



REL 4030 - Methods in the Study of Religion - RVC
 Fall 2022
 8/22/2022 -12/3/2022

Professor Information



Instructor Dr. Erik Larson	Office DM 303
E-mail larsone@fiu.edu	phone (305) 348-3518
Office Hours By Appointment	Website http://religion.fiu.edu/faculty/full-time-faculty/erik-larson/

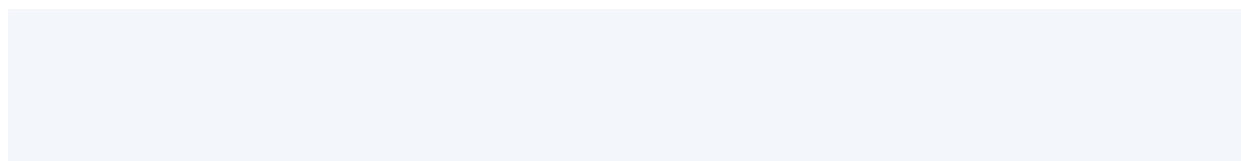
Course Description and Purpose

This online section of Methods in the Study of Religion will introduce you to some of the major ways that religious traditions and practices may be studied. You will be introduced to each methodology through the assigned readings of the scholars studied and PowerPoint presentations by members of the Religious Studies faculty.

You will be tested on your knowledge of the course material through:

- 12 Time-restricted Quizzes
- A Midterm Exam (objective)
- A Final Exam (objective)
- Paper 1 – Critique Paper
- Paper 2 - Research Paper*

*The research paper will develop your ability to evaluate and apply a methodology of your choosing.



Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the major approaches to the study of religion.
- Be familiar with selections from the writings of the scholars studied.
- Have sufficient knowledge to write research papers critically evaluating the methodologies examined.
- Be able to compare and/or contrast approaches.
- Recognize the importance of methodology in the study of religion.
- Be prepared to apply the relevant approaches in your own studies.

Important Information

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 online courses. For additional information, please visit [FIU's Policy and Procedure Library](#).

As a member of the FIU community you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the [FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code](#).

Technical Requirements and Skills

One of the greatest barriers to taking an 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 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.

Privacy Policy Statements for Partners and Vendors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvas • Microsoft • Adobe • Google • YouTube • Respondus LockDown Browser 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn • ProctorU • HonorLock (PDF) • Turnitin • OpenStax • Zoom
---	---

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.

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

Web Accessibility Statements for Partners and Vendors

- [Canvas](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Adobe](#)
- [Google](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [ProctorU](#)
- [HonorLock](#)
- [Turnitin](#)
- [OpenStax](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- [Respondus LockDown Browser](#)

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

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 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 Conduct and Honor Code. Academic Misconduct includes:

Cheating

- The unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids or assistance from another person on any academic assignment or exercise, unless explicitly authorized by the course Instructor;
- Assisting another Student in the unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids, unless explicitly authorized by the Instructor; and
- Having a substitute complete any academic assignment or completing an academic assignment for someone else, either paid or unpaid; and

Plagiarism

- The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the Student's own.
- Assisting another Student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.

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

Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate's well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with [FIU's Panthers Care website](#).

[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don't wait to call (305) 348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.

Inclusivity Statement

This course will serve to embrace the diversity and inclusivity found within Florida International University. We appreciate and respect diversity, equality, equity, cooperativeness, community, and sustainability within our online courses. We are committed to the ongoing education of our students and their participation within the course regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, geographical location, religion, and disability. We strive in encouraging collaboration by preparing our students to value the differences in others. At the core of our intentions is the encouragement of acceptance and appreciation of differences within our student population and community.

Textbook and Course Materials

No textbook required

There are no textbooks for this course. All weekly readings will be available in online format. It is your responsibility to view and read these in time to take the quizzes. If you have any trouble viewing the material, contact the professor on Monday or Tuesday of the week.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, meaning that most of the course work 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 Detail

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the [Canvas Conversations Tutorial](#) or [Canvas Guide](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

Discussion Forums

Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

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. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum [hardware requirements](#).

All assessments will auto-submit when (1) the timer runs out OR (2) the closing date/time is reached, **whichever happens first**. For example, if a quiz has a closing time of 5:00 pm but the student begins the exam at 4:55 pm, the student will only have 5 minutes to complete the quiz.

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 Canvas Help Team](#).

Quizzes (20% of Total Grade)

A time-restricted, online quiz will be given on each week's religious concept. You can take each quiz twice, and the higher of the two attempts will be recorded. Even if you do well on the first attempt, it is advisable to use both attempts. You will not receive the same quiz the second time; the computer randomly chooses the questions from a quiz database. You will have 15 minutes to complete 10 questions.

Quizzes will be available within the modules in which they are due.

Exams (30% Each of Total Grade)

Exam 1 and Exam 2 will each consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and matching questions. These two exams will be time-restricted and will be based on weekly lectures and readings.

Note: Exam 2 is not cumulative—it covers only material from the second half of the semester.

Paper 1 – Critique Paper (20% of Total Grade)

For the first essay, please follow the directions below:

- Choose one of the methodologies that you have covered in the first half of this course.
- Using the research databases available to you via library.fiu.edu, find a critique of the methodology that you have selected.
- After giving the article a thorough reading, compose an essay (4-5 pages) arguing in favor or against the critique. Is the author's critique valid? Why or why not?

Please make sure you include the article you selected in a works cited page at the end of your essay.

Formatting Guidelines

- 12 pt font, double-spaced, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margins- 1 inch on all sides

- Length – 9-12 pages excluding bibliography
- Writing Style - *MLA* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*
- You may use either footnotes or endnotes.

Paper 2- RESEARCH PAPER (30% of Total Grade)

You will write a research paper using **two** of the approaches covered in the course that particularly interests you. The paper will identify a topic in the field of religious studies and then discuss how you could use the methodologies to study the relevant issues. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of each method.

The paper topic must receive the approval of the professor before it is submitted.

Formatting Guidelines

- 12 pt font, double-spaced, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margins- 1 inch on all sides
- Length – 9-12 pages excluding bibliography
- Writing Style - *MLA* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*
- You may use either footnotes or endnotes.

Papers will be submitted via Turnitin in Canvas. Please review the [important information about assignments](#) page for detailed instructions on how to submit your assignment and review grade mark comments.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another's work as your own, falls into three different categories:

- A written work that is entirely stolen from another source;
- Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
- Paraphrasing from another source without proper citations.

Students are expected to understand the definition of plagiarism. See the [Academic Misconduct Statement](#) if you need further clarification. 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.**

Grading

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Weight
Weekly Quizzes	12	20%
Exam 1 (Objective)	1	15%
Exam 2 (Objective)	1	15%
Paper 1 - Critique Paper	1	20%
Paper 2 - Research Paper	1	30%
Total	16	100%

Grading Schema

Name	From	To
A	100%	95%
A-	< 95%	90%
B+	< 90%	87%
B	< 87%	83%
B-	< 83%	80%
C+	< 80%	77%
C	< 77%	70%
D	< 70%	60%
F	< 60%	0%

Course Calendar

Date	Course Content and Assignments
Week 1 August 22	<p>PowerPoint: <i>History of Religions: Troeltsch and James</i> by Professor Larson</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ernst Troeltsch, "Historical and Dogmatic Method in Theology" - Ernst Troeltsch, "The Place of Christianity among the World-Religions" <i>Christian Thought: Its History and Application</i> - William James, Excerpt from <i>The Varieties of Religious Experience</i> in Charles Taliaferro and Paul Griffiths <i>Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology</i> - William James, Postscript to <i>The Varieties of Religious Experience</i>. <p>Take Quiz 1 - Available Monday-Sunday of this week (will remain open until end of 2nd week to accommodate late registration)</p>
Week 2 August 29	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Reductionist: Marx and Freud</i> by Professors Gudorf and Stier</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Marx-Engels Reader</i>, Robert C. Tucker, ed. (New York: Norton, 1972) 11-23, 107-109, 335-353. <p>Take Quiz 2 - Available Monday-Sunday of this week</p>
Week 3 September 5	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Myth and Ritual: Jung, Otto, and Eliade</i> by Professor Northup</p> <p>Read:</p>

Date	Course Content and Assignments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Otto: <i>The Idea of the Holy</i>, Translator's Preface (19 pp) + pp. 1-34 - Eliade: <i>The Sacred and the Profane</i>, Introduction - <i>Images and Symbols</i>: Introduction - <i>Myth and Reality</i>, Excerpt - Jung Foundation article: "Myth and Psyche" <p>Take Quiz 3 - Available Monday-Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 4 September 12</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Sociological: Durkheim and Weber</i> by Professor Wuaku</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Society as Sacred : Emily Durkheim" and "A Source of Social Action : Max Weber" from <i>Eight Theories of Religion</i> 1-40 <p>Take Quiz 4 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 5 September 19</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Anthropological: Geertz and Turner</i> by Professor Seidel</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clifford Geertz, <i>The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays</i> (NY: Basic Books, Inc., 1973) Chapter 4: Religion as a Cultural System, pp. 87-125. - Mathieu Deflem, "Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner's Processual Symbolic Analysis." <i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</i> 30 (1991) 1-25. <p>Take Quiz 5 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 6 September 26</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Anthropological/Sociological: Douglas and Berger</i> by Professors Stier and Alvarez</p>

Date	Course Content and Assignments
	<p>Read: - <i>Purity and Danger</i> - Mary Douglas</p> <p>Take Quiz 6 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 7 October 3</p>	<p>Take Exam 1 – Midterm (objective) Available from Monday, 12:00 am – Sunday, , 11:59 pm</p> <p>Paper 1 – Critique Paper - DUE October 9</p>
<p>Week 8 October 10</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Perennialist/Non-Perennialist:</i> Huxley, Nasr and S. Katz by Professor Katz</p> <p>Read: - Aldous Huxley, Introduction to the Bhagavad Gita - Steven Katz, “Language and Mysticism” - Aseem Shukla, “Exclusivists vs. Pluralists: very different paths to one Truth”</p> <p>Take Quiz 7 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 9 October 17</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Structuralist/Post-Structuralist:</i> Levi-Strauss by Professor Alvarez</p> <p>Read: - Levi Strauss, “History and Anthropology,” from <i>Structural Anthropology</i> (Basic Books, 1963 [Anchor Books, 1967]), 1-28. - Levi Strauss, “The Structural Study of Myth,” from <i>ibid.</i>, 202-229. - Mary Douglas, “The Meaning of Myth,” from <i>The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism</i> (Tavistock Publications, 1967), 49-69. - K. O. L. Burridge, “Levi-Strauss and Myth,” <i>ibid.</i>, 91-115.</p>

Date	Course Content and Assignments
	<p>Take Quiz 8 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 10 October 24</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Structuralist/Post-Structuralist: Foucault</i> by Professor Alvarez</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," from <i>Discipline and Punish</i> (Pantheon, 1977), 195-228. - Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power," from <i>Power/Knowledge</i>, 109-133. - Michel Foucault, "Two lectures," from <i>Power/Knowledge</i>, 78-108. <p>Take Quiz 9 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 11 October 31</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Feminist: Ruether and Mahmoud</i> by Professor Gudorf</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rosemary Radford Ruether, <i>Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology</i> (Boston: Beacon, 1983) 1-46, 93-138. - Saba Mahmoud, <i>Politics of Piety: Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject</i> (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) 1-117. <p>Take Quiz 10 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 12 November 7</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Liberation: Gutierrez, Boff and Phan</i> by Professor Bidegain</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gustavo Gutierrez, <i>A theology of Liberation: history, politics, and salvation</i>, Trans. By Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988; First Edition 1973- in Spanish 1971) Introduction, Chap 1 and 2.

Date	Course Content and Assignments
	<p>- Peter Phan, "Method in Liberation Theologies" <i>Theological Studies</i>, March 1, 2000</p> <p>- Clodovis Boff, "Epistemology and Method of the Theology of Liberation" in <i>Mysterium Liberationis Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology</i>, ed. Ignacio Ellacuria and Jon Sobrino (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993) 57-84.</p> <p>Take Quiz 11 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 13 November 14</p>	<p>PowerPoint: <i>Ecological: Gottlieb</i> by Professor Bauman</p> <p>Read: - Whitney A. Bauman, Rick Bohannon, and Kevin J. O'Brien, eds., <i>Grounding Religion: A Field Guide to Religion and Ecology</i> (Routledge 2010), pp1-78.</p> <p>Take Quiz 12 - Available Monday - Sunday of this week</p>
<p>Week 14 November 21</p>	<p>Start writing your Paper 2- Research Paper (due next week)</p> <p>Happy Thanksgiving!</p>
<p>Week 15 November 28</p>	<p>**Research Paper due Saturday, 11:59pm</p> <p>Take Exam 2 (objective) Available Monday, 12:00pm to Saturday, 11:59pm</p>