In this course we will study the beginnings, nature, scope and purpose of religion by way of looking at some of the major religions of the world. These religions are divided into three major sections, each containing three traditions respectively. Thus the course will include a brief introduction to the religions of South Asia: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism; the religions of East Asia: Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto; as well as the religions of West Asia (Middle East): Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Finally, we will also briefly look at the inter-religious dimension of these religions as well as the outgrowth of new religious movements in the last century and a half.