

REL 3308-U05 (87252) Studies in World Religions
Fall 2021

Days and Times: M, W, F 12:00 a.m. to 12:50 a.m.
Room: OBCC 121

Instructor: Adam D. Gorelick
Office Hours: by appointment
P: 305-348-4100 | F: 305-348-2118 | agorelic@fiu.edu



Students should regularly access the course online in canvas. The Inbox messaging system within canvas is the best way to contact the professor.

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus is subject to minor changes. Students should e-mail the instructor with any questions about the assignments and schedule.

Course Description

This course introduces methods of critical reflection on religion and some of their applications to fundamental topics such as knowledge, value, the sacred, the self, and human society. We will identify, examine, and respect particular examples from diverse religious traditions while also highlighting broad analytical themes helpful in defining religion generally. We will interpret these cross-cultural themes using methods from various academic disciplines.

Course Outcomes

Students will be able to...

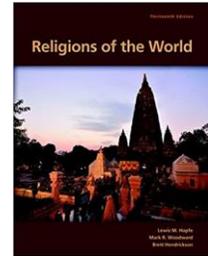
- Apply critical thinking skills to various topics in the field of religious studies.
- Explore the origins, nature, functions, and definitions of religion.
- Bracket out personal bias and attempt to understand the point of view of religious adherents.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems—as pertaining to the development and practice of religions.
- Analyze topics in religious studies through multi-perspective analyses of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.
- Demonstrate willingness to think creatively about religious issues in the contemporary world and to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.
- Conduct field research to better understand a religious community.
- Speak intelligently about the relationship between religion and other cultural phenomena such as art, literature, music, etc.

Texts

Hopfe, Lewis M. et al. *Religions of the World*. 13th ed., Pearson, 2016.

ISBN 13: 978-0-13-379382-6

ISBN-10: 0-13-379382-6



Additional selected readings will be assigned.

Gordon Rule Course

This is a Gordon Rule course which means you must demonstrate “college level writing skills” throughout your assignments. You will not receive any credit as a Gordon rule course for a C- or lower upon completion of this course. Your written assignments must show good control of grammar, style, and structure. Your papers must have a clear thesis, supporting material, and a conclusion.

Guidelines for Written Work

All written work must consistently adhere to the MLA Formatting and Style Guide. Students are advised to carefully proofread all papers before submitting them. All students are encouraged to take advantage of the University resources for writing to be found in the Center for Excellence in Writing, a full-service writing center providing writing assistance and feedback to university students. For more information, go to <http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>.

All written work is submitted through Canvas as turn-it-in assignments, which means that the instructor will be aware of plagiarism. Plagiarism can result in expulsion from the university and will have a negative effect on your entire career. All written work must include your name, Panther ID number, course number and the name of the professor on the title page. It must be double spaced, have 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left and right) and be typed in 12 point font, Times New Roman or Calibri.

SARS-CoV-2 Information

As cases and hospitalizations due to the Delta variant continue to increase in our community, we must unite and take necessary steps to prevent further spread.

- **Daily and before arriving to campus, complete the P3 app.** If you are not given the green check mark to enter campus, then return home, and contact me by email.
- **Please check your FIU email account and your Canvas course at least once a day.** Email and Canvas are the best ways for the university, and your professors, to contact you.
- If you do not feel well, have tested positive for COVID, or have been in contact with a person with COVID while not yet being fully vaccinated, **please do not come to class, immediately complete the P3 app to notify the COVID Response Team or call them at 305-348-1919, and contact me by email as soon as you can. To excuse absences for P3 failure/COVID, please contact the COVID Response Team at 305-348-1919.** If you are directed to quarantine because of COVID-19, your absences will be considered excused, and I will allow you to make up missing assignments.

- A **vaccinated, asymptomatic** individual exposed to a COVID positive person does not need to quarantine. They need to continue to wear a mask. It is recommended to test 3-5 days post known exposure. However, if at any time they become symptomatic, they need to test immediately. If the test returns positive, they need to follow the COVID positive protocol at that time.
- Please take every precaution to keep yourself and others healthy. Per CDC guidelines, **you are encouraged to get vaccinated and strongly advised to wear a mask indoors and in public including all FIU facilities.**
- Missing excessive days may lead to failing a class or a grade of incomplete.
- For me to assist you in achieving your goals, it is important for you to contact me as soon as you experience any events that might disrupt your course participation. For up-to-date information about COVID, please see the repopulation.fiu.edu FAQs.

Religious Holidays

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.

Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC), if you have not done so already.” Please note that if you have a student who is registered with the DRC, you will receive notification about the student’s disability and a detailed description of accommodations the student will require.

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 to 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.

Note: Plagiarism will not be tolerated, and written assignments are to be submitted to turnitin.com.

Grading Scale

94 - 100 A

90 - 93 A-

87 - 89 B+
84 - 86 B
80 - 83 B –
77 - 79 C+
74 - 76 C
60 - 73 D
0 - 59 F

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation – **15% of final grade**

Quizzes – Quizzes will be unannounced and will cover material from the readings and lectures.
15% of final grade

Midterm Exam – The midterm exam will include questions about the material as well as a take-home essay response (1000-word minimum). See below for dates. **30% of final grade**

Formal Research Proposal – Students will conduct a research paper on a topic of their choosing, subject to approval from the instructor. The instructor encourages students to be creative in selecting a specific topic that will appeal to them individually. A formal proposal is required and will count as **10% of final grade**. The proposal must include the following components:

1. An **overarching one-sentence research question** concerning either a specific aspect of a religion or some specific thematic approach to religion.
2. **Three supporting** research questions, **each** of which to be followed by **one sentence of elaboration** explaining why you are asking that question (i.e., how it will help you support the main overarching question from number 1 above.
3. A **preliminary annotated bibliography** with at least **3 academic sources**. An annotated bibliography requires a brief paragraph after each source listed. Use MLA guidelines to list each works-cited entry. Each supporting paragraph will (a) **summarize the content** of the source, (b) **critique its value**, and (c) **consider its usefulness** for the project at hand. Instructor will provide examples of annotated bibliographies.

Research Paper - The final draft of the research paper (1250-word minimum) will count as an additional **30% of final grade**. The bibliography or works cited must include at least 4 scholarly sources.

Calendar

Week 1 (8/23 to 8/29) **No Class on Friday 8/27**

Class introductions, syllabus review, course plan, what is religion?

Week 2 (8/30 to 9/5)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 1

Week 3 (9/6 to 9/12) **No Class on Labor Day, Monday 9/6**

Reading: Hopfe ch. 2

Week 4 (9/13 to 9/19)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 3

Week 5 (9/20 to 9/26)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 4

Week 6 (9/27 to 10/3)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 5

Week 7 (10/11 to 10/17) **Midterm Exam 10/13 in class; Midterm Essay due 10/20, 11:59 p.m.**

Reading: Hopfe ch. 6

Week 8 (10/18 to 10/24)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 7

Week 9 (10/25 to 10/31)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 8

Week 10 (11/1 to 11/7)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 9

Week 11 (11/8 to 11/14) **Formal Research Proposal due Monday 11/8, 11:59 p.m.**

Reading: Hopfe ch. 10

Week 12 (11/15 to 11/21)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 11

Week 13 (11/22 to 11/28) **No Class on Thanksgiving, Thursday 11/25**

Reading: Hopfe ch. 12 **No Class on Turkey Sandwich Day, Friday 11/26**

Week 14 (11/29 to 12/5)

Reading: Hopfe ch. 13

Week 15 (12/6 to 12/11) **Research Paper due 12/9, 11:59 p.m.**

Finals Week – No regular class meetings, **no** final exam