

REL 307 RELIGION AND HEALTH

SPRING 2020

12:30-1:45 Tuesday and Thursday in room 233 CCC

Prof. Alice Keefe

Office: 489A CCC

Office hours: 1:00-2:00 Monday and Wednesday;

2:00-3:30 Tuesday and Thursday and by appointment

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Course description:

This course explores the interrelationships between religion (and/or spirituality) and issues of health, illness, and healing. We will learn about traditional healing practices, including shamanism, and will use our knowledge of these practices as a comparative tool for analyzing dynamics of religious healing in Christian contexts and modern biomedicine. In the final section of the course, we will examine the growing popularity of complementary and alternative medicine and ask questions about the appeal of these alternative healing practices and their place in today's medical marketplace.

Course learning outcomes:

- To equip future healers, including health care professionals, counsellors, religious leaders, with the cultural awareness and sensitivity necessary to go about their work in culturally and religiously diverse environments.
- To develop the capacity to empathetically engage with different worldviews regarding the body, health and healing in order to be able to understand and respond to the different ways people assign meaning to illness and seek healing
- To gain knowledge of diverse array of healing systems embraced by human communities across time and space, and to engage their specific claims about human existence, the cosmos, disease and healing. Modern biomedicine is included in this diverse array and will be treated as one of these healing systems, conditioned like all others by its cultural context.
- To analyze how the forces of globalization are creating a new and unprecedented situation in which diverse systems of healing from around the globe are being appropriated, transformed and used by modern persons as an alternative to or in tandem with modern biomedicine.
- To practice and improve skills in attentive reading, clear writing, and information literacy.

Books on Text Rental:

David Kinsley, *Health, Healing, and Religion: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*

Candy Gunther Brown, *The Healing Gods: Complementary and Alternative Medicine in America*

Additional readings available electronically on Canvas. For best results, these should be printed or at least downloaded onto your own computer, and formatted to permit highlighting and notation.

Criteria for Evaluation:

3 short essays @ 10% each = 30%

Short research paper = 25%

Midterm = 15%

Final exam = 15%

Scheduled and pop quizzes = 10%

Attendance and Participation = 5%

Explanation of Assignments

Midterm (15%) and final exam (15%) will test your knowledge of assigned readings, videos, and class lectures and discussion.

3 Short Essays (10% each). Each essay requires you to reflect thoughtfully on the assigned material with the aim of exercising and improving your skills in close reading, critical thinking and clear writing. Essays will be assessed on a 100 point scale according to the following criteria:

- * essay exhibits a careful reading of the assigned materials
- * essay has a well-articulated main point or argument
- * essay uses quotes and/or specific points from assigned materials to support or illustrate the main point or argument
- * essay is well organized, with a strong introduction, well organized supporting paragraphs and a conclusion that articulates the value or relevance of the argument.
- * essay is concise, coherent, and carefully edited and proofread
- * essay is approximately 2-3 pages in length (450-750 words), typed and double-spaced.
- * essay is handed in on the assigned due date. Late essays will lose 3 points for every class period late.

Short research paper (25 %): Your short research paper will explore a focused question or topic area that arises at the intersection of religion/spirituality and health/healing/medicine/death & dying.

Research papers will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Your research topic must focus on a specific, narrow and well-defined issue or question at the intersection of religion (or spirituality) and medicine/healing. Research paper topics must be approved no later than three weeks in advance of due date.
- Your paper must show evidence, through appropriate use of footnotes or endnotes, of sound research methodology. It is expected that the thesis of your paper will be based on careful consideration and use of at least FIVE relevant sources.
- Your paper must be clearly argued, with the thesis or argument clearly stated at the outset and supported throughout.
- Your paper must be clearly organized, with clearly articulated paragraph structure, including introduction and concluding paragraphs
- Your paper must use correct and consistent format in citations and reference list; any standard citation style is acceptable.
- Your paper must be carefully edited proofread; grammar and spelling errors will bring down your grade.
- Your paper must be typed and double-spaced and approximately **5-7 pages in length.**

Research papers will be due in the 14th week of classes. Late research papers will lose 3 points for every class period late. Papers received after last day of classes (that is, during finals week) will lose 20 points for lateness.

Scheduled and pop quizzes (10%).

- Scheduled quiz dates are indicated on the assignment schedule
- Pop quizzes may be given at any class meeting at the instructors' discretion.
- Each quiz is worth 10 points.
- Quizzes will be based on the reading questions provided for each assignment. You will be able to reference your notebooks during the quizzes, but not the readings themselves. Thus it is in your interest to take good notes on your assignments.
- Pop quizzes and scheduled quizzes cannot be made up. If you have an excused absence on the day a quiz was given and request an alternative make up assignment within two days of the quiz date, Prof. Keefe will assign a short writing assignment in lieu of the quiz. Such writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced, approximately 250-350 words, and submitted within 24 hours of receiving the prompt. These writing assignments must be submitted in hard copy format, either in person or on my office door (489A CCC). They will be graded on a 10 point scale, using the same criteria for effective writing as enumerated under criteria for short essays.
- I will drop your lowest two quiz scores.
- Your grade in this category will be calculated by adding up points earned and calculating their percent value out of 100%.

Attendance and Active Participation (5%)

Class attendance is required. I will take attendance in each class period and expect you to be present.

Active Participation means that you come to class ***having done the assigned reading***, that you have ***a copy of the assigned reading with you*** in class, and that you ***regularly contribute to class discussion***. Excellent active participation will raise your score in the attendance/participation category.

Excessive **unexcused absences** will adversely affect your grade.

Excellent attendance: two or fewer unexcused absences = A in this category.

Good attendance: three to five unexcused absences = B in this category.

Poor attendance: six to eight unexcused absences = C in this category.

Even worse attendance: nine to ten unexcused absences = D in this category.

Failing attendance: eleven or more unexcused absences = specific failing grade calculated by following formula – $x*100/30$ in which x = number of unexcused absences.

Excused absence: An absence may be excused for reasons of illness, family emergency or a school or team related event; if you wish for an absence to be excused, you must send an email to Prof. Keefe stating the reason for your absence in advance of the absence.

Lecture notes will be posted in Canvas. ***It is not the professor's responsibility to fill you in on what you missed if you were absent.*** If you miss class, complete the assignments and carefully study the posted notes; then if you have questions, you can ask your professor.

Classroom Etiquette:

- Cell phones must be muted and put away. Please ask for special permission to have your phone on your desk in cases where it is urgent that you be available for a call.
- Laptop use in class is acceptable, though not recommended for notetaking. Studies show most students learn more effectively by taking handwritten notes. If you are using a laptop for taking notes, you must close all social media sites and other sources of distraction. Laptops are encouraged when we are discussing a reading that you have downloaded (but not printed) from Canvas.
- Do your best to get to class on time. However, sometimes circumstances intervene, and it is OK to enter the classroom late. Please come up after class to get credit for attendance.
- When speaking in class about matters involving religion, be aware of the religious diversity within the class, and strive to ensure that your comments are respectful of difference and contribute to an atmosphere of civil discourse.

Plagiarism and cheating policy:

Plagiarism and cheating are violations of the codes of honesty and mutual respect that binds us together as a community. The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. In addition, all infractions will be reported to the university. For more information regarding the university policy on academic misconduct (plagiarism) and disciplinary procedures, please see chapter 14 of the University Handbook, located at this web page link:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyinfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability Services Office and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way I can. For more information, please visit the Disability Services Office, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>.