

REL 419 – Spring 2009
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS
<http://eLearning.ua.edu>

NOTE: Asterisks (**) designate additional readings available on the course webpage.

January 8 Introductions

Describing Rituals

January 13 What is ritual?

C. Bell “Constructing Ritual” in READINGS 21-33

15 Describing rituals

**Mary Louise Pratt “Fieldwork in Common Places”

20 Rituals beyond traditional religions

G. Goethals “Ritual: Ceremony and Super-Sunday” in READINGS 257-268

22 Classifying rituals and magic

D. Bell “Women’s Business is Hard Work” in READINGS 33-48

27 Myth and ritual school (Chinese New Year)

M. Eliade “Ritual and Myth” in READINGS 194-201

29 Writing styles for rituals

**Ramey “Debating Institutions”

**O. L. Bahadur “Divali”

DRAFT OF Descriptive paper 1 distributed by midnight January 30

February 3 Collaboration on draft of descriptive paper 1

5 Provisional Ethnography

** V. Crapazano “Hermes’ Dilemma”

10 Student presentations of ritual descriptions

Descriptive paper 1 due

12 Ritual change and description

R. Schechner “Restoration of Behavior” in READINGS 441-458

Analyzing rituals

February 17 Ritual and social order

W. Burkert “Function and Transformation of Ritual Killing” in READINGS 62-71

19 Ritual and language

C. Levi-Straus “The Effectiveness of Symbols” in READINGS 368-378

DRAFT OF Descriptive paper 2 distributed by midnight February 20

24 Collaboration on draft of descriptive paper 2

26 Psychology and ritual

B. Smith "Buddhism and Abortion in Japan" in READINGS 458-473

March 3 Student presentations of ritual descriptions

Descriptive paper 2 due

5 Rites of passage and liminality

V. Turner "Liminality and Communitas" in READINGS 511-519

10 Bodily engagement

T. Jennings "On Ritual Knowledge" in READINGS 324-334

12 Holi

**M. Marriott "Holi: The Feast of Love"

16-20 Spring Break

24 Ritual and Identity

M. Pena "Ritual Structure in a Chicano Dance" in READINGS 412-427

DRAFT OF Analysis paper distributed by midnight March 24

26 Collaboration on draft of analysis paper

31 Ritual accidents

J. Z. Smith "The Bare Facts of Ritual" in READINGS 473-483

April 2 Student presentations of analysis of a ritual

Analysis paper due

7 Student presentations

9 Student presentations

Theorizing about rituals

April 14 Theorizing about rituals – Critiquing Victor Turner

C. W. Bynum "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols" in READINGS 71-86

16 NO CLASS – attend Hayden White events

21 Discussion of theorizing themes

F. Staals "The Meaninglessness of Ritual" in READINGS 483-494

DRAFT OF Theoretical paper distributed by midnight April 21

23 Collaboration on Drafts of theorizing papers

28 Continuing theoretical reflections

30 Concluding rituals