REL 3027 - U01 (85218) Meditation and Mystical Traditions
Fall 2018
Days and Times: M, W, F, 11:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.
Room: SIPA 220
Instructor: Adam D. Gorelick
Office Hours: M, W 12-1pm @ DM 301B or by appointment
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PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change. Students should e-mail the instructor with any questions about the assignments and schedule.

Course Description
This course introduces the history, philosophy, and cultural impact of the role of meditation in various mystical traditions, including movements such as Kabbalah, Neo-Platonism, Sufism, Yoga, Tantra, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism.

Course Outcomes
Students will be able to...
- Apply critical thinking skills to various topics in the field of religious studies.
- Explore the origins, nature, functions, and definitions of religion, mediation, and mysticism.
- Differentiate various types of religious experiences.
- Lead a graduate-level seminar session.
- Review and report on the latest research regarding health benefits of mediation.
- Trace historical connections among meditation, mysticism, and martial arts.
- Place aspects of meditation and mysticism within the context of the history of philosophy.
- Bracket out personal bias and attempt to understand the point of view of religious adherents.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems—as pertaining to the development and practice of religions.
- Analyze topics in religious studies through multi-perspective analyses of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.
- Demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world and to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.
- Conduct field research to better understand a religious ritual and community.
- Identify, analyze, and explain contemporary applications of meditation and mysticism to other cultural phenomena such as art, literature, music, medicine, business, education, etc.

Text

ISBN-10: 0195088190

Additional reading selections will be assigned through Canvas.
Guidelines for Written Work
All written work must consistently adhere to one accepted academic style guide such as MLA, APA, or Chicago. Students are advised to carefully proofread all papers before submitting them. All students are encouraged to take advantage of the University resources for writing to be found in the Center for Excellence in Writing, a full-service writing center providing writing assistance and feedback to university students. For more information, go to http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/.

All written work is submitted through Canvas as turn-it-in assignments. Plagiarism can result in expulsion from the university and will have a negative effect on your entire college career. All written work must include your name, Panther ID number, course number and the name of the professor on the title page. It must be double spaced, have 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left and right) and be typed in 12 point font, Times New Roman or Calibri.

Religious Holidays
Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.

Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges
Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), if you have not done so already.” Please note that if you have a student who is registered with the DRC, you will receive notification about the student’s disability and a detailed description of accommodations the student will require.

Academic Conduct
Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Note: Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and written assignments are to be submitted to turnitin.com.

Grading Scale
94 - 100 A
90 - 93 A-
87 - 89 B+
84 - 86 B
80 - 83 B –
77 - 79 C+
Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation – Instructor will record attendance. Participation includes class discussions, assignments, exercises, and group work. **15% of final grade**

Reflection Papers – Students will submit a 1-to-2-page reflection for each chapter of the textbook. The book has a total of 9 chapters. Papers should demonstrate overall familiarity with the material as well as personal reflection upon one or a few key points. **30% of final grade**

Music Appreciation Exercise – Students will select and share a piece of music relevant to meditation and/or mysticism. They will also provide a brief presentation (maximum 15 minutes with music) about the music’s historical, musicological, meditative, and/or mystical associations. See Canvas for more details. **15% of final grade**

Seminar Presentation – Students will perform a close reading of a primary text relating to a meditation and/or mystical tradition. They will research scholarship about the text and practice, present their findings to the class (15 minutes maximum), and submit a digital copy of their presentation materials to the instructor. See Canvas for more details. **40% of final grade**

Calendar

Week 1 (8/20 to 8/26)
*Introduction, Syllabus, Discussion*

Week 2 (8/27 to 9/2)
*Definitions of Terms and Scope of the Course*
Reading: Carmody ch. 1
Assignment: Chapter 1 Reflection due Friday 8/31, 11:59 p.m.

Week 3 (9/3 to 9/9) **No Class on Labor Day, Monday, 9/3**
*Hinduism*
Reading: Carmody ch. 2

Week 4 (9/10 to 9/16) **No Class on Rosh Hashanah, Monday, 9/10**
*Hinduism (continued)*
Reading: See Canvas
Assignment: Chapter 2 Reflection due Monday 9/10, 11:59 p.m.
Assignment: Music Appreciation Exercises Friday, 9/14
Week 5 (9/17 to 9/23) No Class on Yom Kipper, Wednesday, 9/19

Buddhism
Reading: Carmody ch. 3
Assignment: Chapter 3 Reflection due Monday 9/17, 11:59 p.m.
Assignment: Music Appreciation Exercises Friday, 9/21

Week 6 (9/24 to 9/30)

Buddhism (continued)
Reading: See Canvas
Assignment: Music Appreciation Exercises Friday, 9/28

Week 7 (10/1 to 10/7)

Chinese and Japanese Traditions
Reading: Carmody ch. 4
Assignment: Chapter 4 Reflection due Monday 10/1, 11:59 p.m.
Assignment: Music Appreciation Exercises Friday, 10/5

Week 8 (10/8 to 10/14)

Contemporary Applications: Martial Arts, Athletics, Performing Arts
Reading: See Canvas
Assignment: Music Appreciation Exercises Friday, 10/12

Week 9 (10/15 to 10/21)

Jewish Traditions
Reading: Carmody ch. 5
Assignment: Chapter 5 Reflection due Monday 10/22, 11:59 p.m.
Assignment: Music Appreciation Exercises Friday, 10/19

Week 10 (10/22 to 10/28)

Contemporary Applications: Science, Medicine, Psychology, Business, Education
Reading: See Canvas

Week 11 (10/29 to 11/4)

Christian Traditions
Reading: Carmody ch. 6
Assignment: Chapter 6 Reflection due Monday 10/29, 11:59 p.m.

Week 12 (11/5 to 11/11)
**Muslim Traditions**  
Reading: Carmody ch. 7  
Assignment: Chapter 7 Reflection due Monday 11/5, 11:59 p.m.

**Week 13 (11/12 to 11/18)**  
No Class on Veterans Day, Monday, 11/12  
*Mysticism among Oral Peoples*  
Reading: Carmody ch. 8  
Assignment: Chapter 8 Reflection due Monday 11/12, 11:59 p.m.  
Assignment: Seminar Presentations

**Week 14 (11/19 to 11/25)**  
No Class on Turkey Sandwich Day, Friday, 11/23  
*Mysticism among Oral Peoples (continued)*  
Reading: See Canvas  
Assignment: Seminar Presentations

**Week 15 (11/26 to 12/2)**  
*Conclusion*  
Reading: Carmody ch. 9  
Assignment: Chapter 9 Reflection due Monday 11/26, 11:59 p.m.  
Assignment: Seminar Presentations

**Week 16 (12/3 to 12/8)**  
Finals Week – No regular class meetings, no exam, but we will meet during exam period.  
Assignment: Seminar Presentations during Final Exam Period: Wednesday, 12/5, 9:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., at SIPA 220