

Spring 2015 – REL 3308 U09 (20135) – Studies in World Religions

Meets Saturday 9:30 am to 12:15 pm, in CP 111

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Office hours by appointment: Before and after class, or by phone

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This comparative religions course examines the world's major religions, both ancient and contemporary, from historical, psychological, sociological, anthropological and archeological perspectives. We will explore the various myths, rituals, symbols, scriptures, festivals and spiritual leaders of indigenous and tribal communities, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and New Religious Movements (including New Age).

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

EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS COURSE

This class meets once a week: Saturday 9:30 am to 12:15 pm. 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 before or after class 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 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.

QUIZZES AND EXAMS

The quizzes will be taken online and will include ten questions based on that week's text readings worth one point each. Each quiz will be timed and you will be able to take each quiz

twice, with the average counted towards your total. The ten (10) quizzes together are worth 20% of the final grade.

The final exam will be fifty (50) questions from the quizzes, plus fifty (50) fill-in-the-blank and matching questions based on a study guide. The final exam will be timed and taken online during final exam week but can be only taken once. The final exam is worth 15% of the final grade.

ASSIGNMENTS

Group Presentation - Students will give a group presentation on a topic related to the text readings, using PowerPoint, Prezi or similar. Guidelines will be given on Blackboard but the group will present current issues, events or people that impact the religion in that week's readings. Students are responsible for signing up for presentation groups. 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 15% of the final grade.

Site Visit Essay - The student will do field research by attending a religious service or ceremony outside of his/her own religious tradition. The Site Visit should be 1200-1500 words and cited correctly. For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard. The Site Visit is worth 100 points and 20% of the final grade.

The Site Visit Essay 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.

Religion and Ethics Discussions – There will be two (2) discussion questions in Blackboard based on current issues in religion and ethics. Each discussion will be worth 25 points and 10% of the final grade. For more information, see Assignments in Blackboard.

Appiah Analysis Discussion - The student will analyze the article 'The Case for Contamination' by Kwame Anthony Appiah. The Appiah Analysis Discussion on Blackboard is worth 50 points and is 10% of the final grade. For more information, see Assignments in Blackboard.

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

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 10 points each. 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 using social media (text, Facebook, etc.) in class. Arriving late, leaving early or stepping out of the class for long periods will incur a penalty of 5 points.

EXTRA CREDIT

Review a movie in which two religions merge or conflict with each other and write a five-paragraph reaction paper describing the role that religion plays in the story or event. Focus on 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 can be based on a real situation but should not be a documentary or a movie specifically about a religion or a religious figure. If in doubt about your selection, ask the instructor for approval. The extra credit paper is worth up to an extra 20 points. All extra credit reports are due no later than December 1.

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	POINTS	PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE
Quizzes (10, weekly)	100	20%
Appiah Analysis Discussion	50	10%
Site Visit Essay	100	20%
Religion and Ethics Discussions (2)	50	10%
Final Exam	100	15%
Group Presentation	50	15%
Attendance and Participation	50	10%
Total	500	100%

CALENDAR

MODULE	TOPIC	PREP BEFORE CLASS
Week 1 1/11 – 1/17	<p>Class: January 17 Topic: What is religion?</p> <p>Introductions, syllabus review, class plan BREAK What is religion? [and] Religion and demographics</p>	<p>Check into Blackboard Read: Introduction</p>
Week 2 1/18 – 1/24	<p>Class: January 24 Topic: Basic Religions and Native American Religions (US)</p> <p>Concepts in traditional religions BREAK Clips and discussion: Religion, ritual and change</p> <p>Plan your Site Visit (due March 1)</p>	<p>Check into Blackboard Read: Chapters 1-2</p> <p>QUIZ 1 Due 1/24 by 9:30 am</p>

<p>Week 3 1/25 – 1/31</p>	<p>Class: January 31 Topic: African Traditional Religions and Afro-Caribbean Religions</p> <p>African Traditional Religions clips and discussion BREAK Student group 1: Presentation and discussion</p> <p>Appiah Analysis Discussion Due February 1 by 11:59 pm</p>	<p>Read: Chapter 3 & Appiah Article</p> <p>QUIZ 2 Due 1/31 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 4 2/1 – 2/7</p>	<p>Class: February 7 Topic: Hinduism</p> <p>Hinduism clips and discussion BREAK Student group 2: Presentation and discussion</p>	<p>Read: Chapter 4</p> <p>QUIZ 3 Due 2/7 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 5 2/8 – 2/14</p>	<p>Class: February 14 Topic: Jainism and Sikhism</p> <p>Jainism clips and discussion BREAK Film and discussion: Religious symbols and discrimination</p>	<p>Read: Chapters 5 & 7</p> <p>QUIZ 4 Due 2/14 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 6 2/15 – 2/21</p>	<p>Class: February 21 Topic: Buddhism</p> <p>Buddhism clips and discussion BREAK Student group 3: Presentation and discussion</p>	<p>Read: Chapter 6</p> <p>QUIZ 5 Due 2/21 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 7 2/22 -2/28</p>	<p>Class: February 28 Topic: Chinese Religions</p> <p>Religion in China clips and discussion BREAK Student group 4: Presentation and discussion</p> <p>Site Visit Essay due March 1 by 11:59 pm</p>	<p>Chapter 8</p> <p>QUIZ 6 Due 2/28 by 9:30 am</p>

<p>Week 8 3/1 – 3/7</p>	<p>Class: March 7 Topic: Shinto and Zoroastrianism</p> <p>Shinto clips and discussion BREAK Zoroastrianism clips and discussion</p>	<p>Read: Chapters 9 & 10</p> <p>QUIZ 7 Due 3/7 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 9 3/8 – 3/14</p>	<p>Spring Break: No class on March 14</p>	
<p>Week 10 3/15 – 3/21</p>	<p>Class: March 21 Topic: Judaism</p> <p>Judaism lecture, clips and discussion BREAK Student group 5: Presentation and discussion</p>	<p>Read: Chapter 11</p> <p>QUIZ 8 Due 3/21 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 11 3/22 – 3/28</p>	<p>Class: March 28 Topic: Christianity</p> <p>Early Christianity, Catholicism, Orthodoxy & Protestantism BREAK Student group 6: Presentation and discussion</p>	<p>Read: Chapter 12</p> <p>QUIZ 9 Due 3/28 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 12 3/29 – 4/4</p>	<p>Class: April 4 Topic: Islam</p> <p>Islam lecture, clips and discussion BREAK Student group 7: Presentation and discussion</p>	<p>Read: Chapter 13</p> <p>QUIZ 10 Due 4/4 by 9:30 am</p>
<p>Week 13 4/5 – 4/11</p>	<p>Class: April 11 Topic: New Religious Movements 1/2</p> <p>What are New Religious Movements? BREAK Student group 8: Presentation and discussion</p> <p>Religion and Ethics Discussion 1 due by April 12 at 11:59 pm</p>	<p>Read: NRM 1/2 links</p>

<p>Week 14 4/12 – 4/18</p>	<p>Class: April 18 Topic: New Religious Movements 2/2</p> <p>New Religious Movements clips and discussion BREAK Student group 9: Presentation and discussion</p> <p>Religion and Ethics Discussion 2 due by April 19 at 11:59 pm</p>	<p>Read: NRM 2/2 links</p>
<p>Week 15 4/19 – 4/25</p>	<p>Class: April 25 Topic: Issues in Religion</p> <p>Conversion, decline and growth: clips and discussion BREAK Religious or spiritual? clips and discussion</p> <p>Extra Credit due by April 26 at 11:59 pm</p>	<p>Prepare Final Exam Study Guide</p>
<p>Week 16 4/26 – 5/2</p>	<p>NO CLASS on May 2 FINAL EXAM (take online) due by 1:00 on Saturday May 2</p>	