REL 2300

Religions of the World

Section: RVI

Internet/Fully Online

Spring Term 2027

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

Professor Information

Valeria Schindler

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: vschindl@fiu.edu

Phone: N/A

Office Hours: via Zoom by appointment

Office Location: N/A

Department or Academic Unit: Department of Religious Studies

Additional Notes

I am available via Zoom Monday through Friday. Make sure to send m an appointment and check availability.

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

Sociologist Emile Durkheim saw religion as a part of the human condition, and while the content of religion might be different from society to society over time, religion will, in some form or another, always be a part of social life. Therefore, you do not need to be a religious person in order to be in contact with religion. This course will provide you the tools to learn and understand different religious beliefs from around the world and how they interact with your academic field.

Maybe Jesus was a Buddhist monk. Where exactly did your yoga class come from? Why are Native Americans some of the best eco-advocates today? Is Judaism a religion, a culture, or a tribe? It might be good to wonder if religion is a force for good or evil to begin with. Can we still be spiritual without being religious? These are not just entertaining questions but are highly relevant to your personal and professional development in our globalized world. In this interdisciplinary course, we will explore these questions and

many more that emerge as we investigate humanity, religion, and the cosmos.

ONLINE LIVE

An Online Live course bridges the gap between fully online and face-to-face courses by providing students with the necessary online resources to be successful in their course along with synchronous online sessions to ensure mastery of the content. The purpose of these live sessions is to foster collaboration between you, your peers, and your instructor by providing you with the opportunity to practice essential skills and techniques, and to clarify any concepts as you move through the course.

By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to attend all of the required sessions on the date(s) and time(s) in MyFIU (PantherSoft). Just as you would in a face-to-face course, if you miss a class session, you will be missing vital information and in-class activities needed to proceed in the course. Know that you may be penalized for missing virtual live class sessions.

For further information regarding attendance and live class session activities, continue to the assignments heading in the syllabus.

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.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- Demonstrate an understanding of themes, definitions, and symbols relating to religion.
- Compare and contrast the key underlying beliefs and principles of the major Eastern, Western, indigenous and shamanic religions.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the evolution and movement of religious beliefs from ancient to contemporary times.
- Evaluate religious truth claims as potential sources of knowledge.
- Demonstrate an increased empathetic awareness of religious diversity and differences.

Expectations of this Course

Online LIVE

In an Online LIVE course, we meet once a week on Fridays at

11am via Zoom. The time we spend together is dedicated to engaging in learning, clarifying concepts, debating, working in groups, and discussing and developing each of the concepts covered in the course. This course is taught in “reversed classroom” style, in which most of the work in class is done by students, and I will be there to clarify your questions and guide you in your work.

The remaining of the work takes place outside the class, and it will be your responsibility to acquire all the knowledge required for the activities in class. This includes reading the textbook, writing papers, watching videos, reading articles, providing opinions on different topics, and posting weekly in a discussion board.

Course Communication- how to contact your professor

- Communication in this course will take place via the Inbox. Check out the Canvas Conversations Help Desk to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. You can also email me at vschindl@fiu.edu. I will reply to your email within 24 hours, unless you sent an email on a holiday or weekend.

Attendance Policy: Attendance to the in-person Zoom meetings is not mandatory, however, much of the activities we do in class will count towards the final grade. Not attending the Zoom meeting will not only impact your attendance grade-- as many activities done in class count towards your final grade, but you will also be missing on information needed for the activities, quizzes, and tests. If you log into the Zoom meeting 10 minutes late, you will not be allowed

in and be marked absent. Participation includes reading for class, contributing to discussions, being attentive to lectures and student presentations, participating in your group project, and completing an exit ticket activity by the end of the meeting. Students that miss a lot of Zoom meetings usually do not pass the course.

Camera Policy for the Zoom meeting: Having your camera on during the Zoom meeting is highly encourage. ***It is a requirement when doing a presentation***, and if a student in the group do not have the camera on, it will affect the overall grade for the entire group. If you have difficulties accessing a video camera, please contact me ASAP and I will help you getting one.

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 lest 4 times per week;
- respond to discussions by the due date specified. No late work will be accepted;

- respond to emails within 1 days;
- submit assignments by the corresponding deadline

I, as your instructor will:

- log in to the course 5-6 times a week;
- respond to discussion postings within 2 days of the deadline;
- respond to emails within 24 hours unless it is on the weekend or a holiday;
- grade assignments within 2 days of the assignment deadline;
- grade essays within 10 days of the assignment deadline.

Late Assignment policy

- Late assignments are accepted for online activities with a 20 point penalty per late day.
- Late essays are accepted with a 2 point penalty per late day, up to 16 points. No essays will be accepted beyond Week 13 of the semester
- No late submissions of Perusall reflections are accepted
- Quizzes and the midterm exam can be re-scheduled if a reason is provided at least 5 days prior to the scheduled day.
- No Make up dates are provided for the Final Exam

Extra Credit.

Sometimes some students may need an extra help, and it usually involves attending a special lecture and writing a summary and analysis. The essay could be worth up to 3 extra credit points to be added to the final grade. You will have to write a one-page summary of the lecture for one extra credit point. If you want, you can write a two-page analysis linking the lecture to the content of the class for up to two more points. Reports need to be well written with good grammar. A maximum of 6 extra credit points could be awarded. Please refer to the list of events provided in the course resources module. Extra credit reports need to be sent via email by the second to last week of the semester.

Assignments & Assessments

📝 Assignments & Assessments

1. Research Paper

- **Objective:** Choose **two different religions** and research, compare, and contrast **one element** that appears in both.
- **Sources:** Use **scholarly sources only**. Websites and Wikipedia are **not allowed**.
- **Topic Approval:** Your topic must be approved by the deadline indicated in Canvas. Failure to submit for approval may result in a **zero grade**.
- **Support:** A **video tutorial** on performing library research is available in the **Student Resources Module**. Details on content and formatting are in the **Canvas Module**.

Components of the Research Paper:

1. **Topic Submission & Approval**
2. **Annotated Bibliography (20% of the grade)**
3. **Findings on topic in religion A (20% of the grade)**
4. **Findings on topic in Religion B (20% of the grade)**
5. **Final Essay: 1200–2000 words (40% of the grade)**

2. Perusall Reflections

- **Platform:** Perusall, an interactive reading app integrated with Canvas.
- **Functionality:** Highlight, take notes, ask questions, and comment on chapters.
- **Requirements:**
  - Post **at least 6 comments** per reading assignment
  - **At least 4** must be original comments; the rest can be responses or additional original comments
- **Deadline:** Reflections are due **Tuesday** of the week assigned
- **Notes:**
  - Posts may be discussed in class—write thoughtfully
  - Late submissions or make-ups are **not allowed**

3. In-Class Activities

- Activities may include: PlayPosits, group discussions, and personal reflections
- **Submission:** Must be submitted during class to receive

credit
- **Policy:** Absent students will not receive credit for this assignment unless absence is excused (see attendance policy)

4. Exit Ticket

- A short activity or reflection completed at the end of the in-person class
- Designed to summarize or reflect on the day's lesson
- **Policy:** Absent students will not receive credit for this assignment unless absence is excused (see attendance policy)

🧮 Quizzes & Exams

1. Quizzes

- **Number:** 10 quizzes, 10 questions each
- **Policy:** Lowest quiz score **dropped** at the end of the semester
- **Availability:** Canvas, open **Friday after class – Tuesday end of day** (4–5 days)
- **Time Limit:** 10 minutes per attempt
- **Attempts:** Two attempts allowed; **highest score counts**

2. Midterm & Final Exams

- **Midterm:** Covers the first half of the semester

    - 50 multiple-choice and true/false questions
    - 70 minutes to complete
    - Available **4 days** in Canvas (Friday-Tuesday)
- **Final Exam:** Covers the second half of the semester
    - Multiple-choice and true/false questions
    - 70 minutes to complete
    - Available **4 days** around the university-scheduled final exam period (check Panthersoft for exact date)

Important Notes:

- **Practice Quiz:** Take a practice quiz on each computer you plan to use to ensure compatibility
- **Auto-Submit:** Assessments will auto-submit when:
    1. The timer runs out, or
    2. The closing date/time is reached
    (Example: Quiz closes at 5:00 pm, but you start at 4:55 pm—you will have only 5 minutes to complete it)
- **Device Compatibility:** Mobile devices and tablets **cannot** be used for assessments
- **Support:** Contact the **FIU Canvas Help Team** for technical issues

Grading

Course Grading Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Quizzes	10	100	900 (lowest score dropped)	15%
Midterm Exam	1	100	100	12.5%
Final Exam	1	100	100	12.5%
Final Research Paper	1	100	100	25%
In Class Activities	10	100	1000	5%
Perusall Reflection	15	30	450	20%
Exit Ticket	12	5	60	5%
Total	53	835	3010	100

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Attendance and Participation	1	100	100	5%
Total	53	835	3010	100

Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %
A	95 and 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

Textbook and Course Materials

RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD-PERUSALL CODE

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Lewis Hopfe, Mark Woodward, and Brett Hendrickson

Publisher: Pearson

Publication Date: 2014

Copyright Date: 2014

ISBN 10: 0-13-379400-8

ISBN 13: 978-013-379400-7

Notes: VERY IMPORTANT: You have to purchase the Perusall code. Do not purchase the physical or ebooks. You can purchase the code from the FIU library, which will send you a code (this takes time, so purchase it ASAP) or there is a link in a Module with instructions on how to purchase the code directly from Perusall and be able to access it right away.

Chapters/Pages: N/A

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

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You can also send me an email at vschindl@fiu.edu

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Zoom Video Conference

Zoom Meeting 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. We will be utilizing this tool to conduct our Synchronous Meeting on Friday from 11am to 12:15pm

Zoom meetings and dates 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.

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.

Schedule of Topics

This is a tentative outline of the course. It is subject to change with written notice.

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.