ROBIN WRIGHT  PROFESSOR / phone: 392-1625 / E-mail: clasp-fwd-baniwa05@ufl.edu rowrightrobin@yahoo.com SAKAI website

MARY PUCKETT T.A. /

Required or recommended texts:

Text No. 1  Title:  NATIVE RELIGIONS AND CULTURES OF NORTH AMERICA  Author:  LAWRENCE SULLIVAN  ISBN: 9780826414861  Publisher:  CONTINUUM  Copyright: CONTINUUM  Cover:  hardback book  Edition:  1  This text is required (chapters from it will be scanned)

Text No. 2  Title:  THE WORLD WE USED TO LIVE IN  Author:  VINE DELORIA JR  ISBN: 9781555915643  Publisher:  FULCRUM  Copyright:  FULCRUM  Cover:  paperback book  Edition:  2006  This text is required

Text No. 3  Title:  PLAYING INDIAN  Author:  PHILIP DELORIA  ISBN: 0300071116  Publisher:  YALE U  Copyright:  YALE  Cover:  paperback book  Edition:  1998  This text is required

Text No. 4  Title:  NATIVE RELIGIONS AND CULTURES OF CENTRAL AND SOUTH  Author:  LAWRENCE SULLIVAN, ED.  ISBN: 0826411193  Publisher:  CONTINUUM  Copyright: CONTINUUM  Cover:  hardback book  Edition:  1  This text is required (chapters from it will be scanned)
Objectives of the Course: This course introduces the student to the historical and contemporary religious beliefs and practices of Native peoples of North, Central and South America. With such a vast and diverse universe to study, our approach will both present a panoramic overview, particularly in the cases of the major civilizations such as the Maya, Inca, Aztec, and other, recently-studied ancient civilizations. And, the course will focus on intensive contemporary studies of religious ethnographies of native peoples in all three macro-regions of the Americas. Thus, the course is a mix of what we now understand about the religions of the historic great civilizations of the Americas, and what we now understand about contemporary indigenous religiosities. The course will mainly consider issues of historical change and religious continuity.

The Introductory section presents key components of native religions throughout the Americas: the notions of an intersubjective cosmos, the multi-tiered cosmos, and multiple notions of time and space; inter-relationality among spirits, deities, and humans; the centrality of religious specialists: shamans, priests, sorcerers, ceremonial leaders, and prophets; the centrality of reciprocity as both a founding principle of ongoing social life yet, paradoxically, its negation; the importance of “traditional ecological knowledge” to cosmology; and the adaptability of religious beliefs to change. While the course highlights the ‘components’ and resilience of indigenous religions, it also analyzes the principle threats to continuity, specifically focusing on the “appropriations” by non-indigenous peoples of indigenous beliefs.
and practice, the shattering of religious institutions during the conquest, as a result of the imposition of Christianity, or through other political, economic, and social processes. Notions such as \textit{ethnogenesis}, and the \textit{indigenization of Christianity} will be useful to our understanding here.

Following the Introduction, the course will be divided into 3 main sections: (1) Native Central American Religions, mainly Aztec and Mayan. The films and readings are designed to provide both scholarly views on the great civilizations of the past, the visions of the vanquished, and the challenges their historical descendants face today; (2) Native South American Religions, including the Andean Highlands (Inca) but especially, Lowland Amazonia. Here, we will concentrate on \textit{religious ethnographies}, discussing major cycles of sacred stories, the critical importance of \textit{eschatologies}, ancestor ‘cults’, sorcery or ‘dark shamans’, religious movements in history, ‘conversion’ to evangelicalism; and (3) Native North American Religious traditions, especially the immense powers of the religious specialists, the \textit{appropriation} of native cultures and religious traditions by non-native ‘wannabees’ and New Age adaptations, sacred rites and religious renewals, contemporary ceremonialism, and the importance of ‘sacred ecology’ to native peoples’ worldviews. Films will illustrate the various challenges Native North, South, and Central American religious traditions have faced and continue to face today; and how native peoples have forged solutions to contemporary ‘problems’ posed by political and economic changes.

This course can thus be considered under the rubric of the Humanities in that its focus is the religious traditions of native peoples of the Americas, and how they have been studied or presented through scholarly production, cinema, and indigenous perspectives. It seeks to present an in-depth understanding of the \textit{cosmogenies} (views on creation), \textit{cosmologies} (the spatio-temporal structures of the universe), \textit{anthropologies} (relations among all living beings, what constitutes a ‘person’, and what constitute ‘specialists’), and \textit{eschatologies} (views on death and the afterlife) of the native societies studied. The methodologies this course adopts are comparative, historical, and ‘thickly descriptive’, empathetic ethnographies. The instructor’s fieldwork conducted over three decades among the same peoples will provide a constant baseline for comparisons. Another concern is to construct a critical reflection on the possibilities and limitations of doing religious ethnography among an indigenous people whose understanding and worldview is distinct in fundamental ways from the so-called “Western traditions”. How can research tools be modified such that this becomes a meaningful enterprise - one in which the native peoples have an active role in \textit{reconstructing their religious histories} and \textit{writing their own ethnographies}?

The student will learn about native religious traditions of the Americas, which is not offered in any other course, to our knowledge, at this University (this course is required for those who intend to minor in Native American Studies). The students will learn more about the histories of the Americas from the perspectives of the peoples whom European societies and their descendants colonized for centuries.
and who are, only recently, beginning to write their own religious histories from their own perspectives, revitalizing the sacred in new and creative ways. The Writing Requirement (Gordon Rule 2) ensures that students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. As indicated in the Requirements section below, the instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student’s written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization. All written assignments have word counts and submission deadlines.

The materials for the course consist of the readings (articles scanned and included on Sakai, and books to purchase in bookstore or by Amazon.com); films and slides are directly related to the readings and to the lecture material. Discussion groups with the TA will be scheduled on the first day of class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Students are expected to attend all classes and complete assigned readings prior to each class meeting. Class participation and discussion groups count in final grade evaluation. Discussion sections will be established by the T.A. after the first class. Continued absences will not be tolerated; following the third absence, 3 grade points will be taken off the final grade for each day of absence. More than 6 absences will lead to administrative withdrawal from the course;

2) Three written papers on topics that emerge from the readings, each 3-5 pages in length, to be handed in on the week following the final day of Parts II, III, IV;

3) Three reaction papers to films, each 500 words in length. Papers should seek to establish links to the readings and answer specific questions. Papers are due no more than a week following the showing of the film. Papers should be typed in format Times New Roman 12 double-spaced. In all, the four reaction papers are to have 2,000/3,000 written words; Feedback will be provided on all written assignments prior to the last class meeting;

4) Pop-quizzes will be administered whenever the Professor and T.A. consider them necessary.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

20% for the first paper; 20% for the second paper; 20% for the third paper; 25% for the reaction papers; and 15% for class participation and pop-quizzes.

RULES
1. **Plagiarism or cheating**: Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating will automatically receive a grade of zero on the assignment in question and will fail the course. In addition, they will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. Please keep in mind that plagiarism does not consist only in copying verbatim someone else’s material and presenting it as if it were yours. It also includes taking ideas (even paraphrased!) from an author without according him/her proper recognition (through a footnote, for instance). Other forms of cheating (particularly downloading material from the Internet and presenting as if it were yours) will also be subject to the same action. See [http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm) [http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm) for more information on UF policies.

2. **Incompletes are strongly discouraged** and will be given only when students who have finished most of the assignments satisfactorily cannot complete the final requirements due to unforeseen events. If this is the case, students must arrange for the incomplete before the end of the semester.

3. **Make-up exams and quizzes** will be given only under very special circumstances, such as a medical emergency. In that case, students must bring a doctor’s note.

4. Students engaging in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom. Please turn phones and pagers off during class. Texting is not permitted during class, and any inter-nauting during classtime that is not related to the material being discussed will be penalized.

5. **Students with Disabilities**: Students requesting classroom accommodation or special consideration must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation or special consideration.