



**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
NET BUREAU**

SYLLABUS

SUBJECT: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS Code No. : 62

(PROPOSED TITLE: RELIGIOUS STUDIES)

UNIT I: STUDY OF RELIGION

- a. Religion: Meaning, Definition, Nature, and Scope
- b. Theories: Origin of Religion
- c. Study of Religion: Aims and objectives
- d. Dimensions of Religion: Doctrinal, social, moral code of conduct, devotional praxis
- e. Religion's Relationship with other Disciplines: Theology, Ethics, Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology, Culture and Arts

UNIT II: PRE-HISTORICAL RELIGIOUS FORMS

- a. Early forms of Religious Expression: Mana, Magic, Fetishes, Shamans, Totem, Taboo, Ancestor worship
- b. Nature of Holy: Animism, Naturism, Theism, Polytheism, Henotheism, Deism, Monotheism, Pantheism, and Panentheism
- c. Task and Objectives: Myths, Rituals, Rites of Passage, Sacraments, Prayers, Festivals, Sacrifices
- d. Religion of the Major Civilizations: Indus Valley, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Chinese.
- e. Meaning and Nature: Syncretism, Mysticism, Schism, Sect, etc.
- f. Zoroastrianism : Beliefs and Practices

UNIT III: MODERN TRENDS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

- a. Approaches to the Study of Religion: Anthropological, Sociological, Phenomenological, Psychological, Historical, and Experiential.
- b. Challenges to Religion: Atheism, Agnosticism, Existentialism, Humanism, Marxism, Rationalism, Materialism, Secularism, Relativism, Globalization, Clash Civilizations.
- c. Modern Trends in the Study of Religion: Holistic or all inclusive approach, interfaith understanding and dialogue, co-existence, human rights, empowerment of the Subaltern or social justice, gender equality, ecology and environment, world peace and harmony.

- d. Religious Authority: Tradition, magician, diviner, scripture, seer, saint, reformer, founder, prophet

UNIT IV: HINDUISM

- a. Nature of Vedic Religion and Culture
- b. Vedic Literature – Samhita-s, Aranyak-s, Upanisad-s
- c. Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism, Tantricism, etc.
- d. Six Systems of Hindu Philosophy – Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa, and Vedanta
- e. Epics (Ramayana, Mahabharata) and Purana-s
- f. Bhakti and Reform Movements of the Medieval Period
- g. Modern Reform Movements (Brahmosamaja, Aryasamaja, Ramakrishna Mission, etc.)

UNIT V: JAINISM

- a. Sramana Culture and Tirthankara Tradition (Rishabhadeva to Mahavira)
- b. Main Sects of Jainism – Digambara and Svetambara
- c. Prakrit Agama Literature and Prominent Acaryas
- d. Basic Doctrines, Principles and Philosophy
- e. Contribution to Arts and Architecture
- f. Social Aspects of Jainism
- g. Contemporary Developments of Jainism
- h. Jain Pilgrimage and Jain Festivals

UNIT VI: BUDDHISM

- a. Background, Life and Teaching of Gautama Buddha
- b. Pali Tipitaka Literature and Mahayana Sutra-s
- c. Main Sects – Hinayana, Mahayana, etc.
- d. Basic Doctrines, Principles and Philosophy
- e. Contribution to Arts and Architecture
- f. Expansion of Buddhism Outside India
- g. Social Aspects and Revival of Buddhism

UNIT VII: JUDAISM

- a. Origin and Development: Creation, the Call of Abraham, the Call of Moses, the Exodus, the Covenant on Mount Sinai
- b. Hebrew Scripture: Pentateuch (Torah), Prophets (Nabim), Writings (Ketubim)
- c. Jewish Beliefs: Ten Commandments, Talmud, Midrash, Passover, Messiah, etc.
- d. Jewish Celebration: Sabbath, Synagogue Assembly, Passover, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Tabernacles
- e. Jewish Ethics: Covenant consciousness, Mosaic Laws, Jubilee stipulations, marriage and family
- f. Importance of Jerusalem
- g. Major Denomination of Judaism

UNIT VIII : CHRISTIANITY

- a. The Life and Message of Jesus Christ
- b. The beginning of Christianity and the Sermon on the Mount
- c. Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures
- d. Main Christian Churches (Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant)
- e. Important Beliefs and Teachings of Christianity
- f. Christian Life: Worship, Rituals, and Mysticism
- g. History of Christianity in India
- h. Contemporary Trends in Christian Theology

UNIT IX: ISLAM

- a. The social, religious condition of Arabia before the advent of Islam
- b. Life of the Prophet Mohammad and the basic teachings of the Quran, the establishment of the Islamic community and the Madina state.
- c. Introduction of Hadith and Fiqh and some important Muhaddith (Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim) and Faqi (Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafi, Imam Malki Imam Hanbal)
- d. Some important Muslim thinkers: Ali ibn e Hazam, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, ibn-e-Taimiyah and Shah Waliullah

- e. Development of Sufism, some important Sufi order's (Chishtiyah, Qadriyah, Suharwardiyah, Naqsbandiyah, and their impact on society
- f. Challenges of modernity and the reform movements among Muslim in India
- g. Origin and development of sects: Ithna Ashari, Mutazilites and Asharites
- h. The contribution of Medieval Islam to Rational sciences, philosophy and fine arts.

UNIT X: SIKHISM

- a. Socio-religious milieu and life and mission of Guru Nanak
- b. Development of the Sikh Panth (1539-1708)
- c. The Sikh Scripture (Sri Guru Granth Sahib) and the Sikh Literature
- d. The Sikh beliefs and the code of conduct
- e. The Sikh institutions, ceremonies and festivals
- f. The Sikh sects and Modern socio-religious movements
- g. The Sikh diaspora and Modern Issues