

ANT 3241 (1289) – Anthropology of Religion

Summer A – 2012

Instructor:	Andrew Tarter
Contact Info:	andrew.tarter@ufl.edu
Office Location:	TBA
Office Hours:	Monday 9:30-10:30, Tuesday 1:30-2:30, Wednesday 1:30-2:30
Classroom Location:	TURLINGTON L005
Course Meeting Times:	M-F, Period 3 (11:00 am-12:15 pm)
Course web site:	https://lss.at.ufl.edu/

Equal rights statement: All activities in this class are open to all persons with non-discrimination with respect to perceived race, ethnicity, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. However, intentional hate speech of any sort will not be tolerated.

1. Course Description:

This introductory course provides an overview of religion, spirituality, and the supernatural, and how anthropologists approach the study of these belief systems and their associated practices. The course relies on comparative cross-cultural analysis of different and similar belief systems. The primary objectives of this course are:

- A. To understand anthropology and the anthropological perspective on religion;
- B. To acquire a basic understanding and appreciation of the diversity of religions and belief systems, and their practices throughout the world;
- C. To understand the interplay of religion, society, and politics, and the theories that describe these interplays;
- D. To understand the functional aspects of religions, myths and symbols;
- E. To develop critical thinking skills and improve critical reading and writing skills; and
- F. To have fun, gaining knowledge in a respectful and thought-provoking environment.

2. Required Texts:

- A. Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft (3rd Edition). Philip L. Stein and Rebecca Stein. [ARMW on reading list] – **On 2-hour reserve at Library West.**
- B. A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion (2nd ed.). Michael Lambek. [RAR on reading list]. **On 2-hour reserve at Library West.**
- C. Other readings may be assigned, and will available through *e-learning*: (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>).

3. Course Structure & Requirements:

A. EXAMS and FINAL

There are two exams and a final in this class. Exams will be true/false or multiple-choice, and will be taken on scantron sheets. Students must bring their own #2 pencils on exam days.

B. WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Writing assignments (5 total for the semester) are due nearly every week. Topics will be assigned as the class progresses, but will be based on class readings. Writing assignments are to be 2 pages (maximum), double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font (do NOT manipulate the margins), and should critically reflect on the readings of the preceding week (I expect you to incorporate anthropological examples and concepts from the readings into these papers, and to reflect critically on topics).

C. POP QUIZES

Ten pop (unannounced) quizzes will be given throughout the course, and will cover the readings assigned for that day. Reading and being prepared to discuss the assigned reading material is an important part of this class.

D. GROUP PRESENTATION

Everyone will be required to participate in a final group presentation. You will be assigned a group of 4-5 people. Each group will be assigned a religion. The presentation of your assigned religion should include an application of the anthropological concepts and theories discussed in class and in the assigned readings. Presentations **MUST NOT** exceed 10 minutes. Presentations will take place on the last 2 weeks of class before the final.

E. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance is important and expected, and represents 5% of your final grade. Attendance will be taken every day on roll sheets, and/or through pop quizzes. Participation is important and expected, and represents 15% of your final grade. Participation is measured in 2 ways: (1) by your contribution to your groups' presentation (you will anonymously assign participation points to the other members in your group); and (2) through your contribution (or lack of contribution) to class discussions and exercises.

4. Assignment % of Total Grade

Exam I	10
Exam II	10
Final Exam	15
Writing Assignments (5)	25 (5% each)
Pop Quizzes (10)	10 (1% each)
Group Presentation	10
Attendance	5
<u>Participation</u>	<u>15</u> (10% determined by peers; 5% determined by instructor)
TOTAL:	100

5. Grading:

Grades will be determined based on the following breakdown, as defined by the University:

Grading Breakdown												
Grade %	100-93	92.9-90	89.9-87	86.9-83	82.9-80	79.9-77	76.9-73	72.9-70	69.9-67	66.9-63	62.9-60	x<60
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E, I, NG, S-U, WF
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.00	.67	0.00

Grade Posting

When they become available, grades will be posted on e-learning. DO NOT WRITE THE INSTRUCTOR TO INQUIRE ABOUT INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT GRADES (check e-learning instead).

48-Hour Grade Dispute Policy

Students who wish to discuss grades on assignments and exams should contact the instructor within 48 hours of posting to arrange a meeting time. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to question grades or request special consideration. Forty-eight hours after posting, all grades are final.

6. Attendance and Make-up Policy:

Attendance accounts for 10 percent of your final grade in this class. Attendance will be taken faithfully. Class discussions are a crucial component to learning in the course, and missing them is a serious loss. Students wishing to excuse an absence should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course, and send an email reminder the week before the scheduled absence.

Students wishing to excuse an absence due to illness need to provide the instructor with a doctor's note with a phone number on it, *within a week of the illness*. I will follow up on doctor's notes. Students with more than 5 unexcused absences (1/6th of the course) will be given a grade of zero, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. There are no make-ups for exams or the final in this course, unless accompanied by a doctor's note with contact information on it.

7. Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty* (cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, fabrication, etc.) will not be tolerated in any way. Students who conduct themselves in an academically dishonest fashion will receive a zero grade for the course and will be reported to the proper university authorities. Papers will be checked for plagiarism through the "Turn It In" function of E-learning. Please consult the *UF Student Honor Code*,* which all students agree to when registering for classes:

"In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. Student and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code."

*More information on academic honesty:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>

8. Student Conduct:

Every single student must uphold the *Student Honor Conduct Code*. * Appropriate action as defined by University of Florida policy will be taken if students fail to uphold the Student Honor and Conduct Code. Use of cell phones, laptops, and talking during class sessions will not be tolerated AT ALL.

* More info on Student Conduct:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php>

9. Special Classroom Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities must register with the Dean of Students office. Contact the Assistant Dean of Students/Director of the Disability Resources Program at:

P202 Peabody Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611-5055
Phone (352) 392-1261 (V), 392-3008 (TDD)

10. UF Counseling Services:

If you are experiencing stress, or need emotional and/or psychological support, please contact the Counseling Center:

301 Peabody Hall - Phone (352) 392-1575 (www.counsel.ufl.edu)

[Continue on to course meeting, reading, and assignment schedule, next page...]

Course Meeting, Reading, and Assignment Schedule:

Week 1 (May 14-May 18)

M: Welcome

Introduction to the course, review syllabus, teacher and student expectations.

T: What is Anthropology?

READING¹: ARMW Chapter 1: pages 1-14 (stop after reading “Viewing the World”).

W: What is Religion and How Do Anthropologists Study It? - Part I

READING: ARMW Chapter 1: pages 14-28; RAR Part I: pages 1-17.

R: What is Religion and How Do Anthropologists Study It? - Part II

READING: RAR Part I: “Religion as a Cultural System” by Clifford Geertz.

F: What is Religion and How Do Anthropologists Study It? - Part II

READING: RAR Part I: “The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category” by Talal Asad.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT # 1 DUE

Week 2 (May 21-May 25)

M: Early Viewpoints on Religion I

READING: RAR Part I: “Religion in Primitive Culture” by Edward Tylor, and “The Elementary Forms of Religious Life” by Emile Durkheim

T: Early Viewpoints on Religion Part II

READING: RAR Part I: “Remarks on Frazer’s Golden Bough” by Ludwig Wittgenstein”; RAR Part II: “Myth in Primitive Psychology” by Bronislaw Malinowski.

W: Mythology Part I

READING: ARMW: Chapter 2

FILM Part I: “Mythos” by Joseph Campbell

R: Mythology Part II

READING: No reading

FILM Part II: “Mythos” by Joseph Campbell.

F: Religious Symbols Part I

READING: ARMW Chapter 3; and RAR Part II: “The Logic of Signs and Symbols”

WRITING ASSIGNMENT # 2 DUE

Week 3 (May 28-June 1)

M: NO CLASS- MEMORIAL DAY

T: Religious Symbols Part II

READING: RAR Part II: “The Problem of Symbols” by E.E. Evans-Pritchard, “On Key Symbols” by Sherry B. Ortner, and “The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol,” by Eric R. Wolf.

¹ READINGS ARE LISTED UNDER THE DAY THEY WILL BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS.

- W:** Review for Exam I
R: EXAM I
F: Rituals Part I
READING: ARMW Chapter 4

Week 4 (June 4-8)

- M:** Rituals Part II
READING: RAR Part III: “The Movement in Ritual Emergence (Introduction),” “The Control of Experience: Symbolic Action,” by Godfrey Lienhardt, and “Enactments of Meaning,” by Roy A. Rappaport.
- T:** Altered States of Consciousness
READING: ARMW Chapter 5.
- W:** Religious Specialists
READING: ARMW Chapter 6; RAR Part IV: “Shamanic Practices and the State in Northern Asian...” by Caroline Humphrey.
WRITING ASSIGNMENT # 3 DUE
- R:** Magic and Divination
READING: ARMW Chapter 7; RAR Part III: “Form and Meaning of Magical Acts,” by Stanely Tambiah, and “The Poetics of Time in Mayan Divination,” by Dennis Tedlock.
- F:** REVIEW FOR EXAM II

Week 5 (June 11-June 15)

- M:** EXAM II
- T:** The Soul and Death
READING: ARMW Chapter 8; and RAR Part III: “Spirits and Selves in Northern Sudan...” by Janice Boddy.
*** 2 GROUP PRESENTATIONS***
- W:** Gods and Spirits
READING: ARMW Chapter 9
*** 2 GROUP PRESENTATIONS***
- R:** Witchcraft
READING: ARMW Chapter 10; and RAR Part II: “Witchcraft and Sexual Relations...” by Raymond Kelly.
*** 2 GROUP PRESENTATIONS***
WRITING ASSIGNMENT # 4 DUE
- F:** Religion, Modernity, and Change
READING: ARMW Chapter 11; and RAR Part IV: “New Heaven, New Earth,” by Kenelm Burridge, and “The Genesis of Capitalism amongst a South American Peasantry...,” by Michael Taussig.
*** 2 GROUP PRESENTATIONS***

Week 6 (June 18-June 22) FINAL WEEK OF CLASS!!

M: Christianity Part I

READING: RAR Part I: “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” by Max Weber, “Christians as Believers” by Malcom Ruel; and RAR Part IV: “Convicted by the Holy Spirit...” by Susan Harding.

*** 2 GROUP PRESENTATIONS***

T: Christianity Part II

READING: ARMW Chapter 2: “The Gender-Neutral Christian Bible,” (review this—we have already read it); and ARMW Chapter 9: “Christian Angels and Demons” (review this—we have already read it); and RAR Part IV: “The Colonization of Consciousness” by John and Jean Comaroff.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT # 5 DUE

*** 2 GROUP PRESENTATIONS***

W: * 6 GROUP PRESENTATIONS*

R: * 2 GROUP PRESENTATIONS*
REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM

F: FINAL EXAM (NO MAKEUPS!!!)

[Have a great summer!]

This syllabus for “ANT 3620 – Anthropology of Religion” is a binding contract between the student and the instructor. By signing below, I indicate that I have read and understand the above syllabus. I understand my obligations and what is required of me.

_____ (Student name, printed)

_____ (Student signature)

_____ (Student UF ID number)

_____ (Today’s date)

[Read the above statement, fill out the above fields, remove this page from your syllabus, and turn into the instructor]