CSS COURSE SYLLABUS

Comparative Study of Major Religions

100 marks · one paper · Compulsory

Complete Comparative Study of Major Religions syllabus. The full official FPSC syllabus this course covers, section by section.

(Alternative Paper in Lieu of the Compulsory Islamic Studies)

1 Introduction

- Definition(s) of religion
- Emergence of the study of religion as a discipline
- Theological and academic study of religion
- An overview of religious landscape of the World

2 Hinduism

- Historical Background Indus valley civilization, Aryan invasion theory, Vedic Dharma, Brahmanism
- Scriptures:
- Sruti: Vedas, Upanishads, Smirti: Manu Smirti, Sutras, Puranas, Great epics: Ramayana, Mahabharata
- Hindu Doctrines:
- Dharma, Vedanta, Karma, Transmigration of Souls, Moksha (Liberation)
- Ways to Liberation:
- Karma marga (Works/Rituals), Jnana marga (Wisdom), Bhakti marga (Devotion)
- Hindu gods:
- Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Trimurti, other gods and divinities
- Major Hindu Sects:
- Vaishavism (Manifestation avatars), Saivism (Supreme God & Phallic worship), Saktism (Goddess worship)
- Hindu society:
- Caste System, Ashramas (Stages of life)
- Hinduism in the Modern World 19th century reform and revival movements, Contemporary Hindu Tendencies and movements

3 Buddhism

- Historical Background Life of Gautama Buddha, Formation and spread of Buddhism, Rivalry between Brahmanism and &Buddhism
- Scriptures:
- Tripitaka: Sutta Pitaka, Vinaya Pitaka, Abhidhamma Pitaka
- Teachings and Doctrines Three Jewels of Buddhism: Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha, The four noble truths, Eight fold Path
- Buddhist Sects:
- Theravadas (Hinayana), Mahayana, other schools and sects

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- Buddhism in the Modern world

4 Judaism

- A brief history of Jews and Judaism:
- From Abraham to Moses, peace be upon them all, From Moses to establishment of Jewish rule, Destruction of Jerusalem and dispersion of Jews in the world,
- Jewish Scriptures:
- Tanakh (The Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings), Mishnah and Talmud
- Articles of faith and basic teachings:
- Ten Commandments, The thirteen principles of faith propounded by Moses Maimonides (1138-1204)
- Jewish holidays and festivals:
- Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement), Pesach (Passover), Sukkot (Tabernacles) Purim
- Jewish Worship:
- Daily prayer, fasting, Sabbath
- Jewish sects and movements Orthodox Judaism, Conservative Judaism, Reform Judaism, Zionism, Kabbalah, Hasidism

5 Christianity

- Historical background:
- Jewish background of Christianity, Life and of Jesus Christ (Through the Four Gospels), Life and the role of Paul (Through the Letters of Paul), Formation and spread of the Christian Church, Christianization of the Roman Empire, Reform movement
- Scriptures:
- The Holy Bible (Old Testament and New Testament)
- Basic Doctrines:
- Original Sin, Incarnation of God, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Atonement, Trinity
- Christian Sects:
- Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Protestantism Sub-denominations: Lutherans, Reformed and Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Unitarians
- Christian Festivals and Holidays:
- Advent, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost
- Christian worship and Sacraments Baptism, Eucharist, Communion, Lord's Supper, prayer, fasting, psalms, music,
- Christianity in the Modern Times Encounter with modernity, modern theological trends, Missionary movement, Dialogue and relationship with other religions

6 Islam

- Introduction and Historical Background Islamic concept of religion, universality of religion and diversity of shari'ahs, Sirah (Life) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, The era of rightly guided caliphs of Islam
- Sacred Scriptures:
- The Holy Quran, Hadith
- Basic Doctrines and Creed:

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- Tawhid (Oneness of God), Risalah (Belief in Prophets and finality of the prophet-hood with the Prophet Muhammad), Akhirah (Belief in Hereafter and the final reckoning by Allah the Almighty), Belief in angels, previous scriptures, predestination and human responsibility before God, infallibility of the Quran
- Five Pillars of Islam:
- Utterance of Shahadatayn (To proclaim the Oneness of Allah and that Prophet Muhammad is his messenger, salah (five daily prayers), zakah (compulsory charity), sawm (fasting in the month of Ramadan) and Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah who can afford travelling to it)
- Other Teachings of Islam Equality of mankind, simplicity, spiritual purity and bodily hygiene, patience, contentment, moderation, social justice, Jihad, tolerance towards other religions,
- Sects and Schools Sunnis (mainstream Muslims), Shi'ahs (Special devotion for Hazrat Ali and Family of the Prophet), Khawarij (literalists), Mu'tazilah (rationalists)
- Contemporary Islamic movements and tendencies:
- Ikwan al Muslimun (Muslim Brotherhood), Jama'at-i-Islami, Tablighi Jama'at, Salafi movement, Fethullah Gulen movement in Turkey, Iranian revolution, extremist groups.

Source: Revised Syllabi for CSS Competitive Examination, CE-2016 (updated 7 July 2015), Federal Public Service Commission.

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