

ANTHROPOLOGY 116W – ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION – 3 units

Instructor: Charles Ettner

Classroom: S-143

MWF 8:00 - 8:50 a.m.

Office Ph: 278-8831

Office & Hours: S-144

MW 9-10:30 am; T 5-6 pm

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Schedule # 70696

Fall Semester 2010

SPIRITUAL HEALTH WARNING: If you are a fundamentalist of one sort or another (Animist, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Moslem, Zoroastrian, etc.), this class could be dangerous to your "spiritual health." We shall look at magico-religious phenomena from an extremely objective and, for the most part, materialist perspective, much as an entomologist looks at a bug on a slide. No religious tradition will be privileged, least of all the Judeo-Christian tradition. If the prospect of such an approach to religion threatens you, I suggest you consider taking another class (source: Prof. C. Scott Littleton. Spring, 2001: Anth 350 Magic and Religion).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces how anthropologists examine religious belief systems and their associated ritual practices in human society across a variety of cultures. The form of instruction includes lectures and class discussions of selected readings, film presentations, and possibly an occasional guest speaker. A second focus of this course is to assist students with developing college level writing skills and techniques. Therefore, students will be required to write papers of varying lengths and types, in and out of class, throughout the semester.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to enable students to gain:

- 1) a better understanding of the many and diverse ways human beings contemplate and address ideas of the supernatural, or the like, through systems of belief and their associated rituals and practices.
- 2) knowledge of fundamental social science theories, methods, as well as analytical tools for examining and explaining belief systems and their related sociocultural phenomena.
- 3) a more developed and refined set of writing skills enabling one to function properly at the collegiate level and to succeed outside of academia, as well.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & DUE DATES

- A) class participation to include regular attendance
- B) research proposal (200 words) and 3 annotated references (50 words each)..... due Sep 10
- C) 2 research papers 1500-2000 words each.....due Oct 4, Nov 23
- D) observation exercise and paper 1000-1500 words.....due Dec 8
- E) pop quizzes (approximately 8-10)
- F) 2 midterm exams and a final exam

Exams and pop quizzes draw on the contents of the assigned readings, any films shown in class, and all lectures. Students are responsible for all such information—even when absent from class. Students are well advised to take notes during all class lectures and all presentations.

Research topics and the specific format of the research paper will be discussed in class. This info also appears as downloadable files in the Course Documents section on Blackboard. Due dates for submitting all papers and assignments are listed in the assignments schedule below. Please note that I do not accept late research papers and absolutely no late extra credit reports.

Be advised that I routinely submit all student research papers to the plagiarism detection service Turnitin.com for an authenticity review. The process is conducted electronically and I am the only person who has access to the results. A copy of the paper is stored in the system's electronic databank, which protects your intellectual property by identifying anyone who might improperly attempt to use your paper or any parts of your paper at some future date. *You may opt, however, to take this course from an instructor who does not use the Turnitin.com service.*

RECORDING & COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Lectures and supplemental course materials may not be copied, recorded, distributed, or quoted without the written permission of the instructor. No laptops or electronic notetaking devices may be used in class. *Pagers & cell phones, must be turned off, not on vibrate mode, before entering the classroom and remain off, including during breaks, until after you leave the classroom.*

COURSE EXAMS & GRADING POLICY

The requirements for a passing grade in this Anth 116W course are:

- 1) full completion of all course assignments *and acceptable attendance* (see note below)
- 2) an overall 70% average (approximately 700/1000 points) for all course work
- 3) a 70% or higher score on the final research paper

Makeup tests for missed exams must be taken within one week after returning to class, and will only be permitted in the event of a medical emergency, verified in writing by a physician, or for something of a similar nature. There will be no makeup quizzes. Attendance is mandatory, and *any student exceeding six (6) absences is not likely to receive a passing grade.* Leaving class early, without the prior consent of the instructor, will be counted as an absence. Should an 'I' (incomplete) grade be needed, it must be requested by the student and may be granted only to those persons who complete at least 2/3 of all coursework with an overall C average.

Participation–Attendance	15%	A/CR 90-100
Quizzes	10%	B/CR 80-89
1st Research Paper	15%	C/CR 70-79
2nd Research Paper	15%	D/NC 60-69
Observation Paper	10%	F/NC Below 60
Exam #1 & Exam #2	20% (10% ea.)	
Exam #3	15%	

TEXT AND READING MATERIALS (Required)

Covington, Dennis

1995 *Salvation on Sand Mountain: Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia*. New York: Penguin Putnam Inc.

Fadiman, Anne

1997 *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Moro, Pamela A. and James E. Myers, editors.

2010 *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion: A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*. 8th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Supplemental Course Materials and Information – can be located online on Blackboard

PROBLEMS, DIFFICULTIES, AND EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Instructions and guidelines provided in this syllabus are meant to provide clarity and will be strictly adhered to. Students are strongly urged to request additional clarification of any aspect of the course requirements, assignments, and/or instructions as he or she may deem necessary. Most important, should any problem, difficulty, or extenuating circumstance arise impacting your performance or ability, please immediately inform the instructor of the situation. Direct and immediate communication with the instructor is the best way to seek a solution to the academic impact of any given situation. In some instances, the instructor will have knowledge of resources or ways to aid the student in addressing the problem or situation.

COURSE READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS SCHEDULE

(The following schedule of topics is tentative and very likely will be altered, as circumstances dictate)

All readings are from the Moro/Myers/Lehmann textbook unless otherwise specified.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READING ASSIGNMENT</u>
<u>Week One</u>		(to be completed <i>before</i> class)
Aug 23	Course Introduction; Film: Religion & Magic	
Aug 25	Discussion: Research Paper; Writing an Introduction	Writing Guide on Blackboard
Aug 27	Science & Religion	<i>download</i> Gould
<u>Week Two</u>		
Aug 30	Darwin’s Rib	<i>download</i> Root-Bernstein
Sep 1	Developing the Body of a Research Paper	Writing Guide on Blackboard
Sep 3	The Anthropological Study of Religion	1-5 (Introduction)
<u>Week Three</u>		
Sep 6	Labor Day – No Classes	
Sep 8	Religion, Evolution, and Anthro Theory & Method	6-15 (Clifford Geertz)
Sep 10	Film: The Way of the Ancestors	
(Research proposal due – typed paper copy – No email attachments)		

Week Four

Sep 13	Animism & Ancestor Worship	16-19 (Marvin Harris)
Sep 15	Constructing a Summary Conclusion	Writing Guide on Blackboard
Sep 17	Myths, Rituals, & Rites of Passage	42-45 & 83-86

Week Five

Sep 20	Taboo	72-76 (Mary Douglas)
Sep 22	Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism	Guide on Blackboard
Sep 24	Female Cutting and Cultural Relativism	<i>download</i> Gordon

Week Six

Read Fadiman book chs. 1-5

Sep 27	Exam #1	
Sep 29	Religious Specialists	142-149 (Victor Turner)
Oct 1	Religious Specialists	

Week Seven

Read Fadiman book chs. 6-10

Oct 4	Writing Abstracts <i>(Research paper due – paper copy & email attachment)</i>	Guide on Blackboard
Oct 6	Film: The Peyote Road	
Oct 8	On the Peyote Road	207-209 (Kiyaani & Csordas)

Week Eight

Read Fadiman book chs. 11-15

Oct 11	“Primitive” Magic & “Civilized” Magic	314-319 (Malinowski) 320-326 (Gmelch)
Oct 13	Shamanism	150-157 (Vitebsky)
Oct 15	Shamans and Healing <i>(abstract due – typed paper copy – No email attachment)</i>	158-161 (Michael Brown)

Week Nine

Read Fadiman book chs. 16-19

Oct 18	Film: Between Two Worlds	
Oct 20	Discussion of “The Spirit Catches You ...”	
Oct 22	Discussion of “The Spirit Catches You ...” (Sign up for consultations; bring your graded research paper to the appointment)	

Week Ten

Oct 25-27-29	Individual Consultations in my office (S 144) (No Anth 116W class during this week)	
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Week Eleven

Nov 1	Exam #2	
Nov 3	Review – Introductions & Conclusions	I & C Examples on Blackboard
Nov 5	Homer the Heretic and Charlie Church	444-452 (Lisle Dalton, et al.)

Week Twelve

Nov 8	The Global Rise of Religious Nationalism	435-443 (M. Juergensmeyer)
Nov 10	Witchcraft & Sorcery	283-289 (James L. Brain)
Nov 12	European/American Witchcraft (Wicca)	299-307 (T. M. Luhrmann)

Week Thirteen

Read Covington book chs. 1-4

Nov 15 Film: Dance of the Spirit

Nov 17 Vodou (Voodoo) Religion

338-344 (Karen Brown)

Nov 19 Revitalization Movements

360-365 (Anthony Wallace)

Week Fourteen

Read Covington book chs. 5-8

Nov 23 Cargo Cults

371-375 (Peter M. Worsley)

(2nd paper due – paper copy & email attachment)

Nov 24-26 **Thanksgiving Break – No Classes**

Week Fifteen

Read Covington book chs. 9-11

Nov 29 Film – Holy Ghost People; Serpent Handling article

77-82 (Mary Lee Daugherty)

Dec 1 Discussion of “Salvation on Sand Mountain”

Dec 3 Discussion of “Salvation on Sand Mountain”

Week Sixteen

Dec 6 Review

Dec 8 Review

(Observation paper due – typed paper copy – No email attachment)

Dec 9 and 10 Consultation hours 9:00 am to 12 noon

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, Dec 15, 08:45am–10:45am

University Policies

Students with Disabilities: Upon identifying themselves to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. For more information, contact Services to Students with Disabilities in Madden Library 1049 (278-2811)

Cheating and Plagiarism: “Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one’s grade or obtaining course credit; such acts also include assisting another student to do so. Typically, such acts occur in relation to examinations. However, it is the intent of this definition that the term ‘cheating’ not be limited to examination situations only, but that it include any and all actions by a student that are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by fraudulent or deceptive means. Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of others by misrepresenting the material (i.e., their intellectual property) so used as one’s own work.” Penalties for cheating and plagiarism range from a 0 or F on a particular assignment, through an F for the course, to expulsion from the university. For more information on the University’s policy regarding cheating and plagiarism, refer to the Schedule of Courses (Legal Notices on Cheating and Plagiarism) or the University Catalog (Policies and Regulations).

Computers: “At California State University, Fresno, computers and communications links to remote resources are recognized as being integral to the education and research experience. Every student is required to have his/her own computer or have other personal access to a workstation (including a modem and a printer) with all the recommended software. The minimum and recommended standards for the workstations and software, which may vary by academic major, are updated periodically and are available from Information Technology Services (<http://www/csufresno.edu/ITS>) or the University Bookstore. In the curriculum and class assignments, students are presumed to have 24-hour access to a computer workstation and the necessary communication links to the University’s information resources.”

Disruptive Classroom Behavior: “The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained....Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which student and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and understanding of the community in which they live ... Student conduct which disrupts the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.”

California State University, Fresno - General Education Writing Rubric

Scoring Level	Knowledge of Conventions	Clarity and Coherence	Rhetorical Choices
4 - Accomplished	In addition to meeting the requirements for a "3," the writing is essentially error-free in terms of mechanics. Models the style and format appropriate to the assignment.	In addition to meeting the requirements for a "3," writing flows smoothly from one idea to another. The writer has taken pains to assist the reader in following the logic of the ideas expressed.	In addition to meeting the requirements for a "3," the writer's decisions about focus, organization, style/tone, and content made reading a pleasurable experience. Writing could be used as a model of how to fulfill the assignment.
3 - Competent	While there may be minor errors, the paper follows normal conventions of spelling and grammar throughout and has been carefully proofread. Appropriate conventions for style and format are used consistently throughout the writing sample. Demonstrates thoroughness and competence in documenting sources; the reader would have little difficulty referring back to cited sources.	Sentences are structured and words are chosen to communicate ideas clearly. Sequencing of ideas within paragraphs and transitions between paragraphs make the writer's points easy to follow.	The writer has made good decisions about focus, organization, style/tone, and content to communicate clearly and effectively. The purpose and focus of the writing are clear to the reader and the organization and content achieve the purpose well. Writing follows all requirements for the assignment.
2 - Developing	Frequent errors in spelling, grammar (such as subject/verb agreements and tense), sentence structure and/or other writing conventions distract the reader. Writing does not consistently follow appropriate style and/or format. Source documentation is incomplete. It may be unclear which references are direct quotes and which are paraphrased.	Sentence structure and/or word choice sometimes interfere with clarity. Needs to improve sequencing of ideas within paragraphs and transitions between paragraphs to make the writing easy to follow.	The writer's decisions about focus, organization, style/tone, and/or content sometimes interfere with clear, effective communication. The purpose of the writing is not fully achieved. All requirements of the assignment may not be fulfilled.
1 - Beginning	Writing contains numerous errors in spelling, grammar, and/or sentence structure which interfere with comprehension. Style and/or format are inappropriate for the assignment. Fail to demonstrate thoroughness and competence in documentation.	Sentence structure, word choice, lack of transitions and/or sequencing of ideas make reading and understanding difficult.	The writer's decisions about focus, organization, style/tone, and/or content interfere with communication. The purpose of the writing is not achieved. Requirements of the assignment have not been fulfilled.