

Department of Religious Studies
Florida International University

STUDIES IN WORLD RELIGIONS REL 3308 U02B

Professor Erik Larson
DM 303
Email: larsone@fiu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Summer B 2022
W 10:50-2:10
(305) 348-3518
GL 245

Introduction and Aims: This course will cover eleven religious traditions of the world: Native American Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Their major teachings will be discussed in detail and set in their proper historical and cultural contexts. Similarities and differences between the religions will be considered, as well as each religion's unique contribution to world civilization.

Course 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 encourage 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."

Syllabus

Week 1 [June 20-26] Introduction and Native American Religions. Read: RW, Introduction and Overview (pp. 2-8); Chaps 1-2 (pp. 12-37).

Quizzes for Week 1 Due by Sunday, June 26

Week 2 [June 27-July 3] Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism. Read: RW, Chaps. 4-6 (pp. 53-121).

At-home Assignment 1: How Should We Study Religion? Due Wednesday, June 29.

Quizzes for Week 2 Due by Tuesday, July 5

Week 3 [July 5-11] Taoism, Confucianism and Shinto. Read: RW, Chap. 8-9 (pp. 131-171).
At-home Assignment 2: Was there an Aryan Migration? Due Thursday, July 7.

Quizzes for Week 3 Due by Sunday, July 10

Midterm Examination, July 8-10

Week 4 [July 12-18] Judaism. Read: RW, Chap. 10 (pp. 173-201).

At-home Assignment 3: Is Judaism an Ethnicity or a Faith? Due Wednesday, July 13.

Quizzes for Week 4 Due by Sunday, July 17

Week 5 [July 19-25] Christianity. Read: RW, Chap. 11.1-11.5 (pp. 202-237).

At-home Assignment 4: The Enlightenment Due Wednesday, July 20.

Quizzes for Week 5 Due by Sunday, July 24

Week 6 [July 26-31] Islam. Read: RW, Chap. 12 all (pp. 238-263)

Globalization Question Due on Wednesday, July 27

Quizzes for Week 6 Due by Saturday, July 30

Final Examination, July 28-30.

Textbook: Lewis M. Hopfe, Mark R. Woodward, and Brett Hendrickson, Religions of the World, 13th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall 2015) = RW. To access the online book, visit this link and sign in using your credentials: <https://console.pearson.com/enrollment/zvkm0i>

Grading:

Chapter Quizzes	30%
4 At-Home Assignments	40%
Midterm	10%
Final	10%
Globalization Question	10%

Attendance: Attendance is an absolutely essential part of the course! Although it will not be monitored at the beginning of the course, the instructor may choose to keep track of attendance if there is a major problem with students showing up and participating. If so, attendance will be 10% of the final grade, and the chapter quizzes and at-home assignments will each be reduced by

5%. Finally, remember that some material will inevitably be covered in class that is not to be found in the textbook so that each absence negatively affects your ability to do well on the tests.

Academic Honesty: Each student is expected to do his or her own work. It is absolutely unacceptable to submit someone else's work as your own. This is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade (F) for the assignment and possible disciplinary action. Thus, when in the course of writing your paper you quote or paraphrase an idea found in one of your sources you must give credit to the original author (usually by means of a footnote).

Academic Conduct: Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Quizzes: We will be using Pearson's Revel textbook system that includes weekly quizzes with questions drawn from the information in our textbook. You need to buy the code at the bookstore and create a Revel account if you don't already have one. The quizzes will be due each Sunday night so that you are prepared to for our in-class discussions on Tuesdays.

At-Home Assignments: Each week there will be assignments to do at home. These assignments will ask you to do various things such as conduct research, discuss your findings with other students in class, or summarize and synthesize how your views have been enlarged or changed as a result of what you have learned. These at-home assignments will be due each **Wednesday** in a drop-box on Canvas.

Examinations: Both midterm and final examinations will be a combination of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and matching questions. The final examination is not cumulative—it covers only material from the second half of the semester.

Globalization Question: Read the article "The Case for Contamination" by Kwame Appiah and use the information you have learned in class this semester to answer the following question in 3-4 pages:

Describe Appiah's approach and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. Then explain how religions help people express their identities both as individuals and as members of a group. Also, what did you learn about the need for and the potential of better understanding between religions? In your view, what is the best way to approach interreligious dialogue (For example, should we all become the same or should we value our diversity? If the latter, how do we do this? Is globalization a help or a hindrance to diversity?)