

# Syllabus

## REL3100: Introduction to Religion and Culture



**Instructor:** Prof. Albert Wuaku

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

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**Website:** [Professor Biography \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

General Informa

### Course Description and Purpose

This course explores religion from a sociological and anthropological perspective. Students will examine the ways in which sociologists and anthropologists try to explain the phenomenon of religion [ that is, religious beliefs, religious behavior, and religious institutions]. The course exposes students to a range of sociological and anthropological theories that explore the origins of religion as a social and cultural phenomenon and the interplay between religious belief, ritual, and religious institutions and their social and cultural contexts. Note that this is not a course in theology! We will not focus much attention on the content of beliefs and practices of specific religious traditions. Our interest is in the social and cultural dimensions of the phenomenon of religion.

### Course Objectives

- **Four objectives underlie the course:**

- to introduce students to socio-cultural concepts relevant to the understanding of religion as a dimension of social life;
- to examine the dynamics of the relationship between religion and other aspects of society such as politics and the economy;
- to develop critical thinking skills by analyzing and evaluating theoretical perspectives on religious belief and action; and
- to encourage students to apply socio-anthropological concepts in the understanding of their personal religious lives and past and contemporary religious issues in their societies.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester students will:

- gain an intellectual understanding of the interconnection between religion and society in western and non-western cultures;
- improve their writing skills through the writing of essays;
- develop the culture of participating in intellectual conversations through the interchanges discussion questions require of them; and
- be excited about the dynamics of religion in societal life enough to want to pursue studies in this area further.
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Important Information

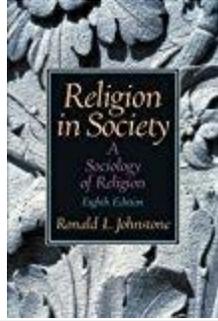
Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

- [Policies](#)
- [Technical Requirements and Skills](#)
- [Accessibility and Accommodation](#)
- [Academic Misconduct Statement](#)
- [Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

## Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## Textbook and Course Materials



## **Religion in Society: A Sociology of Religion**

Ronald L. Johnstone

Routledge, 8th Edition, 2006

ISBN-10: 0131884077

ISBN-13: 9780131884076

You may purchase your textbook online at the [FIU Bookstore \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#).

## **Expectations of this Course**

**This is an online course, meaning that most of the coursework 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 Communication - How to contact your professor**

Communication in this course will take place within Canvas. See the [Canvas Guide \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) on communicating with course users for more information.

**All e-mails sent to the instructor should reflect a professional manner and adhere to the following format:**

Subject Line/Heading: Place your question/comment in the subject heading.

Also, identify this class (Web Class 3100),

Text: The text of the message should begin with Dear Dr. Wuaku. The message should follow and end with the student's full name.

Example E-mail: Below is an example of the format I expect from e-mail inquiries. Please remember you can also call me on 305-348-0112 if you need to speak with me.

From: Joe Doe doee@fiu .edu (Use FIU email address/account)  
To: Albert Wuaku wuakua@fiu .edu  
Subject: Textbook (Web Class 3100)

Dear Dr. Wuaku,

I have a question about the textbook. Do we have to buy it from the bookstore or can we order it online? I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Joe Doe.

**Please remember** you can also call me on 305-348-0112 if you need to speak with me.

## Discussion Forums

Throughout the semester the instructor will post messages to the discussion board that requires a response or activity from each student. Each post will be graded. Each discussion is worth 25 points. To receive all possible points, a posting must be on time, be easy to read, free of careless mistakes, and appropriately address the issue(s) or question(s) presented by the instructor. Also, each student must address or respond to viewpoints of at least three others in the class.

Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.

## Assignments

The essay questions will be based on the lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings. The purpose of these essays is to test the student's knowledge of the vocabulary, issues, theoretical perspectives and the ability to apply the ideas covered to the understanding of lived religious experience.

### **How to respond to essay questions:**

All essay questions must be thoroughly answered. A thorough response is one that shows evidence of familiarity with the text and the power-point notes and shows the student's own originality. The points in the essay must be discussed thoroughly and illustrated with practical examples from the readings or the author's own experiences. The essay must be written in

grammatically correct prose. It must be very well structured and organized. YOU WILL SCORE A ZERO IF YOU SUBMIT WORK THAT IS POORLY WRITTEN.

Read the questions ahead of time. Read the text and PowerPoint notes and draft your responses. Read the question again to make sure you are on the right course. Proofread your work before you submit it.

## Quizzes

There will be a multiple choice quiz or essay assignment after each topic or combination of topics. Each assignment will be worth a total of 25 points. Each essay assignment will consist of 1, 2, 3 or 4 essay questions out of which a student will be required to answer a specified number of questions. If the chosen question has sub-divisions [e.g questions 1 a, 1 b, etc] the student must address all questions in the subdivisions to be awarded full points for the question. A student has only 3 attempts at answering the multiple choice questions. The highest score will be recorded.

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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

## Final Grade

The Final Grade will be determined by a tally of points scored throughout the semester. These points will be converted into percentages [**that is, Points scored by student/total number of points [200] x 100**]. Please keep printed copies of all assignments and graded material. If you cannot produce your class material in a grade dispute, the grade recorded in the instructor's grade book will take precedence.

Students are required and responsible for all assigned text readings and material from Blackboard. Students are expected to check the Announcement and Assignment sections of Blackboard for this class at least every other day. Students who take this course are expected to have the skills necessary to complete all assignments. **Essay Assignments must not be sent as attachments to the professor. They must be posted in the Assignment drop box. I will not grade them if you send them to me as attachments.** If you have computer technology questions during the semester, you should contact the FIU Computer Help Desk.

**Note: I reserve the right to alter this syllabus if and whenever necessary.**

## Grading

<b>Course Requirements</b>	<b>W</b>
Essays and Multiple Choice Quizzes	7
Discussion Assignments	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

<b>Letter</b>	<b>Range%</b>	<b>Letter</b>	<b>Range%</b>	<b>Letter</b>	<b>Range%</b>
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 74
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or below