

CROSSROADS Syllabus:

Sophomore Seminar in Creative Thinking | “Uniting the Opposites”

IDS 2200 (3-3) | TUE 10AM—12:45PM | Malone 211 | BlackBoard® Supported

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Course Description:

CROSSROADS: A Sophomore Seminar in Creative Thinking is a unique educational opportunity designed to capitalize on the dynamic of having three professors from three different disciplines as well as students from multiple disciplines in the classroom at the same time, interacting with each other on one academic theme. The goal is to create a community of learners with instructors acting not only as facilitators but co-learners in a highly energized, hybridized, collaborative and creative environment.

What this course is about:

This course “Uniting the Opposites” will examine the human impulse toward wholeness in the face of the inevitable human cognitive tendency toward dualistic thinking. History, art and religion will be examined as tools for the discovery of the unity underlying opposites in the following cultural contexts:

- **Paleolithic Shamanism and Cave Art** – This unit examines the development of the earliest human artistic traditions in Paleolithic Europe. Connections are made to shamanism, which is believed by many to be the most ancient religious system created by humans.
- **The ancient Bon religion of Tibet** – Bon combines residues of shamanism with a very rich nature based polytheism that takes its inspiration from the beautiful, rugged country of Tibet. This part of the course shows how Bon uses form and color to image the spiritual world.
- **Prehistoric Mississippian and contemporary Creek Indian religion** – This unit is based upon the assumption that it is important to understand the “soul geography” of this region as it was laid down over thousands of years by the Native Americans who lived here. This part of the course traces the carryover from the prehistoric to the contemporary visual and performance arts of the native people of the southeast.
- **Creation Mythology of the San people of Africa** – This unit is a means of entry into the rich human trove of creation myths. Religious answers to the cultural question, “Why are we here?” are powerful doors to the individual question, “Why am I here?” The intersection of geography, history and internal soul geography can be examined using these timeless stories.
- **The Church of Jesus Christ with Signs Following** – In the early twentieth century, the Appalachian mountains of North Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee saw the development of a unique brand of Pentecostal/holiness Christianity. Taking up serpents and drinking poison became a means of demonstrating the holiness of the believer and the power of God. This unit examines the beliefs and practices of snake handling Christianity.

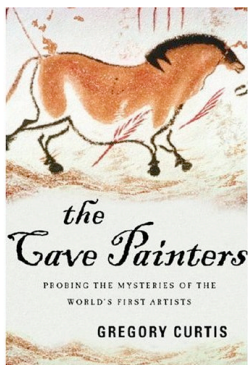
Course Objectives:

This sophomore seminar course is designed...

1. to illuminate the connections between art, history and the human experience of the supernatural as defined in four cultures
2. to expand student’s creative capacities by examining the artistic products created by various cultures in response to their experience of the divine
3. to encourage artistic expression drawn from the students’ evolving understanding of the human/divine connection
4. to encourage critical thinking about the connection between the cultures studied.
5. to foster collaboration and cooperative work with others

6. to synthesize historical metaphors, themes, symbols and content into a contemporary, personally unique model.
7. to broaden discussion, thinking, writing and visualizing about art and its relationship to history, culture, religion and daily life.

PREREQUISITES: Student must have completed a minimum of 30 hours and be classified as a sophomore with a GPA of 3.0 or higher or have special permission from one of the cooperating instructors. IDS2200 can be used to fulfill requirements of Areas 2 and 4 of the General Studies curriculum.



REQUIRED TEXTBOOK/S: Student is required to attain and read a book entitled THE CAVE PAINTERS by Gregory Curtis (2006). Additionally, student should acquire THE SOUTHEASTERN CEREMONICAL COMPLEX and ITS INTERPRETATION by James H. Howard, Missouri Archaeological Society, *Memoir Number 6* (Dec. 1968).

Additional supplemental readings may be required by instructors throughout the term or simply necessitated by the assigned reports or projects.

NOTE: Student MUST collect and retain all assigned readings, essays and notes in a three-ring binder. This binder of compiled information will become an increasingly valuable resource as the term progresses.

GRADING/ATTENDANCE POLICY: Class attendance is EXPECTED and is a strong determinant in the students' success in this course!

- Five (5) Unit presentations (20 points each) = 100 Points
 - Unit presentations should be a 10-page/10-references paper, or a 5-page/5-references paper combined with a project. These should be based upon the content of the unit and each are due on the third class meeting of each unit.
- Final Paper/Project (100 points) = 100 Points
 - Final presentation should be a 10-page/10-references paper, or a 5-page/5-references paper combined with a project. The final presentation should be an original, creative contribution to the sum of human knowledge about the intersection of art, history and religion.

SEMESTER'S TOTAL = 200 Points

[Grading Scale: A=180+, B=160+, C=140+, D=120+, F=119-]

Penalties for academic misconduct as defined in the current Oracle will be assessed at the discretion of the instructor and may include failure for the assignment/exam, failure for the course, or commencement of disciplinary proceedings leading to suspension from the University.

Makeup work will be given for excused absences. Late work will be penalized one (1) point for each day it is late.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: Troy University supports Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which insure that postsecondary students with disabilities have equal access to all academic programs, physical access to all buildings, facilities and events, and are not discriminated against on the basis of disability. Eligible students, with appropriate documentation, will be provided equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic skills and potential through the provision of academic adaptations and reasonable accommodations. Further information, including appropriate contact information, can be found at the link for Troy University's Office of Human Resources at <http://www.troy.edu/humanresources/ADAPolicy2003.htm>

INCOMPLETE GRADES: If for some reason a student is unable to complete the required coursework or attend classes due to come extenuating circumstances, the student may request an academic withdrawal from the University OR the student may petition for an "INC" grade. However, our departmental policy is that a student must have completed at least 80% of the coursework up to that point to make such a petition. Otherwise, an academic withdrawal through University Records is the recommended course of action.

BASIC COURSE OUTLINE: This syllabus and course outline is subject to change as the course develops and at the discretion of its instructional team. Any changes will be discussed in class and posted to the course syllabus on Blackboard.

8/21	Paleolithic Shamanism
8/28	Paleolithic Shamanism
9/3	Labor Day Holiday
9/5	Paleolithic Shamanism
9/11	Tibetan Bon
9/18	Tibetan Bon
9/25	Tibetan Bon
10/2	Muskogee Way
10/8-10/12	Fall Break
10/16	Muskogee Way
10/23	Muskogee Way
10/30	San
11/6	San
11/12	Veterans Day Holiday
11/14	San
11/20	Taking up Serpents
11/21-11/23	Thanksgiving Holiday
11/27	Taking up Serpents
12/4	Final Presentations