



REL 2300

Religions of the World

Section: U07

In Person

Fall Term 2026

Course Meeting Information

Day:	Tuesday, Thursday
Time:	12:30-1:45 p.m.
Location:	Graham Center 283A

Professor Information

Daniel Alvarez

Roles: Primary Instructor

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Phone: 3053482354

Office Hours: TBA

Office Location: SIPA 501

Department or Academic Unit: Religious Studies

Course Description

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

Textbook and Course Materials

Religions of the World

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Lewis M. Hopfe, et al.

Publisher: Prentice Hall

Publication Date: 2019

Copyright Date: 2019

ISBN 10: 013606177X

ISBN 13: 9780136061779

Notes: B00XIH22GM (E-TEXTBOOK)

Chapters/Pages: Required chapters on the course outline below.

Bhagavad Gita

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Franklin Edgerton

Publisher: Harvard University Press

Publication Date: 1972

Copyright Date: 1972

ISBN 10: 9780674069251

ISBN 13: 9780674069251

Chapters/Pages: Pages 1-90, excluding introductory material.

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](#).

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Assignments & Assessments

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).

Grading

A	94-100	C	65-72
A-	90-93	D	64-60
B+	87-89	F	59-0
B	82-86		
B-	78-81		
C+	73-77		

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.

Course Goals

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."

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- See course goals and objectives above.

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.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The **Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility** (CRCA) 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 CRCA team through report.fiu.edu.

Expectations of the Course

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

Readings, Materials, and Open Educational

Resources (OER)

Additional learning resources (articles and videos) are posted on Canvas module.

Policies, Accessibility, Accommodation

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 University's educational mission. 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, or 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 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 [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#).

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.

Core Principles of this Course

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. A 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 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](#)

Schedule of Topics

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: 2nd 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, 18th & 19th Century Reform Movements,

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

Required Reading: Hopfe, 344-356.

Islam in the 19th and 20th 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

OBJECTIVE FINAL (50 QUESTIONS) DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF FINALS
WEEK