



REL 3100

Introduction to Religion and Culture

Section: RVC

Internet/Fully Online

Fall Term 2026

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

Professor Information

Albert Wuaku

Roles: Primary Instructor

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Phone: N/A

Office Hours: By Appointment

Office Location: SIPA 517

Department or Academic Unit: Department of Religious Studies

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

This course explores religion from a sociological and anthropological perspective. Students will examine the ways in which sociologists and anthropologists try to explain the phenomenon of religion [that is, religious beliefs, religious behavior, and religious institutions]. The course exposes students to a range of sociological and anthropological theories that explore the origins of religion as a social and cultural phenomenon and the interplay between religious belief, ritual, and religious institutions and their social and cultural contexts. Note that this is not a course in theology! We will not focus much attention on the content of beliefs and practices of specific religious traditions. Our interest is in the social and cultural dimensions of the phenomenon of religion.

Textbook and Course Materials

Religion in Society

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Ronald L Johnstone

Publisher: Prentice Hall

Publication Date: e-book published on November 16 2015

Copyright Date: 2006

ISBN 10: 0131884077

ISBN 13: 978-0131884076

Chapters/Pages: the entire book

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

gain an intellectual understanding of the interconnection between religion and society in western and non-western cultures

improve on their writing skills through the writing of essays

develop the culture of participating in intellectual conversations through the interchanges discussion questions require of them

be excited about the dynamics of religion in societal life enough to want to pursue studies in this area further

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 as 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.

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 **4 times** per week;
- **respond** to discussions by the due date specified. **No late work will be accepted;**
- **respond** to **emails** within **2 days**;
- **submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

The instructor will:

- log in to the course **3** week;
- respond to emails/messages within 2 business days (excluding holidays and weekends)
- grade assignments and/or provide feedback within **7 days** of the assignment deadline.

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.

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
- Core Principles of This Course
- Nondiscrimination Statement
- Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Fair Use Policy

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.

Throughout the semester, the instructor will post messages to the discussion board that require a response or activity from each student. Each post will be graded. Each discussion is worth 25 points. To receive all possible points, a posting must be on time, be easy to read, free of careless mistakes, and appropriately address the issue(s) or question(s) presented by the instructor. Also, each student must address or respond to viewpoints of at least three others in the class.

Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.

Assignments

The essay questions will be based on the lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings. The purpose of these essays is to test the student's

knowledge of the vocabulary, issues, theoretical perspectives and the ability to apply the ideas covered to the understanding of lived religious experience.

How to respond to essay questions:

All essay questions must be thoroughly answered. A thorough response is one that shows evidence of familiarity with the text and the power-point notes and shows the student's own originality. The points in the essay must be discussed thoroughly and illustrated with practical examples from the readings or the author's own experiences. The essay must be written in grammatically correct prose. It must be very well structured and organized. **YOU WILL SCORE A ZERO IF YOU SUBMIT WORK THAT IS POORLY WRITTEN.**

Read the questions ahead of time. Read the text and PowerPoint notes and draft your responses. Read the question again to make sure you are on the right course. Proofread your work before you submit it.

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.

There will be a multiple-choice quiz or essay assignment after each topic or combination of topics. Each assignment will be worth a total of 25 points. Each essay assignment will consist of 1, 2, 3 or 4 essay questions out of which a student will be required to answer a specified number of questions. If the chosen question has sub-divisions [e.g questions 1 a, 1 b, etc] the student must address all questions in the subdivisions to be awarded full points for the question. A student has only 3 attempts at answering the multiple-choice questions. The highest score will be recorded.

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 Online Support Services](#) .

Final Grade

The Final Grade will be determined by a tally of points scored throughout the semester. These points will be converted into percentages **[that is, Points scored by student/total number of points [200] x 100]**. Please keep printed copies of all assignments and graded material. If you cannot produce your class material in a grade dispute, the grade recorded in the instructor's grade book will take precedent.

Students are required and responsible for all assigned text readings and material from Canvas. Students are expected to check the Announcement and Assignment sections of Blackboard for this class at least every other day. Students who take this course are expected to have the skills necessary to complete all assignments. **Essay Assignments must not be sent as attachments to the professor. They must be posted in the Assignment submission page. I will not grade them if you send them to me as attachments.** If you have computer technology questions during the semester, you should contact the FIU Computer Help Desk.

Note: I reserve the right to alter this syllabus if and whenever necessary.

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.

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.

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Weight
Essay and Multiple Choice Quizzes	70%
Discussion Assignments	30%
Total	100%

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter Grade	Sample Range %
A	95 or above

Letter Grade	Sample Range %
A-	90 – 94
B+	87 – 89
B	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
C	70 – 76
D	60 – 69
F	0 – 59

Schedule of Topics

Detailed within the course

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.

