

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Professor Information



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### Course Description and Purpose

This online course integrates theoretical discussions of myth and ritual, as interrelated cultural dimensions of religion, with analyses of the relatively contemporary medium of film. In each case, a collective artistic experience employs narrative form to evoke, to explain, or even to create meaning. Following the trail of 19th-century anthropology and 20th-century psychology, we will examine the binding connections between myth and ritual, and we will also seek out their secular analogues in literature and drama on our way toward film as an integrative multi-media form of cultural expression. We will explore the sociological implications of mainstream cinema (such as Spielberg, Pixar, etc.) as shared experience, film adaptations of myth versus myth-inspired storytelling, theological and political interpretations (e.g., of alien films), and much more. Online interactive features will include live discussion, video, and even some amateur filmmaking on the part of the students.

### Global Learning Initiatives

The Honors College Seminars: Aesthetics, Values, and Authority, examine the aesthetic underpinnings of culture and foundations of what commonly are held to be “western values.” Discussions will focus not only on these paradigms, but also on the authority

and power relationships associated with them. This course aims to fulfill the goals of the global learning initiative. Innovative pedagogical strategies will be utilized to raise students' awareness of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues. The interdisciplinary nature of the Honors College will facilitate students' ability to develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems, as well as their willingness engage in problem solving in diverse settings.

### **Global Learning Initiatives:**

**Global Awareness (GA on the syllabus)** - Students will demonstrate knowledge of the interrelated global dynamics (social-cultural, political, economic, etc.) that shape aesthetics, values, and authority in diverse cultural contexts.

**Global Perspective (GP on the syllabus)** - Students will be able to analyze the multiple global forces that shape their understanding of aesthetics, values, and authority — economic, political, sociological, technological, and cultural. Global

**Engagement Global Engagement (GE on the syllabus)** - Students will be able to develop solutions to local, global, international, and/or intercultural problems and be able to articulate the causes and contributions to these problems through the paradigm of aesthetics, values and authority.

Appropriate assignments are designated GA, GP, and GE, respectively on the weekly schedule.

### **Course Objectives**

#### **After successful completion of this course student will be able to...**

- analyze and articulate six dimensions of religion, how they interrelate, and how they contribute to a working definition of religion.
- evaluate contrasting opinions about the relationship between two particular dimensions of religion, myth and ritual. Included among these opinions are various forms of myth-ritualism, monomyths of kingship succession, and the pattern of the hero.
- compare and contrast the themes, applications, and legacies of myth and ritual as they appear in the art forms of literature, drama, and film.
- employ critical and creative thinking skills in assessing the psychological and sociological effectiveness of filmmaking as a literary/dramatic medium for transmitting elements of myth and ritual.
- compare and contrast genres and styles of film (such as science fiction, martial arts films, documentaries, animated films, etc.) and gauge the effectiveness of each in expressing and delivering elements of myth and ritual.
- employ structured argumentation and public speaking skills in presenting seven video blogs. These will apply and evaluate theoretical orientations from the textbook and lectures to the assigned films.

- articulate in formal writing an analysis of a film that they choose. To do this, they will draw upon at least three theorists of myth and ritual discussed in the course.
- synthesize concepts from the weekly readings, lectures, and films to create short original films of their own.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### Policies

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.

### Honors Policies

Registration in this course implies an acceptance of and compliance with the Honors College policies for students and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity.

### Honors Citizenship Requirements

Beginning in Fall 2014, Honors College students are required to accumulate at least 20 citizenship points each academic year (Fall and Spring) by attending Honors College activities. Students attending only one semester (Fall or Spring) are required to accumulate 10 citizenship points.

### Community Service Requirements

Community Service: All Honors College students must complete at least 20 volunteer service hours per academic year (fall/spring). The best way to be involved is by working with the City of Sweetwater via our unique Honors College-Sweetwater Partnership. Opportunities there include tutoring, working with the Senior Citizens' Center, offering citizenship classes, and helping the Li'l Abner Foundation's work with children. Other opportunities include working with virtually any non-profit organization and campus fundraising projects. To document your community service hours, log onto [MyHonors](#). Volunteer hours DO NOT count toward the 20 citizenship points. See <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/community-service/>.

### Student Portfolios

The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students' learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what "artifacts" or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience.

### Honors Education in the ARTS (HEARTS)

The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to "explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets.

## Academic Honesty And Plagiarism FIU Academic Misconduct Statement

In The Honors College, the term “honor” refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

### Procedures and Penalties

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the [procedures outlined in the Honors College website](#), and the [Academic Misconduct Procedures](#).

Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

- [FIU Code of Academic Integrity](#)
- [FIU Honors College Plagiarism Policy](#)

## Academic Misconduct Statement

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 to 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 Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

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

## Technical Requirements & Skills

One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course 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 using a computer. Please go to the "[What's Required](#)" webpage to find out more information on this subject.

*This course utilizes the following tools:*

- [Youtube](#)

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

#### Accessibility And Accommodation

Please visit our [ADA Compliance](#) webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

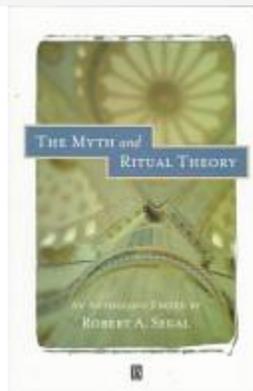
Please visit [Blackboard's Commitment Accessibility](#) webpage for more information.

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

#### Course Prerequisites

Students must be enrolled in the Honors College and have advisor approval to take upper-level courses.

#### Textbook



#### **The Myth and Ritual Theory**

Robert A. Segal

Blackwell Publishing, 1998

ISBN-10: 0631206809

ISBN-13: 9780631206804

[Book Info](#). You may purchase your textbook online at the [FIU Bookstore](#).

#### Films

*Raiders of the Lost Ark*

*Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*

*Black Orpheus*

*Pan's Labyrinth*

*2001: A Space Odyssey*

*E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*

*Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*

*Princess Mononoke*

*Star Wars Episode Four: A New Hope*

*Star Wars Episode Five: The Empire Strikes Back*

*Star Wars Episode Six: The Return of the Jedi*

*Dances with Wolves*

*The Natural*

### Expectations of This Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

### Students are expected to:

- **Review the How to Get Started information** located in the course content.
- **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction with a photo of yourself in the appropriate discussion forum. [See student Bio Activity]
- **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Blackboard.
- **Interact online** with instructor/s and peers and keep up with all assignments.
- **Review and follow** the course calendar. Any appropriate changes will be sent via course message and announcement.
- **Log in to the course** (several times per week)
- **Respond** to discussion boards, blogs and journal postings as required
- **Submit** assignments by their corresponding deadlines.
- **Use word doc or docx** to submit assignments, double line space your work using academic style writing. Some formats are not compatible and cannot be opened in Blackboard; thus your compliance is important. If

you send an incompatible document, it will be returned with a grade deduction and resubmitted in the proper format for a grade.

## Library

The FIU library provides a number of services to distance learning students. For example:

- Students can request a chat session in Learn 9 for an explanation on how to access library resources.
- Students can request detailed instructions on how to access library resources.
- One-on-One assistance from the Distance Learning Librarian.

Don't struggle through your library research alone! Help is available. For further information, contact Sarah Hammill, Distance Learning Librarian, via email at [hammills@fiu.edu](mailto:hammills@fiu.edu) or call 305-919-5604.

You can visit the FIU Library at: <http://library.fiu.edu>

## Statement of Understanding Between Professor And Student

Every student must respect the right of all to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students must adhere to a standard of academic conduct, demonstrating respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University.

As a student taking this class:

- I will not represent someone else's work as my own.
- I will not cheat, nor will I aid in another's cheating.
- I will be honest in my academic endeavors.
- I understand that if I am found responsible for academic misconduct, I will be subject to the academic misconduct procedures and sanctions as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Your signature is required for documentation that you have read and adhere to the policies for these Online courses

## COURSE DETAIL

### Course Communication

Messages is a private and secure text-based communication system which occurs within a course among its course members. Users must log on to Blackboard to send, receive, or read messages. The Messages tool is located on the Course Menu, on the left side of the course webpage. It is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

This is the best method to communicate with your instructor privately.

Visit our [Writing Resources](#) webpage for more information on professional writing and technical communication skills.

## Course Video Blogs (Vlogs)

Blogs are an open communications tool for students to share their thoughts. Here you can post text, images, links and attachments, open for comments.

(2 minutes minimum) students will be required to record and submit brief graded video blogs or “vlogs” seven times during the semester. These consist merely of video of the students speaking. From the reading and lectures, students will utilize theoretical approaches about myth and ritual applied through the lens of the films we are reviewing. Students will also offer their own interpretation of the films’ meaning and impact. Each video must be preceded by a written outline. Instructor will provide detailed prompts of what to look for when preparing each Vlog. **30% of final grade**

- This course has 7 assignments utilizing the Blog tool.
- The Introduce Yourself Vlog is a great opportunity to ensure all your tools are working appropriately and a great way to meet your classmates.
- Within week 1 module you will find information on how to upload a video to YouTube and how to embed that video through YouTube's embed feature.
- Students will upload their videos to their personal YouTube channel and then into the assignment's particular blog by the due date noted in the weekly calendar portion of this syllabus.
- Blogs can be found in the Bog portion of the course menu or within the content area of the course.

## Discussion Forums

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.

## Assessments

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](#).

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 Online Support Services](#).

## Assessments

Quizzes – Each week students will complete a short quiz covering material discussed in that week’s readings and lectures. **30% of final grade**

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](#).

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 Online Support Services](#).

### Course Essay

Essay – (5 pages minimum) students will select a film of their own choosing to view and analyze. Students will conduct their own original analysis of the mythic and ritual elements portrayed or commented upon in the film. To construct an original analytical lens through which to view the film in question, students will integrate the ideas of at least three theorists discussed in the course. **15% of final grade**

### Submitting a Paper to Turnitin:

AFTER YOU HAVE WRITTEN AND SAVED YOUR PAPER ON YOUR HARD DRIVE, you must submit the paper to Turnitin. You will receive a report from Turnitin indicating similarities between the text in your paper and text in an existing document. Turnitin highlights those similarities, providing an annotated document showing your paper and the original source and the percentage of the paper that was plagiarized. Plagiarism is a serious transgression in the University; students who plagiarize can be dismissed for academic misconduct.

You may re-submit your paper (overwrite a previously submitted paper) to Turnitin BEFORE THE DUE DATE to correct plagiarism. I suggest you do that. A paper that indicates a high level of direct quoting and/or lack of citations and referencing will earn a failing grade.

### Procedure for submitting you paper through Turnitin:

- CLICK on the TURNITIN icon on the Course Content page.
- You will see paper assignments for MODULES 1-10 plus the Term Paper. CLICK on the correct MODULE paper assignment.
- CLICK on the following statement: "If you would like to submit a paper to this assignment, click here."
- Follow the instructions on the page for a SINGLE FILE UPLOAD. This includes indicating enrolled student, name, and submission title.
- CLICK on "Browse" to locate your paper file on your hard drive.
- CLICK "Upload"
- CLICK on "Submit" to submit your paper.
- You will be asked "Is this the paper you want to submit?" Confirm that it is the correct paper and CLICK on "Yes, Submit." You MUST do this last step for the paper to be submitted!
- After you confirm your submission, a digital receipt will be e-mailed to you. To view your submission, click the portfolio button.

### Re-Submitting a Paper:

You may overwrite your previous submission until the due date/time set for the assignment. Any second or subsequent submission will overwrite the original file submission.

- Follow the steps for a first time submission.
- CLICK on the "Resubmit" button in the class portfolio page. This allows the re-submission of the paper.
- The originality report for any re-submission will require an additional twenty four hours to generate.
- Review the detailed [Turnitin Instructions](#) on how to submit your assignments and how to review the Grademark comments (feedback) from your professor.

### Short Films

(3 to 15 minutes) students will become amateur filmmakers by creating a short original film utilizing themes discussed in the course (relating to myth and ritual) and elements of film (such as sound, music, photography, plot, performance, etc.). These student films can tell a straightforward structured story, or they can employ a more impressionistic or conceptual approach. In terms of equipment, ideally this will require only a smart phone video recorder and user-friendly web-based editing software. In addition to the final video product, students will also submit social media exercises, a storyboard, release forms for actors, and a brief abstract of their film. **30% of final grade**

### Grading

Course Requirements		Number of It	
Quizzes		14	
Vlogs		7	
Course Essay		1	
Personal Short Film (Project)		1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>23</b>	

Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)	Letter
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F

### COURSE CALENDAR

#### Module Weekly Schedule

## Module 1: Course Introduction

### Week 1 Introduction Aug 20 - 27

#### Assignments:

- View the instructor's welcome message, and record your own. Upload a short video of yourself in which you tell us (1) your name, (2) your major field of study, (3) some geographical history about yourself such as where you're from and where you've been, and (4) a film that you find particularly transformative or inspiring and why. **Due Aug 28 at 11:59 p.m.**

*View lecture and read syllabus carefully*

## Module 2: Dimensions of Religion and the Development of Myth-ritualism

### Week 2 Aug 27 - Sept 3

#### Read:

- Begin Segal's anthology, pp. 1-34.
- Introduction
- "William Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

#### Film:

- *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

#### Assignment:

- **Quiz - Due Sept 4th at 11:55 p.m.**

### Week 3 Sept 3 - Sept 10 (Labor Day Holiday)

#### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 35-57
- "James Frazer, The Golden Bough"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

#### Film:

- *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

#### Assignment:

- **Quiz - Due Sept 25 at 11:55 p.m.**

### Week 4 Sept 10 - Sept 17

#### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 58-92
- "Jane Harrison, Themis"
- "S. H. Hooke, The Myth and Ritual Pattern of the Ancient East"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

#### Film:

- *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*

## Module 2: Dimensions of Religion and the Development of Myth-ritualism

### Assignment

- Quiz - Due Sept 25 at 11:55 p.m.
- Vlog Response - Due Oct 2 at 11:55 p.m.

## Module 3: Uses of Classical Mythology in Contemporary Film

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 93-117
  - "Gilbert Murray, Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy"
- View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Week 5**  
*Sep 17 - Sept 24*

### Film:

- *Black Orpheus*

### Assignment:

- Quiz - Due Oct 2 at 11:55 p.m.

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 118-140
  - "F. M. Cornford, A Ritual Basis for Hesiod's Theogony"
  - "Ivan Engell, New Year Festivals"
- View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Week 6**  
*Sep 24 - Oct 1*

### Film:

- *Pan's Labyrinth*

### Assignment:

- Vlog Response - Due Oct 9 at 11:55 p.m.
- Quiz - Due Oct 9 at 11:55 p.m.

## Module 4: Beyond the Infinite: Extra Terrestrials and Human Transformation

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 141-171
  - "A. M. Hocart, The Life-giving Myth"
  - "E. O. James, The Beginning of Religion"
- View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Week 7**  
*Oct 1 - Oct 8*

### Film:

- *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*

## Module 4: Beyond the Infinite: Extra Terrestrials and Human Transformation

### Assignment:

- **Quiz - Due Oct 16 at 11:55 p.m.**

**Week 8**  
*Oct 8 - Oct 15*

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 172-190
- "Bronislaw Malinowski, Myth in Primitive Psychology"
- "Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

### Film:

- *2001: A Space Odyssey*

### Assignment:

- **Vlog Response - Due Oct 23 at 11:55 p.m.**
- **Quiz - Due Oct 23 at 11:55 p.m.**

## Module 5: Literary Applications of Hero Myth

**Week 9**  
*Oct 15 - Oct 22*

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 191-217
- "Lord Raglan, The Hero of Tradition"
- "Jessie L. Weston, From Ritual to Romance"
- "A Practical Guide to Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*" by Christopher Vogler

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

### Film:

- *Star Wars Episode Four: A New Hope*

### Assignment:

- **Quiz - Due Oct 30 at 11:55 p.m.**

**Week 10**  
*Oct 22 - Oct 29*

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 210-44
- "Northrop Frye, The Archetypes of Literature"
- "Stanley Edgar Hyman, The Ritual View of Myth and the Mythic"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

### Film:

- *Star Wars Episode Five: The Empire Strikes Back*

## Module 5: Literary Applications of Hero Myth

### Assignment:

- Quiz - Due Nov 6 at 11:55 p.m.
- Essay - Due Nov 6 at 11:55 p.m. through turnitin.com

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 245-266
- "Francis Fergusson, The Idea of a Theater"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Week 11**  
*Oct 29 - Nov 5*

### Film:

- *Star Wars Episode Six: The Return of the Jedi*

### Assignment:

- Vlog Response - Due Nov 13 at 11:55 p.m.
- Quiz - Due Nov 13 at 11:55 p.m.

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 267-284
- "Herbert Weisinger, The Myth and Ritual Approach to Shakespearean Tragedy"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Week 12**  
*Nov 5 - Nov 12*  
*(Veterans Day)*

### Film:

- *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*

### Assignment:

- Quiz - Due Nov 20 at 11:55 p.m.
- Storyboard Short Film - Due Nov 20 at 11:55 p.m.

### Read:

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 285-304
- "René Girard, What Is a Myth?"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Week 13**  
*Nov 12 - Nov 19*

### Film:

- *Princess Mononoke*

### Assignment:

- Vlog Response - Due Nov 27 at 11:55 p.m.
- Quiz - Due Nov 27 at 11:55 p.m.

## Module 6: National Myth in the New World

**Week 14**  
Nov 19 - Nov 26  
(Thanksgiving)

**Read:**

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 305-340
- "Theodor H. Gaster, Thespis"
- "Clyde Kluckhohn, Myths and Rituals: A General Theory"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Film:**

- *Dances with Wolves*

**Assignment:**

- **Quiz - Due Dec 4 at 11:55 p.m.**

**Week 15**  
Nov 27 - Dec 3

**Read:**

- Continue Segal's anthology, pp. 341-356
- "Walter Burkert, Homo Necans"
- "Claude Lévi-Strauss, Structure and Dialectics"

*View all lectures carefully and take notes*

**Film:**

- *The Natural*

**Assignment:**

- **Vlog Response - Due Dec 11 at 11:55 p.m.**
- **Quiz - Due Dec 11 at 11:55 p.m.**

**Week 16**  
Dec 3 - Dec 8

**Assignment:**

- **Short Films with Abstracts - Due Dec 14 at 11:55 p.m.**

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change. While the instructor does not anticipate any major changes, please consult him for the latest version as minor updates are occasionally warranted.