



REL 2300

Religions of the World

Section: RVH

Internet/Fully Online

Fall Term 2026

Course Time Zone: Eastern Time (ET). Course due dates and times are according to this time zone.

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

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.

THIS COURSE EXAMINES THE ORIGINS, TEACHINGS, AND PRACTICES OF SELECTED WORLD RELIGIONS, INCLUDING THE EASTERN AND WESTERN TRADITIONS.

Textbook and Course Materials

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD-PERUSALL CODE

Required/Recommended: 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.

Chapters/Pages: N/A

Panther Book Pack

Get all required course materials for \$22 per undergrad credit hour through Panther Book Pack. You'll be charged automatically unless you opt out within 3 days after the add/drop deadline.

For more details, to compare costs, and to learn how to access your course materials, visit the [Panther Book Pack information page on FIU OneStop](#).

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- 1. IDENTIFY THE ROLE THAT RELIGION PLAYS IN CULTURES AND SOCIETIES AROUND THE WORLD.
- 2. DESCRIBE THE BELIEF SYSTEMS AND WORLDVIEWS OF THE FAITH TRADITIONS STUDIED.
- 3. EXPLAIN THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIONS FROM ANCIENT TO CONTEMPORARY TIMES.
- 4. CRITICALLY ENGAGE THE ISSUE OF RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND DIALOGUE IN BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXTS.
- 5. EVALUATE THE ROLE OF RELIGION AS A TRANSFORMATIONAL FORCE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL AS WELL AS FOR SOCIETY AND AS A PLATFORM THAT CAN INCREASE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND GLOBAL AWARENESS.
- 1. STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO ANALYZE TOPICS IN THE FIELD OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES FROM MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES.
- GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
 - 2. STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO ASSESS HOW GLOBAL ISSUES AND TRENDS ARE INTERRELATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND PRACTICE OF RELIGIONS.
 - 3. STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE WILLINGNESS TO ANALYZE AND DISCUSS RELIGIOUS ISSUES IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD.

Expectations of this Course



Online LIVE Course Format

In an **Online LIVE course**, we meet once a week via **Zoom**. During our live sessions, we will:

- Engage in active learning and discussions
- Clarify concepts and answer questions
- Debate and explore course topics
- Complete collaborative and individual in-class assignments

This course uses a **flipped classroom** approach: most of the in-class time is spent **actively working**, while I am there to guide you and provide support.



Independent Work

Outside of our live sessions, you are responsible for preparing for class by:

- Reading the textbook
- Writing papers or reflections
- Watching assigned videos
- Participating in weekly discussion boards

This preparation ensures that you are ready to actively participate in our live Zoom meetings.

Course Etiquette for Online LIVE Classes

In our effort to provide the best Online LIVE experience for every student, FIU emphasizes the importance of maintaining a professional and conducive learning environment during virtual classes. Here are some guidelines to ensure an optimal experience for you and your classmates:

1. **75-Minute Weekly Live Interaction:** Central to the Online LIVE format

is a scheduled 75-minute weekly virtual session where students and instructors come together in real-time. This session provides avenues for direct communication, fostering a sense of classroom community, instant feedback, and collaboration.

2. **Use of Institutional Zoom Account:** Utilize the institutional Class for Zoom account integrated with Canvas. Refrain from using personal Zoom accounts for official class sessions.

3. **Optimal Environment:**

- **Quiet Space:** Find a calm location with minimal background noise. A desk or tabletop is ideal.
- **Mind Your Surroundings:** Be conscious of visual and auditory distractions. Ensure good lighting to make your face visible to others.
- **Limit Interruptions:** If possible, use a room with a door that locks. Inform house members you're in class to prevent disturbances. Consider placing a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your door.
- **Keep Distractions Out of Frame:** Maintain a professional backdrop. Other people and pets should stay off-camera.
- **Cameras On:** If possible, please keep your cameras turned on during the class to foster engagement and interaction.
- **Mute When Not Speaking:** To minimize background noises and interruptions, please mute your microphone when you're not speaking.

4. **Active Participation**

- **Be Present:** When called upon, be ready to participate actively.

Your insights and contributions enrich the class.

- **Stay Present:** Remain actively engaged and present during the class. Refrain from doing housework, other tasks, or any unrelated activity.
- **Avoid Multitasking:** For optimal class participation and learning:
 1. Do not lie down during the class.
 2. Refrain from attending while in transit.
 3. Ensure you're stationary and not walking or running in public areas.
 4. Avoid engaging in any other tasks, such as household chores, that divert your attention.
- **Punctuality:** It is imperative to attend the online class at the specified time. Late arrivals can disrupt the session and result in missed content. Students will not be allowed to enter the Zoom meeting 10 minutes after it started.
- **Notification:** If you can't attend or participate fully, inform your professor as soon as possible.
- **Proof for Absence:** You might need to provide valid documentation, like a doctor's note, for excused absences.
- **Your Responsibility:** You are accountable for any missed content. Ensure you catch up for future assessments or projects.

5. Online Interaction Etiquette:

- Treat online interactions with the same respect and manners as face-to-face conversations.
- Avoid interrupting others. Wait for your turn to speak and use the

"raise your hand" feature when needed.

- Stay positive and avoid negative or rude remarks.
- When communicating through text, avoid using ALL CAPS and be cautious with humor, as it can easily be misunderstood.
- Ensure that discussions remain on-topic.

6. Adherence to FIU Code of Conduct: Remember, classes conducted via Class for Zoom are an extension of traditional classrooms. The FIU student code of conduct applies to online sessions as well.

By adhering to these etiquette guidelines, we can create a more engaging, effective, and respectful learning environment for all participants. Your cooperation and understanding are greatly appreciated.

Technical Requirements for a Synchronous Course

1. General Device Specifications:

- Device Types: Desktop, Laptop, or Tablet.

2. Camera:

- Built-in or external webcam.

3. Microphone:

- Internal built-in microphone or external USB/3.5mm microphone.
- Noise-cancelling feature recommended.

10. Speakers or Headphones:

- Built-in speakers or external speakers.
- Headphones with a built-in microphone are recommended for better sound clarity during synchronous sessions.

11. Network:

- Stable WiFi connection.
 - Minimum Bandwidth:
 - Download: 5 Mbps.
 - Upload: 2 Mbps.
 - Recommended Bandwidth:
 - Download: 10 Mbps or higher.
 - Upload: 5 Mbps or higher.
- Ethernet connection is a suitable alternative for more stable connectivity.

12. Internet Browser:

- Latest version of Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Safari, or Microsoft Edge.
- Ensure that browsers are set to accept cookies and pop-ups.

13. Software:

- Latest version of required video conferencing tools (e.g., Class for Zoom)
- Required course-related software, as specified by the instructor or institution.

15. Power:

- For extended sessions, ensure that the device is plugged into a power source or has adequate battery life.

16. Accessibility:

- Devices and software should be compatible with accessibility tools and software if needed by the user.

Note: Before the course starts, it's advisable for participants to conduct a tech-check, ensuring that all hardware and software components are functioning correctly and are compatible with the course requirements.

Policies & Resources

Before starting this course, please review the Policies & Resources Page in Canvas, which includes comprehensive information on various University and Course Level Policies, such as:

- University Policies
- Accessibility and Accommodations
- Online Etiquette
- Technical Requirements and Skills
- Computer & Digital Literacy Skills
- Course Technology Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies
- Academic Integrity
- Copyright Statement
- Nondiscrimination Statement
- Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Fair Use Policy

Attendance Policy

- **Mandatory participation:** Attendance to all in-person **Zoom meetings** is required.
- **Punctuality:** Logging in **more than 10 minutes late** will result in being marked absent and denied entry to the session.
- **Impact on grades:** Missing Zoom meetings affects your **attendance and participation grade** and can make it difficult to complete activities, quizzes, and exams successfully.
- **Participation includes:**
 - Completing assigned readings before class
 - Contributing to class discussions
 - Being attentive to lectures and student presentations
 - Participating in Playposit activities (if applicable)
 - Completing **exit tickets** by the end of each session
 - Posting a **self-introduction** in the online forum during the first week
- ⚠ Students who frequently miss Zoom meetings often do not pass the course. If you are working during the Zoom meeting, this course might not be for you



Camera Policy

- Having your camera **on during Zoom meetings** is highly encouraged.
 - **Requirement:** Cameras must be on during presentations.
 - **Technical issues:** Contact me immediately if you have difficulty accessing a camera—I will help you obtain one.
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Student Responsibilities

You are expected to:

- Review the **Getting Started** page in the course modules
 - Post a **self-introduction** in the discussion forum during Week 1
 - Take the **Practice Quiz** to confirm your computer is compatible with Canvas
 - Interact online with instructor and peers
 - Review and follow the **course calendar** and weekly outlines
 - Log in to Canvas at least **4 times per week**
 - Submit discussion posts and assignments **by the due date** (no late work accepted for discussions)
 - Respond to emails within **1 day**
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Instructor Responsibilities

I will:

- Log in to Canvas **5–6 times per week**
 - Respond to discussion posts within **2 days of the deadline**
 - Respond to emails within **24 hours** on weekdays (up to 48 hours on weekends/holidays)
 - Grade assignments within **2 days**
 - Grade essays within **10 days**
 - Provide constructive feedback on all assignments
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Late Assignment Policy

- **Essays:** Accepted with a **2-point deduction per day**, up to 16 points. No essays accepted after **Week 14**
 - **Discussion posts:** No late submissions accepted
 - **Quizzes & midterm exams:** Can be rescheduled if you provide a reason **at least 5 days in advance**
 - **Final exam:** No make-up dates provided
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Extra Credit

- **Opportunities:** Attend special lectures and write a report
- **Points:**
 - **1 point:** One-page summary of the lecture
 - **Up to 3 points:** Two-page analysis connecting the lecture to course content
- **Maximum extra credit:** 6 points
- **Deadlines:** Submit reports by **Week 14** in the Extra Credit Module
- Additional opportunities may be announced in class or on Canvas
- **Requirements:** Reports must be well-written with proper grammar

Assignments & Assessments

Assignments & Assessments

1. Research Paper

- **Objective:** Choose **two different religions** and research, compare, and contrast **one element** that appears in both.
- **Sources:** Use **scholarly sources only**. Websites and Wikipedia are **not allowed**.
- **Topic Approval:** Your topic must be approved by the deadline indicated in Canvas. Failure to submit for approval may result in a **zero grade**.
- **Support:** A **video tutorial** on performing library research is available in the **Student Resources Module**. Details on content and formatting are in the **Canvas Module**.

Components of the Research Paper:

1. **Topic Submission & Approval**
 2. **Annotated Bibliography**
 3. **Draft:** 1000–1500 words (**30% of the final essay grade**)
 4. **Final Essay:** 1200–2000 words
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2. Perusall Reflections

- **Platform:** Perusall, an interactive reading app integrated with Canvas.
 - **Functionality:** Highlight, take notes, ask questions, and comment on chapters.
 - **Requirements:**
 - Post **at least 6 comments** per reading assignment
 - **At least 4** must be original comments; the rest can be responses or additional original comments
 - **Deadline:** Reflections are due **Tuesday** of the week assigned
 - **Notes:**
 - Posts may be discussed in class—write thoughtfully
 - Late submissions or make-ups are **not allowed**
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3. In-Class Activities

- Activities may include: PlayPosits, group discussions, and personal reflections
 - **Submission:** Must be submitted during class to receive credit
 - **Policy:** Absent students will not receive credit for this assignment unless absence is excused (see attendance policy)
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4. Exit Ticket

- A short activity or reflection completed at the end of the in-person class
 - Designed to summarize or reflect on the day's lesson
 - **Policy:** Absent students will not receive credit for this assignment unless absence is excused (see attendance policy)
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Quizzes & Exams

1. Quizzes

- **Number:** 10 quizzes, 10 questions each
 - **Policy:** Lowest quiz score **dropped** at the end of the semester
 - **Availability:** Canvas, open **Friday after class – Tuesday end of day** (4–5 days)
 - **Time Limit:** 10 minutes per attempt
 - **Attempts:** Two attempts allowed; **highest score counts**
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2. Midterm & Final Exams

- **Midterm:** Covers the first half of the semester
 - 50 multiple-choice and true/false questions
 - 70 minutes to complete
 - Available **4 days** in Canvas (Friday-Tuesday)
- **Final Exam:** Covers the second half of the semester
 - Multiple-choice and true/false questions
 - 70 minutes to complete
 - Available **4 days** around the university-scheduled final exam period (check Panthersoft for exact date)

Important Notes:

- **Practice Quiz:** Take a practice quiz on each computer you plan to use to ensure compatibility
- **Auto-Submit:** Assessments will auto-submit when:
 1. The timer runs out, or
 2. The closing date/time is reached

(Example: Quiz closes at 5:00 pm, but you start at 4:55 pm—you will have only 5 minutes to complete it)
- **Device Compatibility:** Mobile devices and tablets **cannot** be used for assessments

- **Support:** Contact the **FIU Canvas Help Team** for technical issues

Grading

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	12.5%
Final Exam	1	100	100	12.5%
Final Research Paper	1	100	100	25%
Perusall Reflection	15	30	450	20%
Exit ticket	15	5	75	5%
In class Activities	15	100	1500	5%
Attendance and Participation	1	100	100	5%
Total	59	735	3625	100

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %
A	95 and 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

Schedule of Topics

This is a tentative outline of the course. Check all deadlines in the Canvas Calendar

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 the email is sent during the weekend or a holiday.

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.

Zoom meetings 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.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The **Office of Civil Rights** (OCR) is responsible for ensuring that FIU maintains a workplace and learning environment free from discrimination, where current and prospective faculty, staff, and students are treated equitably. If any student, employee, or applicant has a sincere and reasonable belief that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on age, color, disability, marital status, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex, or any other protected category, they can report their concerns to the OCR team through report.fiu.edu.

UCC Category Description

This course satisfies the University Core Curriculum **Social Sciences, Group 2** requirement.

Social science courses afford students an understanding of the basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavior and past and present social, political, and economic issues.