

REL 2011 RVC - Fully Online
Introduction to Religion
Semester: Fall 2017
Instructor: Erik Larson
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

This online section of Intro to Religion will use a multimedia approach to explore the basic concepts in the study of religion. This format's scope includes the exploration of concepts such as deity, theodicy, cosmology and ritual and others such as religious social implications in society. Students will be introduced to each concept through the textbook, videos, and PowerPoint presentations by members of the Religious Studies faculty, each in their own research specialization. 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 through time-restricted quizzes and long-response exams. Two research papers will develop the student's critical thinking skills and writing abilities. For the site visit essay, students will conduct field research by attending a religious service outside of their own tradition.

*This course fulfills the **Gordon Rule requirement**; you must earn a "C" or better to receive credit for this course.

*This course fulfills the **Global Learning Foundations requirement**. To learn more about Global Learning requirements, please visit:
<https://goglobal.fiu.edu/courses/graduation-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.

GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES TARGETED

- Analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives
- Assess how global issues and trends are interrelated with the development and practice of religions
- Demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world

IMPORTANT INFORMATION POLICIES

Please review the [FIU's Policies](#) webpage. The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette 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](#)" webpage to find out more information on this subject.

Please visit our [Technical Requirements](#) webpage for additional information.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

Please visit our [ADA Compliance](#) webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

Please visit [Blackboard's Commitment Accessibility](#) webpage for more information.

For additional assistance please contact FIU's [Disability Resource Center](#).

COURSE PREREQUISITES

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

PROCTORED EXAM POLICY

This class does not require proctored exams.

TEXTBOOK

Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion
James C. Livingston

Prentice Hall, 6th Edition
013600380X
9780136003809

You may purchase your textbook online at the [FIU Bookstore](#).

EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills, which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **Review the how to get started information** located in the course content
- **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self introduction in the appropriate discussion forum
- **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard
- **Interact** online with instructor/s and peers
- **Review** and follow the course calendar

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place via **Email**

DISCUSSION FORUMS (4 in total - worth 10% of final grade)

REL 2011 - Discussions - Fall 2017									
Discussion 1	Opens	Monday	Sept. 4th	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	Sept. 10th	11:59PM
Discussion 2	Opens	Monday	Sept. 18th	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	Sept. 24th	11:59PM
Discussion 3	Opens	Monday	Oct. 23rd	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	Oct. 29th	11:59PM
Discussion 4	Opens	Monday	Nov. 20th	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	Nov. 26th	11:59PM

There will be four (4) discussions in this course. These discussions are meant to stimulate critical thinking about how religions manifest in our globalized world. The responses in the discussions should be well thought out and written in standard American English (that is to say, use correct spelling and proper punctuation and capitalization). You may use links to news articles or other media sites to strengthen your positions on particular issues.

In addition to posting your own answers to the weekly discussion topics, you should respond to the postings from your fellow classmates and/or the instructor. **Each week that you participate, you should respond to at least two of your classmates' posts. You should have at least three substantial posts in total for each discussion topic.** At the end of the course, your discussion thread will be graded based on the quantity and the quality of what you have written.

In responding to others, it is important to be courteous and respectful. If you disagree with something that has been said, that is fine. But be sure to explain why and where appropriate support your own view with evidence. Also, it is fine to ask questions that are related to our topic to extend the discussion. But please make sure the questions are relevant. Please remember that this is an academic forum.

Discussion topics will be open from Monday to Sunday of each week that a discussion topic is posted. See the course calendar for the weeks that have discussion topics posted.

Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

QUIZZES

A time-restricted, online quiz will be given on each week's religious concept. You can take each quiz twice, and the highest of the two attempts will be recorded. Even if you do well on the first attempt, it is advisable to use both attempts. There is a large database of quiz questions so many of the questions in your second attempt will be new to you since the computer randomly chooses the questions.

For the quizzes, you will have **20 minutes to complete 10 questions**. Each quiz will be open for one week, **from Monday to Sunday until midnight**, and you can take it on any of those days at any time.

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.

Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance please contact FIU Online Support Services.

Note: Quiz resets will not be granted for technical issues. 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.

WRITTEN EXAMS

Your assignments will be automatically checked for plagiarism. See section titled Course Policies to learn more about what plagiarism is and how to properly cite your work.

The essay topics for **Written Exam 1** and **Written Exam 2** will become available in the Assessment area during the exam availability time (check the weekly calendar). All assignments can be submitted via Blackboard in the Assignment Dropbox Folder.

The written exams should each be approximately 500-750 words long.

RESEARCH PAPER 1 - SITE VISIT ESSAY

Your assignment will be automatically checked for plagiarism. See section titled Course Policies to learn more about what plagiarism is and how to properly cite your work.

****Students May Not Submit Work From A Previous Semester Or From Another Class For This Assignment Or Any Other Assignment In This Course.**

Assignment Details and Instructions:

- Format: MLA Format Required
- Content: Field research and supplementary research
- Length: 1800-2000 Words, Not Including Your Works Cited Page
- Double –Spaced, 12-Pt Font, Arial Or Times New Roman Font
- Sources: 3 Academic Sources Minimum
- Works Cited Page required

At the top of your paper, please include the name of the place you visited, the date you visited, and the names of any people you may have interviewed. Also include the particular sect of the religion.

[If you visited a Muslim mosque, was it Sunni or Shi'ite? If you visited a Jewish synagogue, was it Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform? If you visited a Buddhist temple, was it Theravada or a Mahayana sect?] You may want to ask this when you call to find out if your visit is acceptable.

For the Site Visit, the student must perform field research by attending a religious service outside of their own religious tradition. For this assignment, I'd like you to immerse yourself in something unfamiliar (example: Christians should perform field research on a non-Christian religion, like Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.)

Your research should ideally progress in three stages:

(1) Preliminary Research. Before going to the service, it is a good idea to do some preliminary research on the religious tradition. For example, if you're attending a Hindu ceremony, you will want to read the textbook chapter and watch the PowerPoint presentation on Hinduism. Additionally, I strongly recommend that you call the site you'll be visiting and let them know you're coming to do research for a class project. Ask them if there's any dress code requirements, or anything else you should keep in mind. You may also want to ask if they will allow you to take notes during the service. (Some Jewish denominations, for example, do not allow writing on Shabbat {Saturday}.)

(2) Field Research. Attend the service and observe closely. You may want to take notes. Some students have found it helpful to attend services in groups, and you're welcome to do this.

(3) Supplementary research. After your visit, you'll need to do research on things that may have been unfamiliar to you.

If you go to a Jewish service and you see the men wearing kippahs (or yarmulkes), you don't want to write in your essay, "There were these men and they were wearing these funny hats but I don't know why." This is where your additional research comes in. Find out what the hats are called, and find out why they're worn. If you go to a Muslim mosque and you see the worshippers washing their hands and feet, you don't want to write in your essay, "Everyone was washing their hands and feet but I don't know why they did that and it was pretty weird."

Research the practice and find out why it's done.

Finally, after completing these three stages, write a detailed and insightful essay. You should demonstrate a general understanding of the religious tradition, but make most of your essay about your visit.

Use your research to explain your experience. What did you see around you? What did the place of worship look like? Did you see any religious art or religious symbols there? How were people dressed? What rituals were performed? Finally, include your personal reaction to the service. How did you respond? Did you enjoy the visit or did you feel uncomfortable? Was your opinion on the religion changed at all?

RESEARCH PAPER 2- APPIAH ANALYSIS ESSAY

This assignment requires two parts:

1. Discussion (20 POINTS of your assignment grade) and
2. Essay (80 POINTS of your assignment grade)

Assignment instructions:

PART 1 – Discussion Board Portion (20 points)

Read the article "The Case for Contamination" by Kwame Anthony Appiah and post your initial response to the following questions to the Discussion Board: "What roles do religions play in Appiah's analysis? How is your approach similar to or different from his?"

Once you have posted your answer, respond to at least three of your fellow students' posts and explain how you agree/disagree with them. You will need a total of 4 posts: 1 original thread + 3 comments to receive full credit for this part.

Each response should be at least 100 words and should demonstrate knowledge of the article as well as class readings and PowerPoints.

*The discussion posts are due no later than one week prior to the essay deadline. Check Course Calendar in Syllabus for exact due dates.

RESEARCH PAPER 2- APPIAH ANALYSIS ESSAY (continued)

PART 2 - Essay (80 points)

After reading your classmates' responses and considering your initial response, write a more detailed answer to the question in an essay format. Your essay should be at least ~~1800-2000~~ **1000 words** and your argument should be supported with information from the class readings and PowerPoints.

Submit your essay to Assignment Dropbox inside Blackboard.

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.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Papers

Late papers will not be accepted. Students are responsible for reading their blackboard messages and all announcements posted by the instructor. The instructor also reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus by means of announcements or messages with ample time allowed for students to respond and adjust appropriately.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another's work as your own, falls into three different categories:

- a. A written work that is entirely stolen from another source;
- b. Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
- c. 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" for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly the course.

**Students may not submit work from a previous semester or from another class for this assignment or any other assignment in this course. It will be flagged for plagiarism by Turnitin.

Extra Credit

No Extra Credit work will be accepted in this course.

Quiz resets

Quiz resets will not be granted for technical issues. 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.

GRADING

Course Requirements	Points	% of Final Grade
<u>Research Paper 1 – Site Visit</u>	100	20%
<u>Research Paper 2</u> Part 1- Discussion Portion Part 2- Appiah Analysis	20 80	20%
13 Multiple Choice Quizzes *Average will be calculated	100	10%
Participation in Discussion Topics (4 in total)	100	10%
Written Exam 1	100	20%
Written Exam 2	100	20%

Total	100%
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GRADING SCALE

Note: you will need a “C” or higher to receive credit for this course.

Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)
A	93 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 92	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less

Dates	Course Content Calendar
<p>Week 1 - Monday, August 21 - Sunday, August 27</p>	<p>Review and fully familiarize yourself with the course and site. Print and read the course syllabus and course calendar.</p> <p>Section I - The Study of Religion Topic: Defining Religion. Why Are Humans Religious? Why Study Religion? Read: Chapter 1 p. 1-14</p> <p>View Presentations: Dr. Northup - What Is Religion? How Is It Studied? Topic: The Perspective of the Student–Commitment and Objectivity. The Ways Religion Is Studied. Interpreting and Explaining Religion. Read: Chapter 2 p. 15-34</p> <p>DUE: Introduce Yourself in the Discussion Forum DUE: Take Quizzes 1 & 2</p>
<p>Week 2 - Monday, August 28 - Sunday, September 3</p>	<p>Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression</p> <p>View Presentation: Dr. Huchingson -The Sacred and the Holy.</p> <p>Topic: The Concept of Sacred Power. The Ambivalence of Sacred Power. The Holy as Mysterium Tremendum and Fascinans. Sacred Space and Sacred Time. Religion as Ultimate Concern.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 3 p. 35-52</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 3: The Sacred and the Holy</p>
<p>Week 3 - Monday, September 4 - Sunday, September 10</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Northup - Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine.</p> <p>Topic: Symbolic Communication. Religious Symbols. Metaphor, Parable, and Story. Religious Myths. Models and Doctrines.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 4 p. 53-73</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 4: Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum 1</p>

Dates	Course Content Calendar
<p>Week 4 - Monday, September 11 - Sunday, September 17</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Northup - Sacred Ritual.</p> <p>Topic: Ritual Action. Types of Sacred Ritual. Ritual and Sacrifice. Rituals as Sacraments.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 5 p. 74-95</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 5: Sacred Ritual</p>
<p>Week 5 - Monday, September 18 - Sunday, September 24</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Larson - Sacred Scripture.</p> <p>Topic: The Pervasive Role of Sacred Scripture. Using the Term Scripture. Some Distinctive Features of Sacred Scripture. The Authority and Canonicity of Scripture. The Reception and Uses of Scripture. The Interpretation of Scripture.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 6 p. 96-123</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 6: Sacred Scripture DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum 2</p>
<p>Week 6 - Monday, September 25 - Sunday, October 1</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Wuaku - Society and the Sacred: The Social Formations and Transformations of Religion.</p> <p>Topic: The Reciprocal Relationship between Religion and Society. Types of Religious Communities. Voluntary Religious Communities. Protest and Change in Voluntary Religious Communities. The Sect. The Cult: New Religious Movements.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 7 p. 124-150</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 7: Society and the Sacred</p> <p>*Have you visited a religious site yet? Your Site Visit Essay is due soon!</p>
<p>Week 7 - Monday, October 2 - Sunday, October 8</p>	<p>Take Written Exam 1 Covers materials from first half of the course Monday, October 2, 12:00am- Sunday, October 8, 11:45pm</p> <p>*Have you visited a religious site yet? Your Site Visit Essay is due soon!</p>

Dates	Course Content Calendar
<p>Week 8 - Monday, October 9 - Sunday, October 15</p>	<p>Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p>View Presentation: Dr. Huchingson- Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality.</p> <p>Topic: Polytheism and the Worship of Nature. Dualism. Pantheism and Monism. Monotheism.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 8 p. 151-182</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 8: Deity</p> <p>DUE: Research Paper 1- Site Visit due via Turnitin in Assignment Dropbox – Saturday, October 14th 11:45pm</p>
<p>Week 9 - Monday, October 16 - Sunday, October 22</p>	<p>View Presentation: Rabbi Shulkes - Cosmogony: Origins of the Natural and Social Order.</p> <p>Topic: The Practical Basis of Cosmogony. Emergence or Procreation from a Primal Substance or Being. The Sexual Union of a Primal Male and Female. Creation by Conflict and the Ordering of Chaos. Creation by a Divine Craftsman. Creation by Decree or from Nothing. The Rejection of Cosmogonic Speculation. Cosmogony Today.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 9 p. 183-210</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 9: Cosmogony</p>

Dates	Course Content Calendar
<p>Week 10 - Monday, October 23 - Sunday, October 29</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Wuaku - Anthropology: The Human Problem.</p> <p>Topic: Modern Views of Our Human Plight. Stoicism. Christianity. Theravada Buddhism. Confucianism.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 10 p. 211-234</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 10: The Human Problem</p> <p>DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum 3</p>
<p>Week 11 - Monday, October 30 - Sunday, November 5</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Gudorf - Theodicy: Encountering Evil.</p> <p>Topic: The Persistent Demand for Theodicy. Theodicy of "Mystical Participation." A Future, This-Worldly Theodicy. Other-Worldly Theodicy. Dualism. The Karma-Samsara Theodicy. Monotheistic Theodicies.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 11 p. 235-258</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 11: Theodicy</p>
<p>Week 12 - Monday, November 6 - Sunday, November 12</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Gudorf - Ethics: Patterns of Moral Action.</p> <p>Topic: Virtues and Obligations. The Sources and Norms of Moral Authority.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 12 p. 259-286</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 12: Ethics</p> <p>DUE: This is the last week to do Part 1 of Research Paper 2- Appiah Analysis (see Assignment Details) – Due Saturday, November 11, 11:45pm</p>

Dates	Course Content Calendar
<p>Week 13 - Monday, November 13 - Sunday, November 19</p>	<p>View Presentation: Dr. Huchingson - Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation and Liberation.</p> <p>Topic: Ways of Salvation and Liberation. The Way of Grace through Faith. The Way of Devotion. The Way of Action and Obligation. The Way of Mediation and Insight. Goals of Salvation and Liberation. Psychic Wholeness and a Healthy Social Order. Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life. Samadhi and Nirvana.</p> <p>Read: Chapter 13 p. 287-338</p> <p>DUE: Research Paper 2- Appiah Analysis Essay — due on Saturday, November 18, 11:45pm via Turnitin in Assignment Dropbox</p>
<p>Week 14 - Monday, November 20 - Sunday, November 26</p>	<p>Section IV. The Sacred and the Secular in Modernity View Presentation: Dr. Bidegain - The Sacred and the Secular in Modernity.</p> <p>Topic: Secularization and Pluralism. The Reactions of Religious Fundamentalisms Today. The Characteristics of Contemporary Religious Fundamentalism. The Status and Roles of Women in Religion. Relations between Religion and State.</p> <p>Read: Chapters 14-15 p. 339-398</p> <p>DUE: Take Quiz 13: Soteriology and Fundamentalism DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum 4</p> <p>Due: Take Global Learning Quiz (This is for University Assessment Purposes)</p>
<p>Week 15 - Monday, November 27 - Saturday, December 2</p>	<p>You must take the Global Learning Quiz prior to attempting Written Exam 2.</p> <p>Take Written Exam 2 - will only be available Monday- Saturday</p> <p>Covers materials from second half of the course Monday, November 27, 12:00AM– Saturday, December 2</p>

SUMMARY OF DUE DATES

Item	Title	Availability Opens				Availability Closes			
Quiz 1	Ways of Studying Religion	Monday	August 21	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	September 3	11:59 PM
Quiz 2	Ways of Studying Religion	Monday	August 21	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	September 3	11:59 PM
Quiz 3	The Sacred and the Holy	Monday	August 28	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	September 3	11:59 PM
Quiz 4	Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine	Monday	September 4	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	September 10	11:59 PM
Quiz 5	Sacred Ritual	Monday	September 11	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	September 17	11:59 PM
Quiz 6	Sacred Scripture	Monday	September 18	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	September 24	11:59 PM
Quiz 7	Society and the Sacred	Monday	September 25	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	October 1	11:59 PM
Essay	Written Exam 1	Monday	October 2	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	October 8	11:59 PM
Quiz 8	Deity	Monday	October 9	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	October 15	11:59 PM
Quiz 9	Cosmogony	Monday	October 16	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	October 22	11:59 PM
Quiz 10	The Human Problem	Monday	October 23	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	October 29	11:59 PM
Quiz 11	Theodicy	Monday	October 30	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	November 5	11:59 PM

Item	Title	Availability Opens				Availability Closes			
Quiz 12	Ethics	Monday	November 6	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	November 12	11:59 PM
Quiz 13	Soteriology and Fundamentalism	Monday	November 20	12:00AM	-	Closes	Sunday	November 26	11:59 PM
For University Assessment Purposes	Global Learning Quiz	Monday	November 20	12:00AM	-	Closes	Saturday	December 2	11:59 PM
Essay	Written Exam 2	Monday	November 27	12:00AM	-	Closes	Saturday	December 2	11:59 PM

Assignment		Due Date
Site Visit Essay	Due	Saturday, October 14th 11:45pm
Part 1 of Appiah Paper - Discussion (20 points of total assignment)	Due	Saturday, November 11, 11:45pm
Part 2 of Appiah Paper (80 points of total assignment)	Due	Saturday, November 18, 11:45pm
Written Exam 1	Due	Monday, October 2, 12:00am- Sunday, October 8, 11:45pm
Written Exam 2	Due	Monday, November 27, 12:00AM– Saturday, December 2