COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will provide an in-depth survey of eleven religious traditions of the world: Indigenous belief and practice, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Their major teachings will be discussed in detail and set in their proper historical and cultural contexts. Similarities and differences between religions will be considered, as well as each religion’s unique contribution to world civilization. In addition, some representative texts from each will be read and discussed, and occasionally films will be shown which portray how they are “practiced” today.

TEXTBOOK (required)
Mary Pat Fisher, Living Religions (8th edition).
FOR GLOBALIZATION QUESTION: Kwame Anthony Appiah, “The Case for Contamination” (available on blackboard).

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES
1. To provide the student with “raw materials” for the study of religion by immersing the student in the beliefs, doctrines, rituals, symbols, and (select) scriptures of some of the major world religions.

2. To facilitate the informed cross-cultural comparison and evaluation of ways of being religious by focused study of select world religions.

3. To widen, enhance and enrich the intellectual and spiritual horizons of the student by exposure to the spiritual beauty, vitality, coherence, plausibility and richness of non-Christian, non-Western, approaches to the transcendent or ultimate reality.

4. To challenge the student to enter sympathetically into the worldview of the religious traditions selected for study.

5. To provide the context for dialogue and discussion that will enable the student to live in an enormously complex, interdependent, and religiously plural world with patience, understanding, and appreciation for that which is different, and in some cases irreconcilably different, from his or her own “worldview.”
COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 [August 22nd, 24th, 26th]: Introduction, syllabus, requirements, and overview of course
   - Read Preface and Ch. 1 (Religious Responses): pp IX-29.

Week 2 [August 29th, 31st, Sept. 2nd]: Indigenous Sacred Ways
   - Read Fisher: pp.33-70

Week 3 [Sept. 5th no class due to Labor Day, 7th, 9th]: Hinduism
   - Read Fisher: pp.73-118

Week 4 [Sept. 12th, 14th, 16th]: Jainism
   - Read Fisher: pp.121-133

Week 5 [Sept. 19th, 21st, 23rd]: Buddhism
   - Read Fisher, pp. 135-180

Week 6 [Sept. 26th, 28th, 30th]: Daoism and Confucianism
   - Read Fisher, pp.184-214

Week 7 [Oct. 3rd no class due to Rosh Hashannah, 5th, 7th]: Shinto
   - Midterm examination on Friday October 7th.
   - Read Fisher: pp.217-233

Week 8 [Oct. 10th, 12th no class due to Yom Kippur, 14th]: Zoroastrianism
   - Paper proposal due Monday October 10th.
   - Read Fisher, pp.235-238

Week 9 [Oct. 17th no class due to Sukkot, 19th, 21st]: Judaism
   - Read Fisher, pp.239-264

Week 10 [Oct. 24th no class due to Shemini Atzeret, 26th, 28th]: Judaism
   - Fisher, pp. 264-24
Week 11 [Oct. 31st, Nov. 2nd, 4th]: Christianity

- Read Fisher, pp.298-334

Week 12 [Nov. 7th, 9th, 11th no class due to Veteran’s Day]: Christianity

- Read Fisher, pp.334-376
- Guest lecturer: Dr. Roberto Pacheco.

Week 13 [Nov. 14th, 16th, 18th]: Islam

- Read Fisher, pp.381-404

- ***Research paper due on Monday November 14th.

Week 14 [Nov. 21st, 23rd, 25th no class due to Thanksgiving]: Islam

- Read Fisher, pp.404-436

Week 15 [Nov. 28th, 30th, Dec. 2nd]

- **Globalization Question due on Monday Nov. 28th.

Finals week 12/5-12/10: Check University Final Exam Schedule.

GRADING

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm:</td>
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<td>Globalization Question:</td>
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Note on Attendance: Tardiness is disruptive and will be noted, recurring tardiness may end in point deduction of final grade. If you know you will be absent for whatever reason, please inform the instructor ahead of time. Although attendance will not be monitored at the beginning of the course, the instructor may choose to keep track of attendance if there is a major problem with students showing up and participating. If so, attendance will be 10% of the final grade, and the two tests will count for 25% each. Finally, remember that some material will inevitably be covered in class that is not to be found in the textbook so that each absence negatively affects your ability to do well on the tests. Strive for perfect attendance!

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ACADEMIC HONESTY
Each student is expected to do his or her own work. It is absolutely unacceptable to submit someone else’s work as your own. This is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade (F) for the assignment and possible disciplinary action. Thus, when in the course of writing your paper you quote or paraphrase an idea found in one of your sources you must give credit to the original author (usually by means of a footnote).

ACADEMIC CONDUCT
Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SENSORY CHALLENGES
Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center, if you have not done so already.

EXAMINATIONS
Both midterm and final examinations will be a combination of multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching and essay questions. You will need to bring a blue book or loose leaf paper for the midterm and final. The final examination is not cumulative—it covers material only from the second half of the semester.

RESEARCH PAPER
Each student will write a term paper on some topic relating to how religious communities change and adapt as they move to different areas or how they deal with other faith communities. Examples of the former would be how Christianity began in the Near East as a Jewish movement but eventually spread to non-Jews throughout the Roman Empire, or how Buddhism started in India but today has spread to places such as China and Japan where it has exerted immense influence, or how the slave trade led to a synthesis of African religions with Christianity producing the religions we know today as Santeria and Vodou. Examples of the latter, would be how Muslims view Jews and Christians as Peoples of the Book while rejecting polytheistic religions, or how Hindus view the Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu (though this does not mean they convert to Buddhism).
The topic must receive the approval of the instructor before it is handed in. The proposals will not be graded, but failure to turn in a proposal will result in the final paper grade being lowered a third of a letter grade (e.g. a B would become a B-, a B- would become a C+, etc.). The paper should be 6-9 pp. long, excluding bibliography. Each paper is to be printed or typed, not handwritten, with lines double-spaced. Margins for the pages should be 1 inch on all sides and the style should conform to either that of MLA or the Chicago Manual of Style. In the body of the paper you may use either footnotes or endnotes.

GLOBALIZATION QUESTION
Read the article “The Case for Contamination” by Kwame Appiah and use the information you have learned in class this semester to answer the following questions in 3-4 pages:

Describe Appiah’s approach and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. Then explain how religions help people express their identities both as individuals and as members of a group. Also, what did you learn about the need for and the potential of better understanding between religions? In your view, what is the best way to approach interreligious dialogue (For example, should we all become the same or should we value our diversity? If the latter, how do we do this? Is globalization a help or hindrance to diversity?).

Note on internet research:
You may cite from the internet in your term papers, but you must be discerning. Anyone can post “information” on the internet, and thus some of what is there may be inaccurate, incomplete, and sometimes even blatantly untrue. As in print collections in libraries, only scholarly articles on the internet are acceptable as sources for research papers. Internet articles should ideally have authors. Some will list individual authors; others will list institutions as sources. The credibility of the information depends on the credibility of the source. Acceptable sources include individual scholars with academic credentials, educational institutions (e.g., Institute of Reformation History, Princeton University), publicly supported national or international institutions (e.g. the World Health Organization or the National Institutes of Health) or other well-known institutions with credible reputations (e.g. the World Council of Churches, the Children’s Defense Fund). Most educational institutions have addresses which end with the letters “edu.” There will be some internet sources the reliability of which will be difficult to assess. Sometimes you must judge by the tone and range of an article. If it reads like a magazine or newspaper article and does not cite any of the sources it used, it is not scholarly. You should ask whether the article demonstrates balance: Are all sides of the story told? Does it ask critical questions of the material it covers? How well does its treatment accord with treatment from other sources you have found? If you would really like to cite an internet article but have doubts about its acceptability, look up the institution or the author on the internet or in the library. Has the author or institution published other works? Have those been reviewed or cited by other scholars? Also, when you cite from the internet you need to list the entire address on the web where you found the information and the date you accessed it. When applicable you must also note any search terms needed within the website to find this particular article when these do not appear within the address.
The following are examples of a bibliographic entry from the web:

Musa, Edward, “The Art of the Maya.”

Zarabozo, Jamal, “Is Family Planning Allowed in Islam?”
http://www.albany.edu/~ha4934/famplan.html. 4/21/12.

***This is the syllabus as of 08/23/2016 but is subject to change as the course develops. It can be found at religion.fiu.edu***