

**UCC/UGC/ECCC**

Proposal for New Course

***Please attach proposed Syllabus in*** [***approved university format***](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/UCCForms/syllabus.doc)***.***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Course subject and number: | **REL 393** | 2. Units: | **3** |

[**See upper and lower division undergraduate course definitions.**](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/UCCPolicy/Uplow.doc)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3. College: | **Arts and Letters** | 4. Academic Unit: | **Comparative Cultural Studies** |

5**.** Student Learning Outcomes of the new course. *(*[*Resources & Examples for Developing Course Learning Outcomes*](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/Assessment/CourseLearningOutcomesPDF_090712.pdf)*)*

**1. Describe and analyze key ideas as presented in text, film, and discussion**

**2. Understand and analyze the historical and cultural contexts that inform esoteric figures**

**and institutions, practices, and ideologies as presented in class materials**

**3. Reflect on, and respond in writing to, the challenges to the received understanding of the**

**development of Western culture that the history of esotericism presents**

**4. Communicate effectively your reasoning and informed positions in writing and orally.**

6. Justification for new course, including how the course contributes to degree program outcomes, or other university requirements / student learning outcomes. *(*[*Resources, Examples & Tools for Developing Effective Program Student Learning Outcomes*](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/Assessment/ProgramLearningOutcomesPDF_090712.pdf)*).*

**This course adds diversity to REL’s offerings at the 300-level and contributes to the project of comparative cultural studies. The course contributes to the university’s larger goal of global engagement insofar as esotericism was one of the major conduits for the transmission of ideas from the “East” to the “West,” and in the modern era, back again. It deals with patterns of thought and practice originating in the ancient Near East, the appropriation and development of these currents in Europe beginning in the Renaissance and culminating just prior to the Enlightenment. As Asia, and specifically India, was colonized in the 18th century, western esotericism became increasingly infused and synthesized with Indian religious thought and practice. These facts make this course ideally suited in the CCS curriculum as cultural comparison is integral to the study of esotericism. Furthermore, the course covers the influence of esotericism on literature, the arts, and popular culture, in addition to the impact on religious traditions. Students will be required to question the usual narrative of the intellectual history of western civilizations, so the skill critical thinking will be emphasized and further developed by engagement with this subject matter. This course has been offered twice as a topic course, filled both times, and received very high course evaluations.**

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| 7. Effective **BEGINNING** of what term and year? | **Fall 2014** |  |
| [**See effective dates calendar**](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/timelines/1314Effective.xls)**.** |  |  |

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| --- | --- |
| 8.  Long course title: | **ESOTERIC AND OCCULT RELIGIONS** |
| *(max 100 characters including spaces)* | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 9. Short course title: | **ESOTERIC AND OCCULT RELIGIONS** |
| *(max. 30 characters including spaces)* | |

10. Catalog course description *(max. 60 words, excluding requisites):*

**This course examines the little-known and often dismissed religious traditions known as**

**“esoteric” or “occult.” We will trace the origins of these forms of thought and practice back to their roots in the ancient near-East, as well as similar developments in India, and survey the major European and American figures and movements, especially from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, when there was a flowering of interest in the esoteric.**

11. Will this course be part of any plan (major, minor or certificate) or sub plan (emphasis)?

                                                                                                                                   Yes  No

If yes, include the appropriate plan proposal.

**Part of the REL offerings in the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies; course will count as elective credit and can be taken by major or minors, or any other student in CCS, and is open to students from all disciplines. No related plan changes are needed since course will not be specifically named.**

12. Does this course duplicate content of existing courses? Yes  No

If yes, list the courses with duplicate material. If the duplication is greater than 20%, explain why NAU should establish this course.

13. Will this course impact any other academic unit’s enrollment or plan(s)?              Yes  No

      If yes, describe the impact. If applicable, include evidence of notification to and/or response from

each impacted academic unit

14. Grading option:      Letter grade Pass/Fail Both

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| 15. Co-convened with: |  | 14a. UGC approval date\*: |  |
| (For example: ESE 450 and ESE 550) [See co-convening policy](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/UCCPolicy/crosslist.doc).  \*Must be approved by UGC before UCC submission, and both course syllabi must be presented. | | | |

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| 16. Cross-listed with: |  | | |  | | | | |
| (For example: ES 450 and DIS 450) [See cross listing policy](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/UCCPolicy/crosslist.doc).        Please submit a single cross-listed syllabus that will be used for all cross-listed courses. | | | | | | | | |
| 17. May course be repeated for additional units? | | |  | | | Yes     No | | |
| 16a. If yes, maximum units allowed? | |  | | |  | | | |
| 16b. If yes, may course be repeated for additional units in the same term? | | | | | | |  | Yes     No |

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| 18. Prerequisites: | **Sophomore Status or higher or instructor consent** |  |

If prerequisites, include the rationale for the prerequisites.

**As an upper division course on a relatively unknown facet of religious studies, some previous university coursework would be advisable. The final project is an in-depth research paper, so some previous lower-division work on writing and research are necessary.**

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| 19. Co requisites: |  |  |

If co requisites, include the rationale for the co requisites.

20. Does this course include combined lecture and lab components?                   Yes  No

If yes, include the units specific to each component in the course description above.

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| 21. Names of the current faculty qualified to teach this course: | **Paul Donnelly** |

22. Classes scheduled before the regular term begins and/or after the regular term ends may require

additional action.  Review “see description” and “see impacts” for “Classes Starting/Ending

Outside Regular Term” under the heading “Forms”

<http://nau.edu/Registrar/Faculty-Resources/Schedule-of-Classes-Maintenance/>.

  Do you anticipate this course will be scheduled outside the regular term?   Yes  No

**Answer 22-23 for UCC/ECCC only:**

23. Is this course being proposed for Liberal Studies designation?             Yes  No

       If yes, include a [Liberal Studies proposal](http://www2.nau.edu/~d-ugstdy/_source/docs/LS_Proposal_form.doc) and syllabus with this proposal.

24. Is this course being proposed for Diversity designation?Yes   No

       If yes, include a [Diversity proposal](http://www4.nau.edu/avpaa/EthDiv/Divform2010.doc) and syllabus with this proposal.

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| **FLAGSTAFF MOUNTAIN CAMPUS** |  |
| **Scott Galland** | **1/14/2014** |
| Reviewed by Curriculum Process Associate | Date |
|  |  |
| **Approvals**: |  |
|  |  |
| Department Chair/Unit Head (if appropriate) | Date |
|  |  |
| Chair of college curriculum committee | Date |
|  |  |
| Dean of college | Date |
|  |  |
| **For Committee use only:** |  |
|  |  |
| UCC/UGC Approval | Date |

Approved as submitted: Yes  No

Approved as modified: Yes  No

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| **EXTENDED CAMPUSES** |  |
|  |  |
| Reviewed by Curriculum Process Associate | Date |
|  |  |
| **Approvals:** |  |
|  | |
| Academic Unit Head | Date |
|  | |
| Division Curriculum Committee (Yuma, Yavapai, or Personalized Learning) | Date |
|  | |
| Division Administrator in Extended Campuses (Yuma, Yavapai, or Personalized Learning) | Date |
|  | |
| Faculty Chair of Extended Campuses Curriculum Committee (Yuma, Yavapai, or Personalized Learning) | Date |
|  | |
| Chief Academic Officer; Extended Campuses (or Designee) | Date |
|  |  |

Approved as submitted: Yes  No

Approved as modified: Yes  No

**Northern Arizona University REL 393: Esoteric and Occult**

**College of Arts & Letters Religions**

**Dept. of Comparative Cultural Studies Spring 2015**

Prof. Paul Donnelly paul.donnelly@nau.edu

Office: Riles 115 Office Hours:

**Course Prerequisites**

Sophomore status or higher, or instructor's consent. Departmental policy is that freshmen (those with fewer than 30 credits completed when the course begins) are allowed to register for this course only with the permission of the instructor.

**Course Description**

This course examines the little-known and often dismissed religious traditions known as “esoteric” or “occult.” We will trace the origins of these forms of thought and practice back to their roots in the ancient near-East, as well as similar developments in India, and survey the major European and American figures and movements, especially from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, when there was a flowering of interest in the esoteric. The course then examines the ways that the Enlightenment effectively turned such currents of thought into forbidden knowledge through polemics and ridicule. The last part of the course will emphasize twentieth-century developments in magic,

satanism and systems that combine these lines of thought with Indian religion, especially tantric Hinduism and Buddhism, and the manifestations of these ideas in popular culture.

**Distribution Block: Cultural Understanding (CU)**

**Essential Skills: Critical Thinking**

The mission of the **Liberal Studies Program** at Northern Arizona University is to prepare students to live responsible, productive, and creative lives as citizens of a dramatically changing world. To accomplish the mission of Liberal Studies, Northern Arizona University provides a program that challenges students to gain a deeper understanding of the natural environment and the world’s peoples, to explore the traditions and legacies that have created the dynamics and tensions that shape the world, to examine their potential contributions to society, and thus to better determine

their own places in that world. Through the program students acquire a broad range of knowledge and develop essential skills for professional success and life beyond graduation.

Courses in this block enhance students’ understanding of different cultures of the world through the study of language, literature, religion and artistic creations or other disciplines. These courses provide students with an experience of diverse cultures (different from their own), and an analytic framework that facilitates awareness of how cultures vary and shape human experience. Students will become more familiar with cultures of the world and develop an appreciation for the unique features and

perspectives of varied cultural traditions.

In these courses you will learn about various cultures and traditions to help you understand how they shape human experience.

Through the program students acquire a broad range of knowledge and develop essential skills for professional success and life beyond graduation. In addition to discipline-specific skills, this course will help students develop essential skills as defined in the University’s Liberal Studies Program. The course will cultivate critical thinking and effective oral communication, but will emphasize **critical thinking**.

Critical thinking includes the skills - particularly as applied to one’s own work - of 1) articulating the meaning of a statement, 2) judging the truth of a statement, keeping in mind possible biases, 3) determining whether a conclusion is warranted by the evidence provided.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Active engagement with the content of this course will enable the student to:

1. Describe and analyze key ideas as presented in text, film, and discussion.

2. Understand and analyze the historical and cultural contexts that inform esoteric figures and

institutions, practices, and ideologies as presented in class materials.

3. Reflect on, and respond in writing to, the challenges to the received understanding of the

development of Western culture that the history of esotericism presents.

4. Communicate effectively your reasoning and informed positions in writing and orally.

**Course Structure & Approach**

The course will include lectures and discussions. Films will be shown occasionally to illustrate aspects of Esoteric/Occult traditions being studied. This is a course that requires the student to attend class regularly, pay attention, read, listen, think, be openminded, question assumptions, and strive to understand and to seriously consider the views of others.

**Texts & Required Readings**

The following books contain the readings on which this course is based. They are available in the NAU Bookstore and are available through online merchants such as Amazon.com. The articles and chapters are posted on the course page in BBLearn, or are web sources.

**Books:**

Hanegraaff, Wouter. *Western Esotericism: A Guide for the Perplexed.* London and New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Urban, Hugh B. *Magia Sexualis: Sex, Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006. !

**Articles and Chapters posted on BBLearn** (in the order in which they appear in the course)**:**

Hanegraaff, Wouter. “Forbidden Knowledge: Anti-Esoteric Polemics and Academic Research.” *Aries*, 5 (2005) 225-54.

Kripal, Jeffrey. *The Serpent’s Gift: Gnostic Reflections on the Study of Religion*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006. 1-28.

Sanderson, Alexis. “Saivism and the Tantric Traditions.” S. Sutherland, *et. al, The World’s Religions*. London: Kegan Paul, 1988. 660-704.

White, David Gordon. “Transformations in the Art of Love: Kāmakalā Practices in Hindu Tantric and Kaula Traditions.” *History of Religions* (1998) 38:2. 172-198.

Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. “Helena Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society.” *The Western Esoteric Traditions: A Historical Introduction.* Oxford University Press, 2008. 213-28.

Pasi, Marco. “Varieties of Magical Experience: Aleister Crowley’s Views on Occult Practice.” Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr. *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism.* Oxford University Press, 2012. 53-88.

Bogdan, Henrik. “Envisioning the Birth of a New Aeon: Dispensationalism and Millenarianism in the Thelemic Tradition.” Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr. *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism.* Oxford University Press, 2012. 89-106.

Djurdjevic, Gordan. “The Great Beast as a Tantric Hero: The Role of Yoga and Tantra in Aleister Crowley’s Magick.” Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr. *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism.* Oxford University Press, 2012. 107-140.

Edwards, Dave. “Kenneth Grant and the Magical Revival.” *The History of British Magick After Crowley.* Hidden Publishing, 2007. 284-344.

Urban, Hugh. “The Occult Roots of Scientology?: L. Ron Hubbard, Aleister Crowley and the Origins of a Controversial New Religion.” *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions.* 15:3, 91-116.

Richmond, Keith. “Through the Witch’s Looking Glass: The Magick of Aleister Crowley and the Witchcraft of Rosaleen Norton.” Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr. *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism.* Oxford University Press, 2012. 307-34.

Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. “The Modern Mythology of Nazi Occultism.” *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and Their Influence on Nazi Ideology.* New York and London: New York University Press, 1993. 217-25.

Hutton, Ronald. “Crowley and Wicca.” Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr. *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism.* Oxford University Press, 2012. 285-306.

Hanegraaff, Wouter. “New Age Religion and Secularization.” *Numen* (2000) 47. 288-312.

Dyrendal, Asbjorn. “Satan and the Beast: The Influence of Aleister Crowley on Modern Satanism.” Henrik Bogdan and Martin P. Starr. *Aleister Crowley and Western Esotericism.* Oxford University Press, 2012. 369-94.

Petersen, Jesper Aagaard. “Modern Satanism: Dark Doctrines and Black Flames.” Jesper Aagaard Petersen, ed. *Contemporary Religious Satanism.* Burlington, VY: Ashgate Publishing, 2009. 423-57.

Granholm, Kennet. “Embracing Others than Satan: The Multiple Princes of Darkness in the Left-Hand Path Mileau.” Jesper Aagaard Petersen, ed. *Contemporary Religious Satanism.* Burlington, VY: Ashgate Publishing, 2009. 85-101.

Granholm, Kennet. “The Serpent Rises in the West: Positive Orientalism and Reinterpretation of Tantra in the Western Left-Hand Path.” In István Keul (ed.)*Transformation and Transfer of Tantra in Asia and Beyond.* De Gruyter, 2011. 479-503.

Medway, Gareth. “Sex Slaves of Lucifer.” *Lure of the Sinister: The Unnatural History of Satanism.* New York and London New York University Press, 2001. 175-215.

Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. “Conspiracy Beliefs and the New World Order.” *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity.* New York and London: New York University Press, 2002. 279-302.

Baddeley, Gavin. “Sympathy for the Devil/The Deflowering of an Age.” *Lucifer Rising: sin, devil worship and rock’n’roll*. London: Plexus, 2010. 43-66.

Mørk, Gry. “With my Art I am a Fist in the Face of god: On Old-School Black Metal.”Jesper Aagaard Petersen, ed. *Contemporary Religious Satanism.* Burlington, VY: Ashgate Publishing, 2009. 171-98.

**Course Schedule** (dates based on a previous semester)

Week One Introduction to the course: The Serpent’s Gift

1/15 & 1/17 READ: “Forbidden Knowledge” and “The Serpent’s Gift”

Week Two Western Esotericism and Indic Interlude: The Ancient Period

1/22 & 1/24 READ: Hanegraaff, Ch. 1-3 and “Saivism and the Tantric Traditions”

**\*1/24 last day to drop/delete\***

Week Three Western Esotericism and Indic Interlude: The Medieval through the

Early 1/29 & 1/31 Modern Periods

READ: Hanegraff, Ch. 4-6 and “Transformation in the Art of Love”

**Response Paper #1 due 1/31**

Week Four Western Esotericism: Modernity and Orientalism

2/5 & 2/7 READ: Hanegraff, Ch. 7-9, “Helena Blavatsky and the Theosophical

Society”

Week Five *Magia Sexualis*

2/12 & 2/14 READ: Urban Ch. 1-3

**Response Paper #2 due**

Week Six The Great Beast: Aleister Crowley

2/19 & 2/21 READ: Urban Ch. 4, *The Book of the Law*

**Exam due 2/21 in class**

Week Seven Aspects of Crowley’s Thought and Practice

2/26 & 2/28 READ: “Varieties of Magical Experience,” “Envisioning the Birth of a New Aeon” and “The Great Beast as a Tantric Hero”

Week Eight Crowley and his Successors: Kenneth Grant, Jack Parsons &

3/5 & 3/7 Scientology, Rosaleen Norton

READ: “Kenneth Grant,” “The Occult Roots of Scientology?” and “Through a Witch’s Looking Glass”

**Response Paper #3 due**

Week Nine The Occult and Fascism

3/12 & 3/14 READ: Urban Ch. 5, “Modern Mythology ”

**\*3/15 last day to drop with a W\***

Week Ten **SPRING BREAK**

3/19 & 3/22

Week Eleven Wicca, the Neo-Pagan Revival and New Age Religion 3/26 & 3/28 READ: Urban Ch. 6 and “Crowley and Wicca,” “New Age Religion”

**Response Paper #4 due**

Week Twelve The Church of Satan

4/2 & 4/4 READ: Urban Ch. 7, *Satanic Bible,* “Satan and the Beast” and “Modern Satanism”

Week Thirteen The Temple of Set and the modern Left-Hand Path

4/9 & 4/11 READ: “Embracing Others” and “The Serpent Rises in the West”

**Response Paper #5 due**

Week Fourteen Fear of the Occult: Illuminati and Satanic Ritual Abuse

4/16 & 4/18 READ: “Conspiracy Beliefs” and “Sex Slaves of Lucifer”

Week Fifteen The Occult in Popular Culture: The Dark Side of the 60s &

4/23 & 4/25 Norwegian Black Metal

READ: “Sympathy for the Devil” and “With my Art ”

**Final Papers due 4/25**

Week Sixteen Student Research Presentations

4/30 & 5/2

**Class Participation**

There will be frequent periods of discussion in class. Obviously, you have to be in class to participate. It is imperative that: 1) you have read the material for that day and 2) have thought through what you’ve read. It’s a good idea to take notes and write down questions as you read. These questions will facilitate discussion in class.

**Midterm Exam**

There will be a midterm exam, which will include both short answer and essay questions.

**Response Papers**

Five times during the semester, you will submit a one to two page response paper of an article or chapter that you have read for class.

**The Term Paper**

* You must approve your topic with the professor.
* You must use at least three sources and cite from each work (three times),

which will be listed in your Works Cited page.

* Avoid web resources unless specifically approved by the professor.

The format of the paper should follow all the conventions of a college paper, i.e., giving attention to spelling, grammar, and coherent expression of your ideas. You will lose points for spelling and grammar mistakes. In order to qualify for the full points possible for this assignment (100 points) the paper must show a clear and articulate presentation of your ideas, and must demonstrate that you have really engaged with the ideas and given them a fair, but not uncritical, chance to be heard and understood. Think creatively and analytically. Question the assumptions of the author(s), as well as your own. Ideally this will help you gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the meaning and significance of Esoteric/Occult ideas and practices, both within their own contexts and among other patterns of thought, ancient and modern.

The term paper is to be 2000 to 3000 words in length (about 7 to 10 pages typed), has a value of 100 points, and is due in class on the date indicated. The paper may be submitted late, but no more than 7 days late, and it loses 10% of its value for each day it is late (unless a medical excuse is provided in writing).

**Grading**

Grades for the course will be based on a combination of the following means of evaluating student performance, each having the value indicated:

1) Midterm Exam (100 points)

2) 5 Short Response Papers on chapters/articles (100 points)

3) Term paper (100 points)

The grading scale for the course will be as follows:

90%+ = A

80%+ = B

70%+ = C

60%+ = D

below 60% = F

No extra credit should be expected or requested.

**Class Policies**

Being registered for this course means that the student accepts the specified requirements and policies, and agrees to fulfill them. Every student enrolled in this course is responsible on written assignments for recognizing the distinction between the student's own ideas and those from another

source, and for indicating that difference in the universally accepted fashion through appropriate use of quotation marks and citation of sources. Use of the words and ideas of others in a written assignment without giving them credit by citing the sources of that information is called plagiarism, and is equivalent to theft and lying about it. Plagiarism on an assignment for this course will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Cheating on a test in this course will result in a grade of F for the course. Plagiarism and cheating constitute grounds for further disciplinary proceedings. Please see the university's statements of policy at: http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/academicadmin/policy1.html

And, read the Student Handbook's policies on Academic Dishonesty http://

[home.nau.edu/studentlife/handbook.asp](http://home.nau.edu/studentlife/handbook.asp)

**University Policies**[NAU Policies](http://home.nau.edu/universitypolicies/emsa.asp)