

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
Department of Religious Studies  
REL 2011 Intro to Religion  
Spring 2017

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Instructor: John Grullon  
Office Hours: TBA (and by appointment)  
DM 301B

Class Hours: T/R 9:30-10:45 am  
Class Room: SIPA 100  
E-Mail Address: [jgrul009@fiu.edu](mailto:jgrul009@fiu.edu)

### COUSE DESCRIPTION

This section of **Introduction to Religion (or Religion Analysis and Interpretation)** will use text-readings, in-class participation, and multimedia to explore the basic concepts of 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. The student will be introduced to each concept through the textbook, class lectures, internet sources, and videos. Throughout the course the student will be exposed to specific rituals, myths, doctrines, ethics and symbols from various different world religions and cultures. Students will be tested on this material in a midterm and final exam. Two essays will develop the student's critical thinking and writing abilities. For the first essay, the student will conduct field research by attending a religious service outside of his or her own tradition. For the second essay, the student will read and review an article on religion and globalization. This course fulfills the Gordon rule 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.

### TEXTBOOK (required)

James C. Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred* (6<sup>th</sup> edition).

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-600380-9

ISBN-10: 0-13-600380-X

### RECOMMENDED READING

Philip J. Sampson, *6 Modern Myths about Christianity and Western Civilization*.

### EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE

This class meets twice a week: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:45 am. Students are expected to arrive promptly and stay for the full duration of the class. Students should be prepared to participate in class by reading the assignments and by developing discussion or presentation material, as requested. Students are responsible for carefully reading the syllabus and calendar, meeting deadlines as posted, and submitting mature and thoughtful work. Given that some of the material may be new, personal, and or controversial, please engage in a respectful and thoughtful manner with others.

### COURSE DETAIL

#### COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place primarily through Blackboard messenger. You may contact the instructor either through Blackboard and or email (I will likely respond quicker to emails). Appointments can be made upon request. Please contact the instructor immediately if a serious situation arises which will impact student performance. You can inform me after class if you arrived late, but I will only answer questions about grades, makeups and writing assignments in person, face-to-face during office hours.

#### GORDON RULE REQUIREMENT

As this is a Gordon rule course, students will be required to write a minimum of two major assignments, with the first essay submitted in both a first and second draft. Essay 1 (Site Visit) will be submitted as a draft for 10% of the final grade. Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis) will be

submitted in a final version for 10% of the final grade. Each paper will be **1000 to 1200 words** and will be submitted through Turnitin (in Blackboard). All source material must be cited correctly using MLA or Chicago style and long quotes should be avoided. Please be aware that papers with an originality report of 35% similarity will be subjected to additional scrutiny and may incur additional penalties, up to and including even receiving an F (0 points).

This is a Gordon Rule course which means you must demonstrate “college level writing skills” throughout your assignments. You will not receive any credit as a Gordon rule course for a D or lower upon completion of this course. Your written assignments must show good control over grammar, style, and structure. A clear thesis, supporting material, and conclusion must be evident. **I encourage you to visit the writing lab to improve writing if needed.**

### GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a Global Learning course, students will be expected to meet the following objectives through text readings, assignments, and class discussions:

1. Students will be able to analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives.
2. Students will be able to assess how global issues and trends are interrelated with the development and practice of religions
3. Students will be able to demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world.

### DISCUSSION AND PRIVACY

Keep in mind that in-class and online discussions are public. Be cautious with your words and your sources. Respect others’ privacy and do not share class conversations with others outside of class. Recognize that fellow students may not wish to give personal opinions about some topics.

## MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS

The Midterm Exam (Exam #1) and Final Exam (Exam #2) are time restricted online examinations. Each exam has 50 multiple choice and true false questions based on the text readings. **Each exam** is worth 100 points and **20%** of the final grade.

**No make-up final exams will be allowed unless previously scheduled in advance.**

## ESSAYS

Essays will be turned into Turnitin.com via Assignments in Blackboard. It is not necessary to create a separate Turnitin account. 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.

**Essay 1 (Site Visit)** - The student will do field research by attending a religious service or ceremony outside of his/her own religious tradition. Essay 1 (Site Visit) will be handed in twice via Turnitin: First as a draft worth 10% of the final grade, and later as a revised final paper worth 20% of the final grade. The Site Visit should be 1000-1200 (3 to 4 pages double-spaced) words and cited correctly. For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard. **The rough draft is due Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>. The final version is due March 10<sup>th</sup>.**

**Essay 2 (Appiah Article)** - The student will analyze the article 'The Case for Contamination' by Kwame Anthony Appiah. The Appiah Analysis is worth 20% of the final grade. The Appiah analysis should be 1000-1200 (3 to 4 pages double-spaced) words and cited correctly. For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard. The essay is **due Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>.**

## GROUP PRESENTATION

Students will give one group presentation (5 minutes per person in the group) on a topic related to course readings. Guidelines will be given in class for the presentation on some portion of the course text. Additional information might include a demonstration, an explanation of a term/idea, a brief travel description/slide show, or a book review. Be creative and informative! The presentation will be worth 10% of the final grade. Students are responsible for signing up for

presentation slots. If a student cannot attend of the day of the presentation, they may arrange with another student to switch slots, but please inform the instructor by email of changes to the schedule. If a student misses his/her presentation slot and there is no other available slot, the student will receive 0 points for the presentation.

## EXTRA CREDIT

1. Extra credit will be made available by attending a scholarly lecture, usually held on campus, relevant to the subject of religion. A one page summary/reaction paper is required. Dates and topics to be announced.
2. You may also view one of Prager University's videos relevant to the subject of religion and write a one page summary/reaction paper to the video. The website is <https://www.prageru.com/>

You may earn a maximum of 3 points towards your final grade or ¼ of a grade level. Each response paper is worth 1 point and are due by **Friday, April 21 at 11:59 pm.**

## COURSE POLICIES

### 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, if you have not done so already.

### LATE WORK

Late work will not be accepted. If a student has an approved, documented excuse, late papers may be accepted with a penalty of 5 points each day for up to a week. After that papers may no longer be accepted and an F (0) may be issued for the assignment.

### ACADEMIC HONESTY

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.
3. 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://academic.fiu.edu/AcademicBudget/misconductweb/Code\\_of\\_Academic\\_Integrity.pdf](http://academic.fiu.edu/AcademicBudget/misconductweb/Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf) if you need further clarification. Offenders will receive a grade of F (0 points) for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly for the course. Please be aware: Previously submitted papers are not allowed, even if it is your own work and even if you are retaking this class. You may not “reuse” papers.

## 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 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.

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance and participation are worth 10% of the final grade. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive promptly and stay for the duration of the class. Students with ten or more absences will receive 0 points for attendance. Please inform the instructor immediately if a situation develops which will impact your performance or attendance. Participation includes reading for class, contributing to discussions and being attentive to lectures. **Please refrain from texting, emailing, and web surfing during class. If you are using earphones or looking at your smart phone during class, you will be asked to remove them or leave the class.** Arriving late, leaving early or stepping out of class for long periods of time may incur an absence penalty. Students will be expected to sign in on the class roster which will serve as documentation of their attendance.

## GRADING

Essay 1 (Site visit):	10% Rough draft version
	15% Final version
Essay 2 (Appiah Analysis):	15%
Midterm:	20%
Final:	20%
Group presentation:	10%
Attendance/participation:	10%

## SCALE

A	94-100	C+	78-79
A-	90-93	C	70-77
B+	88-89	D	60-69
B	83-87	F	0-59
B-	80-82		

## COURSE CALENDAR

<b>Week 1</b> <b>Jan. 9-13</b>	Ch. 1 What is Religion?  January 10 <sup>th</sup> : Introduction, syllabus review, January 12 <sup>th</sup> : Readings lecture, discussion  <i>Start your Site Visit research early!</i>	Read Preface and Ch. 1, pp.xv-14
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Jan 16-20</b>	Ch. 2 Ways of Studying Religion  Jan 17 <sup>th</sup> : Readings lecture Jan 19 <sup>th</sup> : Readings lecture	Read pp.15-32
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Jan 23-27</b>	Ch. 3 The Sacred and the Holy  Jan 24 <sup>th</sup> : Readings lecture Jan 26 <sup>th</sup> : Readings lecture	Read pp. 37-50
<b>Week 4</b> <b>Jan 30-Feb 3</b>	Ch. 4 Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine	Read pp. 53-71

	<p>Jan 31<sup>st</sup>: Group presentation, discussion Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>: Readings lecture</p> <p><b>Essay 1 (Site visit) draft due by Feb 3 at 11:59 pm</b></p>	
<p><b>Week 5</b> <b>Feb 6-10</b></p>	<p>Ch. 5 Sacred Ritual</p> <p>Feb 7<sup>th</sup>: Group presentation, discussion Feb 9<sup>th</sup>: Readings lecture</p>	<p>Read pp. 74-93</p>
<p><b>Week 6</b> <b>Feb 13-17</b></p>	<p>Ch. 6 Sacred Scripture</p> <p>Feb 14<sup>th</sup>: Group presentation, discussion Feb 16<sup>th</sup>: Readings lecture</p>	<p>Read pp. 96-121.</p>
<p><b>Week 7</b> <b>Feb 20-24</b></p>	<p>Ch. 7 Society and the Sacred...</p> <p>Feb 21<sup>st</sup>: Group presentation, discussion Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>: Readings lecture</p>	<p>Read pp. 124-147</p>
<p><b>Week 8</b> <b>Feb 27-March 3</b></p>	<p>Ch. 8 Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality</p> <p>Feb 28<sup>th</sup>: Group presentation, discussion March 2<sup>nd</sup>: Readings lecture</p> <p><b>Take Midterm Exam by Friday, March 3 at 11:59 pm</b></p>	<p>Read pp.153-179</p>
<p><b>Week 9</b> <b>March 6-10</b></p>	<p>Ch. 9 Cosmogony...</p> <p>March 7<sup>th</sup>: Group presentation, discussion March 9<sup>th</sup>: Readings lecture</p> <p><b>Essay 1 (Site visit) REVISED due by Friday March 10 at 11:59 pm.</b></p>	<p>Read pp. 183-208</p>
<p><b>SPRING BREAK</b> <b>MARCH 13-17</b></p>	<p>SPRING BREAK</p>	<p>SPRING BREAK</p>

<p><b>Week 10</b> <b>March 20-24</b></p>	<p>Ch. 10 Views of the Human Problem</p> <p>March 21<sup>st</sup>: Group presentation, discussion March 23<sup>rd</sup>: Readings lecture</p>	<p>Read pp. 211-231</p>
<p><b>Week 11</b> <b>March 27-31</b></p>	<p>Ch. 11 Theodicy: Encountering Evil</p> <p>March 28<sup>th</sup>: Group presentation, discussion March 30<sup>th</sup>:</p>	<p>Read pp. 235-256</p>
<p><b>Week 12</b> <b>April 3-7</b></p>	<p>Ch. 12 Ethics: Foundations of Moral Action</p> <p>April 4<sup>th</sup>: Group presentation, discussion April 6<sup>th</sup>: Readings lecture</p> <p><b>Essay 2 (Appiah analysis) due Friday April 7 at 11:59 pm</b></p>	<p>Read pp. 259-283</p>
<p><b>Week 13</b> <b>April 10-14</b></p>	<p>Ch. 13 Soteriology...</p> <p><b>April 11th: No class (Passover)</b> April 13<sup>th</sup>: Group presentation, discussion</p>	<p>Read pp. 288-333</p>
<p><b>Week 14</b> <b>April 17-21</b></p>	<p>Ch. 14-15 Secularization and Contemporary Challenges to Traditional Religion...</p> <p><b>April 18th: No class (Passover)</b> April 20<sup>th</sup>: Readings lecture, discussion</p>	<p>Read pp. 341-393</p>
<p><b>Week 15</b> <b>April 24-28</b></p>	<p>FINALS week</p> <p><b>Take Final exam by Tuesday April 25 at 11:59 pm</b></p>	

\*\*This syllabus is subject to revision but any updates will be notified to the class in a timely fashion. Last revised 1/4/2017