

**REL 3308 RVD Fully Online**  
**STUDIES IN WORLD RELIGIONS**  
**Semester: Spring 2019**  
**Instructor: Dr. Michael Zolondek**  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE**

This online section of Studies in World Religions will use a multimedia approach to explore Basic Religions, Native American Religions, African Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Daoism/Confucianism, Shinto, Christianity, Islam, Sects & Cults and Religion in the 21st Century.

Members of the Religious Studies faculty, each in their own research specialization, will introduce students to these religious concepts utilizing the Fisher textbook, films/videos, and narrated PowerPoint presentations.

Students will be tested and graded on this material through:

Time-restricted quizzes – 13 in total

- A midterm (objective and essay portions)
- A final exam (objective and essay portions)
- A term paper\*
- Interactive discussion posts

\*The term paper assignment will test each student's knowledge of the world religions and how they compare. There are strict guidelines for this assignment that can be found under the "Term Paper Information" folder located under Course Content.

\*This course fulfills the **Gordon Rule requirement**; a "C" or better must be earned to receive credit for this course.

\*This course fulfills the **Global Learning Foundations requirement**.

To learn more about Global Learning requirements, please visit: <https://goglobal.fiu.edu/courses/graduation-requirement/>

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast religious societies and cultures in the local, national and/ or international context.
- Situate these societies and cultures within contemporary and historical perspective.
- Critically engage the issue of religious diversity in national and/ or international context

### **GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES TARGETED:**

- Analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives
- Assess how global issues and trends are interrelated with the development and practice of religions
- Demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION POLICIES**

Please review the [policies page](#) as it contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU and additional information on the standards for acceptable netiquette important for online courses.

### **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS & SKILLS**

One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course is a lack of basic computer literacy. Computer literacy is the ability to manage and organize computer files efficiently, as well as being able to navigate your computer's operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course; 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

Please visit our [Technical Requirements](#) webpage for additional information.

### **ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION**

Please visit our [ADA Compliance](#) webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

For additional assistance please contact FIU's [Disability Resource Center](#).

### **COURSE PREREQUISITES**

For information about prerequisites, [click here](#).

## **TEXTBOOK**

Title: Living Religions

Author: Mary Pat Fisher

ISBN: 978-0-13-416924-8

Publisher: Pearson Education

Publication Date: May 6, 2016

Binding Digital, Other

Type Digital

Note: Older editions of the book may be used for this class section: 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> editions are acceptable.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE**

This is an online course; most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. Online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills, which can make these courses 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
- **Attempt the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Canvas
- **Interact** online with instructor/s and peers
- **Review** the course syllabus and calendar
- **Submit** assignments on time

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION**

Communication in this course will take place via Inbox

Conversations are email-like messages sent within Canvas' internal messaging system. Students are alerted to new messages on their dashboard screen upon logging in.

It is recommended that students log in to Canvas daily and review their Inbox for private messages and/or Announcements from the instructor.

## **DISCUSSION BOARD ASSIGNMENTS (10% OF OVERALL GRADE)**

There will be four (5) discussions in this course. These discussions are meant to stimulate critical thinking about how religions manifest in our globalized world.

Discussion topics will become available Monday, 12:00PM to Sunday, 11:59PM of each week that a discussion topic is posted. See the course calendar for the weeks that have discussion topics posted.

To receive full credit for the discussion assignments, students must post a minimum of 3 discussion threads per discussion topic:

- One post in response to the main discussion topic
- Two responses to other students' posts

Keep in mind that this is an academic forum; all students in the course will see the discussion posts. When criticizing or agreeing with another student's position on a given topic, please make sure to include supporting facts and specific examples to strengthen your position. Contribute links to articles, news stories, and/or other media whenever possible.

### **QUIZZES (20% OF OVERALL GRADE)**

Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be attempted through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance please contact [FIU Online Support Services](#).

A time-restricted, multiple-choice quiz will be given on each week's religious concept. The questions in the quizzes will draw from the weekly course content, including audio lectures and assigned readings.

Quiz Availability: Open from Monday, 12:00AM to Sunday, 11:59PM (see Course Calendar for specific dates.)

Quiz Duration: Students will have 20 minutes to answer 10 multiple-choice questions.

Quiz Attempts: Quizzes may be attempted twice. The higher of the two attempts will count towards the student's final grade. It is not mandatory to take each quiz twice.

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and internet connection, it is very important that the "Practice Quiz" be attempted prior to beginning the quizzes or exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum [hardware requirements](#).

The correct answers for quizzes will not be released to students. Students will be able to see submitted answers only. Students should refer to their course materials for the correct answers.

### **EXAMS (50% OF OVERALL GRADE)**

Exam 1 (25% of overall grade) and Exam 2 (25% of overall grade) consist of both objective and essay portions. The objective portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2 are both online, time-restricted examinations. These are in the Assessments area in Canvas.

**Students will have only one attempt to complete the objective portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2, unlike the quizzes. Please make note of this important difference.**

The essay prompts for the exams will become available in the Assessment area during the exam availability period. **The essay portions of these exams must be submitted via Canvas.** See the Assignments content area for essay topics.

The essay portions of Exam 1 and Exam 2 should each be approximately 500-750 words long.

Exam 1 Objective Portion - will cover Basic Religions, African Religions, Native American Religions, Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism.

Exam 2 Objective Portion - will cover Daoism/Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Sects and Cults, and Religion in the 21st Century

## **TERM PAPER (20% OF OVERALL GRADE)**

The term paper will be automatically checked for plagiarism using Turnitin Tools via Canvas. It is not necessary to create an account on Turnitin.com to submit this assignment.

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.

### **Instructions for students (read carefully):**

- Length: 1500-2000 words, in addition to a bibliography/works cited page
- Formatting: Double –spaced, 12-pt font, Arial or Times New Roman Font
- Bibliography: a minimum of 3 academic sources; preferably peer-reviewed publications and books. One of these must be a book reference. These academic

sources are in addition to your textbook/weekly readings/lectures. Do not use Wikipedia as an Internet source.

Construct an argument to answer **ONE** of the following three questions:

1. Identify one of the religions covered in this course that emphasizes behavior/deeds over adherence to creeds/beliefs/spiritual experiences in our current era. Then, compare it to another religion that you interpret as emphasizing the opposite, i.e., creeds/beliefs/spiritual experiences over behavior/deeds. Explain the reasons for such possible differences in emphases by exploring underlying sociological and historical themes. What were major world events or cultural developments that may have led each of these religions to emphasize each of these particular aspects over the other?
2. Although Buddhism and Hinduism share similar beliefs, their approaches to the self, or the 'soul' are very different. Explain the metaphysical and practical distinctions between *anatman* and *atman*, and how these concepts tie into each religion's unique approach to the sacred (god/gods) and the path to salvation. Make sure you specify which branches of Buddhism and Hinduism your analysis is tackling.
3. What is the meaning of the word *Jihad* in Islam? Select two distinct sects of Islam and explain key differences/similarities in the interpretation and practices of this term. What role, if any, does *Jihad* serve in the sects you have selected, in today's world? How has this role changed from previous historical time periods and/or how has it remained the same?

The textbook and required readings will not have enough information about any of the topic questions above to formulate substantial responses. To succeed in this assignment, set aside sufficient time to research the chosen topic thoroughly.

Points will be deducted for infractions of the following requirements-

\*\*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.

### **How your paper will be graded:**

The assignment will be evaluated based on: Research, Style, and Argument

- **Research** refers to the information in your paper. Is it correct? Is it detailed? Do you demonstrate basic knowledge of the religious tradition from which the concept is

taken? Is this knowledge evident in your description? You must use at least three academic sources in your paper. One of them must be a book reference.

- **Style** refers to how that information is presented. This includes the way the information is organized and language skills such as spelling, grammar, and proper sentence structure.
- **Argument** refers to the quality of your analysis, how well you support your

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Late Papers**

Late submissions will NOT be accepted, except in cases of genuine and documented emergencies.

Avoid leaving assignment/quiz submissions for the last minute before a deadline. “Heavy user traffic” during this timeframe may cause delays and/or errors, which can lead to students missing crucial deadlines.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus by means of announcements or messages with ample time allowed for students to respond and adjust appropriately.

### **Assignment Submissions**

All work has to be submitted through Canvas. Canvas does not allow instructors to submit on behalf of students. Please do not email your assignments to your instructor.

If you encounter errors or issues submitting an assignment, click on “Help” inside Canvas Course (located on the left-hand panel inside the course) and select Chat with Canvas Support (student). A live chat with Canvas support can fix the issue immediately.

### **Quiz Resets**

Please limit quiz reset requests to instances when technical issues compromised both quiz attempts. The second attempt is meant to be a “backup” attempt for situations where the first attempt was not completed successfully.

Reopening quizzes after the due date has passed will require verifiable documentation.

### **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

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>

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.

### **Extra Credit**

No Extra Credit work will be accepted in this course.

## **GRADING**

<b>Course Requirements</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Term Paper	20%
13 Multiple Choice Quizzes *Average will be calculated	20%

Midterm (Exam 1) - 50 points objective; 50 points essay	25%
Final (Exam 2) - 50 points objective; 50 points essay	25%
Discussion Board Assignments (5 total)	10%
Total	100%

### GRADING SCALE

This course fulfills the **Gordon Rule requirement**; a "C" or better must be earned to receive credit for this course.

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less

Dates	Course Calendar – Weekly Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> <b>January 7 -</b> <b>January 13</b>	<p>Intro and Basic Religions</p> <p>View: PowerPoint presentation "Introduction to Religion" by Dr. Northup. Video "Mystic Lands: Australia: Dreamtime."</p> <p>Read: Fisher - Chapters 1, Religious Responses, and 2, Indigenous Sacred Ways</p>

<b>Dates</b>	Course Calendar – Weekly Assignments
	Take Quiz 1 Religious Responses and Indigenous Sacred Ways Introduce yourself in the Discussion Forum
<b>Week 2</b> <b>January 14 -</b> <b>January 20</b>	Native American Religion  View: PowerPoint presentation "Native American Religions" by Dr. Huchingson.  Read: William A. Young, Quest for Harmony: Native American Spiritual Traditions, chapter 1. Full text available through Course Content.  Take Quiz 2: Native American Religions  DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum #1
<b>Week 3</b> <b>January 21 -</b> <b>January 27</b>	African Religion  View: PowerPoint presentation "African Religions" by Dr. Rey.  Read: E. Thomas Lawson, "The Yoruba and Their Religious Tradition"  Take Quiz 3: African Religions
<b>Week 4</b> <b>January 28 -</b> <b>February 3</b>	Hinduism  View: PowerPoint presentation "Hinduism" (Lecture I and Lecture II) by Dr. Katz.

<b>Dates</b>	Course Calendar – Weekly Assignments
	<p>Read: Fisher - Chapter 3, Hinduism</p> <p>Take Quiz 4: Hinduism</p>
<p><b>Week 5</b> <b>February 4 -</b> <b>February 10</b></p>	<p>Jainism</p> <p>View: PowerPoint presentation "Jainism" by Samani Charitra Prajna</p> <p>Read: Fisher - Chapter 4, Jainism</p> <p>Take Quiz 5: Jainism</p>
<p><b>Week 6</b> <b>February 11 -</b> <b>February 17</b></p>	<p>Buddhism</p> <p>View: PowerPoint presentation "Buddhism" by Dr. Heine</p> <p>Read: Fisher - Chapter 5, Buddhism</p> <p>Take Quiz 6: Buddhism</p> <p>DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum # 2</p>
<p><b>Week 7</b> <b>February 18 -</b> <b>February 24</b></p>	<p>Midterm - Exam 1</p>

<b>Dates</b>	Course Calendar – Weekly Assignments
	Midterm - Exam 1 (Objective and Essay portions) Available Monday, Feb 18th, 12:00 am – Sunday, Feb 24th, 11:59 pm
<b>Week 8</b> <b>February 25 -</b> <b>March 3</b>	Taoism/Confucianism  View: PowerPoint presentation "Taoism/Confucianism" by Prof. Avila PowerPoint presentation "Shinto" by Prof. Avila  Read: Fisher - Chapters 6, Taoism/Confucianism, and 7, Shinto  Take Quiz 7: Daoism/Confucianism and Shinto  DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum # 3
<b>Week 9</b> <b>March 4 - March</b> <b>10</b>	Judaism  View: PowerPoint presentation "Judaism" (Part I and II) by Dr. Stier  Watch video "Mystic Lands: Jerusalem: Mosaic of Faith."  Read: Fisher - Chapter 8, Judaism  Take Quiz 8: Judaism
<b>Week 10</b>	Islam

<b>Dates</b>	Course Calendar – Weekly Assignments
<b>March 11 - March 17</b>  <b>Spring Break</b>	View: PowerPoint presentation "Islam" by Dr. Musa.  Read: Fisher - Chapters 10, Islam, and 11, Sikhism  Take Quiz 9: Islam  DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum # 4  *Assignments will remain open until March 24th
<b>Week 11</b>  <b>March 18 - March 24</b>	Christianity  View: PowerPoint presentation "Christianity: The First Millennium" by Dr. Larson.  PowerPoint presentation "Christianity: The Second Millennium" by Dr. Gudorf.  Read: Fisher - Chapter 9, Christianity  Take Quiz 10: Christianity
<b>Week 12</b>  <b>March 25 - March 31</b>	Christianity in North America  View: PowerPoint presentation "Religion in North America" by Dr. Northup

<b>Dates</b>	Course Calendar – Weekly Assignments
	<p>Take Quiz 11: Christianity and North American Religion</p> <p>Term Paper Due Saturday, March 30th, 11:45 pm via Assignments area in Canvas</p>
<p><b>Week 13</b> <b>April 1 - April 7</b></p>	<p>Sects and Cults</p> <p>View: PowerPoint presentation "Sects and Cults" by Dr. Northup</p> <p>Read: Fisher - Chapter 12, New Religious Movements</p> <p>Take Quiz 12: Sects and Cults - New Religious Movements</p> <p>Religion in the 21st Century</p> <p>View: PowerPoint presentation "Religion in the Future" by Dr. Gudorf</p> <p>Read: Fisher - Chapter 13, Religion in the 21st Century</p> <p>Take Quiz 13: Religion in the 21st Century</p> <p>DUE: Participate in Discussion Forum #5</p>
<p><b>Week 14</b> <b>April 8 - April 14</b></p>	<p>Quizzes 12 and 13 will remain this whole week – if you didn't finish last week</p> <p>Discussion #5 will also remain open this week.</p>

<b>Dates</b>	Course Calendar – Weekly Assignments
<b>Week 15</b> <b>April 15 - April 20</b>	Take: Final - Exam 2 (Objective and Essay portions)  Note – Exam 2 is due on Saturday, not Sunday.  Available Monday, April 15th , 12:00AM– Saturday, April 20th 11:45pm