



School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Introduction to Religious Studies

RELI 2201-201

CRN 80307

Fall 2025

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor: B.M. Moore, M.Div.

Office Location: N/A

Office telephone: 410.456.6946

Class Meetings: Mondays, 7:15pm-8:15pm

Office Hours: Mondays, 6:15pm-7pm; additional times by appointment.

Email address: bmoore@atlm.edu

Response Time: *Unless you are notified otherwise, I will work to respond to all correspondence within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours during the weekend.*

Course Delivery Method: Online; Asynchronous

IMPORTANT DATES

1st Day of Classes: September 8, 2025

Last Day Drop/Add: September 11, 2025

Attendance Verification: September 18, 2025

Last Day to Reinstate: September 22, 2025

MIDTERM WEEK: October 11-16, 2025

Last Day to Withdraw without Penalty: October 27, 2025

Last Day of Class: December 6, 2025

FINAL EXAMS: December 9-11, 2025

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Religion has been in existence from the earliest references of human history. The entire world has been informed by belief in the sacred, seeking the unknown or the transcendent. This introductory course is designed to provide a modest overview of the origins, growth and social impact of various religions around the world. Emphasis will be given to historical personalities and settings that contributed to the establishment of religious movements. Additional attention will be given to the sociological and ethical dimensions of religious belief, practice and intolerance. The material of this course will increase students' knowledge of religious history.

Course Objectives: At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- I. Engage in critical thinking about religions, humanity, and society.
- II. Articulate ways religion has impacted social activism around the world.
- III. Demonstrate an awareness of the challenges/problems inherent in studying religion(s) comparatively and/or cross-culturally.
- IV. Improve communication skills through thinking, writing, and speaking critically about your own historical, social, and cultural position(s) as it/they relate to religion(s).
- V. Increase in perspective with respect to religious and cultural diversity.

Prerequisites: NONE

Required Text: Myhre, Paul, O., *Introduction to Religious Studies* (Winona: Anslem Academic), 2009.

Computer Hardware & Software Requirements:

One of the challenges many encounter with enrolling in and completing an online course is the accessibility to the required and recommended software and hardware. Different institutions, and even different courses within the same institution, have varying technology requirements. Check your hardware and software systems to determine its compatibility with the online course you have selected.

Minimum hardware recommendations to take online courses:

D2L System Requirement Internet Connection: Ethernet Network required Wireless Network required

Operating System Requirements:

PC: Compatible Operating System; Web Browser (i.e., Firefox, Chrome)

Mac: Compatible Operating System; Web Browser (i.e., Firefox, Chrome, Safari)

Minimum Technical Specifications for Hardware:

- A processor of 2GHz or faster
- 4GB RAM or greater
- 500 GB of Hard Drive space

- Monitor and video card with a minimum resolution of 1024x768
- Keyboard and mouse

Minimum Technical Specifications for Computer Peripherals:

- Speakers
- Headphones
- Microphone
- Webcam

Software Requirements:

Browser Requirements/Supported Browsers Compatible Browsers:

- Apple Safari - <https://support.apple.com/downloads/safari> (Mac)
- Google Chrome - <https://www.google.com/chrome/> (Mac or PC)
- Mozilla Firefox - <https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/> (Mac or PC)

Application Software

- Microsoft Office 2016 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) (Mac or PC)
- Adobe Reader - <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

Plug-ins

- Java - <https://www.java.com/en/download/>
- Adobe Flash Player - <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>
- Windows Media Player - <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=20426>
- Apple QuickTime - [https://support.apple.com/downloads/%](https://support.apple.com/downloads/%2523quicktime)

2523quicktime

- Microsoft Silverlight - <https://www.microsoft.com/getsilverlight/GetStarted/Install/Default>

Accessibility: Wi-Fi is also available for use in the campus parking lots.

American Disability Act (ADA) Statement:

Atlanta Metropolitan College is committed to providing support for all students and making their college experience an enriching opportunity. In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The Department/Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services, located in the Student Services & Success Center, building 650-Suite 252, oversees the coordination of services for students with documented disabilities. The Coordinator of Disability Services collaborates with faculty and staff to offer provisions for reasonable accommodation to students who meet the requirements. It is the policy and practice of AMSC to make all Web information accessible to students with disabilities. If you, as a student with a disability, have difficulty accessing any part of the course materials for this class, please notify the instructor immediately. It is the policy and practice of AMSC to make all Web information accessible to students with disabilities. If you, as a student with a disability, have difficulty accessing any part of the course materials for this class, please notify the instructor immediately. Accommodation cannot be provided until a reasonable accommodation plan is in place. To the greatest extent possible, all college representatives shall observe confidentiality.

Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services:

The Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services operates under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) laws in order to assist in leveling the playing field for students who have disabilities with those who do not.

The amended ADA, otherwise known as ADAAA defines "disability" as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. If you feel that you have a disability or impairment that may limit your academic functioning, please contact Dr. Dorothy Williams, the Coordinator of Counseling and Accessibility Services at 404-756-4016 or at <https://www.atlm.edu/students/counseling-and-disability-services.aspx>. The Coordinator of Counseling and Accessibility Services reviews all accommodation requests. In order to receive accommodations, the student's illness or disability must be verified in writing by a physician, psychiatrist, or some other health care provider or specialist. Students who choose to access disability support services should contact the coordinator as soon as possible after acceptance to AMSC. Please be aware that late notifications may result in complications for establishing accommodation in a timely fashion.

Attendance Policy:

- Attendance and participation discussions are required.
- Students are required to log into the class regularly.
- There are no make-up exams.

Time Commitment:

Students can expect to spend 3 hours per week on this course. Consult the course calendar and your instructor to be sure you are on schedule, keeping up with the material and taking quizzes on time. Expectations for this course as follows:

- Log in regularly to check messages from your instructor and other students.
- Check the course calendar, D2L email, and AMSC email regularly.
- Read, study, and complete all assignments for each lesson by the due date.

Conduct

You are expected to refrain from profanity, crudeness, and slurs of any kind. You are also expected to treat your fellow students and instructor just as you would in the traditional classroom. Proper conduct applies to all forms of communication in the course. The penalty for not complying with these guidelines is removal from the course.

Late Policy:

Late Assignments: Assignments turned in after the due date and time will be subject to a 10-point decrease of the earned grade. (Unless otherwise discussed with professor).

Enrollment Status: Students are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the courses in which they enroll are included in the approved degree plan and program map for their program of study. Students must periodically check their enrollment status in this

course during the semester. The student is responsible for making changes, if any, in enrollment status and taking necessary steps (e.g. pursuing re-instatement in this course) following those outlined in the AMSC catalog.

Class Cancellation: Procedure regarding long-term emergency closure of the college (attendance policy): In the event of an emergency that forces the college to close for an extended period, students MUST contact the instructor of this class within 48 hours using contact information (e.g., email address in BrightSpace/ D2L) on the syllabus to obtain directions for continuing the course. The instructor will provide directions for the transmission and submission of course assignments and course assessments, including due dates. The student is responsible for submitting valid, accurate contact information, including an active AMSC email address, to the instructor by the end of the first week of the course. Students can obtain an Atlanta Metropolitan State College Student email address in the Academic Support Center on the third floor of the Library Building. If the instructor for the course cannot be reached within the specified period (within 48 hours), the Dean of the School responsible for the course can be reached at the email address posted on the college's website.

Abandoning a Course: Abandoning should be avoided at all costs. Abandoning a course instead of following official drop procedures will result in a grade of --F at the end of the course. It is the student's responsibility to initiate and complete the withdrawal process.

Academic Honesty: Only the epitome of professionalism is expected of each student. Cheating or the abetment of cheating is not tolerated. Per page 91-93 of the 2019-2020 Atlanta Metropolitan State College Catalogue the Penalties for Academic Misconduct states: In cases where a student is found guilty of cheating or examination, the instructor may impose a penalty. Types of penalties may include, but are not limited to, the instructor assigning a "F" for the assignment, the instructor not accepting the work, the student being assigned additional work, or the student receiving a grade reduction for the assignment. The maximum penalty the instructor may impose is a grade of "F" for the course.

Grade Breakdown:

- A. **Discussion Forum -25%** Forums are designed to spark discussion about the readings in our textbook and for the course. Posts must be at least 200 words. Discussion forums are collaborative and so students are required to create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. In addition, each student is required to reply to two (2) classmate's posts. Each peer response should be at least 100 words. Mind your grammar and spelling. Cite materials via MLA format. Plagiarism is not tolerated.
- B. **Interview Assignment -15%** Students will conduct a brief interview with a person who actively practices anyone of the religious faith traditions we cover in the course. (Ideally, the interviewee is a non-relative, but

exceptions may be considered). Your interview will result in a 2-page summation. Examples of interview questions may include:

- How long have you practiced/observed your beliefs?
 - If comfortable sharing, what led to your conversion into this religion?
 - How would you explain your faith to someone who has no prior knowledge of it?
 - What is one element of your religion that you potentially struggle with?
- AND,
- What is something you take away from the interview?

C. **Video Summary Reflections (2) -20%** Wherever there are videos, students must submit a 1 and half page, double spaced summary of the videos.

D. **Power Point Activity Paper -15%** Students will research Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, OR Hinduism. Slides should information about central personalities in the founding and growth of the religion, major principles and practices and a brief statement on something they learned while conducting their research. Presentations should not exceed seven (7) slides.

E. **Final Term Paper (FINAL) -25%** Students will submit their term paper using one of the following options:

Option 1: Students will compare two religions' practices. For example, marriage, giving to the poor, etc. in two different religions (ex. Christianity and Buddhism.)

Option 2: Students will write on the history of social activism within one of the religious movements we cover during the semester (use Chapter 9 to assist).

This paper must be at least 5 pages double spaced. Follow MLA format. Your paper must have an identifiable introduction, thesis statement, supporting details and research, a conclusion that clearly summarizes the paper. Your paper must include at least three sources outside of your textbook and include a work cited page. Spelling and grammar errors will count for 1-point deduction for each occurrence. Read over your work. Failure to follow directions will deduct points for your overall paper grade.

CLASS SCHEUDLE

Week 1: September 8th -Introduction to the Course

Review syllabus. Complete class introductions. Read Chapter 1.

Week 2: September 15th -Chapter 1 "What is Religion?"

Discussion Forum: What are two pros and cons associated with the study and practice of religion? Provide details for both your pros and cons.

Short Paper Assignment: What is the difference between religion and spirituality? (1-2 pages)

Week 3: September 22nd -Chapter 2 “How is Religion Studied?”

Discussion Forum: What method for the study of religion interests you most? Why?

What method is the least interesting? Why?

Weekly Assignment: **Power Point Activity is Due.**

Week 4: September 29th -Chapter 3 “Religious Origin Stories”

Discussion Forum and Assignment: Video Assignment

YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=religion+origins

Week 5: October 6th -Chapter 5 “Sacred Words”

Discussion Forum: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AxUtOLG9gc>

Weekly Assignment: **Interview Assignment is Due.**

*Instructional video supplement: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TP8h3s6DqwY>

Week 6: October 13th MIDTERM WEEK -NO CLASS THIS WEEK!

Week 7: October 20th -Chapter 8: “Violence and Religion”

Discussion: Forum: Reflection on “9/11 and Religion” video.

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubBwnbS_nbw

Week 8: October 27th -Chapter 9: “Social Activism in Religion”

Discussion Forum: In what ways did the religious backgrounds of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X inform their beliefs and approaches to social activism?

Be prepared to submit your term paper topic next week!

Week 9: November 3rd -Chapter 7: “Religious Ethics”

Discussion Forum: Reflection on capital punishment (see pg. 93 of textbook)

Weekly Assignment Compare the 10 Commandments in the Old Testament with the 42 Principles of MAAT.

Week 10: November 10th -Chapter 10 “World Religions”

Discussion Forum: Why aren't all religions embraced in certain areas of the world? In your own words, define “interreligious dialogue”.

Weekly Assignment: **Interview Assignment is due this week.**

Week 11: November 17th -Chapter 12: “Technology and Religion”

Discussion Forum: In the age of increasing dependence upon “A.I.”, do you foresee religious institutions amending their practices to accommodate what this technology presents?

Weekly Assignment: Please ensure you are current on responses to all forums and that you have replied to your classmate's responses.

Week 12: December 2nd -Course Review

All overdue assignments are to be submitted this week. No exceptions. All term (final) papers are due in the week of December 9th.

GRADING POLICY

Each student's final grade is based on points earned during the semester on projects, blog posts and assignments, etc. Students will also have at least one mandatory meeting with the instructor to discuss research projects. Problems related to the grading policy for this course or other course management concerns should be first brought to the attention of the professor for the course. However, a resolution of unsettled problems or concerns may be pursued by following the grievance procedures outlined in the AMSC Student Handbook and the Academic Catalog. Grade turnaround time: All assignments and assessments will be graded within one week's time. The instructor will provide comments along with the grade as necessary for feedback.

Frequently Asked Questions and Helpful Links

Grade Appeals and Student Complaint Policy and Process

Please follow the Grade Appeals Process outlined in the AMSC Student Catalog, Pages 61/62. You can also refer to the Grade Appeal brochure at:

<https://www.atlm.edu/downloads/advisement/CAAS%20Grade%20Appeal%20Brochure.pdf>

For student complaint policy and process, refer to AMSC student catalog pages 51/52.

What is Brightspace (D2L) and how can I access it?

Brightspace(D2L) is the virtual space where students access their online courses and some Face2Face class resources, quizzes, assignments, etc. You can access Brightspace (D2L) from <https://atlm.view.usg.edu/> You can also access Brightspace (D2L) from the College's webpage and click on Brightspace (D2L) on top.

What do I do if I face technical issues while taking a quiz or turning in an assignment in Brightspace?

<https://d2lhelp.view.usg.edu/> You can reach the GaView Helpdesk 24/7/365 days at 18557724423. If you are unable to submit a quiz or assignment or face a technical glitch, please contact the University System of Georgia's GaView Helpdesk at 1855-772-4423. The Helpdesk is open 24/7 all 365 days. If your issue cannot be resolved right away, the Helpdesk will issue a ticket to your Atlm Ginger email address. That ticket needs to be forwarded to your instructor to prove that you faced a technical issue that forced you to miss a deadline.

I can't download Respondus Lockdown Browser. What do I do?

If you are unable to download Respondus to your computer, please email the Office of Testing at Testing@atlm.edu at least 24 hours in advance requesting a testing

appointment at the Testing Lab. For Respondus issues, please contact <https://web.respondus.com/contact/>.

Where do I go for ADA Accommodations?

<https://www.atlm.edu/students/counseling-and-disability-services.aspx>

I have a complaint. Where do I go?

Fill out and submit the Student Complaint form.

I have an issue with my grade. How may I appeal my grade?

Read the brochure and follow the instructions to appeal your grade.

How do I Withdraw from a Course?

Follow the Course Withdrawal Process here

I have a Hardship. How do I do a Hardship Withdrawal? Follow the Hardship Withdrawal Process here.

To Know the Campus Carry/HB 280 Policy

House Bill 280 Guidelines

Disclaimer

Information contained in this syllabus and schedule was, to the best knowledge of the instructor, considered correct and complete when distributed for use at the beginning of the semester. This syllabus should be considered only a guide for instructor and students, not a formal contract between Atlanta Metropolitan State College and any student. The instructor reserves the right, acting within the policies and procedures of AMSC, to make changes in course content or instructional techniques.

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