

COURSE OUTLINE

OXNARD COLLEGE

I. Course Identification and Justification:

A. Proposed course id: ANTH R111H

Banner title: Honors: Magic Witchcraft Relig

Full title: Honors: Magic, Witchcraft and Religion: Anthropology of Belief

B. Reason(s) course is offered:

This is part of the Anthropology AA-T. This course fulfills lower division anthropology requirements at the UC and CSU. It is also part of the IGETC Transfer Curriculum pattern. It is one of the recommended electives for an A.A. in anthropology at Oxnard College. It fulfills area D for CSU.

II. Catalog Information:

A. Units:

Current: 3.00

B. Course Hours:

1. In-Class Contact Hours:
Lecture: 52.5 Activity: 0 Lab: 0
2. Total In-Class Contact Hours: 52.5
3. Total Outside-of-Class Hours: 105
4. Total Student Learning Hours: 157.5

C. Prerequisites, Corequisites, Advisories, and Limitations on Enrollment:

1. Prerequisites

Current:

2. Corequisites

Current:

3. Advisories:

Current:

4. Limitations on Enrollment:

Current:

D. Catalog Description:

Current:

Religion and magic are human universals. Anthropologists study contemporary religions and religious consciousness to help reconstruct religions in prehistory, as well as for an understanding of the modern world and of the human mind. The student will be introduced to a fascinating variety of rites, rituals, religious movements, symbolic systems, as well as anthropological theories about religion. Honors work challenges students to be more analytical and creative through expanded assignments, real-world applications and enrichment opportunities. Credit will not be awarded for both the honors and regular versions of a course. Credit will be awarded only for the first course completed with a grade of C or "P" or better.

- E. Fees:
Current: \$ None
- F. Field trips:
Current:
Will be required: []
May be required: [X]
Will not be required: []
- G. Repeatability:
Current:
A - Not designed as repeatable
Previous:
1 -
- H. Credit basis:
Current:
Letter graded only [X]
Pass/no pass []
Student option []
- I. Credit by exam:
Current:
Petitions may be granted: []
Petitions will not be granted: [X]

III. Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. Classify the world's major and minor religions using the basic social structural precepts of cultural anthropology.
- B. Collect and synthesize information on a variety of human belief systems, through interview and observational techniques.
- C. Demonstrate understanding of the role of mind, imagination, consciousness and creativity in the production and maintenance of religious and symbolic beliefs.
- D. Recognize and recall details about the world's major religions, and some of the world's minor religions.
- E. Recognize and recall universal components of religion, such as symbols, rites and rituals, and traditions.
- F. Debate the relative rationality, merits, ethics, social functions, historical purposes and usefulness of various human belief systems.
- G. Read, comprehend and interpret various types of published ideas.
- H. Differentiate between facts, influences, assumptions, major and minor arguments or ideas and conclusions.
- I. Generate new ideas, and express the ideas creatively.
- J. Use logic to draw well supported conclusions from information given.
- K. Write clearly and accurately in a variety of contexts and formats while checking, editing, and revising their written work for correct information, appropriate emphasis, form, style, and grammar.

IV. Course Content:

Topics to be covered include, but are not limited to:

- A. Religion as a human universal
 - 1. Anthropological approaches to recognizing religious phenomena
 - 2. Prehistory and archaeology of religion
 - 3. Evolutionary perspectives on religious belief
 - 4. Religion as a major type of belief system
 - 5. The general components of religion
 - 6. Major theoretical approaches (Freud, Durkheim, James, Jung)
- B. A brief cultural history of religion
 - 1. The animisms: an introduction
 - 2. The religions of civilizations (major religions): basic historical background
 - 3. Is witchcraft a human universal? Definitions of witchcraft
- C. Spirits and animisms
 - 1. Ancestor cults
 - 2. Ghost beliefs
 - 3. Complex animisms
 - 4. The relationship of animism to polytheisms
 - 5. Magic in the context of animism
- D. Gods and goddesses
 - 1. Deism, theism, polytheism, pantheism
 - 2. Greek polytheism
 - 3. Creation myths featuring gods and goddesses
 - 4. Archaeology of gods and goddesses
 - 5. The priestly religions vs. the magical religions
- E. Consciousness and paranormal claims
 - 1. Early human views on consciousness
 - 2. Shamanism
 - 3. Prophets, diviners, soothsayers and distance viewers
 - 4. Mages and sorcerers
 - 5. Theories of ordinary consciousness (Jaynes, Ornstein, others)
 - 6. Symbols, archetypes and the transpersonal
- F. Altered states of consciousness
 - 1. Joan Halifax, Michael Harner and the anthropology of altered states
 - 2. Proposed universals in ASC
 - 3. Meditation
 - 4. Problems in researching ASC
- G. Rituals, rites and ceremonies
 - 1. Joseph Campbell, the notion of mythos, myth as underpinning of religious ceremony
 - 2. Corporate, traditional rituals
 - 3. Magic and Magick
 - 4. Post-modern, non-traditional rituals
 - 5. Why anthropologists spend so much time studying rituals.
- H. The ethnography of religion
 - 1. Anthropological standards: Dogon, Hopi, Nuer, Azande, Lakota
 - 2. Post- modern religions
 - 3. Anthropological ethics in the study of religion
- I. Religion as a contemporary force in world cultures

1. Religion and current events
 2. Unusual religious trends noted by anthropologists
 3. Religion, globalization and homogeneity
 4. Rise of atheism and materialism as forces in modern world
- J. Religion as moral/ethical force.
1. How religious approaches to morality are distinct from political or philosophical ones
 2. Conflicting moral principles in the world's cultures
 3. Marvin Harris's views on how religions embody important moral principles
- K. Selected topics in specific religions/religious movements
1. The Western Magickal tradition
 2. Buddhism in the modern world.
 3. Shinto: The legacy of Confucius and Lao-Tze
 4. Revitalization movements (such as Huna or the Native American Sweat lodge)
 5. Millenarian movements
 6. The religious views of Plato and Pythagoras
 7. Bushido: notions of death among the Samurai
 8. Cults in America
- L. Conclusions
1. What have we learned about religion in the modern world?
 2. How has an anthropological perspective aided our understanding?
 3. What are some other disciplines that might aid in our understanding?
 4. How might a student organize future study of religion?
 5. Becoming a lifelong student of culture and religion.

V. Lab Content:

VI. Methods of Instruction:

Methods may include, but are not limited to:

- A. The instructor will utilize lectures, films, internet resources, anthropological theory and ethnographic material to explore how different cultures around the world understand the supernatural.
- B. Through discussion, ethnographic research, papers and presentations, we will critically examine our own religious practices and compare them with the practices of other cultures. Topics will include, but are not limited to; rituals, rites of passage, whether religion satisfies universal needs, totems, taboos, animism, fetishes, science and religion, magic and witchcraft, polytheism and monotheism, and pollution.
- C. In teaching, instructors will emphasize the importance of cultural relativism when looking at religious practice. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of belief rather than proving or disproving the legitimacy of any particular practice.

VII. Methods of Evaluation and Assignments:

Methods of Evaluation for Degree-Applicable Courses:

- A. Methods of evaluation for degree-applicable courses:
 Essays [X]
 Problem-solving assignments (Examples: Math-like problems, diagnosis & repair) []
 Physical skills demonstrations (Examples: Performing arts, equipment operation) []

For any course, if "Essays" above is not checked, explain why.

- B. Typical graded assignments (methods of evaluation):
1. Discussions
 - a. Students will be required to participate in classroom discussions and in online discussion forums through the course's D2L page. These discussions emphasize developing critical approaches to the study of the anthropology of religion. Students are evaluated in their ability to apply the course theories and perspectives and to think critically about how belief in the supernatural differs cross-culturally. Sample discussions include but are not limited to: The origin and development of religion- Where did religion come from and how did it develop in different cultures? The function of religion: Does religion serve a universal function across all societies? Myth- How does myth operate in different cultures and does myth address universal human concerns about existence? Ritual and rites of passage- what is the importance of ritual in cultural life and how are different rituals practiced around the world?
 2. Exams
 - a. Students will complete exams relevant to the course SLO's. The exams will test the students' comprehension of the course theories and knowledge of the readings.
 3. Ritual Analysis Paper
 - a. Students will select a specific ritual or rite of passage and discuss it from an anthropological perspective. Emphasis should be placed on applying the course theories. Is there a specific ritual process at play? What are the ritual's etic and emic functions? How is it understood by the culture that practices it? Is there a comparable ritual in our own culture?
 4. Research Paper
 - a. Each student will select a specific religious tradition and discuss it from an anthropological perspective. Students may select traditions from any of the cultures that we discuss in the class or they may select an alternative culture. Students should describe the belief system and how it operates within the culture. How does this religion work to fulfill universal needs and address the anxieties of human existence? What symbolism or fetishes does this religion utilize and why? Does this religion practice specific rituals or rites of passage? How has this religion changed as a result of cultural contact?
 5. Group Presentations
 - a. Students will be asked to complete group presentations on particular aspects of the anthropology of religion and how they operate within specific cultural contexts. Topics can include but are not limited to the religion and the body, pollution and love magic, kinship and ancestor worship, divination, witchcraft, the power of belief, and shamanism.
 6. Honors
 - a. Theoretical Paper: Students will select a specific theoretical position relevant to the anthropological study of religion (Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Malinowski, Geertz, etc.) and utilize this theory to analyze a specific religious belief or practice.
 - b. Myth Paper: Students will select a specific myth and analyze it utilizing an anthropological perspective. Emphasis should be placed on applying specific theoretical approaches to the analysis such as Freudian analysis, structural analysis, and symbolic analysis.
- C. Typical outside of classroom assignments:

1. Reading
 - a. One to two chapters from the course textbook per week.
 - b. (Honors): Full length ethnographic manuscripts and primary theoretical texts such as Emile Durkheim's "The Elementary Forms of Religious Life," and Bronislaw Malinowski's "The Role of Magic and Religion."
2. Writing
 - a. Essays and other forms of expressive writing as assigned by instructor, typically to include a visual and written description of a common ritual (such as a dinner party or Thanksgiving), in which direct observation by the student or the use of cultural imagination is required.
 - b. (Honors): Additional research papers examining specific religious practices or theoretical perspectives relevant to the study of the anthropology of religion.
3. Other
 - a. Interviews with friends and families about such topics as their knowledge of religion, fieldwork time in settings conducive to understanding animism, working with informants to build religious genealogies, possible visits to religious sites, rituals and ceremonies.
 - b. Building a portfolio of materials related to religious technologies.

VII. Textbooks and Instructional Materials:

A. Textbooks/Resources:

1. Stein, R and Stein, P (2016). The Anthropology of Religion, Magic and Witchcraft (4th Edition/e). New York 0133808017.
2. Moro, P. & Myers, J. (2009). Magic, Ritual and Religion: A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion (8th/e). New York McGraw Hill (Latest Edition- Classic Text).

B. Other Instructional Materials:

VIII. Minimum Qualifications and Additional Certifications:

A. Minimum Qualifications:

1. Anthropology (Masters Required)

B. Additional Certifications:

1. Description of Certification Requirement:
2. Name of statute, regulation, or licensing/certification organization requiring this certification:

X. Approval Dates

CC Approval Date: 11/25/15

Board Approval Date: 12/8/15

Course ID: 1829