

RELS 298: GODDESSES IN WORLD RELIGION

Dr. June McDaniel

Fall, 2016

Office: 4 Glebe St, Room 101 (843) 953-5956
Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:00-4:00 PM, TTH 11:00- 11:30



Textbooks: Serinity Young, *An Anthology of Sacred Texts By and About Women*
Clarissa Pinkola Estes, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*
OAKS readings

Welcome to the Goddesses in World Religions class. In this class, we shall study earth goddesses and celestial angels, goddesses of life and death, female saints and gurus who embody goddesses, the queens of heaven and female buddhas and bodhisattvas. We shall look at primary texts, writings about these figures from world religions, and examine ritual practices which are focused on goddesses. We shall look at the role of gender in ideas and experiences of the supernatural.

Attendance: There will be 3 allowed absences. On the third absence, I shall note that the student will be dropped from the class if there is one more absence. If you have any excused absences (illness, emergency) let me know, and I will cross them off the attendance sheet). **There will be 1 point of extra credit on the total grade for perfect attendance.**

If you have a disability that qualifies you for academic accommodation, please present a letter from the Center for Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. For more information, please contact www.cofc.edu/~cds/index.htm

Academic Integrity and the Honor Code: There is a zero-tolerance policy toward plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty in this course. This means that anyone caught taking credit for work that is not his or her own, or cheating in any other way, will receive a failing grade for the entire course, which will show up on the transcript as an XF grade. Students are expected to abide by the Honor Code of the College.

Grading: Your grade will be based on five events, each worth 1/5 of the grade:

Test #1:	20%
Test #2:	20%
Test #3:	20%
Term paper:	20%
Presentation:	20%

The passing grade is D-, or 60. Grades are not curved. They range as:

A	94 and over
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	below 60

Extra credit work can also raise or lower your grade. This can include descriptions of public lectures in Religious Studies, or extra papers or projects on areas of personal interest.

Tests: The three tests will be approximately half short answer and half essay. You will need to be able to write good essays for an A grade. I give makeup tests only for emergencies, and they are harder than the original tests (there is no choice of questions). **There will not be a comprehensive final.**

Term Paper: The paper will be an 8-10 page study of goddesses. Its thesis topic will address one of these questions:

Does religious belief in a goddess affect a particular culture? Is that effect positive or negative? Or

What modern culture needs a goddess? Why is one needed?

You can write a paper for either topic. Argue for a specific position.

Include TWO primary sources in your discussion. The paper should describe the religion generally, the situation of goddesses, and the role of women.

The paper should have a title page with the paper title, your name, the class and section, and the date, and a bibliography page. It will be due on 11/1.

I shall hand out a writing guide to help in the organization of the papers. If the paper is late, 10 points will be deducted per class late. Good papers will be

ACCURATE- so we can learn about the religion and its culture of origin

ORIGINAL-with new information that is not simply copied out of an

encyclopedia, or Wikipedia, showing your own perspective on the topic

INTERESTING- show how it relates to your own interests or expresses some valuable ideas that might interest others

Presentation: The group presentations will demonstrate rituals that deal with goddesses.

Groups will act out a myth or ritual that involves goddesses or female symbols.

You may use costumes, music, props, food, etc. You should explain why this ritual is important to the religion, and groups will hand in a 3-4 page outline on the religion, the ritual and the goddess. Part of the presentation grade will include participation in class discussions during each class.

You need to bring the assigned readings to class (and they must be done *before* the day of class).

OAKS readings should be downloaded and brought to class for discussion. **We will be reading from the assigned materials in every class, so it is essential that you bring your materials to class in order to participate in discussion**

You need to discuss the readings in class and to make thoughtful contributions on and/or ask informed questions about those materials in **each** class. In other words, coming to class *is not enough* to earn you participation credit in this course. You must speak in class *thoughtfully* and *critically* in order to be successful in this course. *Steady and constant participation* throughout the course will earn you successful participation credit. I encourage you to write down your thoughts as you do the readings in order to help you recall them in class (annotating your readings is a very good way to prepare for class assignments and discussions).

Personal Electronics Policy: As a courtesy to everyone else, please turn off all cell phones, pagers, watch alarms, radios, etc., before class. Also, laptops are not allowed in class.

Students must use the old-fashioned method of taking notes by hand. The first violation will result in a warning. A second violation will drop your overall grade by 10 points.

This course satisfies the General Education requirements for a Humanities course and students will achieve two **Student Learning Outcomes**:

- 1) Students will analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted or valued in various expressions of human culture;
- 2) Students will demonstrate effective writing skills with the ability to craft an argument in defense of a coherent thesis statement using and analyzing supporting evidence from primary and secondary sources.

These learning outcomes will be demonstrated on the Signature Assignment, the term paper.

Center for Student Learning: You can utilize the Center for Student Learning's (CSL) academic support services for assistance in study strategies, speaking & writing skills, and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843) 953-5635.

You are encouraged to take advantage of the **Writing Lab** in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor). Trained writing consultants can help with writing for all courses; they offer one-to-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, please call 843.953.5635 or visit <http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/>. It is not considered to be plagiarism.



ALL CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF DURING CLASS!

SYLLABUS

Abbreviations:
 Y- Young, Anthology
 O- OAKS

Date	Topic	Assignment
8/23	Introduction Film ‘Divine Women’	
8/25	Theories about Goddesses	O- Is Female to Male... Why Women Need the Goddess When God was a Woman
8/30	Shamans and Shamanesses	Y- Shamanism, North America- Sedna, Sacred Pipe, Corn Maidens, Hawaii O- Hawaiian goddesses, Mongolian shamaness, Japan shamaness
9/1	African religion, Voodoo goddesses, Gullah	Y- Africa, Kung, Bambara Y- Alternative Religious Movements, Voodoo, Mama Lola; Santeria, spells O- Voodoo goddesses
9/6	Aztec and Maya goddesses Guest speaker	Y- Central and South America O- Aztec goddesses
9/8	Ancient Near Eastern Divinities, Guest speaker	Y- Egypt, Mesopotamia-Isis, Hathor, Ishtar O- Isis and Hathor
9/13	Greek goddesses	Y- Ancient Greece-Pandora, Mother Right, Medea, Diotima O- Goddesses of Greece
9/15	Roman goddesses Discussion	Y- Ancient Rome-Vesta, Magna Mater, Sibyl, Cult of Isis
9/20	TEST #1	
9/22	Judaism- Divine Wisdom, Shekinah	Y- Creation, Lilith and Eve, Proverbs, Wisdom, Zohar O- Luria, Shekinah

9/27	Christianity- Early church, Mary Magdalene	Y- New Testament, Summa Theologica, St. Augustine, Mary Magdalene O- Sophia, Misogynism, Who Was Mary Magdalene
9/29	Christianity and Witchcraft	Y- Malleus Maleficarum O- Women, Seduction, Siren
10/4	Orthodox Christianity, Theotokos Guest speaker	O- Mary
10/6	Islam- rejection of the goddess	Y- Creation, Women, Sufism, Ibn Arabi O- Satanic Verses in Qur'an
10/11	Norse and Celtic goddesses	Y- Northern European paganism, Rhiannon, Norns, Valkyries, Brunhilde O- Mighty in Magic
10/13	Wicca and Neopaganism	Y- Alternative Religious Movements, Neopaganism O- Straight from the Witches Mouth
10/18	TEST #2	
10/20	Hinduism- many types Transgender issues Guru as goddess http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/25/world/asia/india-transgender.html	Y- Sarasvati, Earth, Manu O- Transsexualism, Hijra, Ammachi
10/25	Goddesses of the tooth and breast	Y- Durga, Kali, 3 hymns O- Durga and Kali Y- Sita, Radha, Parvati, Lakshmi O- Lakshmi and Radha
10/27	Divine Feminine and Kundalini Yoga (power point)	
11/1	Buddhism, female bodhisattvas, Tara, Dakinis	Y- Can Women Achieve Enlightenment? Kuan Yin, Wisdom as Feminine, Tara, Yeshe Tsogyel TERM PAPER DUE!
11/3	Goddesses and Psychology Guest speaker	
11/8	Fall break	

11/10	Confucianism, Taoism	Y- Book of Changes, Pan Chao, Dao as Female, Techniques for Immortality, Supernatural wife, Queen Mother of West, Goddess of Lo River, Star Women
11/15	Gender, sexuality and Wildness	W- Women who Run with Wolves Bring discussion questions
11/17	TEST #3	
11/22	No class	
11/24	No class	
11/29	Presentations	
12/1	Presentations	

Note: Potential field trip to see Gnostic priestess!



