

RITUAL IN CULTURE & DAILY LIFE
WS 410 004, CRN 64374
June 1-2, 2007 CH 250, PSU
Dr. Frodo Okulam

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course we will look at how ritual works as a tool for personal and cultural change. We will look at various examples of rituals in different traditions and for different purposes, discuss the meaning of ritual, and create a class ritual together. For their coursework, students will design a ritual.

READING MATERIALS: In coursepack.

COURSEWORK FOR CREDIT: Design a personal or group ritual. Prepare a 5-page paper presenting your ritual, its cultural origins, sources you used in preparing it, and details of the ritual, including setting, time of day, week, month, or year if relevant, expected participation, props, and actions. Discuss the purpose of the ritual, why you chose to include what you did, and the expected outcome of the ritual. Also include an evaluation of the results if you have had a chance to use your ritual. I am not looking for a rehashing of someone else's ritual, but for a presentation of your own unique design. Your own experience is the most important criterion. Please cite sources of quotes as they occur. Include as p. 5 of your paper a Resource List with ca. 5 resources of various formats (books, websites, interviews, videos, periodicals). Please use a recognized style for your citations and resource list (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). Style info. avail. at www.owl.english.purdue.edu.

Examples of rituals you might want to design:

Personal or household morning or evening ritual

House Blessing

Wedding, Naming Ceremony, Coming of Age Ceremony, or Croning or Sage Ceremony

New Moon or Full Moon Ceremony

Summer Solstice Ritual or other Seasonal Celebration

Graduation Blessing (Baccalaureate)

Ritual for Healing, Peace, Justice, etc.

Due date: Tues. June 12. Email to me or drop off at WS office, 469 NH

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION: Create a safe and respectful atmosphere for discussion. Treat others with consideration, including ensuring time for all to speak. Agree to keep specifics of class conversations within class. Understand that each person's experience is sacred to them. Respect one another's traditions and positions. Recognize that no one has "the facts" about spirituality or ritual. Respect others' wisdom and your own. Acknowledge that sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, etc., exist. Recognize that this class is taught from an eclectic, feminist perspective.

RITUAL IN CULTURE & DAILY LIFE: SYLLABUS

Fri. June 1

- 5:30 Welcome, attendance, distribution of coursepacks, overview of the course, centering ritual.
- 6:00 Definition, purpose, and examples of rituals. Elements of Ritual.
- 7:00 Break
- 7:15 Wheel of the Year and daily, weekly, & monthly rituals
- 8:15 Cultural Change & Ritual: Presentation & Discussion
- 8:50 Closing Ritual for the evening
- 9:10 Break until tomorrow at 9 AM (Try to read the coursepack before reconvening. Bring a question for tomorrow)

Sat. June 2

- 9:00 Opening Ritual for the Day
- 9:15 Welcome, sign-in.
- 9:30 Explanation of paper; discussion of questions from reading or class
- 10:00 Guest Speaker: Tasa Wolfstar, SisterSpirit
- 11:00 Break
- 11:15 Small group discussion: personal ritual experiences
- 11:45 Class ritual introduction
- 12:00 Break for Lunch
- 1:00 Class ritual prep
- 1:30 Class Ritual
- 2:30 Course Evaluations
- 2:45 Questions re. Papers & Closing
- 3:00 Farewell