students to the beginnings of the academic discourse on Buddhism. It explores the material and socio-historical genesis of Buddhism, while providing acquaintance with the methodology and problems of reading the Buddhist sacred texts and the problematics of recovering the original texts. It attempts to provide a sweeping survey of fundamental Buddhist thoughts and doctrinal standpoints and develop an understanding of their formulation and development, historically and contextually.

It examines the process of the formation of Buddhist monastic organization (*sangha*) leading to its sedantization. Spanning the broad spectrum of sectarian developments within Buddhism, the course also charts the contours of Buddhism's efflorescence and revival in modern times. It shall also introduce and familiarize the students to the contemporary phenomenon of Engaged Buddhism and the movements under its rubric.

Through a diachronic framework the attempt is to sensitize the learners with the fact that religions are not static or frozen in time entities, rather they evolve and change over time.

Course Objectives:

- Introduce students to a systematic academic study of Buddhism.
- Familiarize learners with the sacred literature of Buddhism and its attendant challenges as textual source.
- Contextually survey the formulation and exposition of the range of fundamental Buddhist doctrines, thoughts and core philosophies.
- Examine the evolution and development of Buddhist monastic organization (*Sangha*) and the code of conduct for renunciants.
- Discuss the sectarian developments within Buddhism, and outline Buddhism's efflorescence and revival in modern times.
- Introduce and familiarize the students to the contemporary phenomenon of Engaged Buddhism.

Learning Outcomes:

After the completion of the course the students will:

- Get familiarized with the evolution of the discipline of Buddhology.
- Become acquainted with Buddhism's 'scriptural tradition', the core doctrines, and philosophical ideas.

- Understand with the phenomenon of schisms, doctrinal splits and sectarian developments within Buddhism.
- Be acquainted with the recent developments in Buddhism in response to diversity of modern challenges.

UNIT-I: Introduction and Background

- Curators of the Buddha: Development of academic discourse on Buddhism in the West.
- How Buddhism began: Socio-historical roots, material milieu and the ideological setting.
- Reading the Early Buddhist texts (*Pali Canon*): the *Pali Tipitaka*: from oral to written texts.

UNIT-II: Buddhist Thoughts, Monasticism & Sectarian Developments

- Four Noble Truths, Eight-Fold Path, Dependent Origination, Non-self, *Nirvana* and *Karma, Sila*.
- Mahayana*, Tantric & *Vajrayana* Buddhism: Origins, and basic philosophies.
- Formation of the Buddhist monastic Order (*sangha*) and monastic codes.

UNIT-III: Efflorescence and Modern Revivals

- Early Buddhist art: cave art; sculptural art; narrative art.
- Singhalese Theravada Buddhism.
- Navayana* in modern India.

UNIT-IV: Engaged Buddhism: Facing the Challenges

- Formulating tools of engaged Buddhism.
- Crises and challenges of modernity: War, Peace, Ecology, and Human Rights.
- Engaged Buddhist Movements: *Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha Sahayaka Gana* (TBMSG); *Sarvodaya Shramdana* Movement (Sri Lanka).

Evaluation and Assessment:

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings:

- A.K. Warder. 2004. *Indian Buddhism* (Reprint), Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Akira Hirakawa. 1993. *A History of Indian Buddhism- from Sakyamuni to Early Mahayana*, (Trans. & ed. by Paul Groner) Motilal Banarsidass: Delhi.
- Charles S. Prebish (Ed.) 1995. *Buddhism: A Modern Perspective*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Christopher S. Queen, Charles S. Prebish & Damien Keown (Eds.) 2003. *Action Dharma: New Studies in Engaged Buddhism*, Routledge Curzon: London.
- Donald S. Lopez (Jr.) 1995. *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism Under Colonialism*, The University of Chicago Press: Chicago & London.
- Edward J. Thomas. 1997. *The History of Buddhist Thought*, Reprint. (First Published in 1933, Rea), Munshiram Manoharlal: New Delhi.
- G.B. Upreti. 1997. *The Early Buddhist World Outlook in Historical Perspective*, Manohar: Delhi.
- John C. Holt. 1981. *Discipline: The Canonical Buddhism of Vinayapitaka*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- James Heitzman. 1980. *The Origin and Spread of Buddhist Monastic Institution in South Asia- 500 B.C-300 A.D.*, Univ. of Pennsylvania: Philadelphia.
- Kogen Mizuno. 1997. *Essentials of Buddhism: Basic Terminology and Concepts of Buddhist Philosophy and Practice* (Tr. Gaynor Seikmori), Kosei Publishing Co: Tokyo.
- Mohan Wijayaratna. 1990. *The Buddhist Monastic Life*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- N. N. Bhattacharyya. 1993. *Buddhism in the History of Indian Ideas*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Noble Ross Reat. 1994. *Buddhism: A History*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Padmanabh S. Jaini. 2000. *Collected Papers on Buddhism*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Richard F. Gombrich, 1988. *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benaras to Modern Colombo*, Routledge & Kegan Paul: London & New York.
- Sallie B. King. 2009. *Socially Engaged Buddhism*, University of Hawai'i Press: Honolulu.
- V.P. Varma. 1973. *Early Buddhism and Its Origin*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.

Suggested Readings:

- Charles S. Prebish. 1996. "Ambiguity and Conflict in the Study of Buddhist Ethics: An Introduction.", in *Journal of Religious Ethics*, vol. 24. no.2, pp.295-303.
- Christopher S. Queen, Sallie B. King (Eds.) 1996. *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asia*, State University of New York Press: Albany.
- Dipak Kumar. Barua. 2003. *An Analytical Study of Four Nikayas*, Reprint. Munshiram Manoharlal: New Delhi.
- Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Ed.) 1998. *Buddhism in Practice*, Motilal Banarsidass: New Delhi.
- Hajime Nakamura. 1966. "The Fundamental Standing of Early Buddhist Ethics." *Acta Asiatic*, Nos. 11-18 (in English).
- Sivaraksa Sulak. 1988. *A Socially Engaged Buddhism*, Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development, Bangkok.
- Sukumar Dutt. 1962. *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, George Allen and Unwin, London.

**Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in
Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-27**

Paper No.	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Core Course 3	MCRC – 507	Christianity	III	4

COURSE PROFILE:

This course explores the origins, history, and development of Christianity and the Christian Churches. Topics covered include the formation of the New Testament canon, the different branches of Christianity, the lasting effects of the Reformation and Counter Reformation, and the beginnings of Christianity in India, as well as its differences with Western Christianity. Students will be introduced to Christian anthropology, the ethical thinking and moral teachings of Christianity, with a particular focus on life ethics at the beginning and end of life. The various hermeneutical methods and approaches to the Bible will be examined, as will some of the hermeneutical problems faced by biblical studies today.

The complex and fertile relationship between Christianity and the other two Abrahamic religions, Judaism and Islam, is examined from their origins to the present day. Students will study the shared heritage and divergent paths of these three religions, and the importance of interreligious dialogue between these Semitic faiths.

Course Material: Lectures, Audio and Visual, Articles and literature, Group discussions, Field trips.

UNIT - I

- a) Origins of Christianity
- b) Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ
- c) The Apostles, Paul of Tarsus, and Other Early Church Leaders

UNIT - II

- a) Christian Scriptures and Biblical Hermeneutics
- b) Christian Ethics and Anthropology
- c) Christian Art and Architecture

UNIT - III

- a) Church History: Early, Medieval, Reformation, and Modern
- b) Christian Branches and Denominations: Origins, Doctrines, Practices
- c) Christianity in India: From the Apostolic Era to the Present

UNIT - IV

- a) Comparative Study of the three Abrahamic Religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam
- b) Post-Holocaust Christian-Jewish Relations
- c) Christian-Muslim Inter-religious Dialogue

Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions and Civilizations – w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits
Seminar Course	MCRC-508	Inter-faith Dialogue – An Outreach Programme (Contemporary Issues in Religion, Culture and Society)	III	4

Course Introduction:

In a world peopled by pluralistic and multicultural societies—in terms of religions, faiths and cultures—that is increasingly riddled with religious conflicts, intolerance and suspicion inter-religious and interfaith dialogue is expressly required to serve as an effective tool to build mutual understanding and tolerance in society across religions.

Interfaith dialogue refers to cooperative, constructive, and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions and/or spiritual or humanistic beliefs. The idea and concept of Interfaith dialogue is not merely to be restricted to academic discussions, seminars, conferences and workshops, rather it needs to be disseminated at the individual, institutional and community levels, in order to genuinely promote mutual inter-religious understanding, cooperation, tolerance, and acceptance of each other's' diversity and differences. When employed as a respectful, intentional and strategic tool of meaningful interaction and conversation between people of vastly diverse religious, cultural or spiritual backgrounds Interfaith dialogue has tremendous potential to counteract religious intolerance, conflicts, suspicion, hate and discrimination and simultaneously to promote mutual respect, peace, and fostering harmony and cooperation.

As a Community Outreach Programme the seminar course **Interfaith Dialogue** shall aim at promoting peace, reducing prejudices—replacing assumptions with real encounters—nurturing mutual respect for each other and fostering religious and social harmony and cooperation by encouraging people from diverse religious backgrounds to come together and discuss the shared heritage, ethical and religious values, common genesis of philosophical and doctrinal ideas and religious prescribed code of conduct for common human good and welfare. Thus, it shall act as a strategic tool for communal harmony, building empathy crafting fraternity, and cohesion, and in the process fostering and transforming inter-religious relationships through simple and genuine mutual understanding.

Contemporary Issues in Religion, Culture and Society

The seminar course 'Interfaith Dialogue – An Outreach Programme (Contemporary Issues in Religion, Culture and Society)' is designed to be integrated in a meaningful way with significant contemporary issues related to religion, culture and society. Often religion is understood as a worldview, each with its 'distinctive' set of philosophies, doctrines, beliefs, practices, rituals, etc., that are often enshrined in codified sacred texts and to which the believers have unquestioned allegiance. However, religions are often overlooked as a dynamic

entity and phenomenon that is amenable to social and cultural pressures across times. The textual religion is only one part of religion that frequently gets foregrounded at the expense of the reality of everyday 'lived' religion; which is deeply intertwined with the fabric of social and cultural aspects of the practitioners' daily life.

What is also ignored is the fact that religion besides a theological entity also function as a 'cultural phenomenon' that is manifested in varied forms across all societies and which shape social order, morality, community interaction and personal/collective identity. In a multicultural and globalized world, the outline of religion and culture are often fuzzy. The demarcation of blurred boundaries between the two requires a nuanced interdisciplinary approach that combines the tools and methodology from the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, and history.

The entangled nature of religion, culture, and society means that invariably, across religions these have cumulatively shaped the human experiences, values, morals, and social structures. And on the flip side religious beliefs, philosophical and doctrinal standpoints, ethical injunctions and cultural practices have also left their imprint on social norms, institutions, art, politics, and everyday life. It is thus imperative to lay bare the interconnections and interlinks between religion, culture, and society in order to unravel and develop a holistic perspective on human societies and its response to emergent challenges of constructing identity, diversity, secularism, and social and communal/religious inter-relations.

While attempting to lay bare the dichotomy between religion and culture, this course shall explore how religions shape our collective ideas, institutions, public life, communal cohesion and influence and reinforce social and cultural practices. This course aims to provide a forum for critical engagement with these themes.

Course Objectives:

- Promote mutual understanding and insight into the beliefs, practices, and lived experiences of the 'Others'.
- Foster deep, respectful inter-religious relationships.
- Aim at building social cohesion across diverse faiths.
- Focus on the richness and shared values of religious traditions.
- Examine the relationship between religion, culture and social structures.
- Develop a nuanced understanding of the interplay between religion, culture, socialization and identity.
- To address the gap in understanding how religion and culture influence social dynamics.

Learning Outcomes:

- The students shall gain understanding of the diverse religious and cultural traditions and their societal role and implications.
- It shall encourage critical thinking on a wide range of social and cultural issues and how – if at all – these are shared and shaped by religious cultures.
- The students would gain an inside understanding and cognizance of pluralism and inclusivity that would foster a natural respect towards the 'other' religions and cultures.
- It shall facilitate to examine the role of religion in shaping societal values and conflicts
- Students will be able to gauge the inter-linkages between religion, culture, and society.
- It shall lead to critically analyze religious and cultural practices and evaluate the role of religion in contemporary social issues.

Evaluation and Assessment:

- ❖ Two (02) mandatory Seminar Papers to be written, presented and defended.
- ❖ Each The Seminar Paper shall be on a different theme/topic of research chosen by the student or proposed by the concerned faculty member.
- ❖ The mandatory seminar paper is to be presented and defended in the Centre's Board of Examiners, comprising faculty members, before submission.

Component	Credits/Marks
Seminar Paper – I : Writing, Presentation and Defence	2 Credits (50 Marks)
Seminar Paper – II : Writing, Presentation and Defence	2 Credits (50 Marks)
Total	4 Credits (100 Marks)

Syllabus for the Two-Year PG Programme – M.A. in Comparative Religions and Civilizations– w.e.f. 2026-2027

Paper No	Paper Code	Paper Title	Semester	Credits	Course Level
Research Methodology II	MCRC-509	Research Methodology II	III	4	400

Course Introduction

Research Methodology (RM) II is designed for postgraduate students to prepare them for Ph.D. coursework and advanced research. It serves as foundational training in scientific research. This course begins with the foundations of scientific research, distinguishing common sense from scientific inquiry, and explaining the characteristics, steps, and types of research, including qualitative, quantitative, fundamental, applied, and historical research. It then addresses research design and problem formulation, highlighting the significance of research in social sciences, scientific methods, defining research problems and constructs, phases of research design, and designs for exploratory, descriptive, diagnostic, and hypothesis-testing studies. Furthermore, the course covers sampling techniques, focusing on sampling purpose, sample design, sample size determination, and classification of sampling into non-random, random, and complex random sampling. Together, these components enhance students' academic research competence.

Course Objectives

- To equip postgraduate students with foundational training in scientific research to support Ph.D. coursework and advance research.
- To distinguish common sense from scientific inquiry, and identify the characteristics, steps, and types of research, including qualitative, quantitative, fundamental, applied, and historical research.
- To develop skills in research design and problem formulation, covering scientific methods, research constructs, phases of design, and designs for exploratory, descriptive, diagnostic, and hypothesis-testing studies.
- To illustrate competence in sampling purposes, sample design, sample size determination, and the classification of sampling into non-random, random, and complex random sampling.

Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Have an understanding of the characteristics, steps, and types of research, including qualitative, quantitative, fundamental, applied, and historical approaches.

- To use scientific methods to define research problems and constructs, and choose suitable designs for exploratory, descriptive, diagnostic, and hypothesis-testing studies.
- To know how to apply appropriate sampling techniques by determining sampling purpose, design, and size, and correctly classify and use non-random, random, and complex random sampling.
- To enhance their scientific research skills to strengthen Ph.D. preparation and academic competence.

Unit- I: Foundations of Scientific Research

- Science and Common Sense: Nature, characteristics, and steps in scientific research.
- Key methods and evaluative criteria.
- Types: Qualitative, quantitative, fundamental, applied, historical.

Unit-II: Research Design and Problem Formulation

- Social Science Research: Significance, methods, defining research problem.
- Concepts and Design: Constructs, functions, good design traits.
- Phases and Types: Exploratory, descriptive, diagnostic, hypothesis-testing studies.

Unit- III: Sampling Techniques

- Informal and formal designs, purposes, steps.
- Sampling principles, sample size determination.
- Classification: Non-random, random, and complex random sampling.

Unit-IV: Data Collection and Report Writing

- Methods: Primary (observation, interview, questionnaire, projective techniques) and secondary data.
- Data Collection: Case study, pilot study, pre-testing.
- Hypotheses, Synopsis and Ethics: Hypothesis vs. theory; synopsis writing, proposal appraisal, research ethics, referencing styles.

Component	Marks
Internal Assessments	40
End Semester Exams/University Exams	60
Total	100

Essential Readings

1. Ahuja, Ram. *Research Methods*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2001.

2. Creswell, John W., and J. David Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2022.
3. Goode, William J., and Paul K. Hatt. *Methods in Social Research*. New Delhi: Surjit Publications, 2017.
4. Iyadurai, Joshua. *Social Research Methods: For Students and Scholars of Theology and Religious Studies*. Chennai: Marina Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Religion, 2023.
5. Klausner, Samuel Z. "Methods of Data Collection in Studies of Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 3, no. 2 (Spring 1964): 193–203.
6. Kothari, C. R., and Gaurav Garg. *Research Methodology*. New Delhi: New Age International, 2025.
7. Saravanel, P. *Research Methodology*. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1991.
8. Sharma, Arvind, ed. *Methodology in Religious Studies: The Interface with Women's Studies*. SUNY Series, McGill Studies in the History of Religions, A Series Devoted to International Scholarship. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002.

Suggested Readings

1. Acharyya, Rajat, and Nandan Bhattacharya, eds. *Research Methodology for Social Sciences: Contemporary Issues in Social Science Research*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge India, 2019.
 2. Shankar, Lakshmi, and Reccha Sharma. *Research Methodology and Publication Ethics*. New Delhi: Phoenix International Publication House, 2024.
 3. Wentz, Richard E. "Should Religious Studies Develop a Method?" *The Journal of Higher Education* 41, no. 6 (June 1970): 463–77.
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Two-Year PG Programme

M.A. Comparative Religions and Civilization – w.e.f. 2026-2027

PG Dissertation (Written Submission)/Project Report/Research Paper Semester IV:

Detailed Semester Plan (First Half & Second Half)

Introduction

The curriculum for Semester-IV is designed to guide students through the complete research process starting from the scratch of literature review to final dissertation submission and defence. The semester is neatly designed and divided into two halves as detailed below:

- a) The first half of the semester **(1st–6th week)** focuses on foundational research activities: literature review, research questions, data collection, data analysis, writing of term paper/research paper, and a rotational workshop on research and publication ethics (including AI awareness). The Term paper/Research paper is to be evaluated by the concerned Supervisor.
- b) The second half of the semester **(7th–15th week)** would focus on writing and submission of the dissertation, preparation, viva-voce and defense of the dissertation. The viva-voce is to be assessed by a Dissertation Board consisting all the faculty members and two External examiners of whom at least one should be from JMI and another could be from outside JMI.

Learning Objectives

- To enable students to conduct a systematic literature review and identify research questions within 2 weeks.
- To prepare methodology for dissertation writing within 2-3 weeks.
- To develop skills in data collection and analysis over a 4-week period.
- To integrate AI as part of research ethics training through a rotational workshop.
- To prepare a complete dissertation under a Supervisor.
- To defend the dissertation in an open viva-voce before a panel of internal and external examiners.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the semester, students will be able to:

- Formulate research questions based on a critical literature review.
- Collect, analyze, and interpret data independently.
- Comply with research ethics, including the responsible use of AI.
- Write a complete dissertation in hard-bound format.
- Present and defend their research findings in a 10-minute open-floor viva.

Assessment and Evaluation

Components	Duration	Marks/Credits	Evaluator
Literature Review and Research Questions	2 weeks	100 Marks/4 Credits	Supervisor
Methodology: Data Collection and Data Analysis	3rd – 4th week	100 Marks/4 Credits	Supervisor
a) Academic Writings, Ethics and Publication: (in Workshop mode on Rotational Basis, for 02 Days)	5th – 6th week	Graded Workshop 50 Marks/2 Credits	Workshop Coordinator
b) Term Paper/Research Paper Submission	2 weeks (To be submitted in the 7th week)	Term Paper/Research Paper Submission 50 Marks/2 Credits	Supervisor
Dissertation Writing and Submission	8th – 12th week	100 Marks/4 Credits	Supervisor
Dissertation Presentation	13th – 15th week	50 marks/2 Credits	Dissertation Board (All Faculty Members plus 2 externals- one is from JMI and another is from outside JMI)
Viva-Voce		50 marks/2 Credits	
NOTE: Total Credits not assigned to Supervisor		Workshop (2 Credits) and Viva-Voce (4 Credits)	

Note:

- A hard-bound copy of the M.A. Dissertation is mandatory.
- Examiners may be from Social Sciences/Humanities.
- The CoS shall approve the name of MA Dissertation examiners.
- The External examiner shall be paid an honorarium which must be applied for and approved and sanctioned by the office of the CoE.