

**SUMMER A, 2016 – REL 3308 U02A, #55893 – Studies in World Religions**

Tuesday—Thursday from 2:40 to 6:00 PM – PC 212

**Instructor: Joseph Holbrook**

- Phone: [305-348-2186](tel:305-348-2186)
- GL150. Office hours: M-W, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. or by appointment.
- Please msg through blackboard before using email
- [jholbroo@fiu.edu](mailto:jholbroo@fiu.edu)
- Dedicated class Twitter: @REL\_FIU
- Dedicated class blog: <http://josenmiamireligion.blogspot.com/>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

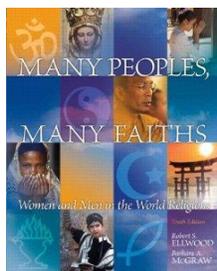
This comparative religions course examines the world's major religions, both ancient and contemporary, from historical, psychological, sociological, anthropological and archeological perspectives. We will explore the various myths, rituals, symbols, scriptures, festivals and spiritual leaders of indigenous and tribal communities, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and New Religious Movements (including New Age).

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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

- Understand the key underlying beliefs and principles of the major world religions.
- Appreciate the early bases and origins of religion among Indigenous Peoples and Shamanic cultures.
- Discern the major similarities and differences between Eastern and Western religions, including cultural and historical contexts, as well as local, national and/or international contexts.
- Be aware of the broad movements and developments in religious belief and practices from ancient to contemporary times.
- 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**



Many Peoples, Many Faiths 10th edition (2013)

Robert S. Ellwood, and Barbara McGraw

ISBN 978-0205797110

ISBN 0-205-79711-3

### EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS COURSE

This class meets twice a week: Tuesday and Thursday from 2:40 to 6:00 pm. Students are expected to arrive promptly and stay for the full duration of the class. Students should be prepared to participate in class by reading the assignments (before class) 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.

### COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place in class, in Blackboard, and, as a last resort, through FIU email. The best method to communicate with your instructor privately is through Blackboard message. Appointments can be made on request. Please contact the instructor immediately if a serious situation arises which will impact student performance. **Please do not email or send Blackboard messages questions regarding grades and make-up work to the professor; you must physically go to the office hours to discuss grades and make-up or late work in person.** All other messages will receive a reply within 24 hours.

### 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.

### **EXAM**

The Final Exam is an online, time-restricted examination. The exam has 50 multiple-choice and true/false questions based on the text readings. The Final exam is worth 100 points (two points per question) and makes up 20% of the final grade. **NOTE:** The instructor reserves the right to give pop quizzes, if the students do not seem sufficiently prepared for class discussion.

### **10/11 CHAPTER QUIZZES**

(10 points each): Every week, there will be a 10 question, multiple-choice and true/false quiz based on the chapter readings from the previous week. The total number of points for the quizzes will be 100 (the lowest quiz will be dropped at the end of the semester) and represents **20 percent of the final grade**. No makeups will be allowed for quizzes! If the student has documentation of a valid medical emergency, the professor may allow a makeup at his discretion, but reserves the right to deduct 10 percent of the grade for late submission. There are no exceptions!

### **ESSAYS and ONLINE FORUM DISCUSSIONS**

Because this is a short and intensive summer course, students will be required to submit only one essay, and then to submit a revision based on corrections and suggestions to the first essay. The student will be allowed to choose between writing about a site visit, or submitting an analysis of "The Case for Contamination" by Kwame Appiah. If the student has already submitted site visits or the Appiah essay for previous classes, **DO NOT submit a previous essay again, it will be considered plagiarism**. Talk with the professor about some other option.

The essay will be turned into Blackboard in a Turnitin dropbox. 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. **IMPORTANT! PLEASE, DO NOT SEND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AS EMAIL OR BLACKBOARD MESSAGE ATTACHMENTS**. They will get lost or immediately be deleted. All writing assignments **MUST BE** submitted in the appropriate drop box. If you are having difficulties, you are encouraged to meet with the professor for assistance.

World Religions Essay (due on June 4th) The student will choose from two options; an essay based on a site visit, or read the *'The Case for Contamination'* by Kwame Anthony Appiah and write an analytical essay of 1,000 to 1,200 words, cited correctly, to be turned in on June 4th. This essay will be worth 100 points and represents 10% of the final grade.

Essay Revision, (due on June 15<sup>th</sup>). Students who score an A or higher on the first essay may submit a revision but are not required to. If they choose not to do a revision, they will receive the same grade for the revision as for the original essay. Students who score less than an A on the essay are required to turn in a revision based on the highlights and comments on the *Grademark* feature in Turnitin. The revision is worth 10 percent of the final grade. The original essay and the revision grades are averaged and together count for 20 percent of the final grade.

Five Online forum and film Discussions: There will be an online forum discussion of the Appiah essay on the Blackboard Discussion Group. The forum discussions are each worth 20 points. There will also be online forum discussions of four films: BLACKROBE (1991), LUTHER (2003), GANDHI (1982) and MALCOLM X, worth 20 points each. Each discussion will focus on the interaction of two different religions; indigenous and Christian in BLACKROBE, Catholic and Protestant in LUTHER, Hindu and Muslim in GANDHI, and Christian and Muslim in MALCOLM X. All of the four forum discussions are required and must be submitted on time; **no make-ups will be allowed under any circumstances!** All five online forum discussions together are worth a total of 20 percent of the final grade.

LATE PAPERS: Regarding essays, my motto is "better late than never." If a student has an approved, documented excuse, late papers may be accepted with a penalty of 10 points per week for up to three weeks, after which papers will not be accepted for any reason. However, I have a strict policy that **NO written assignments (essays or forum discussions) may be submitted AS ATTACHMENTS BY EMAIL OR BLACKBOARD under any circumstances. They MUST be submitted in the correct drop box in Blackboard. Any written assignments sent to me as email attachments will be deleted and will not be graded.**

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another's work as your own, falls into four 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.
4. Reusing an essay that you have previously submitted for another class for credit.

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 PRESENTATION**

Students will give a group presentation on a topic related to the text readings, using PowerPoint, Prezi or similar. Guidelines will be given in class but the group will present current issues, events or people that impact the religion in that week’s readings. Students are responsible for signing up for presentation groups. 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 10 percent of the final grade.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance and Participation together are worth 10 percent of the final grade. Students are expected to attend every class, arrive promptly and stay for the duration of the class. Attendance on time gives 2 points, an excused absence or a late arrival gives 1 point, speaking up at least once in class gives 1 point. Please inform the instructor immediately if a situation develops which will impact your performance or attendance. Participation includes reading the indicated chapter BEFORE class, contributing to discussions and being attentive to lectures and student presentations. Please refrain from texting and emailing in class. Arriving late, leaving early or stepping out of the class for long periods of time may incur an absence penalty. Students will be expected to sign in on the class roster which will serve as documentation of their attendance.

*Current Events* news item: Students will be encouraged to bring in a current events news item to share with the class at least once during the semester. Each current events new item **is worth 3 points** on the attendance and participation grade. **Part of class participation is to arrive on Tuesday having read the appropriate chapters in advance.** There will be pop quizzes to measure student preparedness.

### **EXTRA CREDIT**

A three paragraph, 300-word review or critical response of one of the listed films may be submitted for extra credit. Focus on 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. Make sure to include your own personal reaction to the movie (you liked it, you didn’t like it and why) as well as a section relating the events of the movie to the themes discussed in our class and textbook. The extra credit response is worth up to (and no more than) an extra 1 percent on the final grade. Only a total of 3 extra credits will be allowed. **All extra credit reports are due no later than June 20.**

**GRADING**

| <b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>                           | <b>POINTS</b> | <b>PERCENTAGE OF FINAL GRADE</b> |
|--|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Essay - (due by June 4)                              | 50            | 10%                              |
| Essay revision (June 15)                             | 50            | 10%                              |
| Group Presentation (schedule on BB)                  | 50            | 10%                              |
| Participation & Attendance ( <i>Current Events</i> ) | 50            | 10%                              |
| 4 online forum Discussions                           | 100           | 20%                              |
| Ten Chapter Tests                                    | 100           | 20%                              |
| FINAL EXAM - (June 24)                               | 100           | 20%                              |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>500</b>    | <b>100%</b>                      |

| <b>LETTER GRADE</b> | <b>RANGE</b> | <b>LETTER GRADE</b> | <b>RANGE</b> | <b>LETTER GRADE</b> | <b>RANGE</b> |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 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         |

## CALENDAR

| WEEK | READINGS       | CLASS PLAN & DUE DATES  |
|------|----------------|---|
| 1    | Chapters 1     | May 17: Welcome and Overview of class, Organize Groups.<br>May 19: Introductory lecture: Film: BLACKROBE<br>*Syllabus Quiz Tuesday, May 17<br>Quiz 1 Thursday, May 19;<br>Discussion #1 "Contamination" Sat. May 21                                   |
| 2    | Chapters 2 & 3 | May 24: Readings, lecture: Indigenous Religion. Film: LUTHER<br>May 26: Readings, lecture: Spiritual Paths of India. Appiah Article<br>* Quiz 2 Tuesday MAY 24<br>Quiz 3 Thursday MAY 26<br>FORUM DISCUSSION OF "BLACKROBE" due May 28                |
| 3    | Chapters 4 & 5 | May 31 Readings, lecture: Buddhism. Film: GANDHI<br>June 2: Readings lecture, Groups: Confucianism, Shinto.<br>*Quiz 4 due Tuesday May 31<br>*ESSAY due Wednesday June 1<br>*Quiz 5 due Thursday June 2<br>FORUM DISCUSSION OF "LUTHER" due June 4    |
| 4    | Chapters 6 & 7 | June 7: lecture, groups: Abrahamic Monotheism/Zoroasterianism<br>June 9: Readings, lecture, groups: Judaism<br>*QUIZ 6 due Tuesday June 7<br>QUIZ 7 due Thursday June 9<br>*FORUM DISCUSSION OF "GANDHI" due June 11                                  |
| 5    | Chapters 8 & 9 | June 14: Readings lecture, groups: Christianity. Film: MALCOLM X<br>June 16: Readings lecture, groups: Islam.<br>*QUIZ 8 due Tuesday June 14<br>Essay Revision due June 15<br>QUIZ 9 due Thursday June 16<br>Forum discussion "MALCOLM X" due June 18 |
| 6    | Chapter 10     | June 21: Readings lecture, groups: New Religious Movements.<br>June 23: Video clips, discussion and Review.<br>*Quiz 10 due Tuesday June 21,<br>Extra Credits due June 22,<br>Extra "make-up Quiz" due June 23<br>FINAL EXAM due Friday June 24       |