



**SCS 620- Religions of the Axial Age  
3 Credits/4 CEUs**

<b>Faculty</b>	E. J. Niles
<b>Office Hours</b>	Monday, Tuesday, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Thursday –by appointment
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<b>Required Reading</b>	Armstrong, Karen. <i>The Great Transformation</i> . NY: Anchor Books, 2006 Laughlin, Paul Alan. <i>Getting Oriented</i> . Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2005
<b>Recommended Reading</b>	Foltz, Richard C.. <i>Spirituality in the Land of the Noble</i> . Oxford England: One World, 2008

**Course Description:**

This course examines major developments that occurred from 800 B.C.E – 200 B.C.E. in West Asia, South Asia, East Asia and the northeastern Mediterranean and some of the individuals, referred to as the sages of the Axial Age, who lived during that time. During this period of time older religions experienced changes and new religions emerged. There is an acknowledgement that religions are not static entities and each has changed, developed, and undergone refinement or complete reinterpretation as social and individual needs change.

**Learning Objectives:**

**Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Compare and contrast the Axial Age Religions
2. Assess the significance of the Axial Age for human history and human spirituality

The above learning objectives partially fulfill the following program outcomes for the Master of Divinity and the Diploma in Unity Ministry: MD4

**Assignments:**

**Criteria for Determination of Final Grade**

Assignment	Possible Points	Meets Learning Objective
2 Exams	25 points each	

Project	50 points	

**Selected Bibliography:**

- Adler, J. A. *Chinese Religious Traditions*, Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2002  
 Carrithers, M. *Buddha, a Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001  
 Huyler, S.P. *Meeting God, Elements of Hindu Devotion*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999  
 Ivanhoe, P. J. and Van Norden, W. *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.*,  
 Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co, 2005.  
 Mascaro, J. trans. *The Upanishads* London: Penguin Books, 1965  
 O'Flaherty, W. trans. *The Rig Veda: An Anthology*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England:  
 Penguin Books, 1981

The faculty member will provide a complete syllabus one week before class begins.