Instructor:
Dorcas Dennis

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE
This online section of Religion: Analysis and Interpretation will use a multimedia approach to explore the basic concepts in the study of religion. This format's scope includes the exploration of concepts such as deity, theodicy, cosmology and ritual and others such as religious social implications in society. The student will be introduced to each concept through the textbook, videos, and PowerPoint presentations by members of the Religious Studies faculty, each in their own research specialization. Throughout the course the student will also be exposed to specific rituals, myths, doctrines, ethics and symbols from various different world religions and cultures. Students will be tested on this material through time-restricted quizzes, a midterm, and a final exam. Two essays will develop the student's critical thinking skills and writing abilities. For each of these essays, the student will conduct field research by attending a religious service outside of their own tradition. This course fulfills the Gordon Rule requirement.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will be able to:

- Explain the basic history, development, and belief system of various religious traditions.
- Recognize religious themes and concepts found in other cultures.
- Identify the meaning behind religious concepts and symbols.
- Evaluate their own religious views in regards to other cultures and paradigms of religious thought.
- Apply critical thinking to various topics in the field of religious studies.
- Think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world.
- Perform field research to better understand a particular religious community.

POLICIES
Please review the policies page as it contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU and additional information on the standards for acceptable netiquette important for online courses.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION
Please visit our ADA Compliance webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.
Please visit Blackboard's Commitment Accessibility webpage for more information.

For additional assistance please contact FIU's Disability Resource Center.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES**

For more information about prerequisites, [click here](#).

**TEXTBOOK**

Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion
James C. Livingston
Prentice Hall, 6th Edition
013600380X
9780136003809

You may purchase your textbook online at the [FIU Bookstore](#).

**EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE**

This is an online course, meaning that most of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

**Students are expected to:**

- **Review the how to get started information** located in the course content
- **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum
- **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard
- **Interact** online with instructor/s and peers
- **Review** and follow the course calendar

**COURSE COMMUNICATION**

Communication in this course will take place via [Blackboard Email](#).

This is the best method to communicate with your instructor privately.

**GORDON RULE REQUIREMENT**
As this is a Gordon Rule course, students will be required to write a minimum of two major assignments, with the first submitted in both a first and a second draft. The first draft of the Site Visit Report will account for 10% of that paper grade, and the second draft for the other 90%.

The second essay will be based on the article “The Case for Contamination.”

Each paper should be approx. 1500-2000 words long.

**DISCUSSION FORUMS**

Each week, beginning with the second week of class, there will be discussion questions posted for you to respond to. These discussions are meant to stimulate critical thinking about how religions manifest in our globalized world. These discussions should also serve to help you organize your thoughts and ideas for the Appiah Analysis Essay. The responses in the discussions don’t have to be long, but should be well thought out and written in standard American English (that is to say, use correct spelling and proper punctuation and capitalization). You may use links to news articles or other media sites to strengthen your positions on particular issues.

You will participate in at least 10 out of the 13 topics that will be posted throughout the semester in order to receive full credit for participation in the discussion forum, which is worth 10% of your Appiah Analysis Essay grade. This gives you some flexibility during weeks that are especially busy for you. In addition to posting your own answers to the discussion topics, you should respond to the postings from your fellow classmates and/or the instructor. Each week that you participate, you should respond to at least 2 postings of your classmates. In other words, you should have at least 3 substantial posts in total for each discussion topic. At the end of the course, your discussion thread will be graded based on the quantity and the quality of what you have written.

In responding to others, it is important to be courteous and respectful. If you disagree with something that has been said, that is fine. But be sure to explain why and where appropriate support your own view with evidence. Also, it is fine to ask questions that are related to our topic to extend the discussion. But please make sure the questions are relevant. Please remember that this is an academic forum.

Discussion topics will be open from Monday to Sunday of each week that a discussion topic is posted. See the course calendar for the weeks that have discussion topics posted.

Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.
**QUIZZES**

Six time-restricted, online quizzes will be given throughout the semester. See the course calendar for details concerning the date availability for each quiz and what each quiz will cover. Questions for the quizzes are drawn from the assigned readings, PowerPoint presentations, and audio recorded lectures.

You can take each quiz twice, and the highest of the two attempts will be recorded. Even if you do well on the first attempt, it is advisable to use both attempts. You will not receive the same quiz the second time; the computer randomly chooses the questions from a quiz database. The objective portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2 will be taken directly from this database. Thus, the more times you take the quiz, the more questions you will receive and the better prepared you will be for the exams.

For the quizzes, you will have 45 minutes to complete 30 questions. Each quiz will be open for one week, from Monday to Sunday, and you can take it on any of those days at any time.

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the “Practice Quiz” from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum hardware requirements.

**Note:** Quiz resets will **not** be granted. You will receive two attempts to complete each quiz, if you are logged offline or you have technical failure while attempting the quiz, then you still have the second attempt to complete the quiz.

If you know that you will be unable to take a quiz during a specific week, contact the instructor in advance, and the quiz may be opened so you may take it early. It is the responsibility of students to keep up with the readings and take the quizzes on time.

The correct answers for quizzes will **not** be released to students. Students will be able to see their submitted answers only. Students should refer to their course materials for the correct answers, in order to study for the Exam 1 and Exam 2.

**EXAMS**

Exam 1 and Exam 2 consist of both objective and essay portions. The objective portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2 are both online, time-restricted examinations. They are in the Assessments area of Blackboard. **Students have only one attempt to complete the objective portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2, unlike the quizzes. Please make note of this important difference.**

The essay topics for the exams will become available in the Assessment area during the exam availability time. **The essay portions of these exams must be submitted to turnitin.com via Blackboard (you do not need to register separately with Turnitin.com).** See the folder under Course Content labeled “Assignment Dropbox” for links.

The essay portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2 should each be approximately 500-750 words long.

**ESSAYS**

Turnitin.com

All Essays, ‘Site Visit Report (Draft & Final Copy)’ and ‘Appiah Analysis Essay’ and ‘Exam 1 Essay’ and ‘Exam 2 Essay’, will be turned into Turnitin.com via a link in Blackboard. It is not necessary to create a separate Turnitin account.

Review the detailed Turnitin Instructions on how to submit your assignments and how to review the Grademark comments (feedback) from your professor.

Students will write **two essays** during the semester, in addition to the essay portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2. These two essays below should be written in MLA format.
The Site Visit Report will be submitted twice:

- as a Draft worth 10 points of the essay grade
- as a Final Copy worth 90 points of the essay grade

For the Site Visit Report, the student will do field research by attending a religious service or ceremony outside of his/her own religious tradition. The Site Visit should be approximately 1500-2000 words long.

For the Appiah Analysis Essay, the student will analyze the article ‘The Case for Contamination’ by Kwame Anthony Appiah. The Appiah Analysis Essay should be approximately 1500-2000 words long.

These two essays are not the same assignment as the essay portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2.

Keep electronic and paper copies of all written work. For your own protection, keep a copy of your turnitin.com electronic receipt (confirmation of assignment submission), until you have received your final grade for the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Papers
Late papers will not be accepted.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another's work as your own, falls into three different categories:

15. A written work that is entirely stolen from another source;
16. Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
17. Paraphrasing from another source without proper citations.

Students are expected to understand the definition of plagiarism. See the University Code of Academic Integrity at http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2codeofacainteg.htm if you need further clarification. Offenders will receive a grade of F for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly the course.

**Students may not submit work from a previous semester or from another class for this assignment or any other assignment in this course. It will be flagged for plagiarism by Turnitin.

Extra Credit
No Extra Credit work will be accepted in this course.
## Course Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Site Visit Report (Draft = 10 points and Final Copy = 90 points)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appiah Analysis Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in Weekly Discussions Topics (Minimum 10 discussion topics / 3 posts per topic)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Average of Quizzes (6 Quizzes Total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 1 (objective part = 50 points and essay part = 50 points)</td>
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<td>Exam 2 (objective part = 50 points and essay part = 50 points)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Above 93</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81 - 83</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 - 70</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>91 - 92</td>
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<td>77 - 80</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - 90</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 - 76</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>84 - 86</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>WEEKLY SCHEDULE</td>
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| Week 1 | August 26- September 1 | Review and fully familiarize yourself with the course and site. Print and read the course syllabus and course calendar. **Section I - The Study of Religion**  
**Topic:** Defining Religion. Why Are Humans Religious? Why Study Religion?  
Introduce yourself in Discussion Forum | Chapter 1 p. 1-14 |
| Week 2 | September 2-8 | **Section I - The Study of Religion**  
**Topic:** The Perspective of the Student–Commitment and Objectivity. The Ways Religion Is Studied. Interpreting and Explaining Religion.  
Participate in Discussion Forum | Chapter 2 p. 15-34 |
| Week 3 | September 9-15 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**View Presentation:** Dr. Huchingson - *The Sacred and the Holy.*  
**Take Quiz 1 (Covers Weeks 1-3)**  
Participate in Discussion Forum | Chapter 3 p. 35-52 |
| Week 4 | September 16-22 | **View Presentation:** Dr. Northup - *Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine.*  
Participate in Discussion Forum | Chapter 4 p. 53-73 |
| Week 5 | September 23-29 | **View Presentation:** Dr. Northup - *Sacred Ritual.*  
**Take Quiz 2 (Covers Weeks 4-5)** | Chapter 5 p. 74-95 |
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| **Week 6** September 30 - October 6 | **Topic:** The Pervasive Role of Sacred Scripture. Using the Term Scripture. Some Distinctive Features of Sacred Scripture. The Authority and Canonicity of Scripture. The Reception and Uses of Scripture. The Interpretation of Scripture. | **View Presentation:** Dr. Larson - Sacred Scripture. **Participate in Discussion Forum**  
**Chapter 6 p. 96-123** |
**Chapter 7 p. 124-150** |
| **Week 8** October 14-20 | **Take Exam 1 (objective and essay parts)**  
Covers materials from Week 1-7  
Monday, October 14, 12:00 am – Saturday, October 19, 11:59 pm |  |
| **Week 9** October 21-27 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
**Chapter 8 p. 151-182** |
| **Week 10** October 28-November 3 | **View Presentation:** Rabbi Shulkes - Cosmogony: Origins of the Natural and Social Order. **Topic:** The Practical Basis of Cosmogony. Emergence or Procreation from a Primal Substance or Being. The Sexual Union of a Primal Male and Female. Creation by Conflict and the Ordering of Chaos. Creation by a Divine Craftsman. Creation by Decree or from Nothing. The Rejection of Cosmogonic Speculation. Cosmogony Today. | **Take Quiz 4 (covers weeks 9-10)**  
**Participate in Discussion Forum**  
**Chapter 9 p. 183-210** |
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| Week 11 November 4-10 | **View Presentation:** Dr. Wuaku - Anthropology: The Human Problem.  
| Week 12 November 11-17 | **View Presentation:** Dr. Gudorf - Theodicy: Encountering Evil.  
| Week 13 November 18-24 | **View Presentation:** Dr. Gudorf - Ethics: Patterns of Moral Action.  
**Topic:** Virtues and Obligations. The Sources and Norms of Moral Authority. | Chapter 12 p. 259-286 |
| Week 14 November 25-December 1 | **View Presentation:** Dr. Huchingson - Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation and Liberation.  
Appiah Analysis Essay — due on November 30 by 11:59 pm via Turnitin in Assignment Dropbox | Chapter 13 p. 287-338 |
| Week 15 December 2-December 8 | **Section IV. The Sacred and the Secular in Modernity**  
**View Presentation:** Dr. Bidegain - The Sacred and the Secular in Modernity.  
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>Take Exam 2 (objective and essay parts)</td>
<td>Covers materials from Week 8-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
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<td>Monday, December 9, 12:00 am – Saturday, December 14, 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-14</td>
<td>Participate in Discussion Forum</td>
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