

Rel 2011

Intro To Religion

florida International University

FALL 2015

Instructor: Stephanie Londono

Class hours: MWF 11-11:50 AM

Email: slond006@fiu.edu

Class Room: Deuxieme Maison 110

Office hours: TBA

Note: This syllabus is tentative. Schedule and assignment subjects may change.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This section of Religion: Analysis and Interpretation will use text readings, in-class participation and multimedia to explore basic concepts in the study of religion. This format's scope includes the exploration of concepts such as deity, cosmology and myth, ritual, scripture, ethics and salvation/liberation. The student will analyze religious phenomena as psychological, sociological and anthropological forces in the history of humanity. Each concept will be introduced through the textbook, class lectures, student presentations, videos, Internet sources and discussions. Throughout the course the student will also be exposed to specific rituals, myths, doctrines, ethics and symbols from various different world religions and cultures. Students will be tested on this material in a midterm exam and a final exam. Two essays will develop the student's critical thinking skills and writing abilities. For the first essay, the student will conduct field research by attending a religious service outside of his/her own tradition. For the second essay, the student will read and review an article on religion and globalization. This course fulfills the Gordon Rule requirement.

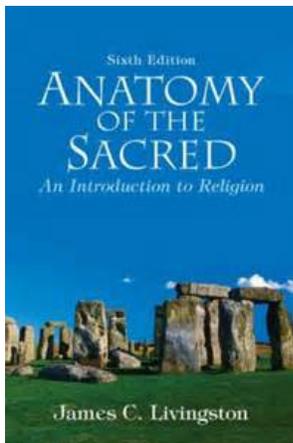
COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, the successful student will be able to:

- Explain the basic history, development, and belief system of various religious traditions.

- Recognize religious themes and concepts found in other cultures.
- Identify the meaning behind religious concepts and symbols.
- Critically engage the issue of religious diversity in national and international context (Global Engagement).
- Analyze issues in the field of religions studies from multiple approaches (Global Perspective).
- Evaluate the interrelationship between his/her own and others' religious views as they relate to understanding other cultures and solving common problems (Global Awareness)

REQUIRED TEXT



Anatomy of the Sacred: An introduction to Religion

by James C. Livingston

ISBN 978-0-13-600380-9

ISBN 0-13-600380-x

* Other reading materials will be provided by the instructor.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS COURSE

Students should be prepared to participate in class by reading the assignments and by developing discussion or presentation material, as requested. Students are responsible for carefully reading the syllabus and calendar, meeting deadlines as posted, and submitting mature, thoughtful work. Some of this material may be new, personal or controversial, so please maintain an open-minded and considerate attitude, allowing others time to reflect and communicate.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place in class, in Blackboard, and through FIU email. The best method to communicate with your instructor privately is through email. Appointments can be made on request. Please contact the instructor immediately if a serious situation arises which will impact student performance.

GORDON RULE REQUIREMENT

As this is a Gordon Rule course, students will be required to write a minimum of two major assignments. Each paper will be at least 1500-2000 words and will be submitted through Turnitin. All source material must be cited correctly using MLA Style and long quotes should be avoided. Please be aware that papers with an originality score of over 35% similarity will be subject to additional scrutiny and may incur additional penalties, up to and including receiving an F (0 points).

GLOBAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

As a Global Learning course, students will be meet the following objectives through text readings, assignments, and class discussions:

1. Students will be able to analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives.
2. Students will be able to assess how global issues and trends are interrelated with the development and practice of religions
3. Students will be able to demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world.

DISCUSSION AND PRIVACY

Some of this material may be new, personal or controversial, so please maintain an open- minded and considerate attitude, allowing others time to reflect and communicate. Keep in mind that in-class and online discussions are public. Be cautious with your words and your sources. Respect others' privacy and do not share class conversations with others outside of class. Recognize that fellow students may not wish to give personal opinions about some topics.

EXAMS- 15% each

There will be two exams: A midterm and a final. Exam 1 and Exam 2 are in-class and consist of both objective and essay portion.

The essay portion for both exams should each be approximately 500-750 words long. The essay topics for the exam will become available in Blackboard a week before the exam. There will be three options of which one will show up on your exam.

Objective: 25 questions - 2 points each (50 total)

Essay: 50 points

TOTAL: 100 points - Each Exam - 15% of your grade.

ESSAYS

Essays will be turned into Turnitin.com via Assignments in Blackboard. It is not necessary to create a separate Turnitin account. Keep electronic and paper copies of all written work. For your own

protection, keep a copy of your Turnitin.com electronic receipt until you have received your final grade for the course.

Essay 1 (Site Visit) - The student will do field research by attending a religious service or ceremony outside of his/her own religious tradition. This assignment is divided into two sections: the paper and one blog entry, which must also be posted on the blog- (this can be a audio, video, or written post).

*** For this assignment the student has three options:**

1. Paper: 1200-1500 words and cited correctly.
2. video format of about 7-10 minutes. The video must be well edited, feature interviewees, images and good quality audio. You will still have to write a script and include a bibliography. Examples of the video format will be provided.
3. Audio format: 7- 10 minutes. Just like the video, It must be well edited, feature interviewees, natural sound, and good quality audio. You will still have to write the script and include a bibliography. Examples of the audio format will be provided.

* For more details about this assignment, see Assignments in Blackboard. The Site Visit is worth 20% of the final grade.

Essay 2-

Make use of your creativity and propose your own topic. By the end of the semester you would have a variety of theories and topics from which to choose from. I recommend finding a topic that can merge both your major and religious studies. Every student must schedule an appointment with the instructor to get cleared before embarking on the research. The paper must be 5-7-long, double-spaced, 12-size font. Use five academic sources to support and elaborate on your theses.

LATE PAPERS: Late papers will not be accepted. If a student has an approved, documented excuse, late papers may be accepted with a penalty of 10 points per day for up to three days, after which papers will not be accepted for any reason.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another's work as your own, falls into three different categories:

1. A written work that is entirely stolen from another source;
2. Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
3. Paraphrasing from another source without proper citations.

Students are expected to understand the definition of plagiarism. See the University Code of Academic Integrity at <http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2codeofacainteg.htm> if you need further clarification. Offenders will receive a grade of F (0 points) for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly for the course. Please be aware: Previously submitted papers are not allowed, even if it is your own work and even if you are retaking this class. You may not "reuse" papers.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS 10%

In the beginning of the semester, students must sign up for a presentation group. If a student fails to sign up in the first two classes, the student will be assigned a group without her or his consent. The groups will be presenting on a different topic every week. Each student in the group is responsible for covering a specific topic related to the text readings.

The group presentation is divided into three parts:

1. **Topic:** Every student must present on a topic corresponding to the week's readings using PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezi or similar. The content can come from the textbook or/and an outside source. (Note: The topics need to be confirmed by the instructor.)
2. **Current issues, events or people that impact the religion:** This information can be obtained from various sources, included the sites I recommend on the blog.
 - 2.1. THIS CURRENT EVENT MUST ALSO BE POSTED ON THE BLOG FOR DISCUSSION.
3. **Discussion Question:** At the end of the presentation students will propose a discussion question. Keep in mind that it is your responsibility to ignite class discussion. Be bold, creative and thoughtful when formulating your question. **NOTE:** The question does not necessarily have to be related to the current event.
 - 3.1. Due to the limited time of the class, the discussion questions MUST BE POSTED ON THE BLOG, AND STUDENTS MUST PARTICIPATE ONLINE. Every student is expected to post one comment and respond to one classmate's comment ONCE A WEEK.

If a student cannot attend on the day of the presentation, they may be seriously penalized (up to receiving a 0 for the project) depending on their participation in project development. The group presentation is worth 50 points and is 10% of the final grade.

BLOG- What you didn't Learn in Class. - 10%

For this class we will be doing a social experiment. This blog will be a public space for us to connect with each other and the world. Every student will receive an invitation to become an author and actively participate.

The blog title is: What you didn't learn in Class- precisely because it will be a space for us to elaborate on ideas and topics that perhaps don't get mentioned in class either because of time or inconvenience.

The blog is divided into four sections: You will find your class (REL3308) in every submenu. Make sure that when you post on any of these pages you select your class on the category menu on the left of the page. This way your post will show on the right section. (This will be further explained in class).

1. **The Class Think Tank:** Groups post their current event and discussion questions every week. Every student must respond to a discussion question and to a classmate's comment.

1.1.**Note:** Every student is encouraged to post on this space at any time as well. Find more info on the blog.

At the end of the course, your discussion thread will be graded based on the quantity and the quality of what you posts. In responding to others, it is important to be courteous and respectful. If you disagree with something that has been said, that is fine. But be sure to explain why and where appropriate, support your own view with evidence. Also, it is fine to ask questions that are related to our topic to extend the discussion. But please make sure the questions are relevant. Please remember that this is an academic forum.

2. The Megan Project: This page is named after a student who two semesters ago came up with a really cool project.

After learning about the universality of religion, Megan began to notice the ubiquitous presence of religion. She continued to find religious symbols in her community, university and travels. Megan realized that religion is not this isolated topic, relegated to churches, Sundays, prayers and gospel channels. This realization led her to this awesome idea of photographing all these symbols with her phone or camera, and put them together in a presentation with a short description of how she encountered these symbols and how are they "religious" from her perspective.

Megan began this project, which she titled "Everyday Religion," during the Fall 2014 in my World Religions class, and expanded it in the following semester while taking Analysis and Interpretation of Religion class.

Lets continue to feed this brilliant idea by spotting and photographing religion everywhere we find it. You will be surprised to learn that pop culture is imbued with religion in many ways. Fashion, music, TV, art, and food are just some of the mediums through which religion is articulated. Take a picture or video and briefly explain how is religion present and relevant in your discovery.

On the description tell us where did your photograph take place, when did you take it and why do you think it is a religious symbol.

3. Movie Reviews: We will be using film to articulate theories and ideas. Share your reaction on the movies we watch in class. Elaborate on important themes and dialogues on your comments.

4. Site Visit Project: Every student should post at least one journal entry. This entry can be in a audio, video or written format. Your paper will also be posted on this section.

You can also find all this information on the blog: <https://relclass.wordpress.com/about/>

Audio examples:

BBC radio:

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05nxhj6

NPR radio:

www.npr.org/2015/06/20/415973913/in-ramadan-saudi-families-break-bread-and-watch-tv-dramas

Video example:

<https://youtu.be/JhLN7dtukig>

EXTRA CREDIT

Creative writing: Develop a short story where you present characters that represent different religions. The story must include in its plot rituals, symbols, scriptures (sacred texts), festivals, teachings (i.e. the eight fold path, the pillars of Islam, etc.) among other aspects that we learned in class. (2-5 Pages).

Poetry: Include all the aforementioned topics. Make sure the poem has a rhyme and a regular meter. The piece must be at least four stanzas. Remember the Vedas and Zoroaster's Gathas appear to be composed in poetic form.

Song: Include all the aforementioned topics. Make it at least 2-3 minutes long.

Visual Art (painting, drawing): Make sure you explain your interpretation in a paragraph.

Movie Review: Review a movie and write a five- paragraph reaction paper describing the role that religion plays in the story or event. Focus on religious symbols, rituals, myths or the ways in which religious beliefs or practices influence the plot or meaning of the movie. Do not tell the whole story of the movie, but just enough so that your points are clear. The movie selection must be approved by the instructor.

All extra credit reports are due no later than December 1. Be creative, respectful and take this opportunity not just for the extra points, but also to leave a strong positive message. Have fun!

Note: superb extra credit projects will be posted on the blog as well.

GRADING

LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE
A	93 - 100	B-	80 - 82	D+	67 - 69
A-	90 - 92	C+	77 - 79	D	63 - 66
B+	87 - 89	C	73 - 76	D-	60 - 62
B	83 - 86	C-	70 - 72	F	< 60

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	SCAL E	PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE
Essay 1- Site Visit	100	20%
Essay 2	100	20%
MIDTERM	100	15%
FINAL	100	15%
Group Presentations	50	10%
Blog Participation	50	10%
Participation and Attendance	50	10%
Total	550	100%

WEEK	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
1 Aug 24-28	Introductions, syllabus review, class plan	Organize presentations CH 1- What is Religion	Ch- 2 Ways of Studying Religion
2 Aug 31-Sept 5	Ch -3 The sacred and the Holy Sacred Power The Holy as <i>Mysterium Tremendum</i> 37-42	Cont. Ch- 3 <i>Sacred Space and Time</i> 42- 50	Cont. Ch-3 Film: BlackRobe
3 Sept 7-11	Labor Day - No class	Student Group 1. The Sacred and the Holy blog post - discussion	Ch.4 Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine Symbols, Metaphor, Parable, and Story 53-63
4 Sept 14-18	Ch-4 Cont. Religious Myth 63-68 Site visit journal Entry- (post on Blog)	Ch-4 Cont. Models and doctrines 68-70	Student Group 2. Sacred Symbol, Myth, and Doctrine blog post - discussion
5 Sept 21-25	Ch-5 Sacred Ritual Ritual Action and Types of Sacred Ritual 74-89	Ch 5- Cont. Ritual Sacrifice and Rituals as Sacraments 89-93	Student Group 3. Sacred Ritual. blog post - discussion

6 Sept 28- Oct 2	Ch-6 Sacred Scripture Scripture, its roles and features 96-104 Site visit -Due Submitt on Turnitin 11:59 PM	Ch-6 Cont. Authority and Canonicity Uses of scripture 104-112	Ch-6 Cont. Interpretation of Scripture Liberation Theology 112-121
7 Oct 5-9	Student Group 4. Sacred Scripture blog post - discussion	Ch-7 Society and The Sacred: The Social Formations and Transformations of Religion Religion and Society 124-127	Ch-7 Cont. Types of Religious Communities 127-136
8 Oct 12-16	Ch-7 Cont. The Sect and The Cult. 136-147	Student Group 5. Society and The Sacred blog post - discussion	MIDTERM EXAMS Covers week 1-7
9 Oct 19-23	Ch- 8 Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality Polytheism and animism 153-163	Ch-8 Cont Dualism, Pantheism and Monism 163-171	Ch-8 Cont Monotheism and Panentheism 171-180
10 Oct 26-30	Student Group 6. Concepts of the Divine blog post - discussion	Ch-9 Cosmogony: Origins of the Natural and Social Order Cosmogony Emergence from a Primal Substance Sexual Union 183-186	Ch-9 Cont. Creation by Conflict Craftsman Ex-nihilo 186-198
11 Nov 2-6	Ch-9 Cont Rejection of Cosmogonic Speculation The Anthropic principle Creation Science Intelligent Design 198-208	Student Group 7. Cosmogony blog post - discussion	Ch-10 Views of the Human Problem overview 211-212 Buddhism and Confucianism 223-232
12 Nov 9-13	Ch-10 Cont Stoicism Christianity 212-223 Recommended movie: Ghandi	Student Group 8. Human Problem blog post - discussion	Ch-11 Theodicy: Encountering Evil Demand for theodicy 235-244 Final Paper Due. Turnitin 11:59 PM

13 Nov 16-20	Ch-11 Cont. Karma-Samsara Theodicy Monotheistic Theodicy 244-256	Ch-11 Cont. Film: The Trial of God	Student Group 9. Theodicy blog post - discussion
14 Nov 23-27	Ch-12 Ethics: Foundation of Moral Action Philosophical Ethics Sources and Norms of Moral Authority 259-274	Ch-12 Cont. Sources and Norms of Moral Authority 274-283	Student Group 10. Ethics blog post - discussion
15 Nov 30- Dec 4	Ch-13 Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation the way of Grace through faith The Way of Devotion 287-297 Film: Luther	Ch-13 Cont. The way of Action and Obligation 297-307	Student Group 11. Soteriology blog post - discussion
16 Dec 7-11	Review	Final 9:45-11:45 AM Same Classroom	

RELIGIOUS SITES OF SOUTH FLORIDA

A REMINDER TO ALL STUDENTS THAT THE SITE VISIT AND REPORT MUST BE DONE FOR A RELIGIOUS TRADITION THAT IS NOT THE STUDENT'S OWN. I strongly recommend to start the fieldwork early, and that you attend at least 2-3 times to have a successful report.

ISLAMIC: the times to go are Fridays and Sundays at 1:30 p.m. Female students can bring a scarf with them if they don't want to stand out, but it is not required.

Miami Gardens Mosque (Sunni) 4305 N.W. 183 street
Miami, Florida 33055

Mosque of Miami (Sunni) 7350 N.W. 3rd Street Miami, Florida 33126 305-261-7622

Masjid Al-Ansar (Sunni) 5245 N.W. 7th Avenue Miami, Florida 33127 305-757-8741

Islamic School of Miami Masjid al-Noor (Sunni) 11699 SW 147 Ave Miami, FL 33196

(305) 408-0400

Tasnim Uddin, Principal of School

Friday: 1:30 pm, Islam School on Sundays: 10am-12pm (behind the Exxon gas station)

Islamic Jafferia Association Imambara (Shia) 10554 N.W. 132nd Street
Hialeah Gardens, Florida 33016
(305) 557-6835

[http://www .ijmiami.org/](http://www.ijmiami.org/)

Muhammad's Mosque # 29 (Nation of Islam) 5660 N.W. 7th Ave.
Miami, Florida
305-756-9136

BAHAI

FIU Bahai Club 305-436-2490

Bahai Faith (South) 9300 S. Dixie Hwy. Miami, Florida 305-570-8886

Bahai Faith (North) 4365 Rock Island Rd. Ft. Lauderdale
(North of Commercial) 954-524-4084

BUDDHIST

(Nichiren Buddhist)

Sokka Gakkai International Miami Community Center 20000 S.W. 36th St.
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33332 954-349-5200

Avalokitesvara Buddhist Study Center (Buddhist) 7550 S.W. 82nd Court
Miami, Florida 33143
305-271-6361

267-8000

International Zen Institute of Florida (Buddhist) Dharma House
3860 Crawford Avenue
Miami, Florida 33133

305-448-8969

Wat Buddharangsi Temple (Thai, Buddhist) 15200 S.W., 240th Street
Homestead, Florida
305-245-2702

Amida Temple ("Pure Land" Buddhist) c/o Kuang-Hsi Wu
12815 S.W. 119 Terrace
Miami, Florida 33186

305-385-2866

International Dharma Center (Buddhist) P.O. Box 141728
Coral Gables, Florida
33114-1728

305-267-8000 (Ileana Davis)
Kagyü Shedrup Chöling (Tibetan Buddhist)

1905 Monroe Street
Hollywood, Florida 33020 954-920-1346

HINDU: Plan to attend Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Shiva Vishnu Temple 5661 Dykes Rd. (S.W. 160th Ave)
Pembroke Pines (Davie)
954-689-0471 webmaster@shivavishnu.org

(I-75 north, exit at Sheridan, go west to Dykes Road, then go north for about a mile, temple on the left)

The South Florida Hindu Temple 13010 Griffin Road
Davie, Florida
954-438-3675

info@sfht.org

Hare Krishna Temple 3220 Virginia St. Coconut Grove, Florida 305-442-7218

SIKH: Plan to attend Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Sikh Society of Florida 16000 Sterling Rd. Pembroke Pines, Florida 954-680-0221

(Same directions as to Shiva Hindu Temple, but closer to Sheridan on Dykes Road)

JAIN

Jain Center of South Florida
1960 N. Commerce Parkway #11 Weston, FL 33326
Here is Direction Link for Jain center. <http://jaincentersfl.com/direction.html>

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN

Synagogues: Friday evenings, near Sundown; and Saturday mornings, 8:00 a.m. only.
Christian churches: 11:00 a.m. morning service. Consult Yellow Pages for synagogue or church nearest where you live.

Students are encouraged to do detective work and find representatives of the other major world religions in Miami or the South Florida area: Taoism, Confucianism (Chinese), Shinto (Japanese), and Zoroastrianism (Persian/Iranian, and mostly in Bombay, India).

