Syllabus
Magic and Religions
REL3075

Instructor: Erin Weston
Phone: 305-348-1329
Office: DM 322B
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 2-3 pm & by appointment
E-mail: Please use Blackboard Messages

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE
This course will examine the role of magic, witchcraft, and the supernatural in various religious and cultural contexts from around the world. Students will analyze magical beliefs, practices, and symbols and the role they play in various global religious traditions. This course will employ interdisciplinary methods with an emphasis on anthropology, and various religious/magical practices and beliefs will be viewed from both etic and emic perspectives. While this course will look at a variety of source cultures, it will also emphasize the interaction of religious beliefs and practices with global concerns in the world today.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students will be able to:

- Outline and describe your understanding of the role of magic, witchcraft, and the supernatural in various religions and cultural contexts.
- Identify and summarize key theories on why magic has sustained itself despite shifts in science and technology.
- Distinguish between various magical practices, techniques, and symbols in a variety of cultural contexts.
- Compare and contrast magical practices from both etic and emic perspectives.
- Articulate one’s own beliefs about the existence of magic and the supernatural in the contemporary world.

GLOBAL LEARNING COURSE OUTCOMES
Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelatedness of beliefs and practices regarding magic, witchcraft and the supernatural in a variety of cultural contexts.
- Construct a multi-perspective analysis of a topic related to magic and religion.
- Demonstrate a willingness to engage in an ongoing dialogue about current global concerns in order to address problems arising from the interaction between global concerns and local religious beliefs and practices.
IMPORTANT INFORMATION

POLICIES
Please review the FIU's Policies webpage. The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS & SKILLS
One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course is a lack of basic computer literacy. By computer literacy we mean being able to manage and organize computer files efficiently, and learning to use your computer's operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course; but students enrolled in online courses are expected to have moderate proficiency using a computer. Please go to the "What's Required" webpage to find out more information on this subject.

Please visit our Technical Requirements webpage for additional information.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION
Please visit our ADA Compliance webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

Please visit Blackboard's Commitment Accessibility webpage for more information.

For additional assistance please contact FIU's Disability Resource Center.

COURSE PREREQUISITES
There are no prerequisites for this course.

TEXTBOOKS

*Magic Witchcraft and Religion: A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*
Pamela Moro, James Myers
McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages, 09/27/2012
ISBN-10: 0078034949
Book Info. You may purchase your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.

*The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*
Rebecca L. Stein, Philip L. Stein
Allyn & Bacon, 05/25/2007
ISBN-10: 0205516238
Book Info. You may purchase your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.
EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE
This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- Review the how to get started information located in the course content
- Introduce yourself to the class during the first week by posting a self introduction in the appropriate discussion forum
- Take the practice quiz to ensure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard
- Interact online with instructor/s and peers
- Review and follow the course calendar
- Log in to the course at least 3 times per week.

The instructor will:

- Log in to the course at least 5 times per week
- Respond to discussion boards, blogs and journal postings within 3 days or sooner
- Respond to [emails/messages] within 3 days or sooner
- Grade assignments within 2 weeks or sooner of the assignment deadline

COURSE DETAIL
STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE
This course is divided into an introduction section and ten lessons. Each of the ten lessons consists of a PowerPoint Lecture, Readings, Videos, and a Quiz. There will also be online discussions, either live or in writing, as well as private journaling. After Lessons 5 and 10, there will be two non-cumulative exams based on the questions covered in the quizzes. Finally, there is a capstone paper, where you will have the opportunity to showcase your favorite theories that you learned over the course of the semester.

You should set aside approximately 6-8 hours per week to study materials, view lectures, finish readings, participate in discussions and prepare for quizzes/exams.

By having many small assignments, you are able to interact with the ideas presented throughout the semester in multiple ways. This course utilizes multiple mediums to present the material, with the understanding that all students learn in slightly different ways. The goal is that by using multiple methodologies ALL students will have enhanced learning.
All assessments and assignments in this course are conducted fully online and, unless otherwise noted in your syllabus, are due on the Monday of a given week at noon.

**COURSE COMMUNICATION**
Communication in this course will take place via Messages

Messages is a private and secure text-based communication system which occurs within a course among its Course members. Users must log on to Blackboard to send, receive, or read messages. The Messages tool is located on the Course Menu, on the left side of the course webpage. It is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

Visit our Writing Resources webpage for more information on professional writing and technical communication skills.

**DISCUSSION FORUMS**
There will be five discussion topics. The topics will be posted on "Discussion Topics" folder in the Course Content. Students must post well thought-out comments based on the required work throughout the semester. Participation is required and represents 15% of your final grade. Both the quantity and the quality of your posts will contribute to your grade. All students are required to participate in all the three topics (at least 200 words). Discussions must be posted during the period they are assigned and are due by 11:59 pm on the Sunday which ends that particular lesson.

Once you have composed your original posting, take some time to carefully review other postings within your discussion group. Pick two that are most interesting to you and provide meaningful, detailed, and constructive feedback.

Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

**ADOBE CONNECT PRO MEETING**
Adobe Connect is an online meeting room where you can interact with your professor and fellow students by sharing screens, sharing files, chatting, broadcasting live audio, and taking part in other interactive online activities.

Meetings will be available on the following dates:
Live Discussion 1 - TBA from 7:30pm - 8:30pm
Live Discussion 2 - TBA from 7:30pm - 8:30pm

Note: These meetings are optional but are a good opportunity to connect with your classmates and exchange ideas.

Requirements for using Adobe Connect:
Disable any window pop-up blocker. Adobe Flash Player is required to successfully run your Adobe Connect meeting. You can test your computer to make sure your computer and network connections are properly configured to provide you with the best possible Adobe Connect meeting experience. Use of a combination headset and microphone with USB connection is recommended to ensure quality sound and reduce technical difficulties.

Reference Adobe Connect (Tutorials & Help) to learn about the tool, how to access your meeting rooms and recordings.

**JOURNALING**
There will be bi-weekly journal reflections, which will only be seen by the student and the professor. These reflections will only be graded that they were completed, but not for content. This will provide an opportunity for students to interact privately with the professor in regards to the course content. Journals may be a short paragraph, but must be turned in on time to receive credit. Altogether, the journal entries will be worth 5% of your overall grade.

**QUIZZES**
There will be fully online quizzes covering each section. Your quiz scores will be averaged together for a final quiz score worth 20% of your final grade. All quizzes consist of 20 multiple-choice questions, and each question will be worth 5 points. A quiz will be available from Thursday 12:00 am till Monday 12:00 noon of the given week. Once you open a quiz, you will have 30 minutes to complete and submit it. You will have two attempts to take a quiz. The highest score will be counted.

Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance please contact FIU Online Support Services.

**EXAMS**
There will be two non-cumulative exams based on the readings and materials covered throughout the course. Each exam will be worth 20% of your final grade. All exams consist of multiple choice, fill in the blanks and true/false questions, and each question will be worth 2 points. Exams will be available for three days from 12:00am to 11:59pm. Once you open an exam, you will have 60 minutes to complete and submit it.

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the "Practice Quiz" from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum hardware requirements.
Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance please contact FIU Online Support Services.

CAPSTONE ESSAY
There will be one essay assigned throughout the semester, which is aimed at assisting in comprehension, synthesis, and retention of the ideas. This essay will be between 1000 to 2000 words long and will be worth 20% of your grade. This is a formal academic essay and students must cite their sources. MLA is the preferred citation style in Religious Studies.

Submission: Students must submit their essays to Turnitin.com via Blackboard's Assignment Dropbox.

Review the detailed Turnitin Instructions on how to submit your assignments and how to review the Grademark comments (feedback) from your professor.

Peermark Assignment:

In addition to writing your own essay, you will read three of your classmates' essays and provide commentary. This peer review process will help improve your writing and editing skills, as well as deepening your understanding of the subject matter. Turnitin.com will assign two of the three papers randomly and the third paper will be your choice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
In addition to the completion of writing assignments, discussions, quizzes, and exams, a key requirement for successful completion of this course will be an open mind. Students are expected to exhibit respect to all religious traditions and peoples at all times. Thus, disrespectful or derisive commentary will not be tolerated in this course. Religion is, after all, a very personal and sensitive subject for many.

On the other hand, class participants can expect academic freedom to express their views. Although religion can be personal, this is an academic course taken for college credit and thus students are expected to examine the topics rigorously. Religion shall not be exempt from the scrutiny placed on any and all academic subjects.

PROTOCOL FOR TECHNICAL ISSUES
If you have any technical problems,

1) Contact tech support to file a report, and
2) Contact me by email to let me know what is going on.

If you are having technical problems and an assignment is due,

1) E-mail me a copy of the assignment, so it is on time, and
2) Contact tech support.

## GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion (including Student Biography Participation)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal Entries</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Above 93</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - 82</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 - 69</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 92</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - 89</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 - 76</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 - 86</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 - 72</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 59</td>
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## COURSE CALENDAR

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

All assessments and assignments in this course are conducted fully online and, unless otherwise noted in your syllabus, are due on the Monday of a given week at noon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
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| **Introduction** Aug. 25, 2014 - Sept. 1, 2014 | **Course Introduction** Review and fully familiarize yourself with the course and site. Print and read the course syllabus and course calendar.  
**Obtain texts and read ahead for Lesson 1**  
**Student Introduction due Monday, September 8, 2014 by 12:00 Noon** |
| **Lesson 1** Sept. 1, 2014 -                      | **The Anthropological Study of Religion**  
2. Read Chapter 1 - Stein & Stein  
3. Read Chapter 1 - Moro |
### Sept. 8, 2014

- Live Discussion 1 through Adobe Connect - TBA from 7:30pm - 8:30pm
- Journal Due: Monday, September 8, 2014 by 12:00 Noon
- Lesson 1 Quiz - Thursday, September 4 - Monday, September 8, 2014 by 12:00 Noon
- Discussion # 1 Due: Monday, September 8, 2014 by 12:00 Noon

### Lesson 2

Sept. 8, 2014 - Sept. 22, 2014

- Mythology, Symbolism and Worldview
  - 1. PowerPoints: Mythology & Religious Symbols
  - 2. Read Chapters 2 & 3 - Stein & Stein
  - 3. Read Chapter 2 - Moro
  - 4. Read Deming Religious Symbolism PDF

- Lesson 2 Quiz - Thursday, September 18 - Monday, September 22, 2014 by 12:00 Noon
- Journal Due: Monday, September 22, 2014 by 12:00 Noon

### Lesson 3

Sept. 22, 2014 - Sept. 29, 2014

- Ritual
  - 1. PowerPoint: Rituals
  - 2. Read Chapter 4 - Stein & Stein
  - 3. Read Chapter 3 - Moro

- Lesson 3 Quiz - Thursday, September 25 - Monday, September 29, 2014 by 12:00 Noon
- Discussion #2 Due: Monday, September 29, 2014 by 12:00 Noon
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<th>Noon</th>
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| **Lesson 4**<br>Sept. 29, 2014 - Oct. 6, 2014 | • Religious Specialists<br>• 1. PowerPoint: Religious Specialists<br>• 2. Read Chapter 6 - Stein & Stein<br>• 3. Read Chapter 4 - Moro<br>• 4. Videos: “Korean Shaman Kut” (14:48), "Becky Fisher"
<p>|  | • Lesson 4 Quiz - Thursday, October 2 - Monday, October 6, 2014 by 12:00 Noon&lt;br&gt;• Journal Due: Monday, October 6, 2014 by 12:00 Noon |
|  | • Lesson 5 Quiz - Thursday, October 9 - Monday, October 13, 2014 by 12:00 Noon&lt;br&gt;• Discussion #3 Due: Monday, October 13, 2014 by 12:00 Noon |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 7</th>
<th>Witchcraft, Sorcery, Divination, and Magic</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Read Chapter 7 &amp; 10 - Stein &amp; Stein</td>
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<td>3. Read Chapter 7 - Moro</td>
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<td>Lesson 7 Quiz - Thursday, November 6 - Monday, November 10, 2014 by 12:00 Noon.</td>
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<td>Journal Due: Monday, November 10, 2014 by 12:00 Noon.</td>
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<td>Discussion #4 Due: Monday, November 10, 2014 by 12:00 Noon.</td>
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<td>Essay on Magic Due: Monday, November 10, 2014 by 12:00 Noon to Turnitin.com via Blackboard.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Lesson 8</th>
<th>Death, Ancestors, Ghosts, and Souls</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Read Chapter 8 - Stein &amp; Stein</td>
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<td>3. Read Chapter 8 - Moro</td>
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<td>4. Videos: “Mystic Lands Haiti: Dance of the Spirit” (25:00) &amp; “Aghoris” (3:13)</td>
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<td>Lesson 8 Quiz - Thursday, November 13 - Monday, November 17, 2014 by 12:00 Noon</td>
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<td>Discussion #5 Due: Monday, November 17, 2014 by 12:00 Noon</td>
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<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Lesson 9 Quiz - Thursday, November 20 - Monday, November 24, 2014 by 12:00 Noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 17, 2014 - Nov. 24, 2014</td>
<td>Gods and Spirits</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. PowerPoint: Gods &amp; Spirits</td>
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<td>2. Read Chapter 9 - Stein &amp; Stein</td>
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<td>3. Videos: “Ethiopian Healing” &amp; “Indian Exorcism” and “Venezuelan Umbanda”</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 10</th>
<th>Lesson 10 Quiz - Thursday, December 4 - Monday, December 8, 2014 by 12:00 Noon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. PowerPoint: The Search for New Meaning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Read Chapter 11 - Stein &amp; Stein</td>
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<td>3. Read Chapter 9 - Moro</td>
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<td>4. Videos: “Circumcision” (1:58) &amp; &quot;XTC - Rave Culture&quot; (14:47)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Final Exam</th>
<th>Final Exam: Wednesday, December 10, 2014 - Saturday, December 13, 2014 by 11:59 pm</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journal Due: Thursday, December 8, 2014 by Noon</td>
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<td>*** Extra time for Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
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