

Winter 2012: Religious Studies 114D Religion and Healing

Religious Studies 114D
Tues. & Thurs. 8:00 AM – 9:15 AM
Phelps 1160

Professor Inés Talamantez
Office HSSB 3069
talamant@religion.ucsb.edu

Office Hours: Wed 10:00 AM -12:00 PM or by appointment

Course description: The course begins by introducing the students to interdisciplinary and multicultural approaches and theories regarding the study of religion and healing. The course will focus on understanding the experimentation, evaluation, and sacralization of the biosphere in cultures to meet human physical and spiritual needs. We will explore ecofeminism and alternative medicine and their impacts on American religious life, as well as healing traditions in Native American, Mexican, and Haitian cultures. We will examine ecologically grounded theory, spirituality, and ritual in a variety of contexts. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of consciousness in achieving a balance in mind, body, and spirit. We will discuss these issues utilizing texts, class discussions, and multimedia technologies.

Required texts:

- Readings to be completed before lecture
Pathologies of Power by Paul **Farmer**
The Scalpel and the Silver Bear by Lori **Alvord** and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt.

Course Requirements:

Assignments will be carefully analyzed and discussed in class. Two formal papers will be required.

- **Class participation**
- **First paper is a short essay 5 pages long, due February 9, 2012.**
- **Second paper is a 10 page essay DUE ON THE DAY OF YOUR ORAL PRESENTATION**
- **Oral Presentation (Dates listed below, present ALPHABETICALLY by last name)**

Grading:

Two Paper Proposals.....	10%
Class Participation.....	20%
First Paper (5 pages).....	20%
Second Paper (10 pages).....	25%
Oral presentation of class project.....	25%

The final is an oral presentation of your last paper, because future educated women and men should hone their speaking skills. Successful students will approach reading as an active critical exercise, writing as a process for discovering one's thesis and speaking in class as a respectful dialogue between multiple points of view.

Course Lectures and Readings:

Jan 10: Course Introduction / Health and Suffering

Reading: Farmer pp 29, “On Suffering and structural violence: social and economic rights in the global era”

Jan 12: Health and Healing in Chiapas

Reading: Farmer pp 91, “Lessons from Chiapas”

Jan 17: Liberation Theology and Social Justice

Reading: Farmer pp 139, “Health, healing, and social justice: insights from liberation theology”

Jan 19: Medicine Today

Reading: Farmer pp 160, “Listening for prophetic voices: a critique of market-based medicine”

Jan 24: Ethics in Medicine

Reading: Farmer pp 196, “New malaise: medical ethics and social rights in the global era”

Jan 26: Health Issues and Human rights

Reading: Farmer pp 213, “Rethinking health and human rights: time for a paradigm shift”

Jan 31: Proposal due for 1st paper (2 pages)

Lecture: Navajo Religion

Reading: Alvord, Introduction and Chapter 1: Chantways

Feb 2: Living in two worlds

Reading: Alvord, Chapter 2: Walking the Path Between Worlds and Chapter 3: Journey Down the Medicine Path

Feb 7: Life in balance

Reading: Alvord, Chapter 4: Life out of Balance and Chapter 5:
Rez Dogs and Crow Dreams

Feb 9: 1st Paper Due Today

Lecture: Navajo Healing

Reading: Alvord, Chapter 6: Ceremony Medicine and Chapter 7:
Spiritual Surgery

Feb 14: Navajo Traditions

Reading: Alvord, Chapter 8: The “Navajo Plague” and Chapter 9:
Two Weddings

Feb 16: A Study in Symbolism

Reading: Alvord, Chapter 10: At the Big Medicine Space and
Chapter 11: “Do Not Try to Count the Stars”

Feb 21: Proposal for 2nd paper due (2 pages) + annotated bibliography

Lecture: Navajo Ritual

Reading: Alvord, Chapter 12: The Spirit Horse’s Bridle and
Chapter 13: A Knotted Sash

Feb 23: Oral Presentations and discussion

Feb 28: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 1: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 6: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 8: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 13: Oral Presentations and discussion

March 15: Oral Presentations and Course Review