

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SPRING 2013

Jan 7, 2013 - April 20, 2013

Religion: Analysis & Interpretation

| REL 2011 | U12

Green Library 165

MWF: 4:00 PM - 4:50 PM

Instructor: Shivani Bothra	Course Supervisor: Dr. Oren Stier
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Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of religions in its diverse manifestations. In other words, what is religion, how and why is it studied. We shall examine the different manifestations and practices of religion, focusing on religious experiences. Although no particular tradition will be treated at length, materials from several religions will be chosen to exemplify thematic topics in the experience of the Sacred. Our approach to the phenomenon of religion will be conceptual; some of the topics we will explore include theodicy, myth, sacred ritual, scripture, and ethics. In order to facilitate critical thinking and to stimulate active learning, this course will supplement lectures with small-group exercises, class discussions, the use of multimedia, documentary films and fieldwork in an unfamiliar religious tradition. The successful completion of this course (grade of C or better) fulfills one of the two Gordon Rule courses in the University Core Curriculum: 'Humanities with Writing' section.

Course Objectives

- This course will provide students with tools for analyzing and interpreting religious traditions in contemporary societies, and will provide critical thinking skills for dealing with multi-religions in a given context.
- This course will also provide the students with the "raw materials" for the study of religion by introducing students to the beliefs, doctrines, rituals, symbols, (select) scriptures, and experiences (through group presentations and discussions).

Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to analyze topics in the field of religious studies from multiple perspectives.
- Students will be able to explain the history and development of the belief systems and practices of various religious communities.
- Students will be able to apply critical thinking to important topics in the field of religious studies.
- Students will be able to appreciate the need and willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world.
- Students will be able to evaluate their own and others religious views as they relate to understanding other religious traditions.

Text Book

Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion

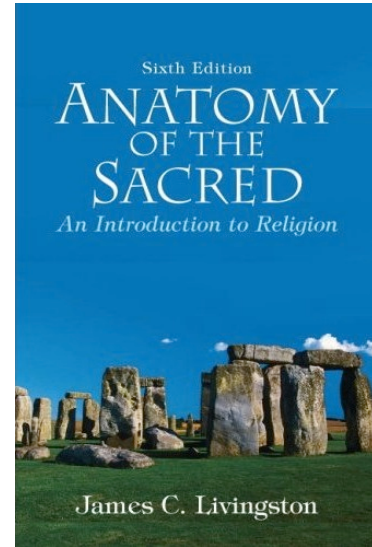
By **James C. Livingston**

(6th Edition) 2009

Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall

ISBN-10: 013600380X

ISBN-13: 978-0136003809



Text Book

Communicating with the Instructor

- **E-mail:** via Blackboard & email
- **Contact:** During office hours

Grading

Course Requirements	Points	Weights
Site Visit Essay		25%
Assignment #1 Draft (10%)	100	
Assignment #2 Final Report (15%)	100	
Midterm (Exam 1)		20%
(Multiple Choice Questions)	100	

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Final Exams (Exam 2)		30%
Multiple Choice Questions (10%)	100	
Assignment #3 Essay (20%)	100	
Class Presentation	100	10%
Class attendance/punctuality and Class participation (requirement)	100	15%
TOTAL		100%

Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range
A	Above 93	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	> 59

Course Requirements

The following elements will assess the course:

1. Site Visit Draft - Essay #1 (Assignment 1) 10% Student must develop an outline regarding the religious site visit, which he/she intends to do. The religious site visit should not be within his or her own religious tradition. Draft must include the purpose of the selection made, brief outline of your queries and demonstrate your enthusiasm for doing it. Minimum requirement is two pages.

2. Site Visit Final Report - Essay #2 (Assignment 2) 15% This is the further development of the draft on the basis of instructor's feedback. Student must attend a religious service/ceremony in order to write a good critical essay that describes and analyzes the experience during the site visit. Demonstrate your interaction with people visiting the place. Remember it is not a crash course of the doctrines of the

faith you visit, show your participation. Be specific and detailed in your discussion. Essay requirements: 6-7 pages double-spaced, 12- point font (such as Times or Garamond), minimum of three (3) academic sources cited in the essay body and referenced in a "Works Cited" page. Additional information, including a suggested list of potential religious sites to attend, is given below. You are free to choose any other place that is not included in the list. All the three assignments i.e., the Site Visit Draft, Final Report and the Final Essay (see below) will be submitted via www.turnitin.com.

2. Mid Term Exam (Exam1) 20% - There will be a Midterm exam, in class, which is comprised of **Multiple-choice Questions** (40 questions in all). Questions will be based on topics discussed in class for the semester.

3. Final Exam (Exam 2) 30% – **(a)** This is comprised of **Multiple Choice Questions**, (40 questions in all), which is 10% of the total grade.

(b) And a Globalization Essay- (**Essay #3**) - Analysis of Kwame Anthony Appiah 's "A Case for Contamination,"4-5 pages double space). Details will be provided to students in the class. This is 20% of the total grades.

Please Note - Keep the electronic and paper copies of all written work. For your own protection, keep a copy of your turnitin.com digital receipt (confirmation of assignment submission) until you have received your final grade for the course.

4. Class Presentation and Discussion (10%) - There will be presentations on each week 's readings (starting the week Two). Each student will present for five minutes. These consist of 3-4 students who will present their findings on assigned readings and lead discussions in class. Details will be provided to students in the class.

Evaluation will be based on Content, Style and Research and how actively the group is able to engage the class in discussion. This is 10% of the overall grade.

5. Attendance and Class Participation (15%) - Regular class attendance and participation in class discussions in all sessions is an important requirement in this class. No opinion is wrong. Feel free to contribute your ideas. If you have to be absent for any special reason, give prior notice to instructor and with

documentation. Absenting yourself for more than three times in class without documentation will affect your attendance evaluation. **The use of electronic device should be for class presentation or for taking notes. Use of cell phones and texting during the class is not permitted.**

Failure to complete any written Essay Assignment will result in F grade in the course. Make-ups will only be allowed with prior approval of the instructor and/or with appropriate documentation.

Course Policies

Late papers will be downgraded by two points for each day late.

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 for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly the course.

Policies and Procedures

[FIU's policies and procedures are important to the quality of your education.](#)

Religious Sites You Might Want to Visit

To help you get started here are the names and addresses of various religious sites in Miami and the surrounding area. However, feel free to attend other sites not listed here.

Buddhism

Sokka Gakkai International (Nichiren Buddhist - Mahayana)

Miami Community Center 20000 SW 36th Street

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33332 Mobile: 954-349-5200

International Zen Institute of Florida (Zen – Mahayana) Dharma House 3860
Crawford Avenue, Miami, Florida 33133 **Phone:** 305-448-8969

Amida Temple ("Pure Land" Buddhist – Mahayana)

C/O Kuang-Hsi Wu 12815 S.W.

119 Terrace Miami, Florida 33186 Phone: 305-385-2866

Kagyü Shedrup Chöling (Tibetan Buddhist)

1905 Monroe Street Hollywood,

Florida 33020 **Mobile:** 954-920-1346

Hinduism

- Shiva Vishnu Temple

5661 Dykes Rd. (S.W. 160th Ave.) Pembroke Pines (Davie),

FL 954-689-0471 • webmaster@shivavishnu.org (I-75 North, Exit Sheridan,

go west to Dykes Road, then go North for about a mile, temple on left).

- The South Florida Hindu Temple

13010 Griffin Road Davie, FL 954-438-3675 • Email: info@sfht.org

Jainism

Jain Center of South Florida

1960 N. Commerce Parkway #11

Weston, FL 33326

Islam

- Mosque of Miami (Sunni)

7350 N.W. 3rd Street Miami, Florida 33126 Phone: 305-261-7622

Good times to attend their prayer services are on Friday and Sunday, usually around 1:30 p.m.

- Masjid Al-Ansar (Sunni)

5245 N.W. 7th Avenue Miami, Florida 33127 Phone: (305) 757-8741

- Miami Gardens Mosque (Sunni)

4305 N.W. 183rd Street Miami, FL 33055

- Islamic Jafferia Association Imambara (Shia)

10554 N.W. 132nd Street Hialeah Gardens, FL 33016

Phone: (305) 557-6835 • <http://www.ijamiami.org>

Judaism and Christianity

For Jewish and Christian services, below are just two, but you may of course consult the Yellow Pages for the church or synagogue nearest you.

- Temple Emanu-El - The South Beach Synagogue: Led by Rabbi Myron S. Geller

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- Cantor George Mordecai 1701 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach

Phone: (305) 538-2503 • www.tesobe.org

Orthodox Christianity

Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Cathedral 320 Palermo Ave. Coral Gables, Florida 33134 • <http://stgeorgemiami.org/>

African Diasporan Religions

Halouba Temple/Botanica Northeast 1 Ave. 54th Street Miami, Florida 33137-2415
Phone: (305) 751-7485

Expectations of This Course

This course requires a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline skills that can make it quite demanding for some students.

Course Calendar (Provisional)

Review and fully familiarize yourself with the course and a Religious site of your choice. Print and read the course syllabus and course calendar before class.

Module	Topic	Text Readings
Week 1 Jan 7-11, 2013	Section 1 The Study of Religion View Presentation: Topic: Defining Religion. Why Are Human Religious? Why Study Religion? The Perspective of the Student–Commitment and Objectivity.	Chapter 1 P.3-14

<p>Week 2 Jan 14 -18, 2013</p>	<p>Defining the Ways Religion is Studied</p> <p>Interpreting and Explaining Religion.</p> <p>View Presentation: How Is Religion Studied? Group 1 Presentation</p> <p>Compare and contrast the ways of studying and interpreting religions.</p>	<p>Chapter 2 P.15-34</p>
<p>Week 3 Jan 21 - 25, 2013</p>	<p>Section 2.</p> <p>Universal Forms of Religious Experience and Expression</p> <p>Topic: The Concept of Sacred Power. The Ambivalence of Sacred Power. The Holy as <i>Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans</i>. Sacred Space and Sacred Time.</p> <p>View Presentation: The Sacred and the Holy Group 2 Presentation</p> <p>Compare and contrast the concept of the sacred and holy in two religious traditions</p>	<p>Chapter 3 P. 37-52</p>

<p>Week 4 Jan28 - Feb 1, 2013</p>	<p>Topic: Symbolic Communication and Religious Symbols</p> <p>View Presentation: Sacred Symbols</p> <p>Group 3 Presentation:</p> <p>Compare and contrast the concept of the sacred symbol in two religious traditions.</p>	<p>Chapter 4 P. 53-73</p>
<p>Week 5 Feb 4 - 8, 2013</p> <p>Essay #1: Site Visit Draft Copy Due Feb 8 2013 by 11:59 pm. via Turnitin.com</p>	<p>Topic: Religious Myths. Models and Doctrines</p> <p>View Presentation:</p> <p>Sacred Myth and Doctrine</p> <p>Group 4 Presentation: Compare and contrast the concept of the sacred myths and doctrines in two religious traditions.</p> <p>Show Documentary on Sacred Doctrines/Myths</p>	<p>Chapter 4 P. 53-73</p>

<p>Week 6 Feb.11 - 15, 2013</p>	<p>Topic: Ritual and Action, Types of Sacred Ritual. Ritual and Sacrifice, Rituals as Sacraments</p> <p>View Presentation: Sacred Rituals</p> <p>Show Documentary on Sacred Rituals</p> <p>Group 5 Presentation: Sacred rituals in different Religions</p>	<p>Chapter 5 P. 74-95</p>
<p>Week 7 Feb 18 - 22, 2013</p>	<p>Topic: Using the Term Scripture. The Pervasive Role of Sacred Scripture. Some Distinctive Features of Sacred Scripture. The Authority and Canonicity of Scripture. The Reception and Uses of Scripture. The Interpretation of Scripture.</p> <p>View Presentation: Sacred Scripture</p> <p>Group 6 Presentation: Compare and contrast the concept of the sacred scriptures in two religious traditions.</p>	<p>Chapter 6 P. 96-123</p>

<p>Week 8 Feb 25 - Mar 1, 2013</p>	<p>Presentation on the Topic: The Reciprocal Relationship between Religion and Society. Types of Religious Communities. Voluntary Religious Communities. Protest and Change in Voluntary Religious Communities.</p> <p>Group 7 Presentation: Compare and contrast the concept of the society and sacred in two religious traditions.</p>	<p>Chapter 7 P. 124-149</p>
<p>Week 9 Mar 4 - 8, 2013</p> <p>Midterm Exam 1 (Multiple Choice Questions) Mar 8, 2013</p> <p>Essay# 2: Site Visit Final Version Due Mar 10, 2013</p>	<p>Section III Universal Components of a Religious Worldview</p> <p>Topics: • Polytheism and the Worship of Nature. Dualism. Pantheism and Monism. Monotheism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Society and the Sacred: The Social Formations and Transformations of Religion <p>View Presentation: Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality</p> <p>No Class Presentation</p>	<p>Chapter 8 P. 153-182</p>

Week 10 - SPRING BREAK - Mar 11- 15, 2013

<p>Week 11 Mar 18 - 22, 2013</p>	<p>Topic: Cosmogony: Origin of Natural and Social Order</p> <p>Group 8 Presentation:</p> <p>Compare and contrast the concept of Cosmogony in two religious traditions</p>	<p>Chapter 9 P. 183-210</p>
<p>Week 12 Mar 25 - 29, 2012</p>	<p>Topic: Modern Views of Human Plight Stoicism Christianity Theravada Buddhism Confucianism</p> <p>View Presentation: Anthropology: The Human Problem</p> <p>Group Activity</p>	<p>Chapter 10 P. 211-234</p>
<p>Week 13 April 1 - 5, 2013</p>	<p>Theodicy: Encountering Evil This Worldly and Other Worldly Theodicy, Dualism, The Karma-Samsara Theodicy and Monotheistic Theodicies</p> <p>Group 9 Presentation: Theodicy</p>	<p>Chapter 11 P. 235-258</p>

<p>Week 14 April 8 - 12, 2013</p>	<p>Topic: Ethics Foundation of Moral Action</p> <p>View Presentation: Ethics: Patterns of Moral Action</p> <p>Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation and Liberation</p> <p>Group 10 Presentation</p> <p>Compare and Contrast the concept of Salvation in two different traditions</p>	<p>Chapter 12 P. 259-286 And Chapter 13 P. 287-338</p>
<p>Week 15 April 15 - 19, 2013</p> <p>Essay#3 Globalization Essay Due April 19</p>	<p>The Sacred and the Secular in Modernity</p> <p>Secularization, Modernization and Globalization</p> <p>Course Review</p>	<p>Chapter 14-15 P. 341-380</p>
<p>Week 16 Final Exams 2 Multiple Choice</p>	<p>Course Ends</p> <p>Final grades posted TBA</p>	

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