

Rel 3308

Studies In World Religions

florida International University

FALL 2015

Instructor: Stephanie Londono

Class hours: MWF 12-12:50PM

Email: slond006@fiu.edu

Class Room: Deuxieme Maison 110

Office hours: TBA

Note: This syllabus is tentative. Schedule and assignment subjects may change.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This comparative religions course examines the world's major religions, both ancient and contemporary, from historical, anthropological, sociological and psychological perspectives. We will explore the various myths, rituals, symbols, scriptures, festivals and spiritual leaders of indigenous and tribal communities. The journey will begin with basic religions and Native American religions, then exploring Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam among other traditions that inform the diverse world of religions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, the successful student will be able to:

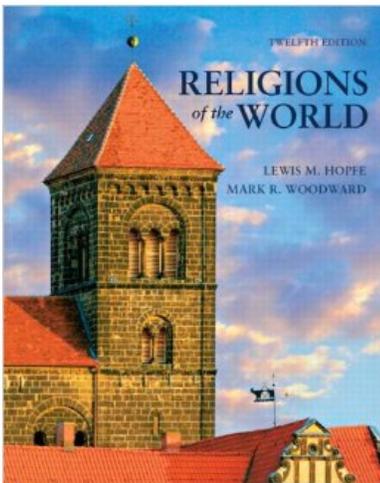
- Understand the key underlying beliefs and principles of the major world religions.
- Appreciate the early bases and origins of religion among Indigenous Peoples and Shamanic cultures.
- Discern the major similarities and differences between Eastern and Western religions, including cultural and historical contexts, as well as local, national and/or international contexts.

- Be aware of the broad movements and developments in religious belief and practices from ancient to contemporary times.
- Critically engage the issue of religious diversity in national and international context

(Global Engagement).

- Analyze issues in the field of religions studies from multiple approaches (Global Perspective).
- Evaluate the interrelationship between his/her own and others' religious views as they relate to understanding other cultures and solving common problems (Global Awareness)

REQUIRED TEXT



Religions of the World, 12th edition (2012) Lewis M. Hopfe and Mark R. Woodward

ISBN 978-0-205-158607

ISBN 0-205-15860-9

*Other reading material will be provided by the instructor.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS COURSE

Since the class only meets one day a week, students are expected to arrive promptly and stay for the full duration of the class. Students should be prepared to participate in class by reading the assignments and by developing discussion or presentation material, as requested. Students are responsible for carefully reading the syllabus and calendar, meeting deadlines as posted, and submitting mature, thoughtful work.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place in class, in Blackboard, and through FIU email. The best method to communicate with your instructor privately is through email. Appointments can be made on request. Please contact the instructor immediately if a serious situation arises which will impact student performance.

GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a Global Learning course, students will be meet the following objectives through text readings, assignments, and class discussions:

1. Students will be able to analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives.
2. Students will be able to assess how global issues and trends are interrelated with the development and practice of religions
3. Students will be able to demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world.

DISCUSSION AND PRIVACY

Some of this material may be new, personal or controversial, so please maintain an open- minded and considerate attitude, allowing others time to reflect and communicate. Keep in mind that in-class and online discussions are public. Be cautious with your words and your sources. Respect others' privacy and do not share class conversations with others outside of class. Recognize that fellow students may not wish to give personal opinions about some topics.

EXAMS- 15% each

There will be two exams: A midterm and a final. Exam 1 and Exam 2 are in-class and consist of both objective and essay portion.

The essay portion for both exams should each be approximately 500-750 words long. The essay topics for the exam will become available in Blackboard a week before the exam. There will be three options of which one will show up on your exam.

Objective: 25 questions - 2 points each (50 total)

Essay: 50 points

TOTAL: 100 points - Each Exam - 15% of your grade.

ESSAYS- 20% each

Essays will be turned into Turnitin.com via Assignments in Blackboard. It is not necessary to create a separate Turnitin account. Keep electronic and paper copies of all written work. For your own protection, keep a copy of your Turnitin.com electronic receipt until you have received your final grade for the course.

Essay 1 (Site Visit) - The student will do field research by attending a religious service or ceremony outside of his/her own religious tradition. This assignment is divided into two sections: the paper and one blog entry, which must also be posted on the blog- (this can be a audio, video, or written post).

*** For this assignment the student has three options:**

1. Paper: 1200-1500 words and cited correctly.

2. video format of about 7-10 minutes. The video must be well edited, feature interviewees, images and good quality audio. You will still have to write a script and include a bibliography. Examples of the video format will be provided.

3. Audio format: 7- 10 minutes. Just like the video, It must be well edited, feature interviewees, natural sound, and good quality audio. You will still have to write the script and include a bibliography. Examples of the audio format will be provided.

* For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard. The Site Visit is worth 20% of the final grade. (5%- Draft/ 15%- Final Copy).

Essay 2- Make use of your creativity and propose your own topic. By the end of the semester you would have a variety of theories and topics from which to choose from. Every student must schedule an appointment with the instructor to get cleared before embarking on the research. The paper must be 5-7-long, double-spaced, 12-size font. Use five academic sources to support and elaborate on your theses. This essay is worth 20% of the final grade.

LATE PAPERS: Late papers will not be accepted. If a student has an approved, documented excuse, late papers may be accepted with a penalty of 10 points per day for up to three days, after which papers will not be accepted for any reason.

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; and
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 F (0 points) for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly for the course. Please be aware: Previously submitted papers are not allowed, even if it is your own work and even if you are retaking this class. You may not "reuse" papers.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS 10%

In the beginning of the semester, students must sign up for a presentation group. If a student fails to sign up in the first two classes, the student will be assigned a group without her or his consent. The groups will be presenting on a different religion every week. Each student in the group is responsible for covering a specific topic related to the text readings.

The group presentation is divided into three parts:

1. Topic: Every student must present on a topic related to the religion using PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi or similar. The content can come from the textbook and/or an outside source. (Note: The topics need to be confirmed by the instructor.)

2. Current issues, events or people that impact the religion: This information can be obtained from various sources, included the sites I recommend on the blog.

2.1. THIS CURRENT EVENT MUST ALSO BE POSTED ON THE BLOG FOR DISCUSSION.

3. Discussion Question: At the end of the presentation students will propose a discussion question. Keep in mind that it is your responsibility to ignite class discussion. Be bold, creative and thoughtful when formulating your question. **NOTE:** The question does not necessarily have to be related to the current event.

3.1. Due to the limited time of the class, the discussion questions **MUST BE POSTED ON THE BLOG, AND STUDENTS MUST PARTICIPATE ONLINE.** Every student is expected to post one comment and respond to one classmate's comment **ONCE A WEEK.**

If a student cannot attend on the day of the presentation, they may be seriously penalized (up to receiving a 0 for the project) depending on their participation in project development. The group presentation is worth 50 points and is 10% of the final grade.

BLOG- What you didn't Learn in Class. - 10%

For this class we will be doing a social experiment. This blog will be a public space for us to connect with each other and the world. Every student will receive an invitation to become an author and actively participate.

The blog title is: What you didn't learn in Class- precisely because it will be a space for us to elaborate on ideas and topics that perhaps don't get mentioned in class either because of time or inconvenience.

The blog is divided into four sections: You will find your class (REL3308) in every submenu. Make sure that when you post on any of these pages you select your class on the category menu on the left of the page. This way your post will show on the right section. (This will be further explained in class).

1. The Class Think Tank: Groups post their current event and discussion questions every week. Every student must respond to a discussion question and to a classmate's comment.

1.1.Note: Every student is encouraged to post on this space at any time as well. Find more info on the blog.

At the end of the course, your discussion thread will be graded based on the quantity and the quality of what you posts. 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.

2. The Megan Project: This page is named after a student who two semesters ago came up with a really cool project.

After learning about the universality of religion, Megan began to notice the ubiquitous presence of religion. She continued to find religious symbols in her community, university and travels. Megan realized that religion is not this isolated topic, relegated to churches, Sundays, prayers and gospel channels. This realization led her to this awesome idea of photographing all these symbols with her phone or camera, and put them together in a presentation with a short description of how she encountered these symbols and how are they "religious" from her perspective.

Megan began this project, which she titled "Everyday Religion," during the Fall 2014 in my World Religions class, and expanded it in the following semester while taking Analysis and Interpretation of Religion class.

Lets continue to feed this brilliant idea by spotting and photographing religion everywhere we find it. You will be surprised to learn that pop culture is imbued with religion in many ways. Fashion, music, TV, art, and food are just some of the mediums though which religion is articulated. Take a picture or video and briefly explain how is religion present and relevant in your discovery.

On the description tell us where did your photograph take place, when did you take it and why do you think it is a religious symbol.

3. Movie Reviews: We will be using film to articulate theories and ideas. Share your reaction on the movies we watch in class. Elaborate on important themes and dialogues on your comments.

4. Site Visit Project: Every student should post at least one journal entry. This entry can be in a audio, video or written format. Your paper will also be posted on this section.

You can also find all this information on the blog: <https://relclass.wordpress.com/about/>

Audio examples:

BBC radio:

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05nxhj6

NPR radio:

www.npr.org/2015/06/20/415973913/in-ramadan-saudi-families-break-bread-and-watch-tv-dramas

Video example:

<https://youtu.be/JhLN7dtukig>

EXTRA CREDIT

Creative writing: Develop a short story where you present characters that represent different religions. The story must include in its plot rituals, symbols, scriptures (sacred texts), festivals, teachings (i.e. the eight fold path, the pillars of Islam, etc.) among other aspects that we learned in class. (2-5 Pages).

Poetry: Include all the aforementioned topics. Make sure the poem has a rhyme and a regular meter. The piece must be at least four stanzas. Remember the Vedas and Zoroaster's Gathas appear to be composed in poetic form.

Song: Include all the aforementioned topics. Make it at least 2-3 minutes long.

Visual Art (painting, drawing): Make sure you explain your interpretation in a paragraph.

Movie Review: Review a movie and write a five- paragraph reaction paper describing the role that religion plays in the story or event. Focus on religious symbols, rituals, myths or the ways in which religious beliefs or practices influence the plot or meaning of the movie. Do not tell the whole story of the movie, but just enough so that your points are clear. The movie selection must be approved by the instructor.

All extra credit reports are due no later than December 1. Be creative, respectful and take this opportunity not just for the extra points, but also to leave a strong positive message. Have fun!

Note: superb extra credit projects will be posted on the blog as well.

Must be turned in by December 1st.

GRADING

LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE
A	93 - 100	B-	80 - 82	D+	67 - 69
A-	90 - 92	C+	77 - 79	D	63 - 66
B+	87 - 89	C	73 - 76	D-	60 - 62
B	83 - 86	C-	70 - 72	F	< 60

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	SCAL E	PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE
Essay 1- Site Visit	100	20%
Essay 2	100	20%
MIDTERM (Oct. 24)	100	15%
FINAL (Dec. 5)	100	15%
Group Presentations	50	10%
Blog Participation	50	10%
Participation and Attendance	50	10%
Total	550	100%

WEEK	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
1 Aug 24-28	intro syllabus	Intro Religion. What is Religion? Introduction p.2-11	Basic Religions Ch. 1.
2 Aug 31-Sept 5	Native American Religions Ch- 2	Native American Religions Recommended film: BURY MY HEART AT WOUNDED KNEE Ch. 2.	Native American Religions Student Group 1.
3 Sept 7-11	Labor Day - No class	African Religions Ch. 3	African Religions
4 Sept 14-18	African Religions Student Group 2.	Hinduism Ch. 4 Origins of Hinduism Recommended film: Film "330 Million Gods"	Hinduism The Vedas and the Upanishads Blog Journal Entry Due
5 Sept 21-25	Hinduism The Varna system and stages of life Bhagavad Gita and Post colonial Hinduism	Hinduism Student Group 3.	Buddhism Life of the Buddha. Teachings. Ch. 6 p. 128-138

6 Sept 28- Oct 2	<p>Buddhism</p> <p>There three jewels and the four noble path.</p> <p>Ch. 6 p.138- 149</p> <p>Recommended Films: Film: “Footprint of the Buddha” (Theravada Buddhism)</p> <p>Recommended film: “Land of the Disappearing Buddha” (On pure land and Zen Buddhism)</p> <p>Site visit Due 11:59 PM turnitin</p>	<p>Buddhism</p> <p>Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism</p>	<p>Buddhism</p> <p>Student Group 4.</p>
7 Oct 5-9	<p>Jainism</p> <p>Ch. 5</p>	<p>Jainism</p>	<p>Jainism</p> <p>Student Group 5.</p>
8 Oct 12-16	<p>Chinese Religions: Confucianism</p> <p>Recommended Film: “Chinese Religions”</p>	<p>Taoism</p> <p>Ch. 8</p>	<p>Chinese Religions:</p> <p>Student Group 6.</p>
9 Oct 19-23	<p>Sikhism</p> <p>Ch- 7</p> <p>Analects of Confucius 199-202</p>	<p>Sikhism</p> <p>Student Group 7.</p>	<p>MIDTERM</p>
10 Oct 26-30	<p>Judaism</p> <p>Ch. 11</p>	<p>Judaism</p> <p>Recommended Film: God on Trial</p>	<p>Judaism</p>

11 Nov 2-6	Judaism Student Group 8.	Christianity Recommended Film: Luther Ch. 12	Christianity Ch. 12
12 Nov 9-13	Christianity Ch. 12	Christianity Student Group 9.	Islam Ch. 13 Paper 2 Due 11:59 PM turnitin
13 Nov 16-20	Islam Ch. 13	Islam Recommended Film: "The Message."	Islam Student Group 10.
14 Nov 23-27	Women and Religion Reading material provided by instructor. <i>Women and Religion</i> Book: Religion in Society	Women and Religion Film: "When God was a Girl." Misrepresentation	No Class. Thanksgiving.
15 Nov 30- Dec 4	Women and Religion Student Group 11	New Religious Movements Bahai (Readings provided by instructor)	New Religious Movements The Church of Scientology (Readings provided by instructor)
16 Dec 7-11	New Religious Movements Wicca (Readings provided by instructor)	Final Remarks, conclusion, final review.	FINAL

RELIGIOUS SITES OF SOUTH FLORIDA

A REMINDER TO ALL STUDENTS THAT THE SITE VISIT AND REPORT MUST BE DONE FOR A RELIGIOUS TRADITION THAT IS NOT THE STUDENT'S OWN. I strongly recommend to start the fieldwork early, and that you attend at least 2-3 times to have a successful report.

ISLAMIC: the times to go are Fridays and Sundays at 1:30 p.m. Female students can bring a scarf with them if they don't want to stand out, but it is not required.

Miami Gardens Mosque (Sunni) 4305 N.W. 183 street
Miami, Florida 33055

Mosque of Miami (Sunni) 7350 N.W. 3rd Street Miami, Florida 33126 305-261-7622

Masjid Al-Ansar (Sunni) 5245 N.W. 7th Avenue Miami, Florida 33127 305-757-8741

Islamic School of Miami Masjid al-Noor (Sunni) 11699 SW 147 Ave Miami, FL 33196

(305) 408-0400

Tasnim Uddin, Principal of School

Friday: 1:30 pm, Islam School on Sundays: 10am-12pm (behind the Exxon gas station)

Islamic Jafferia Association Imambara (Shia) 10554 N.W. 132nd Street

Hialeah Gardens, Florida 33016

(305) 557-6835

[http://www .ijamiami.org/](http://www.ijamiami.org/)

Muhammad's Mosque # 29 (Nation of Islam) 5660 N.W. 7th Ave.

Miami, Florida

305-756-9136

BAHAI

FIU Bahai Club 305-436-2490

Bahai Faith (South) 9300 S. Dixie Hwy. Miami, Florida 305-570-8886

Bahai Faith (North) 4365 Rock Island Rd. Ft. Lauderdale

(North of Commercial) 954-524-4084

BUDDHIST

(Nichiren Buddhist)

Sokka Gakkai International Miami Community Center 20000 S.W. 36th St.

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33332 954-349-5200

Avalokitesvara Buddhist Study Center (Buddhist) 7550 S.W. 82nd Court

Miami, Florida 33143

305-271-6361

267-8000

International Zen Institute of Florida (Buddhist) Dharma House

3860 Crawford Avenue

Miami, Florida 33133

305-448-8969

Wat Buddharangsi Temple (Thai, Buddhist) 15200 S.W., 240th Street
Homestead, Florida
305-245-2702

Amida Temple ("Pure Land" Buddhist) c/o Kuang-Hsi Wu
12815 S.W. 119 Terrace
Miami, Florida 33186

305-385-2866

International Dharma Center (Buddhist) P.O. Box 141728
Coral Gables, Florida
33114-1728

305-267-8000 (Ileana Davis)
Kagyu Shedrup Chöling (Tibetan Buddhist)

1905 Monroe Street
Hollywood, Florida 33020 954-920-1346

HINDU: Plan to attend Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Shiva Vishnu Temple 5661 Dykes Rd. (S.W. 160th Ave)
Pembroke Pines (Davie)
954-689-0471 webmaster@shivavishnu.org

(I-75 north, exit at Sheridan, go west to Dykes Road, then go north for about a mile, temple on the left)

The South Florida Hindu Temple 13010 Griffin Road
Davie, Florida
954-438-3675

info@sfht.org

Hare Krishna Temple 3220 Virginia St. Coconut Grove, Florida 305-442-7218

SIKH: Plan to attend Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Sikh Society of Florida 16000 Sterling Rd. Pembroke Pines, Florida 954-680-0221

(Same directions as to Shiva Hindu Temple, but closer to Sheridan on Dykes Road)

JAIN

Jain Center of South Florida
1960 N. Commerce Parkway #11 Weston, FL 33326
Here is Direction Link for Jain center. <http://jaincentersfl.com/direction.html>

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN

Synagogues: Friday evenings, near Sundown; and Saturday mornings, 8:00 a.m. only.

Christian churches: 11:00 a.m. morning service. Consult Yellow Pages for synagogue or church nearest where you live.

Students are encouraged to do detective work and find representatives of the other major world religions in Miami or the South Florida area: Taoism, Confucianism (Chinese), Shinto (Japanese), and Zoroastrianism (Persian/Iranian, and mostly in Bombay, India).