



REL 3308 Studies in World Religions

Section: RVF

Internet/Fully Online

Fall Term 2023

Course Meeting Information

Mandatory Zoom Class Meeting Times

Day:	Friday
Time	11am- 12:15pm
Location	Zoom

Professor Information

Valeria Schindler

Contact: vschindl@fiu.edu

Office Hours:

Via Zoom

Valeria Schindler

Contact: vschindl@fiu.edu

Turnaround Time: Within 24 hours

Office: Meetings take place via Zoom

Office Hours:

After Zoom class on Friday and by appointment during the week. Please email me to schedule an appointment

Course Description and Purpose

Sociologist Emile Durkheim saw religion as a part of the human condition, and while the content of religion might be different from society to society over time, religion will, in some form or another, always be a part of social life. Therefore, you do not need to be a religious person in order to be in contact with religion. This course will provide you the tools to learn and understand different religious beliefs from around the world and how they interact with your academic field.

Maybe Jesus was a Buddhist monk. Where exactly did your yoga class come from? Why are Native Americans some of the best eco-advocates today? Is Judaism a religion, a culture, or a tribe? It might be good to wonder if religion is a force for good or evil to begin with. Can we still be spiritual without being religious? These are not just entertaining questions but are highly relevant to your personal and professional development in our globalized world. In this interdisciplinary course, we will explore these questions and many more that emerge as we investigate humanity, religion, and the cosmos.

Course Goals

This is an introductory course to world religions and one of the many courses that complete the Global Learning requirement. Since it is an extensive subject, we will be focusing on some of the major religions of our world, examining them from its historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, and ritualistic practices. Furthermore, we will also learn about religions that are no longer in practice and had influenced some of today's religions. We will analyze the differences and similarities between religions and associate their practices, beliefs, and applications to contemporary issues in our world.

What is important to learn as a global citizen? What about University Requirements for the Global Learning Objectives?

1. **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.

2. **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.

3. **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.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of themes, definitions, and symbols relating to religion.
- Compare and contrast the key underlying beliefs and principles of the major Eastern, Western, indigenous and shamanic religions.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the evolution and movement of religious beliefs from ancient to contemporary times.

- Evaluate religious truth claims as potential sources of knowledge.
- Demonstrate an increased empathetic awareness of religious diversity and differences.

Expectations of the Course

Online LIVE

In an Online LIVE course, we meet once a week via Zoom. The time we spend together is dedicated to engaging in learning, clarifying concepts, debating, working in groups, and discussing and developing each of the concepts covered in the course. This course is taught in “reversed classroom” style, in which most of the work in class is done by students, and I will be there to clarify your questions and guide you in your work.

The remaining of the work takes place outside the class, and it will be your responsibility to acquire all the knowledge required for the activities in class. This includes reading the textbook, writing papers, watching videos, reading articles, providing opinions on different topics, and posting weekly in a discussion board.

Course Communication- how to contact your professor

- Communication in this course will take place via the Inbox. Check out the Canvas Conversations Help Desk to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. You can also email me at vschindl@fiu.edu. I will reply to your email within 24 hours, unless you sent an email on a holiday or weekend.

Attendance Policy: Attendance to the in-person Zoom meetings is mandatory, and students are expected to engage in class discussion. If you login 10 minutes late, you will not be allowed in the Zoom meeting and be marked absent. Not attending the Zoom meeting will not only impact your attendance grade-- as many activities done in class count towards your final grade, but you will also be missing on information needed for the activities, quizzes, and tests. Participation includes reading for class, contributing to discussions, being attentive to lectures and student presentations, and completing an exit

ticket activity by the end of the day in which we meet. Participation also includes introducing yourself in the online forum. Students that miss a lot of Zoom meetings usually do not pass the course.

Camera Policy for the Zoom meeting: Having your camera on during the Zoom meeting is highly encourage. ***It is a requirement when doing the presentation***, and if a student in the group do not have the camera on, it will affect the overall grade of the presentation for the entire group. Students will know by the third week what day they will be presenting. If you have difficulties accessing a video camera, please contact me ASAP and I will help you getting one.

Students are expected to:

- review the getting started page located in the course modules;
- introduce yourself to the class during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- take the practice quiz to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- interact online with instructor and peers;
- review and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- log in to the course at least 4 times per week;
- respond to discussions by the due date specified. No late work will be accepted;
- respond to emails within 1 days;
- submit assignments by the corresponding deadline

I, as your instructor will:

- log in to the course 5-6 times a week;
- respond to discussion postings within 2 days of the deadline;
- respond to emails within 24 hours unless it is on the weekend or a holiday;
- grade assignments within 2 days of the assignment deadline;

- grade essays within 10 days of the assignment deadline.

Late Assignment policy

- Late assignments are accepted for online activities with a 20 point penalty per late day.
- Late essays are accepted with a 2 point penalty per late day, up to 16 points. No essays will be accepted beyond Week 13 of the semester
- No late submissions of online discussions are accepted
- Quizzes and the midterm exam can be re-scheduled if a reason is provided at least 5 days prior to the scheduled day.
- No Make up dates are provided for the Final Exam

Extra Credit.

Sometimes some students may need an extra help, and it usually involves attending a special lecture and writing a summary and analysis. The essay could be worth up to 3 extra credit points to be added to the final grade. You will have to write a one-page summary of the lecture for one extra credit point. If you want, you can write a two-page analysis linking the lecture to the content of the class for up to two more points. Reports need to be well written with good grammar. A maximum of 6 extra credit points could be awarded. Please refer to the list of events provided in the course resources module. Extra credit reports need to be sent via email by the second to last week of the semester.

Assignments

- **Research Paper**
 - Students will have to choose two different religions, and research, compare, and contrast one element that appears in both religions. You will have to use scholarly sources for this assignment, no websites or Wikipedia articles will be

accepted. The topic needs to be approved by the deadline indicated in Canvas by the professor, if not, you will not receive a zero grade for the essay. In the module for Student Resources there is a video tutorial on how to perform research at the Library online. *Details on the content and format of the essay are provided in the Module in Canvas*

- **The essay has two components:**
 - ***Bibliography and draft:*** Should be 1000-1500 words and it is 30% of the final grade of the essay
 - ***Final essay:*** 1200-2000 words
- **Online activities**
 - Every week after covering a topic, you will have to submit one or two activities. Each activity is available under the corresponding module and is due at midnight on Sunday. All the due dates are listed on the course's calendar. I do accept late submissions for the activities, with a 20-point deduction per late day. Points will also be deducted for poor grammar or typos, and not well justified answers.
- **Perusall Reflections**
 - You will have to purchase our textbook in Perusall, which is a reading interactive app. You will be able to highlight, take notes, and make comments while reading. For each assigned reading, I will provide a general prompt or a series of questions that you can answer while reading the chapters. You can also ask questions and make comments on the reading. You will have to post at least 6 comments on the assigned reading. At least three of them must be original comments, and the rest could be answers to questions or comments on your classmates comments. The Perusall reflection is due on Tuesday. Keep in mind that your postings will likely be seen by other members of the course and I might bring some of your posts to be discussed in class. Care should be

taken when determining what to post. Since these are intended to be online “discussions” (similar to conversations), late submissions or make ups will not be allowed under any circumstances.

- **Group presentation**

- This will be done at the beginning of each topic. The group will present on the religion being covered. The presentation should be a maximum of 45 minutes. All members need to present and the cameras of every single member of the group need to be on for the entire presentation. You will get a chance to pick the religion you would like to present on by visiting the People tab and clicking on "Group Presentation on Religion". Guidelines, Instructions, and Rubric are provided in Canvas in the module "Course Resources".

- **Exit Ticket**

- Each student will have a chance to fill out an exit ticket at the end of the in-person class, which is going to be something related to what happened during the meeting. Sometimes it could be an activity performed at the end of the class

Assessments

- **Ten 10-questions quizzes**—from which the lowest score will be dropped at the end of the semester.
 - The quizzes will be available for four (5) days in Canvas, opening on Friday after class and closing at the end of the day on Tuesday. Students have 10 minutes to complete each quiz. You will have the chance to take each quiz twice if you want, and the highest score will be kept as your final score.
- **Midterm and Final Exams.**

- **Midterm:** will cover the first half of the semester and will include 50 multiple choice and true and false questions. Students will have one hour and ten minutes to complete it. The midterm will be available for four (4) days in Canvas, opening on Thursday and closing at the end of the day on Sunday.
- **Final:** will cover from second half of the semester and will include multiple choice, and true and false questions. Students will have one hour and ten minutes to complete it. The final will be available for four days around the date set by the university. You can consult Panthersoft later on in the semester for the day.
 - *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.*

Grading

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Total	62	835	3625	100

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Quizzes	10	100	900 (lowest score dropped)	15%
Midterm Exam	1	100	100	10%
Final Exam	1	100	100	10%
Draft and Bibliography	1	115%00	100	** This grade is 30% of the grade in your final essay**
Final Research Paper	1	100	100	15%
Online Activities	16	100	1600	15%
Group Presentation	1	100	100	10%
Perusall Reflection	15	30	450	15%
Exit ticket	15	5	75	5%
Attendance and Participation	1	100	100	5%
Total	62	835	3625	100

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %
A	95 and	B	83-86	C	70-76

	Above				
A-	90-94	B-	80-82	D	60-69
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	F	59 or less

Textbook and Course Materials for Purchase

If no materials listed, no items are needed.

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD-PERUSALL CODE

Required/Recommended: The textbook is Required

Authors: Lewis Hopfe, Mark Woodward, and Brett Hendrickson

Publisher: Pearson

Publication Date: 2014

Copyright Date: 2014

ISBN 10: 0-13-379400-8

ISBN 13: 978-013-379400-7

Notes: VERY IMPORTANT: You have to purchase the Perusall code. Do not purchase the physical or ebooks. You can purchase the code from the FIU library, which will send you a code (this takes time, so purchase it ASAP) or there is a link in a Module with instructions on how to purchase the code directly from Perusall and be able to access it right away.

Panther Book Pack Undergraduate Rental Program

FIU has implemented the Panther Book Pack rental program, which provides your required print and digital course materials at a flat rate of \$20 per undergraduate credit hour. When you registered for your classes this session, you were notified via email of the required course materials that are included in the Panther Book Pack. The Panther Book Pack program applies to all undergraduate credit hours per academic session. I recommend that you review the pricing for all materials across your classes this session compared to the Panther Book Pack flat rate. If the Panther Book Pack is not your best option, you may opt out up to three days after the add/drop deadline. You may opt back

into the Panther Book Pack up to three days after the add/drop deadline. If you do not opt out of the Panther Book Pack rental program, you will be charged \$20 per credit hour and the course materials will be reserved for you for the undergraduate courses for which you are registered. For more details, visit bookpack.fiu.edu

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. I will respond to all correspondences within 24 hours, unless you send me a message on the weekend.

You can also send me an email at vschindl@fiu.edu

Zoom Video Conference

Zoom is a video conference tool that you can use to interact with your professor and fellow students by sharing screens, chatting, broadcasting live video/audio, and taking part in other interactive online activities. We will be utilizing this tool to conduct our Synchronous Meeting on Friday from 11am to 12:15pm

Zoom meetings and dates can be accessed via the Zoom link in the course navigation menu. Once you click on the Zoom link, it will route you to join the meeting for the respective class session. You will also be able to view upcoming meetings, previous meetings that you have already joined, and meeting recordings. Before joining an actual class session:

- Reference the [Zoom Student Tutorials](#) to learn about the tool, how to access your meeting room, and share your screen.
- Access the [Zoom Test Meeting Room](#) to test out the software before joining an actual session.

If you encounter any technical difficulties, please contact the [FIU Canvas Help Team](#). Please ensure you contact support immediately upon the issue occurring.

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 student success 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 in 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

- [Canvas](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Adobe](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [ProctorU](#)
- [HonorLock](#)
- [Turnitin](#)
- [OpenStax](#)

- [Zoom](#)
- [Respondus LockDown Browser](#)

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

Please visit accessibility.fiu.edu for additional information about accessibility at FIU.

Academic Integrity

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;

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.

Artificial Intelligence - AI

- Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

Ethics still matter and plagiarism is a serious offense.

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

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.

Copyright

The following conduct is prohibited by the Student Conduct and Honor Code. Lack of familiarity with University policy is not a defense to a violation of this Code. Unless specifically noted, the intent is not a required element to establish a policy violation. The following conduct violation or any attempt to violate the Code will be used in charging all Students or Student Organizations;

Section 5 | Conduct Violations - g. Computer Misuse

- vii. Unauthorized distribution or downloading of copyrighted materials, including but not limited to, unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing. This is a violation whether the user is using their own personal computer or the University's information technology system for unauthorized distributions.

Copyright Statement: The materials and content in this online course are provided solely for student use during the course. Course materials may not be shared outside of the course or with any third party without the explicit permission of the instructor or content publisher. [Visit FIU Library's Copyright Lib Guide](#) to learn more about copyright law and restrictions.

Additional Resources:

- [Student Conduct and Honor Code](#)
- [Digital Millennium Copyright Act Policy](#)
- [FIU - Copyright Guidance for Students](#)
- [FIU Library's Copyright Lib Guide](#)