REL 4030 - Methods in the Study of Religion - RVC - Fall 2020

Professor Information

Instructor: Dr. Erik Larson
E-Mail: larsone@fiu.edu
Office: DM 303
Phone: (305) 348-3518
Office Hours: By Appointment
Website: http://religion.fiu.edu/faculty/full-time-faculty/erik-larson/

Course Description and Purpose

This online section of Methods in the Study of Religion will introduce you to some of the major ways that religious traditions and practices may be studied. You will be introduced to each methodology through the assigned readings of the scholars studied and PowerPoint presentations by members of the Religious Studies faculty.

You will be tested on your knowledge of the course material through:

- 12 Time-restricted Quizzes
- A Midterm Exam (objective)
- A Final Exam (objective)
- Paper 1 – Critique Paper
- Paper 2 - Research Paper*  

*The research paper will develop your ability to evaluate and apply a methodology of your choosing.
Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the major approaches to the study of religion.
- Be familiar with selections from the writings of the scholars studied.
- Have sufficient knowledge to write research papers critically evaluating the methodologies examined.
- Be able to compare and/or contrast approaches.
- Recognize the importance of methodology in the study of religion.
- Be prepared to apply the relevant approaches in your own studies.

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. For additional information, please visit FIU's Policy and Procedure Library.

As a member of the FIU community you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code.

Technical Requirements and 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.

Privacy Policy Statements for Partners and Vendors

- Canvas
- Microsoft
- Adobe
- Google
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- ProctorU
- HonorLock (PDF)
- Turnitin
- OpenStax
- Zoom
- Respondus LockDown Browser

Please visit our Technical Requirements webpage for additional information.
Accessibility and Accommodation

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190.

For additional assistance please contact FIU’s Disability Resource Center.

Web Accessibility Statements for Partners and Vendors

- Canvas
- Microsoft
- Adobe
- Google
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- ProctorU
- HonorLock
- Turnitin
- OpenStax
- Zoom
- Respondus LockDown Browser

Please visit our ADA Compliance webpage for additional information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.
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 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 Conduct and Honor Code. Academic Misconduct includes:

Cheating

- The unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids or assistance from another person on any academic assignment or exercise, unless explicitly authorized by the course Instructor;
- Assisting another Student in the unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids, unless explicitly authorized by the Instructor; and
- Having a substitute complete any academic assignment or completing an academic assignment for someone else, either paid or unpaid; and

Plagiarism

- The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the Student's own.
- Assisting another Student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.

Learn more about the academic integrity policies and procedures as well as student resources that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate's well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU's Panthers Care website.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don't wait to call (305) 348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.

Inclusivity Statement

This course will serve to embrace the diversity and inclusivity found within Florida International University. We appreciate and respect diversity, equality, equity, cooperativeness, community, and sustainability within our online courses. We are committed to the ongoing education of our students and their participation within the course regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, geographical location, religion, and disability. We strive in encouraging collaboration by preparing our students to value the differences in others. At the core of our intentions is the encouragement of acceptance and appreciation of differences within our student population and community.
Textbook and Course Materials

No textbook required

There are no textbooks for this course. All weekly readings will be available in online format. It is your responsibility to view and read these in time to take the quizzes. If you have any trouble viewing the material, contact the professor on Monday or Tuesday of the week.

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.

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 Canvas;
- interact online with instructor and peers;
- review and follow the course calendar;

Course Detail

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the Canvas Conversations Tutorial or Canvas Guide to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

Discussion Forums

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

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.

All assessments will auto-submit when (1) the timer runs out OR (2) the closing date/time is reached, whichever happens first. For example, if a quiz has a closing time of 5:00 pm but the student begins the exam at 4:55 pm, the student will only have 5 minutes to complete the quiz.

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 Canvas Help Team.

Quizzes (20% of Total Grade)

A time-restricted, online quiz will be given on each week's religious concept. You can take each quiz twice, 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 the second time; the computer randomly chooses the questions from a quiz database. You will have 15 minutes to complete 10 questions.

Quizzes will be available within the modules in which they are due.

Exams (30% Each of Total Grade)

Exam 1 and Exam 2 will each consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and matching questions. These two exams will be time-restricted and will be based on weekly lectures and readings.

Note: Exam 2 is not cumulative—it covers only material from the second half of the semester.

Paper 1 – Critique Paper (20% of Total Grade)

For the first essay, please follow the directions below:

- Choose one of the methodologies that you have covered in the first half of this course.
- Using the research databases available to you via library.fiu.edu, find a critique of the methodology that you have selected.
- After giving the article a thorough reading, compose an essay (4-5 pages) arguing in favor or against the critique. Is the author's critique valid? Why or why not?

Please make sure you include the article you selected in a works cited page at the end of your essay.

Formatting Guidelines

- 12 pt font, double-spaced, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margins- 1 inch on all sides
- Length – 9-12 pages excluding bibliography
- Writing Style - MLA or the Chicago Manual of Style
- You may use either footnotes or endnotes.

Paper 2- RESEARCH PAPER (30% of Total Grade)

You will write a research paper using two of the approaches covered in the course that particularly interests you. The paper will identify a topic in the field of religious studies and then discuss how you could use the methodologies to study the relevant issues.
Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of each method.

The paper topic must receive the approval of the professor before it is submitted.

**Formatting Guidelines**

- 12 pt font, double-spaced, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margins- 1 inch on all sides
- Length – 9-12 pages excluding bibliography
- Writing Style - *MLA* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*
- You may use either footnotes or endnotes.

Papers will be submitted via Turnitin in Canvas. Please review the [important information about assignments](#) page for detailed instructions on how to submit your assignment and review grade mark comments.

**Plagiarism**

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

- A written work that is entirely stolen from another source;
- Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
- Paraphrasing from another source without proper citations.

Students are expected to understand the definition of plagiarism. See the [Academic Misconduct Statement](#) 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.**

**Grading**

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<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Quizzes</td>
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<td>Exam 1 (Objective)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Exam 2 (Objective)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 1 - Critique Paper</td>
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<td>Paper 2 - Research Paper</td>
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<td>Weekly Dates</td>
<td>Course Content and Assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1 -</strong></td>
<td><strong>PowerPoint:</strong> <em>History of Religions: Troeltsch and James</em> by Professor Larson</td>
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<td>Monday, August 24 -</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
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<td>Sunday, August 30</td>
<td>- Ernst Troeltsch, “Historical and Dogmatic Method in Theology”</td>
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<td>- Ernst Troeltsch, “The Place of Christianity among the World-Religions”</td>
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<td><em>Christian Thought: Its History and Application</em></td>
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<td>- William James, Excerpt from <em>The Varieties of Religious Experience</em> in Charles Taliaferro</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and Paul Griffiths <em>Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- William James, Postscript to <em>The Varieties of Religious Experience</em>.</td>
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<td><strong>Take Quiz 1</strong> - Available Monday-Sunday of this week (will remain open until end of 2nd week</td>
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<td>to accommodate late registration)</td>
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<td><strong>Week 2 -</strong></td>
<td><strong>PowerPoint:</strong> <em>Reductionist: Marx and Freud</em> by Professors Gudorf and Stier</td>
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<td>Monday, August 31 -</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Take Quiz 2</strong> - Available Monday-Sunday of this week</td>
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<td><strong>Week 3 -</strong></td>
<td><strong>PowerPoint:</strong> <em>Myth and Ritual: Jung, Otto, and Eliade</em> by Professor Northup</td>
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<td>Monday, September 7 -</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
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<td>- Eliade: <em>The Sacred and the Profane</em>, Introduction</td>
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<td>- <em>Images and Symbols</em>: Introduction</td>
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<td>- <em>Myth and Reality</em>, Excerpt</td>
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<td>- Jung Foundation article: “Myth and Psyche”</td>
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<td><strong>Take Quiz 3</strong> - Available Monday-Sunday of this week</td>
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| **Week 4 -**<br>Monday, September 14 - Sunday, September 20 | **PowerPoint:**<br>*Sociological: Durkheim and Weber* by Professor Wuaku

**Read:**
- “Society as Sacred : Emily Durkheim” and “A Source of Social Action : Max Weber” from *Eight Theories of Religion* 1-40

**Take Quiz 4** - Available Monday - Sunday of this week |
| **Week 5 -**<br>Monday, September 21 - Sunday, September 27 | **PowerPoint:**<br>*Anthropological: Geertz and Turner* by Professor Seidel

**Read:**

**Take Quiz 5** - Available Monday - Sunday of this week |
| **Week 6 -**<br>Monday, September 28 - Sunday, October 4 | **PowerPoint:**<br>*Anthropological/Sociological: Douglas and Berger* by Professors Stier and Alvarez

**Read:**
- *Purity and Danger* - Mary Douglas

**Take Quiz 6** - Available Monday - Sunday of this week |
| **Week 7 -**<br>Monday, October 5 - Sunday, October 11 | **Take Exam 1 - Midterm (objective)**<br>Available from Monday, October 5th, 12:00 am - Sunday, October 11th, 11:59 pm

**Paper 1 - Critique Paper - DUE October 11th** |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Weekly Dates</th>
<th>Course Content and Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 8 -</strong></td>
<td><strong>PowerPoint:</strong> Perennialist/Non-Perennialist: Huxley, Nasr and S. Katz by Professor Katz</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, October 12</strong></td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>- Sunday, October 18</strong></td>
<td>- Aldous Huxley, Introduction to the Bhagavad Gita</td>
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<td>- Steven Katz, “Language and Mysticism”</td>
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<td>- Aseem Shukla, “Exclusivists vs. Pluralists: very different paths to one Truth”</td>
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<td><strong>Take Quiz 7</strong> - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</td>
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<td><strong>Week 9 -</strong></td>
<td><strong>PowerPoint:</strong> Structuralist/Post-Structuralist: Levi-Strauss by Professor Alvarez</td>
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<td><strong>Monday, October 19</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Take Quiz 8</strong> - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</td>
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<td><strong>Week 10 -</strong></td>
<td><strong>PowerPoint:</strong> Structuralist/Post-Structuralist: Foucault by Professor Alvarez</td>
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<td><strong>Monday, October 26</strong></td>
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<td>- Michel Foucault, &quot;Two lectures,&quot; from <em>Power/Knowledge</em>, 78-108.</td>
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<td><strong>Take Quiz 9</strong> - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</td>
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<td><strong>Week 11 -</strong></td>
<td><strong>PowerPoint:</strong> Feminist: Ruether and Mahmoud by Professor Gudorf</td>
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<td><strong>Monday, November 3</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Take Quiz 10</strong> - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</td>
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<td>Weekly Dates</td>
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| **Week 12** - Monday, November 9 - Sunday, November 15 | **PowerPoint:**  
*Liberation: Gutierrez, Boff and Phan* by Professor Bidegain  

**Read:**  
- Peter Phan, “Method in Liberation Theologies” *Theological Studies*, March 1, 2000  

**Take Quiz 11** - Available Monday - Sunday of this week |

| **Week 13** - Monday, November 16 - Sunday, November 22 | **PowerPoint:**  
*Ecological: Gottlieb* by Professor Bauman  

**Read:**  

**Take Quiz 12** - Available Monday - Sunday of this week |

| **Week 14** - Monday, November 23 - Sunday, November 29 | Start writing your Paper 2- Research Paper (due next week)  
Happy Thanksgiving! |

| **Week 15** - Monday, November 30 - Saturday, December 5 | **Research Paper due Saturday, December 5th, 11:59pm**  
**Take Exam 2 (objective)**  
Available Monday, November 30th 12:00pm to Saturday, December 5th 11:59pm |
## Modules

### Week 1
- **Week 1 Outline**
- **Introduce Yourself**
- **Quiz 1 - James and Troeltsch**
  - Aug 30 | 100 pts

### Week 2
- **Week 2 Outline**
- **Quiz 2 - Freud and Marx**
  - Sep 06 | 100 pts
  - Will unlock Aug 31, 2020 at 12:00 am

### Week 3
- **Week 3 Outline**
- **Quiz 3 - Eliade, Otto, and Jung**
  - Sep 13 | 100 pts
  - Will unlock Sep 07, 2020 at 12:00 am

### Week 4
- **Week 4 Outline**
- **Quiz 4 - Durkheim and Weber**
  - Sep 20 | 100 pts
  - Will unlock Sep 14, 2020 at 12:00 am

### Week 5
- **Week 5 Outline**
- **Quiz 5 - Geertz and Turner**
  - Sep 27 | 100 pts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Outline</th>
<th>Quiz</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Quiz 6 - Douglas, Frazer, and Robertson Smith</td>
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<td>Quiz 7 - Perennialists and Exclusivists</td>
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<td>Quiz 8 - Levi-Strauss</td>
<td>Paper 1 - Critique</td>
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<td>Quiz 9 - Foucault</td>
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- Week 6 Outline is due Oct 04, 2020 | 100 pts
- Quiz 6 - Douglas, Frazer, and Robertson Smith will unlock Sep 28, 2020 at 12:00 am
- Week 7 Outline is due Oct 11, 2020 | 100 pts
- Exam 1 will unlock Oct 05, 2020 at 12:00 am
- Week 8 Outline is due Oct 12, 2020 | 100 pts
- Quiz 7 - Perennialists and Exclusivists will unlock Oct 12, 2020 at 12:00 am
- Week 9 Outline is due Oct 19, 2020 | 100 pts
- Quiz 8 - Levi-Strauss will unlock Oct 19, 2020 at 12:00 am
- Paper 1 - Critique will unlock Oct 26, 2020 at 12:00 am
- Week 10 Outline is due Oct 26, 2020 | 100 pts
- Quiz 9 - Foucault will unlock Nov 01, 2020 at 12:00 am
- Week 11 Outline is due Nov 01, 2020 | 100 pts
- Paper 2 - Critique will unlock Dec 05, 2020 at 12:00 am