



REL 3075

Magic and Religions

Section: RVC

Internet/Fully Online

Fall Term 2026

Course Time Zone | Eastern Time (ET). Course due dates are according to this time zone.

Professor Information

Erin Weston

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: eweston@fiu.edu

Response Time: Within 24 - 48 hours unless noted

Phone: N/A

Office Hours: By Appointment

Office Location: Zoom

Website: <https://sipa.fiu.edu/people/faculty/religious-studies/weston.erin.html>

Department or Academic Unit: Religious Studies/SIPA

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

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.

Textbook and Course Materials

Magic Witchcraft and Religion: A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion (Required)

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: STEIN

Publisher: McGraw Hill

Publication Date: September 27, 2012

Copyright Date: September 27, 2012

ISBN 10: 0078034949

ISBN 13: 978-0078034947

Chapters/Pages: N/A

The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft -- Pearson eText, 3e (Required; on Perusal)

Required/Recommended: Required

Authors: Rebecca L. Stein, Philip L. Stein

Publisher: Pearson

Publication Date: December 9, 2010

Copyright Date: December 9, 2010

ISBN 10: 9780205718115

ISBN 13: 978-0205718115

Chapters/Pages: N/A

Panther Book Pack

Get all required course materials for \$22 per undergrad credit hour through Panther Book Pack. You'll be charged automatically unless you opt out within 3 days after the add/drop deadline.

For more details, to compare costs, and to learn how to access your course materials, visit the [Panther Book Pack information page on FIU OneStop](#).

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- CLO 1. Explain the interaction of religious beliefs and practices with cultural and global concerns.
- CLO 2. Define key terminology in the study of magic and religions.
- CLO 3. Identify the role of magic, witchcraft, and the supernatural in various religions and cultural contexts.
- CLO 4. Analyze key theories on why magic has sustained itself despite shifts in science and technology.
- CLO 5. Differentiate various magical practices, techniques, and symbols in a variety of cultural contexts.
- CLO 6. Compare and contrast magical practices from an emic (insider's) perspective.
- 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 (aligns with CLO 1, 3, 5). Construct a multi-perspective analysis of a topic related to magic and religion (aligns with CLO 4). 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 (aligns with CLO 1-6)

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 as 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 getting started** page located in the course modules;
- **introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- **take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- **interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **review** and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- **log in** to the course **X times** per week;
- **respond** to discussions by the due date specified. **No late work will be accepted;**
- **respond to emails** within **X days**;
- **submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

The instructor will:

- log in to the course;
- respond to **emails** within **24 hours**;
- grade assignments and/or provide feedback within **X days** of the assignment deadline.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the [Canvas Conversations Tutorial](#) or [Canvas Guide](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. I will respond to all correspondences within 24 hours.

Policies & Resources

Before starting this course, please review the Policies & Resources Page in Canvas which includes comprehensive information on various University and Course Level Policies such as:

- University Policies
- Accessibility and Accommodations
- Online Etiquette
- Technical Requirements and Skills
- Computer & Digital Literacy Skills
- Course Technology Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies
- Academic Integrity
- Copyright Statement
- Core Principles of This Course
- Nondiscrimination Statement
- Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Fair Use Policy

Assignments & Assessments

This course is divided into ten lessons. Each of the lessons consists of a lecture, readings, videos, and a quiz. There will also be online discussions in the form of blogs, as well as private reflection journals, in select lessons. After Lessons 5 and 10, there will be exams based on the questions covered in the quizzes. Finally, there is a capstone essay, 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.

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.

Perusall

Starting in Lesson 3, you will access the book chapters of *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft* through Perusall, a tool for collaborative annotations. You are required to contribute at least 4 high-quality annotations for every chapter and are encouraged to interact with your peers by commenting on their annotations. Perusall book chapter annotations are worth 20% of your grade.

Perusall is a self-grading platform. Information on the grading breakdown and how Perusall scoring works can be found in each Perusall assignment's instructions, available from the modules.

Blogs

Blogs are an open communication tool for students to share their thoughts. Here you can post text, images, links, and attachments. These will be completed as Discussions on Canvas and you will be required to leave comments on other students' posts.

Blogs are worth 15% of your final grade. Keep in mind that your blog postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

A rubric is available in each blog assignment, accessible from the modules.

Guide: [How to view the rubric for my graded discussion?](#)

Quizzes

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. Assessments in this course are

not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet.

Each lesson culminates in a quiz that assesses your understanding of the lesson's material. There are 10 quizzes, each with 10 questions worth 10 points each. Quizzes are worth 20% of your grade.

Each quiz is available from 12:00am until 11:59pm the Monday it is due. Once you open a quiz, you will have 20 minutes to complete and submit it. You will have two attempts to take a quiz. The highest score will be counted.

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. Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet.

For more information, please review the [important information about quizzes](#) page.

Reflection Journals

There will be 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 regard 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 10% of your overall grade.

Exams

There will be a midterm and a final exam. The midterm covers the content from lessons 1-5 and the final covers the content from lessons 6-10. You will have 75 minutes to complete each exam. The exams have 46 questions each. The first 45 questions come from a quiz bank that contains both multiple-choice and true-or-false questions. Each of these questions is worth 2 points. The last question is a

free-response and it is worth 10 points.

Each exam is worth 15% of your final grade. You will be able to see your scores for the multiple-choice and true/false questions immediately after submission. Scores for the free-response question will be available within 2 weeks.

This course uses Honorlock. Please see the [Honorlock FAQs](#) for more information.

Late Policy

Late work is generally **not** accepted. For late work to be accepted, you must provide evidence of extreme circumstances.

Proctored Exams

Please note that the information contained in this section applies only if your course requires a proctored exam.

Through a careful examination of this syllabus, it is the student's responsibility to determine whether this online course requires proctored exams. Please visit our [Student Proctored Exam Instructions](#) webpage for important information concerning proctored exams, proctoring centers, and important forms.

Zoom Video Conference

Zoom is a video conference tool that you can use to interact with your professor and fellow students by sharing screens, chatting, broadcasting live video/audio, and taking part in other interactive online activities.

Zoom meetings can be accessed via the Zoom link in the course navigation menu. Once you click on the Zoom link, it will route you to join the meeting for the respective class session. You will also be able to view upcoming

meetings, previous meetings that you have already joined, and meeting recordings. Before joining an actual class session:

Reference the [Zoom Student Tutorials](#) to learn about the tool, how to access your meeting room, and share your screen.

Access the [Zoom Test Meeting Room](#) to test out the software before joining an actual session.

If you encounter any technical difficulties, please contact the [FIU Canvas Help Team](#). Please ensure you contact support immediately upon the issue occurring.

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Perusall Annotations	21	10	210	20%
Quizzes	12	100	1200	20%
Reflection Journal	6	5	30	10%
Blogs	7	10	70	20%

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Midterm Exam	1	100	100	15%
Final Exam	1	100	100	15%
Total	48	N/A	1710	100%

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less

Students are responsible for reading their messages and all announcements posted by the instructor. The instructor also reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus by means of announcements or messages with ample time allowed for students to respond and adjust appropriately.

Schedule of Topics

This is a tentative schedule and subject to change.

Date	Topics & Assignments
Aug 24 - Aug 30	Course Introduction • Review and fully familiarize yourself with the course and site. • Print and read the course syllabus and course calendar Tasks Due: 1. Obtain texts and read ahead for Lesson 1 2. Student Introduction Video Blog
	Lesson 1: The Anthropological Study of Religion • PowerPoints: The Anthropological Study of Religion • Read Chapter 1 – Stein & Stein • Read Chapter 1 - Moro • Videos: "Culture Clash New World Meets Old: The Hunt for Society" (4:46) & "How to Study Cultures" (24:14) Tasks Due: 1. Introduction Biography Blog 2. Perusall Annotations Due 3. Journal 1 Due 4. Lesson 1 Quiz 5. Blog Lesson 1

	Lesson 2: Mythology, Symbolism and Worldview • PowerPoints: Mythology & Religious Symbols • Read Chapters 2 & 3 – Stein & Stein • Read Chapter 2 – Moro • Read Deming Religious Symbolism PDF • Videos: "Sketches of the World: In The Search of the Light"(26:12) &"Scrabble Creek" (5:39) & "Sketches of the World: The Winds of Mystery" (27:18) Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 2 Quiz 3. Journal 2
	Lesson 3: Ritual 1. PowerPoint: Rituals 2. Read Chapter 4 – Stein & Stein 3. Read Chapter 3 - Moro 4. Videos: "Peruvian Blood", "Santeria Ritual" Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 3 Quiz 3. Blog Lesson 3

	Lesson 4: Religious Specialists 1. PowerPoint: Religious Specialists 2. Read Chapter 6 - Stein & Stein 3. Read Chapter 4 - Moro 4. Videos: "Korean Shaman Kut" (14:48), "Becky Fisher" Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 4 Quiz 3. Journal 3
	Lesson 5: Altered States of Consciousness 1. PowerPoint: Altered States of Consciousness 2. Read Chapter 5 – Stein & Stein 3. Read Chapter 5 - Moro 4. Videos: "San Pedro Ceremony" (6:42) & "Possession" (1:55),"Phuket Pain Rituals" "Alex & Allyson Grey" (videos 1 & 2) Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 5 Quiz 3. Blog Lesson 5
	MIDTERM

	Lesson 6: Illness, Healing, and Religion 1. PowerPoint: Illness, Healing, and Religion 2. Read Chapter 6 – Moro Read Chapter 11 Stein 3. Read: “The Origins and Functions of Religious Healing,” “Magic in Everyday Life” Culture Specific Diseases 4. Videos: “Native American Healers,” & “Brazilian Healing” Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 6 Quiz
	Lesson 7: Witchcraft, Sorcery, Divination, and Magic 1. PowerPoints: Magic & Divination, Witchcraft 2. Read Chapter 7 & 10 – Stein & Stein 3. Read Chapter 7 - Moro 4. Videos: “Mexican Witchcraft,” “Divination,” “Wicca,” “Zimbabwean Magic.” Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 7 Quiz 3. Blog Lesson 7 4. Journal 4

	Lesson 8: Death, Ancestors, Ghosts, and Souls 1. PowerPoint: Death, Ancestors, Ghosts, & Souls 2. Read Chapter 8 – Stein & Stein 3. Read Chapter 8 - Moro 4. Videos: “Mystic Lands Haiti: Dance of the Spirit” (25:00) & “Aghoris” (3:13) Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 8 Quiz 3. Blog Lesson 8 4. Journal 5
	Lesson 9: Gods and Spirits 1. PowerPoint: Gods & Spirits 2. Read Chapter 9 – Stein & Stein 3. Videos: “Ethiopian Healing” & “Indian Exorcism” and “Venezuelan Umbanda” Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 9 Quiz

	Lesson 10: Religion in a Changing World 1. PowerPoint: The Search for New Meaning 2. Read Chapter 12 – Stein & Stein 3. Read Chapter 9 - Moro 4. Videos: "Circumcision" (1:58) & "XTC - Rave Culture" (14:47) Tasks Due: 1. Perusall Annotations Due 2. Lesson 10 Quiz 3. Journal 6 4. Blog Lesson 10
	FINAL EXAM

Nondiscrimination Statement

The **Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility** (CRCA) is responsible for ensuring that FIU maintains a workplace and learning environment free from discrimination, where current and prospective faculty, staff, and students are treated equitably. If any student, employee, or applicant has a sincere and reasonable belief that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on age, color, disability, marital status, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex, or any other protected category, they can report their concerns to the CRCA team through report.fiu.edu.