

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
Department of Religious Studies  
REL 3308 Studies in World Religions  
Spring 2013

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Instructor: Mr. Daniel Alvarez  
Office Hours: TBA  
DM 302 or by Appointment

Class Hours: TR, 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.  
Class Room: SIPA AUDITORIUM 125  
E-Mail Address: [Alvarezd@fiu.edu](mailto:Alvarezd@fiu.edu)

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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

#### TEXTBOOKS

Lewis M. Hopfe, Mark R. Woodward, *Religions of the World*, 11th edition, 2007.

Franklin Edgerton, *Bhagavad Gita*, Harvard University Press, 1972.

Lao Tzu, selections from the Tao te Ching (available on Blackboard).

FOR GLOBALIZATION QUESTION: Selections from Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*; and Mortimer Adler, *Truth in Religion* (available on Blackboard).

#### INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

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."

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

1. **Mid-Term Exam**, on Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism: 50 questions (25 % of final grade)
2. **Final Exam**, on Judaism, Christianity and Islam: 100 questions (40% of final grade).
3. **Quiz #1**: 20 questions (10% of final grade).
4. **Quiz #2**: 20 questions (10% of final grade).
5. **Site Visit** (4-5 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) (10% of final grade). Site Visit Format and Short Directory of Religious Sites of South Florida given 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 5<sup>th</sup> week, others the 10<sup>th</sup> week, to make it easy for the teaching assistants to grade reports in a timely manner.

**6. Globalization Question:** students will write an essay (minimum of 2 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) on the question provided by the instructor (5% of final grade).

**Extra credit:** 1 pt. for every event attended (with verification). Only special lectures offered by the 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 exams and quizzes are objective** (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.

The midterm exam will consist of fifty (50) questions; the final exam will consist of one hundred (100) questions. 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).

**ALL WORK WILL BE DONE ONLINE AND SUBMITTED TO BLACKBOARD.**

ALL EXAMS, QUIZZES, SITE VISIT REPORT, and the GLOBALIZATION ESSAY (that is, all class assignments) will be done ONLINE THROUGH MOODLE.

A	94-100	C	73-77
A-	90-93	C-	70-72
B+	88-89	D+	68-69
B	83-87	D	63-67
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	78-79	F	0-59

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Week 1

Introduction: Syllabus, Requirements, Textbooks, Overview of course

Hinduism: Pre-Classical or Vedic Religion

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, *et al.*, chapter 4, 71-81; Edgerton, 111-119.

### Week 2

Film: Pre-Aryan Civilization of the Indus Valley

Hinduism: The Upanishads

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 81-89; Edgerton, 120-131; 164-178.

## Week 3

Hinduism: Bhagavad Gita: Karma, Jñana, Bhakti  
*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 89-107; *Bhagavad Gita*, 3-91.

Film: "330 Million Gods"

## Week 4

Theravada Buddhism: The Four Noble Truths, Nirvana, Anatta  
*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 127-136; 152-153 ("The Noble Eight-Fold Path").  
*Recommended:* Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, 1-66; "Siddhartha," film based on the novel by Herman Hesse.

Film: "Footprint of the Buddha"

## Week 5

**Quiz #1, on Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism due**

Mahayana Buddhism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 136-148; 153-154 ("The Infinite Compassion of the *Bodhisattva*").

*Recommended:* Film: "Little Buddha."

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

## Week 6

Chinese Religions: Taoism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 169-183; 195-197 (selection from the *Tao Te Ching*).

## Week 7

Chinese Religions: Confucianism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 183-194; 197-200 (selection from the *Analects of Confucius*).

## Week 8

**Mid-Term Exam (on Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism) due**

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

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 241-251; 274-276 (Deuteronomy 5, 6: "The 10 Commandments").

## Week 9

Prophecy in tension with Kingship and Priesthood

*Required Reading:* Hoseah, Amos, Micah (whole books); Jeremiah 7, Deuteronomy 20, Isaiah 56, 58, 60, and 61.

Judaism: The Emergence of Rabbinic Judaism

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 250-273.

## Week 10

Judaism: Kabbalah, Pietism, Emancipation, Holocaust

Christianity in the First Century: The Historical Jesus

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 280-304; 318-326; Matthew 5-7 (in Hopfe), 25:31-46; Luke 4:1-30; Galatians 1, 2; II Corinthians 11-13; Acts 15.

Week 11

Jewish, Greek, Gnostic Christianities: Early Catholicism

From Early Catholicism to the Emergence of the Catholic Tradition

Week 12

**Quiz #2, on Judaism and Christianity due**

The Emergence of the Protestant Tradition: 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 304-320.

Islam: The Prophet and the Faith of Islam

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 333-349; 362-370 (selection from the *Qur'an*).

Week 13

Film: "There is no God but God"

Islam: Development of Law, Sufism, 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Century Reform Movements, Islamic Fundamentalism (from Ibn Hanbal to Muhammad Al'Wahhab)

*Required Reading:* Hopfe, 350-361.

Week 14

Islam in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Arab Nationalism vs. Islamic Fundamentalism

Wither Islam?

Week 15

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

**GLOBALIZATION QUESTION DUE**

**FINAL EXAM WILL BE POSTED THE WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS**

## 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**. If a phone number is no longer valid, call information and please let the instructor know that the number(s) has been changed so that the directory can be updated. If you learn about other sites not included below, please let the instructor know also. **I strongly recommend that you visit the site first to familiarize yourself with location and the times officially given by the personnel at the site. Any information concerning service times given below are tentative.**

**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.ijamiami.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).

## FORMAT FOR SITE VISIT REPORT

Name of site visited	Site location (complete address)
Sect/branch and/or subsect	Phone number
Contact person (if any)	Hours of worship: Days and Times

1. Fundamental beliefs (important if you are visiting a sectarian group, and note differences in belief and practice from its parent group), and sources of authority or basis for the religion or sect (such as inspired scriptures, teachers, direct revelations, and the like). Specify both the religion and the sect or branch you have visited (e.g., Hindu temple [Shiva, Vishnu, Hare Krishna]; Synagogue [Orthodox, Reformed, Conservative]; Buddhist sect [Pure Land, Nichiren, Tibetan, Mahayana, Theravada] Islamic sect [Nation of Islam, Sunni, Shia], etc.).

2. Why is the religion here in South Florida, whose needs is the religion/sect meeting. Narrate the reasons for the appearance of sect in South Florida.

**\*3.** Describe art, symbols, images, cultic objects (including sacred scriptures, if of artistic or aesthetic merit) of the religion.

4. Distinctive dress, articles of clothing, of members and/or clergy of the religion you witnessed during visit. Inquire as to whether normally there is a distinctive dress, etc. in other locations. Include how much adaptation or concessions to "American" ways of worshipping you witnessed during your visit (for this you may also have to tap a knowledgeable person for information).

**\*5.** Forms of ritual, worship/liturgy, special ceremonies, particular/distinctive practices that you saw practice during your visit.

6. Major religious festivals or sacred days (and their dates and days during the year) celebrated in South Florida (and those elsewhere, such as in the country of origin of religion or where religion is strongest).

**\*7.** Describe how what you saw and heard impacted you; did visit enhance your appreciation for that particular religious faith and/or for religion in general; did you feel you were "worshipping"?; did anything strike you in a negative way?; what was the most positive result of your visit?

**\* Starred/boldfaced items should constitute the bulk of your report**, what you should give priority to when you write your report. Also, it is important that you make an effort to enter sympathetically into the religion you will be visiting. You do not have to agree with what you see and hear, but you should make an effort to understand it. After your visit and as you write your report, you will have the opportunity to express your opinion about what you witnessed.