



## ANT 3241 Myth, Ritual, and Mysticism

Section: U01

Hybrid/Certified

Spring Term 2025

### Course Meeting Information

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Class meeting times	
Day:	Fridays
Time:	9:30-10:45 AM
Location:	PC 439

### Professor Information

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Ann-Renee Clark

**Contact:** [aclark@fiu.edu](mailto:aclark@fiu.edu)

**Office Hours:**

By Appointment

### Course Description and Purpose

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Welcome to Myth, Ritual, and Mysticism. In this course, we'll be exploring human belief, tendencies towards myth creation and ritual observance, and mysticism both in and beyond religion. We'll examine the potential cultural, social, and biological reasons that human belief systems came to exist, and people's lived experiences of those belief systems.

Please read this entire syllabus. The syllabus is a contract between students and instructor. It provides an overview of the expectations for this class, as well as what you can expect for your assignments. It also includes my contact information, technology information for the course, and grading and course policies. By continuing to take this course, you are agreeing to the terms and conditions of this class. I'm looking forward to a productive semester, so please read this syllabus carefully and make sure this is the right section of this course for you.

## Course Goals

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### University Core Curriculum

This course satisfies the following University Core Curriculum requirement for Social Science Group Two (university-required):

- Students will demonstrate the ability to examine behavioral, social, and cultural issues from a variety of points of view.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavioral, social, and cultural issues, past and present, local and global.

## UCC Category Description

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This course satisfies the University Core Curriculum (Social Science + Group 2) requirement.

According to this category: Students will demonstrate the ability to examine behavioral, social, and cultural issues from a variety of points of view. Students will demonstrate an

understanding of basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavioral, social, and cultural issues, past and present, local, and global.

## **Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives**

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Student learning outcomes allow faculty to assess the level of proficiency in content knowledge and skills that their students acquire in a course.

If the objective meets a special designation, you will see the code after the objective:

University Core Curriculum: UCC

Gordon Rule Writing: GRW

Global Learning: GL

Civic Literacy: CL

- CO1. identify and use major concepts in the anthropological study of ritual, mysticism and mythology to understand how humans express systems of belief cross-culturally. (GL)
- CO2. Analyze the various roles of different historical, social, and cultural contexts in shaping how human beings experience life, death, and belief (UCC)(GL)
- CO3. Investigate and analyze human belief systems, and discuss how human belief changes through time (UCC)(GL)
- CO4. Apply course materials in assignments via direct references, employing these materials as support for your arguments

## **Expectations of the Course**

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### **Attendance**

You are expected to come to class every day that it meets. A portion of your grade is determined by class participation ("Hybrid Assignments", see "Grading" below) and attendance is required to accomplish this. Accordingly, all undocumented absences are considered unexcused. I do understand however that cars break down, life opportunities arise, and minor catastrophes must occasionally be attended to in-person. You can have two unexcused absences in the course with no grade penalty. You do not have to contact your instructor for an unexcused absence.

If you have a medical emergency or documented illness, if you must be excused for a religious holiday, or if you have a serious family emergency to which you must attend, please bring, or send me, documentation for your absence as soon as possible, so you may be excused as per University policy. Please provide documentation in your initial email if possible, and then view your Modules on Canvas to see what work you will need to make up. (Please do not ask the instructor if you will "miss anything" in class that day, as the answer is "yes"; the readings and assigned work you will miss are on Canvas. The instructor does not post lecture notes online, but students may upload their class notes.) Also, if you're a student athlete, please bring, or send me, documentation of any events that you are required to attend, so you may be excused for these (and only these) event-related absences.

### **Late Work and Make-Up Policy:**

Late work will not be accepted for this class - nor will make-up exams be given - without a documented, university-accepted, excused reason for the absence. See attendance policy for acceptable, excusable absences. If you need to make-up an exam due to an excused absence, please provide the instructor with the appropriate documentation for your absence, and ask the instructor, in-person or via email, when the exam can be rescheduled for you (this must be done within one week of the missed exam if you're well enough to contact the instructor, and before the last week of the semester; make-up exams will not be scheduled during finals week.)

## **Assignments**

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All work for this course must be **original work** intended to address each individual assignment and not work that was previously done for other courses. Each week's readings and films must be viewed or read before that week's class meeting.

This is a hybrid course, so you'll also need to use the Canvas Learning Management System regularly. Your syllabus, video links, course readings, content for hybrid assignments, and any other materials you'll need for the course will be found on the class Canvas site. As a hybrid course, half of your course content will be online - on Canvas - and half of the course content will be in class. Both physical attendance and online work are required for this course.

Course assessments include two essays exams, written in class, six required Hybrid Assignments, written in class and based on online course content, and one Final Quiz that will be completed online during Finals Week.

Additionally, **students are not to use Artificial Intelligence (AI)** programs for any portion of any assignment without explicitly citing and referencing the program (and its creators) as the author of the content, and providing quotation marks for all AI generated content. Failing to cite AI generated content is considered academic dishonesty and will be treated as such (please see FIU policy on academic dishonesty.) The use of AI generated content as a resource is actively discouraged for this course, as such programs essentially are internet "crowd-sourcing" (site-sourcing) programs that often provide incorrect and inaccurate information.

## Assessments

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- In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the "Practice Quiz" from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum hardware requirements.
- All assessments will auto-submit when (1) the timer runs out OR (2) the closing date/time is reached, whichever happens first. For example, if a quiz has a closing time of 5:00 pm but the student begins the exam at 4:55 pm, the student will only have 5 minutes to complete the quiz.

- Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance, please contact FIU Canvas Help Team.

## Grading

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### Grade Distribution

Course Grading Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Essay Exams (in class)	2	300	600	60%
Hybrid Assignments	6 (out of 9)	50	300	30%
Comprehensive Quiz (online)	1	100	100	10%
<b>Total</b>	9	N/A	1000	100%

### Grading Scheme

Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %
A	94 or above	B	83-86	C	70-76
A-	90-93	B-	80-82	D	60-69
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	F	59 or less

## Textbook and Course Materials

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**Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn (3rd edition)**

**Required/Recommended:** Required

**Authors:** McCarthy Brown, Karen

**Publisher:** University of California Press

**Publication Date:** April 5, 2011

**Copyright Date:** 2011

**ISBN 10:** 0520268105

**ISBN 13:** 978-0520268104

**Notes:** Previous editions of this book are fine for use in the class (but they aren't available with the Panther Book Pack)

**Textbook Description:** Vodou is among the most misunderstood and maligned of the world's religions. Mama Lola shatters the stereotypes by offering an intimate portrait of Vodou in everyday life. Drawing on a 35 year long friendship with Mama Lola, a Vodou priestess, Karen McCarthy Brown tells tales spanning five generations of Vodou healers in Mama Lola's family, beginning with an African ancestor and ending with Claudine Michel's account of working with Mama Lola after the Haitian earthquake. Out of these stories, in which dream and vision flavor everyday experience and the Vodou spirits guide decision making, Vodou emerges as a religion focused on healing brought about by mending broken relationships between the living, the dead, and the Vodou spirits. Deeply exploring the role of women in religious practices and the related themes of family and of religion and social change, Brown provides a rich context in which to understand the authority that urban Haitian women exercise in the home and in the Vodou temple.

### **The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft (5th Edition)**

**Required/Recommended:** Required

**Authors:** Stein, Rebecca L. and Philip L. Stein

**Publisher:** Pearson

**Publication Date:** 2024

**Copyright Date:** 2011

**ISBN 10:** 9780205718115

**ISBN 13:** 978-0205718115

**Notes:** Previous editions of this book are fine (3rd and 4th edition of this book is fine for use in the class, but they aren't available with the Panther Book Pack)

### **Panther Book Pack**

The Panther Book Pack rental program provides your required print and digital course materials at a flat rate of \$20 per undergraduate credit hour. When you registered for your classes this session, you were notified via email of the required course materials that are included in the Panther Book Pack.

Make sure to review the pricing for all materials across your classes this semester and compare the cost to the Panther Book Pack flat rate. If the Panther Book Pack is not your best option, you may opt out up to three days after the add/drop deadline. The deadline to opt back into the Panther Book Pack is also three days after the add/drop deadline.

If you do not opt out of the Panther Book Pack rental program, you will be charged \$20 per undergraduate credit hour for which you are registered and the course materials will be reserved in your name. For more details and to learn how to access your course materials, visit [onestop.fiu.edu/bookpack](http://onestop.fiu.edu/bookpack).

## **Course Communication**

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### **Communication with the Instructor**

Outside of class meetings, you can contact your Instructor via Canvas mail or personal email (the address given at the link at the top of this syllabus.) When you send me an email it's important that you include your full name and which course you're in (I have four of them.) State your issue clearly and attach documentation for things such as excused absences. Emails will be answered between 9 and 5 pm, Monday-Friday. Any emails received after 5pm, and emails received on the weekends, will be addressed on the next work day (usually Monday. If there is a true and actual dire emergency, I will address your email immediately, but things like late work, absences, or even missed exams are not actual emergencies.)



Check out the [Canvas Conversations Tutorial](#) or [Canvas Guide](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. I will respond to all correspondences within 24 hours.

## Discussion Forums

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Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

## Policies

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Please review the [FIU's Policies webpage](#). The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses. For additional information, please visit [FIU's Policy and Procedure Library](#).

As a member of the FIU community, you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the [FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code](#).

## Technical Requirements and Skills

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One of the greatest barriers to student success is a lack of basic computer literacy. By computer literacy, we mean being able to manage and organize computer files efficiently and learning to use your computer's operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course, but students enrolled in online courses are expected to have moderate proficiency in using a computer. Please go to the [What's Required webpage](#) to find out more information on this subject

Privacy Policy Statements for Partners and Vendors

- [Canvas](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Adobe](#)
- [YouTube](#)

- [LinkedIn](#)
- [ProctorU](#)
- [HonorLock](#)
- [Turnitin](#)
- [OpenStax](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- [Respondus LockDown Browser](#)

Please visit our [Technical Requirements webpage](#) for additional information.

## **Accessibility and Accommodation**

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The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190.

For additional assistance please contact [FIU's Disability Resource Center](#).

Web Accessibility Statements for Partners and Vendors

- [Canvas](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Adobe](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [ProctorU](#)

- [HonorLock](#)
- [Turnitin](#)
- [OpenStax](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- [Respondus LockDown Browser](#)

Please visit [accessibility.fiu.edu](https://accessibility.fiu.edu) for additional information about accessibility at FIU.

## Academic Integrity

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Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Conduct and Honor Code.

*Academic Misconduct includes:*

### **Cheating**

- The unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids or assistance from another person on any academic assignment or exercise, unless explicitly authorized by the course Instructor;
- Assisting another student in the unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids, unless explicitly authorized by the Instructor; and
- Having a substitute complete any academic assignment or completing an academic assignment for someone else, either paid or unpaid;

## Plagiarism

- The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the Student's own.
- Assisting another student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.

Learn more about the [academic integrity policies and procedures](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

## Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

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If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate's well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with [FIU's Panthers Care website](#).

[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don't wait to call (305) 348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.

## Core Principles of this Course

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This course will serve all students, encouraging collaboration by preparing students to value the differences in others. We appreciate the multiplicity of the lived experiences and perspectives of all students. We are committed to the ongoing education of our students and their open participation within the course.

## Copyright

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The following conduct is prohibited by the Student Conduct and Honor Code. A lack of familiarity with University policy is not a defense to a violation of this Code. Unless specifically noted, the intent is not a required element to establish a policy violation. The following conduct violation or any attempt to violate the Code will be used in charging all Students or Student Organizations;

#### Section 5 | Conduct Violations - g. Computer Misuse

- vii. Unauthorized distribution or downloading of copyrighted materials, including but not limited to, unauthorized peer-to-peer file sharing. This is a violation whether the user is using their own personal computer or the University's information technology system for unauthorized distributions.

Copyright Statement: The materials and content in this course are provided solely for student use during the course. Course materials may not be shared outside of the course or with any third party without the explicit permission of the instructor or content publisher. Visit FIU [Library's Copyright Lib Guide](#) to learn more about copyright law and restrictions.

Additional Resources:

- [Student Conduct and Honor Code](#)
- [Digital Millennium Copyright Act Policy](#)
- [FIU - Copyright Guidance for Students](#)
- [FIU Library's Copyright Lib Guide](#)

## Proctored Exams

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**Please note that the information contained in this section applies only if your course requires a proctored exam.**

Through a careful examination of this syllabus, it is the student's responsibility to determine whether this online course requires proctored exams. Please visit our [Student](#)

[Proctored Exam Instructions webpage](#) for important information concerning proctored exams, proctoring centers, and important forms.