

Portland State University  
**WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY**  
WS 410 005, CRN 44009 4 credits  
Jan. 5-Mar. 11, 2010, Clay 202

Dr. Frodo Okulam

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will explore women's spirituality in many traditions from its beginnings in ancient times to the present day. Through a variety of resources, including video and guest presentations, readings, and experiential exercises, participants will have opportunities to develop insights into their own spirituality and share with one another.

**READING MATERIALS**

Textbook: Available on campus in the Women's Resource Center, basement of Montgomery Hall, the first week of class. (See attached sheet for info. and returns policy). Text: *She is Everywhere! An anthology of writing in womanist/feminist spirituality*. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2005. Handouts: In class, no charge.

**GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Attendance and participation: **40%**. This includes preparatory readings, presence in class, and appropriate participation in discussion and experiential exercises.
2. Journal: **20%**. At least 2 pages per week. Includes: responses to readings, personal reflections and items of interest from your research.
3. 2 short response papers: **10%**. 2 page papers in response to speakers.
4. Research project: **30%**. 7 p. paper **or** 20 min. presentation with references cited and a resource list. Project ideas include exploring an author's works in the field of women's spirituality, an issue in women's spirituality, w.s. within a particular tradition, experiencing a women's spirituality celebration, or interviewing an author or practitioner in the field. Paper due Mar. 16. Pres. by sign-up.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION**

1. Create a safe and respectful atmosphere for discussion. Treat others with consideration, including ensuring time for all to speak.
2. Understand that each person's spiritual experience is sacred. Respect one another's traditions.
3. Agree to keep specifics of class conversations within class.
4. Recognize that no one has "the facts" about spirituality or spiritual traditions. Respect others' wisdom and your own.
5. Acknowledge that sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression exist.

Recognize that this class is about women's experience and is taught from the perspective of feminist analysis.

## Support Your Local Feminist Bookstore: Buy Your Books from In Other Words

### About Us

In Other Words Women's Books & Resources is the last surviving non-profit feminist bookstore in the United States. For the last 15 years we have offered a comprehensive and diverse collection of books, magazines, and zines with a wide variety of subjects, including: feminist & queer studies, erotica, sex & sexuality, trans studies, spirituality, herbs, and non-sexist children's books, to name a few. In Other Words is more than a bookstore and has recently become a hub of activity—hosting a wide range of community events, meetings and workshops that include author readings, Spanish classes, writing workshops, concerts, art shows, yoga and much more. We also support many local progressive organizations by providing the space and outreach opportunities for community based activities and public forums to encourage dialogue and debate.

### Why buy your books from In Other Words?

Buying your books from In Other Words instead of online is an important way that you can support not only your local feminist community but also your local economy. Over the 15 years that In Other Words has been open, we have watched many of our sister feminist bookstores close their doors. Textbook sales are a huge part of what keeps ours doors open and our community programs thriving.

### How to buy your books from In Other Words:

Textbooks are available at our store in NE Portland before and after the term starts. *For the first week of classes only*, we bring them to the **Women's Resource Center** in the basement of the **Montgomery Building**, located on PSU Campus. We will also mail books for out of town students. We accept cash, checks, and credit cards. Most books are new and we sell used books when they are available.

Feel free to contact us: [textbooks@inotherwords.org](mailto:textbooks@inotherwords.org) or [www.inotherwords.org](http://www.inotherwords.org) or 503-232-6003

### **For the first week of classes only, books will be available on campus at the Women's Resource Center**

The Women's Resource Center is located in the basement of the Montgomery Building. Our hours for the first week of classes are: **Mon: 9-7, Tue: 10-7:30, Wed: 10-6, Thur: 11-6, Fri: 12-3.**

### Return Policy:

*If you drop the class* you may return **your textbooks to our bookstore**, for full credit, within 10 days of purchase. They must be in new condition, and you must present proof of having dropped the class (such as a printout of the new class schedule).

### Buy Back Policy:

We will buy your used textbooks back at 20–25 % of the retail price *if we are sure the book is going to be used again*. Only a manager can buy back your books, so call the store ahead of time to make sure one will be there. Manager hours at In Other Words are generally 10 to 6 Monday to Thursday.

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| <b>In Other Words Bookstore</b><br>8 NE Killingsworth<br><b>Store Hours:</b><br>M-F 10 AM to 9 PM<br>Sat 12 PM to 6 PM<br>Sun Closed |
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**By Car from PSU:** Take I-5 North to exit 303. Follow signs for Killingsworth and turn Right onto Killingsworth. Drive 10 blocks to Williams Ave. We are on the right, just after the light.

**By Bus from PSU:** Board the 6 MLK at SW Columbia and SW Park. Get off at NE MLK and Killingsworth. Walk 3 blocks West to Williams. We are located on the left, just before the light.

## SYLLABUS, WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY Winter 2010

### JANUARY

**Tues. Jan. 5:** Introduction, explanation of syllabus and assignments. Meeting one another: Names. Explore defining Women's Spirituality. Go to get texts. Reading for Thursday: Women's Spirituality Handout.

**Thurs. Jan. 7:** Experiential exercise: Grounding. Discussion: Questions from handout. Experiential exercise: Sacred Intention. Reading for Tues.: She is Everywhere pp. 1-13. Journal writing questions: What is part of my spirituality? What is not? What am I keeping? What am I leaving behind? Where is my center?

**Tues. Jan. 12:** Experiential exercise: Altar creation. Small Group Discussion: Journal questions; Questions from readings. **Video: "The Goddess Remembered."** Reading for Thurs.: p. 201-208, Goddesses around the World.

**Thurs. Jan. 14:** Experiential exercise: Goddess images. Discussion: Goddesses in Prehistory and early history; relevance to today. Readings for Tues.: p. 31-42, Luisah Teish. Journal: How do I react to prehistoric Goddess-images? What do I think of the ideas expressed in the readings? How does this affect my spirituality?

**Tues. Jan. 19:** Experiential exercise: Ancient Woman. Small Group Discussion: Journal questions; Women's spirituality and our matriline. Stereotypes of women: Discussion of Teish reading. Journal questions: Thoughts on the readings: What are my inner stereotypes of women? How are they shaped by spiritual or religious images? What is my concept of Deity/Deities? How does this interact with my self-image?

**Thurs. Jan. 21: Speaker: Vanessa Timmons**, facilitator of SisterSpirit's Inner Journeys Women's Journaling Circle. Sign up to meet with me re. Project. Readings: p. 209-225: Athena and She is Everywhere. Journal: Something from Vanessa. Thoughts on the readings.

**Tues. Jan. 26: Library Training with Sarah Beasley in Library rm. 170.** She will lead us in research techniques in our particular subject and help us get started on project research.

**Thurs. Jan. 28 Meet with me re. project.** Journals: Personal connection with project topic. What has shaped my spirituality? How have my life experiences contributed to my spiritual understanding? **Prepare journals to turn in Tues.**

### FEBRUARY

**Tues. Feb. 2: Journals due for first time. Speaker: Judy Bluehorse Skelton**, Instructor, PSU, Portland Public Schools Indian Education, Oregon Indian Education Advisory Bd., Herbal pharmacist.

**Thurs. Feb. 4:** Check-in re. projects; follow up from Judy. Journals returned to you. **Visit Women's Studies open house in SMC 296.** Further project meetings if needed.. **Prepare response paper to turn in Tues.**

**Tues. Feb. 9: First Response paper due: Vanessa &/or Judy. Labyrinth Walk with Carol Joy Brendlinger, SMSU 333.** Readings for Thurs.: 93-105, 232-238: Spanish Goddess, Guadalupe in Calif.

**Thurs. Feb. 11:** Discussion: Labyrinth follow-up. How does my heritage and community influence my spirituality? Intro. to spiritual traditions & women's spirituality. Journal: Issues around my topic &/or the readings. Further thoughts on heritage & spiritual traditions related to your personal spirituality. Readings for Tues.: 156-166: Stregoneria; Handout on Wicca.

**Tues. Feb. 16:** Feminist Wicca & Women's Spirituality. Video clip re. Wicca. Readings for Thurs.: 252-259, 362-373: Black Madonna; Qabalah.

**Thurs. Feb. 18:** Feminist Judaism and Christianity. Video: Joan Chittister. Readings for Thurs.: Something from *SageWoman*; 175-188. Journal: My "Wisdom Scroll" would include... **Prepare second response paper: Labyrinth or video clips.**

**Tues. Feb. 23: Second response paper due: Labyrinth or video clips.** Small Group Discussion: *SageWoman* article & your "Wisdom Scroll." Intro. to Ecofeminist Spirituality. Reading for Thurs.: 346-351 Essence of the Whale.

**Thurs. Feb. 25:** Video: Luna. Ecofeminist spirituality & further thoughts.

**Tues. Mar. 2:** Class presentations or open topic. **Prepare journals to turn in Thurs.**

**Thurs. Mar. 4:** Class presentations. **Journals due.**

**Tues. Mar. 9:** Class presentations. Journals returned to you.

**Thurs. Mar. 11: Last Class.** Further presentations? Class party. Journals returned to you. Evaluations.

**DUE DATE for PAPERS: Tues. Mar. 16.**