

## REL 2011 U06 - INTRO TO RELIGION- SPRING 2017

**Instructor:** Stephanie Londono

M.A. Religious Studies

**Email:** slond006@fiu.edu

**Office hours:** M-W-F 1:00-2:30 PM/ DM 301B

**Class Hours:** M-W-F 12:00-12:50pm

**Class Room:** PG 6 115

**Note: This syllabus is tentative. Schedule and assignment subjects may change.**

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This section of Religion: Analysis and Interpretation 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. This format's scope includes the exploration of 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 the history of humanity. Each concept will be introduced through the textbook, class lectures, student presentations, videos, Internet sources and discussions. 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 in a midterm exam and a final exam. Two essays will develop the student's critical thinking skills and writing abilities. For the first essay, the student will conduct field research by attending a religious service outside of his/her own tradition. For the second essay, the student will propose her/his own subject of research based on the . This course fulfills the Gordon Rule requirement.

### INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD

<b>Readings</b>	Creative activities/ Projects	<b>Note taking</b>
Lecture, Tests		Discussion
Writing assignments	Video resources	Group Work

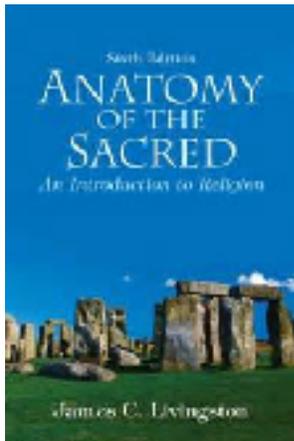
### COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, the successful student 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.
- Critically engage the issue of religious diversity in national and international context (Global Engagement).
- Analyze issues in the field of religions studies from multiple approaches (Global Perspective).
- Evaluate the interrelationship between his/her own and others' religious views as they relate to understanding other cultures and solving common problems (Global Awareness)

## **REQUIRED TEXT**



Anatomy of the Sacred: An introduction to Religion

by James C. Livingston

ISBN 978-0-13-600380-9

ISBN 0-13-600380-x

\* Other reading materials will be provided by the instructor.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS COURSE**

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, thoughtful work. Some of this material may be new, personal or controversial, so please maintain an open-minded and considerate attitude, allowing others time to reflect

and communicate.

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION**

Communication in this course will take place in class, in Blackboard, and through FIU email. The best method to communicate with your instructor privately is through email. Appointments can be made on request. Please contact the instructor immediately if a serious situation arises which will impact student performance.

## **GORDON RULE REQUIREMENT**

As this is a Gordon Rule course, students will be required to write a minimum of two major assignments. Each paper will be at least 1500-2000 words and will be submitted through Turnitin. All source material must be cited correctly using MLA Style and long quotes should be avoided. Please be aware that papers with an originality score of over 35% similarity will be subject to additional scrutiny and may incur additional penalties, up to and including receiving an F (0 points).

## **GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

As a Global Learning course, students will be 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**

Some of this material may be new, personal or controversial, so please maintain an open- minded and considerate attitude, allowing others time to reflect and communicate. 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.

## **EXAMS- 15% Each**

The Midterm Exam (Exam 1) and Final Exam (Exam 2) are in-class, time-restricted examinations. Each exam consists of an **essay portion** and **50 objective questions** based on the text readings and lectures. The three possible essay questions will become available on Blackboard a week before the exam. The student will choose one of the questions and write the essay in class. The length of the essay for both exams should be approximately 500-750 words long.

Each exam is worth 100 points, 50 points for the objective and essay portion respectively. Students will have to **bring a blue book** for the essay portion, the Scantron will be provided by the instructor.

Note: Free bluebooks are available through the student government (GC 211).

### **Quizzes**

There will be 12 weekly quizzes based on the reading material. The quizzes are available so that students rehearse their reading memory and learning.

### **ESSAYS- 20% Each**

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 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 (including the family's religion even if they are non-practicing members)**. **This means that the student must choose a religion that is absolutely foreign to her/him.** The rule of thumb is: if the religion you choose uses the same sacred scripture as your home tradition, then this religion is instantly disqualified.

The Site Visit should be 1200-1500 words, double-spaced, 12-size font. For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard.

You will need to cite five academic sources and use MLA style.

**\* For this assignment the student has three options:**

1. **Paper:** 1200-1500 words and cited correctly.

2. **video** format of about 7-10 minutes. The video must be well edited, feature interviewees, images and good quality audio. You will still have to write a script and include a bibliography. Examples of the video format will be provided.

3. **Audio** format: 7- 10 minutes. Just like the video, It must be well edited, feature interviewees, natural sound, and good quality audio. You will still have to write the script and include a bibliography. Examples of the audio format will be provided.

**\* For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard. The Site Visit is worth 20% of the final grade.**

**Tip:** Keep a journal to help your memory remain fresh.

- Entry/Access
- Interaction (interviews)
- Obstacles
- Main impressions (important details) -What did you learn?

**Audio examples:**

BBC radio: [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05nxhj6](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05nxhj6) NPR radio:

[www.npr.org/2015/06/20/415973913/in-ramadan-saudi-families-break-bread-and-watch-tv-dramas](http://www.npr.org/2015/06/20/415973913/in-ramadan-saudi-families-break-bread-and-watch-tv-dramas)

**Video example:**

<https://youtu.be/JhLN7dtukig>

**Essay 2**

Make use of your creativity and propose your own topic. By the end of the semester you will be equip with a variety of theories and topics from which to choose from. I recommend finding a topic that can merge both your major and religious studies. **Every student must schedule an appointment** with the instructor to get cleared before embarking on the research. The paper must be 5-7-long, double-spaced, 12-size font. Use five academic sources to support and elaborate on your thesis.

**LATE PAPERS:** Late papers will be penalized. Late papers may be accepted with a penalty.

## **PLAGIARISM**

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; and
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://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2codeofacainteg.htm> 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.

## **GROUP PRESENTATIONS- 15%**

Students will give a group presentation on a topic related to the text readings, using PowerPoint, Prezi or similar. Students are responsible for signing up for presentation groups. If a student cannot attend on the day of the presentation, they may be seriously penalized (up to receiving a 0 for the project) depending on their participation on project development. The group presentation is worth 60 points and is 15% of the final grade.

### **The group presentation is divided into three parts:**

1. **Topic:** Every student must present on a topic related to the week's readings using PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi or similar. Each chapter presents a variety of topics, choose an aspect that you are interested in and elaborate on it.  
(Note: The topics need to be confirmed by the instructor.)
2. **Current issues:** each member of the group has to present a current event relevant to their chapter. This information can be obtained from various sources which are included in the sites I recommend on the blog.
3. **Discussion Question:** At the end of your presentation, each student will propose a discussion question. Keep in mind that it is your responsibility to ignite class discussion. Be bold, creative and thoughtful when formulating your question.  
NOTE: The question does not necessarily have to be related to the current event.

## **PARTICIPATION - 15 % (Three parts)**

### **ATTENDANCE**

This class meets three times a week for 50 minutes. Your physical presence is imperative to succeed in this course, as much of your textbook material is further developed and analyzed in class. Keep in mind that learning happens best in when sharing your ideas with others.

### **QUESTIONS**

Every week a student must bring a question from the readings. Questions usually arise when we do not fully understand a concept or would like further explanation. You can also formulate questions by connecting the week's reading and your own thoughts on outside experience. No question is silly or too obvious. The only rule, is that you make it an open-ended question so that we have room to brainstorm. You have to make a minimum of 15 question throughout the semester. The more you participate, the better.

### **BLOG - What you didn't Learn in Class**

**<https://relclass.wordpress.com>**

This blog is a public space for us to connect with each other and the world. Every student will receive an invitation to become an author and actively participate.

The blog title is What you didn't learn in Class- precisely because it will be a space for us to elaborate on ideas and topics that perhaps don't get mentioned in class either because of time or any other inconvenience.

The blog is divided into different sections:

1. On the **Class Think Tank**, news and stories relevant to religious studies will be posted. Students are encouraged to participate and comment on these posts.
2. **Movie Reviews:** We will be using film to articulate theories and ideas. Share your reaction on the movies we watch in class. Elaborate on important themes and dialogues on your comments.
3. **The Megan Project:** This page is named after a student who a couple of semesters ago came up with a really cool project. After learning about the universality of religion, Megan began to notice the ubiquitous presence of religion. She continued to find religious symbols in her community, university and travels. Megan realized that religion is not this isolated topic, relegated to churches, Sundays, prayers and gospel channels. This realization led her to this awesome idea of photographing all these symbols with her phone or camera, and put them together in a presentation with a short description of how she encountered these symbols and how are they "religious" from her perspective.

Megan began this project, which she titled “Everyday Religion,” during the Fall 2014 in my World Religions class, and expanded it in the following semester while taking Analysis and Interpretation of Religion class.

Lets continue to feed this brilliant idea by spotting and photographing religion everywhere we find it. You will be surprised to learn that pop culture is imbued with religion in many ways. **Fashion, music, TV, art, and food** are just some of the mediums though which religion is articulated. Take a picture or video and briefly explain how is religion present and relevant in your discovery.

On the description tell us where did your photograph take place, when did you take it and why do you think it is a religious symbol.

**EXTRA CREDIT - This will be added to your final exam grade.**

**Blog Editor:** Responsible for posting one story a week along with a short analysis.

**Creative writing:** Develop a short story where you present characters that represent different religions. The story must include in its plot rituals, symbols, scriptures (sacred texts), festivals, teachings (i.e. the eight fold path, the pillars of Islam, etc.) among other aspects that we learned in class. (2-5 Pages).

**Poetry:** Include all the aforementioned topics. Make sure the poem has a rhyme and a regular meter. The piece must be at least four stanzas. Remember the Vedas and Zoroaster’s Gathas appear to be composed in poetic form.

**Song:** Include all the aforementioned topics. Make it at least 2 minutes long.

**Photography/ Visual Art (painting, drawing):** Make sure you explain your interpretation in a paragraph.

**Movie Review:** Review a movie and write a five- paragraph reaction paper describing the role that religion plays in the story or event. Focus on religious symbols, rituals, myths or the ways in which religious beliefs or practices influence the plot or meaning of the movie. Do not tell the whole story of the movie, but just enough so that your points are clear. The movie selection must be approved by the instructor.

**The extra credit is worth up to an extra 5 points. All extra credit reports are due no later than April. Be creative, respectful and take this opportunity not just for the extra points, but also to leave a strong positive message. Have fun!**

To submit your extra credit, email it to the instructor under the heading: **Extra Credit Intro 2017 (Last name)**

Note: superb extra credit projects will be posted on the blog

## GRADING

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	SCALE	PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE
Essay 1- Site Visit (Feb 19)	100	20%
Essay 2. (April 16)	100	20%
MIDTERM (Feb 23)	100	15%
FINAL (April 28)	100	15%
Presentations	60	15%
Questions, Blog, Attendance	150	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>100%</b>

LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE
A	93 - 100	B-	80 - 82	D+	67 - 69
A-	90 - 92	C+	77 - 79	D	63 - 66
B+	87 - 89	C	73 - 76	D-	60 - 62
B	83 - 86	C-	70 - 72	F	< 60

**CALENDAR Please Note: Schedule and assignments subject to change by instructor.**

WEEK	MONDAY	WED	FRIDAY	TO DO
<p><b>1</b> <b>Jan 9-13</b> Section I - The Study of Religion <b>Topic:</b> What is religion?</p>	Intro, syllabus review, class plan	Readings lecture, organize presentations	Readings lecture	<p><b>Chapter 1</b> p.1-14</p> <p><b>Quiz 1</b></p> <p><b>Start your Site Visit research early!</b></p>
<p><b>2</b> <b>Jan 16-20</b> Section I - The Study of Religion <b>Topic:</b> Ways of studying religion</p>	<b>No class- MLK</b>	Readings Lecture	Readings discussion	<p><b>Chapter 2</b> p.15-34</p> <p><b>Quiz 2</b></p>

<p>3 <b>Jan 23-27</b></p> <p>Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> The sacred and the holy</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion,</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 3 p.35-52</p> <p>Film: BLACK-ROBE</p> <p>Quiz 3</p>
<p>4 <b>Jan 30- Feb 3</b></p> <p>Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Sacred symbol, myth and doctrine</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion,</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 4 p. 53-73</p> <p>Quiz 4</p>
<p>5 <b>Feb 6-10</b></p> <p>Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Sacred ritual</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion,</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 5 p. 74-95</p> <p>Film: LUTHER</p> <p>Quiz 5</p>

<p>6 <b>Feb 13-17</b></p> <p>Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Sacred scripture</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion,</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 6 p. 96-123</p> <p>Quiz 6</p> <p><b>Essay 1 (Site Visit) due by 6:00 pm on Sunday, Feb 19, via BB Assign-ments</b></p>
<p>7 <b>Feb 20-24</b></p> <p>Section II. Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Society and the sacred</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion,</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 7 p. 124-150</p> <p>Quiz 7</p> <p>Group competition results revealed (Groups 1-7).</p>
<p>8 <b>Feb27- March 3</b></p>	<p><b>Monday Feb 27th Midterm Exam Covers materials from Week 1-7.</b></p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings Discussion</p>	<p>Ch 8 p. 151-182</p> <p>Film: ROMERO</p>

<p><b>March 6-10</b></p> <p>Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Deity, or concepts of the divine/ ultimate reality</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p> <p>First MP picture due- post on blog under MP category</p>	<p>Readings discussion</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 8 p. 151-182</p> <p>Quiz 8</p>
<p>9 <b>March 13-17</b></p> <p><b>SPRING BREAK</b></p>				
<p><b>10 March 20-24</b></p> <p>Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Cosmology</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 9 p. 183-210</p> <p>Quiz 9</p>

<p>11 <b>March</b> <b>27-31</b></p> <p>Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> The human problem</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch10 p. 211-234</p> <p>Quiz 10</p> <p><b>April 1, Extra Credit due</b></p> <p>Film: GANDHI</p>
<p>12 <b>April 3-7</b></p> <p>Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Encounterin g evil</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p> <p>2nd MP picture due- post on blog under MP category</p>	<p>Readings discussion,</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 11 p. 235-258</p> <p>Quiz 11</p> <p>Film: God on Trial</p>
<p>13 <b>April</b> <b>10-14</b></p> <p>Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Ethics</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings discussion</p>	<p><b>student presentation</b></p>	<p>Ch 12 p. 259-286</p> <p>Quiz 12</p> <p><b>Essay 2 due by 6:00 pm on Sunday April 16, via Blackboard Assignments</b></p>

<p><b>14</b> <b>April</b> <b>17-21</b></p> <p>Section III. Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Salvation and liberation</p>	<p>Readings lecture</p>	<p>Readings Lecture</p>	<p>REVIEW</p>	<p><b>Chapter 13</b> <b>p.287-338</b></p> <p><b>Quiz 13</b></p> <p><b>Group competition results revealed (Groups 8-12).</b></p>
<p>15 April 24-28 <b>FINAL'S WEEK</b></p>			<p>Final Friday April 24 9:45- 11:45AM same room</p>	
<p>MAY 4 <b>Grades available to students</b></p>				

## DIRECTORY FOR YOUR FIELD RESEARCH - PAPER ONE

### RELIGIOUS SITES OF SOUTH FLORIDA

A REMINDER TO ALL STUDENTS THAT THE SITE VISIT AND REPORT MUST BE DONE FOR A RELIGIOUS TRADITION THAT IS NOT THE STUDENT'S OWN. I strongly recommend to start the fieldwork early, and that you attend at least 2-3 times to have a successful report.

**ISLAMIC:** the times to go are Fridays and Sundays at 1:30 p.m. Female students can bring a scarf with them if they don't want to stand out, but it is not required.

Miami Gardens Mosque (Sunni) 4305 N.W. 183 street  
Miami, Florida 33055

Mosque of Miami (Sunni) 7350 N.W. 3rd Street Miami, Florida 33126 305-261-7622

Masjid Al-Ansar (Sunni) 5245 N.W. 7th Avenue Miami, Florida 33127 305-757-8741

Islamic School of Miami Masjid al-Noor (Sunni) 11699 SW 147 Ave Miami, FL 33196

(305) 408-0400

Tasnim Uddin, Principal of School

Friday: 1:30 pm, Islam School on Sundays: 10am-12pm (behind the Exxon gas station)

Islamic Jafferia Association Imambara (Shia) 10554 N.W. 132nd Street  
Hialeah Gardens, Florida 33016  
(305) 557-6835

<http://www.ijamiami.org/>

Muhammad's Mosque # 29 (Nation of Islam) 5660 N.W. 7th Ave.  
Miami, Florida  
305-756-9136

## BAHAI

FIU Bahai Club 305-436-2490

Bahai Faith (South) 9300 S. Dixie Hwy. Miami, Florida 305-570-8886

Bahai Faith (North) 4365 Rock Island Rd. Ft. Lauderdale  
(North of Commercial) 954-524-4084

## BUDDHIST

(Nichiren Buddhist)

Sokka Gakkai International Miami Community Center 20000 S.W. 36th St.  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33332 954-349-5200

Avalokitesvara Buddhist Study Center (Buddhist) 7550 S.W. 82nd Court  
Miami, Florida 33143  
305-271-6361

267-8000

International Zen Institute of Florida (Buddhist) Dharma House  
3860 Crawford Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33133

305-448-8969

Wat Buddharangsi Temple (Thai, Buddhist) 15200 S.W., 240th Street  
Homestead, Florida  
305-245-2702

Amida Temple ("Pure Land" Buddhist) c/o Kuang-Hsi Wu  
12815 S.W. 119 Terrace  
Miami, Florida 33186

305-385-2866

International Dharma Center (Buddhist) P.O. Box 141728  
Coral Gables, Florida  
33114-1728

305-267-8000 (Ileana Davis)  
Kagyü Shedrup Chöling (Tibetan Buddhist)

1905 Monroe Street  
Hollywood, Florida 33020 954-920-1346

HINDU: Plan to attend Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Shiva Vishnu Temple 5661 Dykes Rd. (S.W. 160th Ave)  
Pembroke Pines (Davie)  
954-689-0471 webmaster@shivavishnu.org

(I-75 north, exit at Sheridan, go west to Dykes Road, then go north for about a mile,  
temple on the left)

The South Florida Hindu Temple 13010 Griffin Road  
Davie, Florida  
954-438-3675

info@sfht.org

Hare Krishna Temple 3220 Virginia St. Coconut Grove, Florida 305-442-7218

SIKH: Plan to attend Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Sikh Society of Florida 16000 Sterling Rd. Pembroke Pines, Florida 954-680-0221

(Same directions as to Shiva Hindu Temple, but closer to Sheridan on Dykes Road)

JAIN

Jain Center of South Florida  
1960 N. Commerce Parkway #11 Weston, FL 33326  
Here is Direction Link for Jain center. <http://jaincentersfl.com/direction.html>

**JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN**

Synagogues: Friday evenings, near Sundown; and Saturday mornings, 8:00 a.m. only.  
Christian churches: 11:00 a.m. morning service. Consult Yellow Pages for synagogue or church nearest where you live.

Students are encouraged to do detective work and find representatives of the other major world religions in Miami or the South Florida area: Taoism, Confucianism (Chinese), Shinto (Japanese), and Zoroastrianism (Persian/Iranian, and mostly in Bombay, India).