

COURSE CODE T4P1 (M) 2010

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER 2010

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

B.A. / B.Ed IV / IDE

TITLE OF PAPER : RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

COURSE NUMBER : T4P1

TIME ALLOWED : THREE HOURS

INTRUCTIONS: 1. ANSWER ANY FOUR (4) QUESTIONS

2. ALL QUESTIONS CARRY EQUAL MARKS.

TOTAL MARKS : 100

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED  
BY THE INVIGILATOR

1. "For a great many people in various countries religion is something which is a part of the fabric of society and life" (J.R. Hinnells). Critically discuss the above statement with special reference to the rationale for the study of world religions.
2. Drawing examples from current studies of the indigenous religions of North America and Africa, write a critical essay of the future of the so-called 'Traditional Religions of the World'.
3. Discuss the claim by some scholars that Hinduism is a world-denying religious tradition.
4. Explain the religious and philosophical bases of the pacifist strand of Buddhism. Comment on its relevance, if any, for our day and age.
5. "In many ways the doctrines of Confucianism and Taoism complement each other, running side by side like two powerful streams through all later Chinese thought and literature, appealing simultaneously to two sides of Chinese character" (W.T. de Bary). Discuss this above statement showing the extent in which the two traditional philosophies continue to shape the thoughts and behaviour of contemporary Chinese.
6. Discuss the key doctrines of Islam and indicate the aspects that militate against the forging of harmonious relations between Muslims and Christians. Briefly outline a model of interfaith relations which could help foster amicable relations between Muslims and Christians in Africa.
7. "The Baha'i Faith upholds the unity of God, recognizes the unity of His prophets, and inculcates the principle of the oneness and wholeness of the entire human race" (SHOGHI EFFENDI). Explain this statement indicating the continuities and discontinuities between the Bahai'i Faith and other religions of the world.
8. "Religion is a two-edged sword which can cut either way with serious consequences. It is a powerful and delicate phenomenon which needs to be handled with utmost care" (J.I. Omeregbe). Discuss this assertion, drawing specific examples from at least three religious traditions.