REL 2011

Introduction to Religion

Section: U08

In Person

Spring Term 2027

Course Meeting Information

Classes are scheduled from 1 PM to 1:50 PM in Ocean Bank 121

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

Carlos Grenier

Roles: Primary Instructor

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Office Hours: TuTh 11AM-2 PM

Office Location: SIPA-2 524

Department or Academic Unit: Religious Studies

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.

Course Goals

At the end of this course, students will able to:

1. Explain the basic history, development, and belief systems of various religious traditions.

1. Recognize religious themes and concepts found in other cultures.
2. Identify the meaning behind religious concepts and symbols.

3. Evaluate their own religious views in regards to other cultures and paradigms of religious thought.
4. Apply critical thinking to various topics in the field of religious studies.
5. Demonstrate creative thinking about religious issues in the contemporary world.
6. Conduct field research about a particular religious community.
7. Analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives.
8. Assess how global issues and trends are interrelated with the development and practice of religions.

Textbook and Course Materials

Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Livingston, James C.

Publisher: Prentice Hall

Publication Date: 2008

Copyright Date: 2008

ISBN 10: 013600380X

ISBN 13: 9780136003809

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

- See Course Goals

Expectations of the Course

• Analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives

• Assess how global issues and trends are interrelated with the development and practice of religions

• Demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world

Assignments & Assessments

Quizzes and responses (10% of grade)

Invent a Religions Essay (5%)

Midterm Exam (25% of grade)

Final Exam (25% of grade)

Site Visit Paper (20% of grade): 1000 words

Attendance and Participation (10% of grade)

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.

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

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

COURSE SHEDULE

WEEK 1

1. What is religion? Why are humans religious?

Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 1

1. Ways of Studying Religion

Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 2

WEEK 2

The Sacred and the Holy

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 3

Quiz 1 (Due Friday)

WEEK 3

Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 4

Quiz 2 (Due Friday)

WEEK 4

Ritual

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 5

Site Visit Project introduced

WEEK 5

Scripture and Religious Literature

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 6

Quiz 3 (Due Friday)

WEEK 6

Religion and Society

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 7

Quiz 4 (Due Friday)

Midterm

WEEK 7

Components of a Religious Worldview: Deity

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapters 8 and 9

Quiz 5 (Due Friday)

WEEK 8

Components of a Religious Worldview: The Human Condition

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 10

WEEK 9

Theodicy: Encountering Evil

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 11

Quiz 6 (Due Friday)

Invent a Religion Essay

WEEK 10

Religions of the World

WEEK 11

Ethics

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 12

Quiz 7

WEEK 12

Soteriology

1. Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 13

Quiz 8

WEEK 13

Modernity

Read Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, Chapter 14

Quiz 9

WEEK 14

Presentations

Site Visit Project Due

WEEK 15

Final Exam (taken online)

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.

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.