

## **Course title: Contemporary Religious Trends**

### **Course Code**

#### **Course Description:**

The course on Contemporary Religious Trends explores the evolving landscape of religion in the modern world. It examines the diverse religious phenomena, emerging challenges, and trends shaping religious beliefs, practices, and interactions in contemporary society. The course analyzes the impact of globalization, multiculturalism, modernization, and interfaith dialogue on religious expressions, as well as the role of religion in peace, violence, and conflict situations. Through critical examination and analysis, the course aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of religion in contemporary society.

#### **Course Objectives:**

1. To understand the emergence of multi-faith societies and the challenges and opportunities presented by religious diversity in pluralistic societies.
2. To examine the impact of globalization and media on religious beliefs and practices, including the portrayal of religion and stereotypes in the media.
3. To explore the relationship between religion and modernization, including the interaction between religion and science, and the influence of logical positivism on religious discourse.
4. To analyze the role of religion in peace, violence, and conflict situations, including the rise of religious extremism and the dynamics of inter-religious and intra-religious conflicts.
5. To investigate the phenomenon of new religious movements, understanding their origins, characteristics, and impact on contemporary religious trends.
6. To engage in critical reflection and analysis of contemporary religious issues, including the dialogue initiatives among various religions and the challenges and possibilities of interfaith cooperation.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

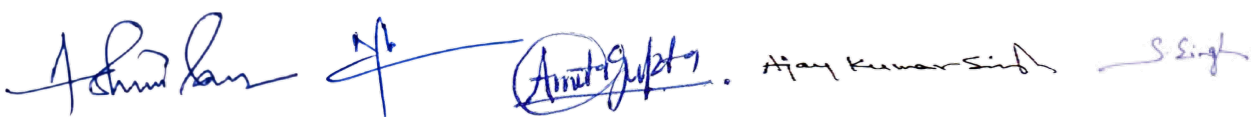
**LO1:** Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by religious pluralism in pluralistic societies.

**LO2:** Analyze the influence of globalization, media, and multiculturalism on religious beliefs, practices, and perceptions.

**LO3:** Evaluate the relationship between religion and modernization, including the impact of science, logic, and secularization on religious discourse.

**LO4:** Assess the role of religion in peace, violence, and conflict situations, including the dynamics of religious extremism and inter-religious/intra-religious conflicts.

**LO5:** Examine the origins, characteristics, and impact of new religious movements on contemporary religious trends.



Handwritten signatures of five individuals in blue ink, likely representing faculty or administrative approval. The signatures are: 1. A stylized signature starting with 'A'. 2. A signature starting with 'N'. 3. A signature that appears to be 'Anand Gupta'. 4. A signature that appears to be 'Ajay Kumar Singh'. 5. A signature that appears to be 'S Singh'.

**LO6:** Engage in critical reflection and analysis of contemporary religious issues, demonstrating an understanding of interfaith dialogue, cooperation, and the complexities of religious dynamics in a diverse global context.

**1. Religion in the Pluralistic Societies**

- 1.1 Emergence of Multi-faith Societies
- 1.2 Globalization and Religion
- 1.3 Neo-Religious Diaspora

**2. Advent of Multiculturalism**

- 2.1 Media Explosion, Stereotyping and Religion
- 2.2 Global Cooperation Trends and Religion
- 2.3 Dialogue Initiatives among various Religions

**3. Religion and Modernization**

- 3.1 Religion, Science and Scientism
- 3.2 Logical Positivism and Religion
- 3.3 Value Neutrality of Science

**4. Peace, Violence and Religion**

- 4.1 Religious Extremism
- 4.2 Inter-religious and Intra-religious Conflicts
- 4.3 Role of Religion in Conflict Situations

**5. New Religious Movements**

**Suggested Readings:**

- 1. Asad, Talal. Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity. Stanford University Press, 2003.
- 2. Hinnells, John R. The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion. Routledge, 2009.
- 3. Heelas, Paul, et al. The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005.
- 4. Huntington, Samuel P. The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- 5. Juergensmeyer, Mark. Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence. University of California Press, 2003.
- 6. Knott, Kim, and Elizabeth Poole. Media Portrayals of Religion and the Secular Sacred: Representation and Change. Ashgate Publishing, 2013.
- 7. Smith, Jonathan Z. Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown. University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- 8. Taylor, Charles. A Secular Age. Harvard University Press, 2007.
- 9. Wallis, Roy, and Steve Bruce. Secularization: New Century Debates. Routledge, 1992.

The image shows five handwritten signatures in blue ink. From left to right: the first signature is 'John' followed by a flourish; the second is a stylized 'A' with a flourish; the third is 'Anurag Gupta' with a circular flourish around the name; the fourth is 'Ajay Kumar Singh' with a flourish; and the fifth is 'S. Singh' with a flourish.

10. Wilson, Bryan. Religion in Secular Society: Fifty Years On. Routledge, 2016.

Wilson of Amrit Gupta. Ajay Kumar Singh S. Singh