

Religious Studies Department
REL 3308 Studies in World Religions
FALL 2014
Biscayne Bay Campus

Instructor: Valeria Schindler

Office: Academic One 223

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays

8:30am to 9:45am and by Appointment

Class Days and Hours: MWF 11am-11:50am

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Course Description:

This is an introductory course to world religions. Since it is an extensive subject, we will be focusing on some of the major religions of our world, examining them from its historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological, and ritualistic practices. We will also learn about religions that are no longer in practice, which will enable us to understand how the influence they had on other religions. We will analyze the differences and similarities between the religions learned in our course and associate their practices, beliefs, and applications to contemporary issues in our world.

We will use different techniques as a way of learning in this class, such as debates, lectures, personal assignments, videos, and group assignments.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Define and discuss basic religious terminology.
- Learn and apply critical thinking skills in the context of religion.
- Appreciate the history, basic teachings, practices, and underlying beliefs and principles of some of the world religions, analyzing them in a critical way and understanding their similitudes and differences.
- Understand what the religious phenomena and religious experience are by utilizing different approaches and theories of religion in order to present a critical analysis.

- Become more aware and understanding of the diversity of religious beliefs in our society and its effects on contemporary and every-day events.
- Challenge his/her own misconceptions of what religion and its practices are and open his/her mind to new ideas.

University Requirements for the Global Learning Objectives:

1. **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.

2. **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.

3. **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.

Required Textbooks:

- Hopfe, Lewis and Woodward Mark, *Religions of the World*, twelfth edition. New Jersey, Pearson Education, 2011.
ISBN-10: 0-205-15860-9
ISBN-13: 978-0-205-15860-7
- **Note:** It is not required to purchase *MyReligionLab* with your textbook.

Assignments:

- **Ten (10) ten-question quizzes- lowest score to be dropped-** on the reading material and class lectures including multiple choice and true or false questions. These quizzes will be taken on Blackboard
- **Midterm and Final Exams.**
 - **Midterm:** will cover the first half of the semester and will include multiple choice, true and false, and matching questions.

- **Final:** will cover from second half of the semester and will include multiple choice, true and false, and matching questions.
- **Semester Project:** This project can be done as an individual or in groups of up to three (3) students. All projects must have the following components: Proposal, Bibliography and Draft, and a paper or Creative Presentation. The Creative Presentation can be an in class presentation using creative tools such as power point, videos, pictures, etc.
- For the project you will have to choose a topic, concept, ritual, myth, or custom practice in two different religions and compare and contrast them. For example, you can compare and contrast the Inca's myth of creation with the creation myth in the Bible. You will have to use scholarly sources for this assignment. A research session at the library will be set up so each student learns how to use the resources we have at the university. I do not consider WIKIPEDIA a source, so please do not use it for this paper.
- **Proposal:** A paragraph describing what you will be comparing and contrasting and why.
- **Bibliography and Draft (30% of the grade):** Minimum 5 sources, please use either MLA or Chicago style to present them. You will also have to present a draft of your presentation. There is no specific format, you can write paragraphs, charts, bullets, outline etc. The content of your draft is basically your findings.
- **Paper:** If you choose this option, you will have to produce an essay of 1300-1800 words. The essay could be in MLA or Chicago Style. Make sure the essay is well structured and written.
- **Creative presentation:** If you choose this option, your presentation should be no more than 5 minutes long. You can use any media tools to create a fun and comprehensive presentation of your comparison and contrast.
- **Please consult the course calendar for due dates**

- **Extra Credit** opportunities are available and usually involves attending a special lecture or event and writing a two-page review and analysis: at least one page should summarize the event and provide evidence of attendance, and at least one page must analyze the event in the context of a course theme or concept. The essay could be worth up to 3 extra credit points to be added to the final grade. A maximum of 6 extra credit points could be awarded. Please refer to the list of events provided on Blackboard. Extra Credit reports are due on the last week of the semester.

Grading Criteria:

- (10) Quizzes: 20%
- Midterm: 25%
- Final: 25%
- Class presentation: 20%
- Attendance and Participation: 10%
- **Total: 100%**

Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range
A	93 and Above	C	74-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-73
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	84-86	D	64-66
B-	80-83	D-	60-63
C+	77-79	F	Below 60

A's are awarded to exceptional work in class and assignments

B's are awarded for good to very good work.

C's are awarded for average to above average work.

D's are awarded for barely passing with below average work.

F's are awarded for unacceptable work.

Course Policies:

- All written papers (if necessary) will have to be submitted through Turnitin in Blackboard
- **Blackboard** will be used as an online assistance to the course. Additional material and readings will be posted there. **It is your responsibility to check Blackboard before each class.** To log into Blackboard Go to www.ecampus.fiu.edu and use the login to Blackboard tab. To login you have to use your FIU email address, just the part before the "@" Your password is the same you use for your email account or to login to MyFIU. The course is REL 3308 Section B-52. Please let me know if you have any problems.
- **Plagiarism**
 - It is the theft of intellectual property of others, including their ideas, concepts, and words. Plagiarism **will not be tolerated** in this course. Please visit <http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2codeofacainteg.htm>

To clarify what constitutes plagiarism for this university. Offenders will receive an "F" on the paper, and could fail the entire course.

Some examples of plagiarism are:

- Papers acquired online or from other sources that were not produced by the student that have submitted them.
- Copying material and ideas from other sources without attribution.
- Using other student's work.

IF YOU HAVE ANY DOUBTS, PLEASE TALK TO ME FIRST.

- **Late assignments, missed tests.** Points are going to be deducted for both. If you miss a quiz, you will lose the points the quiz is worth. If you turn in a paper after its due date, **2 points are going to be deducted per late day, up to 16 points total.** If you know in advanced you won't be able to take a quiz or if you have any issues with your assignments' due date, **PLEASE TALK TO ME BEFORE IT HAPPENS** and I might be able to give you a make-up date. However, **NO MAKE-UP DATES FOR FINAL EXAM!!**
- **NO CELL PHONES OR COMPUTERS** in class please. If necessary, power point presentations will be available to you after each class through Blackboard. If you need to use your computer to take notes, please talk to me.
- **Attendance and participation** are extremely important. **ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.** If you know you will be absent for any reason, please inform me **before** the class you will miss. Tardiness will be penalized as well. I value your participation and your comments, so is very important that you take an active role in class. If you have any problems, please consult with me in advanced. **MORE THAN 8 ABSENTS IN THE SEMESTER WILL RESULT IN A 0 GRADE FOR ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

COMMUNICATION is the key for a successful relationship.

Behavioral Misconduct: Any student who is subject to sexual harassment, stalking, or physical or verbal abuse should immediately speak to the instructor. The university has policies to protect students in these instances and the instructor will immediately refer the student to the appropriate program or resource. Remember, this is a course in which different ideas are welcomed, even if they do not agree with our own notions.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities, as defined by law, have the right to receive needed accommodations if their disabilities make it difficult to perform academic tasks in the usual way or in the allotted time frame. However, in order to receive accommodation, students with disabilities must register with Disability Resource Center. This office will keep the student's written request, notify a faculty member who has a student with a disability enrolled in his/her class, and indicate what kinds of arrangements must be made.

Religious Holidays: By university policy, students must notify the instructor at least two weeks in advance that he/she wishes to observe a religious holiday. The student will be excused from class without penalty, but will still be responsible for the material studied in the class.

- For University's deadlines, please refer to <http://onestop.fiu.edu/academic-calendar/Academic%20Calendar%20Archives/2013-2014%20Academic%20Calendar%20-%2010%2023%2013%20Sheet1.pdf>

Important Note: *This syllabus can be amended determined by the demands of the course.*

REL 3308: Studies in World Religion
FALL 2014
Course Outline and Calendar

Week of August 25th: Introduction and approaches to religion

- 8/25 : Introduction and course overview
- 8/27: Introduction to religion: Definitions, origin of religions, etc.
 - **Due reading pages 2-9 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
- 8/29: Dimensions and Theories of religion – Marx, Freud, Durkheim, Webber, Eliade, and others.

Week September 1st: Ancient Religions

- **9/1: LABOR DAY – NO CLASS**
- 9/3: Ancient Religions
 - **Quiz #1 – Basic concepts and definitions; Dimensions and theories of religions**
- 9/5: Basic religions/ Indigenous sacred ways
 - **Due reading pages 14-26 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward**
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Week of September 8th: Other Native Religious ways

- 9/8 The African experience
 - **Due reading pages 48-59 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
- 9/10: Native American and Amerindian traditions
 - **Due reading pages 28-43 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward**
- 9/12: Hinduism
 - **Quiz #2 Ancient Traditions; Basic/ indigenous ways; African experience; Native American and Amerindian traditions**

Week of September 15th: Eastern Religions

- 9/15: Hinduism
 - **Due reading pages 72-85 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**

- **Topic to be analyzed need to be presented for approval – Please submit it on Blackboard**
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- 9/17: Hinduism
- 9/19: Buddhism
 - **Due reading pages 128-138 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
 - **Quiz #3 - Hinduism**

Week of September 22nd: Eastern Religions (Contd.)

- 9/22: Buddhism
 - **Due reading pages 138-150 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
- 9/24: Buddhism
- 9/26: Research class @ Library

Week of September 29th: Eastern Religions

- 9/29: Jainism
 - **Due reading pages 116-124 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward**
 - **Quiz #4 - Buddhism**
- 10/1: Sikhism
 - **Due reading pages 156-165 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
- 10/3: Daoism

Week of October 6th: Eastern Religions, and Midterm

- 10/6: Confucianism
 - **Quiz #5 – Jainism; Sikhism; Daoism; Confucianism**
- 10/8: **MIDTERM**
- 10/10: Judaism
 - **Due reading pages 242-256 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**

Week of October 13th: Judaism

- 10/13: Judaism
- 10/15: Judaism
 - **Due reading pages 256-271 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**

- 10/17: Work on Sources and Draft

Week of October 20: Judaism and Christianity

- 10/20: Judaism
- 10/22: Christianity
 - **Due reading pages 278-288 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
 - **Quiz #6 Judaism**
- 10/24: Christianity
 - **Due reading pages 288-302 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**

Week of October 27th: Christianity and Islam

- 10/27: Christianity
 - **Due reading pages 302-312 AND 314-315 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
 - **Sources and outline or draft of paper and presentation to be submitted to professor**
- 10/29: Islam
 - **Due reading pages 328-339 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward**
 - **Quiz #7 Christianity**
- 10/31: Islam
 - **Due reading pages 339-356 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**

Week of November 3rd: Islam and contemporary issues

- 11/3: Islam
 - **Due reading pages 339-356 of Religions of the World by Hopfe and Woodward.**
 - **LAST DAY TO DROP COURSE WITH DR GRADE**
- 11/5: Islam
- 11/7: Islam

Week of November 10th: New Religious Movements

- 11/10: Radical Movements
 - **Quiz #8 - Islam**
- 11/12: Violence and Religion
 - **Due reading handouts on violence posted on Blackboard**
- 11/14: Cults and Sects

Week of November 17th: Contemporary issues

- 11/17: Nature Spirituality/ Wicca
 - **Quiz #9**
- 11/19: New Religious movements – Baha'i
- **11/20: Project due through Blackboard**
- 11/21: Voodoo

Week of November 24th: Other views

- 11/24: Gender and Religion
 - **Due reading handouts women studies and religion provided by instructor**
- 11/26: In class presentation
- **11/28: THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS**

Week of December 1st: In class presentations/ final remarks

- 12/1: In class presentation
- 12/3: In class presentation
- 12/5: Final remarks, conclusions, and review for final exam

Week of December 8th: Final week of the semester. Please consult FIU's website for finals schedule

Important Note: *This calendar can be amended determined by the demands of the course.*