

Common Course Outline

NAST/PHIL 117

Native American Religions

3 Semester Hours

Community College of Baltimore County

Description

NAST/PHIL 117 – 3 credits - Native American Religions develops a rational approach to the study of Native American religions, and examines the variety of Native American religious traditions, historical religious movements, contemporary religious practices, and the struggle for religious freedom via an exploration of the nature, structure, and meaning of ritual and religion in Native American cultures. Topics include but are not limited to creation stories, concepts of the supernatural, mythology, ceremonialism, symbolism, dreams and visions, medicine, healing, shamanism, concepts of the soul, and connections with nature. This course employs academic methods of analysis and comparison, in order to understand Native American religions as they are connected with issues of metaphysics, philosophy of mind, ethics, and cosmology.

3 Credit Hours

Prerequisites: ACLT 052 or ACLT 053

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. analyze how a system of ethics has been established and utilized by Native American religions;
2. define the ways in which Native American religions have established a method of understanding the passages of human life;
3. define the way in which various Native American religions verify knowledge;
4. explain the meaning and purpose of vital religious myths within Native American religions;
5. explain the meaning and purpose of various Native American religious rites and rituals;
6. analyze the methods by which Native American religions establish a relevant worldview;
7. compare and contrast at least six distinct Native American religions;
8. compare and contrast at least six distinct Native American religions;
9. compare various world views of Native American religions with contemporary secular world views; and
10. analyze how various Native American religions establish a theory of human nature.

Major Topics

- I. Defining religion
- II. Spiritual and non-spiritual world views of Native American cultures

- III. Myths within Native American cultures
- IV. Rites, rituals and worship of Native American cultures
- V. Religious meaning and significance of Native American cultures
- VI. The value and purpose of religion in Native American cultures

Course Requirements

Grading/exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

1. Regular attendance and class participation in discussions/activities.
2. At least two in-class exams/quizzes.
3. Analyzing a variety of primary and secondary texts. This is a writing assignment.
4. In class presentations and/or group work.

Writing: The individual faculty member will determine specific writing assignments. The course will include at least one significant writing/research assignment or several smaller writing assignments equaling at least a total of five pages. In completing the writing assignment, students will utilize academic sources appropriate to the discipline.

Other Course Information

This course is an elective course in the Native American Studies Program.