



Gregory Price Grieve
 (336) 334-4913
 108a Foust Building
 gpgrieve@uncg.edu
 Office Hours: TR 11:15-12:15
 (or by appointment)
<http://www.gpgrieve.org>

REL 252: Ritual Studies

Tuesday- Thursday—9:30-10:45

FOUST 111

COURSE DESCRIPTION

By focusing on theory, research methods and students own experience, the course introduces students to ritual studies. Questions investigated include: what does ritual mean? What does ritual do? What is the relation between experience, practice and theory? And how does a researcher negotiate balance between the research and the researched? Students in this course will be active participants, learning how to do library and field work toward the crafting of a major research paper.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- ◆ demonstrate in writing and speech a working knowledge of the basic elements of ritual studies as they are manifested in particular traditions and cultures;
- ◆ classify and describe how selected topics in ritual studies are shaped by contemporary social institutions;
- ◆ make critical comparisons among religious traditions, experiences, and practices across culture, time, ethnicity, race, and gender;
- ◆ formulate the relationship between ritual and other elements of society, such as the connection between religion and power, the role of religious movements as forces of personal and social transformation, and as social justice;
- ◆ demonstrate a working knowledge of, and the ability to apply to, religious practice, various theories, methodological perspectives, and experiential approaches to religious studies.

TEACHING METHODS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR ACHIEVING LEARNING

OUTCOMES: This course is designed as a seminar and writing workshop. Student participation is essential, and while the professor will lead discussion and occasionally lecture, student-led discussion will drive the course. Students will also engage in library research, as well as study the craft of writing academic research papers.

Student participation is graded on the classroom assessment evaluation designed by Kathleen Tunney, of the Southern Illinois University department of Social Work (<http://www.siu.edu/~deder/partrub.html>). Library research and writing is evaluated through the completion of a writing portfolio whose pedagogy is based on the writing and pedagogy program developed by Joe Williams (The University of Chicago) and Greg Colomb (University of Illinois). (CF. Booth, Wayne, Greg Colomb and Joe Williams. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995). Two written exams evaluate the students' ability to classify and describe topics in South Asia, as well as make critical comparisons between religion and other elements of society. A final research paper will evaluate how the student formulates relationships between religion and other social formations, as well as his or her ability to apply various theories and methodological perspectives in religious studies.

EVALUATION AND GRADING: (100 points possible)*

1. *Student Responses:* Critically examine and study the course material. Each member of one of the small groups will submit a critical analysis of the assigned reading to blackboard before each class. Each member of another small group will be assigned to respond to one of the member's analysis. *Print up Blackboard response so you can read them in class.*
..... (one point for each paragraph for a total of) 20 %
2. *One "short-answer" exam*10%
3. *Construction of a Ritual:* Each group will construct rite of passage, which each group will use as initiation ritual to the Writing Process (10 points for the ritual, 5 points for written explanation). 15%
4. Student Participation, for group and class work.....10%
(For details of rubric used, see <http://www.siu.edu/~deder/partrub.html>)
5. Writing Portfolio20%
(Writing exercises, Topic, Annotated bibliography, XYZ problem, Claim, Introduction, Conclusion, Evidence (Sub-claims), Warrant, Qualification, First Version, and Student comments) (CF. *Craft of Research*, 1995)
6. Final Research Paper.....25%

Note: Group work and oral exams cannot be made-up. Written exams cannot be made up unless a written excuse is given before the date of the exam. All late papers in relation to the portfolio will be penalized one half letter grade for each day late. No late assignments will be taken for topic, sources, question, claim, outline, draft introductory paragraph, student draft and student draft comments.

*The standards for grading are those described in the Undergraduate Bulletin, pp. 37-40, and at <http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/0001/uncgGradingSys.html>.

REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS/REFERENCES:

- ◆ Ronald Grimes. *Beginnings in Ritual Studies* (revised edition). Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1995.
- ◆ Ronald Grimes. *Deeply to the Bone: Re-Inventing Rites of Passage*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- ◆ E-reserves and class-handouts.

WEBSITES: See Blackboard for many websites and online articles that will help you in choosing and researching a topic for the final paper.

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE: Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to UNCG *Undergraduate Bulletin*. If the student has any questions, they should speak with me or consult the ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY <http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Honor.html>.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Attendance will be taken every class, and grades may be lowered due to absences. After four absences, your grade will be lowered by one half letter for each absence (e.g., from A to A-, A- to B+, etc.). Tardiness of more than ten minutes will be considered an absence. Final grades will be raised by one half letter for those with perfect attendance. Absences will only be excused with a written document—this includes doctors' appointments and funerals. You may miss up to six classes; after that your grade will be dropped by one half letter.

FINAL EXAMINATION: There is no final exam, but the final paper is due the final day of class at 4:59PM.

IN CLASS RULES

What I try to cultivate in students: Critical thinking, imagination, curiosity, and a healthy skepticism tempered by wisdom, compassion, diligence and a sense of humor.

- *Meta-rule*—There are no excuses for not being prepared for class, for not handing in assignments on time and for not following these guidelines. If you have a situation in which you are unable to comply, come and speak with me before the problem arises.
- *Reading*—You must come to class with material printed out and carefully read. Not coming to class prepared and with the text, whether a book, an article or information from the web — in hand counts as an absence.
- *Computer Access* —All students must have regular access to a computer that is connected to the internet and to a printer.
- *Group Work*— You must have a willingness to read and have other students read your writing. You must have a responsibility of respect towards other student's views, and a duty to take seriously the ideas, words and writing that they put forward.
- *No late Assignments*— All assignments must be turned in on time; those turned in late will not be given credit (assignments are due at the beginning of the class period in which they

are marked in the syllabus). If you must for any reason miss an exam, you must let me know in writing before not after the date. You will receive a zero on the exam if you do not inform me beforehand.

- *No Cellular Phones or Instant messaging!* — Cellular phones must be turned off in the classroom. If your phone rings I will deduct one half letter from your final grade. If you talk on the phone or text message, I reserve the right to fail you. Turn them off before you enter the room!
- *Proper use of laptop computers in classroom* — You may use computers to take notes. This privilege will be revoked if you use the computer for any other purpose. This includes "surfing" the internet, answering emails or playing games.
- *No Chatter* — If I am lecturing, or if a student "has the floor," other talking is highly distracting. If you have something to add to the conversation, please raise your hand and I will call upon you in turn. If you have something to say, which is not related to the class, please wait until the period is over.
- *No Hats, Sunglasses and Roller Skates* — Hats, sunglasses and roller skates are not appropriate in the classroom. Please take them off before you enter.
- *No Eating in Class*— It is not appropriate to eat in the classroom. Please eat outside of the class period.

TOPICAL OUTLINE/CALENDAR:

Week 1—*Introduction: What is ritual and religious practice?*

Tuesday Aug 15: Introduction to course

Thursday Aug 17: What is ritual and religious practice?

READ: "Ritual [First Edition]" and "Ritual [Further Considerations]" in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (this is available as an E-text through the library catalogue, or through the course's library website).

CHOOSE: four small groups (A, B, C and D)

Section One: Introducing Ritual

Week 2 — *The Ritual Field*

Tuesday Aug 22: *Ritual Studies* 1-39

Group A analysis, responded to by group D

(see: sample paragraphs of critical exchange in course documents)

Thursday Aug 24: *Ritual Studies* 40-74

Group A analysis, responded to by group C

Week 3— *Ritual Processes*

Tuesday Aug 29: *Ritual Studies* 75-89

Group B analysis, responded to by group A

Thursday Aug 31: *Ritual Studies* 90-118

Group B analysis, responded to by group D

Week 4—*Theories of Ritual*

Tuesday September 5: *Ritual Studies* 119-136

Group C analysis, responded to by group B
Thursday September 7: *Ritual Studies* 137-160
Group C analysis, responded to by group D

Week 5— *Ritual and Theater*

Tuesday September 12: *Ritual Studies* 161-219
Group D analysis, responded to by group C
Thursday September 14: *Ritual Studies* 220-271-
Group D analysis, responded to by group A

Week 6—

Tuesday September 19: **Exam # 1**

Section Two: Re-inventing Rites of Passage

Thursday September 21:
READ: "Rites of Passage: An Overview [First Edition]" and "Rites of Passage: An Overview [Further Considerations]" in the Encyclopedia of Religion (this is available as an E-text through the library catalogue, or through the course's library website).
Deeply to the Bone: 1-15

Week 7— *Celebrating New Life, Ritually Nurturing the Young*

Tuesday September 26: *Deeply to the Bone* 15-56
Group D analysis, responded to by group B
Thursday September 28: *Deeply to the Bone* 57-86
Group D analysis, responded to by group C

Week 8— *Coming of Age*

Tuesday October 3: *Deeply to the Bone* 87-124
Group C analysis, responded to by group A
Thursday October 5: *Deeply to the Bone* 125-150
Group C analysis, responded to by group A

Week 9 — *Divining Mates, Making Kin*

Tuesday October 10 (No Class for Fall Break)

Thursdays October 12: *Deeply to the Bone* 151- 216
Group B analysis, responded to by group C

Week 10 — *Living with the Dead, Exiting Gracefully*

Tuesday October 17: *Deeply to the Bone* 217-253
Group A analysis, responded to by group B

Thursday October 19: *Deeply to the Bone* 254- 284
Group A analysis, responded to by group D

Week 11— *Passages Troubled and Uncharted*

Tuesday October 24: *Deeply to the Bone* 285-334

Group B & C analysis, responded to by group A & D
Thursday October 26: *Deeply to the Bone* 335-347
Group A & D analysis, responded to by group B & C

Section Three: (w)riting

Week 12-16: In the final section of the class we will put the text to work by writing a final 5-7 page research paper. This creative undertaking is based upon Wayne Booth's *Craft of Research*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995). These will include the creation of an Annotated bibliography, XYZ problem, Claim, Introduction, Conclusion, Evidence (Sub-claims), Warrant, Qualification. At this time we will break down into smaller groups of five persons.

Final Paper Topic: Using at least one theoretical approach from the readings, make an argument about a specific rite of passage. Use websites on Blackboard to help you locate a topic.

Tuesday October 31: *What is Your Topic!*

READ: Booth 1-33

DUE: Your topic. a piece of visual culture

* Library Visit

Thursday November 2—*Topics, Questions, Problems*

(SMALL GROUP)

Reading: Booth, 40-89

Due: Annotated Bibliography [At least five sources, three of which must be through the library.]

Tuesday November 7 — *Making a Claim*

(SMALL GROUP)

Reading: Booth, 111-138

Due: X, Y Z Exercise

Thursday November 9—*Subclaims: Evidence, Qualifications and Warrants .*

(SMALL GROUP)

Reading: Booth, 138-181

Due: Paper Structure

Tuesday November 11 — *Planning and Revising*

(SMALL GROUP)

Reading: Booth, 189-221

Due: Revised Paper Structure

(Thanksgiving Break)

MONDAY November 27, email first version to small group members and professor

Tuesday November 28—*Introduction and Conclusion*

(SMALL GROUP)

Reading: Booth, 222-237

Other Group members papers [print up and bring to class]

Due: First Version

Thursday November 30— Revising

Reading: Booth, 263-288

Due: Re-written Introduction and Conclusion

MONDAY December 4th, **Hard copy** of *second version* and Portfolio are due in my out box by 4pm. (Religious Studies Office, Foust 109). Remember the meta-rule. Emailed or late copies will not be accepted.

Wednesday and Thursday Decemeber 6 and 7th,
Presentation of Rites of Passage and written analysis due.

MONDAY December 11th, **Hard copy** of *final version* is due in my out box by 4pm. (Religious Studies Office, Foust 109). Remember the meta-rule. Emailed or late copies will not be accepted.