REL 2300

Religions of the World

Section: U03

In Person

Spring Term 2027

Course Meeting Information

Class Meeting Times	
Day:	MWF
Time:	12:00 PM - 12:50 PM
Location:	PC 213

Professor Information

Adam Gorelick

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: agorelic@fiu.edu

Phone: 3053484100

Office Hours: By Appointment

Office Location: DM 383C

Department or Academic Unit: Religious Studies

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

This course introduces methods of critical reflection on religion and some of their applications to fundamental topics such as knowledge, value, the sacred, the self, and human society. We will identify, examine, and respect particular examples from diverse religious traditions while also highlighting broad analytical themes helpful in defining religion generally. We will interpret these cross-cultural themes using methods from various academic disciplines.

Course Goals

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the interdisciplinary academic analysis of the multidimensional cultural phenomena collectively referred to as religion. We will

do this by surveying specific examples from religions of the world.

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

- apply critical thinking skills to various topics in the field of religious studies.
- explore the origins, nature, functions, and definitions of religion.
- bracket out personal bias to attempt understanding the point of view of religious adherents.
- demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems—as pertaining to the development and practice of religions.

- analyze topics in religious studies through multi-perspective analyses of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.
- demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world and to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.
- recall, recite, and consider basic details about the history, beliefs, practices, values, and institutions of many religions of the world.
- conduct field research to better understand a religious community.
- speak fluently about the relationship between religion and other cultural phenomena such as art, literature, music, etc.

Expectations of the Course

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is subject to minor changes. Students should e-mail the instructor with any questions about the assignments and schedule.

PLEASE NOTE: Academic freedom and responsibility are essential to the integrity of the University. The principles of academic freedom are integral to the conception of the University as a community of scholars engaged in the pursuit

of truth and the communication of knowledge in an atmosphere of tolerance and freedom. The University serves the common good through teaching, research, scholarship/creative activities, and service. The fulfillment of these functions rests upon the preservation of the intellectual freedoms of teaching, expression, research, and debate. We affirm that academic freedom is a protected right in addition to a faculty member's constitutionally protected freedom of expression and is fundamental to the faculty member's responsibility to seek and to state truth as he or she sees it.

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

Assignments & Assessments

Attendance and Participation – 15% of final grade

Formal Research Proposal - 10% of final grade

Research Paper - 30% of final grade

Quizzes - 15% of final grade

Midterm Exam - 30% of final grade

Grading

Attendance and Participation – 15% of final grade

Formal Research Proposal - 10% of final grade

Research Paper - 30% of final grade

Quizzes - 15% of final grade

Midterm Exam - 30% of final grade

Grading Scale

94 - 100 A

90 - 93 A-

87 - 89 B+

84 - 86 B

80 - 83 B –

77 - 79 C+

74 - 76 C

60 - 73 D

0 - 59 F

Textbook and Course Materials

Religion Matters

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Prothero

Publisher: Norton

Publication Date: 2024

Copyright Date: 2024

ISBN 10: 1324062142

ISBN 13: 978-1324062141

Chapters/Pages: 15

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

Week 1

Class introductions, syllabus review, course plan, what is religion?

Reading: ch. 1

Week 2

Reading: ch. 2

Week 3

Reading: ch. 3

Week 4

Reading: ch. 4

Week 5

Reading: ch. 5

Week 6

Reading: ch. 6

Week 7

Reading: ch. 7

Week 8 Midterm Exam Questions in class

Reading: ch. 8

Week 9 Midterm Essay due

Reading: ch. 9

Week 10

Reading: ch. 10

Week 11 Formal Research Proposal due Friday

Reading: ch. 11

Week 12

Reading: ch. 12

Week 13

Reading: ch. 13

Week 14

Reading: ch 14

Week 15

Reading: ch 15

Week 16 Research Paper due

Finals Week – No regular class meetings, no final exam

Policies & Resources

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.

In addition, the FIU Policies and Procedures Library website serves as the official repository for university-wide policies and procedures.

Gordon Rule Course

This is a Gordon Rule course which means you must demonstrate "college level writing

skills" throughout your assignments. You will not receive any credit as a Gordon rule

course for a C- or lower upon completion of this course. Your written assignments must

show good control of grammar, style, and structure. Your papers must have a clear thesis, supporting material, and a conclusion.

Guidelines for Written Work

All written work must consistently adhere to the MLA Formatting and Style Guide. Students are advised to carefully proofread all papers before submitting them. All students are encouraged to take advantage of the University resources for writing to be found in the Center for Excellence in Writing, a full-service writing center providing writing assistance and

feedback to university students. For more information, go to http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/Links to an external site..

All written work is submitted through Canvas as turn-it-in assignments, which means that the instructor will be aware of plagiarism. Plagiarism can result in expulsion from the university and will have a negative effect on your entire career. All written work must include your name, Panther ID number, course number and the name of the professor on the title page. It must be double spaced, have 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left and right) and be typed in 12 point font, Times New Roman or Calibri.

Religious Holidays

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.

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.