GENERAL INFORMATION

Class meets on M-W-F in Chem and Physics 111 at 4 pm.

PROFESSOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Joseph Holbrook
Email: jholbroo@fiu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This section of Religion: Analysis and Interpretation will use text readings, in-class participation and multimedia to explore basic concepts in the study of religion. This format's scope includes the exploration of concepts such as deity, cosmology and myth, ritual, scripture, ethics and salvation/liberation. The student will be introduced to each concept through the textbook, class lectures, student presentations, videos, Internet sources and discussions. 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 in a midterm exam and a final exam. Two essays will develop the student's critical thinking skills and writing abilities. For the first essay, the student will conduct field research by attending a religious service outside of his/her own tradition. For the second essay, the student will read and review an article on religion and globalization. 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.

**TEXTBOOK**

*Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*
James C. Livingston
Prentice Hall, 6th Edition
ISBN 10: 013600380X
ISBN 13: 9780136003809

[Click here](#) to buy your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.

**EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE**

This class meets three times a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3:00 to 3:50 pm. Since the class is only fifty minutes long, 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. 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.
COURSE DETAIL

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place in class, in Blackboard, and through 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.

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 essay submitted in both a first and a second draft. Essay 1 (Site Visit) will be submitted as a draft for 10% of the final grade and will be resubmitted as a revised final version for an additional 20% of the final grade. Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis) will be submitted in a final version for 20% of the final grade. Each paper will be 1500-2000 words and will be submitted through Turnitin. All source material must be cited correctly using MLA Style and long quotes should be avoided. Please be aware that papers with an originality score of over 35% similarity will be subject to additional scrutiny and may incur additional penalties, up to and including receiving an F (0 points).

GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a Global Learning course, students will be expected to 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

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.
MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS

The Midterm Exam (Exam 1) and Final Exam (Exam 2) are in-class, time-restricted examinations. Each exam has 40 multiple-choice questions based on the text readings. Each exam is worth 50 points (1.25 points per question) and 15% of the final grade. Students will need a green Scantron and a pencil for each exam.

ESSAYS

Essay 1 (Site Visit Draft & Final Copy) and Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis) 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 (confirmation of assignment submission) 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. Essay 1 (Site Visit) will be handed in twice via Turnitin: First as a draft worth 10% of the final grade, and later as a revised final paper worth 10% of the final grade. The Site Visit should be 1500-2000 (5 to 6 pages double-spaced) words and cited correctly. For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard.

Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis) - The student will analyze the article ‘The Case for Contamination’ by Kwame Anthony Appiah. The Appiah Analysis is worth 10% of the final grade. The Appiah Analysis should be 1500-2000 (5 to 6 pages double-spaced) words and cited correctly. For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard.

GROUP PRESENTATION

Students will give one group presentation (5 minutes per person in the group) on a topic related to course readings. Guidelines will be given in class for the presentation on some portion of the course text. Additional information might include a demonstration, an explanation of a term/idea, a brief travel description/slide show, or a book review. Be creative and informative! The presentation will be worth 50 points and is 10% of the final grade. Students are responsible for signing up for presentation slots. If a student cannot attend of the day of the presentation, they may arrange with another student to switch slots, but please inform the instructor by email of changes to the schedule. If a student misses his/her presentation slot and there is no other available slot, the student will receive 0 points for the presentation.
EXTRA CREDIT

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. The extra credit paper is worth an extra 20 points. All extra credit reports are due no later than April 1.

COURSE POLICIES

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 5 points per day for up to five 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.

Attendance and Participation
Attendance and Participation together are worth 50 points and 10% of the final grade. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive promptly and stay for the duration of the class. However, students are given two “free” absences in order to accommodate transportation issues, illness, family responsibilities and unavoidable absences. Students are strongly encouraged to save their “free” absences for unavoidable events since any other absences will incur a penalty of 5 points each. Students with ten or more absences (after the two “free” absences) will receive 0 points for attendance. Please inform the instructor immediately if a situation develops which will impact your performance or attendance. Participation includes reading for class, contributing to discussions and being attentive to lectures and student presentations. Please refrain from
texting and emailing in class. Arriving late, leaving early or stepping out of the class for long periods of time may incur an absence penalty. Students will be expected to sign in on the class roster which will serve as documentation of their attendance.

**GRADING**

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<th>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 1 - Site Visit Draft (due Jan. 29)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Exam 1 – MIDTERM (on Feb. 21)</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Essay 1 - Site Visit Final (due March 17)</td>
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<td>Essay 2 - Appiah Analysis (due April 11)</td>
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<td>Exam 2 – FINAL (on April 21)</td>
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<td>12 Weekly Chapter Quizzes</td>
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<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<td>On-line discussions of films</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; Attendance</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**COURSE CALENDAR**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>MODULE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>TEXT</th>
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| **Week 1**  
Jan. 8-10 | **Section I - The Study of Religion**  
**Topic:** What is religion?  
Jan. 8: Introductions, syllabus review, class plan  
Jan. 10: Readings lecture, organize presentations  
*Start your Site Visit research early!* | Chapter 1  
p.1-14 |
| **Week 2**  
Jan. 13-17 | **Section I - The Study of Religion**  
**Topic:** Ways of studying religion  
Jan. 13: Readings lecture,  
Jan. 15: Readings lecture, Film: *BLACKROBE*  
Jan. 17: Readings discussion, student presentation | Chapter 2  
p.15-34 |
| **Week 3**  
Jan. 20-24 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** The sacred and the holy  
Jan. 20: MLK Jr. DAY – no class  
Jan. 22: Readings discussion  
Jan. 24: Group presentations, discussion | Chapter 3  
p.35-52 |
| **Week 4**  
Jan. 27-31 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** Sacred symbol, myth and doctrine  
Jan. 27: Readings lecture, student presentation Sept.  
Jan. 29: Readings discussion,  
Jan. 31: Student presentations (2), news discussion  
*Essay 1 (Site Visit Draft) due by 11:59 pm on Jan. 29, via Blackboard Assignments* | Chapter 4  
p.53-73 |
| **Week 5**  
Feb. 3-7 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** Sacred ritual  
Feb. 3: Readings lecture, student presentation Sept.  
Feb. 5: Readings discussion, Film: *LUTHER*  
Feb. 7: Student presentations (2), news discussion | Chapter 5  
p.74-95 |
| **Week 6**  
Feb. 10-14 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** Sacred scripture  
Feb. 10: Readings lecture, student presentation  
Feb. 12: Readings discussion,  
Feb. 14: Student presentations (2), news | Chapter 6  
p.96-123 |
| Week 7 | Feb. 17-21 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** Society and the sacred  
Feb. 17: - President's Day – No School  
Feb. 19: Readings discussion,  
Feb. 21: Midterm Exam Covers materials from Week 1-7. | Chapter 7  
p.124-150 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 8 | Feb. 24-28 | Feb. 24: Readings lecture,  
Feb. 26: Film: *ROMERO*  
Feb. 28: Student presentations, news discussion | Chapter 8  
p.151-182 |
| **Week 9** | **March 3-7** | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
**Topic:** Deity, or concepts of the divine/ultimate reality  
March 3: Readings lecture, student presentation  
March 5: Discussion: The Internet, social media, and evaluating sources Readings discussion,  
March 7: Student presentations, discussion | Chapter 9  
p.183-210 |
| **SPRING BREAK – March 10-14** | **Week 10** | **March 17-21** | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
**Topic:** Cosmology  
*Essay 1 (Site Visit Final) due by 11:59 pm on March 17, via Blackboard Assignments*  
March 17: Readings lecture, student presentation  
March 19: Readings discussion, student presentation  
March 21: Student presentations, news discussion | Chapter 10  
p.211-234 |
| **Week 11** | **March 24-28** | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
**Topic:** The human problem  
March 24: Readings lecture, student presentation  
March 26: Readings discussion, Film: *GANDHI*  
March 28: Student presentations, discussion | Chapter 11  
p.235-258 |
| **Week 12** | **March 31-April 4** | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
**Topic:** Encountering evil  
March 31: Readings lecture  
April 2: student presentation (April 1, Extra Credits are due)  
April 4: Readings discussion, student presentation | Chapter 12  
p.259-286 |
| **Week 13** | **April 7-11** | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
**Topic:** Ethics  
April 7: Readings lecture, student presentation  
April 9: Readings discussion, student presentation  
April 11: Student presentations (2), news discussion | Chapter 13  
p.287-338 |
| Week 14 | April 14-18 | Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview
| Topic: | Salvation and liberation |
|April 14: Readings lecture, student presentation |
|April 16: Readings discussion, student presentation |
|April 18: Group Presentation, discussion |
|Note: 2 chapters next week, read ahead! |

| Final Exam Week | April 21-25 | Professor office hours, Mon. and Wed. from 3 to 5pm in GL 150. |
|Final Exam: **Monday, 4-21 at 2:15-4:15 pm in Chem and Physics 111** |
|Covers week 8-15. |

**Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis) due by 11:59 pm on April 11, via Blackboard Assignments**

**Chapters 14 p.339**

**Chapters 15 p.-398**