#### **COURSE OUTLINE**

## Anthropology 104 Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion

#### I. <u>Catalog Statement</u>

Anthropology 104 is a cross-cultural survey of religion and the supernatural. The course includes an examination of magic, witchcraft, and forms of religious expression in a wide variety of cultures around the world. The course considers the forms and functions of supernatural beliefs and rituals in various societies to derive insight into the roles of religious beliefs and institutions in human life. The course covers ritual, witchcraft, magic, symbolism, altered states of consciousness, and religious change.

Total Lecture Units: 3.0 **Total Course Units: 3.0** 

Total Lecture Hours: 48.0

**Total Faculty Contact Hours: 48.0** 

Recommended preparation: Eligibility for English 120 or ESL 151.

## II. Course Entry Expectations

Skills Level Ranges: Reading 5, Writing 5, Listening/Speaking 5, Math 2

Prior to enrolling in the course, the student should be able to:

- 1. read and understand abstract and complex collegiate level textbooks;
- 2. communicate learning, conceptual understanding and critical analysis skills through writing research papers, essay exams, or other types of writing assignments;
- 3. learn material through class lecture, discussion, and reading;
- 4. add, subtract, multiply, and divide using whole numbers, fractions, and decimals;
- 5. convert fractions and decimals to percentages.

### III. Course Exit Standards

Upon successful completion of the required coursework, the student will be able to:

- 1. apply the different anthropological theories to understand religious experience and the role that religion plays for human societies;
- 2. compare and contrast religious practices, beliefs, and institutions from a variety of societies with different economic and technological foundations;
- 3. describe the different fundamental categories of religious tradition;

- 4. demonstrate a functional knowledge of components of religion including symbolism, myth, ritual, and ritual practitioners;
- 5. apply anthropological methods to the study of Western, African, Oceanic, Native American and Eastern religions;
- 6. demonstrate an understanding of syncretism in religious traditions such as Voodoo and Santeria in the United States and abroad;
- 7. demonstrate a familiarity with contemporary American religious practices from a broad array of communities, ethnic groups and immigrant groups including modern Wicca, Pentecostalism, cults, and New Age religious practices.

### **IV.** Course Content

### **Total Faculty Contact Hours = 48 hours**

#### A. Functions of Religion and the Supernatural

6 hours

- 1. Psychological, sociological, and anthropological approaches
- 2. Scientific and comparative methods
- 3. Definitions of religion
- 4. Animism, animatism, totemism, polytheism, and monotheism

#### B. Symbolism and Myth

6 hours

- 1. Nature of symbols
- 2. Taboo
- 3. Sacred and profane
- 4. Totems
- 5. Symbols in a variety of religions and myths
- 6. Functions of myths
- 7. Psychological, structural, sociological understandings of myth
- 8. Examples from the United States and abroad

C. Rituals 4 hours

- 1. Rites of passage
- 2. Rites of intensification
- 3. Social functions of rituals
- 4. Liminality
- 5. Contemporary rituals in America and other cultures

### D. Religious Specialists

3 hours

- 1. Shaman
- 2. Priests
- 3. Prophets

## E. Religious Use of Drugs

3 hours

- 1. Altered states of Consciousness
- 2. Religious verses medicinal verses recreational usage
- 3. Range of cultural attitudes toward drugs
- 4. Hallucinogens and other means of inducing altered states
- 5. Different attitudes toward altered states in America with specific case studies

# F. Ethnomedicine: Religion and Healing 3 hours 1. Cultural theories of etiology, diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes 2. The role of cultural belief in outcomes. 3. The integration or exclusion of family and local group in curing processes 4. Examples of ethnomedicine from African and Native American traditions G. Religious explanations of Misfortune 4 hours 1. Witchcraft and sorcery 2. European witch hunts 3. Malicious supernatural figures including ghosts and spirits 4. Spirit possession H. Magical Practices 3 hours 1. Imitative 2. Sympathetic 3. Contagious 4. Magical belief verses science I. Knowing the sacred and the unknown 3 hours 1. Attribution of supernatural cause for natural and social events 2. Divination a. Dreams b. Tarot and horoscopes c. Ordeals d. Necromancy e. Role for social group in conflict resolution J. Syncretic Traditions 3 hours 1. Voodoo and blended religions in Haiti, Cuba, Brazil, and New Orleans 2. Possession, trance and possession trance 3. Polytheism and Catholicism K. Attitudes Toward the Dead 3 hours 1. Ancestor Cults 2. Taboos around the dead 3. Mortuary rites in the United States and abroad 4. Relationships between the dead and the living L. Old and New Religions 4 hours 1. Cargo Cults, Cults, and sects 2. Culture change 3. New Religious movements in United States and abroad M. Religion in the Modern World; Focus on America 3 hours 1. The changing face of religion in modern United States and abroad

- 2. The effect of globalization on religions forms
- 3. Religious and political conflicts
- 4. Skepticism

#### V. **Methods of Instruction**

The following methods of instruction may be used in the course:

- 1. lectures;
- 2. class discussions;
- 3. small group activities including exercises;
- 4. video and other multi-media presentations;
- 5. optional on-line presentation of course material.

#### VI. **Out of Class Assignments**

The following out of class assignments may be used in the course:

- 1. weekly exercises (e.g. collect a myth from a Native American group);
- 2. term paper or other shorter written assignments (e.g. analyze the symbolism in Genesis);
- 3. assignment involving field work (e.g. do fieldwork on an ethnomedical practice considering etiology, diagnosis, treatment and outcomes).

#### VII. **Methods of Evaluation**

The following methods of evaluation may be used in the course:

- 1. grade outside written assignments and/or oral projects;
- 2. occasional or weekly quizzes;
- 3. two or more mid-term examinations;
- 4. final examination.

#### VIII. <u>Textbook(s)</u>

Moro, Pamela and James Myers. Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion: The Anthropological Study of the Supernatural 8<sup>h</sup> Edition. Mountain View, CA.: Mc-Graw Hill, 2009. Print.

14th Grade Reading Level. ISBN: 0-78140013.

Stein Rebecca and Phillip Stein. Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York: Allyn & Bacon, 2011. Print.

14<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Level. ISBN: 0-205-71811-6

Scupin, Raymond. Religion and Culture: An Anthropological Focus 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. 2007. Print.

19th Grade Reading Level. ISBN: 0-13-1850504

Bowen, John Richard. *Religion in Culture and Society 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. 1998. Print.

14th Grade Reading Level. ISBN 0-205-20010-9

Hicks, David. *Ritual and Belief: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Boston: McGraw Hill. 2001. Print.

12<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Level. ISBN 0-07-2414898

## IX. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the required coursework in Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion, the student will be able to:

- 1. apply the different anthropological theories to understand religious experience and the role that religion plays for human societies;
- 2. compare and contrast religious practices, beliefs, and institutions from a variety of societies with different economic and technological foundations;
- 3. describe the different fundamental categories of religious tradition;
- 4. demonstrate a functional knowledge of the religious fixtures including symbolism, myth, ritual, and ritual practitioners;
- 5. analyze the intersection between religion, healing, and other cultural institutions;
- 6. apply anthropological methods to the study of Western, African, Oceanic, Native American and Eastern religions;
- 7. demonstrate an understanding of syncretic religious traditions such as Voodoo in the United States and abroad;
- 8. demonstrate a familiarity with contemporary American religious practices from a broad array of communities, ethnic groups and immigrant groups including modern Wicca, Pentecostalism, cults, and New Age religious practices.