GENERAL INFORMATION

Class meets on M-W-F in Chem. & Physics, 101 at 1 pm.

PROFESSOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Joseph Holbrook
- Email: jholbroo@fiu.edu
- Office Hours M-W, 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM or by appointment.
- GL 150 (first floor of Green Library, to the right of Starbucks and the escalator when entering the front entrance; through the double doors down the hallway on the left)
- Phone: 305-348-2186
- Twitter: @REL_FIU
- Dedicated class blog: http://josenmiamireligion.blogspot.com/
- YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNQvOQW2aM_zBbJH4VekS330EBwbRcMCd

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 1:00 to 1:50 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 primarily through Blackboard messenger. The best method to communicate with your instructor privately is through Blackboard messenger; only use email as a backup if messenger does not work. Appointments can be made on request. Please contact the instructor immediately if a serious situation arises which will impact student performance. You can inform me after class if you arrived late, but I will only answer questions about grades, makeups and writing assignments in person, face-to-face in my office hours.

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 a revised final version will be resubmitted for an additional 10% of the final grade. Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis) will be submitted in a final version for 10% of the final grade. Each paper will be 1000 to 1200 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 time-restricted, online examinations. Each exam has 50 multiple-choice or true/false questions based on the text readings. Each exam is worth 100 points and 10% of the final grade.

ESSAYS

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 (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 1000-1200 (3 to 4 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 1000-1200 (3 to 4 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 10% of the final grade. Students are responsible for signing up for presentation slots. If a student cannot attend 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.
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 1 percent of the final grade. **All extra credit reports are due no later than April 13.** The maximum amount of extra credits that are possible are 3 points on the final grade or 1/3 of a grade level. Extra credits will also be given for students who follow the class twitter account, @REL_FIU or who make at least 10 comments (complete sentences) on the class religious studies blog: http://josenmiamireligion.blogspot.com/. Only those students are eligible to do extra credit work who have completed all of the regularly assigned work and who have at least a B or higher (85%) in their attendance and participation grade. **Students who do not come to class, do not participate or who do not complete assignments on time will not be allowed to turn in extra credit work.**

**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 10 percent for the first week, after which papers will not be accepted for any reason or they will be discounted by 50 percent at the professor’s discretion.

**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 10% of the final grade. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive promptly and stay for the duration of the class. Students with ten or more 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. If you are using earphones or looking at your smart phone during class, you will asked to remove them or leave the 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. **CURRENT EVENT ITEM:** each student may bring to the class one current event item that has a religious theme or undertone. The current event news item will count 3 points for attendance and
participation.

**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 #1 (due Feb. 3)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Revision - Site Visit #Revision (due March 2)</td>
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<td>Essay 2 - Appiah Analysis (due April 13)</td>
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<td>Exam 1 – MIDTERM (on March 8)</td>
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<td>Exam 2 – FINAL (April 25)</td>
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<td>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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<td>Participation &amp; Attendance (&amp; Current Event news item)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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| Week 1  
Jan. 11 - 16 | **Section I - The Study of Religion**  
**Topic:** What is religion?  
Jan. 11: Introductions, syllabus review, class plan  
Jan. 13: Readings lecture, organize presentations  
Start your Site Visit research early! | Chapter 1  
p.1-14 |
| Week 2  
Jan. 18 - 22 | **Section I - The Study of Religion**  
**Topic:** “Ways of studying religion”  
Jan. 18: Chapter 2, “Methods of Social Science Analysis”  
Jan. 20: Readings, Lecture discussion  
p.15-34 |
| Week 3  
Jan. 25 - 29 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** The sacred and the holy  
Jan. 25: Readings lecture, discussion,  
Jan. 27: Group discussion of Chapter 3,  
Jan. 29: Finish Mission, proof read forum posts  
*Film discussion of “The Mission” due Wed. Jan. 27 | Chapter 3  
p.35-52 |
| Week 4  
Feb. 1 – 5 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** Sacred symbol, myth and doctrine  
Feb. 1: Group Presentation, Readings lecture  
Feb. 3: Group discussion of Chapter 4  
*Site Visit #1 due by 11:59 pm on Feb. 3, via Blackboard*  
Feb. 5: Film: “LUTHER” Group Proofread Site Visit | Chapter 4  
p.53-73 |
| Week 5  
Feb. 8 – 12 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** Sacred ritual  
Feb. 8: Group Presentation, Current Events News  
Feb. 10: Readings discussion,  
Feb. 12: Film: “LUTHER” | Chapter 5  
p.74-95 |
| Week 6  
Feb. 15 – 19 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
**Topic:** Sacred scripture  
Feb. 15: Group Presentation, Current Events News  
Feb. 17: Readings discussion,  
Feb. 19: Film: LUTHER (Proof read revisions) | Chapter 6  
p.96-123 |
| Week 7  | Feb. 22 – 26 | **Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression**  
Topic: Society and the sacred  
Feb. 22: Group Presentation, Current Events News  
Feb. 24: Readings discussion, Assignments  
*Film discussion forum of “LUTHER” due Feb. 24  
Feb. 26: Discuss Appiah Essay group proof read forum post  
Chapter 7  
pp. 124-150 |
|---|---|---|
| Week 8  | Feb. 29 – March 4 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
Topic: Deity, or concepts of the divine/ultimate reality  
Feb. 29: Group Presentation, Current Events News  
March 2: Readings lecture, Discussion  
*March 2, Site Visit Revision due by 11:59 pm on via Blackboard  
March 4: Intro GANDHI  
Chapter 8  
pp. 151-182 |
| Week 9  | March 7 – 11 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
Topic: Cosmogony  
March 7: Group Presentation, Current Events News  
*March 8 Midterm due by midnight  
March 9: Discussion of Cosmogony  
March 11: Film GANDHI  
Chapter 9  
pp. 183-210 |
| March 14 – 18 | **SPRING BREAK** |
| Week 10  | March 21 – 25 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
Topic: The human problem  
March 21: Group Presentation, Current Events News item  
March 23: Readings discussion, student presentation  
March 25: GOOD FRIDAY  
Chapter 10  
pp. 211-234 |
| Week 11  | March 28 – April 1 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
Topic: Encountering evil  
March 28: Group Presentation, Current Events  
March 30: *Film discussion “GANDHI” due Nov. 4  
April 1: Discussion: Introduce Film: MALCOLM X  
Chapter 11  
pp. 235-258 |
| Week 12  | April 4 – 8 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
Topic: Ethics  
April 4: Group Presentation, Current Events News  
April 6: presentation ETHICS *Appiah forum discussion due  
April 8: Film: MALCOLM X  
Chapter 12  
pp. 259-286 |
| Week 13  | April 11 – 15 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
Topic: Salvation and liberation  
April 11: Group Presentation, Current Events News  
April 13: Readings, discussion, *(Extra Credits due).  
*Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis) due by 11:59 pm, via Blackboard  
April 15: Film: MALCOLM X (at home)  
Chapter 13  
pp. 287-338 |
| Week 14 | April 18 – 22 | **Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview**  
**Topic:** New Religious Movements, New Age  
April 18: Readings lecture, student presentation  
April 20: Discussion  
April 22: Film: *MALCOLM X* (at home) | Chapter 14 p.338-398 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 15 | April 25 – 29 | **Section IV. The Sacred and the Secular in Modernity**  
**Topic:** Secularization and Pluralism  
April 25: Readings lecture, student presentation  
April 27: Readings discussion, and Review  
*DUE:* *MALCOLM X*  
April 29: LAST DAY OF CLASS | Chapter 15 p.338-398 |
| FINAL EXAMS | April 2 | Professor office hours, M-W-F from **11:30 to 1pm in GL 150**  
**Final Exam: Due on May 2**  
Covers week 8-15. |