

# Florida International University

## REL 3308: Studies in World Religions

Spring 2013

*FIU Broward Pines Center (BPC)*

**Instructor:** Isabel Morales

**Office/Phone:** BPC/ 954-438-8612

**Class Day & Hours:** MON, 6:25pm-9:05pm

**Email:** moralesm@fiu.edu

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Classroom #:** BPC 115

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

### Course Description:

This is an introductory course to world religions in which students will have the opportunity to explore some of the major religions **in an objective and academic manner**, with an eye toward understanding the similarities and differences between them.

We will use an array of techniques as a way of learning in this class (such as lectures, class discussions, personal and team presentations, interviews, and site visits).

This is a Global Learning designated course.

Again, please note that this class looks at religion in an objective and academic manner, and does NOT promote the validity of any particular religion over another.

In fact, **this class is based on the premise that no one tradition has the exclusive claim to truth or wisdom. Hence, I do expect that each of you be creative, respectful, and open-minded in your study of religious cultural phenomena.**

### Required Textbook:

**Title:** *Think World Religions*

**Author:** Roy R. Robson

**Print:** ISBN-10 0-205-93443-9, ISBN-13 978-0-205-93443-0

**Publisher:** Pearson **Copyright year:** © 2013 **Pages:** 312

## Course Objectives:

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

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

## Course Requirements:

Assignment:	Worth:	Due Date:
<b>Team Presentation</b>	<b>120 points</b>	
<b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b>	<b>80 points</b>	<i>WKS 5 - 13</i>
<b>Mandatory Attendance</b>	<b>300 points</b>	<i>WKS 1 - 15</i>
<b><u>Main Term Project</u></b>	<b>500 points (total)</b>	
<b>PT I: Journal Entries</b>	(100)	<i>J1 – WK 6</i>
<b>PT II: Interview</b>	(100)	<i>J2 – WK 8</i>
<b>PT III: Site Visit</b>	(200)	<i>J3 – WK 12</i>
<b>PT IV: Final Presentation</b>	(100)	<i>Presentation and J4 – WK 14*</i>

Please note that with the exception of your reflection notes (which are an in-class activity), all other written assignments are to be turned in via **Blackboard** (this includes team presentations and journal entries), and are due at the end of the assigned week.

**Our academic week start on MON evenings in class and end the following SUN at 11:59pm.**

**Late assignments:** Points are going to be deducted for tardiness. If you miss the deadline on your assignments, you will lose 10% of the total grade value per week it is late. For example, late journal entries will lose 10 points per week they are late. Please note that *Presentation Reflection Notes* are due at the end of each (presentation) class and cannot be made up.

### Grading Scale:

Letter Grade:	Range:	Converted to Points:
A	93 - 100	930 - 1000 points
A-	90 - 92	900 - 929 points
B+	87 - 89	870 - 899 points
B	83 - 86	830 - 869 points
B-	80 - 82	800 - 829 points
C+	77 - 79	770 - 799 points
C	73 - 76	730 - 769 points
C-	70 - 72	700 - 729 points
D+	67 - 69	670 - 699 points
D	63 - 66	630 - 669 points
D-	60 - 62	600 - 629 points
F	0 - 59	0 - 599 points

### Who Receives an A Grade?

- This student provides consistent, excellent, high quality work on all assignments.
- This student actively participates in class on a regular basis with knowledgeable, insightful and relevant comments and answers to questions.
- This student exhibits superior college level writing skills and knows how to conduct and demonstrate solid research to support his/her paper's arguments.
- This student turns in all assignments on time.
- This student demonstrates near perfect attendance and punctuality.
- This student is highly motivated to learn and improve academic skills.

### Who Receives a C Grade?

- This student provides consistent, average quality work on all assignments.
- This student participates in class with relevant comments and answers to questions.
- This student exhibits average college level writing skills and demonstrate basic research to support his/her paper's arguments.
- This student turns in most or all assignments on time.
- This student demonstrates good attendance and punctuality.
- This student shows average motivation to learn and improve academic skills

### Who Receives an F Grade?

- This student provides extremely poor quality work on most or all assignments that does not meet even minimal academic standards.
- This student may not participate in class even a minimal level and is unable to provide knowledgeable, insightful and relevant comments and answers to questions.
- This student does not exhibit college level writing skills fails to conduct and demonstrate research skills to support his/her paper's arguments.
- This student does not turn in assignments on time or fails to turn in assignments.
- This student may demonstrate extremely poor attendance and punctuality.
- This student has not shown the motivation to learn and improve their academic skills.

## Course Policies:

**Attendance is mandatory** in this class. Students are to arrive on time and stay until the class period is over. Repeated tardiness is counted as an absence for that day.

### Respect, Courtesy and Communication:

- It is the student's responsibility to be attentive, respectful, keep up with the work, and hand in assignments on time.
- Cell phones must be turned off during class. There will be no texting or leaving class to take a telephone call.
- All computers are closed in class. Class notes will be taken by hand. There is no surfing on computers in class!
- If a student is having any difficulties with the assignments, readings, punctuality, attendance, or medical issues, they should speak to the professor before it becomes a problem. Good communication will always lead to a successful resolution of the issue.

## Other Important Information:

**Plagiarism** is the theft of intellectual property of others, including their ideas, concepts, and words. Plagiarism **will not be tolerated** in this course. Plagiarism offenders will receive an “F” on the assignment in question, and could fail the entire course... it is ultimately up to the instructor’s discrepancy to decide.

For more information on plagiarism and to clarify what constitutes plagiarism for this university, please visit: <http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2codeofacainteg.htm>

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.**

### **Behavioral Misconduct:**

#### **Behavioral misconduct will NOT be tolerated in this class!!**

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.**

**Extra Credit:** I will provide students who would like and/or need extra credit opportunities to earn it with extra assignments. These extra credit assignments may consist on a written report based on an assign reading, movie, and/or for attending certain events related to religious studies. I will let you know when these events will be happening during the semester.

**Spring 2013 - Course Calendar (January 7<sup>th</sup> –April 22<sup>nd</sup> . 2013)**

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Class Topic:</b>	<b>Assignments Due:</b>
WK1 – Jan 7	Course Overview & Syllabus	<b>Readings (Robson):</b> Chapters 1 & 2
WK2 – Jan 14	Intro to Religious Studies	
WK3 – Jan 21	<b>No Class – Holiday (MLK)</b>	
WK4 – Jan 28	Understanding World Religions	
WK5 – Feb 4	Hinduism	<b>Readings (Robson):</b> Chapters 3 & 4 <b>Group Presentation:</b> Team 1 <b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b>
WK6 – Feb 11	Buddhism	<b>Readings (Robson):</b> Chapters 5 & 6 <b>Group Presentation:</b> Team 2 <b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b> <b>Journal (Part 1)</b>
WK7 – Feb 18	East Asian Sacred Ways	<b>Readings:</b> Chapters 7 & 8 <b>Group Presentation:</b> Team 3 <b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b>
WK8 – Feb 25	Judaism	<b>Readings:</b> Chapter 9 & 10 <b>Group Presentation:</b> Team 4 <b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b> <b>Journal (Part 2)</b>
WK9 – Mar 4	Christianity	<b>Readings:</b> Chapters 11 & 12 <b>Group Presentation:</b> Team 5 <b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b>
WK10 – Mar 11	<b>No Class – Spring Break</b>	
WK11 – Mar 18	Islam	<b>Readings:</b> , Chapters 13 & 14

		<b>Group Presentation: Team 6</b>
		<b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b>
WK12 – Mar 25	Religions of Place	<b>Readings: Chapter 15</b> <b>Group Presentation: Team 7</b> <b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b> <b>Journal (Part 3)</b>
WK13 – Apr 1	New Religions	<b>Readings: Chapter 16</b> <b>Group Presentation: Team 8</b> <b>Presentation Reflection Notes</b>
WK14 – Apr 8	Wrapping Up Our Experiences	<b>Journal (Part 4)***</b>
WK15 – Apr 15	Wrapping Up Our Experiences	
WK 16 – April 22	<b>No Class - Finals Week</b>	

If you, the student, continue in this course then you agree to the policies and procedures of this course; student is responsible to know those policies and procedures as stated in this syllabus.

Again, this syllabus is subject to change; any changes will be announced in class and by Blackboard email to all students.

<b>Team Presentation Topic:</b>	
<b>Presentation Date:</b>	
<b>Team Members</b>	
<b>Names:</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b>