

# Course Syllabus

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## REL2300-21 Summer BW60

### World Religions

#### Instructor Contact

- Instructor: Jeanine E. Viau, Ph.D.
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- Office Hours: Via Zoom by appointment

The official modes of communication for this course are internal Canvas messages and UCF email. The instructor will only respond to external email sent to her @ucf.edu email address (listed above) by students using their @knights.ucf.edu email addresses. Also, please do not expect an immediate response to messages and emails. Forty-eight hours is a reasonable amount of time in which to expect a response.

#### Course Information

- Course Name: World Religions
- Course ID & Section: REL2300-BW60
- Credit Hours: 3
- Semester/Year: Summer 2021
- Location: Online

#### Course Description

In this class, we will look at the five major world religions and several minority traditions, seeking a basic literacy of the central tenets and practices of each tradition, as well as deeper engagement through field visits, films, and discussions. Across cultures and global contexts, religion plays a significant role in shaping interpersonal and social values, and subsequently, public life. For example, consider the significance of abortion and same-sex marriage debates in the U.S. or the tide of violence besetting Buddhist and Muslim communities in Myanmar. These issues and others, and the religious ideologies that seem to fuel these tensions require careful reflection. We will adopt an academic posture in our considerations of the entanglement between religious identification and social life. This means breaking-down assumptions and working toward understanding through critical engagement – critical engagement of our own beliefs and social contexts, as well as those of others.

#### Course Objectives

- To develop an understanding of the distinctive nature of several major world religious traditions through intellectual inquiry into their beliefs and practices in their specific historical and socio-cultural context

- To analyze the challenges faced by religions in the modern and postmodern periods and some characteristic responses of religions to those challenges
- To develop a cross-cultural awareness and openness that is a mark of the global citizen and which will enable the student to engage in informed and respectful dialogue with other religious traditions
- To introduce students to some of the main themes and issues involved in the academic study of religion

## Required Text

- The textbook for this class is Mary Pat Fisher's *Living Religions* published by Pearson. **Editions 7, 8, 9, or 10 will work for this course**. The earlier editions are available for much less through second hand sellers. The textbook is also available in both print and digital formats. **It is imperative that you have your textbook by the start of the second week of classes. Readings for the first week are linked in the [Week 1 Overview](#)**.
- Throughout the course, there may be additional readings, films, and other materials assigned that are not in the textbook. These readings will be specified under Modules for each respective week and will be available electronically through Canvas.

## Evaluation and Grading

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	100-94%
A-	93-90%
B+	89-86%
B	85-80%
C+	79-76%
C	75-70%
D+	69-66%
D	65-60%
F	59 and below

Assignment	Percentage of Grade
Exams	70%

Discussions	15%
Online Site Visit	15%
Total	100%

## Course Requirements

**Readings:** There are readings, films, and other materials assigned each week in this course. The assigned materials are listed in each weekly overview available under Modules. Your success in graded discussions and on exams will depend on your demonstrating clear understanding and critical engagement with these materials.

**Discussions:** You are required to participate in three graded discussions in this course. Your initial posts will respond to a structured prompt. Be sure to answer these prompts in their entirety using direct references to the assigned readings, films, etc. Your initial posts are due by Wednesday at 11:59pm in the weeks that they are assigned. You are also required to respond to at least two classmates in each discussion before Sunday at 11:59pm. Discussions will be graded based on three criteria: 1) the quality of your initial post, 2) the quality of your responses to classmates, and 3) whether or not you meet the participation requirements. Please review the Discussion Guidelines available under Course Expectations for more information. Please note that for all written work in this course, you should use either MLA or Turabian style guidelines for source citations and bibliographies.

**Exams:** There are three exams in this course, as well as a Syllabus Quiz assigned for the first day of class. Exams are administered through Canvas and will combine multiple-choice, matching, and true/false formats. These are open-book assessments. However, the exams will be up to 50 questions in length, and you will only have 75 minutes to complete the exam once you begin. Each exam will be available for 72 hours, Friday through Sunday in the week it is assigned. I will post an exam review discussion on the Sunday before each scheduled exam so that you can focus your review and preparation.

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT** - As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the Syllabus Quiz no later than Friday of the first week of classes at 11:59PM. **Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.**

**Online Site Visit:** You will attend an online religious event, teaching, or ceremony of your choice. However, it cannot be an event related to a tradition in which you have practiced in previously or that you belong to. This means, for example, that if you belong to one Christian denomination, you are not allowed to attend and report on a different Christian denomination. The online event or teaching you attend must be affiliated with a religious tradition that is entirely unfamiliar to you. You will submit a write-up of your experience using the Field Notes Template available with the assignment prompt in Webcourses. Your write-up should be 2.5-3 pages double-spaced with 1-inch margins and using 12-point Times New Roman font. You are required to engage at least one primary source in your write-up. A primary source is something particular to the organization that you choose, such as the website, publications, or an interview with a leader or member. You may want to engage other sources to help with definitions, explanation, etc. However, all secondary sources must be peer-reviewed. Please use MLA or Turabian style guidelines for your source citations and bibliography.

\*\*\***What is 'peer-reviewed'?** A good indicator of academic rigor is that a source is designated "peer-reviewed." This means that the source has been reviewed and approved for publication by other scholars in the field. Academic sources include academic journal articles, books (also, book chapters or essays from collected volumes), and/or peer-reviewed reference texts. **Do not use .com resources!** A good place to start is the course textbook or the ATLA database available through the UCF Library website. On the database search page, check the box for "Peer-Reviewed".

## Emergencies/Missed Assignments

**Emergencies.** Make sure that any health or personal emergencies are properly documented, and please contact me **as soon as possible** if difficulties arise during the semester.

**Late Work.** Ten percent will be deducted for each day an assignment is late except in the case of appropriately documented emergencies. This includes exams, so please let me know as soon as possible if you missed an exam. Please pay close attention to the deadlines listed for each assignment in the Course Schedule and weekly overviews. **Please be aware that a broken or malfunctioning computer, or the inability to retrieve, produce, or submit assignments from a computer will not be accepted as a valid excuse for late work.**

\*\*\***IMPORTANT** - As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each semester. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the Syllabus Quiz no later than Friday of the first week of classes at 11:59PM. **Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.**

## Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course). Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct at <<http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc>> (<http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc>). According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in

1. Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
2. Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
3. Commercial Use of Academic Material: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
4. Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.
5. Plagiarism: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.

6. Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
7. Helping another violate academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, consult the International Center for Academic Integrity <<http://academicintegrity.org> (<http://academicintegrity.org/>)>.

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices” <<http://wpacouncil.org/node/9> (<http://wpacouncil.org/node/9>)>.

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF’s student handbook, *The Golden Rule* < <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/docs/goldenrule.pdf> (<http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/docs/goldenrule.pdf>)>. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students’ education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a “Z Designation” on a student’s official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see <<http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade> (<http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade>)>.

## Turnitin

In this course we will utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author’s work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) (<http://www.turnitin.com/>).

## Unauthorized Use of Class Materials

There are many fraudulent websites claiming to offer study aids to students but are actually cheat sites. These include (but are not limited to) Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, and Clutch Prep. UCF does not endorse any of these products. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face penalties.

## Unauthorized Use of Technology for Sharing

If you were in a classroom setting taking a quiz, would you ask the student sitting next to you for an answer to a quiz or test question? The answer should be no. This also applies to graded homework, quizzes, tests, etc.

Students are not allowed to use GroupMe, WhatsApp, or any other form of technology to exchange course material associated with a graded assignment, quiz, test, etc. when opened on Webcourses.

The completion of graded work in an online course should be considered a formal process: Just because you are not in a formal classroom setting being proctored while taking a quiz or test does not mean that the completion of

graded work in an online course should not be treated with integrity.

The following is not all inclusive of what is considered academic misconduct. These examples show how the use of technology can be considered academic misconduct and could result in the same penalties as cheating in a face-to-face class:

- Taking a screen shot of an online quiz or test question, posting it to GroupMe or WhatsApp, and asking for assistance is considered academic misconduct.
- Answering an online quiz or test question posted to GroupMe or WhatsApp is considered academic misconduct. Giving advice, assistance, or suggestions on how to complete a question associated with an online assignment, quiz, or test is considered academic misconduct.
- The use of outside assistance from another student or by searching the internet, Googling for answers, use of websites such as Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, etc. is considered academic misconduct.
- Gathering to take an online quiz or test with others and sharing answers in the process is considered academic misconduct.

If a student or group of students are found to be exchanging material associated with a graded assignment, quiz, or test through any form of technology (GroupMe, WhatsApp, etc.), or use outside assistance (Googling answers, use of websites such as Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, etc.), they could receive anywhere from a zero grade on the exercise to an “F” in the course depending on the act.

## Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with [Student Accessibility Services](http://www.sds.sdes.ucf.edu/) (<http://www.sds.sdes.ucf.edu/>), Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

## R-E-S-P-E-C-T

In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different from ourselves. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experiences, values and beliefs. In this time we share together over the semester, please honor the uniqueness of your fellow classmates, and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect your fellow students' opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind.

The University of Central Florida recognizes that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, rather than divide us. In this class, people of all ethnicities, genders and gender identities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. If you feel your differences may in some way isolate you from UCF's community or if you have need of any specific accommodations, please speak with the instructor early in the semester about your concerns and what we can do together to help you become an active and engaged member of our class and community.

# Tech Concerns

The instructor cannot provide technical support. If students are experiencing problems with myUCF or Canvas, they will need to contact the appropriate department. The Computer Services & Telecommunications Service Desk can be reached at (407) 823-5117, [telecom@ucf.edu](mailto:telecom@ucf.edu), and OTC 550 (Main Campus).

Even though computers and word processing software are marvelous time and energy-saving tools, they can and do cause problems from time to time. **Please be aware that a broken or malfunctioning computer, or the inability to retrieve, produce, or submit assignments from a computer will not be accepted as a valid excuse for late work.** It is advised that students make sure their work is saved appropriately, and in more than one location (such as a USB flash drive, external hard drive, CD/DVD, online storage, or even emailing a copy to oneself).





## Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.










## Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

## Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Mon Jun 28, 2021	 <a href="#">Syllabus Quiz</a> ( <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143636">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143636</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jun 30, 2021	 <a href="#">Discussion 1</a> ( <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143641">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143641</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Sun Jul 11, 2021	 <a href="#">Exam I</a> ( <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143637">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143637</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jul 14, 2021	 <a href="#">Discussion 2</a> ( <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143639">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143639</a> )	due by 11:59pm



Date	Details	Due
Sun Jul 25, 2021	 <a href="#">Exam II</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143638">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143638</a>	due by 11:59pm
Tue Jul 27, 2021	 <a href="#">Exam I Corrections</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7159701">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7159701</a>	due by 11:59pm
Wed Jul 28, 2021	 <a href="#">Discussion 3</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143640">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143640</a>	due by 11:59pm
Sun Aug 1, 2021	 <a href="#">Online Site Visit Report</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143643">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143643</a>	due by 11:59pm
Fri Aug 6, 2021	 <a href="#">Exam II Corrections</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7170235">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7170235</a>	due by 11:59pm
Sun Aug 8, 2021	 <a href="#">Exam III</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143635">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7143635</a>	due by 11:59pm
	 <a href="#">Points Added for Exam I</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7159672">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7159672</a>	
	 <a href="#">Points Added for Exam II</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7170225">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7170225</a>	
	 <a href="#">Points Added for Exam III</a> <a href="https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7196111">https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1380214/assignments/7196111</a>	