

Polytechnic, Tempe, and West campuses

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| 1.) DATE: 4-24-09 | 2.) COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Maricopa Co. Comm. College District |
| 3.) COURSE PROPOSED: Prefix: PSY Number: 225 Title: Psychology of Religion Credits: 3 | |
| CROSS LISTED WITH: Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ; | |
| 4.) COMMUNITY COLLEGE INITIATOR: WILLIAM T. FARRAR IV PHONE: 623-935-8478 FAX: | |
| ELIGIBILITY: Courses must have a current Course Equivalency Guide (CEG) evaluation. Courses evaluated as NT (non-transferable are not eligible for the General Studies Program. | |
| MANDATORY REVIEW: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The above specified course is undergoing Mandatory Review for the following Core or Awareness Area (only one area is permitted; if a course meets more than one Core or Awareness Area, please submit a separate Mandatory Review Cover Form for each Area). POLICY: The General Studies Council (GSC-T) Policies and Procedures requires the review of previously approved community college courses every five years, to verify that they continue to meet the requirements of Core or Awareness Areas already assigned to these courses. This review is also necessary as the General Studies program evolves. | |
| AREA(S) PROPOSED COURSE WILL SERVE: A course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. Although a course may satisfy a core area requirement and an awareness area requirement concurrently, a course may not be used to satisfy requirements in two core or awareness areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirements and the major program of study. | |
| 5.) PLEASE SELECT EITHER A CORE AREA OR AN AWARENESS AREA: Core Areas: Select core area... Awareness Areas: Cultural Diversity in the United States (C) | |
| 6.) On a separate sheet, please provide a description of how the course meets the specific criteria in the area for which the course is being proposed. | |
| 7.) DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Description <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Syllabus <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Criteria Checklist for the area <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Table of Contents from the textbook required and/or list or required readings/books <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of how course meets criteria as stated in item 6. | |
| 8.) THIS COURSE CURRENTLY TRANSFERS TO ASU AS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DEC PSY prefix <input type="checkbox"/> Elective Effective date: 2010 Spring Course Equivalency Guide Is this a multi-section course? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Is it governed by a common syllabus? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no | |
| Chair/Director: SUSAN KARPINSKI | Chair/Director Signature: |

AGSC Action: Date action taken: Approved Disapproved

Effective Date:

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

| ASU--[C] CRITERIA | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES | | | |
| YES | NO | | Identify Documentation Submitted |
| | | 1. A Cultural Diversity course must meet the following general criteria: | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The course must contribute to an understanding of cultural diversity in contemporary U.S. Society. | The class is focused on cultural diversity as can be seen in the following elements of the course competencies that explicitly address cultural issues (see official course outline for full explanation): 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19. Furthermore, major elements course outline all include a cultural component (i.e., IE; IIA,B,C; IIIA; IVC,D,F; VC; VIA,D; VIIC) |
| | | 2. A Cultural Diversity course must then meet at least one of the following specific criteria: | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. The course is an in-depth study of culture-specific elements, cultural experiences, or cultural contributions (in areas such as education, history, language, literature, art, music, science, politics, work, religion, and philosophy) of gender*, racial, ethnic and/or linguistic minority groups** within the United States. | Course competencies that focus on cultural or gender comparisons (see official course outline for full explanation): 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19. Course outline components comparing cultural or ethnic groups include 4 of the 7 major elements (IIIA,C;IVC,D;VC;VI A;VIIC) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. The course is primarily a comparative study of the diverse cultural contributions, experiences, or world views of two or more gender*, racial, ethnic and/or linguistic minority groups** within the United States. | |

ASU--[C] CRITERIA

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>c. The course is primarily a study of the social, economic, political, or psychological dimensions of relations between and among gender*, racial, ethnic and/or linguistic minority groups** within the United States.</p> <p>*Gender groups would encompass categories such as the following: women, men, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender individuals, etc.</p> <p>**Cultural, racial, ethnic, and/or linguistic minority groups in the U.S. would include categories such as the following: Hispanics, African Americans, Native Americans/First Peoples, Asian Americans, Jewish Americans, Muslim Americans, members of the deaf community, etc.</p> | |
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| Course Prefix | Number | Title | Designation |
|---------------|--------|------------------------|-----------------|
| PSY | 225 | Psychology of Religion | CULTURAL |

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria.
Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

| Criteria (from checksheet) | How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column) | Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus) |
|---|---|---|
| Example-See 2b. Compares 2 U.S. cultures | Example-Compares Latino & African American Music | Example-See Syllabus Pg. 5 |
| Criteria 1. The course must contribute to the understanding of cultural diversity in America. | <p>The following are only some of the examples of how this course contributes to an understanding of diversity in contemporary U. S. Society</p> <p>The course delineating three psychological dimensions of religion (social, cognitive, and biological/evolutionary) of religions in the USA and showing how these elements serve a common set of psychological needs through a diversity of cultural methods.</p> <p>As part of the course, students delineate the five elements of religious maintenance as outlined by Rue (2005) requiring students to show how different religions approach these dimensions differently in their goal of religious maintenance.</p> <p>Describe the three dimensions of religious experience and how they can give rise to cultural difference. Students discuss how different religions place different emphasis on these three dimensions and how these difference in emphasis in emphasis lead to the diversity in the interpretation of religion.</p> | <p>(Also see 3rd column of Criterion 1 above)</p> <p>Week 1 in syllabus</p> <p>Week 2 in syllabus</p> <p>Weeks 3 and 4 in syllabus</p> |

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| | <p>Students explore the visual and auditory elements of how religious experience is conveyed and we discuss how various cultures differ in terms of aesthetic emphasis</p> <p>Students discuss the cultural, psychological and socioeconomic factors that lead to the growth of new religious movements and discuss how different religious movements address these factors based on local factors such as economic situation and addressing of psychological need. We then address how these needs give rise to the various types of new religious movements.</p> <p>The class discusses the dynamic elements of religions, syncretism, in which religions blend elements of other religions into their own structures. We discuss why syncretism arises, and how it creates unique, novel expressions of religion.</p> <p>As part of the class, students present and share information about smaller religions or new religious movements, with an emphasis on those in the USA. They apply the various psychological models to these religions to show how they address common human needs using a broad spectrum of diverse strategies.</p> | <p>Week 7</p> <p>Weeks 8, 9 and 12 in syllabus</p> <p>Weeks 11 and 13 in syllabus</p> <p>Midterm Project</p> |
| <p>Criteria 2a. In-depth study of culture specific elements, cultural experiences, and cultural contributions within US.</p> | <p>The class is an in-depth investigation of how culture influences religious expression. The focus of the course develops an understanding of religion as a human psychological phenomenon while addressing diverse cultural manifestations. A partial list of issues addressed include:</p> <p>Addressing the role of ritual in a Mescalero Apache coming of age ceremony, and exploring it's similarity and differences to Christian ceremonies</p> | <p>(Also see 3rd column of Criterion 2a above)</p> <p>Week 2 in syllabus</p> |

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| | <p>A discussion of the factors that gave rise to the nation of Islam phenomenon in the USA.</p> | <p>Week 3 in syllabus</p> |
| | <p>An examining of the research showing how gender impacts religious expression and religious belongingness.</p> | <p>Week 6 in syllabus</p> |
| | <p>The needs that give rise to a culture of Santos in the Mexico-USA borderlands and it's complex relationship to Catholicism.</p> | <p>Week 11 in syllabus</p> |
| | <p>An evaluation of the various social and cultural factors giving rise to religious diversity in the new religious movements</p> | <p>Week 12 in syllabus</p> |

Official Course Description: MCCCDCD Approval: 03/25/03

PSY225 20036-99999

LEC 3 3
Credit(s) Period(s)

Psychology of Religion

Provides an introduction to the history, varieties and theories of the psychology of religion from an empirical, research-based perspective. Specific areas of study include the role of gender, age, socioeconomic status, and personality on religious experience, the effects of religion and prayer on mental and physical health, the development of religious thought and behavior over the lifespan, and the social psychology of new religious movements. In addition, the role of cultural differences on religious attitudes both within the USA and around the world is also addressed. Prerequisites: PSY101 or Permission of Instructor.

MCCCDCD Official Course Competencies:

**PSY225 20036- Psychology of Religion
99999**

1. Describe the diversity of the religious experience and outline the role William James played in it's psychological description (I).
2. Compare the strengths and weaknesses of studying religion from a psychological perspective (I).
3. Identify the key difficulties in forming a psychological description of religious experience. (I).
4. Explain the importance of understanding the diversity of religious experience within the USA and across the world. (I, II)
5. Discuss the how culture affects religious outlooks and how religion informs an individual's worldview. (II).
6. Outline the variety of ordinary and extraordinary religious experience, and describe the factors- personality, culture, gender, and socioeconomic factors- that affect the interpretation of these experiences (II, V).
7. Describe the conversion experience and list the factors that underlie this experience (III).
8. Discuss the role of mystical experiences in religion, and compare and contrast how these experiences are understood in Eastern and Western traditions (III).
9. Outline the hypothesized religious and moral development of individuals (IV).
10. Describe how religious behavior and attitudes change during early and late adulthood (IV).

11. Explain how gender differences influence the religious experience (IV) .
12. Compare how various religious traditions address death (IV).
13. Assess the role that German psychological tradition played in understanding the psychology of religion (V).
14. Assess how the American humanistic tradition influenced contemporary research into the psychology of religion (V).
15. Describe the use of prayer in the religious experience and contrast the gender, cultural, and socioeconomic factors that influence prayer (VI).
16. Evaluate the effects of religion on mental health and discuss how various religious traditions view mental health (VI).
17. Discuss how social influences affect the individual's religious experience (VII).
18. Describe the rise of new religious movements (NRMs) across the globe and assess the factors that contribute to their rise (VII).
19. Compare and contrast the research that examines how religion influences cross-cultural relationships (VII).

MCCCD Official Course Outline:

**PSY225 20036- Psychology of Religion
99999**

- I. Introduction to the Psychology of Religion
 - A. The Beginnings of the Psychology of Religion: James
 - B. The relationship of the science of psychology to religion
 - C. Defining psychology of religion
 - D. Empirical methodologies used in the investigation of religion
 - E. Current topics in the Psychology of Religion around the world
- II. The varieties of Religion
 - A. Religious diversity in the modern world
 - B. The role of culture in the formation of religion
 - C. The role of religion in forming world outlooks
- III. Religious Experience
 - A. Ordinary and extraordinary religious experiences
 1. Factors related to interpretation of religious experiences
 - a. Socioeconomic
 - b. Gender
 - c. Cultural
 - B. Conversion

- C. Mysticism
 - 1. Western traditions
 - 2. Eastern traditions
- IV. Religious Development
 - A. Development of religious thinking
 - B. Moral development
 - C. Gender differences in religious development
 - D. Religious Development in adulthood
 - 1. Gender differences in adult religiosity
 - E. Religious development in late adulthood
 - F. Religion and death across cultures
- V. Religion and personality
 - A. The German Tradition
 - 1. Freud
 - 2. Jung
 - B. The American Humanistic Tradition
 - 1. Allport
 - 2. Maslow
 - 3. Frankl
 - C. Extrinsic vs. Intrinsic religiosity
 - 1. Gender differences
 - 2. Cultural differences
 - 3. Socioeconomic factors
- VI. Religion and mental and physical health
 - A. Use of prayer for healing
 - 1. Gender factors
 - 2. Across cultures
 - 3. Across socioeconomic groups
 - B. Physiological processes in the religious experience
 - C. Religion and adjustment
 - D. Religion and mental disorders across cultures
- VII. The social psychology of religion
 - A. Social psychology of religious organizations
 - B. The growth of new religious movements
 - C. Religious differences across cultural boundaries

PSY 225: Psychology and Religion
Section: 45152, MWF 11:00am – 11:50pm in MON 210

Fall 2009

Instructor: William T. Farrar IV
Message Phone: 935-8478
Email: william.farrar@emcmail.maricopa.edu
Office Hours: MWF 9-10, TH 2-3 or by appointment in MON 265

Texts: Argyle, M. (2000). *Psychology and Religion: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge..

Course Description: Analysis of psychological perspectives on the religious experience of the individual. Application of historical and contemporary psychological theories to the question of religious experience. Prerequisites: PSY101 or Permission of Instructor.

1. Describe the diversity of the religious experience and outline the role William James played in its psychological description
2. Compare the strengths and weaknesses of studying religion from a psychological perspective
3. Identify the key difficulties in forming a psychological description of religious experience.
4. Explain the importance of understanding the diversity of religious experience within the USA and across the world.
5. Discuss the how culture affects religious outlooks and how religion informs an individual's worldview.
6. Outline the variety of ordinary and extraordinary religious experience, and describe the factors- personality, culture, gender, and socioeconomic factors- that affect the interpretation of these experiences.
7. Describe the conversion experience and list the factors that underlie this experience.
8. Discuss the role of mystical experiences in religion, and compare and contrast how these experiences are understood in Eastern and Western tradition.
9. Outline the hypothesized religious and moral development of individuals.
10. Describe how religious behavior and attitudes change during early and late adulthood.
11. Explain how gender differences influence the religious experience.
12. Compare how various religious traditions address death.
13. Assess the role that German psychological tradition played in understanding the psychology of religion.
14. Assess how the American humanistic tradition influenced contemporary research into the psychology of religion.
15. Describe the use of prayer in the religious experience and contrast the gender, cultural, and socioeconomic factors that influence prayer .
16. Evaluate the effects of religion on mental health and discuss how various religious traditions view mental health.
17. Discuss how social influences affect the individual's religious experience.
18. Describe the rise of new religious movements (NRMs) across the globe and assess the factors that contribute to their rise.
19. Compare and contrast the research that examines how religion influences cross-cultural relationships.

Course Outline:

Week:

| | Mon | Wed | Fri | |
|-----------|-------------|------------------|--------------|---|
| 1 | 8/24 | 8/26 | 8/28 | Introductions; A Three Component Model of the Psychology of Religion No Reading |
| 2 | 8/31 | 9/2 | 9/4 | A Model of Religious Maintenance Reading: Rue (2005) <u>Discuss Midterm Project: : A psychological and symbolic presentation of a non-traditional religion in terms of cognitive and social need</u> Brief Introduction to Expression of faith in Indigenous Cultures (Video on Mescalero Tribe Coming of Age Ceremony) |
| 3 | 9/7 | 9/9 | 9/11 | No Class Monday! Religious Experience Reading: Argyle, Chapter 4 Brief Introduction to Shiite Islam and it's relation to the nation of Islam |
| 4 | 9/14 | 9/16 | 9/18 | Facilitating religious experience: Music, arousal and ritual. Reading: Argyle, Chapter 5 Brief Introduction to Yoruba-based religions and their integration into religious expression in the Western Hemisphere |
| 5 | 9/21 | 9/23 | 9/25 | Religious Belief Reading: Argyle, Chapter 6 Brief introduction to Christian religion (Catholic, Protestant and Greek Orthodox) |
| 6 | 9/28 | 9/30 | 10/2 | Test 1 on Monday The development of religious belief (emphasis on Fowler's theory). The relationship between gender and religious expression The role of intellect and institution on guiding religious interpretation Reading: Argyle, Chapter 2 |
| 7 | 10/5 | 10/7 | 10/9 | Religion and the Aesthetic: Archetypes and the Symbolic Nature of Religious Experience Reading: Forsyth (2003) Brief introduction to Buddhism |
| 8 | 10/12 | 10/14 | 10/16 | An Exchange theory of Religion Reading: Stark & Bainbridge (1996) <u>Midterm Project Due</u> |
| 9 | 10/19 | 10/21 | 10/23 | Religion and Social Need: Identity, Status, and Social Belongingness, & Politics Reading: To be announced Brief Introduction to Hinduism |
| 10 | 10/26 | 10/28 | 10/30 | Religion and Cognitive Need: Unity, Meaning, Emotional Security, and Control. (The Role of the Anthropomorphic Principle) Reading: To be announced Brief introduction to Taoism and Confucianism |
| 11 | 11/2 | 11/4 | 11/6 | Syncretic Religion: Belongingness, Meaning in marginalized worlds Reading: Griffiths (2003) on the Santos of the Mexico-USA borderlands Test 2 on Friday |
| 12 | 11/9 | 11/11 | 11/13 | No Class Wednesday! The birth, growth and death of Sects, Cults, and New Religious Movements Reading: Stark and Bainbridge (1996) <u>Discuss final project: Creative religion through symbolism.</u> Brief introduction to Cults and New Religious Movements |
| 13 | 11/16 | 11/18 | 11/20 | Modern culture and the role of religious symbolism: the religious qualities of the secular age Reading: Argyle, Chapter 14 Brief Introduction to Consumerism and Communism and their relationship to religion |

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|----|-------|-------|------------------|---|
| 14 | 11/23 | 11/25 | 11/27 | No Class Friday! <i>Analysis of a religious work</i> |
| 15 | 11/30 | 12/2 | 12/4 | <i>Ongoing analysis of a religious work</i> |
| 16 | 12/7 | 12/9 | 12/11 | <u>Final Project due</u> |
| | 12/14 | | | <u>Test 3 on Mon at 11:00</u> |

This syllabus schedule is flexible and many of the topics will be material presented from outside of class. Keep in mind that my goal in this class is to learn about what drives the individual toward the religious experience and how the religious experience changes our consciousness. At the same time, Remember that passing the course is your responsibility: you must study, do the required work, and pass the tests in order to successfully complete the course. If you encounter difficulties with the material or presentation, please consult with me. Together, we can often overcome any obstacle to learning. Our common goal is to facilitate your success.

Attendance: You may be withdrawn after missing more than two class periods.

Grading: Your grade will be based on test performance, papers, and in-class projects and presentations. In the class, you will be able to earn a maximum of 100 points.

A. 3 Tests (45% of grade).

Three tests will be given during the semester. **You should not miss any quizzes.** Make-up quizzes will be given if the student and professor have made arrangements before the day of the absence, or if the absence is excused as described in the Mesa Community College Student Handbook. Otherwise, **missed quizzes can not be made up and receive 0 points.**

B. 2 Projects (20% of grade)

A midterm and final project will be required. These projects will be graded by a rubric or scoring sheet. Projects are due on the Monday of Class. If not complete, they will automatically lose points as described on the rubric or grading sheet.

C. Pre-class Quizzes (20% of grade)

Before each week, a quiz on the reading will be due. These quizzes are on Blackboard. Except for the first one, each quiz will appear on Wednesday before we discuss the reading and be available until the Sunday before we discuss the reading. Each quiz has 20 questions and is worth a point. If you get 17-20 correct, you get the entire point. If you get 13-16 correct, you get 0.75 point. If you get 9-12 correct, you get 0.5 points. Anything less than 8 gets no points. You may take the quiz up to three times before Sunday. Each time you make a try, it must be completed before you quit. Also, only two hours is available for each try.

D. In class projects, pop quizzes, homework assignments, internet exercise (15% of grade)

These points are for activities in class, including participation in discussions

Your performance on the four quizzes will determine your grade. Letter grades will be assigned as follows

- A = 90-100 points
- B = 80-89 points
- C = 70-79 points
- D = 60-69 points
- F = 59 or less points

Special assistance: Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class must contact the Disability Resources and Services office (KOM B-109) at 623.935.8935 or 623.935.8928 TTY or drs@emcmail.maricopa.edu.

Academic Integrity Policy: All students assume as part of their obligation to the college the responsibility to exhibit in their academic performance the qualities of honesty and integrity. All forms of student dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to misconduct associated with the classroom, laboratory, or clinical learning process. Some examples of academic misconduct are cheating, plagiarism, and excessive absences. For more information, please refer to the Student Handbook, Section 2.3.11. Students are also responsible for the information in this syllabus and for the college policies in the college catalog and the student handbook.

Respect for Others: In order to ensure continuity of instruction and learning, beepers, pagers, cell phones, and all other electronic devices should be turned off before entering the classroom.

Blackboard: Information such as this syllabus, links, and homework assignments will be posted on blackboard.

Other useful resources to enhance your success: (Links will be available on the course website as well)
Information Commons, Instructional Computing: (623) 935-8150
Library: (623) 935-8191
Learning Enhancement and Writing Support Center: (623) 935-8189
NASA Center for Success in Math and Science (623) 935-8221

THIS SYLLABUS MAY BE MODIFIED BY THE PROFESSOR AT ANY TIME

Book Outline, Supplemental Readings, and Activities in class that support the learning of Cultural Awareness in the Psychology of Religion
(As used by William Farrar at Estrella Mountain Community College; See syllabus)

Below is the outline of *Psychology and Religion: An Introduction*: by Michael Argyle (2000), which is an good introductory text that emphasizes the behavioral and attitudinal differences between different religious cultures in the United States.

1. The relation between psychology and religion
2. Socialization
3. The effect of personality
4. The extent and varieties of religious experience
5. The causes and effects of religious experience
6. Religious beliefs
7. Freud's and Jung's accounts of religious belief
8. Worship and prayer
9. Ritual and Charisma
10. Happiness and other benefits and cost of religion
11. Physical and Mental health
12. Religious and other origins of morals
13. The effect of religion on behavior
14. Secularization and the present state of religion
15. The growth of new religious movement
16. Conclusions for religion

Supplemental readings for this semester include Chapters from:

Griffith, J. S. (2003) *Folk Saints of the Borderlands: Victims, Bandits and Healers* .
Tucson, AZ: Rio Nuevo

This semester, we addressed the section on Juan Malverde, a border-crossing Robin Hood type "saint". We also touched upon Juan Soldado, an unofficial "victim saint". We discuss their role in supporting cultural identity in the Mexico-USA borderlands.

Atran, S. (2002). In gods we trust: The evolutionary landscape of religion. Oxford University.

We read sections of *Chapter 5: Sense of Sacrifice: Culture, Community and Commitment*. Atran uses a dense array of examples for each concept taken from a wide variety of religions both within the USA and across the globe to discuss the social and biological factors that play into a sense of religious commitment.

Stark, R. , & Bainbridge, W. S. (1987). A Theory of religion. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University.

We read sections of *Chapter 7- Affiliation with Sects and Cults*. This information is then supplemented by a discussion of religious activities as diverse as Santeria, Scientology, The People's Temple and the Children of God. The discussion focuses

primarily on the socioeconomic and cultural factors that lead to the creation of these new religious movements.

Rue, L. (2005). *Religion is not about god: How religions nurture our biological nature and what to expect when they fail*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University.

We read two different sections at different times. One section addresses a five-component model of religion. This model is critical for making cultural comparisons because it allows us to compare and contrast how and why different cultures emphasize different aspects of religious cohesion. The other section we read is on whether consumerism qualifies as a religion. This issue is excellent for making a large number of mainstream cultural assumptions explicit so that they can be contrasted with the religious values embedded in new religious movements.

One of the major goals of the class is to show students how religion is used by people to create a coherent world view. We have many activities to supplement this. Some are outlined below:

One activity is the use of video excerpts from National Geographic's Taboo series as a jumping off point for applying theoretical constructs to issues of cultural diversity. For example, one video is of a Mescalero Apache coming of age ceremony for women and its role in maintaining the identity of an indigenous subculture in the USA. This material is then used to discuss issues, such as identity maintenance in the face of a powerful mainstream culture.

Another example is the midterm. In the midterm project, students explore a new religious movement that they have never encountered before and describe it in terms of Rue's five factor model (i.e., they discuss how the elements of the religion are used to create a coherent world view that supports group identity formation within the larger cultural matrix). They then conjecture on the possible psychological and social factors that lead to the form of the new religious movement.

In addition, contemporary data from sources such as the *Psychology of Religion Journals*, the Pew Foundation, the Gallup Poll, that we use to explore the diversity of cultural, socioeconomic, educational differences in the United States and apply this data to the cultural diversity of religious expression in the United States. We also engage in other projects to enhance cultural diversity.