REL 2011: Introduction to Religion  
Florida International University

**Instructor:** Patrick J. Villalonga  
M.A., Adjunct Lecturer  
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**When?** 12:00 PM - 2:15 PM  
**Where?** Glenn Hubert Library 150

Note: This syllabus is tentative. Changes will be made in a timely manner and students will be notified.

**What will we be doing together?**

We will use text readings, in-class participation and multimedia to explore basic concepts in the study of religion and how they relate with the dynamics of society. We will explore concepts such as deity, cosmology and myth, ritual, scripture, ethics and salvation/liberation. The student will analyze religious phenomena as psychological, sociological and anthropological forces in human history. Each concept will be introduced through the textbook, class lectures, videos, Internet sources and discussions. Throughout the course, we will also be exposed to specific rituals, myths, doctrines, ethics and symbols from various different world religions and cultures. This course fulfills the Gordon Rule requirement.

**What you should walk away with by course’s end?**

- You will be able to explain the basic history, development, and belief system of various religious traditions.
- You will be able to recognize religious themes and concepts found in other cultures.
- You will be able to identify the meaning behind religious concepts and symbols.
- You will be able to critically engage the issue of religious diversity in national and international context (Global Engagement).
- You will be able to analyze issues in the field of religions studies from multiple approaches (Global Perspective).
- You will be able to evaluate the interrelationship between your own and others’ religious views as they relate to understanding other cultures and solving common problems (Global Awareness).
Course Materials

Anatomy of the Sacred (6th Edition) by Livingston

Assignments

Midterm Exam 100 Points
Midterm Essay* 100 Points
Field Study 100 Points
Final Exam 100 Points
Final Essay* 100 Points
Total Points 500 Points

Extra Credit #1: Analysis Using a Framework 10 Points
Extra Credit #2: Synthesizing Arguments 10 Points
Extra Credit #3: Rice Experiment 10 Points
Extra Credit #4: Midterm Conference 10 Points
Extra Credit #5: Final Conference 10 Points
Total Extra Credit Points 50 Points

*These essays must incorporate citations from two different sources.

- Assignments must be turned in by the due date. Any makeups must be accompanied by an official excusal.
- There are no curves.

Attendance

I will not take attendance for grading purposes throughout the course of the semester.

Course Schedule

Monday, 8 May 2017

Hour 1: Introduction to REL 2011

Hour 2: Introduction to the Study of Religion
Wednesday, 10 May 2017

Hour 1: Introduction to the Study of Religion, Chapter 1: What is Religion,

Hour 2: Chapter 2: Ways of Studying Religion

Friday, 12 May 2017

DUE: Extra Credit #1: Analysis Using a Framework in Class

Hour 1: Chapter 3: The Sacred and the Holy

Hour 2: Chicago Style, Chapter 4: Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine

Monday, 15 May 2017

Receive Midterm Essay Prompts

Begin getting access to your field study site

Hour 1: Chapter 4: Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine

Hour 2: How to do Field Research

Wednesday, 17 May 2017

Receive Field Study Assignment Sheet

Hour 1: Chapter 5: Sacred Ritual

Hour 2: Chapter 5: Sacred Ritual

Friday, 19 May 2017

Conferences

Monday, 22 May 2017

Due: Midterm Essay in Class
Hour 1: Midterm Exam

Hour 2: Chapter 7: Society and the Sacred

Wednesday, 24 May 2017

Receive Extra Credit #2 Assignment Sheet

Hour 1: Chapter 6: Sacred Scripture

Hour 2: Chapter 6: Sacred Scripture

Friday, 26 May 2017

Hour 1: Chapter 7: The Sacred and Society

Hour 2: Chapter 7: The Sacred and Society

Monday, 29 May 2017

NO SCHOOL

Wednesday, 31 May 2017

Hour 1: Chapter 8: Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality

Hour 2: Chapter 8: Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality

Friday, 2 June 2017

Hour 1: Chapter 9: Cosmogony: Origins of the Natural and Social Order

Hour 2: Chapter 10: Views of the Human Problem

Monday, 5 June 2017

Due: Extra Credit #2: Synthesizing Arguments in Class

Receive Extra Credit #5 Assignment Sheet
Due: Field Study in Class

Hour 1: Chapter 11: Theodicy: Encountering Evil
Hour 2: Chapter 11: Theodicy: Encountering Evil

Wednesday, 7 June 2017
Receive Final Essay Prompts

Hour 1: Chapter 12: Ethics: Foundations of Moral Action
Hour 2: Chapter 13: Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation and Liberation

Friday, 9 June 2017

Hour 1: Chapter 14: Secularization—New Religious Revitalization Movements—Contemporary Religious Fundamentalism
Hour 2: Chapter 14: Secularization—New Religious Revitalization Movements—Contemporary Religious Fundamentalism

Monday, 12 June 2017

Hour 1: Chapter 15: Contemporary Challenges to Traditional Religions: The Status and the Roles of Women—Relations Between Religion and the State
Hour 2: Chapter 15: Contemporary Challenges to Traditional Religions: The Status and the Roles of Women—Relations Between Religion and the State

Wednesday, 14 June 2017

Conferences

Friday, 16 June 2017

Due: Final Essay in Class

Due: Extra Credit #5: Rice Experiment in Class
Hour 1: Final Exam

Hour 2: Rice Experiment Presentations