

Course Syllabus



REL4030: Methods in the Study of Religion; Section RVC

Instructor Information Table



Dr. Erik Larson

Instructor Information

- **Email:** larsone@fiu.edu (<mailto:larsone@fiu.edu>)
(<mailto:gsimpson@fiu.edu>)
- **Office Hours:** By Appointment
- **Website:** <https://religion.fiu.edu/faculty/full-time-faculty/erik-larson/>
(<https://religion.fiu.edu/faculty/full-time-faculty/erik-larson/>)

Course Time Zone | Eastern Standard Time (EST). Course due dates are according to this time zone.

General Information

Course Description and Purpose

This online section of Methods in the Study of Religion will introduce you to some of the major ways that religious traditions and practices may be studied. You will be introduced to each methodology through the assigned readings of the scholars studied and PowerPoint presentations by members of the Religious Studies faculty.

You will be tested on your knowledge of the course material through:

- 12 Time-restricted Quizzes
- A Midterm Exam (objective)
- A Final Exam (objective)
- Paper 1 – Critique Paper

- Paper 2 - Research Paper*

*The research paper will develop your ability to evaluate and apply a methodology of your choosing.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Understand the major approaches to the study of religion.
- Be familiar with selections from the writings of the scholars studied.
- Have sufficient knowledge to write research papers critically evaluating the methodologies examined.
- Be able to compare and/or contrast approaches.
- Recognize the importance of methodology in the study of religion.
- Be prepared to apply the relevant approaches in your own studies.

Policies

Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

- [Policies](#)
- [Netiquette](https://online.fiu.edu/html/canvas/policies/) [\(https://online.fiu.edu/html/canvas/policies/\)](https://online.fiu.edu/html/canvas/policies/)
- [Technical Requirements and Skills](#)
- [Accessibility and Accommodation](#)
- [Academic Misconduct Statement](#)
- [Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Textbook and Course Materials

No textbook required

There are no textbooks for this course. All weekly readings will be available in online format. It is your responsibility to view and read these in time to take the quizzes. If you have any trouble viewing the material, contact the professor on Monday or Tuesday of the week.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, meaning that most of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **review the how to get started information** located in the course content;
- **introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self introduction in the appropriate discussion forum;
- **take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Canvas;
- **interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **review** and follow the course calendar;

Course Detail

Course Communication - how to contact your professor

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the [Canvas Conversations Tutorial](#) (<https://vimeo.com/canvaslms/212en>) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

Discussion Forums

Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

Quizzes (20% of Total Grade)

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the [Practice Quiz](#) ([%24CANVAS_OBJECT_REFERENCE%24/quizzes/g50d715ad5cfc3d0f6b230250cacd0ea1](#)) from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. For quiz duration, grading criteria and feedback response time, please review the [important information about quizzes](#) page.

A time-restricted, online quiz will be given on each week's religious concept. You can take each quiz twice, and the higher of the two attempts will be recorded. Even if you do well on the first attempt, it is advisable to use both attempts. You will not receive the same quiz the second time; the computer randomly chooses the questions from a quiz database. You will have 15 minutes to complete 10 questions.

Quizzes will be available within the modules in which they are due.

Exams (30% Each of Total Grade)

Exam 1 and Exam 2 will each consist of multiple-choice, true/false, and matching questions. These two exams will be time-restricted and will be based on weekly lectures and readings.

Note: Exam 2 is not cumulative—it covers only material from the second half of the semester.

Paper 1 – Critique Paper (20% of Total Grade)

For the first essay, please follow the directions below:

- Choose one of the methodologies that you have covered in the first half of this course.
- Using the research databases available to you via library.fiu.edu, find a critique of the methodology that you have selected.
- After giving the article a thorough reading, compose an essay (4-5 pages) arguing in favor or against the critique. Is the author's critique valid? Why or why not?

Please make sure you include the article you selected in a works cited page at the end of your essay.

Formatting Guidelines

- 12 pt font, double-spaced, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margins- 1 inch on all sides
- Length – 4-5 pages excluding bibliography
- Writing Style - *MLA* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*
- You may use either footnotes or endnotes.

Paper 2- RESEARCH PAPER (30% of Total Grade)

You will write a research paper using **two** of the approaches covered in the course that particularly interests you. The paper will identify a topic in the field of religious studies and then discuss how you could use the methodologies to study the relevant issues. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of each method.

The paper topic must receive the approval of the professor before it is submitted.

Formatting Guidelines

- 12 pt font, double-spaced, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margins- 1 inch on all sides
- Length – 9-12 pages excluding bibliography
- Writing Style - *MLA* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*
- You may use either footnotes or endnotes.

Papers will be submitted via Turnitin in Canvas. Please review the [important information about assignments](#) page for detailed instructions on how to submit your assignment and review grade mark comments.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, or attempting to pass off another's work as your own, falls into three different categories:

- o A written work that is entirely stolen from another source;
- o Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
- o Paraphrasing from another source without proper citations.

Students are expected to understand the definition of plagiarism. See the [Academic Misconduct Statement](#) if you need further clarification. Offenders will receive a grade of F for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly the course.

****STUDENTS MAY NOT SUBMIT WORK FROM A PREVIOUS SEMESTER OR FROM ANOTHER CLASS FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT OR ANY OTHER ASSIGNMENT IN THIS COURSE. IT WILL BE FLAGGED FOR PLAGIARISM BY TURNITIN.**

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Weight
Weekly Quizzes *2 lowest grades will be dropped	12	20%
Exam 1 (objective)	1	15%
Exam 2 (objective)	1	15%
Paper 1 - Critique Paper	1	20%
Paper 2 - Research Paper	1	30%
Total	16	100%

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	93 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 92	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less

[Course Calendar](#)

Access your [Course Calendar](#) for course topics and assignments.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Sun Aug 29, 2021	 Quiz 1 - James and Troeltsch (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502558)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 5, 2021	 Quiz 2 - Freud and Marx (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502561)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 12, 2021	 Quiz 3 - Eliade, Otto, and Jung (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502556)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 19, 2021	 Quiz 4 - Durkheim and Weber (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502562)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Sep 26, 2021	 Quiz 5 - Geertz and Turner (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502563)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 3, 2021	 Quiz 6 - Douglas, Frazer, and Robertson Smith (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502557)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 10, 2021	 Exam 1 (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502559)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 17, 2021	 Quiz 7 - Perennialists and Exclusivists (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502554)	due by 11:59pm
Sat Oct 23, 2021	 Paper 1 - Critique (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502565)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 24, 2021	 Quiz 8 - Levi-Strauss (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502560)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Oct 31, 2021	 Quiz 9 - Foucault (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502564)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Nov 7, 2021	 Quiz 10 - Feminism (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502553)	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Sun Nov 14, 2021	 Quiz 11 - Liberation Theology (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502555)	due by 11:59pm
Sun Nov 21, 2021	 Quiz 12 - Religion and Ecology (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502548)	due by 11:59pm
Sat Dec 11, 2021	 Exam 2 (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502539)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Dec 13, 2021	 Paper 2 - Research Paper (https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/113659/assignments/1502566)	due by 11:59pm