



REL 2300

Religions of the World

Section: U08

Hybrid/Certified

Fall Term 2026

Course Meeting Information

Class meeting times	
Day:	Mondays
Time:	10:00 AM - 11:15 AM
Location:	Chemistry & Physics Building, Room 117

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

Professor Information

Iqbal Akhtar

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: iakhtar@fiu.edu

Response Time: 48 hours

Phone: 305-348-2186

Office Hours: TBD

Office Location: SIPA 1 506

Department or Academic Unit: Religious Studies

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the major world religions, exploring their historical development, core beliefs, practices, and contemporary significance. Students will examine Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religious traditions through scholarly analysis and comparative study.

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.

Textbook and Course Materials

Experiencing the World's Religions

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Michael Molloy

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Higher Education (US)

Publication Date: 2020-01-06

Copyright Date: 2020

ISBN 10: 1260813746

ISBN 13: 9781260813746

Chapters/Pages: all

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

Identify and explain the fundamental beliefs and practices of major world religions

Analyze the historical and cultural contexts that shaped different religious traditions

Compare and contrast various religious worldviews and their approaches to common human questions

Evaluate the role of religion in contemporary global society

Demonstrate critical thinking skills in the academic study of religion

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be

conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

In addition to the completion of writing assignments and exams, the primary requirement for successful completion of this course will be an open mind. Students are expected to exhibit respect to all religious traditions and peoples at all times. Thus, disrespectful or derisive commentary will not be tolerated in this course. Religion is, after all, a very personal and sensitive subject for many.

On the other hand, class participants can expect academic freedom to express their views. Although religion can be personal, this is an academic course taken for college credit and thus students are expected to examine the topics rigorously. Religion shall not be exempt from the scrutiny placed on any and all academic subjects.

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 5 times per week;
- respond to discussions by the due date specified. No late work will be accepted;
- respond to emails/messages within 3 days or sooner;
- submit assignments by the corresponding deadline

The instructor will:

- log in to the course 4 times per week;

- respond to discussion postings within 2 days of the deadline;
- respond to emails/messages within 48 hours;
- grade assignments within 2 weeks of the assignment deadline.

Grading

Assignment	Percentage
Class Participation	15%
Reading Quizzes	20%
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Research Paper	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

Letter	Range
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

Proctored Exams

Please note that the information contained in this section applies only if your course requires a proctored exam.

Through a careful examination of this syllabus, it is the student's responsibility to determine whether this online course requires proctored exams. Please visit our [Student Proctored Exam Instructions](#) webpage for important information concerning proctored exams, proctoring centers, and important forms.

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.

Schedule of Topics

Week	Weekly Assignments/Readings/Modules
Unit 1: Introduction to Religious Studies (Aug 25 - Sep 8)	Introduction and Indigenous Religions
	Week 1 (Aug 25): What is Religion? Approaches to Religious Studies
	Reading: Vaughn, Introduction and Chapter 1
	Week 2 (Sep 1):
	Labor Day - No Class
	Week 3 (Sep 8): Indigenous and Ancient Traditions
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 2

Week	Weekly Assignments/Readings/Modules
Unit 2: Eastern Tradition (Sep 15 - Oct 13)	Week 4 (Sep 15): Hinduism - Origins and Core Concepts
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 3 (Hinduism - Part 1)
	Week 5 (Sep 22): Hinduism - Practices and Modern Expressions
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 3 (Hinduism - Part 2)
	Week 6 (Sep 29): Buddhism - Life of Buddha and Four Noble Truths
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 4 (Buddhism - Part 1)
	Week 7 (Oct 6): Buddhism - Schools and Practices
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 4 (Buddhism - Part 2)
	Week 8 (Oct 13): Mid-term Exam

Week	Weekly Assignments/Readings/Modules
Unit 3: Abrahamic Traditions (Oct 20 - Nov 17)	Week 9 (Oct 20): Judaism - History and Foundational Beliefs
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 5 (Judaism - Part 1)
	Week 10 (Oct 27): Judaism - Practices and Contemporary Issues
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 5 (Judaism - Part 2)
	Week 11 (Nov 3): Christianity - Origins and Development
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 6 (Christianity - Part 1)
	Week 12 (Nov 10): Christianity - Denominations and Modern Christianity
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 6 (Christianity - Part 2)
Unit 4: Contemporary Issues and Conclusion (Nov 24 - Dec 6)	Week 13 (Nov 17): Islam - Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 7 (Islam - Part 1)
	Week 14 (Nov 24): Islam - Practices and Contemporary Islam
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 7 (Islam - Part 2)
	Week 15 (Dec 1): Religion in the Modern World
	Reading: Vaughn, Chapter 8 (Contemporary Perspectives)
	Week 16 (Dec 6): Final Exam

Policies & Resources

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](#).

Assignments & Assessments

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.

Assignments

- Regular attendance is expected. More than two unexcused absences may result in a reduced final grade.

Quizzes

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. Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet.

Late Work

Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.

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.