

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Department of Religious Studies

REL 3308 Studies in World Religions

Fall 2023

Instructor: Mr. Daniel Alvarez

Class Hours: TR, 12:30-1:45 p.m.

Office Hours: TBA .

PC 432

DM 304A

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#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examines the origins, teachings, and practices of selected world religions. The specific religions selected for examination may vary from semester to semester.

#### TEXTBOOKS

Lewis M. Hopfe, Mark R. Woodward, *Religions of the World*, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> edition, 2012 [pagination in the syllabus follows the 12<sup>th</sup> edition exclusively].

Franklin Edgerton, *Bhagavad Gita*, Harvard University Press, 1972.

Lao Tzu, selections from the Tao te Ching (available on Canvas).

FOR GLOBALIZATION QUESTION: Kwame Anthony Appiah, "The Case for Contamination" (available on Canvas).

#### INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To provide the student with the "raw materials" for the study of religion by immersing the student in the beliefs, doctrines, rituals, symbols, and (select) scriptures of some of the major world religions.

2. To facilitate the informed cross-cultural comparison and evaluation of ways of being religious by focused study of select world religions.
3. To widen, enhance and enrich the intellectual and spiritual horizons of the student by exposure to the spiritual beauty, vitality, coherence, plausibility and richness of non-Christian, non-Western approaches to the transcendent or ultimate reality.
4. To challenge the student to enter sympathetically into the worldview of the religious traditions selected for study.
5. To provide the context for dialogue and discussion that will enable the student to live in an enormously complex, interdependent, and religiously plural world with patience, understanding, and appreciation for that which is different, and in some cases irreconcilably different, from his or her own "worldview."

#### UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS: GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Global Awareness: Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems.
  - **Course Learning Outcome:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of the interrelated dynamics (social-cultural, political, economic, etc.) that shape the actions of multiple figures in diverse cultural contexts.
- Global Perspectives: Students will be able to develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.
  - **Course Learning Outcome:** Students will be able to analyze the multiple causal forces that shape the perspectives of historical individuals/persons – economic, political, sociological, technological, cultural, etc.
- Global Engagement: Students will be able to demonstrate a willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.

- **Course Learning Outcome:** Students will demonstrate a willingness to engage in negotiation regarding actions of global import within the context of the class simulation.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As a **Gordon Rule course**, written assignments are required of all students in order to fulfill the State-mandated standards for this course. The Gordon Rule requirement will be met by **four (4) writing assignments (see below): a midterm essay exam, a final essay exam, a site visit report, and the globalization question.**

**Note about the assignments:** Students will have **two (2) attempts**, with highest score being the final score, on all the objective assessments (quizzes and exams). For the written assignments, the instructor will post the questions **two (2) weeks before the essays are due** on Blackboard. That is, students will have two weeks to write all the written exams, including the globalization question.

1. **Midterm Essay Exam**, Two (2) Short Essays (500-700 words), on questions provided by instructor: 15% of final grade)
2. **Final Essay Exam:** Two (2) Short Essays (500-700 words), on questions provided by instructor (15% of final grade).
3. **Two (2) Quizzes:**

**Quiz #1**, on Hinduism and Buddhism: 20 questions (10% of final grade).

**Quiz #2**, on Chinese Religions (Taoism and Confucianism): 20 questions (10% of final grade).

4. **Objective Midterm**, 50 questions, two attempts, 2 hours, on Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism (15% final grade).

5. **Objective Final**, 50 questions, two attempts, 2 hours, on Judaism, Christianity, Islam (15% of final grade).

6. **Site Visit** (4-5 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) (15% of final grade).

7. **Globalization Question (essay format):** students will write an essay (minimum of 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) on Kwame Anthony Appiah's "The Case for Contamination" (5% of final grade).

*Site Visit Format* and *Short Directory of Religious Sites of South Florida* are found at the end of the syllabus. Site visit reports will be staggered throughout the semester if necessary based on alphabetical order- (last name of students). That is, the due dates will not be

the same for all students, with some site visits due the 5<sup>th</sup> week, others the 10<sup>th</sup> week, to make it easy for the teaching assistants to grade reports in a timely manner.

### EXTRA CREDIT: EXTRA CREDIT

During the course of the term, there will various extra credit opportunities available to the student. You will earn one (1) point towards the final grade, based on 100 points. So if you attend five (5) extra credit events, you will have earned five (5) whole points toward your final score total. Students will be allowed to earn **up to 5 extra credit points**. Proof of attendance to an extra credit event will be submitting a **3x5 index card**, which will be collected by the professor and the Teaching Assistants (TAs) after the conclusion of the event (not before).

Only special lectures offered by the Religious Studies Department, Muslim World Studies Initiative, Middle East Studies Center, Judaic Studies, Institute of Asian Studies, and Center for Spirituality count toward extra-credit opportunities and will be announced in class and via email to all students.

**THE QUIZZES** will be true/false, multiple choice, and the questions will be drawn from the required reading, lectures, and videos. Given this fact, it is important that the student make an effort to attend every class. All exams and quizzes are online. As explained above, students will have **two (2) ATTEMPTS for each of the objective assessments** (quizzes).

The quizzes will be twenty (20) questions each. The final exam of one hundred (100) questions will not be comprehensive; it will cover only the material after the midterm exam (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). **YOU WILL HAVE ONE (1) HOUR TO COMPLETE THE QUIZZES.**

### SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Students will have one week to submit assignments to TURNITIN.COM (ON CANVAS). Due dates will be posted on the weeks assignments are due. Papers submitted **any time within one week** after the first week dates will (that is, the second week) be deducted **10 points**; any time during the week after that (the third week) **20 points**. **No paper will be accepted after the third week** (see dates below).

This late paper policy does not apply to the final exam. Final exam will be submitted during the announced submission period and will not be accepted after that.

**GET THE RECEIPT:** Students should print the **Turnitin.com receipt** that verifies the date and the hour you they submitted their work. Receipts are essential to settle disputes as to when and whether a paper was submitted (and avoid possible late submission point deductions).

All written work will be submitted through TURNITIN.COM (midterm, final, and site visit).

All written work must be typed, double-spaced, and in a "normal" (12 pt) size font (written work submitted in *large* font will not be acceptable); and any quotations should follow the manual of style or the standard style recommended by FIU.

This course may also fulfill the **Critical Inquiry** requirement of the FIU core curriculum if the student earns a grade of "C" or higher. A "C-" or lower grade will **not** satisfy the Critical Inquiry requirement.

Grades will be posted **10 days after the last due date** of the week papers are submitted. Please do not ask for your grade before the ten days are up.

**Quotations from internet sources** (Wikipedia, Encarta, and the like) **will not be accepted**. All source quotations must be from the assigned textbooks.

**ALL WORK WILL BE DONE ONLINE AND SUBMITTED TO BLACKBOARD.**

## FIU Academic Misconduct Statement

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellence in 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 that 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 Honors College 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 other work; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. Cheating violates both University and College codes.

**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, commits plagiarism. Plagiarism violates both University and College codes.

**Unacceptable behavior** – Students who show repeated or egregious disrespect for classmates or instructors, are disruptive, or consistently violate course rules are subject to the sanctions of the Honors College.

ALL EXAMS, QUIZZES, SITE VISIT REPORT, and the GLOBALIZATION ESSAY (that is, all class assignments) will be done ONLINE THROUGH CANVAS.

A	94-100	C	73-77
A-	90-93	C-	70-72
B+	88-89	D+	68-69
B	83-87	D	63-67
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	78-79	F	0-59

## COURSE OUTLINE

## Week 1

Introduction: Syllabus, Requirements, Textbooks, Overview of course

Hinduism: Pre-Classical or Vedic Religion

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, *et al.*, chapter 4, 72-82; Edgerton, 111-119.

## Week 2

Film: Pre-Aryan Civilization of the Indus Valley

Hinduism: The Upanishads

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 82-89; Edgerton, 120-131; 164-178.

## Week 3

Hinduism: Bhagavad Gita: Karma, Jñana, Bhakti

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 89-107; *Bhagavad Gita*, 3-91.

Film: "330 Million Gods"

## Week 4

Theravada Buddhism: The Four Noble Truths, Nirvana, Anatta

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 128-138; 153-154 ("The Noble Eight-Fold Path").

*Recommended:* "Siddhartha," film based on the novel by Herman Hesse.

Film: "Footprint of the Buddha"

Week 5      **Quiz #1, on Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism (due date tba)**

Mahayana Buddhism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 138-150; 154-155 ("The Infinite Compassion of the *Bodhisattva*").

Recommended: Film: "Little Buddha."

Film: "Land of the Disappearing Buddha" (on Pure Land and Zen Buddhism).

Week 6

Jainism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 116-124.

Sikhism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 156-165.

Week 7      **Essay Midterm Exam (on Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism), due date tba**

Chinese Religions: Taoism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 172-185; 197-199 (selection from the *Tao Te Ching*).

Chinese Religions: Confucianism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 186-196; 193-200 (selection from the *Analects of Confucius*).

Week 8



Film: Chinese Religions

Israel: The pre-history of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 242-251; 272-274 (Deuteronomy 5, 6: "The 10 Commandments").

Week 9 **Quiz #2, on Chinese Religions (Taoism and Confucianism)**

Prophecy in tension with Kingship and Priesthood

*Required Reading:* Hoseah, Amos, Micah (very short books of the Hebrew Bible); Jeremiah 7,

Deuteronomy 20, Isaiah, 6, 9, 11, 58, 60, 61.

Between the Testaments: 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism 520 b.c.-70 c.e.

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 251-271.

Week 10

The Emergence of Rabbinic Judaism: 200 b.c.-500 c.e.;  
Judaism: Kabbalah, Hasidic Pietism,

Emancipation, Holocaust

Christianity in the First Century: The Historical Jesus

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 278-295; 319-322 (Matthew 5-7); Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 4:1-30;

Galatians 1, 2; II Corinthians 11-13; Acts 15.

Week 11 From Early Catholicism to the Catholic Tradition: 200-1500

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 295-302.

The Formation of the Protestant Evangelical Tradition: 1517-1800

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 302-318.

Week 12

The Formation of the Protestant Liberal Tradition: 1800-2000

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 307-318.

Week 13

Islam: The Prophet and the Faith of Islam

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 328-344; 357-364 (selection from the *Qur'an*).

Film: "There is no God but God"

Week 14

Islam: Development of Law, Sufism, 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Century Reform Movements,

Islamic Fundamentalism (from Ibn Hanbal to Muhammad Al'Wahhab)

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 344-356.

Islam in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Arab Nationalism vs. Islamic Fundamentalism

Week 15

Film: "The Message" (on the life and message of prophet Muhammed).

**GLOBALIZATION ESSAY AND ESSAY FINAL EXAM DUE ON MONDAY OF FINALS WEEK**

**QUIZ #5 WILL BE POSTED THE WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS**

## 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**. If a phone number is no longer valid, call information and please let the instructor know that the number(s) has been changed so that the directory can be updated. If you learn about other sites not included below, please let the instructor know also. **I strongly recommend that you visit the site first to familiarize yourself with location and the times officially given by the personnel at the site. Any information concerning service times given below are tentative.**

**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](mailto: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>Links to an external site.

## **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).

### FORMAT FOR SITE VISIT REPORT

Name of Site Visited:

Sect or Denomination of Religion:

Day visited:

1. Briefly (short paragraph), state the fundamental beliefs (important if you are visiting a sectarian group, and note differences in belief and practice from its parent group), and sources of authority or basis for the religion or sect (such as inspired scriptures, teachers, direct revelations, and the like). Specify both the religion and the sect or branch you have visited (e.g., Hindu temple [Shiva, Vishnu, Hare Krishna]; Synagogue [Orthodox, Reformed, Conservative]; Buddhist sect [Pure Land, Nichiren, Tibetan, Mahayana, Theravada] Islamic sect [Nation of Islam, Sunni, Shia], etc.).

2. Why is the religion here in South Florida, whose needs is the religion/sect meeting. In a sentence or two, what are the reasons for the appearance of religion/sect in South Florida.

**\*3. Describe in some detail art, symbols, images, cultic objects (including sacred scriptures, if of artistic or aesthetic merit) of the religion. If there are few or none, say so.**

4. Distinctive dress, articles of clothing, of members and/or clergy of the religion you witnessed during visit. Inquire as to whether normally there is a distinctive dress, etc. in other locations. Include how much adaptation or concessions to "American" ways of worshipping you witnessed during your visit (for this you may also have to tap a knowledgeable person for information).



**\*5. Forms of ritual, worship/liturgy, special ceremonies, particular/distinctive practices that you saw practice during your visit. As with #3, this should be a significant part of your report.**

6. Major religious festivals or sacred days (and their dates and days during the year) celebrated in South Florida (and those elsewhere, such as in the country of origin of religion or where religion is strongest).

**\*7. Describe how what you saw and heard impacted you; did visit enhance your appreciation for that particular religious faith and/or for religion in general; did you feel you were "worshipping"?; did anything strike you in a negative way?; what was the most positive result of your visit? Your experience at the site is especially important for this report so don't just write something generic (like "I enjoyed my experience... It really changed my life." Write about your specific experiences at the site, don't just say that you had a wonderful time.**

**\* Starred/boldfaced items should constitute the bulk of your report**, what you should give priority to when you write your report. Also, it is important that you make an effort to enter sympathetically into the religion you will be visiting. You do not have to agree with what you see and hear, but you should make an effort to understand it. After your visit and as you write your report, you will have the opportunity to express your opinion about what you witnessed.