

**REL 2011-B51B (54742) Introduction to Religion (Analysis and Interpretation)**  
Summer 2022

Days and Times: M, W 12:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.  
Room: Biscayne Bay Campus, Academic Center One 130

Instructor: Adam D. Gorelick  
Office Hours: by appointment  
P: 305-348-4100 | F: 305-348-2118 | [agorelic@fiu.edu](mailto:agorelic@fiu.edu)



Students should regularly access the course online in canvas. The Inbox messaging system within canvas is the best way to contact the professor.

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

### **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 Outcomes**

Students will be able to...

- 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 and attempt to understand 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.
- Conduct field research to better understand a religious community.
- Speak intelligently about the relationship between religion and other cultural phenomena such as art, literature, music, etc.

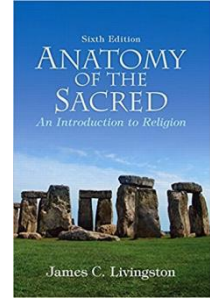
## Texts

Livingston, James C. *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion*.  
6th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2009.

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-600380-9

ISBN-10: 0-13-600380-X

Additional selected readings and other materials will be assigned through Canvas.



## 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/>.

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.

## SARS-CoV-2 Information

As cases and hospitalizations due to the Omicron variant continue to increase in our community, we must unite and take necessary steps to prevent further spread.

- Daily and before arriving to campus, complete the P3 app. If you are not given the green check mark to enter campus, then stay home, and contact me by email by forwarding your P3 app email notification advising you to stay home.
- Please check your FIU email account and your Canvas course at least once a day. Email and Canvas are the official ways for the university, and your professors, to contact you.
- If you do not feel well and/or have tested positive for COVID-19, please do not come to class, immediately complete the P3 app to notify the COVID Response Team and contact me by email by forwarding your P3 app email notification as soon as you can. In order to receive an excused absence for P3 failure/COVID-19, you must complete the P3 app and forward the email notification. If directed to stay home by the P3 app, that email notification will serve as your excused absence when you forward it to me. The make-up

policy is that the instructor will allow you to submit assignments when you have recovered.

- FIU is following current CDC Guidance. Please refer to the link where you can access their most current information.
- Please take every precaution to keep yourself and others healthy. Per CDC guidelines, you are encouraged to get vaccinated and strongly advised to wear a mask indoors and in public including all FIU facilities.
- Missing excessive days may lead to failing a class or a grade of incomplete.
- For me to assist you in achieving your goals, it is important for you to contact me as soon as you experience any events that might disrupt your course participation. For up-to-date information about COVID-19, please see the [repopulation.fiu.edu](http://repopulation.fiu.edu) F FAQs.
- Please be advised that classes may be audio and visually recorded and/or subject to course capture for future access by students in this course. Your attendance/participation in this course constitutes consent to such recordings, which will only be used for educational purposes by students in the course and securely stored in University systems. If there is a concern regarding the recording and use of such recording, please contact [FERPA@fiu.edu](mailto:FERPA@fiu.edu).

### **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.

### **Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges**

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC), if you have not done so already.” Please note that if you have a student who is registered with the DRC, you will receive notification about the student’s disability and a detailed description of accommodations the student will require.

### **Academic Conduct**

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

**Note:** Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and written assignments are to be submitted to turnitin.com.

### **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

### **Course Requirements**

Attendance and Participation – **15% of final grade**

Quizzes – Quizzes will be unannounced and will cover material from the readings and lectures. **15% of final grade**

Midterm Exam – The midterm exam will include questions about the material as well as a take-home essay response (1000-word minimum). See below for dates. **30% of final grade**

Formal Research Proposal – Students will conduct a research paper on a topic of their choosing, subject to approval from the instructor. The instructor encourages students to be creative in selecting a specific topic that will appeal to them individually. A formal proposal is required and will count as **10% of final grade**. The proposal must include the following components:

1. An **overarching one-sentence research question** concerning either a specific aspect of a religion or some specific thematic approach to religion.
2. **Three supporting** research questions, **each** of which to be followed by **one sentence of elaboration** explaining why you are asking that question (i.e., how it will help you support the main overarching question from number 1 above.
3. A **preliminary annotated bibliography** with at least **3 academic sources**. An annotated bibliography requires a brief paragraph after each source listed. Use MLA guidelines to list each works-cited entry. Each supporting paragraph will (a) **summarize the content** of the source, (b) **critique its value**, and (c) **consider its usefulness** for the project at hand. Instructor will provide examples of annotated bibliographies.

Research Paper - The final draft of the research paper (1250-word minimum) will count as an additional **30% of final grade**. The bibliography or works cited must include at least 4 scholarly sources.

### **Calendar**

Week 1 (6/20 to 6/26)

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

Reading: Livingston ch. 1-2

Week 2 (6/27 to 7/3)

Reading: Livingston ch. 3-4

Week 3 (7/4 to 7/10) **No Class on 7/4**

**Midterm Exam 7/10 in class; Midterm Essay due 7/17, 11:59 p.m.**

Reading: Livingston ch. 5-6

Week 4 (7/11 to 7/17)

Reading: Livingston ch. 7-9

Week 5 (7/18 to 7/24)

**Formal Research Proposal due Monday 7/18, 11:59 p.m.**

Reading: Livingston ch. 10-12

Week 6 (7/25 to 7/29)

**Research Paper due 7/29, 11:59 p.m.**

Reading: Livingston ch. 13-15