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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

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**PROFESSOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Dr. Jayne A. Klein  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, immediately after class, or by Appointment  
**E-mail:** [martinj@fiu.edu](mailto:martinj@fiu.edu)

*"If we take the world's enduring religions at their best, we discover the distilled wisdom of the human race."* - Huston Smith

*"Blessed is he who learns a lesson of worship from Nature."* - Ralph Waldo Emerson

*"Nothing worth knowing can be understood with the mind ..."* - Woody Allen

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE**

Ever since the beginning of humanity's existence on Earth, religion has been a singularly powerful influence on the lives of a vast majority of its occupants, and it seems likely that it will remain so for as far into the future as our minds can project. While there are some who view religion as a singularly powerful means for promoting goodness and morality in the world, there are others who see it as the source of most of the hatred and violence in the world. Whatever one's opinion, however, it is incumbent upon all of us today to develop a familiarity with a number of the World's major religions, so that we may be better able to understand ourselves and our neighbors in what, today, is an enormously complex, interdependent, and global world.

It is not the intention of this course to uphold any one particular religious belief system over any other, but rather, to introduce students to the academic study of religion. Therefore, this course will introduce students to some of the World's major and most enduring religious traditions – both Eastern and Western – by exploring their history, basic beliefs, practices, rituals, associated narratives, and relevant figures. One of the primary goals of this examination will be to identify those **universal elements** – those common threads – found in all of them, elements that bind all of us, as human beings living together on this small planet, to one another.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, the successful student will be able to:

- Analyze the differences and similarities between the religions studied.
- Analyze the historical development of the religious traditions presented.
- Compare and contrast religious societies and cultures in their local, national, and global context.
- Recognize the different ways of being religious and of interpreting the sacred.
- Appreciate the importance that the various religious traditions discussed throughout the semester hold for their practitioners.
- Identify the common threads that tie all religions to one another.

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

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**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 hybrid/online courses.

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS & SKILLS

One of the greatest barriers to taking a hybrid or 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 hybrid and 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

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 or the Wolfe University Center on BBC.

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](#).

## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT STATEMENT

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 to 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.

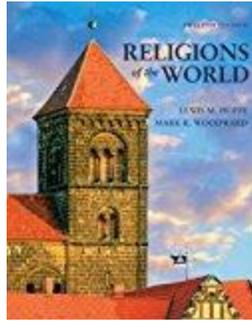
Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

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

## COURSE PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## TEXTBOOK



## **Religions of the World**

Lewis M. Hopfe, Mark R. Woodward

Pearson, 12nd Edition, 2011

ISBN-10: 0205158609

ISBN-13: 9780205158607

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

**OR** you may purchase it in the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, or 12<sup>th</sup> edition from **ANY** source you are familiar with.

(Other required readings will be made available to you at various times during the course of the semester.)

## EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE

This is a HYBRID course, which means that we will meet in the classroom once a week and online for the second portion of each weekly class. Power points containing “lecture” materials for each week’s topic, which you will be responsible to read and understand (in addition to the textbook readings), will be posted online. In addition to the posted readings, you will be provided with a number of videos to watch online before the in-class meetings. Expectations for performance in a hybrid course are basically the same as those for a traditional course. In fact, hybrid courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills, which can make these courses more demanding for some students. However, it is this instructor’s opinion that the combination of in-person and online work should prove to be a highly enriching experience for both you and your instructor.

## COURSE DETAIL

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### COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place primarily during the in-person class meetings, but there will also be opportunities to participate via discussion boards. In addition, please feel free to contact me via **Email if you have any questions or concerns**.

The Email feature is an external communication tool that allows users to send emails to users enrolled within the course. Emails are sent to the students’ FIU email on record. The Email tool is located on the Course Menu, on the left side of the course webpage

### DISCUSSIONS

Twenty-five (25) percent of your final grade will depend on your attendance and level of participation, in the form of in-class discussions in a variety of formats to be determined.

### 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. All exams will be in the online format, so it is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum [hardware requirements](#).

All exams are in multiple choice and true-false format. Once you begin an exam, you will have 90 minutes in which to complete it. While you may stop and then re-start an exam, that exam must be completed in one sitting and within the 90-minute timeframe allotted. You may choose any day of the announced week of the exam to take it.

- **Exam #1** – Week 6 (on all introductory material; the theories about the origins of religions, Basic Religions, and African Religions (including films viewed)) – available from Tues., 2/14, at 12 am. to Sun., 2/19, at 11:59 pm.
- **Exam #2** – Week 11 (on Hinduism and Buddhism) – from Tues. Mar. 21 at 12 am to Sun. 3/26 at 11:59 pm.
- **Exam: #3** – Week 16 (on Judaism, Islam, and Christianity) – from Fri., Apr. 21 at 12 am to Sun. 4/30 at 11:59 pm

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](#).

## GRADING

Course Requirements		Weight	
Class Attendance and Participation		25%	
Exam #1		15%	
Exam #2		20%	
Exam #3		20%	
Research Paper		20%	
Visit to Holocaust Memorial - For Extra Credit - 15 points added to lowest exam grade		N/A	
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	

Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)
A	94 or above	B	84 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 93	B-	81 - 83	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 80	F	59 or less

## COURSE CALENDAR

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**\*NOTE: The professor reserves the right to modify the course syllabus at any time. Students will receive written notification of any modifications, should they be made.**

DATE	TO-DO
<b>Week 1</b> <b>(January 10-14)</b>	<b>Tuesday, Jan. 10 – In-class Meeting:</b>
	<b>Introduction to the Course:</b>
	Course overview and review of course syllabus; discussion of various assessments of the term “religion”; some theories about the origins of religion
	<b>Assignments for Week 2:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reading:</b> Hopfe &amp; Woodward, Introduction/Overview chapter, Chapter One (“Basic Religions”); power points on “Zeitgeist” film</li> <li>• <b>View:</b> Excerpt from the film “Zeitgeist” (view film <b>BEFORE</b> class on Jan. 17)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b> <b>(January 17-21)</b>	<b>Tuesday, Jan. 17 – In-class Meeting</b>

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- “Zeitgeist”: pros and cons
- Characteristics of Basic Religions

**Assignments for Week 3:**

- **Reading:**
  - Hopfe & Woodward, Chapter 3 (African Religions)
- **View:** “Sorcerers of Zaire”

**Tuesday, Jan. 24 – In-class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- African Traditional Religions
- Sorcerers of Zaire -- make note of elements in the film that demonstrate some of the main beliefs of the African religions

**Week 3  
(January 24-28)**

**Assignment for Week 4:**

- **Reading:**
  - Laurenti Magesa, Chapter 2, The Moral Universe
  - Power Points on the Papal Bulls

**Tuesday, January 31 – In-Class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

“The Moral Universe” -- elements that make up the African view of morality and ethics, a more in-depth view of philosophy behind African religions and their view on the hierarchy of the Universe

**Week 4  
(January 31 -  
February 4)**

**Reading Assignment for weeks 5 & 6:**

- Power points on the Transatlantic Slave Trade
- Hopfe & Woodward, begin reading Chapter 4 (Hinduism)
- Power points on Classical Hinduism

**Tuesday, February 7 – In-Class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- Film “Middle Passage” will be shown in class in its entirety

**Week 5  
(February 7-11)**

**Assignments for Week 6:**

- Finish reading chapter on Hinduism
- Read power points on Hinduism
- Study for Exam #1
- **View:** “Mystic India”

**Week 6  
(February 14-18)**

**Tuesday, February 14 – In-Class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- Classical Hinduism

**Reading Assignment:**

- Hopfe & Woodward, start reading Chapter 6 (Buddhism)
- Power points on Buddhism

[**Assessment:** Exam #1 -- exam available on-line until Sunday, Feb. 19 at 11:59 p.m.]

**Tuesday, February 21 – In-Class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- Post Classical Hinduism
- Introduction to Buddhism and the Life of the Buddha

**Week 7  
February 21-25)**

**Assignment:**

- **Reading:**
  - Finish chapter 6
  - Notes on the Eightfold Path
  - Notes on the split within Buddhism after the Buddha's death

**Tuesday, February 28 – In-Class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

Buddhism

**Week 8  
(February 28 -  
March 4)**

**View:** Excerpts from film “Little Buddha”

**Reading Assignment:**

- Hopfe and Woodward, Chapter 11 (Judaism)
- Power points on Judaism

**Tuesday, March 7 – In-Class Meeting**

**Film:** “*Compassion in Exile: The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Tibet*” will be shown in class

**Week 9  
(March 7-11)**

**Assignments:**

- **Reading:** Hopfe & Woodward, finish reading Chapter 11 (Judaism)

Study for Exam #2

**Week 10  
(March 13-18)**

**Tuesday, March 14 – NO CLASS!**

**Spring Break: University Open, No Classes**

**Tuesday, March 21 – In-Class Meeting**

**Week 11  
(March 21-25)**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- Judaism

**Assignment:**

- **View:** “A History of God, Part I

**[Assessment: Exam #2 (on Hinduism and Buddhism) -- available on-line until March 26 at 11:59 p.m.]**

NOTE: Monday, March 20 Last Day to Drop with DR grade; Last day to withdraw from University with WI grade

**Tuesday, March 28 – In-Class Meeting**

**Reading:**

- Hopfe & Woodward, Chapter 13 (Islam)
- Power Points

**View:**

- “The Mystery of the Jews”

**Week 12  
(March 28 - April 1)**

**Tuesday, April 4 – In-Class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- Introduction to Islam and the Life of Muhammad

**Assignments:**

- **Reading:**
  - Hopfe and Woodward, Chapter 12 (Christianity)
  - Power points
- **View:** *A History of God, Part 3* (on Islam)

**Week 13  
(April 4-8)**

**Tuesday, April 11 – In-Class Meeting**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- Islam (continued)
- Introduction to Christianity and the Life of Jesus
- **Film** “*Islamic Mysticism: The Sufi Way*” will be shown in class

**Reading:**

- Finish reading Chapter on Christianity
- Power points

**View:**

- A History of God, Part 2

**Week 14  
(April 11-15)**

**Tuesday, April 18 – Last In-Class Meeting of Spring Semester**

**Week 15  
(April 18-22)**

**Lecture/Discussion:**

- Main Denominations within Christianity
- Some final words

**FINAL EXAM WEEK**

**Week 16  
(April 25-29)**

**Assessment ON-LINE:**

- **Exam #3** (*on Judaism, Islam, and Christianity*)