Instructor Contact Information
Instructor: Christine Jones, PhD
Office: HH 204C
  • Contact me via Canvas message or email: Bioarchjones@tamuct.edu
  • Office hours: By appointment

Course Description
A critical examination of Wicca and Neo-pagan groups in the US. Explores the history of such groups and exposes the student to academic research in this area.

Accessing Canvas
This is a 100% online course, and uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [https://tamuct.instructure.com/]. Since this is an online class, most communication between the instructor and students will be electronic in nature; however, all students are welcome and encouraged to attend office hours or make an appointment for an office visit.

Technology Requirements
This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system.

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [https://tamuct.instructure.com/] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [https://tamuct.onecampus.com/]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal. Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

• Canvas Support. Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

• For Other Technology Support. For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu, Phone: (254) 519-5466 Web Chat: [http://hdc.tamu.edu] Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.

• Technology issues are not an excuse for missing a course requirement. Make sure your computer is configured correctly and address issues well in advance of deadlines. If you have problems with your personal computer and/or Internet, you have access to the computer lab in Warrior Hall (Room 104). The library (in Warrior Hall) also has computers students can use.
Student-instructor interaction
During the week (Mon-Fri) I usually check emails often and respond within 24 hours. I may not respond to weekend emails until Monday or Tuesday. Email is a better way to reach me than Canvas message.

Warrior Shield:
Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas
Warrior Shield is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in Warrior Shield through their myCT email account. Connect to Warrior Shield by 911Cellular [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in Warrior Shield, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

Course Objectives
- Students will be able to recognize the functions that religion serves in society.
- Students will become acquainted with theories and research on religious beliefs and practices.
- Students will be able to identify the social and environmental factors related to neo-pagan groups.
- Students will acquire basic literacy in Wicca and neo-pagan traditions.
- Students will be able to assess the impact of neo-pagan traditions on the daily lives of groups and their impact on society.
- Students will gain an appreciation for the multidimensional nature of religiosity and other ways of practicing religion.
- Students will develop a degree of objectivity about the subjective reality of religion.
- Students will submit prose reactions to material and topics covered in class discussions.
- Students will submit acceptable essays for mid-term and final papers. To be accepted, the student shall discuss all aspects of an essay question, using standard English prose and grammatical construction.

Required Textbooks
Course Requirements

1. **Term papers (400 pts)**
   - Students will submit two term paper assignments, a Midterm paper and Final paper (200 points each). Due dates for each paper are posted in the course schedule below, but students can submit their papers at any time during the semester.
   - **How term papers work in this class:** The instructor will provide students with 2 essay questions per term paper. Students work alone on drafting their answers during the semester. Students submit their completed essay answers in TEXT ENTRY format using the paper link in the Term paper module.
   - A cover page or list of references IS NOT NEEDED. Instead, when students refer to course readings in their answers they must use the name of the book and author (ex: In “Spiral dance,” Starhawk explains the Wiccan worldview.)
   - **No emailed copies of papers will be accepted. No .doc or .pdf versions of papers will be accepted.** The student must submit their paper essays using TEXT ENTRY boxes provided in the paper link on Canvas. (The best way to do this is to compose and save your essay in a word document and then copy/paste the words into the text entry box). The instructor WILL NOT accept the following excuse:
     - “I didn’t submit my paper because I typed the only copy of my essay answers in the text entry box and then the computer/internet died and erased my answers”
   - Students will receive feedback comments from the instructor for improvement.
   - The following rubric will guide the instructor:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualities &amp; Criteria</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Not objective and poorly addresses the issues. Information is unnecessary or insufficient to discuss the issues.</td>
<td>Mostly objective and addresses most of the issues. Information is mostly necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues.</td>
<td>Objective and addresses all the issues. Information is necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements of topics to be addressed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is correct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Writing</strong></td>
<td>Poorly written and contains flagrant spelling and grammatical errors. Poorly organized, lacks clarity, and is incoherent.</td>
<td>Mostly well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways.</td>
<td>Well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Well organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and English usage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and coherence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Weight: 30%)</td>
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NOTE: Upper-level undergraduate students are expected to have adequate knowledge of the essentials of grammar, writing style, and essay organization in accordance with writing manuals. The University Writing Center is also available to students. In Modules, there is a Power Point on “Typical Problems with Essays” in order to help students avoid common mistakes on essays.

2. Reaction Comment (300 pts)
   - There are 6 total reaction comments (RCs) assigned, worth 50 points each.
   - RCs are due every Sunday at 11:59pm except on term paper weeks. Due dates are listed in the schedule below.
   - In RCs, students express their reactions to something discussed or experienced in class. The reaction may be emotional, cognitive, insightful, positive, negative, or neutral. Students should make comments on the content of assigned readings, video lectures, and discussions, coupled with their reactions in RCs. **A mere summary of material discussed in class, however, is not substantial enough for credit.**
   - RCs are private and can only be seen by the student and instructor. The instructor will provide feedback on the first few RCs so that the student knows they are completing them properly.
   - Weekly reaction comments should be 2 paragraphs long or approximately 400 to 600 words. Students should limit themselves to no more than 1 question in any given RC.
   - A link will be provided each week in the Canvas module for students to submit their RC (i.e. “RC Week 1”).
   - **RCs should NOT be submitted in advance of the weekly materials, as they are reactions. EX: Wait until the due date for RC 2 has passed before submitting RC 3, etc.** There are no makeups for RCs (see late policy).

3. Discussion Boards (200 points)
   - There are 4 online discussion boards, worth 50 points each.
   - **Discussion board responses are DUE SUNDAYS 11:59PM during the week they are assigned. Discussion board due dates are listed in the schedule below.** Students should aim to submit their primary response earlier in the week (Fridays for example), so that all students have an opportunity to submit their secondary comments at a reasonable time.
   - For each discussion, a student is required to submit one primary response and two secondary responses.
     i. **ONE primary response** (25 pts) should reflect familiarity with the readings, and should include the student’s complete answer to the weekly discussion question(s). Students should answer these as they would an essay question on an exam (see rubric below). Primary responses should be at least a half page in length (about 250 words) to get full credit. Students should avoid direct quotations as they do not count towards the 250 word minimum, and when referring to specific brief passages in the
text the author of each section and page number should be included in parentheses. See rubric for grading of discussion posts.

ii. **TWO secondary responses (12.5 pts each)** After each student has made their primary response, they must make **TWO additional secondary responses to what some student wrote.** Secondary responses should be at least a couple of sentences or more. They should be substantive, meaning they have added important content or additional information to the discussion by enriching the original answer. The best secondary responses refer to the course materials in some way and are not just simple agreement.

- After students submit their three responses for a discussion week they have met the requirements for grading. Students may continue to post as many comments as they like to discussion threads, and this is encouraged to foster discussion.
- The following rubric will guide the instructor:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Criteria for Discussion boards</th>
<th>Points allotted for each discussion (50 total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explanation of issues:</strong> In the primary post, the student focuses on explaining issues by answering the discussion questions for the week. The primary post clearly demonstrates that the student has read and comprehended the sources. The issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.</td>
<td><strong>Up to 17.5 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis of evidence:</strong> In the primary post, the student takes information from sources with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. It is clear the student is considering the evidence presented by authors to support their claims. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.</td>
<td><strong>Up to 5 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Message Coherence:</strong> Posts MUST be cited appropriately and written in clear, grammatically correct, and properly spelled English. Stream-of-consciousness posts will lose points.</td>
<td><strong>Up to 2.5 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary Response Post #1:</strong> Responses elaborate, contradict, modify, or explain the original message and stay on topic, drawing on the readings and other course materials as appropriate.</td>
<td><strong>Up to 12.5 points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary Response Post #2:</strong> Same as #1</td>
<td><strong>Up to 12.5 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Book Discussions WEBEX (100 pts)**
   - There will be 2 scheduled class discussions (day/time below) via WebEx, worth 50 points each. The Webex link will be shared via canvas and a reminder announcement will be posted.
- If a student cannot attend the book discussions for any reason (ex: work, medical, childcare), they can choose to submit the ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT attached to the end of this syllabus instead of attending book discussions. If students choose this option they must notify the instructor.

- WebEx discussions will be approximately 1 hour long. The first 5 minutes will be used to take attendance.

- Students must read the assigned books before each discussion. Students earn some points for simply attending a scheduled discussion. Students earn full points for participating meaningfully. Meaningful participation includes sharing TQE: Thoughts, Questions, and Epiphanies about the books we are reading.
  - EX: What did you like? Dislike? What surprised you? What imagery interested you and why? What lingering questions do you have about this book? What notes did you take on the chapter? What themes and symbols are prominent? More information on TQE method will be provided during the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheduled Discussion Day/Time</th>
<th>Points for attendance (on time and did not leave early)</th>
<th>Points for meaningful participation</th>
<th>Total points possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WED JUN 17 @ 2pm</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WED JULY 8 @ 2pm</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** If students are tardy (appear in the session after roll is called), it is their responsibility to notify the instructor at the conclusion of class (before leaving the session that day), that they arrived in class and would like to receive some credit for class participation. Failure to notify the instructor may result in no participation points for that session.

5. **Academic Integrity Quiz**

During the first week of class, the student is to read the section in the syllabus on Academic Integrity and visit the link provided in that section regarding plagiarism. The student must complete the course quiz “Academic Integrity” by the due date listed in the course schedule below and on Canvas. **NOTE:** Students will not be allowed to continue in the course without by completing and submitting this quiz by the due date.

**Grading Matrix and Conversion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Papers (2 @ 200)</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction Comments</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards (4 @ 50)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Discussions (2 @ 50)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Integrity Quiz</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Discussions</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 6/1/20</td>
<td>Introduction: Terms and early development</td>
<td>Adler: Both prefaces, Ch 1-5</td>
<td><strong>Discussion board 1</strong> due 6/7 before midnight</td>
<td>Academic Integrity quiz AND RC1 due 6/7 before midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 6/8/20</td>
<td>Contemporary Witches, Wiccans &amp; Neo-pagans 1</td>
<td>Starhawk: Both intros, Ch 1-8</td>
<td><strong>Discussion board 2</strong> due 6/14 before midnight</td>
<td>RC2 due 6/14 before midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 6/15/20</td>
<td>Contemporary Witches, Wiccans &amp; Neo-pagans 1</td>
<td>Starhawk: Ch 10-12 Adler: Ch 8,9,11,12</td>
<td><strong>Webex book discussion 1:</strong> Adler &amp; Starhawk <strong>JOIN discussion on WED JUN 17 @ 2pm</strong></td>
<td>RC3 due 6/21 before midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 6/22/20</td>
<td>Shamanism and Neo-shamanism 1</td>
<td>Harner: Intro, Preface, Ch 1-3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm paper due 6/28 before midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 6/29/20</td>
<td>Shamanism and Neo-shamanism 2</td>
<td>Harner: Ch 4-7</td>
<td><strong>Discussion board 3</strong> due 7/5 before midnight</td>
<td>RC4 due 7/5 before midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 7/6/20</td>
<td>Folk magick traditions</td>
<td>Lightfoot: WHOLE BOOK</td>
<td><strong>Webex book discussion 2:</strong> Harner &amp; Lightfoot <strong>JOIN discussion on Wed JUL 8 @ 2pm</strong></td>
<td>RC 5 due 7/12 before midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 7/13/20</td>
<td>Solitary pagans</td>
<td>Berger: Ch 1-3</td>
<td><strong>Discussion board 4</strong> due 7/19 before midnight</td>
<td>RC6 due 7/19 before midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 7/20/20</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Berger: Ch 4,5, Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final paper due 7/24 before midnight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note on readings:** The instructor expects that you have read the entirety of all assigned readings. This includes the notes at the back of the book. Allow yourself PLENTY of time to read the books. Don’t wait until the last minute. A chapter a day is a good goal.

### COURSE PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

**INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK**

The instructor will grade and give feedback on RCS and discussion board posts, usually by the end of that week after they are due. The instructor will also respond to selected discussions. It is the student’s responsibility to read instructor responses to these posts.
• Sometimes inaccurate information is presented by students that should be corrected, and the purpose of some replies is to alert the class to such information.
• Students may ask relevant questions regarding instructor responses within the discussion to clarify information however the intent of the instructor is to make sure the concept has been covered adequately not to engage in a debate on the topic.

DISCUSSION PARTICIPATION
Discussions are not the same as RCs. In a discussion, students often encounter experiences, beliefs, and viewpoints that are different from their own. One of the course objectives is to “develop a degree of objectivity about the subjective reality of religion.” As such, student discussions (both verbal and written) should maintain an attitude of objectivity based on study and reflection of the course materials.

  o Students should be courteous and respectful to others, including the authors of the text books!
  o Students should seek to limit or control their personal biases when reading course materials AND when responding to the contributions of others
  o Students should consider the objective study of religious traditions and practices as valuable and relevant to understanding local, national, and global problems and issues.
  o More information will be provided on discussion participation by the instructor during Week 1.

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 something of value to contribute to class discussion. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by your 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 experience, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences.

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.
LATE WORK

- **Midterm Papers and RCs:** If a student needs more time on the midterm paper or RC, they can email the instructor to request an extension no later than 24 hours **before the assignment is due.** Once the extension is granted the student can submit the assignment. Midterm papers or RCs submitted after the due date without contacting the instructor to request an extension will not be accepted. Late final papers will not be accepted.

- **Discussion boards:** Late discussion responses are not accepted.

- **WebEx Book discussions:** If a student misses or cannot participate in the book discussions and wants to makeup those missed points, they must email the instructor to notify her of the intent to submit the alternative assignment (see end of syllabus).

**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. If modified, a revised course calendar will be posted on Canvas and will replace of the syllabus.

**UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES**

All University resources, procedures, and guidelines are available online through the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [https://tamuct.instructure.com/] in the modules section.

**Copyright Notice.** Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas’ Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

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ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT

This assignment serves as an alternative ONLY for those students who are not able to attend the WebEx book discussions.

Before attempting this assignment, please contact the instructor to notify her that you will be submitting an alternative assignment instead of attending book discussions. She will provide you with due dates and additional guidelines needed to complete the assignment.

Assignment description: Students will record and submit a 15 minute long video “Book Review” of one of our assigned textbooks. Students must make a video using Canvas Studio (see tutorials in the alternative assignment module) and submit by uploading the video as a post in the “Alternative assignment” discussion board. Links to youtube or other video sources will not be accepted. Student videos can be made using either the webcam or screen capture function of Canvas Studio.

What is a book review?

A critical book review is a thoughtful discussion of a text’s content, strengths, and weaknesses. A book review should reflect a student’s capacity to read critically and to evaluate an author’s arguments. Students should compose a review as they would an academic presentation, with an argument supported by evidence, and a clear, logical structure.

Starting the review project. Students should:

- Read the book carefully, taking notes on material they think may be relevant or quotable and on their impressions of the author’s ideas and arguments.
- Determine the author’s principal argument, the chief themes of the text, the kinds of evidence used, and the way in which the author uses them.

Organizing the review. Students should:

1. Begin with bibliographic information: the author’s name, the book’s full title, place of publication, publisher, edition, and date.
2. Introduce the book. They should give their initial impressions, including a key observation on the text. This key observation will be their thesis. Students should not begin with a flat statement such as “This book is interesting.” They should instead begin with an anecdote, a challenging quotation, or a key observation.
3. Present a descriptive analysis and evaluation of the book. They should describe the book’s contents, the author’s argument, presentation, and evidence, and then provide their own evaluation. For example, in an excellent critical book review, students will
   - clearly set out the author’s purpose in writing the book, and whether or not they think the author has succeeded.
• describe the author’s arguments and the themes of the book, and give their appraisal of their validity and effectiveness.
• describe the sources and evidence the author uses to prove his case, and evaluate their appropriateness and sufficiency. What are the author’s sources? Should the author have used more, or different, sources?
• Comment on the author’s organization and writing style.

4. Conclude. Here the student may make more general remarks about the book and the ideas presented in it. If they have not already done so, students can indicate whether they felt the book was worthwhile, and for what audience.

Grading Rubric for Alternative assignment (100 points total)

• **Book Information**: 5 points. The author’s name, the book’s full title, place of publication, publisher, edition, and date.
• **Organization**: 15 points. The review’s organization makes sense and aids the viewer’s understanding of the content. The book review is divided into sections that summarize each main idea and give supporting evidence. Transitions between ideas are smooth.
• **Summary**: 20 points. Accurately summarizes the main ideas and topics discussed in the book, as well as its organization. Gives the reader a feel for what the book is about and whether it might interest them.
• **Author’s Purpose and Style**: 20 points. Gives the author’s background and viewpoint on the topic, including the author’s qualifications, intent, purpose, main point, and audience.
• **Critical Evaluation**: 25 points. The review contains the author’s argument, quality of presentation, and accuracy of evidence. It contains an evaluation of whether or not information was presented thoroughly and convincingly with enough pertinent details. It also contains the student’s overall opinion of the book, and if they would recommend it to others.
• **Formatting and Presentation**: 15 points. The book review is created as a video presentation using Canvas Arc studio. It is appropriately timed (approximately 15 minutes). The presentation was clearly prepared in advance and presented professionally.

A note on plagiarism: *Do not try to find someone else’s review (including video reviews such as those on youtube or on podcasts) of one of our textbooks and copy or paraphrase it yourself. If you plagiarize, you will receive a zero on the assignment. Rephrasing another reviewer’s ideas, such as by using the same specific ideas in the same specific order, is considered plagiarism, even if you use different words. You must read the book yourself in order to do well on this assignment.*