COURSE SYLLABUS
STUDIES IN WORLD RELIGIONS
REL3308 ONLINE SUMMER A 2013

PROFESSOR: OREN STIER
EMAIL: STIERO@FIU.EDU
OFFICE: DM301C
PHONE: 305 348-6729

GENERAL INFORMATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This online section of Studies in World Religions will use a multimedia approach to explore Basic Religions, Native American Religions, African Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Daoism/Confucianism, Shinto, Christianity, Islam, Sects & Cults and Religion in the 21st Century. The student will be introduced to each tradition through the textbook, videos, and PowerPoint presentations offered by the members of the Religious Studies faculty, each in their own research specialization. Students will be tested on this material through time-restricted quizzes, a midterm, and a final exam. One essay assignment will be required and is due via turnitin.com. The essay assignment will test each student's knowledge of the world religions and how they compare. There are strict guidelines for this assignment that can be found under the "Essay Dropbox" located under Course Content.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will be able to:
- Compare and contrast religious societies and cultures in the local, national and/or international context.
- Situate these societies and cultures within contemporary and historical perspective.
- Critically engage the issue of religious diversity in national and/or international context.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

POLICIES
Please review the policies page as it contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU and additional information on the standards for acceptable netiquette important for online courses.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS & SKILLS
One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course is a lack of basic computer literacy. By computer literacy we mean being able to manage and organize computer files efficiently, and learning to use your computer’s operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course; but students enrolled in online courses are expected to have moderate proficiency using a computer. Please go to the "What’s Required" page to find out more information on this subject.
For detailed information about the technical requirements, please [click here](#).

**ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION**

For detailed information about the specific limitations with the technologies used in this course, please [click here](#).

For more information about Blackboard’s Accessibility Commitment, [click here](#).

For additional assistance please contact our [Disability Resource Center](#).

**COURSE PREREQUISITES**

For information about prerequisites, [click here](#).

**TEXTBOOK**

![Living Religions](image)

*Living Religions*(Required)

Mary Pat Fisher
Prentice Hall, 8th edition

ISBN 10: 0205835856

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

**Important Note:** To successfully view the online videos in this class, you will need a high-speed Internet connection. If you only have dial-up Internet, you will need to visit one of the FIU computer labs to download and watch the videos.

**EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE**

This is an online course, meaning that most of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

**COURSE DETAIL**

**COURSE COMMUNICATION**

Communication in this course will take place via Email
This is the best method to communicate with your instructor.

**DISCUSSION FORUMS**

The Discussion Board will be used for class discussions and other postings of general interest that are directly related to the course. Everyone can read Discussion Forum postings; therefore, do not post private information. Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.

**QUIZZES**

A weekly time-restricted, online quiz will be given on each religious tradition. **You can take each quiz two times, and the higher of the two attempts will be recorded.** Even if you do well on the first attempt, it is advisable to use both attempts. You will not receive the same quiz every time; the computer randomly chooses the questions from a quiz database. The objective questions on the midterm and final exams will be taken directly from this database. Thus, the more times you take the quiz, the more questions you will receive and the better prepared you will be for the exams.

For the quizzes, you will have **10 minutes to complete 10 questions.** Each quiz will be open from Monday to Saturday, and you can take it on any of those days at any time. Quizzes 1 and 2 will remain open until the end of the 2nd week of the term to accommodate late registrations.

**Note:** Quiz resets will not be granted. You will receive two attempts to complete each quiz, if you are logged offline or you have technical failure while attempting the quiz, then you still have the second attempt to complete the quiz.

Resetting quizzes after they have passed will require a serious and verifiable reason (death in the family, hospitalization, serious accident, etc.).

The correct answers for quizzes will **not** be released to students. Students will be able to see their submitted answers only. Students should refer to their course materials for the correct answers, in order to study for the midterm and final exams.

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the "Practice Quiz" from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum **hardware requirements.**

**EXAMS**

The midterm and final exams consist of both objective and essay portions. The Midterm Objective (Exam 1) & Final Objective (Exam 2) are both online, time-restricted examinations. They are in the Assessments area. **Students have only one attempt to complete the objective portions of the Midterm and Final Exams,** unlike the quizzes. **Please make note of this important difference.**

**Students who do not complete both parts of the Midterm and Final Exams will not receive a final grade for the course. Make sure you attempt the objective and essay portions of**
The essay topics for the exams will become available in the Assessment area during the exam availability time. The essay portions of these exams must be submitted to turnitin.com via Blackboard (you do not need to register separately with Turnitin.com). See the folder under Course Content labeled "Assignment Dropbox" for links.

The Midterm Exam Essay and the Final Exam Essay should each be approximately 500-750 words long.

The midterm will cover Basic Religions, African Religions, Native American Religions, Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism, while the final exam will cover Daoism/Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Sects and Cults, and Religion in the 21st Century.

TERM PAPER

Turnitin.com

Students will submit Term Papers to Turnitin.com via Blackboard. It is not necessary to create an account on Turnitin.com to submit this assignment.

**Students who do not complete the Term Paper assignment will not receive a final grade for the course. Make sure you complete the Term Paper assignment.**

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.

The Term Paper assignment is to answer **ONE** of the following three questions (Do not forget to provide evidence to support your arguments!):

1. Which of the religions you have studied seems to be most focused on behavior and deeds, and which on the cultivation of spiritual and moral character? Explain the reasons for such differences by exploring underlying sociological and historical themes.
2. Although Buddhism and Hinduism share many similar beliefs, they differ in their understanding of one’s self, or the ‘soul.’ Explore these two religions and the concepts of anatman and atman, especially in relation to how they conceive of the sacred (god/gods) and the way to salvation.
3. What is the meaning of the word Jihad in Islam? How has this concept been interpreted by Muslims and what role does it have within their worldview, especially in modern times?

*Once you choose one of the three topics, make sure you pay attention to everything that is being asked of you in your chosen topic, and make sure when you are finished writing that you have done everything you have been asked to do.*

When reading your Term Papers, I will be looking at four different elements:
Structure/Organization, Style & Mechanics, Quality of Argument/Fulfills Assignment and Content/Documentation. I will use a rubric that gives equal weight to each of these four categories when assigning a grade for the Term Paper.

**Structure/Organization** includes paragraph structure, length of the paper, and the organization of information in the paper.

**Style & Mechanics** refer to how that information is presented. This includes the readability of the paper, language skills such as spelling, grammar, punctuation and proper syntax, and proofreading.

**Quality of Argument/Fulfills Assignment** refers to the quality and relevance of your analysis, how well you support your own argument, and the degree to which you answer the questions posed.

**Content/Documentation** includes the nature and accuracy of the evidence provided to support your argument, whether that evidence demonstrates knowledge of course material, and the quality of the documentation of that evidence.

**Important:**

Your textbook and required readings have enough information about the topic to get you started. You should be able to supplement your Term Papers with basic research using the 15-volume *Encyclopedia of Religion*, edited by Lindsay Jones (Detroit: Macmillan, 2005) available as an online resource via the FIU Library, and/or other online encyclopedic resources. *Do not use any resources for your paper other than those available through the FIU Libraries.* For citation and referencing style, you **must** use MLA style in-text citations, **must** provide specific page references for quotations and paraphrases, and **must** provide a works cited page (which will not count towards your total word count); for more info and guidelines, see [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/675/1/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/675/1/)

Your completed Term Paper should be between 1000-1500 words.

*Do not use Wikipedia as a source for your Term Paper, and take care not to copy information from the Internet.* Points will be deducted for infractions of these rules.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Late Papers**

Except in cases of *genuine* and *documented* emergencies, late papers will be heavily penalized: 5 points will be deducted for the first day late, or part thereof, and 10 points for every day thereafter, or part thereof, up to 50 points maximum. If you wait until the last minute to complete a quiz or an exam, or wait to submit the term paper, the ‘traffic’ may be heavy and the submission may not go through: heavy Internet traffic is not a valid excuse for a late paper. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO SUBMIT YOUR WORK.**
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 if you need further clarification. Offenders will receive a grade of F for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly fail the course.

GRADING

IMPORTANT: STUDENTS MUST ATTEMPT THE TERM PAPER, BOTH PARTS OF MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A GRADE IN THIS COURSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz Average (13 Quizzes Total; lowest 2 quiz grades will be dropped)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm (Exam 1) - 50 points objective; 50 points essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final (Exam 2) - 50 points objective; 50 points essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
<th>RANGE</th>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
<th>RANGE</th>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
<th>RANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Above 93</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - 82</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68 - 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 92</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78 - 79</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>63 - 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88 - 89</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 - 77</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60 - 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 - 87</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 - 72</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>90 - 92</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78 - 79</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>63 - 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Above 93</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - 82</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68 - 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 92</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78 - 79</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>63 - 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88 - 89</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 - 77</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60 - 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 - 87</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 - 72</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODULE</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENTS &amp; READINGS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Intro and Basic Religions** | **View:**  
PowerPoint presentation "Introduction to Religion" by Prof. Northup.  
Video "Mystic Lands: Australia: Dreamtime."  
**Read:**  
Fisher - Chapters 1, Religious Responses, and 2, Indigenous Sacred Ways  
**Take Quiz 1 (will remain open until end of 2nd week for late registration)**  
Religious Responses and Indigenous Sacred Ways |
| **Native American Religion** | **View:**  
PowerPoint presentation "Native American Religions" by Dr. Huchingson.  
**Read:** William A. Young, Quest for Harmony: Native American Spiritual Traditions, chapter 1. Full text available through Netlibrary.  
**Take Quiz 2: (will remain open until end of 2nd week for late registration)**  
Native American Religions |
| **African Religion** | **View:**  
PowerPoint presentation "African Religions" by Dr. Rey.  
**Read:** E. Thomas Lawson, "The Yoruba and Their Religious Tradition"  
**Take Quiz 3:**  
African Religions |
| **Hinduism** | **View:**  
PowerPoint presentation "Hinduism" (Lecture I and Lecture II) by Dr. Katz.  
**Read:** Fisher - Chapter 3, Hinduism  
**Take Quiz 4:**  
Hinduism |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>May 26-28</th>
<th><strong>Jainism &amp; Buddhism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>View:</strong></td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation &quot;Jainism&quot; by Samani Charitra Prajna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation &quot;Buddhism&quot; by Dr. Heine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
<td>Fisher - Chapter 4, Jainism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fisher - Chapter 5, Buddhism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Take Quiz 5 &amp; 6:</strong></td>
<td>Jainism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3.5</th>
<th>May 29 - June 1</th>
<th><strong>Midterm - Exam 1</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May 23, 12:00 am - May 26, 11:59 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>June 2-5</th>
<th><strong>Taoism/Confucianism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>View:</strong></td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation &quot;Taoism/Confucianism&quot; by Prof. Avila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation &quot;Shinto&quot; by Prof. Avila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
<td>Fisher - Chapters 6, Taoism/Confucianism, and 7, Shinto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Take Quiz 7:</strong></td>
<td>Daoism/Confucianism and Shinto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4.5</th>
<th>June 6-8</th>
<th><strong>Judaism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>View:</strong></td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation &quot;Judaism&quot; (Part I and II) by Dr. Stier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watch video &quot;Mystic Lands: Jerusalem: Mosaic of Faith.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
<td>Fisher - Chapter 8, Judaism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Take Quiz 8:</strong></td>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>June 9-12</th>
<th><strong>Islam</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>View:</strong></td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation &quot;Islam&quot; by Dr. Musa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
<td>Fisher - Chapters 10, Islam, and 11, Sikhism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Take Quiz 9:</strong></td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Week 5.5 | June 13-16 | **Christianity** |
Week 6
June 17-19

View:
- PowerPoint presentation "Christianity: The First Millennia" by Dr. Larson.
- PowerPoint presentation "Christianity: The Second Millennia" by Dr. Gudorf.
- PowerPoint presentation "Religion in North America" by Dr. Northup

Read:
- Fisher - Chapter 9, Christianity

Take Quiz 10 & 11:
- Christianity
- Christianity and North American Religion

Term Paper due June 16, 11:59 pm

Week 6.5
June 20-21

View:
- PowerPoint presentation "Sects and Cults" by Dr. Northup
- PowerPoint presentation "Religion in the Future" by Dr. Gudorf

Read:
- Fisher - Chapter 12, New Religious Movements
- Fisher - Chapter 13, Religion in the 21st Century

Take Quizzes 12 and 13
- Sects and Cults - New Religious Movements
- Religion in the 21st Century

Final - Exam 2
- June 20, 12:00 am - June 21, 11:59 pm