

# ANTH A220: MAGIC, WITCHCRAFT, AND RELIGION

Item	Value
Curriculum Committee Approval Date	10/09/2019
Top Code	220200 - Anthropology
Units	3 Total Units
Hours	54 Total Hours (Lecture Hours 54)
Total Outside of Class Hours	0
Course Credit Status	Credit: Degree Applicable (D)
Material Fee	No
Basic Skills	Not Basic Skills (N)
Repeatable	No
Open Entry/Open Exit	No
Grading Policy	Standard Letter (S)
Associate Arts Local General Education (GE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area 4 Social and Behavioral Sciences 4B Social and Economic Institutions (OD2)</li> </ul>
Associate Science Local General Education (GE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area 4 Social and Behavioral Sciences (OSD)</li> </ul>
California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cal-GETC 4 Social &amp; Behavioral Sciences (4)</li> </ul>
Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IGETC 4 Social&amp;Behavioral Sci (4)</li> </ul>
California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE-Breadth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSU D Soc Politic Econ Inst (D)</li> </ul>

## Course Description

The course provides a comparative overview of systems of magic, witchcraft, and religion from past and present societies around the world. Students will identify and examine supernatural beliefs and practices in cultural settings with respect to the role of the material world as well as social and political systems. Transfer Credit: CSU; UC.

## Course Level Student Learning Outcome(s)

1. Recognize and apply key terminology, theoretical orientations, principles and methods used in the anthropological study of the supernatural and of religion, as well as recognize and apply the role of the study of the supernatural in anthropology's holistic study of humankind.
2. Compare and contrast systems of magic, witchcraft, and religion from the past and the present and from societies around the world.

## Course Objectives

- 1. Identify the theoretical perspectives and key concepts used by anthropologists to investigate the belief in the supernatural.
- 2. Recognize and differentiate the role of myth and ritual in cultures
- 3. Distinguish between mana, animism and animatism
- 4. Examine and evaluate the role of religious practitioners (shamans, priests, prophets)

- 5. Identify cultism and cultish organization
- 6. Recognize and compare the role of witchcraft and paganism in human history
- 7. Discuss belief in demons and role of exorcisms in culture
- 8. Identify various beliefs in the afterlife and death
- 9. Describe revitalization movements and religious syncretism
- 10. Discuss psychic phenomena within the context of science and religion

## Lecture Content

Overview of the anthropological study of religion Anthropological perspectives and theoretical approaches to the study of religion Role of key contributors to the study of religion and the supernatural (e.g. E. B. Tyler, Edmund Leach, Emile Durkheim , etc.) Definition of religion Comparative (cross-cultural) approach Anthropological research methods used to study religion (e.g. participant observation, interview techniques, video recordings, ethnographic reflexivity) History of religious belief and practice Earliest evidence of belief systems in the Paleolithic (e.g. Neanderthals, modern humans) Changes in belief systems in the Neolithic period, for example: Myths and religion Polytheistic societies Monotheistic societies Atheism Supernatural entities and powers Gods/Goddesses Sacred places Ancestors Animism Animatism Role of religious practitioners/specialists Full-time vs. part-time practitioners Social roles vs. religious roles Societal status and influence Integration of religious beliefs and practices with subsistence, social organization, and other aspects of culture Food preferences and taboos Social control (e.g norms and taboos) Social practices (e.g. marriage, family, social hierarchy) Rituals and ceremonies (e.g. rite of passage, rites of inetsification, sacrifice, etc.) Magic and divination Supernatural explanations of birth, life, and death Transitional states between life and death (e.g. ghosts, vampires, zombies, etc.) Ancestors and souls Reincarnation Salvation and the afterlife Cross-cultural approach es to witchcraft and sorcery (e.g. European, African, Native American, modern witchcraft) Beliefs Practioners Social control Exorcism Persecution of witches Religion and culture contact Changes in belief systems occuring after colonization Loss of belief systems Religious syncretism Revitalization movements Persecution and discrimination Holy wars Religious organization Cults Sects Churches

## Method(s) of Instruction

- Lecture (02)
- DE Online Lecture (02X)

## Instructional Techniques

Audio and/or Visual Presentations (Power points, videos, animations, 3D images, etc...) used during lecture and/or uploaded to the course management system Collaborative group work Small group or directed class discussions. Student-instructor conferences to provide assistance or feedback on assignments and exams Provide feedback (handwritten, verbal, and/or electronic) for exams and assignments.

## Reading Assignments

Students will spend 2 hours per week reading assigned chapters from the textbook, additional course handouts, and/or websites which emphasize key concepts to facilitate understanding of the material and participation in class discussions.

## **Writing Assignments**

Students will spend two hours per week researching for and writing papers that compare and contrast belief systems across various subsistence patterns. The paper will require the use of research from peer-reviewed articles.

## **Out-of-class Assignments**

Each student will spend two to four hours visiting a religious establishment/ ceremony/ ritual outside of his/her own belief system. The student will interview a practitioner of that belief to increase the student's awareness of the belief system and its connection to other aspects of culture.

## **Demonstration of Critical Thinking**

Students will make in-class presentations and lead discussion sessions comparing and contrasting modern and ancient types of religious practices and how they relate to changes in the environment, technology, and superstructure within a society.

## **Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration**

Students will work in small groups to discuss the ethnographic research methodologies used by anthropologists to study a culture's religious beliefs. Furthermore, students will evaluate ethnographic reports and identify the uses and limitations of ethnographic methods when exploring belief systems and determine an appropriate methodology for their own research project. Students will write short essays/ journals about observations they made about a variety of belief systems they observed throughout the semester. This requires them to compare and contrast a variety of belief systems across the world.

## **Eligible Disciplines**

Anthropology: Master's degree in anthropology or archaeology OR bachelor's degree in either of the above AND master's degree in sociology, biological sciences, forensic sciences, genetics or paleontology OR the equivalent. Master's degree required.

## **Textbooks Resources**

1. Required Stein, Rebecca L. and Philip L. Stein. *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. , 4th ed. Routledge, 2017