**Religious Studies 300: Religion and Healing**

Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis

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**Office Hours**: M: 3–4:00 p.m. & by appt

**Semester**: Fall 2013

**Time**: M, W 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

**Location**: CAV 241

(CAV 335)

“*Healing and medical traditions within every culture are intensely concentrated arenas in which foundational notions of the sacred and the ultimate (whether explicit or implicit) come into play within lived daily life*.” – Suzanne J. Crawford

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Illness is a universal human experience as is the desire to make illness meaningful. Despite this universality, cultural and religious differences can produce very different interpretations of the meaning and larger significance of illness both for the individual and those around her or him. In this course we will examine several religiously-informed understandings of illness (of body, mind, spirit, and community) as well as the interpretative and healing strategies that different cultures have developed to explain, address, and alleviate it. The root of the English term "heal” means “to make whole,” suggesting that healing is ultimately about restoring wholeness.

We will investigate:

* cross-cultural views of selfhood, health, illness, and healing;
* the role of ritual, symbol, myth, music, and art in healing;
* the relationship of healing practices to community, cosmology, and sacred narratives;
* how social forces and unequal power relationships contribute to illness

We will begin by briefly considering biomedicine, the predominant theory of illness and practice of healing in the West, which will help establish a common vocabulary and conceptual framework for our studies. We then will examine four different cultural-religious healing traditions: East Asian (traditional Chinese medicine); South Asian (yoga and ayurveda); Native American (Diné or Navajo traditions); and Latin American (Brazilian religions). We shall discuss the notion of the “efficacy of symbols” in each case: the worldview supporting the diagnosis, the root metaphors by which this worldview is expressed, and the transformations of self that emerge during or from healing. In the final unit of the course, we will investigate what happens when religious and biomedical systems of healing collide, using Anne Fadiman’s account of a Hmong family’s troubled journey through the American medical system, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*.

The study of various religious and biomedical approaches to healing raises questions about the differences between disease and illness, curing and healing, religion and folk tradition, institutionalized religion and spirituality. It also highlights cross-cultural specificities in conceptions of the body, agency, morality, knowledge, and selfhood.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To examine conceptions of healing, illness, suffering and wellbeing in different cultural and religious settings, as well as the therapeutic regimens that have been developed to address the root causes of illness within specific cultural contexts.
2. To develop a conceptual framework and vocabulary that enables comparison among different forms of religious and biomedical healing.
3. To identify the root metaphors and philosophical assumptions that structure different healing systems, as well as potential points of overlap and conflict among these systems.
4. To enable students to critically reflect on their own taken-for-granted assumptions about religion, healing, and the body and to foster critical empathy with alternative perspectives.
5. To analyze the power relations (linked to class, gender, ethnicity, history, etc.) that emerge when different perspectives on health and healing come into contact with one another.
6. To develop skills appropriate to the humanities, including the ability to: comprehend, interpret and analyze texts; synthesize information from diverse sources; critically evaluate theories, authors and arguments; and communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Together, these course objectives advance the principles of undergraduate education at IU <[http://www.iport.iupui.edu/selfstudy/tl/PULs](https://www.exchange.iu.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=2658fa2d1da04998a7baa8ef2dff55b1&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.iport.iupui.edu%2fselfstudy%2ftl%2fPULs)>, including core communication skills, critical thinking, intellectual depth and breadth, values and ethics, and the integration and application of knowledge, with particular emphasis on PUL #5, “Understanding Society and Culture.”

REQUIRED TEXTS

You should acquire the following books which, with the exception of #3, are available at the IUPUI campus bookstore and on 2-hr. reserves at the circulation desk of the library:

1. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, Anne Fadiman.

2. *Spirits with Scalpels: The Cultural Biology of Religious Healing in Brazil*, Sidney Greenfield.

3. *Between Heaven and Earth: A Guide to Chinese Medicine,* Harriet Beinfield & Efrem Korngold

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS

Some of the required readings for this course are available in PDF format in the folder titled “Additional Readings” located in the Resources area of Oncourse CL, or directly from: [http://www.iupui.edu/~womrel/Rel&HealingReadings/](http://www.iupui.edu/~womrel/Rel%26HealingReadings/)

It is highly recommended that you access these readings from campus and either print them out immediately or download them to a jumpdrive. These readings are indicated in the class schedule by the abbreviation (ON). They are listed alphabetically by the author and the first words of the title (excluding “The”).

COURSE FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

This course is multidisciplinary and comparative in nature, drawing mostly on the fields of religious studies and anthropology. Although there are no specific prerequisites for enrollment, because it is an upper-level course I will assume some basic familiarity with the academic study of religion. In format, the course is structured as an advanced discussion seminar in which we, as a group, read and discuss the course materials. This means that discussions between students, and between students and myself, will be the main vehicle driving the learning experience in this classroom. As a result there will NOT be a great deal of lecturing in this course. Rather, I expect all students to be active participants in creating a viable and vibrant learning experience in the classroom, rather than be passive recipients of information.

*There is a significant amount of reading required for this course*. You will be expected not only to read the assigned essays or chapters, but also to draw your own connections between the different readings. The classroom will be a site where we will discuss the readings and the connections between them. To guide your reading and help facilitate discussion, I will post reading guide questions periodically. You are expected to come to class having done the assigned readings and completed any reading guide questions. On at least one occasion in the course of the semester, students, working alone or in pairs, will be responsible for facilitating class discussion. Because this course is structured as a collective learning endeavor, its success will depend on the full participation of all of its members: you will get out of it exactly what you are prepared to put in.

If you have not taken seminar classes before, this may be a very new experience for you.

One major difference between seminars and lecture courses is that seminars require ALL

participants to come to every class having done the required readings for the week and ready to contribute actively in class discussions. Any student may be called upon without prior warning to make brief presentations on the assigned readings during the class. *However, seminars are not occasions for presenting uninformed opinions even if they relate to the topic under discussion*. You will be expected to, and indeed called upon, to relate your contributions to the readings and/or other credible—preferably scholarly—sources of information.

GRADING

There are 1,000 total points that can be earned in this class. They are distributed as follows:

Facilitating Discussion 200 points (20% of course grade)

Assignments 300 points (30% of course grade)

Reading Guide Questions 300 points (30% of course grade)

Forums 100 points (10% of course grade)

Participation & Attendance 100 points (10% of course grade)

The following percentile scale will be used to determine grades: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; 59 and under = F. The top and bottom two numbers within each grade bracket correspond to plus and minus grade designations, respectively (e.g., 88-89 = B+, 80-81 = B-).

This is an upper-level university course. I assume that you have a good working command

of English and will expect you to demonstrate that in your written work. No one whose writing

is not clear and whose grammar and spelling are not solid can expect to get a grade as high as

C.

*The \*secret\* formula for getting a good grade in this class*: Attend every session and be fully present. Read and digest all assigned readings and contribute to class discussion in a thoughtful manner. If you don't understand something, ask. Assimilate the content of the course. Spend sufficient time on written assignments, producing at least two drafts of essays and proofreading them before turning them in. If you haven't done all of these things, don't complain about your grade.

EXTRA CREDIT

Periodically, extra credit possibilities will be announced in class. For more information about extra credit in this course, refer to the document entitled “Guidelines for Extra Credit” (on the Resources page of Oncourse).

ONCOURSE

Students must have access to Oncourse and should regularly check our class site for announcements, extra credit options, assignments and other information, particularly if you are absent from class.

ASSIGNMENTS

Written work must be typed and double-spaced, with legible fonts and reasonable margins. On formal papers extensions are granted *only in emergencies*, and only after a consultation with me *in advance of the due date*. Late papers (i.e., those handed in after the due date or extension date) will be penalized as follows: for every business day (M – F) that the paper is late, ten points (a whole letter grade) will be deducted. Students must save copies of written work. Students are expected to hand in a hardcopy of their work—do not e-mail me your work.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory, not optional, and will affect your final course grade. I neither want nor need to know the reason for your absence from class, but be warned that it will have the following consequences: 1) any late homework will receive half-credit and will not be accepted if later than one class period from the due date (see above); and, 2) more than four absences over the course of the semester will affect your final course grade. Exceptions will be made only in cases of documented hospitalization or grave necessity (such as the death of a close relative). In all cases, attendance should take priority over assignments—do not skip class because you have not completed an assignment!

PLAGIARISM AND THE WEB

Plagiarism is the use of the work of others without properly crediting the actual source of the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, entire articles, music or pictures. Plagiarism is a form of stealing and is a serious offense. Avoid the temptation to plagiarize: DO NOT cut and paste sentences or phrases from the internet or other sources into your written work. Do not copy sentences verbatim from the readings into your homework, instead, use your own words. Whenever you take words from, or whenever your ideas or expressions have been shaped by, another author or source (other than our class), you *must* reference these borrowings and contributions using the proper citation format.

Relying on flawed information may lower your grade.  You must also give citations for *every* website you use in anyway.  If, on assignments, you fail to cite your sources, whether you use page references for books or URLs for websites, I will return your assignment without a grade.  To get a grade, you will have to add the necessary references

I may use the anti-plagiarism software “Turnitin.com” to guarantee that the work you submit is all your own. *A* *finding of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for that assignment and notification of the appropriate authorities* (see Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct: <http://dsa.indiana.edu/Code/index1.html>).

CLASS ASSISTANCE

If you need assistance, guidance, some reassuring words, or would just like to chat about something pertaining to the course, drop by during office hours or write me an email.  Please note that you can expect a response to any e-correspondence within twenty-four hours or less during regular business hours; I do not check e-mail after 5 pm or on weekends.

For students who require particular types of accommodation and assistance, please contact IUPUI’s Adaptive Education Services (AES).  You can learn more about AES by visiting its home page, <http://life.iupui.edu/aes/index.asp>.  You can contact AES by phone, 274-3241 (voice) or 278-2050 (TDD/TTY), and e-mail, aes@iupui.edu.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**AUG 19 (M) Introduction to the Course**

Review of syllabus, required readings, course format and expectations

**UNIT I. FOUNDATIONS: ILLNESS, HEALING, EMBODIMENT, SELFHOOD**

**AUG 21 (W) Sickness, Healing and the Self**

Reading: Hahn, “*Sickness and Healing*” (intro & chapter 1) (ON)

Note: skip the section entitled “Plan of the Book” from bottom of page 7-10.

**AUG 26 (M) Paradigms of Embodiment**

Reading: Scheper-Hughes, “*The Mindful Body*” (ON)

**AUG 28 (W) Rituals of the Embodied Self**

Reading: Miner, “*Body Ritual Among the Nacirema*” (ON)

**SEP 2 (M) NO CLASS (LABOR DAY HOLIDAY)**

**SEP 4 (W) Biomedical Rituals: Society and Selfhood**

Reading: Floyd-Davis, “*The Rituals of American Hospital Birth*” (access this article at: [www.terrylarimore.com/BirthRites.html](http://www.terrylarimore.com/BirthRites.html))

**UNIT II. EAST ASIA: COMPLEMENTARY SELVES**

**SEP 9 (M) Chinese Medicine**

Reading: Between Heaven and Earth, chapters 1-3

**SEP 11 (W) Acupuncture**

Reading: Between Heaven and Earth, chapter 13

**Guest Speaker:** **Erica Siegel, Indy Acupuncture**

**SEP 16 (M) Yin/Yang**

Reading: Between Heaven and Earth, chapters 4-5

**DUE:** **Assignment #1**

**SEP 18 (W) The Five Phases**

Reading: Reading: Between Heaven and Earth, chapter 6

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Xiaoming Jin**

**UNIT III. SOUTH ASIA: SUBTLE SELVES**

**SEP 23 (M) Hindu Cosmology**

Reading: Huston Smith, “*Hinduism*” access at: <http://www.hindugateway.com/library/articlesfaith/articles/f_lib_article_hs_people.html>

**SEP 25 (W) Ayurveda**

Reading: 1) “*Ayurveda: History and Philosphy*”: [www.healthandhealingny.org/tradition\_healing/Ayurveda-history.html](http://www.healthandhealingny.org/tradition_healing/Ayurveda-history.html); and

2) “*Introduction to Ayurveda*” (read the first three sections): <http://www.ayurveda-caam.org/education/halpern_intro_ayurveda.html>

**SEP 30 (M) Ayurveda**

Reading: watch the video “*India: A Second Opinion*” at <http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/india701/video/video_index.html>

**Guest Speaker: Ellen Leonard**

**OCT 2 (W) Yoga**

Reading: Desikachar, “*Excerpts from the Heart of Yoga*” (ON)

**Guest Speaker: Ahna Hoke, Invoke Yoga Studio**

**UNIT IV. NATIVE AMERICA: COMMUNAL SELVES**

**OCT 7 (M) Diné (Navajo) Cosmology**

Reading: Schwarz, “*The Cultural Construction of the Nihookáá Dinéé*” (ON)

**OCT 9 (W) Healing and Identity**

Reading: Lewton, “*Identity and Healing in Three Navajo Religious Traditions*” (ON)

**OCT 14 (M) NO CLASS (Fall Break)**

**OCT 16 (W) Ceremony**

Reading: 1) Kinsley, “*Healing Ceremonies Among the Navajo*” (ON); and

2) Brown, “*The Earth, It’s Life Am I: Navajo Chantways*” (ON)

**UNIT V. LATIN AMERICA: POROUS SELVES**

**OCT 21 (M) Brazil**

Reading: Spirits With Scalpels, chapters 8-11

**OCT 23 (W) Afro-Brazilian Spirit Healers**

Reading: Hayes, “*Serving the Spirit, Healing the Person*” (ON)

**OCT 28 (M) Spirit Surgeries**

Reading: Spirits With Scalpels, Introduction and chapters 1-4

**OCT 30 (W)**  **Brazilian Spirit Healers Go Global**

Reading: Rocha, “*Seeking Healing Transnationally: John of God*” (ON)

**UNIT VI. NEW AGE SELVES**

**NOV 4 (M)**  **Valley of the Dawn**

Reading: Dawson, “*Valley of the Dawn*” (48-54) (ON)

**DUE: Assignment #2**

**NOV 6 (W) Valley of the Dawn**

Reading: Hayes, “*Intergalactic Space-Time Travelers*” (ON)

**NOV 11 (M) Santo Daime**

Reading: Dawson, “*Ayahusca Religions*” (up to Barquinha section)

**UNIT VII. MARGINALIZED SELVES**

**NOV 13 (W) Structural Violence**

Reading: Farmer, “*Suffering and Structural Violence*" (ON)

**NOV 18 (M) Diseases of the Colonized**

Reading: Jacob, “*This Path Will Heal Our People*” (ON)

**NOV 20 (W) NO CLASS (**Prof. Hayes will be out of town)

**NOTE:** Begin reading The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down – needs to be completed and ready to discuss for class on DEC 2.

**NOV 25 (M) THE SPIRIT CATCHES YOU AND YOU FALL DOWN**

Reading: Fadiman, The Spirit Catches You

**NOV 27 (W) NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Holiday)**

**UNIT VIII. WHEN RELIGIOUS AND BIOMEDICAL HEALING SYSTEMS COLLIDE**

**DEC 2 (M) THE SPIRIT CATCHES YOU AND YOU FALL DOWN**

Reading: Fadiman, The Spirit Catches You

**DEC 4 (W) FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

Amna (biomedicine); Jason (TCM); Jessica (Ayurveda & Yoga); Mike (Navajo)

**DEC 9 (M) FINAL PRESENTATIONS**

Shane (Afro-Brazilian religions); Khadijah (Spirit Healers); eLinda (Valley of the Dawn); Prof. Hayes (final summary)