

M. Phil. Programme
Department of World Religions and Culture
University of Dhaka
Syllabus for the Session: 2000-2001 to 2002-2003

M. Phil. Programme of the Department of World Religions is a two-year programme. Students having at least second class Masters from the Department of World Religions of the University of Dhaka or students having equivalent degree/degrees from any other recognised University (home or abroad) are eligible for admission to this programme. The Academic Committee of the Department will decide issues of admission, subject to a final approval from the Faculty and the Academic Council.

In the 1st Year students will be expected to complete four courses from a list of eleven. On acting upon the supervisors' recommendations, the Academic Committee of the Department will select those courses most appropriate to the student's area of specialization.

After completion of the 1st year, students will be given one year to write a thesis. Staff members who are directly connected with the Department will supervise the thesis. But if needed, qualified teachers belonging to other Departments of the University may be requested to supervise the thesis instead.

At the end of 1st Year, students will be required to sit for a written examination on four courses of 100 marks each. Besides this they will be required to appear at an oral examination which will be worth 100 marks. The pass mark for all courses is 50%.

Regarding admission, readmission, examination, extension of time for submitting thesis, formation of the examination committee, etc. all the prescribed rules followed by the Departments of the Faculty of Arts will be applicable to the M. Phil Programme of the Department of World Religions.

The following courses will be offered for the M. Phil. Programme:

WRC-M.Phil. 101: Sacred texts of Different Religions.

Central themes and basic structures of respective oral and written sacred "scriptures" of World Religions; their ongoing influence in religious communities and individual lives.

WRC - M. Phil. 102: Research Methodology.

Survey of history and range of theoretical and methodological approaches to academic study of religion; intensive training in the particular theoretical orientation and research methods selected for each student respectively.

WRC-M. Phil. 103: Legal and Ethical Issues in Different Religions.

Comparative study of major traditions of religiously sanctioned law; examination of the relation of law to ethics in each case; consideration of other religious grounds for ethics.

WRC - M. Phil. 104: Religious Expressions in Art.

Exploration of aesthetic/emotional expressions of religious faith in musical, visual, architectural and reflect literary artistic forms (emphasis to expertise of instructor); religious themes, norms and critiques of such expressions in art.

WRC-M. Phil. 105: Sociology of Religion.

Selective readings in "classical" and currently influential sociologists of religion; critical assessment of these; applications of sociology of critical religion to analyse one or more major issue involving religion and society.

WRC-M. Phil. 106: Anthropology of Religion.

Selective reading in "classical" and currently influential anthropologists of religion; critical assessment of these; applications to issues affecting aboriginal and tribal communities.

WRC- M. Phil. 107: Religion and Politics.

Comparison of traditional religious and philosophic views of polity and modern political science views of religion in relation to polity; analysis of one or more major issue involving religion and politics from traditional as well as political science perspectives.

WRC-M. Phil. 108: Religion and Environmental Issues.

Introduction to rapidly emerging research on overt and latent impact of traditional religion-cultural values and symbolism and of current secular values and ethos on human respect for, versus exploitation of, the natural environment; impact on

religious consciousness of threat of ecological degradation and its disproportionate impact on the poor.

WRC- M. Phil. 109: Religion and Communication.

Examination of traditional means of communication within and between religious communities; the risks and possibilities for religious traditions presented by the internet and other high-tech communications media; their impact on collective and individual religious consciousness.

WRC-M. Phil. 110: Religious History of Bangladesh

Review of the religiously plural history of the Bengal region with special attention to eastern Bengal, now Bangladesh; critical assessment of the historiography of the subject; defining proposals for further research.

WRC-M. Phil. 111: Current Issues in Philosophy of Religion.

A selection of readings from major philosophers of East and West will be made focusing on one or more issue of current salience in human religious life (possibly, but not exclusively: war and peace; affluence and poverty; gender; race; faith,, agnosticism, atheism; bioethical problems; future of religion).