**Vocabulary**

*Introduction to Religious Studies*

Fall 2020

Bhagavad Gita

the “song of the Lord”; one of the scriptures of **Hinduism**

bodhisattva

in Mahayana Buddhism, one who achieves enlightenment but postpones Nirvana in the interest of bringing truth to the world.

Brahman

impersonal spirit, the Absolute, the Eternal; the Universal essence from which all created things emanate

Brahmin

member of the highest ranking social class, a class of priests

Confucianism

Confucianism the great religious-political tradition of China founded by Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.).

dharma

“law,” “duty,” or “teaching”; in **Hinduism**, especially associated with duties of one’s caste; in **Buddhism**, the teaching of the **Buddha**.

Krishna

one of the most notable avatars of Vishnu, the divine charioteer in the *Bhagavad Gita*

nirvana

Nirvana the sacred reality in Buddhism; signifies the extinguishing of all desire and release from the cycle of time (see samsara).

samsara

the cycle of time (**Hinduism**, **Buddhism**) governed by **karma**. Taoism :: Taoism a system or practice for following the Tao.

Siddhartha Gautama

the Buddha

Tao

Tao the “way” or “power” of harmony and balance among all things.

Upanishads

writings of Hindu sages, ca. 700-200 BCE