

COURSE SYLLABUS

HEALERS AND MEDIUMS: REL 3185 #82315 FALL 2014

GENERAL INFORMATION • IMPORTANT INFORMATION • COURSE DETAIL • COURSE CALENDAR

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROFESSOR INFORMATION-INSERT RECENT PHOTOGRAPH BELOW

Instructor:	Prof. Mary Lou Pfeiffer, LL.M., MA,	Phone:	305-348-4100
Office:	DM 239A, Honors College (MAMC) and AC I 214, Honors College (BBC)	Fax:	305-348-2118
Office Hours:	By appointment at BBC or MAMC	E-mail:	Please use Blackboard course messages or if necessary pfeiffer@fiu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This online course investigates healing through mediumship, channeling, PSI (paranormal psychological phenomena), shamans, animals and plants and offers a unique experience through alternative global practices that are studied through the use of texts, electronic readings, video streaming, art and resources information. In addition, the skeptic viewpoint that questions the validity of such healing and PSI experiences is included. An overview of accepted global alternatives in health and religious practices of categories that were considered taboo in Western medicine for many years, are currently being investigated and implemented by institutions of higher learning, universities and research laboratories in the US and world-wide. "Healers and Mediums" (through religious and cultural practices) treat diseases, maladies, and physical-emotional-spiritual problems encountered by human beings, many practices have been used for hundreds or thousands of years, and lie outside the normative acceptance of Western science, technology and medical practices.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The texts include a first-hand account of healing and paranormal phenomena written by Miamian Philip Smith, *Walking Through Walls, A Memoir*. Shamans, possibly the oldest of known healers on Earth in religious and cultural communities, and many of their practices are presented in Piers Vitebsky's *Shamanism* and another memoir, *Of Water and the Spirit: Ritual, Magic, and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman* by Malidoma Patrice Somé. *The Believing Brain* by Michael Shermer presents the skeptic viewpoint regarding many of the healing methods and PSI material for the course. DVD's/videos and electronic readings enhance the texts. PPT's are presented in each module.

Electronic readings include excerpts about animals as healers (from Susan McElroy and Jeffrey Masson), nature and Earth-based religions that use alternative healing methodologies, ethnobotany, American tribal peoples use of plants, various methods like vision quest or the ancient Chinese practice of acupuncture and acupressure,

herbal remedies, and Spiritualism in the US.

Students use texts, electronically posted (online) readings, videos, art, music, resources and web links to pertinent sites that enhance the course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

ALL OBJECTIVES FULFILL THE GLOBAL LEARNING INITIATIVES

GLOBAL LEARNING COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course complies with the global learning initiatives at FIU: **Global Learning Outcomes: Global Awareness-** Students will demonstrate knowledge of the interrelated global dynamics (social-cultural, political, economic and other values) in diverse cultural contexts, presented through the use of texts and global cultural systems (historically) that exist to healing humanity. **Global Perspective-** Students will be able to analyze the multiple global forces that shape their understanding of a deeper and broader sense of healing on Earth- economically, politically, sociologically, technologically and/or, and inter-culturally. **Global Engagement-** Students will be able to develop solutions to local, global, international, and/or intercultural problems and be able to articulate the causes and contributions to these problems through the paradigm of aesthetics, values and authority. Appropriate assignments are designated A (Global Awareness), B (Global Perspective), and C (Global Engagement), respectively on the schedule. The global learning objectives are incorporated into the weekly course schedule and are listed as A, B, and/or C in the assignments of the course schedule. The diversity (locale of students' origins if known and with permission from the students)) within the course will be anonymously used in the Global Initiatives. For example, to demonstrate the diversity of 30 students: 10- North America, 8- Latin/South America including the Caribbean, 3- Africa, 5 European, 4- Asia. Students will participate in a pre-course survey at the onset of the class followed by a post-course solution survey.

Upon successful completion of this course for the Global Learning Initiatives through readings, media presentations, active learning and exam exercises, the student should:

1. Define the terms "healers" and "mediums," and describe alternative methods used by healers, mediums and shamans globally, using the glossary provided for this course that includes ethnobotany, animals as healers. (A, B, C)
2. Distinguish the global perspectives that have shaped the trends and systems of diverse cultures in healing methods (like shamanism and reincarnation or past-life regression) from the past and through current concepts (A, B, C)
3. Recognize patterns of evolutionary change from rituals and practices that may reshape the future while preserving the traditions of aesthetics and cultural values of the past that include animals in hunting societies and for healing purposes (A, B, C)
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the cultural and cross-cultural dynamics involved in these alternative methods of healing (A, B, C)
5. Define skepticism and the terminology or glossary terms that accompany the skeptic viewpoints in terms

- of PSI. (A, B)
6. Gain an appreciation and explain in definitive terms the diversity of life on Earth as well as an acceptance of various ways used to heal the maladies of the body from a global viewpoint using plants (ethnobotany) and animals in healing; some of these methods lay outside the current medical practices in the USA and Europe where pharmacology is developed. (A, B, C)
 7. Fulfill research requirements (PPT, media or paper presentation) that involve active contact with global forms of healing as methodologies (C).

Relate the above objectives in problem solving for healing methodologies from the “pre-course survey” continuing with the “post- solution” survey after the course is completed.

PROFESSOR BIOGRAPHY

Prof. Mary Lou Pfeiffer:

- Holds advanced degrees: LL.M in Intercultural Human Rights from St. Thomas University School of Law and MA in Religion from Florida International University;
- Fellow, Full-time Senior Instructor in The Honors College at FIU;
- Her undergraduate degrees include religious studies, biology (minor-geology) and allied health breast care;
- Owns and operates an art glass studio specializing in stained/etched glass, stone and wood sculpting;
- Studied architectural glass in Germany with renowned glass artists and sculpting with Elliot Miller;
- Her specialty areas include human rights law (rights of women, the child, internally displaced persons/refugees, and global indigenous peoples) and North American Indian cultures;
- Attended the UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights for Indigenous Working Peoples in Geneva, Switzerland for several years;
- Her research areas encompass human rights, indigenous sacred sites, the Miami Circle and the Tequesta village in Miami, earth ethics, and studies involving breast cancer and asbestosis;
- Completing a project of her uncle's original "V" mail letters from WWII, and two current manuscripts - the Miami Circle, and a work from her life as the wife of a Naval fighter pilot who participated in a "seagull society" during the Vietnam years;
- Served as Past President of the Women's Studies Board, participates in the Pre-Professional Advisement and Evaluation Committee (PPAEC) and is a member of the Overtown Youth Center Board of Advisors;
- Is a recipient of the Alumni Torch Award at FIU, the Bronze Torch Society and has received two Outstanding Service Awards from Religious Studies;
- Has two sons- avid surfers, one is a Miami-Dade Country paramedic firefighter and the other a chef and café owner on Oahu; and 5 grandchildren;
- Her “other” family includes 2 dogs, 2 cats, an Umbrella cockatoo and an aviary of finches

Religious Observances Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose

religious practices coincide with class requirements or scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work. **Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges** Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center, if you have not done so.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

POLICIES

Please review the [policies page](#) as it contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU and additional information on the standards for acceptable netiquette important for online courses.

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PROFESSOR AND STUDENT

Every student must respect the right of all to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students must adhere to a standard of academic conduct, demonstrating respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. As a student in the College of Business taking this class:

I will not represent someone else's work as my own.

I will not cheat, nor will I aid in another's cheating.

I will be honest in my academic endeavors.

I understand that if I am found responsible for academic misconduct, I will be subject to the academic misconduct procedures and sanctions as outlined in the Student Handbook.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM FIU ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT STATEMENT

Registration in this course implies an acceptance of and compliance with the Honors College policies for students and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity. Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Code of Academic Integrity – <http://www.fiu.edu/~dwyere/academicintegrity.ht>

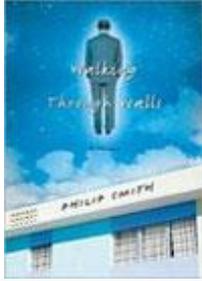
FIU Honors College Student Handbook – <http://honors.fiu.edu/handbook0910.ht>

FIU Honors College Plagiarism Policy – http://honors.fiu.edu/current_policy_plagiarism.html

COURSE PREREQUISITES

The only prerequisite or requirement is the student must be Honors upper division 3rd or 4th year.

TEXTBOOK



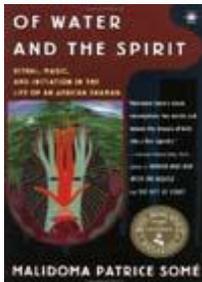
Walking Through Walls: A Memoir (Hardcover) (Required)

Philip Smith

Atria; First Edition edition (2008)

ISBN 10: 1416542949

ISBN 13: 9781416542940



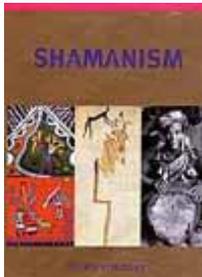
Of Water and the Spirit: Ritual, Magic and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman(Required)

Malidoma Patrice Some

Penguin Books, 1994

ISBN 10: 0140194967

ISBN 13: 978-0140194968



Shamanism (Required)

Piers Vitebsky

University of Oklahoma Press, 2001

ISBN 10: 0806133287

ISBN 13: 9780806133287

Insert *Life Before Life*

, Jim B. Tucker,

St. Martin's Griffin, 9780312376741

Click here to buy your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore.

POLICIES

Please review the **policies page** as it contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU and additional information on the standards for acceptable netiquette important 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" page for more information. (List the accessibility information)

COURSE PREREQUISITES

THERE ARE NO PREREQUISITES FOR THIS COURSE

EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE

This is an online course, meaning that the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

Electronic information: DVD's. PDF's. PPT's and glossaries are listed on the weekly syllabus below and in folders on the homepage. These complement the required readings and topics for each section: 1) Introduction, 2) PSI and Healing Through Mediums, 3) Shamans, 4) Skeptics

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
- **Return an electronically signed form in Week 1 that you have reviewed the folders in the course content, syllabus, and course schedule and your computer is compatibility for submitting material online. All course assignments and assessments must be submitted through the course itself to receive credit for completion.**
- **Participate in the pre-course survey and the post solutions at the close of the course for those who wish to use the course as part of their global learning initiative.**
- **Review the 24-hour clock that is used in this course, rather than the AM/PM, 12-hour time listing. Required work: discussions-quizzes-exams-assignments are due at 12:00, that is 12 PM noon, not midnight.**

COURSE DETAIL

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Communication in this course will take place via **messages**. **An early warning system exists that will send a message directly to you if you miss an assignment, assessment or discussion; a zero is assigned for the missed work. No make-ups will be accepted unless discussed in advance of the due date and verified by the professor.**

The message feature is a private, **internal** Blackboard only communication system. Users must log on to the blackboard system to send/receive/read messages. There are no notifications in Blackboard to inform users when a new message has been received; therefore, it is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

This is the best method to communicate with your instructor privately.

DISCUSSION FORUMS

There are 8 discussions posted for grading and two live chats. Each student will post her/his comments for the topic listed and then respond to at least four other students' postings. Discussions and chats are graded according to content of the original post and responses on a 10-point scale; 10 points are awarded for the discussion and responses; deductions are awarded according to the quality of the posted information responses. [Review the Discussion Rubric below]

Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.

Students are also required to know the expectations or "netiquette" that pertains to the discussion board. Students who abuse this forum by making harassing, inappropriate or abusive statements will be removed and receive a zero (0). Remember, your participation is key to connecting with other students. Further,

often it is the deciding factor between receiving a higher or lower grade at the end of the term.

Discussion Rubric:

CATEGORY	1	5	8	10
Promptness and Initiative	Does not respond to most postings; rarely participates	Responds to most postings several days after initial discussion with limited initiative	Responds to most postings within a 24 hour period	Consistently responds to postings in less than 24 hours; demonstrates good self-initiative
Delivery of Post	Utilizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear "hasty"	Errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts	Few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts	Consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings
Relevance of Post	Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short remarks	Occasionally posts off topic; most posts are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic	Frequently posts topics that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic	Consistently posts topics related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic
Expression within the post	Does not express opinions or ideas about the topic	Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal expression of opinions or ideas	Opinions and ideas are stated with occasional lack of connection to topic	Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic
Contribution to the Learning Community	Does not make effort to participate in learning community; appears indifferent	Occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with the discussion	Frequently attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration; interacts freely	Aware of needs of community; frequently attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic

Discussion Rubric is based on the California State University at Hayward: Assessing Effectiveness of Student Participation in Online Discussions and altered accordingly to fit this course.

QUIZZES

Each quiz is open for a 4-day period, (one attempt) from 08:00 of the first day until 12:00 on the 4th day. (US Eastern Standard Time or Daylight Savings Time). Each student has one attempt at each quiz. Once you open the quiz, you will have the allotted time to save each response and submit all your answers. (Remember not to touch the computer Back button within Blackboard - use arrows to scroll backward.) Please study all the relevant course material for each week. You will need to complete the quizzes and exams by yourself. Any interaction of any form with others will constitute cheating, and may

have serious repercussions.

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**.

EXAMS

Exams are intended to assess your comprehension, retention, and knowledge of the materials covered in electronic postings, videos and required texts. **The midterm exam is open for a 5-day period, (one attempt) from 08:00 of the first day until 12:00 on the 5th day.**

MAKE UP POLICY

No make-up assignments, quizzes or exams are accepted. All assigned material and due dates are indicated in the syllabus and a zero (0) grade will be assessed for any late or missed coursework. If some unforeseen emergency arises that prevents you from taking an exam or handing in an assignment, documentation must be provided (i.e., a summons for jury duty, letter on Physicians letterhead stating explicitly why student could not hand in assignment/take exam, etc). This documentation will be verified by contacting the appropriate individuals. Once verified a decision to proceed will be made by the Professor.

ADOBE CONNECT PRO MEETING

The Adobe Connect Pro Meeting is an online meeting room in which you can interact with your Professor and fellow students by sharing your computer, screens or files, chat, broadcast live audio and take part in other interactive online activities.

Requirements for using Adobe Connect Pro Meeting:

- Disable any window pop-up blocker.
- **Adobe Flash Player** is required to successfully run your Connect Pro meeting. You can **test your computer** to make sure that you are set up with all of the tools you will need to participate in the meeting.
- Use of a combination **headset and microphone** with USB connection is recommended to ensure quality sound and reduce technical difficulties.

Please **click here** for additional information on Adobe Connect (Tutorials & Help).

GRADING

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	WEIGHT
1 Written Essay assignment- #1 (Critical review of PSI website, 250-word minimum, A & B)	10%

4 Written Essay Assignments #2, #3, #4, #5 (300 word minimum, A, B & C)	15%
7 Graded Discussions, 2 live chats (A, B, C)	10%
5 Quizzes (A, B, C)	10%
1 Timed Midterm Exam (A, B, C)	25%
Final Essay Critical Book Review Part A- abstract- 200 words, essay outline, bibliography 5%; Part B- Review, 1,250 words 25%, (A, B, C)	30%
Total	100%

LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE
A	Above 93	B-	80 - 83	D+	67 - 69
A-	90 - 92	C+	77 - 79	D	64 - 66
B+	87 - 89	C	74 - 76	D-	61 - 63
B	84 - 86	C-	70 - 73	F	< 60

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE DISCUSSIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS DUE DURING THE SAME WEEK, SAME DATE AND TIME. A LISTING OF ASSIGNED WORK IS ATTACHED AT THE END OF THE COURSE CALENDAR. ALL ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS ARE DUE AT 12:00 (THAT'S NOON ON A 24-HOUR CLOCK, NOT IN THE EVENING JUST BEFORE MIDNIGHT) ON THE APPOINTED DAY, USUALLY SUNDAY UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

Time for this course is listed in the 24-hour clock to avoid confusion regarding submissions, due dates and times, ie 8 AM, 08:00, 12:00 (noon) or 20:00 is 8 PM. All assignments and assessments are due at NOON, 12:00, usually on Sunday unless otherwise stated (See the 24-hr clock posted in the Information folder).

STUDENT BIO ACTIVITY

Please provide a brief biographical overview with a photograph of yourself on the Student Bio Forum under Discussions. You are encouraged to include following in your bio: Name, status in your current program, educational background to date, the reason you take this course, your expectation of this course, your experience with any aspect of online learning, work experience, career plans, and personal plans. (No longer than 200 words). This is required in the fall prior to any grade postings.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS / INFORMATION

Podcasts of appropriately selected music and other items for each topic in the 7 Deadly Sins are available to

download; PPT's are available throughout the course; some lyrics are provided to accompany musical genres: classical (including operatic), rock and roll, punk, ska, rap.

Discussions [Required weekly/bi-weekly discussion "blogs" are found under the discussion tool [see above information on the left drop down menu]; A Discussion Rubric for grading discussions is posted in the Information folder under "Rubrics." Discussions are required responses regarding the topics and other points that are directly related to the course. Do not post private information. Discussions (protocol): Discussions are conducted through online posts and online "live" chats. An "initial" post (5 points) by each student for each topic is required; response to at least 4 others is required, 5 points. After the initial post is completed by the deadline, each student needs to read posts by others and respond to a MINIMUM of 4 classmates initial posts. This allows students to interact with each other's ideas. Grade range 10-0 points. Discussion grades consider the quality of your posts in addition to the quantity. Missing or minimal responses result in a deduction of points. All discussions are due by the date and time listed in the weekly summary. Please be courteous and respectful of others ideas. Negative aggressive comments will not be tolerated. Also please be concise.

The topics are selected from: A) Required readings, B) Video presentations, C) Music/lyrics, and D) Works of art [works are imaged online in each module], the texts and possible current events that may arise in the media.

Assignments (Essays and PPT's)- Essays or creative projects like PPT's are a major part of the online course used to access your abilities in the class. A zero "0", grade will be assigned for any late work or lack of work submitted.

All Bb Learn course material is listed in separate folders that are 'titled' according to "sinful" topics, as well as not so sinful ones.

NO MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS, QUIZZES OR EXAMS FOR THIS COURSE. PLEASE DO NOT REQUEST A CHANGE OR DELAY! THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. All assignments are due as indicated; a zero (0) grade will be awarded for anything turned in after the due date, with the following exceptions: If some unforeseen emergency arises that prevents you from taking an exam or handing in an assignment, documentation must be provided (i.e., a summons for jury duty, letter on Physicians letterhead stating explicitly why student could not hand in assignment/take exam, etc). This documentation will be verified by contacting the appropriate individuals. Once verified a decision as to how to proceed. This will be at the discretion of the Professor.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes or additions as deemed necessary. Information regarding updated postings is sent through the course announcements and via course email; thus, **it is important that you check your course email on a regular basis.**

LIBRARY

The FIU library provides a number of services to distance learning students. For example:

- Students can request a chat session in Learn 9 for an explanation on how to access library resources.
- Students can request detailed instructions on how to access library resources.
- One-on-One assistance from the Distance Learning Librarian.

Don't struggle through your library research alone! Help is available. For further information, contact Sarah Hammill, Distance Learning Librarian, via email at hammills@fiu.edu or call 305-919-5604.

You can visit the FIU Library at: <http://library.fiu.edu/>

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