

**Anthropology 2R03 – Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft  
Summer 2018  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:30 – 9:30  
CNH B107**

**Instructor:** Dr. Rebecca Plett

**Email:** plettra@mcmaster.ca

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 5 – 6 p.m., CNH 515

**Overview and Objectives:**

This course will examine the concepts of religion, magic, and witchcraft from an anthropological perspective. By examining a variety of topics related to these concepts through readings, digital resources, and discussion, students will have the opportunity to gain a critical awareness of religious experience across cultural contexts. Over the course of the semester, students will become familiar with the definitions and critiques of the categories of religion, magic, and witchcraft by anthropologists across the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the present, understanding that religious worlds are meaningful, vivid, and significant to those that inhabit them.

**Required texts:**

*Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion: A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion.* Pamela A. Moro, ed. Ninth edition, McGraw-Hill 2013.

And **EITHER:**

*Witching Culture: Folklore and Neo-Paganism in America.* Sabina Magliocco. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

*Shamans of the Foye Tree: Gender, Power, and Healing Among Chilean Mapuche.* Ana Mariella Bacigalupo. University of Texas Press, 2007.

**Learning Assessments:**

Your grade will be evaluated based on the following:

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Midterm Exam (July 10)          | 30% |
| Final Exam (July 31)            | 40% |
| Critical Book Review (August 7) | 30% |

- The Mid-Term Examination will be 60 minutes in length, and multiple-choice and true/false format. It will take place during class time, followed by a lecture. Both exams will cover material from readings, lectures, and films, and the Mid-Term exam will cover material from June 19 – July 5.
- The Final Exam will be 90 minutes in length, and multiple-choice and true/false format. It will take place during class time, and will cover material from the entire semester, with a focus on material (lectures, readings, films) from July 10 – July 26<sup>th</sup>.
- The critical book review will be based on **ONE** of two books: *Witching Culture* **OR** *Shamans of the Foye Tree*. They will be available on a first-come, first-served basis, with 50 students maximum reviewing each book. The book review will be 1500 – 1700 words in length, due at the end of the semester. They should include a summary of the book's arguments, and discuss how they relate to and/or illustrate topics covered in class. Further instructions on how to write a book review will be provided on Avenue.

Papers are to be submitted to a dropbox in Avenue to Learn by August 7, 2018, 11:59 pm. **Late papers without an acceptable excuse** (e.g. a medical issue accompanied by proper documentation) **will not be accepted**. Papers submitted via the Avenue to Learn dropbox will be evaluated for originality using Turnitin.com.

## **Topic and Reading Schedule**

### **June 19: Introduction and the Anthropological Study of Religion**

*Read:* Chapter 1 articles by Eller and Wagner in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

### **June 21: Myth, Symbolism, and Worldview**

*Read:* Chapter 2 articles by Narayan and Sood, Wolf, and Geertz in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

### **June 26: Ritual**

*Read:* Chapter 3 articles by Turner, Csordas, and Kapchan in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

### **June 28: Shamans, Priests, and Prophets**

*Read:* Chapter 4 articles by Turner, Vitebsky, and Brown in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

### **July 3: Altered States**

*Read:* Chapter 5 articles by Lewis, Harner, and Hudson in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

## **July 5: Illness, Healing, and Religion**

*Read:* Chapter 6 articles by Foster, Fadiman, and Kenyon in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

## **July 10 – Witchcraft, Sorcery, Divination, and Magic**

**MID-TERM EXAM** – First 50 minutes of class

## **July 12 – Witchcraft, Sorcery, Divination, and Magic**

*Read:* Chapter 7 articles by Thomas, McPherson, and Luhrmann in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

## **July 17 – Death, Ancestors, Ghosts, and Souls**

*Read:* Chapter 8 articles by Metcalf and Lock in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

## **July 19 – Death, Ancestors, Ghosts, and Souls**

*Read:* Chapter 8 articles by Brown and Conklin in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

## **July 24 – Religion in a Changing World**

*Read:* Chapter 9 articles by Hoodfar and Fluehr-Lobban in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

## **July 26 – Religion in a Changing World**

*Read:* Chapter 9 articles by Juergensmeyer and Erzen in *Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion*

## **July 31 – FINAL EXAM**

## **August 7 – BOOK REVIEW DUE**

**The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.**

## Course guidelines

### 1. Late policy:

Please **contact me** if you are unable to submit an assignment on time. I am generally willing to negotiate assignment deadlines in extenuating circumstances. However, based on the due date of the assignment, **if you do not contact me in advance, late assignments will not be graded.**

### 2. Email:

Please ask detailed questions about course material and assignments in person. Please contact me through McMaster mail with matters pertaining to class.

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion. Email Forwarding in MUGSI: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>  
\*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above linkemails that do not originate from a McMaster email account.

### 3. Laptop Policy:

My suggestion is that you hand-write class notes, rather than reading and taking notes on your computer.

If you strongly prefer to use a computer in class, this will be allowed. However, **please be respectful of the instructor and your classmates, and do not engage in non-class-related activities on your computer.**

You will be asked to cease laptop use if it is apparent that your computer is a source of distraction.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own for which other credit has been obtained. (*Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide*)
  2. Improper collaboration in group work. (*Insert specific course information*)
  3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.
- (*If applicable*) In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

### MSAF

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e. no documentation required)
- Rules governing the MSAF are as follows:
  - The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.
  - The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight.
  - The 'one MSAF per term' limit is retained.
  - As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate their relief.
- Policy: The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work or here: [http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests\\_for\\_Relief\\_for\\_Missed\\_Academic\\_Term\\_Work](http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work)

**Academic Skills Counselling and Services for Students with Disabilities** are available through the Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

Tel: 905-525-9140 x28652 Email: [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca)

Website: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

### AODA

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact Marcia Furtado at 905-525-9140 extension 24423 or email [furtam1@mcmaster.ca](mailto:furtam1@mcmaster.ca)