

**FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

**SUMMER A 2014**

**REL 2011 (U02A) - Religion: Analysis & Interpretation**

**TR: 2:40pm-6:00pm**

**VENUE: PC111**

<b>Instructor: Prof. Albert Wuaku</b>	
<b>Office:</b> DM 309A	<b>Office Phone:</b> 305 348 0112
<b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:wuakua@fiu.edu">wuakua@fiu.edu</a>	
<b>Office Hours:</b> TR (12:30pm-1:30pm)	

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The focus of this course is the religious experience and the analytical tools available for a scholarly exploration of its diverse manifestations. We shall not focus attention on specific religious traditions. Rather, materials from several religious experiences will be chosen to exemplify the themes we will be exploring. Some of the topics to be explored include the nature of the religious experience, the various ways of studying religion, understandings of the sacred in the context of religious traditions, the concept of theodicy as a religious category, narrative genres such as myth, proverbs, parables and their place in the religious experience, scripture and its forms etc. 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 film and video lectures, and field research on 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's '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.
- To 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).

## TEXTBOOK

**Livingston, James C. 2009. *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion (6<sup>th</sup> Edition)*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall. ISBN-10: 013600380X.**

## COMMUNICATING WITH THE INSTRUCTOR

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

## GRADING

Course Requirements	Weights
Quiz	40%
Midterm essay	20%
Site visit essay	20%
Group Presentation and Discussion	10%
Class attendance/punctuality and participation	10%
Total	100%

<b>Total</b>					<b>100</b>
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

## 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.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course will be assessed by means of the following elements:

**[1] Site visit essay 20%** – The student must visit a religious group in a tradition other than his or her own and present a report based on his or her findings. The student is expected to produce an analytical account of his or her observations. This means the essay must go beyond mere description of observations. The student must provide rationalizations for actions observed..

**[3] Quizzes (40%)** – Nearly every week’s class session will complete with a short 20-25-question quiz/test. This ensures that students are doing the required readings. Absenteeism will negatively affect student grades, as these quizzes may not be made up without prior consent and approval. This time restricted, online quizzes will be given on each topic discussed the previous week except the first week. **You will have 2 chances to take the quiz.**

**[4] Mid Term Essay (20%)**- There will be a Midterm essay. This will be an analysis of *Kwame Appiah*’s “A Case for Contamination.

**(5) Group Presentation and Discussions (10%)** Sometimes there will be presentations on topics assigned by the professor. Groups of 5-7 students will present their findings on assigned research.

**(6) Attendance and Class Participation-(10%)**

**\*\*\*Failure to complete any of these exams will result in an F grade in the course. Make-ups will only be allowed with prior approval of the instructor and/or with appropriate documentation.**

## FORMAT FOR ESSAYS

The essay will be turned in to blackboard Information on this will be given in class.

Keep electronic and paper copies of all written work. For your own protection, keep a copy of your turnitin.com electronic receipt (a confirmation of assignment submission) until you have

received your final grade for the course.

You will need to do research; your textbook and required readings will not have enough information about the topic. You will need to consult a minimum of three outside sources and one must be a book reference. You will also need notes in your paper, and a Bibliography/Works Cited page. You may use any recognized style manual, but you must use it consistently. The paper should be at least 6 pages long, and no more than 7 pages.

Do not use Wikipedia as an internet source. You may use internet sources, but use only academic sources from the internet. (Academic sources list individual authors, name their sources, and have institutional affiliations.) Points will be deducted for infractions of these rules.

When reading your essays, I will be looking at three different elements: **Content, Style, and Research**. You will receive a grade in each of these areas, and these grades will then be averaged together for your final essay grade.

**Research:** refers to the information in your paper. Is it correct? Is it detailed? Do you demonstrate basic knowledge of the religious tradition from which the concept is taken? Is this knowledge evident in your description? You must use at least three academic sources in your paper. One of them must be a book reference.

**Style** refers to how that information is presented. This includes the way the information is organized and language skills such as spelling, grammar, and proper sentence structure.

**Argument:** refers to the quality of your analysis, how well you support your argument.

For more detailed instructions, please see the "Essay" page under Course Content.

## COURSE POLICIES

### Late Papers

Late papers will be downgraded one letter grade for each day late.

### 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 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

- **Religious Sites**

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

### **Buddhism**

#### **Sokka Gakkai International (Nichiren Buddhist - Mahayana)**

Miami Community Center  
20000 SW 36th Street  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33332  
954-349-5200

#### **International Zen Institute of Florida (Zen – Mahayana)**

Dharma House  
3860 Crawford Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33133  
305-448-8969

#### **Wat Buddharangsi Temple (Thai – Theravadan)**

15200 S.W., 240th Street  
Homestead, Florida  
305-245-2702

#### **Amida Temple ("Pure Land" Buddhist – Mahayana)**

c/o Kuang-Hsi Wu  
12815 S.W. 119 Terrace  
Miami, Florida 33186  
305-385-2866

#### **Kagyü Shedrup Chöling (Tibetan Buddhist)**

1905 Monroe Street  
Hollywood, Florida 33020  
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

info@sfht.org

## **Islam**

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

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

### **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

(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.

### **Messianic Judaism**

Beth T'filah Messianic Jewish Synagogue

Ramada Inn. 2nd Floor  
1925 Harrison St.  
Hollywood, FL 33020  
<http://www.bethfilah.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. 54<sup>th</sup> Street  
Miami, Florida 33137-2415  
305-751-7485

## **EXPECTATION 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)**

### **Assignments & Readings**

<b>Week 1</b> <b>May 12-18<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Course Introduction</i>  <b>View: Power Point Presentation on: Defining Religion-what is religion and ways of studying religion.</b>  Reading in preparation for this class: Chapter 1&2 (Livingston)  No Quiz
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<p><b>Week 2</b> May 19-25</p>	<p><b>Universal forms of Religious Experience and universal components of a religious world view</b> <i>read chapters 3(Sacred and the Holy) and chapt 8 (Deity: Concepts of the Divine and Ultimate Reality)</i></p> <p><b>Read:</b> Chapter 3 &amp; 8</p> <p><b>Take Quiz 1:</b> will be based on chapter 1&amp;2 (Livingston) deadline: may25th 11:59</p>
<p><b>Week 3</b> May 26-June 1<sup>st</sup></p>	<p><b>Soteriology: Ways and Goals of Salvation and Liberation</b></p> <p><b>Read: Chapter 13 (Livingston)</b></p> <p><b>Take Quiz 2:</b> based on Chapter 3&amp; 8 deadline June 1st</p>
<p><b>Week 4</b> June 2nd to June 8</p>	<p><i>Sacred Symbols, Rituals, Myth, and Doctrine</i></p> <p><b>View: Power presentation on Sacred Symbols, Myth, Doctrine and Sacred rituals</b></p> <p><b>Read:</b> Chapter 4, 5 &amp;6 (Livingston)</p> <p><b>Quiz 3:</b> Based on chapter 13 due June 8<sup>th</sup> 11:59</p> <p><b>Mid Term Paper due on JUNE 8, 11:59pm via Blackboard</b></p> <p><b>(Analyze the article on ‘A Case for Contamination’ by Kwame Appiah).</b></p>
<p><b>Week 5</b></p>	<p><b>Theodicy: Encountering Evil</b></p> <p><b>Read: Chapter 10 &amp;11( Livingston)</b></p> <p><b>Take Quiz 4:</b> based on chapters 4, 5 &amp;6</p>

**June 9 to June  
15th**

**Week 6  
June 16<sup>th</sup> to June  
20th**

**Society and the Sacred : The Social foundations and trans formations of  
Religion**

**Read: Chapter 7 (Livingston)**

**Quiz 5 based on chapters 10&11 &7**