

# ANT 4241 Ritual and Symbolism

Spring 2014

T,R 2:00-3:20

HC 116

Instructor: Dr. Rachel Corr  
HC 108 799-8018  
Office Hours: M, W, F 10-12  
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Course Description: In this course we first look at some of the classic anthropological works on symbolism and ritual and then turn to more recent developments through ethnographic case studies. We will view symbolism and ritual as they relate to political movements, rites of passage, secret societies, dramatic performances, and social dramas. We will read specific cases of ritual change, and the use of ritual as a vehicle for historical narratives and political expression.

## WAC

This writing intensive course serves as one of two "Gordon Rule" classes at the 2000-4000 level that must be taken. You must achieve a grade of "C" (not C-minus) or better to receive credit. Furthermore, this class meets the University-wide Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) criteria, which expect you to improve your writing over the course of the term. Writing-to-learn activities have proven effective in developing critical thinking skills, learning discipline-specific content, and understanding and building competence in the modes of inquiry and writing for various disciplines and professions.

Course Objective: To make students familiar with how different scholars approach the study of ritual and symbolism and to give the students tools to do their own analysis.

Requirements: There will be regular unannounced quizzes (on readings, lectures, and videos) throughout the course. There will be no make up quizzes, but the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Students are required to write one 3-4 page paper on a set of readings, and a final 8-10 page paper on one of the last two sets of readings. The final paper will go through several stages of revision. Late work will be marked down a third of a letter grade for every three days late. Incompletes will be granted in exceptional circumstances.

## Participation and Classroom Etiquette Policy

In order to enhance and maintain a productive atmosphere for education, personal communication devices, such as cellular telephones and pagers, are to be disabled in class sessions. **No laptops or cell phones. Students who violate this policy, and students seen doing work for other classes during this class will receive an F for their participation grade.**

Students are permitted up to three unexcused absences and it will not affect your grade. More than three absences will affect your participation grade. Special circumstances must be discussed with the instructor.

## Policy on Accommodations

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 117 (772-873-3441) -- and follow all OSD procedures.

### Academic Integrity Policy

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001. **Students caught plagiarizing will receive an F for the course.**

### Grading:

Quizzes	25%
Short Paper	25%
Participation	25%
Final Paper	25%

### Required Books:

Edmund Leach *Culture and Communication*

Victor Turner *The Ritual Process.*

Douglas, Mary, *Purity and Danger*

All other assigned readings are on Blackboard

### Schedule

	Tuesday	Thursday
Jan. 10-12	Introduction	Leach Ch. 2-7
Jan. 17-19	Finish Leach (Ch. 8-19).	Firth: "Public Symbols and Private Reactions"
Jan. 24-26	Obeyskere: "Medusa's Hair; Douglas: Introduction	Douglas ch. 2-3
Jan. 31-Feb. 2	Douglas ch. 6-7	Douglas ch. 8
Feb. 7-9	Finish Douglas	Bakhtin, selections from <i>Rabelais and His World</i> (Introduction only) Powerpoint: Rumpelstilksin's bargain chapter).
Feb. 14-16	Limon: "Carne, Carnales and the Carnavalesque	Weismantel: "City of Women"
Feb. 21-23	Van Gennep: "Territorial Passage"	Turner ch. 3 <b>In-class discussion of paper assignments</b>
Feb. 28-March 1	Turner ch. 4-5	<b>Leach or Douglas papers due.</b> Video: Massai Women
Spring Break March 5-11		
March 13-15	Library research	<b>Discuss paper topics</b>
March 20-22	<b>Turner papers due</b>	Performance: Schechner

March 27-29	Symbols and Political Power: Kertzer “Ritual, Politics, and Power;”	Class discussion of findings; <b>Discuss writing</b> (Strunk and White)
April 3-5	<b>First Draft</b> of Papers due	presentations
April 10-12	Presentations	Presentations <b>In-class discussion of revision process</b>
April 17-19	Papers returned for revision	Video: The trance dance among the !Kung
April 24	<b>Final papers due</b>	

Description of Paper Assignments and Feedback:

Writing assignments promote critical thinking and analytical writing; require students to analyze academic discourse and non-academic reportage; encourage students to recognize and examine the intellectual and/or cultural assumptions that underlie course readings and their own writing.

Students are required to write two papers on the course material. The first paper will be a 1000 word analysis of one of the authors (Leach, Douglas, or Turner). The second paper will be a 3,000 word independent research paper. Papers will be returned for revision, with substantive feedback from the instructor. All papers will be graded based on grammar, style, extent to which supporting evidence is appropriately cited, extent to which an understanding of the texts is demonstrated and improvement of writing.

If this class is selected to participate in the university-wide WAC assessment program, you will be required to access the online assessment server, complete the consent form and survey, and submit electronically a first and final draft of a near-end-of-term paper.