

RELS3700: Topics in Religious Studies

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Spring 2020

Course Information

Instructor: Clare van Holm (she/her/hers)

Email: cvanholm1@gsu.edu

CRN: 19868 (online)

Course Prerequisites: None, suggest RELS2001

Office Hours: by appointment only, via GoogleChat

Typically available Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00am - 1:00pm EST

Course Description

This course is based on the premise that patterns of medical pluralism reflect the power dynamics of society at large, including issues of race, gender, class and ethnicity (Baer, 2001). This dynamic is especially visible in the hierarchy of acceptance and views of legitimacy of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) in relation to biomedicine. In framing CAM within the context of the holistic health movement, New Age religious and spiritual culture of the 1970's West Coast, and the American preoccupation with "Eastern" religious systems, students will explore themes of resistance and accommodation, as well as issues of cultural appropriation within popular CAM healing modalities, including naturopathy, herbalism, chiropractic, Ayurveda, Chinese Medicine, acupuncture, meditation and yoga.

Learning Objectives

- Explore the socio-historical contexts (specifically in relation to race, ethnicity, class and gender) of popular CAM modalities practiced in the United States;
- Create a space for personal ruminations and active reflection upon how the student's understanding of the course topics are developing and evolving through a "learning journal" EduBlog;
- Demonstrate course material engagement, critical thinking, and research skills through the completion of various "Choice Board" assignments;
- And cultivate digital competency through the creation and use of an EduBlog through the Wordpress platform.

Course Materials:

- [*Nature Cures: The History of Alternative Medicine in America*](#), by James C. Whorton, PhD. (available as free e-book at GSU library, or ~\$15 paperback used at amazon.com)
- [*Toward an Integrative Medicine: Merging Alternative Therapies with Biomedicine*](#), by Hans Baer (~\$10 paperback used at amazon.com)
- Supplementary materials will consist of articles posted to iCollege and links to external media (podcasts, videos), which can be found in the course reading schedule.

Course Requirements

Discussion Groups

At the beginning of the semester, students will self-select into small groups to meet, **either virtually or in-person**, and discuss the readings six (6) times over the course of the semester. After each group meeting, an assigned student will submit detailed notes based on the group's thoughts, ruminations and questions on behalf of their group. These notes are due on **Sundays by 11:59pm EST in iCollege**. (See Small Group Discussion PDF in iCollege course documents for further details).

Grading for this portion of the course requirements will be determined by a combination of your group notes (participation, depth and breadth of group conversation), as well as peer- and self- reflection and evaluation, submitted at the midpoint and end of the semester.

Reflection Journal (via EduBlog)

Students will also create individual “reflection journals” (in the form of an [EduBlog](#)) that will act as an informal space for students to explore, process, and reflect on the course material and it’s intersection in their own lives. The intention of these blogs is not necessarily to perform the repetition of “correct” knowledge, but instead to document one’s learning journey. In this class’s context, “blogging means being intellectual in front of other people, and helping to broaden the definition of ‘intellectual’ ([Gardner Campbell](#)).”

Specific details and rubrics for the Reflection Journal assignment will be posted during Week 2.

Choice Board Assignments

Students will be given a choice of assignments to complete (and submit via their EduBlogs), ranging in difficulty and hopefully attuned to different learning styles and personal interests. Each assignment is given a value ranging from one star (☆) to four stars (☆☆☆☆); students will need to complete enough assignments to total eight (8) stars.

Examples of assignments include creating a (wikipedia-esque) biography of an alternative healing leader, attending a CAM healing session as a participant-observer, creating a week’s reading of a CAM topic not covered in class, conducting a recorded interview with an alternative medicine healer, and writing a classic research paper.

Specific details and rubrics for the Choice Board assignment will be posted no later than Week 3.

General Housekeeping

Administrative Deadlines:

Students must participate and engage with the course material (group discussion, blog posts and comments) no later than **Friday, January 24**. Failure to do so will be considered a “no-show” and the student will be dropped from the course during the initial phase of GSU’s Roll Verification.

Students must also continue to participate in course blogs, assignments, and group discussions through **Tuesday, March 3rd** (and beyond). Failure to do so will result in your status being adjusted to “stopped attending” and you will be dropped from the course.

The “midpoint” of the class is **Tuesday, March 3rd**. This is the last day to drop the class for a “W”.

Grade Determination

Each student’s grade will be based upon the following:

- Group Discussion - 30%
- Reflection Journal - 25%
- “Choice Board” Course Assignments - 40%
- Miscellaneous Participation - 5%

Grade Scale

In accordance with Religious Studies Department policy, I use a +/- scale: A+ 97-100, A 93-96, A- 90-92; B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82; C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72; D 60-69, F 0-59.

Late Policy

Late work will not be accepted. In the event of extreme circumstances, you must contact me via email and receive written confirmation regarding alternative arrangements in advance of the deadline.

Contacting the Instructor

As this is an online course, email is the best way to communicate with me. Email me directly at cvanholm1@gsu.edu.

I will do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours, although my remote “office hours” are on **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays**. Please only use your **Georgia State University email account**, rather than a personal account. If you use iCollege to contact me, I cannot guarantee a prompt response except on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For questions regarding due dates, readings, and class policies, I will likely direct you to review the syllabus and course documents. For more complex questions, I am happy to set up a conference or video call. Please email me to arrange a mutually agreeable time, but know that I will likely need at least 48 hours notice.

Technology Questions

This class requires technological competency. For questions regarding how to navigate iCollege, please take advantage of GSU’s plethora of technology help at the [Technology Service Desk](#) (404-413-4357).

For EduBlog resources and technical support, see the [Sites.GSU.edu page](#).

COURSE READING SCHEDULE*

*This course syllabus provides a general plan for the semester; it is tentative and changes may be necessary

Week 1: Introductions; Defining Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

- *Toward an Integrative Medicine*: “Introduction” (pg ix-xix) - iCollege
- “Varieties of Healing: A taxonomy of unconventional healing practices” (pg 196-204) - iCollege

Due by Sunday, Jan 19th

- ✓ Enroll in a group based on schedule availability
- ✓ Syllabus Quiz
- ✓ Introduction Survey

Week 2: Medical Pluralism in the United States

- *Biomedicine and Alternative Healing Systems in America*: “Nineteenth-Century American Medicine as a Pluralistic System”, (pg 7-30) - iCollege
- *Nature Cures*: “The Hippocratic Heresy: Alternative Medicine’s Worldview”, (pg 3-24)
- [Gardner Writes \(blog\)](#): “[The Reverend Asked Me a Question...](#)”

- [Gardner Writes \(blog\): "Blogs and Baobabs"](#)

Due by Sunday, Jan 26th at 11:59pm EST

- ✓ Group Discussion Notes #1
- ✓ Create an EduBlog "Reflection Journal"
- ✓ Write your first journal entry

Week 3: Naturopathy, Homeopathy, and Botanical Medicine

- *Nature Cures: Every Man His Own Physician: Thomsonianism* (pg 25-48)
- *Nature Cures: Dilutions of Grandeur: Homeopathy* (pg 49-75)
- *Nature Cures: Therapeutic Universalism: Naturopathy* (pg 191-217)

Week 4: Osteopathy and Chiropractic

- *Nature Cures: The Rule of Artery: Osteopathy* (pg 141-163)
- *Nature Cures: Innate Intelligence: Chiropractic* (pg 165-190)

Due by Sunday, Feb 9

- ✓ Group Discussion Notes #2

Week 5: The Holistic Health Movement

- *Toward an Integrative Medicine: Chapter 1: "The Popularization of Holistic Health and New Age Movements"*, (pg 1-24)
- *Nature Cures: "The Holistic Health Explosion: Acupuncture"* (only 245-257)
- "Alone in a Sea of Rib-Tips": Alvenia Fulton, Natural Health, and the Politics" - iCollege

Week 6: New Age (religious) Movements

- "The New Age Movement and Western Esotericism", Wouter J. Hanegraaff (pg 25-50) - iCollege
- "Metaphysical Healing and Health in the United States", Brett Hendrickson (pg 347-355) - iCollege
- Well + Good, ["Spiritual Activist Rachel Ricketts Challenges White Women to Rethink Wellness"](#)

Week 7: CAM as a Reflection of Social Relations

- "The American Dominant Medical System as a Reflection of Social Relations in the Larger Society", (pg 1103-1111) - iCollege
- "Beyond the Barriers: racial discrimination and the use of complementary and alternative medicine among Black Americans", (pg 1155-1162) - iCollege
- "A systematic review of traditional, complementary and alternative medicine use amongst ethnic minority populations: A focus upon prevalence, drivers, integrative use, health outcomes, referrals and use of information sources" (pg 1137-1156) - iCollege

Due by Sunday, Mar 1

- ✓ Group Discussion Notes #3
- ✓ Group Discussion Individual and Peer Reflection (mid-semester)

Week 8: The Development of Contemporary CAM

- *Toward an Integrative Medicine: Chapter 2: The Semi-Legitimation of Four Professional Heterodox Medical Systems* (pg 25-56)

- *Toward an Integrative Medicine*: Chapter 3: Partially Professionalized Therapeutic Systems: The Struggle for Legitimacy (pg 57-88)

Due by Sunday, Mar 8

- ✓ Choice Board Assignment Check-in : total of four (4) stars worth of assignments completed

Week 9: Chinese Medicine in America: Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture

- *Multicultural Approaches to Health and Wellness in America*, Chun Nok Lam and Soh-Leong Lim, "Traditional Chinese Medicine: A Healing Approach from the Past to the Future" - iCollege
- "Multiple Meanings of Chinese Healing in the United States", Linda L. Barnes, (pg 307-331) - iCollege
- *Nature Cures: The Holistic Health Explosion: Acupuncture* (only 257-270)

Due by Sunday, Mar 15

- ✓ Group Discussion Notes #4

Week 10: Spring Break

Week 11: Protestant Buddhism and Mindfulness Meditation

- "Complementary and Alternative Medicine in America's 'Two Buddhisms'", Paul David Numrich, (pg 344-357) - iCollege
- "When Mindfulness is Therapy: Ethical Qualms, Historical Perspectives", (pg 621-631) - iCollege
- *For Indigenous Minds Only: a Decolonization Handbook*, "Neurodecolonization: Using Mindfulness Practices to Delete the Neural Networks of Colonialism", Michael Yellow Bird, (pg 57-83) - iCollege
 - [OR video: "Decolonizing the Mind: Healing through neurodecolonization and mindfulness"](#)

Week 12: Ayurveda and Americanized Hinduism

- *Transcendent in America: Hindu-Inspired Meditation Movements as New Religion*, "Chapter 2: Laying the Foundation for American-Style Hinduism" - iCollege
- "Asian Medicine in America: The Ayurvedic Case". Reddy, S (pg 97-120) - iCollege

Week 13

- *Selling Yoga*: Chapter 2: "From Counterculture to Counterculture" (pg 20-41) - iCollege
- *Selling Yoga*: Chapter 3: "Continuity with Consumer Culture" (pg 42-72) - iCollege
- [Praxis Center: Yoga and the Roots of Cultural Appropriation](#)
- [Fox News Controversy on Yoga and White Supremacy](#)
- ["How a Popular Decolonizing Yoga Summit Became a Colonizing One"](#)
- ["Decolonizing Yoga for People of Color and the Trope of the White Yoga Teacher"](#)
- [#Namaslay, or how black women are using trap yoga as a mode of spiritual resistance](#)

Due by Sunday, April 12

- ✓ Group Discussion Notes #5

Week 14: Indigenous Healing and Neoshamanism

- "The New Age Sweat Lodge", William M. Clements, (pg 143-162) - iCollege

- "Native American Medicine: The Implications of History and the Embodiment of Culture", Wendy M. K. Peters, Julli M. Green, and Pilar E. Gauthier (pg 172-195) - iCollege
- "Of Seeds and Shamans: The Appropriations of the Scientific and Technical Knowledge of Indigenous and Local Communities" (pg 1-34) - iCollege

Week 15

- *Toward an Integrative Medicine*: "Chapter 4: The Emergence of Complementary and Alternative Medicine and Integrative Medicine" (pg 89-117)
- *Toward an Integrative Medicine*: "Chapter 7: Creating an Authentic Holistic Health System" (pg 149-161)
- "Epistemological challenges to integrative medicine: An anti-colonial perspective on the combination of complementary/alternative medicine with biomedicine" (pg 34-56) - iCollege

Due by Sunday, April 26

- ✓ Group Discussion Notes #6
- ✓ Group Discussion Individual and Peer Reflection (end-semester)

Finals Week: April 28 - May 5

Due by Sunday, Mar 3

- ✓ Choice Board Assignment Check-in : total of eight (8) stars worth of assignments completed

Department of Religious Studies

General Syllabus Statement Spring 2020

- GSU is home to a fantastically diverse student body, and our classrooms are spaces for respectful teaching and learning.
 - Please use the names and pronouns preferred by students and faculty. Students who wish to use a name or pronoun other than what is available on the class roll may introduce themselves to the class using it, or they may contact the instructor via email.
 - Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Access & Accommodation Center in Suite 205 of the Student Center East. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Access & Accommodation Center of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is sought.
- This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Deviations may be necessary.
- The last day to withdraw from a course with the possibility of receiving a W is **Tuesday, March 3.**
- Students are responsible for confirming that they are attending the course section for which they are registered. Failure to do so may result in a WF or F for the course.
- Students who are involuntarily withdrawn may petition the department chair for reinstatement into their classes.
- By University policy and to respect the confidentiality of all students, final grades may not be posted or given out over the phone. To see your grades, check the web (student.gosolar.gsu.edu).
- While the penalty for academic dishonesty is a matter of the instructor's discretion in the Department of Religious Studies, the customary penalty for a violation of the academic dishonesty rules is an "F" in the course. See the University Policy on Academic Honesty on the reverse of this sheet.
- A student may be awarded a grade of "W" no more than 6 times in their career at Georgia State. After 6 Ws, a withdrawal is recorded as a WF on the student's record. A WF counts as an F in a GPA.
- Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State University. Upon completing the course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation.

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For more information on the religious studies program visit: www.gsu.edu/religion

Policy on Academic Honesty, from the GSU Catalog

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The university assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable or unethical conduct related to their academic work.

The university's policy on academic honesty is available [online through the Office of the Dean of Students](#). The policy represents a core value of the university, and all members of the university community are responsible for abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. All members of the academic community—students, faculty, and staff—are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such reporting are on file in the offices of the deans of each college, the office of the dean of students, and the office of the provost.

In an effort to foster an environment of academic integrity and to prevent academic dishonesty, students are expected to discuss with faculty the expectations regarding course assignments and standards of conduct. Students are encouraged to discuss freely with faculty, academic advisers, and other members of the university community any questions pertaining to the provisions of this policy. In addition, students are encouraged to avail themselves of programs in establishing personal standards and ethics offered through the university's Counseling Center.

Definitions and Examples

The examples and definitions given below are intended to clarify the standards by which academic honesty and academically honorable conduct are to be judged. The list is merely illustrative of the kinds of infractions that may occur, and it is not intended to be exhaustive. Moreover, the definitions and examples suggest conditions under which unacceptable behavior of the indicated types normally occurs; however, there may be unusual cases that fall outside these conditions that also will be judged unacceptable by the academic community.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as one's own. Plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student's work as one's own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of the paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else.

The submission of research or completed papers or projects by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the faculty member. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Any work, in whole or in part, taken from the Internet or other computer-based resource without properly referencing the source (for example, the URL) is considered plagiarism. A complete reference is required in order that all parties may locate and view the original source. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course, examples of which should be provided in advance by the faculty member. The student is responsible for

understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

Cheating on Examinations: Cheating on examinations involves giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include the use of notes, computer-based resources, texts, or "crib sheets" during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member), or sharing information with another student during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member). Other examples include intentionally allowing another student to view one's own examination and collaboration before or after an examination if such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the faculty member.

Unauthorized Collaboration: Submission for academic credit of a work product, or a part thereof, represented as its being one's own effort, which has been developed in substantial collaboration with another person or source or with a computer-based resource is a violation of academic honesty. It is also a violation of academic honesty knowingly to provide such assistance. Collaborative work specifically authorized by a faculty member is allowed.

Falsification: It is a violation of academic honesty to misrepresent material or fabricate information in an academic exercise, assignment or proceeding (e.g., false or misleading citation of sources, falsification of the results of experiments or computer data, false or misleading information in an academic context in order to gain an unfair advantage).

Multiple Submissions: It is a violation of academic honesty to submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the faculty member(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit. In cases in which there is a natural development of research or knowledge in a sequence of courses, use of prior work may be desirable, even required; however the student is responsible for indicating in writing, as a part of such use, that the current work submitted for credit is cumulative in nature.