



Texas A&M
UNIVERSITY
Central Texas

ANTH 5310
Anthropology of Religion
Fall 2020

Class Location: Online
Class Hours: Tuesdays, 6:00-8:45 p.m.
Instructor: Floyd Berry, PhD
Office: HH 204 S (not used during pandemic)
Office Hours: MTWR 2-5 (please make an appointment)
Email: (prefer Canvas message) fberry@tamuct.edu
NOTE: If contacting instructor outside of Canvas, students must use their official TAMUCT emails.

1.0 Course Description

Examines the religious history, beliefs, and practices of societies based on ethnographic literature. Cross-listed with RELS 5310.

2.0 Accessing Canvas

This is a lecture course with online components in Canvas. The student accesses Canvas at <https://tamuct.onecampus.com/> and locates the “card” for the Canvas platform.

3.0 Course Objectives

1. Students will be able to discuss different types of religious phenomena, focusing primarily on small-scale societies.
2. Students will be able to discuss the role of shamans as religious practitioners.
3. Students will be able to analyze rites of passage and the concept of liminality.
4. Students will gain an appreciation for the variety of religious phenomena as an aspect of different cultures and environments, based on readings, commentaries, and class discussions.
5. Students will submit acceptable essays for mid-term and final exams. To be accepted, the student shall discuss all aspects of an essay question, using standard English prose and grammatical construction.
6. Students will submit an annotated bibliography based on peer-reviewed articles.

4.0 Textbook

4.1 Required for Course

Warms, R., Garber, J., & McGee, R. J. (Eds.).(2009). *Sacred realms: Readings in the anthropology of religion* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford.

4.2 Recommended but Not Required

Armstrong, K. (2001). *Buddha*. New York: Penguin.

Armstrong, K. (2002). *Islam: A short history* (2nd ed.). New York: Modern Library.

- Armstrong, K. (2006). *Muhammad: A prophet for our time*. New York: Harper One.
- Berger, H. A. (1999). *A community of witches: Contemporary neo-paganism and witchcraft in the United States*. Columbia, SC: South Carolina.
- Berger, H. A., Leach, E. A., & Shaffer, L. S. (2003). *Voices from the pagan census: A national survey of witches and neo-pagans in the United States*. Columbia, SC: South Carolina.
- Bruce, S. (2017). *Secular beats spiritual: The westernization of the easternization of the West*. Oxford.
- Castaneda, C. (1968). *The teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui way of knowledge*. New York: Pocket.
- Castaneda, C. (1971). *A separate reality: Further conversations with Don Juan*. New York: Pocket.
- Castaneda, C. (1972). *Journey to Ixtlan: The lessons of Don Juan*. New York: Pocket.
- De Waal Malefijt, A. (1968). *Religion and culture: An introduction to anthropology of religion*. New York: MacMillan.
- Eliade, M. (1951/1964). *Shamanism: Archaic techniques of ecstasy* (W. R. Trask, Trans.). Princeton.
- Erickson, P. A., & Murphy, L. D. (2013). *A history of anthropological theory* (4th ed.). Toronto.
- Gaster, T. H. (Ed.). (1959). *The new golden bough: A new abridgment of the classic work by Sir James George Frazer*. New York: Mentor.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic.
- Harner, M. (1980). *The way of the shaman*. New York: Harper One.
- Harris, M. (1968). *The rise of anthropological theory*. New York: Columbia.
- Hutton, R. (1999). *The triumph of the moon: A history of modern pagan witchcraft*. Oxford.
- Hutton, R. (2017). *The witch: A history of fear, from ancient times to the present*. New Haven, CT: Yale.
- James, E. O. (1950). *The beginnings of religion*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Johnson, P. (1987). *A history of the Jews*. New York: Harper.
- Lang, A. (1887). *Myth, ritual, and religion* (Vols. 1-2). N.p.: Perfect Library.
- Lessa, W. A., & Vogt, E. Z. (Eds.). (1979). *Reader in comparative religion: An anthropological approach*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1978). *Myth and meaning*. New York: Schocken.
- Malinowski, B. (1948). *Magic, science and religion and other essays*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor.
- McGee, R. J., & Warms, R. L. (2017). *Anthropological theory: An introductory history* (6th ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Morris, B. (2006). *Religion and anthropology: A critical introduction*. Cambridge.
- Price, N. (Ed.). (2001). *The archaeology of shamanism*. London: Routledge.
- Prothero, S. (2010). *God is not one: The eight rival religions that run the world – and why their differences matter*. New York: Harper One.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. (1952). *Structure and function in primitive society*. New York: Free Press.

- Radin, P. (1937). *Primitive religion*. New York: Dover.
- Schama, S. (2013). *The story of the Jews: Finding the words, 1000 BC-1492 AD*. New York: Harper.
- Service, E. R. (1978). *Profiles in ethnology* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins.
- Turner, V. (1967). *The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell.
- Turner, N. (1969). *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*. New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction.
- Tylor, E. B. (1874). *Primitive culture: Researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, language, art and customs* (2nd ed.; Vols. 1-2). New York: Henry Holt.
- Van Gennep, A. (1908/1960). *The rites of passage* (M. B. Vizedom & G. L. Caffee, Trans.). Chicago.
- Wallace, A. F. C. (1966). *Religion: An anthropological view*. New York: Random House.

5.0 Course Requirements

5.1 Exams (400 pts)

The student shall take two exams, a mid-term and a final. The exams are “take-home” exams in that the student has a week to answer the questions that are presented. Students type on a Microsoft Word document and submits the exam by attaching it to an email (message in Canvas), sent to the instructor. Each exam is valued at 200 points. Students are encouraged to review their work before submission. The mid-term exam will receive comments from the instructor and will be returned to the student. The following rubric will guide the instructor:

Qualities & Criteria	Poor	Good	Excellent
Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of topics to be addressed • Information is correct • Coherency <p>(Weight: 70%)</p>	Not objective and poorly addresses the issues. Information is unnecessary or insufficient to discuss the issues.	Mostly objective and addresses most of the issues. Information is mostly necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues.	Objective and addresses all the issues. Information is necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues.
	(0-109 pts)	(110-131 pts)	(132-140 pts)
Quality of Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity • Grammar and English usage • Organization and coherence <p>(Weight: 30%)</p>	Poorly written and contains flagrant spelling and grammatical errors. Poorly organized, lacks clarity, and is incoherent.	Mostly well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways.	Well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Well organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways.
	(0-40 pts)	(41-55 pts)	(56-60 pts)

A week before each exam, the instructor will provide students with two exam questions. This practice provides the student with a week’s worth of preparation.

NOTE: Graduate students are expected to have adequate knowledge of the essentials of grammar, writing style, and essay organization in accordance with writing manuals. If the student does *not* have adequate knowledge in these areas, then the purchase and use of additional books are highly recommended. Failure to provide written work in accordance with the essentials of acceptable, English writing style will result in poor grades. Examples of non-standard English usage include, among other things, sentence fragments, run-ons, dangling modifiers, lack of agreement between pronouns and their antecedents or subjects and verbs, bulleted items, slashes, flagrant misuse of punctuation, slang or abbreviated expressions, “etc.,” and excessive use of metaphorical language. In Modules, there is a Power Point on “Typical Problems with Essay Exams.”

5.2 Class Participation (300 pts)

Students are expected to participate in online class discussions, indicating an understanding of the reading material and how to apply it. Students are to read assigned material before class. Students earn a point for each of two questions that are posted by the instructor. Thus, the student earns 0-2 points on each class day (total of 13 days), which corresponds to the following grade:

Points	Grade	Points	Grade	Points	Grade
28	300	18	195	8	90
27	290	17	185	7	78
26	279	16	174	6	67
25	269	15	164	5	56
24	258	14	153	4	45
23	248	13	143	3	34
22	237	12	132	2	23
21	227	11	122	1	12
20	216	10	111	0	0
19	206	9	101	---	---

NOTE: The graduate student is allowed one absence without major deduction of points (based on Class Participation rubric). A second absence, however, results in a lowering of the final course grade (e.g., A becomes B, B becomes C).

5.3 Academic Integrity Document

During the first week of class, the student is to read the section in the syllabus on Academic Integrity (§ 8.0) and the link provided in that section regarding plagiarism. Students must read the document (also in Canvas, under Modules) pertaining to Academic Integrity and send emails to the instructor that they understand Academic Integrity. **NOTE: Students will not be allowed to continue in the course without notifying the instructor of their comprehension of this**

material. Examples of academic dishonesty in this course might be having someone do the student's work or plagiarizing from internet sites.

5.4 Annotated Bibliography (300 pts)

The student will submit an annotated bibliography of ten sources from the *American Anthropologist* journal pertaining to a topic (singular) of interest. The student accesses the journal through the online University Library. The student clicks on Academic Search Complete and then in the search box enters *American Anthropologist* as a "Journal Name." The student should get hundreds or thousands of articles to browse through. The annotated bibliography shall consist of ten pages, one for each source.

Students summarize the main points of each article, limiting their summary to one page per article. Students submit their work by attaching the 10-page annotated bibliography to an email (message in Canvas) and sending it to the instructor. Each page shall have the bibliography entry at the top of the page, followed by the summary. Students shall use Times New Roman, typeface 12, double-spaced. Each summary is worth 30 points.

6.0 Grading Matrix and Conversion

6.1 Matrix

	Points
Exams (2 @ 200)	400
Class Participation	300
Reaction Comments	300
Academic Integrity Acknowledgement	-----
<i>Total:</i>	1000

6.2 Conversion to Course Letter Grade

Points	%	Grade
900 – 1000	90 – 100	A
800 – 899	80 – 89	B
700 – 799	70 – 79	C
600 – 699	60 – 69	D
0 – 599	0 – 59	F

7.0 Course Calendar¹

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
8/25/20	Syllabus Academic Integrity Religious Studies	Syllabus Academic Integrity/ plagiarism readings (§ 8.0 of syllabus) Power Point Discussions	
9/1/20	Introduction Religious Origins	pp. x-xvii pp. 6-13, 28-32	Academic Integrity acknowledgement due before 6 pm
9/8/20	Charisma	pp. 35-44	
9/15/20	Possession and Funerals in Japan	pp. 44-66	
9/22/20	Water Temples, Sacred Cows, and Sacred Groves	pp. 69-100	
9/29/20	Tribal Deities, Syncretism, and Controlling Jinn.	pp. 104-116, 121-129	
10/6/20	Shamanism, Prophecy, and Female Power	pp. 132-165	
10/13/20	Liminality	pp. 167-174	
10/20/20	Rites of Passage and Liminality	pp. 175-193	
10/27/20	Mid-term Exam		
11/3/20	Altered States and Hallucinogens	pp 204-217	
11/10/20	Killing Infants and the Aged and Suttee	pp. 271-284	
11/17/20	Bewitching and Terrorism	pp. 321-326, 404-411	
11/24/20	Good vs. Bad Muslim	pp. 376-386	
12/1/20	New Religions and Wicca	pp. 389-404	Annotated Bibliography Due by 6:00 p.m.
12/8/20	Final Exam		

¹ Events are subject to minor revision (see § 14.0).² pp = pages, in textbook

8.0 Academic Integrity

TAMUCT expects all students to maintain high standards of personal and scholarly conduct. Students guilty of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, self-plagiarism (“recycling”), or collusion. The instructor shall initiate action for each case of academic dishonesty and report it to the Associate Director of Student Conduct. Zero points will be assigned for any course product that violates academic honesty. The student should access this link for more information: <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>.

9.0 Disability Support

If students believe that this course may present barriers to learning due to a disability, they must contact Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831 in Warrior Hall, Ste. 212. For more information, students may visit their website at <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>. Any information that the student provides is private and confidential and will be treated as such. The instructor cannot accommodate students’ disabilities unless they first communicate with Access and Inclusion.

10.0 Diversity in the Classroom

Respect for cultural and human biological diversity are core concepts within the social sciences. In this course, each voice in the classroom has value in contributing to class discussion. The student should respect the different experiences, beliefs, and values expressed by one’s fellow students and instructor, and refrain from derogatory comments about other individuals, cultures, groups, or viewpoints. In this course we welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, disabilities, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities, geographical locations, languages, military experiences, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences.

11.0 Classroom Etiquette

Students shall show respect to other students and to the instructor in all communications, whether verbal or in writing (e.g., online). For example, arguing, complaining, and challenging that is not based on readings, rationality, and the course objectives are a violation of classroom etiquette.

12.0 Writing Center

The University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students. The UWC is located in Warrior Hall, Rm 416. One may contact Dr. Bruce Bowles at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu for more information.

13.0 Late Work

As a rule, make-up work for the two exams will not be accepted. The mid-term exam may be accepted late, but with a 20-point deduction for each day late. *In no instance*

will a make-up for the mid-term exam be given after two weeks from the original exam date. To be considered as a prospect for making up the mid-term exam, the student must contact the instructor within 24 hours of having missed the exam for purposes of making it up. The final course grade will be posted within a few days of the final exam; therefore, *no incompletes will be awarded for this course.* If students foresee that they will be unable to complete the course, then they should either drop the course or accept the posted grade.

14.0 Modification of the Syllabus

This syllabus may be revised in minor ways at the discretion of the instructor. The student is responsible for noting any changes in the syllabus. More than likely, a change in the syllabus will pertain to typos or events in the course calendar (§ 7.0). If modified, a revised course calendar will be posted on Canvas and will replace § 7.0 of the syllabus.

15.0 Contact with the Instructor

The student should contact the instructor via the message feature of Canvas about any topic or issue that pertains to the course.

16.0 Announcements

The student is responsible for checking Canvas on a near-daily basis for ongoing announcements or messages pertaining to the course.