

THURSDAY
6:45 TO 10:00
BGC 130

INTR 565:
Folk Religions
COURSE SYLLABUS

PROFESSOR:
A. SCOTT MOREAU
BGC M219; x5949

- 1) **Course description:** Strategies for understanding folk religions are examined and applied through theoretical discussion, case studies, extensive video illustrations, and student-led research presentations.

- 2) **Outcomes:**

Department Mission Statement: Our mission is to develop professionals skilled in the theory and practice of missions for committed service in a dynamically changing world. Therefore we are committed to developing effective cross-cultural professionals who are 1) competent communicators of Christ, 2) skillful in facilitating intercultural understanding, and 3) effective servants.

Student outcomes for the course in relation to the Department Mission Statement:

By the end of this course, the student will have developed as an effective cross-cultural professional in these areas:

- a) *Competent communicator of Christ, as evidenced in that the student:*
 - i) Can speak from the Scriptures with authority and cultural sensitivity about the person and work of Jesus Christ and the necessity for all persons having a relationship with him;
 - ii) Is effective in developing appropriate cross-cultural relationships;
 - iii) Can understand and disciple believers from other cultures in Christian growth;
 - b) *Skillful in facilitating intercultural understanding, as evidenced in that the student:*
 - i) Understands theological foundations and is able to relate them appropriately in decision making;
 - ii) Knows how to study/research cross-cultural situations;
 - iii) Understands cultural dynamics and the role they play in decision-making;
 - c) *Effective servant, as evidenced in that the student:*
 - i) Partners with the local church in its various forms;
 - ii) Seeks to be an agent of positive transformation in the professional context;
- 3) **Texts:**
 - a) Paul Hiebert, Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tienou, *Understanding Folk Religions* (Grand Rapids, Baker, 2000)
 - b) Mark Ritchie, *Spirit of the Rainforest* (Chicago: Island Lake Press, 1996).

- c) David Burnett, *World of the Spirits* (London: Monarch Books, 2000).
- d) Assigned readings from the Network for Strategic Missions (counts as one textbook)
- e) Course notes

4) Assignments

- a) **Reading:** Read the texts following the reading schedule. **Turn in the reading report by May 6 at 7:00 pm.**

To facilitate discussion on the readings, journal one idea, thought, statement, or question you have concerning the reading for each week. By this I mean a total of one entry each week from **all** of the readings for that week, *not* one entry from each reading. Bring this to class and be ready to discuss it.

Concerning the Class Notes: The class notes are not definitive products, but introductions to the ideas found in the field. They are not designed for smooth reading, but as introductory overviews of the type of writing being done and the issues which need to be considered for the course. Possibly you will have many questions from the notes—they will be welcome during class or by appointment with me outside of class. My hope is that you will come to class with your thinking stimulated and in need of discussion rather than listening to a straight lecture. If the former is true, class will run on a seminar rather than lecture format, guided by the discussion generated by the class. You are encouraged to come to class with examples out of your own life and ministry which helps shed light on the issues being discussed.

Concerning the Reading Report: You will be given full credit for everything read on time, 50% credit for everything read late. The questions will be worth 20% of your reading grade. You do not have to ask the question in class to receive credit, but do bring it to class each week so that we may discuss them. On the reading report, simply put a "Y" if you have written the question/comment/idea down before class for that week, and an "N" if you have not.

- b) **Case Studies:** We will work through case studies on three Thursdays (see attached schedule). Follow the instructions in the handout "Case Study Procedures."
- c) **Research paper:** Write a research paper (maximum of 2500 words—please indicate the word length of your paper at the end of the paper--roughly 8 to 10 pages in double-spaced 12 pitch type) on the topic of your choice in regard to folk religions. **Due Thursday, April 29 at the beginning of class.**

5) Grading:

- a) For all class grading, I will use the following grading scale:

Grade	Range	Description
A	96-100	Outstanding: The level of research, thinking, and communication are outstanding. You have mastered the theory and have shown how it is applicable in the context you have chosen. This is not a common grade.
A-	92-96	Superior: The level of research, thinking, and communication are superior. You understand the theory and have shown how it is applicable in the context you have chosen. Well done!
B+	88-92	Very good: The level of research, thinking, and communication are very good. You generally understand the theory and have shown how it is applicable in the context you have chosen, though your work could be stronger in one of the areas.
B	84-88	Satisfactory: The level of research, thinking, and communication are satisfactory. You appear to understand the theory and have made progress in showing how it is applicable in the context you have chosen, though your work could be stronger in both areas.
B-	80-84	Acceptable but average at best: The level of research, thinking, and communication are acceptable. I think you understand the theory and have made a start in showing how it is applicable in the context you have chosen, though I am not completely sure.
C+	76-80	Acceptable but definitely below average: The level of research, thinking, and communication are barely acceptable. I think you have read some of the theory and have started to consider how it is applicable in the context you have chosen, but you have not proven either to me.
C or below	75 or below	Not acceptable: Depending on what I see, I may assume you tried, but I am not sure. The work I see is not appropriate for this class.

- b) The weighted grading for each assignment is:
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|----------------|-----|------------|
| Reading | 25% | |
| Case Studies | 30% | (10% each) |
| Research paper | 45% | |
- c) **Late assignments:** Unless arrangements are made with the professor in advance, all late assignments will be reduced in grade by 10%.
- d) **Cheating and plagiarism:** Cheating (the presentation of someone else's work which the student ought to have done personally) or plagiarism (the use of ideas and information from a specific source without giving credit in some manner to the source) will result in the disqualification (including a grade of 0) of the unit of the course affected by it.
- 6) **Office hours:** my office hours are posted on my door (BGC M219) and on the Web (<http://www.wheaton.edu/Missions/Moreau/officehours.htm>)--feel free to come by and make sign up for some time together.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Written Assignments
3/18	Introduction/Syllabus Tools for Understanding Folk Religions Folk & Formal Religions Worldview	
3/25	Powers in Folk Religions Myth Symbol	CS: The Vulnerable Age (course notes)
4/1	Rituals, Scripts, Lifeways Themes	Report on “The Vulnerable Age” due CS: Parting with the Ancestors (course notes)
4/8	Guidance People of Power	Report on “Parting with the Ancestors” due CS “The Threat of the Spirit Dancers” (Handout)
4/15	Social Security Health and Healing	Report on “The Threat of the Spirit Dancers” due
4/22	Possession Phenomena Systems: <i>Spirit of the Rain Forest</i>	
4/29	Dealing with Death Systems: Folk Islam	Research paper due
5/6	Response to Folk Religions	