Instructor: Daniella Vaclavik  
Office Hours: MWF 3-3:50  
Office: DM 302  
Classroom: Chem&phys 107  
Email: daniellavaclavik@mac.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is an introduction to the study of religion. Through class lectures, discussions, and activities, the student will explore concepts such as deity, theodicy, cosmology, and ritual, as well as religious social implications in society. 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 an objective midterm and final exam. Furthermore, three essays will develop the student’s critical thinking skills and writing abilities. For two of these essays, the student will conduct field research by attending a religious service outside of their own tradition, and the third essay is an analysis of the article “The Case for Contamination” by Kwame Anthony Appiah. This course fulfills the Gordon Rule requirement.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will be able to:
- Gain the necessary tools for the study of religion by being immersed in the beliefs, doctrines, rituals, symbols, (select) scriptures, and experiences
- Recognize religious themes and concepts in different traditions and 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
- Perform field research in order to better understand a particular religious tradition and community
- Perform informed cross-cultural comparison and evaluation of ways of being religious
- Understand the similarities and differences of many of the world’s religions in an educated manner, creating the opportunity for increased appreciation and tolerance

TEXTBOOK
Required:
*Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*
James C. Livingston  
Prentice Hall, 6th Edition

ISBN 10: 013600380X  
ISBN 13: 978013600380

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
GORDON RULE
As a **Gordon Rule course**, written assignments are required of all students in order to fulfill the State-mandated standards for this course. The written assignments for this course consist of three essays. Under the Gordon Rule, FIU requires the following of the student’s essays:
1. Have a clear thesis or controlling idea
2. Have a thesis supported with adequate reasons and evidence
3. Be organized clearly and logically
4. Show sustained analysis and critical thought
5. Show knowledge of conventions of standard written English
6. Show awareness of disciplinary conventions in regard to content, style, form, and delivery method. *Essays need to be 1500-2000 (a minimum of 5 pages)*

**COURSE POLICIES:**

**LATE PAPERS**
Late written work will receive a deduction of 5 points per day for five days, after which it will no longer be accepted. Extra time for assignments will not be allowed without a valid (documented) excuse. Students are expected to plan their work in a timely manner; please do not wait until last minute to submit your work online.

**PLAGIARISM**

*Plagiarism will not be tolerated.* Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another's work as your own, falls into three different categories:
1. A written work that is entirely stolen from another source
2. Using quotations from another source without properly citing them
3. 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 0 for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly the course. Furthermore, they will be reported to the University for Academic Misconduct.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE**

Attendance and class participation are mandatory and part of the course’s final grade. Students are to arrive on time and stay until the class period is over. Students who arrive 15 minutes late will be counted as tardy. Three tardies will count as one absence. In the event of an excused absence or emergency, it is the student’s responsibility to approach the instructor and provide evidence for their absence as soon as possible. Students are allowed 3 unexcused absences, after which points will be deducted. Students are expected to actively participate in class by making relevant comments, as well as asking and answering questions.

*Students are expected to silence their cellphones, be attentive, and stay for the duration of the entire class. Please let the instructor know before class if you need to leave early. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.*

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

By university policy, students must notify the instructor at least two weeks in advance that he/she wishes to observe a religious holiday. The student will be excused from class without penalty. The student is still responsible for the material and will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up any work missed after discussion with the instructor.

**SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK**

*All written work is to be submitted to turn-it-in via Blackboard*
- Students should save their Turnitin.com receipt that verifies the date and the hour you they submitted their work. Receipts are essential to settle disputes as to when and whether a paper was submitted (and avoid possible late submission point deductions).
- All written work must be typed, double-spaced, and in a 12 point font size (written work submitted in large font or with wider spaces will not be accepted).
- Format and citing should follow a standard style.
- Quotations from internet sources such as Wikipedia, Encarta, and the like, will not be accepted.
GRADE CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>above 93</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-92</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-80</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>61-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>71-73</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COURSE GRADES
Site Visit (Essay 1) - First Draft 10%
Site Visit (Essay 2) - Final Draft 20%
Globalization Essay (Essay 3) 20%
Objective Midterm (Exam 1) 15%
Objective Final (Exam 2) 15%
Attendance and Class Participation 20%
TOTAL 100%

EXTRA CREDIT
There will be several extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. These will consist of attending lectures and writing a 2 page essay, and will be announced by the instructor in class. Each opportunity will be worth 2 extra points, with a maximum of 6 extra points towards the student’s final grade. To earn 2 points the student must write a minimum of 2 pages and no more than 3. The essay should be well written (typed, double spaced 12 point font, correct formatting, spelling, and insightful) and turned in no later than a week after the event.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1  August 26-Sept 1
Introduction: Syllabus, requirements, Overview of course
What is Religion? - Defining religion. Why are humans religious?
Why study religion?

WEEK 2  September 2-8
*Monday Sept 2 - Labor Day (University Closed)

WEEK 3  September 9-15
The Sacred and the Holy - The concept of sacred power. The ambivalence of sacred power. The holy as mysterium Tremendum and fascinans. Sacred space and sacred time.

WEEK 4  September 16-22

WEEK 5  September 23-29
- Site Visit Essay #1 Due Saturday September 28 by 11:59pm -
WEEK 6  

WEEK 7  

WEEK 8  

WEEK 9  

WEEK 10  

WEEK 11  

WEEK 12  

WEEK 13  

WEEK 14  
Nov 25-Dec 1 * Monday Nov 11 - Veterans Day (University Closed)  
Secularization, pluralism, and revitalization Movements. The reactions of religious fundamentalists today. The characteristics of contemporary religious fundamentalism.

WEEK 15  
Dec 2-8 Contemporary Challenges of Traditional Religion - The status and roles of women. The relations between religion and the state. Some types of relationships between religion and the state.

WEEK 16  
Dec 9-15 Finals Week