In a sacred manner        All of Creation is With the Living.
I live.                  All of Creation can Feel the tender kiss.
To the heavens          All of Creation is Learning.
I gazed.                All of Creation Learns of Beauty.
In a sacred manner I live. We are Evolving Beings.
My horses              Ancient Zero Chiefs Song
Are many.

Lakota Song

Course Overview
This course introduces students to the academic study of religion with a focus on themes, elements, functions, and theories of religion. It explores several of the major Eastern and Western religious traditions, both ancient and contemporary, including Shamanism, Native American, Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Religious beliefs, rituals and practices are studied from historical, psychological, sociological, anthropological and archeological perspectives, which will assist in shedding light on the overall meaning of religion within the context of human existence.

Course Texts
In addition to handouts, there are two books that students will read in this course, and one that is required for your research papers.
- *Religions of the World*, 10th edition, by Lewis M. Hopfe and Mark R. Woodward  [9th Edition acceptable and can be used with only minor chapter number differences, but chapter headings are the same.]

Course Objectives
By the end of this course, the successful student will be able:
- To reflect critically upon the nature of the divine and the nature of religion.
- To give a basic overview of the origins, functions, common themes, types of and definitions of religion.
- To appreciate the early bases and origins of religion among indigenous Native Peoples and Shamanic cultures.
- To grasp the historical, contextual and developmental connections, as well as the similarities and differences between the major Eastern and Western religions.
- To interpret and explain in an organized, critical and analytical fashion the meaning and structure of a selected group of religious texts or practices.
- Understand how an individual’s identity and outlook are shaped by religious influences
- Analyze topics in the field of religions studies from multiple perspectives (Global Perspective)
- Critically assess how developments within and between religions affect and are affected by global issues and trends
- Demonstrate a willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world (Global Engagement)
- Evaluate the interrelationship between their own and others’ religious views as they relate to understanding other cultures and solving common problems (Global Awareness)
- Perform field research to better understand a particular religious community
Requirements, Assignments and Grading

1. Regular attendance and punctuality are expected by all. Up to three absences will go without penalty. Each additional absence beyond will bring the Attendance Grade down (4 absences = 80%, 5 absences = 60%, 6+ absences = 0%, 8+ absences are grounds for failing the course) and bring down your overall grade. Perfect Attendance results in an attendance grade of 110%, so it boosts your overall grade.

2. It is the student’s responsibility to be attentive, respectful, keep up with the work, and hand in assignments on time. Cell phones must be turned off during class. No texting and no surfing on computers in class!

3. If a student is having any difficulties with the assignments, readings, papers, tests, punctuality, or attendance they should speak to the professor before it becomes a problem. Good communication will lead to a good resolution of the issue.

4. This is a Gordon Rule course with a three paper written word requirement and you must attain at least a C (not a C- or less) to pass a Gordon Rule course.

5. **Plagiarism** is the theft of someone else’s intellectual property: their ideas, theories, concepts, opinions, or words. It consists of the unattributed (no reference citation) quotation of the exact words of a published text, or the unattributed borrowing of original ideas by paraphrase from a published text. On written papers for which the student employs information gathered from books, articles or oral sources, each direct quotation, as well as ideas and facts that are not generally known to the public at large, or the form, structure or style of a secondary source must be attributed to its author by means of the appropriate citation procedure (in our course THE MLA Handbook). Only widely known facts, thoughts, and observations original to the student do not require citations. In addition, extensive quotations from textbooks or other sources mechanically inserted (cut and paste) into the paper for the sake of padding or bulk will not be accepted either. Your quotations should be selective and should not be strewn throughout the essays overshadowing or disproportional to your own original writing. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will cause the guilty student to be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs and possibly fail the class. Whenever a student is unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, they are encouraged to consult their professor.

6. **Assignments and Grading**
   a. **Four Tests** (12% Each Test): Multiple Choice, Matching, True/False, Short Essay
   b. **One 1500 Word Research Paper** (20%): Please see Tips for Excellent Research Papers on Blackboard for everything you need to write a solid research paper. You must provide a minimum of five references (books, journal articles, interviews, etc.) of which only one may come from the Internet (except for full e-books and e-articles). The Internet source must be a scholarly, professional expert source. You may not use the Hopfe and Woodward textbook as one of your references.
      1. Research Paper: Choose one of the four topics below:
         a) The Role of Women in Religion throughout History.
         b) The Differences between the God of the Native Americans and the God of the White European Settlers, and how this affected their religious worldview, beliefs and practices.
         c) The Differences between the major Eastern (Asian) Religions and the major Western (The People of the Book) Religions: their concepts of God and creation, and their religious worldview, beliefs and practices.
         d) The Historical and Modern Reasons for Hostility between the Religions of the People of the Book
   c. **One 1000 Word Field Visit Essay** (15%) + 5% Extra Credit (Outstanding papers) if you are chosen to give a brief oral presentation of your experience. Visit a worship service or ceremony (temple, mosque, church, cathedral or worship facility) **outside of your own religious background or current religious practice.** [Note: Remember that if your religious background or current practice is Christian, you cannot do this Field Visit Essay on any other Christian Churches (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Pentecostal, etc.) If you do, the paper will not be accepted.] The list is shown below, but you can research and find your own organization to visit. Write about your experience: what you observed, what you learned, how you felt, and anyone you interviewed. At least one interview with a priests, minister, rabbi, imam, lay leader or church official is required. Describe the service, building structure, art and cultic objects, clothing, rituals, ancillary practices (such as serving special foods), “the feel of the place,” and anything else relating to the religion and the service. Demonstrate that you have done some research ahead of time so that you have some basic knowledge of what you are going to experience. Identify your own religious background or practice in the introduction. Specify the religion and the branch or sect you attended for the site visit. [Note: Respect the church or temple or mosque. **DO NOT TAKE NOTES DURING THE WORSHIP SERVICE, PRAYERS OR MEDITATIONS.** Do your research ahead of time and in interviews. Sit quietly and participate appropriately during the worship
service, following the other worshippers in what to do. DO NOT MAKE ANY CRITICAL OR DISPARAGING COMMENTS TO ANYONE WHILE ATTENDING SOMEONE ELSE’S SACRED SPACE."

d. **Think, Pair, Share: One 500 Word Opinion Essay (12%)** involving a small group discussion of “The Case for Contamination” by Kwame Anthony Appiah. You will answer the following questions: What roles do religions play in Appiah’s analysis? How is your approach similar to or different from his? Part I (250 words) of the paper will be submitted before discussing it with your group. Part II (250 words) will be submitted a week later after you have discussed it. Reflect on how your views have changed or remained the same. This essay will be on Blackboard. You must participate in the group discussion and the instructor will monitor your discussion group’s Blackboard Discussion Board on the topic. Your paper will not be accepted if you do not participate in the discussion. The paper should reflect your discussion points.

e. **Class Participation/Attendance (5% Total)**

f. **One Extra Credit Paper (2%)**
1. 500 Word Extra Credit Paper: Of all the religions we studied (besides the one you practice or the one you were raised in), which had the most positive impact on you and why?

Or

2. 500 Word Movie Review: The Peaceful Warrior with Nick Nolte, The Da Vinci Code with Tom Hanks, or Joshua (F. Murray Abraham, Tony Goldwyn). Explain and discuss the religious themes of the movie, the spiritual and religious traditions, how the story affected you, and what it means today.

Or

3. 500 Word Movie Review on Jesus Camp. Analyze the movie, especially what you liked/disliked about the religious training depicted and the larger issue of the separation of religion and state.

7. **Letter Grade Range**

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**Guidelines for Writing and Research**

1. Your grade on all papers will consist of three parts: **Organization, Structure and Research** (30% of grade), **Style and Grammar** (20% of grade), and **Content and Argument** (50% of grade). **Organization, Structure and Research** refers to solid introduction (with thesis statement), building of argument and points, and finishing with a sound conclusion. Additionally, you must demonstrate college level research practices and use the MLA format correctly. **Style and Grammar** refers to how well you write: grammar, sentence structure, word usage, including use of interesting and varied words and phrasing. **Content and Argument** refers to how well you logically build your case and follow the FIRES model (Facts, Incidents, Reasoning/Rationale, Examples, and Statistics). FIRES makes for a more interesting paper in which you back up your points with specific examples and facts. To sum up, under the Gordon Rule FIU requires that student papers: 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; and 6) show awareness of disciplinary conventions in regard to content, style, form, and delivery method. Check out **Dr. Norris’ Excellent Tips for Writing Research Papers** on Blackboard to guide you in writing your essays.

2. While there is a wealth of sound research information at your disposal on the Internet, there is a greater deal of dubious material, so please be discerning. Acceptable authorship includes individual, recognized experts, educational institutions (e.g. Institute of Reformation History, Stanford University), publicly supported national or international institutes (e.g. World Health Organization), and other well-known institutions with solid reputations (e.g. World Council of Churches).

3. All essay assignments will be turned in through the Turnitin website (www.Turnitin.com) on the day they are due. The class user number and password will be given out before the first paper is due. There is a 5% grade penalty per day for late papers. You may write more than the minimum word requirement, but not less without penalty.

4. We use The MLA Handbook for writing papers in this course. Check out **Dr. Norris’ Excellent Tips for Writing Papers** to guide you in writing your essay.
5. Please take advantage of the (free) Writing Lab which will provide you with someone to go over your papers for grammatical, format, and content issues before you hand it in. Stop by to set up an appointment with them in PC 247! Their website also contains examples of MLA style and other helpful tools.

**Local Religious Organizations**

**BAHAI**
1. FIU Bahai Club 305-436-2490
2. Bahai Faith (South), 9300 S. Dixie Hwy., Miami, Florida 305-570-8886

**BUDDHIST**
Remove shoes before entering!
5. Avalokitesvara Buddhist Study Center (Buddhist) 7550 S.W. 82nd Court, Miami, Florida 33143 305-271-6361 or 267-8000
6. International Zen Institute of Florida (Buddhist) Dharma House, 3860 Crawford Avenue, Miami, Florida 33133 305-448-8969
7. Wat Buddharangsi Temple (Thai, Buddhist), 15200 S.W., 240th Street, Homestead, Florida 305-245-2702
8. Amida Temple ("Pure Land" Buddhist), c/o Kuang-Hsi Wu, 12815 S.W. 119 Terrace, Miami, Florida 33186 305-385-2866
9. International Dharma Center (Buddhist), P.O. Box 141728 Coral Gables, Florida, 33114-1728 305-267-8000 (Ileana Davis)
10. Kagyu Shedrup Chöling (Tibetan Buddhist) 1905 Monroe Street, Hollywood, Florida 33020 954-920-1346

**HINDU**
Remove shoes before entering!
11. Hindu Society of America. 9851 SW 168th St. Miami Fl., (3 blocks west of US 1) Times: Mon., Tues., Fri. 7:00 pm Sunday at 9am. 305-256-0828
12. 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) Sunday 10am
13. The South Florida Hindu Temple, 13010 Griffin Road, Davie, Florida 954-438-3675 info@sfht.org
14. Hare Krishna Temple, 220 Virginia St., Coconut Grove, Florida, 305-442-7218

**ISLAM**
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.
15. Miami Gardens Mosque (Sunni) 4305 N.W. 183 street Miami, Florida 33055
16. Mosque of Miami (Sunni) 7350 N.W. 3rd Street, Miami, Florida 33126 305-261-7622
17. Masjid Al-Ansar (Sunni) 5245 N.W. 7th Avenue, Miami, Florida 33127 305-757-8741
18. 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)
20. Muhammad's Mosque # 29 (Nation of Islam) 5660 N.W. 7th Ave.,Miami, Florida 305-756-9136

**JAIN**
22. Contact Professor Neptune Srimal, Srimal@fiu.edu AC1-389, 305-919-5969

**SIKH**
Plan to attend Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.
21. 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)

**UNIVERSALIST**
22. Unity, Unitarian, Quaker (American Society of Friends) can be found in the Yellow Pages, and The Church of the Way of the Messiahs (786-201-2468).

**JEISH AND CHRISTIAN**
Synagogues: Friday evenings, near Sundown; and Saturday mornings, 8:00 a.m. only. Bet Briera on Galloway (87th Ave) between Kendall and 112th St. recommended for Friday evening service.
Christian churches: Roman Catholic, Protestant, Greek Orthodox: 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), Self-Realization Fellowship, and Zoroastrianism (Persian/Iranian, and mostly in Bombay, India).

**Class and Reading Schedule**

**Week 1**
- **M 1/10** Lesson: Course Introduction and Overview
  - The Origins of Religion I
  - Reading for Next Class: Hopfe and Woodward, Introduction and Overview
- **W 1/12** Lesson: The Origins of Religion II
- **F 1/14** Lesson: The Origins of Religion III
  - Reading for Next Class: Chapter 1 Hopfe and Woodward

**Week 2**
- **M 1/17** **Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (No Classes)**
- **W 1/19** Lesson: The Nature of Religion and the Divine I
- **F 1/21** Lesson: The Nature of Religion and the Divine II

**Week 3**
- **M 1/24** Lesson: The Nature of Religion and the Divine III
- **W 1/26** **Exam: Online Test I on Overview and Chapter 1**
  - Reading for Next Class: Chapter 2, Hopfe and Woodward

**Part II: Shamanic and Native Religions**
- **F 1/28** Lesson: The Shaman Way I

**Week 4**
- **M 1/31** Lesson: The Shaman Way II
  - **Project Due: Appiah Opinion Essay (Part I)**
- **W 2/2** Lesson: The Shaman Way III
- **F 2/4** Lesson: Native American Origins and Brief History
  - **Movie: 500 Nations**

**Week 5**
- **M 2/7** Lesson: The Story of the Zero Chiefs, the Iroquois Nation, and Their Modern World Impact
  - **Project Due: Appiah Opinion Essay (Part II)**
- **W 2/9** Lesson: The Medicine Wheel
  - Reading for Next Class: Chapter 4, Hopfe and Woodward
- **F 2/11** **Exam: Online Test II on Chapter 2 and Shamanism**

**Week 6**
**Part III: Eastern Traditions**
- **M 2/14** Lesson: A Yin Yang Way of Life
- **W 2/16** Lesson: The Classic of the Way (The Tao)
- **F 2/18** Lesson: The Confucian Tradition
  - Reading for Next Class: Chapter 4, Hopfe and Woodward

**Week 7**
- **M 2/21** Lesson: Hinduism I: Origins and History
- **W 2/23** Lesson: Hinduism II: Sacred Scriptures: Vedas
- **F 2/25** Lesson: Hinduism II: Sacred Scriptures: Law of Manu and Bhagavad Gita

**Week 8**
- **M 2/28** Lesson: Hinduism III: Yoga
- **W 3/2** Lesson: Hinduism IV: Contemporary Issues
  - **Movie: Life Energies**
  - Reading for Next Class: Chapter 6, Hopfe and Woodward
- **F 3/4** Lesson: Buddhism I: The Story of Buddha and The Middle Way

**Week 9**
- **M 3/7** Lesson: Buddhism I: The Story of Buddha and The Middle Way
  - **Project Due: 1000 Word Field Visit Paper (A-L Students)**
Week 10  
Spring Break (March 14-19) No Classes

Week 11
M 3/21  Lesson: Buddhism III: The Eightfold Noble Path and Other Teachings
Project Due: 1000 Word Field Visit Paper (M-Z Students)

W 3/23  Exam: Online Test III on Chapters 4,6,8
Reading for Next Class: Chapter 11, Hopfe and Woodward

Part IV: The People of the Book
F 3/25  Lesson: Judaism I: Defining Judaism and Patriarch Origins

Week 12
M 3/28  Lesson: Judaism II: History of a People and Sacred Scriptures

W 3/30  Lesson: Judaism III: Traditional Themes

F 4/1  Lesson: Judaism IV: Contemporary Themes
Reading for Next Class: Chapter 12, Hopfe and Woodward

Week 13
M 4/4  Lesson: Christianity I: Defining Christianity, Its Founders, and Sacred Scriptures
Project Due: 1500 Word Research Paper (A-L Students)

W 4/6  Lesson: Christianity II: Sacred Scriptures

F 4/8  Lesson: Christianity III: The Evolution of the Church
Reading for Next Class: Chapters 8, 9, 10 Armstrong

Week 14
M 4/11 Lesson: Christianity IV: The Evolution of the Church and Contemporary Themes
Project Due: 1500 Word Research Paper (M-Z Students)
Reading for Next Class: Chapter 13, Hopfe and Woodward, and Chapters 1, 2, 3 Armstrong

W 4/13 Movie: Inside Islam

F 4/15  Lesson: Islam I: The Stories of Abraham and Muhammad
Reading for Next Class: Chapters 4, 5, 6 Armstrong

Week 15
M 4/18  Lesson: Islam II: The Five Pillars and Other Spiritual Themes
Reading for Next Class: Chapters 7,8,9 Armstrong
Project Due: All Extra Credit Papers

W 4/20  Lesson: Islam III: The Evolution of a Religion and Muhammad Today
Reading for Next Class: Chapters 9, 10 Armstrong
Project Due: Oral Presentations

F 4/22  Lesson: Postmodern/New Age Religion
Project Due: Oral Presentations

Week 16
M-S 12/6-12/11  Final Exam Week: Test IV: Online Final Exam on Chapters 11,12,13 and Muhammad Text