

Syllabus for Worldviews: Science, Magic and Religion

Spring 2012

Instructor: Dr. Barbara Hornum--- Class meets in McAlister 4011, Tues. & Thurs. 12:30-1:50

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E-mail: hornumbg@drexel.edu Hours: Korman 293 Tues/Thurs; 11-11:30 and by appointment. Preferred communication is by email. Please be sure that your Drexel email is working, that your mailbox has space and that it is checked weekly. There will be group emails sent to that address only. If you have an alternate email address you must forward Drexel email to that but understand that I will only send group mailings to the official email address. You are responsible for all communications so mailed.

Texts: Bowen, J.J. Religions in Practice: An Approach to the Anthropology of Religion. Paperback, Fifth Edition. 2011. Prentice Hall.

Warms, Garber and McGee (EDS.) Sacred Realms: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion. Paperback, 2009. Oxford University Press.

Course Description:

This anthropology course examines how perceptions about the way in which the world is structured, ordered and functions, influence our beliefs and actions. In the course, we will compare the perspectives of science, magic and religion through readings, films and discussions.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will explore the anthropological approach to religion in an anthropological comparative and cross- cultural framework. They will learn to use ethnographic data to support or refute positions, theirs and others. (Discussions, Exams, Evidence Based Journals.)
2. Students will examine the differences and similarities between religion and science over time and in different types of social structures in order to make connections to the interrelationships of time and social frameworks to the development of beliefs and institutions. Discussions, Exams, Evidence Based Journals.)
3. Students will develop the ability to examine and process different types of materials, theoretical, historical, comparative and ethnographic using analysis and synthesis of the materials. (Discussions, Exams, Evidence Based Journals,) This engages students in higher order thinking and is a DSLP.
4. Students will sharpen communication skills both written and oral. (Discussions, Exams, Evidence Based Journals.) These skills are part of the DSLP on communication.

Course Requirements:

1. Regular attendance is required, as the course will include regular student class participation. In class, group work will also be a part of the course. Students missing more than two classes must see the instructor to avoid a grade penalty. Any materials or announcements covered in class missed during an absence are the student's

responsibility. Students are expected to arrive on time and stay the length of the class. Students who are late more than two times or who leave the class early more than twice will be required to meet with the instructor and may be penalized.

2. The course will be run as a seminar and will combine lectures and student analyses of the readings and films. All assignments are expected when due and students are responsible for meeting deadlines. Reading assignments are generally due on the Tuesday of each week. (In week one, the assignment will be due on Thursday.)
3. There will be discussion questions based on the week's assignment and these will be the basis for in class group work. Students will be placed in discussion groups during week one. The discussions should follow the learning objectives in terms of using ethnographic evidence to support or refute contentions.
4. Many weeks we will have films to augment the reading and class material. The films cannot be repeated and students will be responsible for any material covered. These films will form a series of case studies and questions about them will appear on your exams. You will also be expected to include them in your weekly course analytic and reflective journal. (* Full details on the journal will be provided in a separate section below.) It is suggested that you do a paragraph summary of each film shortly after viewing it as an aid to discussion and studying. While the films will generally be shown on Thursday, there are exceptions that will be announced in advance.
5. There will be two essay exams. Students will receive study questions the week before each exam as indicated below. Attached to these will be examples of how answers will be evaluated. It is expected that students will prepare responses in advance. At the time of the exam, the instructor will have selected some of the study questions and the responses will be written in Blue Books over the scheduled time. No notes may be used. As with any written work for the course, reference should be made to the grading criteria. Missing an exam will result in a failure of that exam. There will be no make-ups allowed without the approval of the instructor for major life events such as illness or injury. If a make-up is granted, in fairness to other students, there will be a grade point penalty. * If the class demonstrates general proficiency and control of the material on the midterm, the final will be a take home exam given out in the 8th week. No decision will be made till after the midterm is graded.
6. Laptops for note taking only may be used in class. Any student using a laptop for other purposes will forfeit the right to use a laptop in subsequent classes. However, laptops may be used during the weekly group discussions for notation of the discussion and for reporting to the class.
7. Cell phones must be put on silent mode and left closed. Only in the case of a university emergency when all cell phones go off may they be opened. If a student has a family emergency and will need to take a call during class, notification of this possibility must be communicated in advance to the instructor so special arrangements may be made.

Evidence Based Journal:

This is a major requirement of the course and will be evaluated accordingly. Each student will be expected to keep a written evidence based journal on a weekly basis that will explore the connections between the topics covered each week based on the reading assignments, class lectures and discussions, and films when shown. In addition to using

these sources to make CONNECTIONS, students should express how the issues, ideas and topical relations have influenced their thinking each week; students will also be expected to include a reflective conclusion about the materials. Each journal entry should range between 2-4 pages in length. Please note the Grading Scale and Rubrics as indicated below. While the reflective conclusions will not be graded and may contain thoughts that are slowly forming all other materials need to be used evidentially in the commentaries. As the weeks progress, it is expected that the CONNECTIONS will also expand to link elements from all materials and all weeks. An A grade will not be possible without this. The journals will be collected at the start of the 4th week and while not graded will be returned with commentary as part of the developmental process. Students should refer to the four learning objectives on the front of the syllabus and the weekly learning goals indicated on the reading assignments as well in evaluating their work. These can also be useful in organizing the weekly entries. For example, students who do not demonstrate the synthesis of materials within the course and the ability to use evidence to support their positions will not be able to attain an A. Students who simply describe what they have read will fall somewhere in the C range. A separate sheet of rubrics and a “mock up” of a hypothetical journal entry will be given out the first week of class for the journal as well as for all assignments to indicate how the learning goals for these assignments will be assessed.

Weighted Grading:

Evidence Based Journal	30%
Midterm	30%
Final	30%
Class Participation	10%

Grading Scale.

A+	97-100
A	94-96
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63 (This is for internal item grading. Not a possible final grade.)
F	59 or lower

Grading Criteria/Rubrics: (These rubrics apply to all formal and graded written work and any formal oral presentations.)

A+ Outstanding Work. Original ideas that demonstrate total mastery of material and the ability to critically evaluate the material logically and with synthesis as well as analysis. All material will be evidentially supported with appropriate description and citations. Use of materials from all readings, class and films. Material will be supremely well organized and presented in a clear and professional manner. No errors or typos will be present.

A Very Superior Work. Demonstrates full synthesis, logic and solid analysis. Materials show appropriate description and examples to support ideas. Materials used are from all readings, class and films and show integration and connections. Citations are present. Clarity and organization are strong.

A- Superior Work. Some synthesis of materials, clear analysis based on evidence and examples. Materials discussed are from all readings, class and films and display integration and connections. Appropriate citations. Good clarity and logical organization.

B+ Clearly Above Average Work. Mostly presentation is at the level of analysis with only a little synthesis. Some integration of materials but not from all readings, class and films. No real errors but some material not fully supported by examples. Clear use of appropriate citations. Good clarity and organization.

B Slightly Above Average Work. No synthesis but adequate analysis of material and reasonable use of supporting examples. Not all readings, class and films represented but those that are connected. Some gaps in connecting ideas and organization could flow more smoothly. Appropriate citations.

B- Average Work. No synthesis and some, but minimal analysis present. Heavily dependent on description without extrapolation. Not all required readings used. Class and films represented but some obvious connections are missing. Some gaps in use of examples but citations are appropriate. Writing style may need improvement in organization, clarity and logic.

C+ Average Work. Only at level of description. No real analysis of material but solid use of examples in support of description. Missing use of some readings, class and films. Integration of materials could be improved. Citations are sufficient for material. Writing style needs work on organization, clarity and logic.

C Average Work. Only description. Could use more examples and much of what is presented is simple restating of reading, class and content of films. Gaps in how connections are demonstrated. Citations are sufficient. Writing style needs work on organization, clarity and logic.

C- Slightly Below Average Work. Level of description but no real connections between different sections of books, class and films. Minimal use of films and little integration of materials. Some parts of questions not answered. Citations are sufficient. Writing style needs improvement in logic, clarity and organization.

D+ Below Average Work. Not displaying knowledge of all readings, class material and films. Missing some key points but work shows some attempt at making connections and in using examples to support positions. Some parts of questions not answered. Writing style is in need of improvement in logic, clarity and organization. Citations poorly made for what is presented.

D Below Average Work. Missing some of readings, class material and films. Descriptions need expansion and more examples. Little integration of material. Largely paraphrasing readings and little use of films. Missing some parts of questions. Citations spotty. Need to greatly improve organization, clarity and logical presentation of material. Spelling and proofing should be improved.

F Failure. Unacceptable Work. Not demonstrating completion of required assignments in terms of readings and films.

Reading Assignments: Please note that I have moved the assignment of chapters and articles from the arrangements of the books to better fit the two books together and also to have them follow the way I will be organizing the topics of the course. There is logic to this rearrangement but it is not perfect.

Week One: At the start of class, a brief list of concepts and questions will be given to allow the professor to assess what ideas about the areas of the course students are starting with. These will be collected but not graded. You should keep a copy of these and your answers so you can do self-assessment of whether and how you might answer these same questions at the end of the term. Format of both books and correspondence will be explained.

Bowen- Chapters 1-2, Reader-Part 1, Chapter 1, Articles-1-3.

Learning Goals: You should understand the framework and organization of both books. You should be able to define and distinguish between worldview, science and religion and the different approaches used to study religion. Additionally, you should know some of the basic concepts in the anthropology of religion.

Week Two:

Bowen- Chapter 3, Reader- Part 1, Chapters 2 & 3, Articles - 4-9. Part 2, Chapter 4, Articles-10-13.

Learning Goals: You should have some sense of the domains and boundaries of religion and how these are influenced by variations over time and space.

Week Three:

Bowen- Chapter 4, Reader- Part 2, Chapter 6, Articles – 17-21, Part 3, Chapter 8- Articles- 27-30

Learning Goals: You should understand the different types of rituals and the functions they play in a variety of cultures.

Week Four: First three weeks of the Evidence Based Journal are to be turned in on as a word attachment to my email address on Tuesday for review and commentary.

Bowen- Chapters 5 & 6,- Reader – Part 3, Chapter 7, Articles 22-26, Part 4 Chapter 9, Articles-31-34 and Chapter 10, Articles 35-37.

Learning Goals: You will have some initial exposure to some religious specialists, patterns of healing and roles of magic and science. You will also examine aspects of sorcery, witchcraft and modernity.

Study questions for midterm will be given out.

Week Five:

Midterm Tuesday on materials covered in weeks 1-4.

For Thursday- Bowen-Chapters 10&11. Reader-Part 2- Chapter5-Articles 14-16.

Learning Goals: You will expand your knowledge of religious specialists and leaders and how religious language can lead to belief and influence behavior.

Weeks Six and Seven: Weeks 1 through 6 of Evidence Based Journal are to be turned in for review and commentary. (Weeks 1-3 should indicate your responses to my earlier edits. Weeks 4-6 should demonstrate that you have continued to use the suggested patterns.)

Bowen-Chapters 9 &12. Reader- Part 5- Chapters 11 & 12- Articles 38-46

Learning Goals: You will be able to understand what happens when religions and religious ideas move from one location to another. You should also gain an understanding how religions change and how new religions emerge as part of a process of culture - change, revitalization and syncretism.

Week Eight:

Bowen: Chapters 14 & 15.

Learning Goals: You should be able to look analytically at religion in the United States in terms of some of the critical influences of technology and secularism. Either the study questions or the final exam questions will be given out.

Week Nine:

Bowen-Chapter 7- Reader- Part 6- Chapters 13-14.

Learning Goals: You should have an understanding of world religions. In this week, the focus will be on Hinduism and Buddhism

Week Ten:

Bowen- Chapter 8 & 13-Reader-Part 6- Chapters 15-17.

Learning Goals: You should have an understanding of the Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam and their development. You should understand the origins of these five world religions, what has altered over time and be able to compare them especially in their most recent manifestations. The complete Evidence Based Journal including all reflections and an indication, if any of how the answers to the thought questions might have changed. The completed journal will be due by midnight of the last class by word attachment.

Final Exam when scheduled by Registrar. **Do not make plans or travel arrangements until we have been informed of the date and time. Even if we have a take-home examination it will be due on the assigned date.**

Assignments and course requirements may be modified as necessary in terms of content. Deadlines will remain the same.

Drexel University Policy on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. By placing his/her name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments. Plagiarism covers unpublished as well as published sources. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Quoting an entire piece of written work without acknowledgment of the source
- Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theory, even if it is completely paraphrased in one's own words without acknowledgment of the source
- Borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials that are not clearly common knowledge without acknowledgment of the source
- Copying another student's essay test answers
- Copying, or allowing another student to copy, a computer file that contains another student's assignment, and submitting it, in part or in its entirety, as one's own
- Working together on an assignment, sharing the computer files and programs involved, and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work

Students are urged to consult with individual faculty members, academic departments, or recognized handbooks in their field if in doubt regarding issues of plagiarism.

Drexel University Policy on Cheating:

Cheating is an act or an attempted act of deception by which a student seeks to misrepresent that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test paper
- Allowing another student to copy from a test paper
- Unauthorized use of course textbook or other materials, such as a notebook to complete a test or other assignment from the faculty member
- Collaborating on a test, quiz, or other project with any other person(s) without authorization
- Using or processing specifically prepared materials during a test such as notes, formula lists, notes written on the students clothing, etc. that are not authorized
- Taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you

Statement for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations and services at Drexel University need to present a current accommodation verification letter (AVL) to faculty before accommodations can be made. This MUST be done prior to the midterm! AVL's are issued by the Office of Disability Services (ODS). For additional information, contact ODS at www.drexel.edu/edt/disability.

The syllabus is a contract between the instructor and the student. It is very important that each student has read and understood all of the materials, assignments and due dates on the syllabus. Each student is to indicate this by signing and dating below and return this sheet no later than the end of the first week of class.

Student's Name _____, Date _____

Rubrics for Anth 210 Assignments and Grading.

In a general way all graded assignments will follow the Rubrics and Grading Breakdown on the syllabus. These cover the use of supporting evidence for statements, clarity of expression, synthesis of different materials used in the course and critical analysis of materials. As the term develops, there will be a larger array of materials across the weeks.

Evidence Based Journal.

A Range. Each week the analysis must demonstrate the use of supporting evidence from the text, the reader, a film if shown and class or lecture examples. The selection of appropriate ethnographic material must be clear and linked to the reflection and analysis. There must also be a demonstration that the different materials are connected and not just described. That is synthesis. Organization should have clarity and logic.

B Range. Supporting evidence needs to be present. The main difference here would be less synthesis and weaker connections. It might also reflect over reliance on only a few of the examples in the materials without indicating why others were not being selected. Written expression might have less clarity and there could be some problems with how things are organized.

C Range. Materials are described but there is little synthesis and minimal analysis. Presentation is chunked. Thus the presentation takes a paragraph for the text, another for the reader, yet another for materials from class or films, if shown but really lack connections. The organization seems random and there may be some problems with clarity of expression and logic of thinking.

D range. It is obvious that all the issues of C are present but worsened by not showing that reading has been completed. There is a repetitious use of the same sparse points and examples. Writing is poor and there are many uncorrected errors.

F. Student demonstrates minimal interest, work or thought.

Mid Term and Final.

These will receive numbered grades that match the Grade range on the syllabus. Otherwise the same rubrics apply. When I grade questions especially after providing study questions, I am looking for the same way of processing materials. This will be discussed in more detail in class and after I have seen the first of the Journal Assignments.

Mock Up for Evidence Based Journal Anth 210

This is intended to simply give students an idea of the type of high quality journal entry I am looking for. That doesn't mean you should feel that you cannot use your own format and organization. However, the inclusion of analysis, synthesis and evidence to support your reflections would have to be present to get a grade in the A range.

Most importantly, this is based on what I know but not from the readings or text for the class. It is neither a template nor something to be followed rigidly. It is also more monodimensional as it is not actually from an assignment covering a full week of material.

Assignment: Material on Friday the 13th.

This week's assignments looked at where we might fit beliefs like the potential for random, often dangerous events occurring on a particular day. This was in the context of whether such beliefs belong in the realms of magic and religion or should be seen as superstition.

In our text, Smith talks about how religions all change over time, some slow, some very rapidly. Paralleling this discussion is the work in our reader by Jones in which she examines 5 societies over a 100-year span of ethnographies. This survey underscores that in two of these societies in what we might call the developed world religious change in both belief and practice can take place in as short a time as 10 years. That differed from the other three societies, which because of either geographical or cultural isolation the changes are more gradual, so gradual that in the case of the MXTPK they encompassed the typical life span so that a person born in 1900 and dying in 1960 would not know they had occurred. But someone born in 1965 and reading about beliefs and practices 40 years earlier would find them not only no longer practiced nor believed but would view them as weird.

A film we saw on the multiple cycles and thousand year calendars of Balinese Hindus made the point that these calendars typically have overlapping cycles whereas in the West this only occurs with Friday the 13th. To me this isn't totally clear because if these cycles once were understood, they are not any longer. Thus the article by Thomas in the reader which discusses how cultures may have remnants of beliefs from the past or through culture contact but no longer have any knowledge of the practices which once were useful in countering any potential dangers when the cycles came together helped me gain some perspective on why there are movies about Friday the 13th, why some people may feel vaguely uneasy when having an exam on this day, while yet others go out of their way to "challenge" the danger and go hang gliding. Thomas talks about the fact, as did Smith and Jones about the inevitability of change.

At some point in time, some societies like ancient Babylon had a belief system that involved both symbols like numbers and corresponding shapes that could evoke powerful supernatural beings. These same societies also believed that certain supernatural beings

were in charge of or connected to certain days of the week. When the number and the day came together, dangerous spirits could have impact on human beings. This could occur magically, through the manipulation by religious specialists or magicians who knew how to use the numbers and spirits to gain power. As Thomas states, for the Babylonians this was all part of their religious system where the dangers could generally be manipulated and controlled at least by some. But over thousands of years the knowledge disappeared, as did the religious system but the sense that certain numbers and certain days were potentially malevolent continued. With this lost, Thomas and others see the emergence of what in our society we label superstition. As I think about this, I begin to see connections to people saying not to walk under a ladder, to not whistle in a graveyard, if an actor never to talk about the play Macbeth but rather talk about the Scottish Play. While these are not discussed in our course so far, I did look on the Internet and found some references about certain shapes, e.g. the ladder's triangular shape being a doorway to another dimension. One of these references came from Brown's study of Babylonian religion done in the 1890s. Apparently the possibility of control through magical or religious manipulation of symbols—see Queen's study of symbols in the next section of the reader—disappears faster than fragmented awareness of the symbol. An interesting question is how many of these “superstitions” remain in our society and/or in others. I assume that as we go further into the course and the relevant chapters that I might be able to start to list this.

When thinking about all of this and whether there is any connection between what I am learning and my own beliefs, I haven't reached any definitive conclusions. I do not really think about Friday the 13th. But I do read my horoscope in the paper. Most of the time it is just because it is on the same page as the comics. But once in a while, something happens unexpectedly during the day and when I try to analyze it, I go back and see that something in that day's horoscope seems to have predicted the event.

Does this prove that the stars and planets that existed when we were born control our lives? I am not sure. It is kind of fun to think about that. But in the text, an early anthropologist, Malinowski, talking about magic in the Trobriand Islands discusses that magic is never disproved by its failures but is proved by its successes. Thus if 364 days of the year events in my life and the day's horoscope don't fit I don't notice anything. But on the one day that they do, it makes me think that horoscopes are valid predictors of events.