REL 2300

Religions of the World

Section: U06

In Person

Spring Term 2027

Course Meeting Information

LOCATION: CHARLES PERRY (PC) 428

DAYS: TUESDAY/THURSDAY

TIME: 12:30-1:45 PM

Professor Information

Daniel Alvarez

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: alvarezd@fiu.edu

Phone: 3053482186

Office Hours: Thursday 12:45-2:45 pm

Office Location: SIPA 501

Department or Academic Unit: Religious Studies

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

Examines the origins, teachings, and practices of selected world religions. The specific religions selected form examination may vary from semester to semester.

Textbook and Course Materials

Bhagavad Gita

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Franklin Edgerton

Publisher: Harvard University Press

Publication Date: 1972

Copyright Date: 1972

ISBN 10: Not available

ISBN 13: 9780674253865

Chapters/Pages: Required pages on the course outline

Invitation to World Religions

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Jeffrey Brodd, et al.

Publisher: Oxford University Press

Publication Date: 2024

Copyright Date: 2024

ISBN 10: 0197771343

ISBN 13: 9780197771341

Chapters/Pages: Required pages on the course outline

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.

Assignments & Assessments

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Midterm Essay Exam, Two (2) Short Essays (500-700 words), on questions provided by instructor: 15% of final grade)

2. Final Essay Exam: Two (2) Short Essays (500-700 words), on questions provided by instructor (15% of final grade).

3. Two (2) Quizzes:

Quiz #1, on Hinduism and Buddhism: 20 questions (10% of final grade).

Quiz #2, on Chinese Religions (Taoism and Confucianism): 20 questions (10% of final grade).

4. Objective Midterm, 50 questions, two attempts, 2 hours, on Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism (15% final grade).

5. Objective Final, 50 questions, two attempts, 2 hours, on Judaism, Christianity, Islam (15% of final grade).

6. Site Visit (4-5 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) (15% of final grade).

7. Globalization Question (essay format): students will write an essay (minimum of 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) on Kwame Anthony Appiah's "The Case for Contamination" (5% of final grade).

As a Gordon Rule course, written assignments are required of all students in order to fulfill the State-mandated standards for this course. The Gordon Rule requirement will be met by four (4) writing assignments (see below): a midterm essay exam, a

final essay exam, a site visit report, and the globalization question.

Note about the assignments: Students will have two (2) attempts, with highest score being the final score, on all the objective assessments (quizzes and exams). For the written assignments, the instructor will post the questions two (2) weeks before the essays are due on Blackboard. That is, students will have two weeks to write all the written exams, including the globalization question.

Site Visit Format and Short Directory of Religious Sites of South Florida are found at the end of the syllabus. Site visit reports will be staggered throughout the semester if necessary based on alphabetical order- (last name of students). That is, the due dates will not be the same for all students, with some site visits due the 5th week, others the 10th week, to make it easy for the teaching assistants to grade reports in a timely manner.

EXTRA CREDIT: EXTRA CREDIT

During the course of the term, there will various extra credit opportunities available to the student. You will earn one (1) point towards the final grade, based on 100 points. So if you attend five (5) extra credit events, you will have earned five (5) whole points toward your final score total. Students will be allowed to earn up to 5 extra credit points. Proof of attendance to an extra credit event will be submitting a 3×5 index card, which will be collected by the professor and the Teac;hing

Assistants (TAs) after the conclusion of the event (not before).

Only special lectures offered by the Religious Studies Department, Muslim World Studies Initiative, Middle East Studies Center, Judaic Studies, Institute of Asian Studies, and Center for Spirituality count toward extra-credit opportunities and will be announced in class and via email to all students.

THE QUIZZES AND OBJECTIVE EXAMS will be true/false, multiple choice, and the questions will be drawn from the required reading, lectures, and videos. Given this fact, it is important that the student make an effort to attend every class. All exams and quizzes are online. As explained above, students will have two (2) ATTEMPTS for each of the objective assessments (quizzes).

The quizzes will be twenty (20) questions each. The final exam of one hundred (100) questions will not be comprehensive; it will cover only the material after the midterm exam (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). YOU WILL HAVE ONE (1) HOUR TO COMPLETE THE QUIZZES.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Students will have one week to submit assignments to

TURNITIN.COM (ON CANVAS). Due dates will be posted on the weeks assignments are due. Papers submitted any time within one week after the first week dates will (that is, the second week) be deducted 10 points; any time during the week after that (the third week) 20 points. No paper will be accepted after the third week (see dates below).

This late paper policy does not apply to the final exam. Final exam will be submitted during the announced submission period and will not be accepted after that.

GET THE RECEIPT: Students should print the Turnitin.com receipt that verifies the date and the hour you they submitted their work. Receipts are essential to settle disputes as to when and whether a paper was submitted (and avoid possible late submission point deductions).

All written work will be submitted through TURNITIN.COM (midterm, final, and site visit).

All written work must be typed, double-spaced, and in a "normal" (12 pt) size font (written work submitted in large font will not be acceptable); and any quotations should follow the manual of style or the standard style recommended by FIU.

This course may also fulfill the Critical Inquiry requirement of the FIU core curriculum if the student earns a grade of "C" or higher. A "C-" or lower grade will not satisfy the Critical Inquiry requirement.

Grades will be posted 10 days after the last due date of the week papers are submitted. Please do not ask for your grade before the ten days are up.

Quotations from internet sources (Wikipedia, Encarta, and the like) will not be accepted. All source quotations must be from the assigned textbooks.

ALL WORK WILL BE DONE ONLINE AND SUBMITTED TO CANVAS.

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 of one (1) point will awarded for attending an approved event or lecture.

A	94-100	C	65-72
A-	90-93	D	64-60
B+	87-89	F	59-0
B	82-86		
B-	78-81		
C+	73-77		

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 Goals

1. To provide the student with the "raw materials" for the study

of religion by immersing the student in the beliefs, doctrines, rituals, symbols, and (select) scriptures of some of the major world religions.

2. To facilitate the informed cross-cultural comparison and evaluation of ways of being religious by focused study of select world religions.

3. To widen, enhance and enrich the intellectual and spiritual horizons of the student by exposure to the spiritual beauty, vitality, coherence, plausibility and richness of non-Christian, non-Western approaches to the transcendent or ultimate reality.

4. To challenge the student to enter sympathetically into the worldview of the religious traditions selected for study.

5. To provide the context for dialogue and discussion that will enable the student to live in an enormously complex, interdependent, and religiously plural world with patience, understanding, and appreciation for that which is different, and in some cases irreconcilably different, from his or her own "worldview."

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- See Course Goals

Expectations of the Course

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

See course goals and objectives above.

Expectations of the Course

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS: GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Global Awareness: Students will be able to demonstrate

knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems.

    - Course Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the interrelated dynamics (social-cultural, political, economic, etc.) that shape the actions of multiple figures in diverse cultural contexts.

- Global Perspectives: Students will be able to develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.
    - Course Learning Outcome: Students will be able to analyze the multiple causal forces that shape the perspectives of historical individuals/persons — economic, political, sociological, technological, cultural, etc.
- Global Engagement: Students will be able to demonstrate a willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.
    - Course Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate a willingness to engage in negotiation regarding actions of global import within the context of the class simulation.
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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

Introduction: Syllabus, Requirements, Textbooks, Overview of course

Film: Pre-Aryan Civilization of the Indus Valley

Hinduism: Pre-Classical or Vedic Religion

Required Reading: Brood, et al., chapter 4, 125-128; 100-125 (read in this order).

Week 2

Hinduism: The Upanishads

Required Reading: Brodd, et al., 125-134. Bhagavad Gita, 1-45.

Week 3

Hinduism: Bhagavad Gita: Karma, Jñana, Bhakti

Required Reading: Brodd, 134-149; Bhagavad Gita, 46-99.

Film: "330 Million Gods"

Week 4

Theravada Buddhism: The Four Noble Truths, Nirvana, Anatta

Required Reading: Brodd, 154-166 (“The Noble Eight-Fold Path").

Film: "Footprint of the Buddha

Recommended: “Siddhartha,” film based on the novel by Herman Hesse.

Week 5 Quiz #1, on Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism (due date tba)

Mahayana Buddhism

Required Reading: Brodd, 166-183; "The Infinite Compassion of the Bodhisattva").

Recommended: Brood, 183-198; Film: “Little Buddha.”

Film: "Land of the Disappearing Buddha" (on Pure Land and Zen Buddhism).

Week 6

Jainism

Required Reading: Brodd, 203-229.

Sikhism

Required Reading: Brood, 233-258.

Week 7 Essay Midterm Exam (on Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism), due date tba

Chinese Religions: Taoism

Required Reading: Brodd, 277-284; 290-295.

Chinese Religions: Confucianism

Required Reading: Brood, 263-277; 284-290.

Recommended: Brodd, 295-308.

Film: Chinese Religions

Week 8 Quiz #2, on Chinese Religions (Taoism and Confucianism)

Israel: The pre-history of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Required Reading: Brodd, 374-391.

Week 9

Prophecy in tension with Kingship and Priesthood

Required Reading: Professor Alvarez Lecture Notes

Between the Testaments: 2nd Temple Judaism 520 b.c.-70 c.e.

Required Reading: Brodd, 392-406.

Week 10

The Emergence of Rabbinic Judaism: 200 b.c.-500 CE; Judaism: Kabbalah, Hasidic Pietism,

Emancipation, Holocaust

Required Reading: Brodd, 406-425.

Christianity in the First Century: The Historical Jesus

Required Reading: Brood, 432-450.

Week 11 From Early Catholicism to the Catholic Tradition: 200-1500

Required Reading: Brodd, 450-468.

The Formation of the Protestant Evangelical Tradition: 1517-1800

Required Reading: Brodd, 468-484.

Week 12

The Formation of the Protestant Liberal Tradition: 1800-2000

Required Reading: Professor Alvarez's Lecture Notes.

Week 13

Islam: The Prophet and the Faith of Islam

Required Reading: Brodd, 490-513.

Film: "There is no God but God"

Week 14 Islam: Development of Law, Sufism, 18th & 19th Century Reform Movements,

Islamic Fundamentalism (from Ibn Hanbal to Muhammad Al'Wahhab)

Required Reading: Brodd, 513-532.

Recommended: 533-548.

Islam in the 19th and 20th Century: Arab Nationalism vs. Islamic Fundamentalism

Week 15

Film: "The Message" (on the life and message of prophet Muhammed).

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.

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.

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.