

Course Name: Women and Spirituality Course Number: PHIL 265AE
Professor: Phone:
Email Address
Course Year/Semester: Fall 2018
Course Meeting Location:
Course Meeting Day(s)/Time: Tuesdays 4:30-7:10
Office Location:
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11:30-1:30pm and by appointment
Course Credit Hours: 4 Course Prerequisite(s): n/a
Catalog Description:

Course Description:

This course is designed as an exploration into the various dimensions and ideologies concerning the role of the feminine in relation to the Divine. The course itself will be divided into two sections. In the first part, traditional religious systems and dogmas will be critically examined as to their methodologies and practices in subsuming the Feminine into a patriarchal view of the universe. In the second half, myths and archetypes from ancient Goddess worship to twentieth century feminist *thealogy* will be presented as legitimate alternatives for spiritual, sociological and ecological evolution. Special attention will be placed on feminist metaphysical structures for understanding consciousness and reality. Classes will be conducted by means of lecture, primary and secondary readings and class presentations and discussions. **A word of warning:** Every belief system is a belief system to be transcended.

Primary Texts:

Sexism and God-Talk, Rosemary Radford Ruether
Beyond God the Father, Mary Daly
Weaving the Visions, Judith Plaskow and Carol P. Christ
Integrating Ecofeminism Globalization and World Religions, Ruether
The Spiral Dance, Star Hawk
Her Underground, Celeste and Giancola

Primary Readings: (handouts)

"The Charge of the Goddess," Starhawk's version
Women and Madness, "Demeter Revisited," Phyllis Chesler
The Great Cosmic Mother, "The Organic Religion of Early Women,"
Monica Sjöö and Barbara Mor
Nothing Sacred/Women Respond to Fundamentalism and Terror, Ed. Betsy Reed
The Goddess Within, "The Goddess Wheel," Jennifer and Roger Woolger
"Renewing the Scared Hoop," Dhyani Ywahoo
"Witches," Xavière Gauthier
Creative Ritual Work (for presentations)
Gyn/Ecology, (introduction) Mary Daly

Suggested Additional Text:

EarthPath, Star Hawk

Course Requirements and Grading:

Attendance: Regular attendance for class is required.

Class participation: Students are expected to arrive at class on time and prepared. You are responsible for all material, assigned texts, reading and writing assignments. In addition you are also required to be active participants in both formal class discussions and final presentations.

Writing Assignments: Students will be required to write 1 to 2 pp. response papers for 3 of the primary readings.

Presentations: Students will give a ten minute class presentation.

Class Project: Students will present and participate in a group ritual project.

Research Paper/Activist Project/Ritual: One 10 page research paper to be done in conjunction with a approved activist/ritual project.

Grading Policy: The grade for the course will consist of an average of the presentations, group project and research paper. Students will be provided with the opportunity of earning extra credit by attending philosophy department lectures/events and submitting a written analysis (1 p.). Notice of up-coming lectures will be provided. Any additional credit after that is based on class participation and effort and completely dependent upon the judgment of the instructor.

Incompletes: The instructor does not give “incompletes” or “make-up” exams without a compelling reason (e.g. written medical notification). Note that according to [REDACTED] policy on incompletes, work not completed within one calendar year following the end of the course will automatically and irrevocably turn the final course grade to “F”.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious offense. Please see Additional Information page on Academic Integrity.

COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVE

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENTS
Upon successful completion of this course, students will understand:	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	How the student will be assessed on these learning objectives:
Develop an understanding of the philosophical and religio-cultural underpinnings of world belief systems and thought	Practice and use the methods of textual analysis and critical thinking to explain basic philosophical principles and feminist	Weekly reading assignments, class discussions and presentations

	critiques	
Articulate the philosophical principles behind feminist critiques of world religions	Analyze and critically evaluate the basis for philosophical arguments against patriarchy and systems of domination	Argument analysis for final research paper, as well as class discussions
Engage with their peers in constructive dialogue about global issues concerning, discrimination, oppression and destruction	Utilizing philosophical perspectives for understanding daily life and our relations within a growing global community	Group project and presentations on women, nature, the environment and globalization
Identify and critically evaluate levels of discourses within various domains of language	In reading, writing and speaking, use philosophical analysis as a method of redress	Formal and informal class discussions and dialogues

Course Calendar:

Week I & II (Sept. 4 & 11):

pre-history, pre-patriarchy, origins and beginnings of world religions, ancient myths; Sumer, Babylon, Egypt, India and Greece, matriarchy and tribal communities, Triple Goddess, Great-Mother worship in the Indo-European world, Aryan invasion, subsuming the goddess.

READ: "The Charge of the Goddess," Starhawk's version

Women and Madness, "Demeter Revisited," Phyllis Chesler

The Great Cosmic Mother, "The Organic Religion of Early Women,"

Monica Sjöö and Barbara Mor

Week III (Sept. 18):

the origins of western Judeo-Christian traditions and Islam, language and god, re-examination of biblical myths and the origination of sin, the role of women and good and evil.

READ: *Sexism and God-Talk*, Ruether

Nothing Sacred/Women Respond to Fundamentalism and Terror, Ed. Betsy Reed

Response Paper

Week IV (Sept. 25):

naming evil, the problem with god, reversals, background and foreground, beyond patriarchal thought, woman as the second coming, the final cause.

READ: *Beyond God the Father*, Daly

Response Paper

Week V (Oct. 2):

the role of women in the eastern traditions, Buddhism, Hinduism, eastern Goddess archetypes, primordial feminine energy, enlightenment and oppression.

Film: *Fire*

Week VI (Oct. 9):

the re-emergence of the goddess, modern Goddess worship, Neo-paganism, Native American and ritual work, symbols and theories, working with women and earth energy.

READ: *The Goddess Within*, "The Goddess Wheel," Jennifer & Roger Woolger and "Renewing the Sacred Hoop," Dhyani Ywahoo

Week VII (Oct. 16):

eco-feminism, world religions, and deep ecology, the spirit of earth,

READ: *Integrating Ecofeminism Globalization and World Religions*, Ruether

Gyn/Ecology, (introduction) Mary Daly

Response Paper

Week VIII (Oct. 23):

reclaiming the goddess, the necessity of the feminine, parthenogenesis and creativity, principles of matriarchy, myths of resurrection, liberation and alienation, paganism, pantheism and panentheism, , Gaia theory,

READ: *Her Underground*, Giancola

Week IX (Oct. 30)

Magick and circle work, raising energy, the meaning of ritual

READ: *The Spiral Dance*, Star Hawk

"Witches," Xavière Gauthier

Creative Ritual Work (for presentations)

Week X & XI (Nov. 6 & 13)

class presentations

READ: *Weaving the Visions*, Judith Plaskow and Carol P. Christ

Week XII - XV (Nov. 20 Dec. 3):

Rituals and Group Presentations (Final)

READ: *Her Underground* Celeste & Giancola

***** Paper due dates TBA.

"Feminist activism is responding to a basic conflict between truth and ignorance. The existence of patriarchy depends on their keeping people, including feminist ignorant of other options for being, e.g., pretending that patriarchal religion represents the only and natural way to relate to self, others, and nature. We defiantly unravel their falsehoods, and we weave new possibilities with the female wisdom that we have always carried within us. " C.S.

**"I am not interested in pursuing a society that uses analysis, research,
and experimentation to concretize their vision of cruel destinies. . .
a society with arrogance rising, moon in oppression and sun in destruction."**

Barbara Cameron from *This Bridge Called my Back*

"The women's movement is the single greatest hope for the survival of spiritual consciousness on this planet." Mary Daly

University Closing/Class Cancellation: In the event of the University closing for snow days or other class cancellations student should check their email for information regarding the class lecture, assignments, instructions and make up work etc.

General Continuity Plan: work on blackboard

Specific Continuity Plan: on blackboard

Note: This professor reserves the right to change the course content or due dates based on pedagogical needs.

Student Engagement: To complete this course, students will need to dedicate, at a minimum, the following amount of time to the listed activities:

Assignment	Estimate	Engagement Hours
Class attendance	3x15	45
Course Reading (primary texts)	700 pp x 5 minutes per page	60
Course Reading (secondary texts)	200pp x 5 minutes per page	18
Oral Presentation	10 minutes 2 hour prep	2
Response papers (3)	7 hours each	20
Research/ Activist Project	10pp paper/activist project writing and research	40
Total		180

Additional Information

Note: *This course follows the Federal Government's Credit Hour definition: "An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutional established equivalence that reasonably approximates no less than:*

- (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."



Disability Statement and Link: [REDACTED]

Statement on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

. If you determine that you need formal, disability-related accommodations, it is very important that you register with the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For more information about the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Absences and Attendance Policy from the Student Handbook (link)

[REDACTED]

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic dishonesty will be reported to the [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

Academic Grievance Policy: [REDACTED]

Student Resources: Student Support/Mental Health:

[REDACTED]

Early Alert: [REDACTED]

The Center [REDACTED]) For a complete review of free services, workshops and online resources go to [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Statement for International Students

For more information, go to [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]