REL 2011

Introduction to Religion

Section: RVH

Internet/Fully Online

Spring Term 2027

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

UCC Category Description

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

Humanities courses must afford students the ability to think critically through the mastering of subjects concerned with human culture, especially literature, history, art, music, and philosophy, and must include selections from the Western canon.

Professor Information

Thomas Norris

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: tnorris@fiu.edu

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the nature and variety of religious phenomena, belief, and practice. It shows the ways religion is studied, a cross-cultural study of the variety of history forms of religious belief and practice, such as deity conceptions at the divine myth, ritual scripture, rites of passage, views of the human problem evil, and the ways and goals of an examination of the challenges faced by religion today.

Why should I care about religion?

Why do bad things happen to good people? Is religion irrelevant in our fast-paced technological world? Does the sacred look the same across traditions? How can the

study of religion help us understand current events? Is religion a creative or destructive force? How does the study of religion relate to your major? These are just some of the questions that we will explore throughout the semester.

This course is interested in examining the different expressions, practices and interpretations of religion from an interdisciplinary perspective. Although no particular tradition will be favored, materials from several traditions will be chosen to exemplify thematic topics in the experience of the Sacred. We will also focus on the tenets of religions, dispelling common misconceptions and assumptions and looking into the emergence of new practices among the post-denominational generation.

How can this course help you advance in your career?

You do not need to be personally religious, majoring in religious studies, or in a field within humanities to benefit from this course. Whatever your academic field is, this course will train you to make important connections between your career and the world of the sacred and the profane. You will be able to understand the complexity of the definitions of religion and secularization, and the role religion plays in local and international affairs.

Religious illiteracy can greatly impact our ability to understand personal and social motivations behind financial decisions, political engagement, science and technological advancement, environmental and

migration policies, family planning, diet and food production, gender relations, war and terrorist attacks, and more. Whether you notice or not, religion is a universal phenomenon that continues to transform and be transformed by our societies.

Our approach is interdisciplinary, which means you will be critically reflecting from many fields of study such as philosophy, psychology, cultural studies, history, economics, gender studies, among others. This enhances your ability to think critically, communicate effectively, respond sensitively, collaborate with others and creatively resolve conflict.

Student Learning Outcomes/ Objectives

- Student learning outcomes allow faculty to assess the level of proficiency in content knowledge and skills that their students acquire in a course. If the objective meets a special designation, you will see the code after the objective: University Core Curriculum: UCC Gordon Rule Writing: GRW Global Learning: GL Civic Literacy: CL

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.

Students are expected to:

- Review the how to get started information located in the course content
- Introduce yourself to the class during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum and an appropriate photo
- Take the practice quiz to ensure that your computer is compatible with Canvas
- Interact online with instructor/s and peers
- Review and follow the course calendar
- Log in to the course 4 times per week
- Respond to discussion board postings within 2 business days
- Respond to emails/messages within 2 business days
- Submit assignments by the corresponding deadline
- Check official FIU email and Canvas Messages daily

The instructor will:

- Log in to the course 3 times per week
- Respond to emails/messages within 2 business days (excluding holidays and weekends)
- Grade assignments within 7 business days of the assignment deadline

Assignments from the text and other resources are listed for each class session. Students are expected to pace their learning according to the posted course assignments. It is expected that interactive learning and teaching will enrich the learning experience of all students, and that each student will work in partnership with the professor to create a positive learning experience for all. Student engagement is a necessary condition for an effective learning experience and includes contributions to debate and discussion (if any), positive interactive learning with others, and an enthusiastic attitude towards inquiry. Everyone is expected to be a positive contributor to the class learning community, and students are expected to share the responsibility of teaching each other.

Grading

Grading

Late Work

Late submissions will not be accepted, except in cases of genuine and documented emergencies.

Avoid leaving assignment/quiz submissions for the last minute before a deadline. “Heavy user traffic” during this timeframe may cause delays and/or errors, which can lead to students missing crucial deadlines.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus by means of announcements or messages with ample time allowed for students to respond and adjust appropriately.

Extra Credit

No extra credit will be offered or accepted in this course.

Assignment	**Weighted Total**
Quizzes	10%
Perusall Activities	10%
Discussions	10%
Midterm	15%
Final	15%
Research Paper 1	20%
Research Paper 2 (Part 1 & Part 2)	20%

A	95 or 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

This syllabus is subject to change; you are responsible for regularly monitoring Canvas Announcements, Conversations/Inbox and your FIU student email to be aware of any noted changes

Textbook and Course Materials

Anatomy of the Sacred

Required/Recommended: Requires

Authors: James C. Livingston

Publisher: Prentice Hall

Publication Date: 2008

Copyright Date: 2008

ISBN 10: 013600380X

ISBN 13: 9780136003809

Chapters/Pages: 15 Chapters

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 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

Weekly Schedule

This syllabus is subject to change; you are responsible for regularly monitoring Canvas Announcements, Conversations/Inbox and your FIU student email to be aware of any noted changes.

DateModule TopicsTasks

Date Module Topics Tasks

Dates	Module	Instructional Materials	Instructional Materials

Week 1	1 The Study of Religion	• Textbook: Chapter 1 - "What is Religion?" (pages 1 - 14) • Textbook: Chapter 2 - "Ways of Studying Religion" (pages 15 -	• Quiz: Mod. 1 | Ways of Studying Religion • Discussion: The Study of Religion

		34) • Lecture: Dr. Northup - "What is Religion?" (Duration: 27:58) • Article for Discussion 1 - article: Schneider,	

		Nathan. "Why the World Needs Religious Studies." *Religion Dispatches* (2011).	

Week 2	2 The Sacred and the Holy	• Textbook: Chapter 3 - "The Sacred and the Holy" (pages 35 - 52) • Lecture: Dr. Huchingson - "The Sacred and the Holy"	• Quiz: Mod. 2 | The Sacred and the Holy • Perusall Activity on Video on Kabbalah

		(Duration: 22:04) • Video Religion for Breakfast - What is Kabbalah? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLaE996B-IQ	

Week 3	3 Symbols, Myth, and Doctrines	• Textbook: Chapter 4 - "Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine" (pages 53 - 73) • Lecture: Dr. Northup - Sacred Symb	• Quiz: Mod. 3 | Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine • Perusall on Article: Xidakis, Ioannis. "Neomythology: A

		ol, Myth, and Doctrine • Article Xidakis, Ioannis. "Neomythology: A new religious mythology." *Religions* 13,	new religious mythology." *Religions* 13, no. 6 (2022): 536.

		no. 6 (2022): 536.	

Week 4	4 Sacred Ritual	• Textbook: Chapter 5 - "Sacred Ritual" (pages 74 - 95) • Lecture: Dr. Northup - "Sacred Ritual" • Lecture: Erin	• Quiz: Mod. 4 | Sacred Ritual • Discussion on Article Clark, Mary Ann. "Santería Sacrificial Rituals: A Reco

		Weston' Overview on Rituals • Article Clark, Mary Ann. "Santería Sacrificial Rituals: A Reconsideration of Religious	nsideration of Religious Violence." *Pomegranate* 8, no. 2 (2006) (Discussion 2)

		Violence." *Pomegranate* 8, no. 2 (2006).	

Week 5	5 Sacred Scripture	• Textbook: Chapter 6 - "Sacred Scripture" (pages 96 - 123) • Lecture: Dr. Larson - "Sacred Scripture" (Duration: 43:57	• Quiz: Mod. 5 | Sacred Scripture (Quiz) (MLO 1, MLO 2, MLO 3, MLO 4, MLO 5, MLO 6) • Perus

		) • Article: Leach, Robert. "a Religion of the Book? on Sacred Texts in Hinduism." *The expository times* 126, no. 1	all on Article: Leach, Robert. "a Religion of the Book? on Sacred Texts in Hinduism." *The expository times* 126, no. 1 (2014

		(2014): 15-27 .	): 15-27 .

Week 6	6 Society and the Sacred	• Textbook: Chapter 7 - "Society and the Sacred: The Social Formations and Transformations of Religion" (page	• Quiz: Mod. 6 | Society and the Sacred • Discussion on article: Lutkajtis, Anna. "Ministry of the Mushroom:

		s 124 - 150) • Lectu re: Dr. Wuak u - "Soci ety and the Sacre d: The Socia l Form ations and Trans forma tions of Religi	Psiloc ybin Churc hes, Psyc hedeli c Exper ience and Sacre d Sens emaki ng." Intern ation al Journ al for the Study of New

		on" • Article for Discussion 3 article: Lutkajtis, Anna. “Ministry of the Mushroom: Psilocybin Churches, Psychedelic Exper	Religions 11, no. 2 (2022): 179–202. https://doi.org/10.1558/ijsnr.20152.

		ience and Sacred Sensemaking." International Journal for the Study of New Religions 11, no. 2 (2022): 179–202.	

		https://doi.org/10.1558/ijsnr.20152.	

Week 7	7 Deity	• Textbook: Chapter 8 - "Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality" (pages 151 - 182) • Lecture: Dr. Huchingso	• Midterm Exam Essay (Modules 1-6) • Quiz: Mod. 7 | Deity • Perusall on Byrne, Cathy. "The one and many Gods of

		n - "Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality" Article: Byrne, Cathy. "The one and many Gods of Hinduism." *Crossroa*	Hinduism." *Crossroads: An International Journal for the Study of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics* 1, no. 2

		ds: An International Journal for the Study of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics 1, no. 2 (2007): 15-27.	(2007): 15-27.

Week 8	8 Cosmogony	• Textbook: Chapter 9 - "Cosmogony: Origins of the Natural and Social Order" (pages 183 - 210) • Lecture: Rabbi	• Quiz: Mod. 8 | Cosmogony • Perusall on Article: Arutyunyan, Margarita, Nataliya Solovyeva, and Olga Evreeva.

		Shulkes - Cosmogony: Origins of the Natural and Social Order • Article: Arutyunyan, Margarita, Nataliya Solov	"The elements in the cosmogonic myths of the world nations." *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (2021

		yeva, and Olga Evreeva. "The elements in the cosmogonic myths of the world nations." *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological*	): 7. • Research Paper 1

		Studies 77, no. 4 (2021): 7.	

Week 9	9 Anthropology	• Textbook: Chapter 10 - "Views of the Human Problem" (pages 211 - 234) • Lecture: Dr. Wuaku - "Anthropology:	• Quiz: Mod 9 Quiz • Research Paper 2 – Part 1 Discussion • Perusall

		The Human Problem" Article Robbins, Joel. "The anthropology of Christianity: Unity, diversity, new directions: An introduction to supplement 10."	

		Current Anthropology 55, no. S10 (2014): S157-S171.	

Week 10	10 Theodicy	• Textbook: Chapter 11 - "Theodicy: Encountering Evil" (pages 235 - 258) • Lecture: Dr. Gudorf - "Theodicy: Encounteri	• Quiz: Mod. 10 | Theodicy Perusall on Article: Karma, Morality, and Evil

		ng Evil" Article: Karma, Morality, and Evil	

Week 11	11 Ethics	• Textbook: Chapter 12 - "Ethics: Patterns of Moral Action" (pages 259 - 286) • Lecture: Dr. Whitney Bauman - Religi	• Quiz: Mod. 11 | Ethics • Perusall on Article: Jecker, N. S., C. A. Atuire, V. Ravitsky, M. Ghaly, V. Vaswani, and T. C.

		on, Science, and Ethics • Dr. Gudorf - "Ethics: Patterns of Moral Action" • Article Jecker, N. S., C. A. Atuire	Voo. "Religion welcome here: a pluriversal approach to religion and global bioethics." *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 22, no. 2

		, V. Ravitsky, M. Ghaly, V. Vaswani, and T. C. Voo. "Religion welcome here: a pluriversal approach to religion and	(2025): 381-394.

		global bioethics." *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 22, no. 2 (2025): 381-394.	

Week 12	12 Soteriology	• Textbook: Chapter 13 - "Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation and Liberation" (pages 287 - 338) • Lecture: Dan	• Perusall on Article: Al ma'itah, Qais Salem, and Zia Ul Haq. "The concept of Messiah in Abrahamic religions: A focus

		Alvarez - "Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation and Liberation" Article: Alma'itah, Qais Salem, and Zia Ul Haq. "The conc	ed study of the eschatology of Sunni Islam." *Heliyon* 8, no. 3 (2022). Research Paper 2 – Part 2

		ept of Messiah in Abrahamic religions: A focused study of the eschatology of Sunni Islam." *Heliyon* 8, no. 3 (2022).	

Week 13	13 Secularization and Modernity	• Textbook: Chapter 14 - "Secularization - New Religious Revitalization Movements - Contemporary Religious Fund	• Quiz: Mod. 12 | Soteriology and Fundamentalism • Discussion on article: Dullo, Eduardo. 2024. “Secularization,

		amentalism" • Textbook: Chapter 15 - "Contemporary Challenges to Traditional Religion: The Status and the Roles of	Secularism and Laicidade in Brazil: Rethinking Global Theoretical Assumptions." Religion Compass 18 (2): 1–11.

		Women - Relations Between Religion and the State" • Lecture - Secularization in the Modern World – Dr. Heine	https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12485 (Discussion 4) (MLO 8) • Global Learning Quiz

		• Lecture: Dr. Bidegain - "The Sacred and the Secular in Modernity" (16:36) • Article for Discussion 4: Dullo, Eduardo. 2024.	

		“Secularization, Secularism and Laicidade in Brazil: Rethinking Global Theoretical Assumptions.” Religion Compass	

		18 (2): 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12485	
Week 14			
Week 15	Final		• Final Exam Essay

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

Assignments

All work must be submitted through Canvas. Canvas does not allow instructors to submit on behalf of students. Please do not email your assignments to your instructor.

If you encounter errors or issues submitting an assignment, click on “Help” inside Canvas Course (located on the left-hand panel inside the course) and select Chat with Canvas Support (student). A live chat with Canvas support can fix the issue immediately.

Assessments

Discussion Forums(10% of final grade)

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.

Discussion Forum Expectations:

- There will be three (3) discussions in this course. These discussions are meant to stimulate critical thinking about how religions manifest in our globalized world.
  Discussion topics will become available Monday, 12:00 PM to Sunday, 11:59 PM of each week that a discussion topic is posted. See the course calendar for the weeks that have discussion topics posted.

  To receive full credit for the discussion assignments, students must post a minimum of 3 discussion threads per discussion topic:

  - One post in response to the main discussion topic
  - Two responses to other students' posts
- Please refer to the rubric for details on what criteria your discussion assignments will be evaluated on. Canvas Tutorial: How do I view the rubric for my graded discussion?

Keep in mind that this is an academic forum; all students in the course will see the discussion posts. When criticizing or agreeing with another student's position on a given topic, please make sure to include supporting facts and specific examples to strengthen your arguments. Contribute links to articles, news stories, and/or other media whenever possible.

Perusall Assignments **(10% of final grade**)

Students will read articles and/or watch selected videos through Perusall inside Canvas where they will be awarded points for leaving high quality thoughtful comments on each reading or video. This both ensures students are reviewing and engaging critically with the weekly instructional materials. Students will be able to see other students' interactions in Perusall.

Students earn full credit by submitting 4 high-quality comments.

If all comments are bunched together in a small area of the content, deduct up to 10% of this component.

High quality comments are those that do the following:

-reveal interpretation of the text

- demonstrate understanding of concepts through analogy and/or synthesis of multiple concepts

-thoughtful explanations with substantiated claims and/or concrete examples

-poses profound questions that go beyond the material covered in the text

-explains the relationship between concepts

Here is a good guide for Writing good comments in the social sciences – Perusall : Writing good comments in the social sciences – Perusall

Quizzes (10% of final grade)

A time-restricted, multiple-choice quiz will be given on each week's religious concept. The questions in the quizzes will draw from the weekly course content, including audio lectures and assigned readings.

There is also a Global Learning Quiz at the end of the semester which does count toward the final grade in this course. However, it is necessary to answer all questions on this quiz in order to meet FIU's Global Learning Graduation Requirement.

Quiz Availability: Open from Monday, 12:00 AM to Sunday, 11:59 PM (see Course Calendar for specific dates.)

Quiz Duration: Students will have 20 minutes to answer 10 multiple-choice questions.

Quiz Attempts: Quizzes may be attempted twice. The highest of the two attempts will count towards the student's final grade. It is not mandatory to take each quiz twice.

Quiz Resets: Please limit quiz reset requests to instances when technical issues compromised both quiz attempts. The second attempt is meant to be a “backup” attempt for situations where the first attempt was not completed successfully. Reopening quizzes after the due date has passed will require verifiable documentation.

Quiz Grading: Quizzes will be graded automatically. Students will be able to see their scores immediately after submitting the quiz.

Quiz Answers: The correct answers for quizzes will not be released to students. Students will be able to see submitted answers only. Students should refer to their course materials for the correct answers.

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 encounter any technical difficulties, please contact the FIU Canvas Help Team. Please ensure you contact support immediately upon the issue occurring.

Exams (30% of final grade)

The essay prompts for Written Exam 1 and Written Exam 2 will become available in the Assessment area during the exam availability time (check the weekly calendar)

- The essay prompts for Written Exam 1 and Written Exam 2 will become available in the Assessment area during the exam availability time (check the weekly calendar).
- All assignments can be submitted via Canvas in the Assignments content area.
- The written exams should each be approximately 500-750 words long.
- All written assignments will be automatically checked for plagiarism. See section titled Course Policies to learn more about what plagiarism is and how to properly cite your work.
- Exams will be graded manually. Students will be able to see their scores within 7 business days of the

assignment deadline.

Research Papers (40% of final grade)

Research Paper 1 | Site Visit Essay

All written assignments will be automatically checked for plagiarism. See section titled Course Policies to learn more about what plagiarism is and how to properly cite your work.

**Students May Not Submit Work From A Previous Semester Or From Another Class For This Assignment Or Any Other Assignment In This Course.

Assignment Details and Instructions:

- Format: MLA Format Required
- Content: Field research and supplementary research
- Length: 1800-2000 Words, Not Including Your Works Cited Page
- Double –Spaced, 12-Pt Font, Arial Or Times New Roman Font
- Sources: 3 Academic Sources Minimum
- Works Cited Page required
- For this Site Visit, students will perform field research by attending a religious service outside of their own

religious tradition. The goal is to immerse each student in an unfamiliar religious context (example: Christians/ Catholics should perform field research on a non-Christian religion, like Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.)

At the top of your paper, please include the name of the religious site visited, the date visited, the names of any individuals you may have interviewed, and the particular sect or denomination of the religion that practices at the site.

[If you visited a Muslim mosque, was it Sunni or Shi'ite? If you visited a Jewish synagogue, was it Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform? If you visited a Buddhist temple, was it Theravada or a Mahayana sect?] You may want to ask this when you call to find out if your visit is acceptable.

Your research should ideally progress in three stages:

1. Preliminary Research
    - Before going to the service, it is a good idea to do some preliminary research on the religious tradition. For example, if you're attending a Hindu ceremony, you will want to read the textbook chapter and watch the PowerPoint presentation on Hinduism. Additionally, I strongly recommend that you call the site you'll be

visiting and let them know you're coming to do research for a class project. Ask them if there's any dress code requirements, or anything else you should keep in mind. You may also want to ask if they will allow you to take notes during the service. (Some Jewish denominations, for example, do not allow writing on Shabbat {Saturday}.)

2. Field Research

    - Attend the service and observe closely. You may want to take notes. Some students have found it helpful to attend services in groups, and you're welcome to do this.

3. Supplementary Research

    - After your visit, research any elements of the experience that were unfamiliar and that left you with questions, including but not limited to the practices, symbols, dress code, and conversations encountered at the site. In other words, research each practice and find out why it's done in this particular section.

- Examples:

If you go to a Jewish service and you see the men wearing kippahs (or yarmulkes), you don't want to write in your essay, "There were these men and they were wearing these funny hats but I don't know why." This is where your additional research comes in. Find out what the hats are called, and find out why they're worn.

If you go to a Muslim mosque and you see the worshippers washing their hands and feet, you don't want to write in your essay, "Everyone was washing their hands and feet but I don't know why they did that and it was pretty weird."

Upon completing these three stages, write a detailed and insightful essay. It should demonstrate a general understanding of the religious tradition; use your research to explain your experience at the site. What did you see around you? What did the place of worship look like? Did you see any religious art or religious symbols there? How were people dressed? What rituals were performed?

Finally, include your personal reaction to the service. How did you respond? Did you enjoy the visit or did you feel uncomfortable? Were your opinions about the religion challenged or confirmed by the site visit?

Please refer to the rubric for details on what criteria Research Paper 1 will be evaluated on.

Research Paper 2 | Appiah Analysis Essay

This assignment requires two parts:

1. Discussion (20 POINTS of your assignment grade) and
2. Essay (80 POINTS of your assignment grade)

- **PART 1** – Discussion Board Portion (20 points)

  Read the article “The Case for Contamination” by Kwame Anthony Appiah and post your initial response to the following questions in the Discussion Board: "What roles do religions play in Appiah’s analysis? How is your approach similar to or different from his?”

  Once you have posted your answer, respond to at least three of your fellow students' posts and explain how you agree/disagree with them.

  In order to receive full credit for this part, a total of 4 posts will be required: 1 original thread + 3 comments

  Each response should be at least 100 words and should demonstrate knowledge of the article as well as class readings and PowerPoints.

  The discussion posts are due one week prior to the essay deadline. Check Course Calendar in Syllabus for exact due dates.

  Please refer to the rubric for details on what criteria the Research Paper 2 Discussion will be evaluated on.

Canvas Tutorial: How do I view the rubric for my graded discussion?

PART 2 - Essay (80 points)

**Students May Not Submit Work From A Previous Semester Or From Another Class For This Assignment Or Any Other Assignment In This Course. It Will Be Flagged For Plagiarism By Turnitin.

Instructions:

After reading your classmates' responses and considering your initial response in Part 1 of this assignment, read the article: “The Case for Contamination” by Kwame Anthony Appiah again. Write a well-structured essay that answers the questions: "What roles do religions play in Appiah’s analysis? Do you agree or disagree to his approach towards religion? How does it differ from your individual approach towards religion?”

Guidelines:

- Format: MLA Format Required
- Length: 1000 Words, Not Including Your Works Cited Page
- Double –Spaced, 12-Pt Font, Arial Or Times New Roman Font
- Sources: Class Readings And Powerpoint

Lectures

- Submit your essay to Assignments via Canvas.
- Keep electronic receipts and/or paper copies of all submitted work.

- In every Gordon Rule course at FIU, students must demonstrate “college-level writing skills.” College-level writing must exhibit the following characteristics:
  - It has clear purpose and thesis or controlling ideas.
  - The thesis is supported with adequate reasons and evidence.
  - It shows sustained analysis and critical thought.
  - It is organized clearly and logically.
  - It shows knowledge of conventions of standard written English.
  - It shows awareness of disciplinary conventions in regard to content, style, form, and delivery methods.
  - Moreover, sources must be cited as appropriate.
- Thesis Statement: The thesis is the central idea of your paper around which all your evidence and claims are organized. Every single paragraph should be dedicated in a clear way to proving your thesis. In your essay, the

thesis should be stated as quickly and as clearly as possible. In fact, many teachers will expect your thesis statement to appear in the last sentence of your essay's first paragraph. A vivid thesis statement will announce the steps of its argument, not just provide a flat statement of the essay's ultimate goal. Think of the thesis as a roadmap that gives directions to your reader rather than as a picture of your final destination.

A good thesis should not state something that is obviously true. When your thesis is too easy to prove, your essay can become repetitive and you may feel that you do not have enough to write about. A complex thesis, on the other hand, requires you to convince your reader that your argument is logical and will reveal ideas that cannot be easily anticipated. A worthwhile thesis will always outline an argument with which a reader can readily disagree.

These are two links to guide you to write a good thesis statement:

- "How to Write a Thesis Statement" by Writing Tutorial Services, Indiana University Bloomington
- "Thesis Statements" by The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- Please refer to the rubric for details on what criteria Research Paper 2 will be evaluated on.

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.