

Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2022

Course Change Information

What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)

Add Literary, Visual and Performing Arts GE foundation

What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?

The current course syllabus has been redesigned with LVPA in mind (please see attached GE Foundations Course file). Adding the Literary, Visual and Performing Arts GE to RS 3666 will highlight the interdisciplinary nature of our curricula in CS and RS. It will help demonstrate and enact the links between religious studies, comparative literature and visual culture. It will also draw important connections to other units, such as English, Art History, Film Studies, etc.

What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?

(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?

The course provides students with theoretical tools for understanding their place in modern culture and their relationship to other religious and social movements. Close readings of texts will be combined with analyses of music and film, as well as field trips to observe local ritual performances. On a more pragmatic note, if this course doesn't have GE's attached to them, they likely won't meet the minimum enrollments and so have no place in our curriculum.

Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request? No

Is this a request to withdraw the course? No

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area	Religious Studies
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org	Comparative Studies - D0518
College/Academic Group	Arts and Sciences
Level/Career	Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog	3666
Course Title	Magic in the Modern World
Transcript Abbreviation	Modern Magic
Course Description	This course traces the modern revival of magic and neo-paganism, both in new religious movements and in popular culture, novels, music and film, from 1870 to the present. The course examines the intersections between emergent magical groups and various social and political movements.
Semester Credit Hours/Units	Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course	14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course	Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component?	No
Grading Basis	Letter Grade
Repeatable	No
Course Components	Lecture, Recitation
Grade Roster Component	Lecture
Credit Available by Exam	No
Admission Condition Course	No
Off Campus	Never

Campus of Offering Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster
Previous Value [Columbus](#)

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Exclusions

Electronically Enforced No

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 38.0201
Subsidy Level General Studies Course
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:

Culture and Ideas; Global Studies (International Issues successors); Literary, Visual and Performing Arts; Historical and Cultural Studies

Previous Value

General Education course:

Culture and Ideas; Global Studies (International Issues successors); Historical and Cultural Studies

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Explore the role of political and social circumstances in shaping magical communities
- Consider what constitutes a religion and various magical movements' roles as religious
- Trace the transmission of modern magic from England to Western Europe and the United States, while also examining influence of non-Western traditions
- Analyze, interpret and evaluate the revival of magic in the modern period and how it has helped influence the beliefs, perceptions and norms that have guided the behavior of many new religious groups over the last two hundred years
- Examine what motivates backlash against modern magic

Content Topic List

- Magic
- new religious movements
- Neo-paganism
- fantasy literature
- occultism and popular culture
- modernity
- fan culture

Sought Concurrence No

COURSE CHANGE REQUEST
3666 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette
Chantal
11/03/2021

[Previous Value](#)

Attachments

- RS 3666 GE-Foundations-Submission Form-LVPA.pdf

(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Arceno, Mark Anthony)

- RS 3666 Syllabus.pdf

(Syllabus. Owner: Arceno, Mark Anthony)

Comments

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Arceno, Mark Anthony	10/04/2021 11:30 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Armstrong, Philip Alexander	10/25/2021 03:44 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	11/03/2021 12:55 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Cody, Emily Kathryn Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin, Deborah Kay Hilty, Michael Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Steele, Rachel Lea	11/03/2021 12:56 PM	ASCCAO Approval

RS 3666
MAGIC IN THE MODERN WORLD
From the Golden Dawn to Harry Potter

Classroom: TBA
Meeting Time: TBA

Dr. Hugh B. Urban
Distinguished Professor, Department of Comparative Studies
431 Hagerty Hall
urban.41@osu.edu
office hours: by appointment

Course Description and Outline

Since the end of the nineteenth century, there has been a tremendous revival of interest in magic, witchcraft, and paganism throughout the United States, England and Europe. This course will trace the modern revival of magic and neo-paganism, both in new religious movements and in popular culture, literature, music, and film, from roughly the 1870s to the present. The course is designed as the sequel to "Magic and Witchcraft in the Middle Ages and Renaissance" (MEDREN 2666). However, students are also encouraged to take this course either before or without MEDREN 2666.

The course will explore the roots of modern magic in late medieval and early modern sources, and then trace the development of modern magical movements such as the Golden Dawn, Wicca, and modern Druidism. We will pay particular attention to the role of ritual performance, art, and symbolism in the appeal of modern magical groups over the last 150 years. Along the way, we will examine the intersections between these magical groups and various social and political movements, such as second wave and radical feminism and various forms of environmentalism from the 1960s onward. We will also discuss the backlash against modern magic among Evangelical Christians, as well as the "Satanic Panic" that spread across the U.S. in the 1980s. Throughout the class we will also examine the recurring role of magic in popular culture, fiction, film, and television. Since the nineteenth century, modern magic has been closely tied to movements in fiction, poetry, art and music, as we see in the influence of the Golden Dawn on poets such as W.B. Yeats, the influence of occultism on rock and heavy metal music since the 1960s, and the role of magic in novels such as *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Golden Compass*, *Harry Potter*, *The Magicians*, and many others.

In addition to close readings of primary and secondary texts, the course will also include guest speakers and several field trips to local neo-pagan events. Students will develop a final group project on a topic of their own choosing to be presented to the class during the last two weeks of the semester.

GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course fulfills the General Education requirement for “**Cultural Studies**” and “**Literature, Visual and Performing Arts**”

Cultural Studies

Goal: Successful students will evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas to develop capacities for aesthetic and cultural response, judgment, interpretation, and evaluation.

- Expected Learning Outcomes**
1. Successful students are able to analyze and interpret selected major forms of human thought, culture, ideas or expression.
 2. Successful students are able to describe and analyze selected cultural phenomena and ideas across time using a diverse range of primary and secondary sources and an explicit focus on different theories and methodologies.
 3. Successful students are able to use appropriate sources and methods to construct an integrated and comparative perspective of cultural periods, events or ideas that influence human perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors.
 4. Successful students are able to evaluate social and ethical implications in cultural studies.

Literary, Visual or Performing Arts

Goal 1: Successful students will analyze, interpret, and evaluate major forms of human thought, cultures, and expression; and demonstrate capacities for aesthetic and culturally informed understanding.

- Expected Learning Outcomes:**
1. Successful students are able to analyze and interpret significant works of design or visual, spatial, literary or performing arts.
 2. Successful students are able to describe and explain how cultures identify, evaluate, shape, and value works of literature, visual and performing art, and design.
 3. Successful students are able to evaluate how artistic ideas influence and shape human beliefs and the interactions between the arts and human perceptions and behavior.
 4. Successful students are able to evaluate social and ethical implications in literature, visual and performing arts, and design.

Goal 2: Successful students will experience the arts and reflect on that experience critically and creatively.

- Expected Learning Outcomes:**
1. Successful students are able to engage in informed observation and/or active participation within the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design.
 2. Successful students are able to critically reflect on and share their own experience of observing or engaging in the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design.

We meet the outcomes by:

- Examining primary and secondary sources on a wide range of modern magical movements, with special attention to the role of ritual performance, art, narrative, and symbolism
- Employing a range of methodological approaches in order to understand the role of these movements in modern historical, social, and cultural contexts.
- Critically analyzing the influence of these modern magic on literature, poetry, music, film, and television since the nineteenth century
- Reflecting on the social and ethical implications of both the rise of modern magical movements and our study of these groups in an academic context.

READINGS

Required Texts

Nevill Drury, *Stealing Fire from Heaven* (Oxford U.P., 2011). Available as e-book on OSU Library website: <https://library.ohio-state.edu/search/t?SEARCH=stealing+fire+from+heaven&searchscope=7>
Sarah Pike, *Earthly Bodies, Magical Selves* (University of California Press, 2001)
Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon* (Penguin, 2006)
C.S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* (Scholastic, 1955)

Readings on our Carmen web-site:

There are also a number of short articles and chapters on the contents section of our Carmen site.

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

Evaluations in this class will be based on four things:

1. Attendance and participation (20% of final grade). This means a) attendance to all classes; b) completing the readings for each day; and b) vigorous participation in class discussions. More than two unexcused absences will result in a lower grade (loss of 2 points per additional absence)
2. Generating discussion questions based on the readings (15% of final grade). Students will post 1-2 discussion questions on the readings once a week. Questions should be posted on our Carmen site **the night before class**.
3. Three short written papers (4-6 pages) on assigned topics (45% of final grade). The papers must make use of the readings discussed in class.
4. A group project on a religious movement or topic not covered in class (20% of final grade). Students will work in groups of 4-6 members and will do a 30-40 minute presentation to the class. Everyone who does it will get full credit (20 points). Awards and extra points will be given for the overall best presentation and for the most entertaining presentation.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-87	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	E	0-59

STUDENT RIGHTS AND CONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee. For additional information, see Code of Student Conduct: <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your

disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

SYLLABUS

WEEK I. THE ROOTS OF MODERN MAGIC: MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN SOURCES

8-23 **What is "Magic?" What is the Difference between Magic and Religion?**

Read: *Encyclopedia of Religion*, "Magic" (on Carmen)

8-25 **The Roots of Modern Magic in Ancient and Medieval Traditions**

Read: Drury, *Stealing Fire from Heaven*, chapters 1-2 (ebook on OSU library website)

Film clip: "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone"

WEEK II. THE MAGICAL REVIVAL IN 19TH CENTURY ENGLAND

8-30 **The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn**

Read: Drury, *Stealing Fire from Heaven*, chapter 3

Film: W.B. Yeats and the Golden Dawn

9-1 **The Rebirth of "Magick:" Aleister Crowley as Poet and Magician**

Read: Drury, *Stealing Fire from Heaven*, chapter 4

Film clip: "Aleister Crowley"

WEEK III. MAGIC, OCCULTISM, AND SPIRITUALISM IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

9-6 **Crowley and the Ordo Templi Orientis**

Read: Urban, *Magia Sexualis* (on Carmen)

Film clip: "The Devil Rides Out"

9-8 **Spiritualism, Séances, and Ouija Boards**

Read: Urban, "Spiritualism" (on Carmen)

WEEK IV. THE REBIRTH OF WITCHCRAFT: WICCA IN 20TH CENTURY ENGLAND

9-13 **Gerald Gardner and the First Modern Covens in England**

Read: Drury, *Stealing Fire from Heaven*, chapter 6

9-15 **Doreen Valiente and the Development of Wicca as a Religious Movement**

Read: Urban, *Magia Sexualis* (on Carmen)

* * * * *Note: First Short Paper due September 18* * * * * *

WEEK V. WICCA, FEMINISM AND ENVIRONMENTALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

9-20 **Neo-Paganism and Feminism**

Read: Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, pp.176-232

9-22 **Neo-Paganism and Environmentalism**

Read: Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, pp.373-438

Filmed lecture: "Starhawk discusses Permaculture at Harvard Divinity School"

WEEK VI. NEOPAGAN FESTIVAL CULTURE

9-27 Pagans, Festivals and Alternative Community

Read: Pike, *Earthly Bodies*, pp.1-86

9-29 Pagans, Gender, and Sexuality

Read: Pike, *Earthly Bodies*, pp.155-226.

WEEK VII. MODERN SATANISM: CHURCH OF SATAN AND TEMPLE OF SET

10-4 The Age of Satan: LaVey and the Church of Satan in the 1960s

Read: Drury, *Stealing Fire from Heaven*, chapter

Film: "Satanis: The Devil's Mass"

10-6 The Temple of Set, Werewolf Order other Modern Satanists

Read: Urban, "The Church of Satan" (on Carmen)

***** *Note: Final Project Topics Due October 6 in Class* *****

WEEK VIII. "THEY SOLD THEIR SOULS FOR ROCK N ROLL:" Magic, Satanism, and Music

10-11 Magic and Music in the 1960s and 70s: From Coven to Led Zeppelin

Read: Baddely, *Lucifer Rising, I* (on Carmen)

10-13 Autumn Break: No Class

***** *Note: Second Short Paper Due October 16* *****

WEEK IX. "THE SATANIC PANIC:" FEARS OF WITCHCRAFT AND SATANISM IN THE 1980s

10-18 Satanism and Heavy Metal: from Black Sabbath to Gorgoroth

Read: Baddely, *Lucifer Rising, II* (on Carmen)

Film: "They Sold their Souls for Rock n Roll"

10-20 Cult Scares and Satanic Panic from the 1960s to the Reagan Era

Pike, *Earthly Bodies*, pp.87-102

WEEK X. MAGIC IN THE MODERN WORLD: Legal debates and Fiction

10-25 Magic and the Law: the debate over Wicca at Fort Hood Military Base

Read: Urban, "Wicca and Neopaganism" (on Carmen)

10-27 Magic in Modern Fiction: C.S. Lewis and Christian Magic

Read: Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew*

Laconte, *A Hobbit, A Wardrobe and a Great War* (Carmen)

WEEK XI. MAGIC IN MODERN FICTION, II: From Tolkien to Harry Potter

11-1 Magic, Wizardry, and Catholicism in Tolkien's Middle Earth

Read: Laconte, *A Hobbit, A Wardrobe and a Great War, II* (Carmen)
Madsen, "Light from an Invisible Lamp" (Carmen)

11-3 Magic and Morality in Harry Potter

Read: Feldt, "Contemporary Fantasy Fiction" (Carmen)

Film clips: *Harry Potter and Sorcerer's Stone*; *Harry Potter and Half-Blood Prince*

****** Note: Final Project Bibliography Due November 3******

WEEK XII. MAGIC IN MODERN FICTION, III: Fan Culture and Fan Pilgrimage

11-8 Harry Potter Fan Culture as a "New Religion"?

Read: Larsen, "(Re)claiming Harry Potter Fan Pilgrimage Sites" (Carmen)

11-10 The Magic of Netflix: Sabrina the Teenage Witch

Watch before class: "The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina," episode 1

WEEK XIII. MAGIC AND CYBERSPACE

11-15 Technopagans and Online Ritual

Read: Drury, *Stealing Fire from Heaven*, chapter 9; Drury, "Magic and Cyberspace" (on Carmen); Urban, *Magia Sexualis* (on Carmen)

11-17 Working Day for Final Group Projects

No readings, but come ready to work on your projects

****** Note: Third Short Paper Due November 20******

WEEK XIV. STUDENT PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

11-22 Student presentations

Readings TBA; attendance counts double

11-24 Thanksgiving: No Class

WEEK XV. STUDENT PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

11-29 Student presentations

Readings TBA; attendance counts double

12-1 Student presentations

Readings TBA; attendance counts double

WEEK XVI: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS, CONT.

12-6 Student Presentations: Attendance counts double

SUGGESTIONS FOR FINAL GROUP PROJECTS

Magic in other novels or films not discussed in class, such as *Midsommar*, *A Dark Song*, etc.

Magic in art, such as Alex Gray, Austin Osman Spare, Giger, etc.

Magic in role-playing and/or video games such as D&D

Reactions against Harry Potter among conservative religious groups

Magic in Afro-Caribbean traditions, Vodou, Santería, etc.

Magic in non-Western traditions, such as South Asia, East Asia, Africa, etc.

Chaos Magick

Odinism and Norse neopaganism

LGBTQ neopaganism, such as Radical Faeries, etc.

Witch trials in late medieval/ early modern Europe, England, and America

Magic and neopaganism in Ohio

Create your own magical group

Create your own magical RPG

Any other ideas are welcome as long as they have something to do with magic in the modern world

GE Rationale: Foundations: Literary, Visual, or Performing Arts (3 credits)

Requesting a GE category for a course implies that the course fulfills **all** expected learning outcomes (ELOs) of that GE category. To help the reviewing panel evaluate the appropriateness of your course for the Foundations: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts, please answer the following questions for each ELO.

A. Foundations

Please explain in 50-500 words why or how this course is introductory or foundational in the study of Literary, Visual, or Performing Arts.

RS 3666 "Magic in the Modern World" covers the rise of interest in magic, witchcraft and occultism in England, Europe and the United States from the late nineteenth century to the present. The course not only traces the rise of modern magical groups such as the Golden Dawn, Wicca, Druidry, and various forms of neo-paganism, it also shows the influence of these groups on popular culture, particularly the literary, visual, and performing arts. From its origins, the renewed interest in magic was closely tied to movements in modern literature, poetry, art, and performance. One of the first and most important modern magical groups was the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which attracted many artists, novelists and poets of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including W.B. Yeats, Gustav Meyrink, Arthur Conan Doyle, and others. Some of the most important figures in the rise of modern magic and neo-paganism were themselves poets and novelists, such as Aleister Crowley -- a poet as well as the most influential occultists of the modern period -- and Gerald Gardner -- a novelist and founder of modern Wicca. The course also traces the influence of modern magic in music, film, and popular literature. For example, magical and occult themes are pervasive in rock and heavy metal music from the late 1960s onward; they are also found throughout classic films from the late 1960s onward, such as Rosemary's Baby, the Omen, the Exorcist, and countless others. And many of the most popular works of 20th and 21st century fiction -- Lord of the Rings, the Narnia Series, Harry Potter -- have centered on magical themes (though often reworked through a Christian lens). Beyond simply tracing these movements, however, the course also provides students with theoretical tools for understanding their place in modern culture and their relationship to other religious and social movements. Close readings of texts will be combined with analyses of music and film, as well as field trips to observe ritual performances by local Wiccan and Druid groups.

B. Specific Goals

Goal 1: Successful students will analyze, interpret, and evaluate major forms of human thought, cultures, and expression; and demonstrate capacities for aesthetic and culturally informed understanding.

Expected Learning Outcome 1.1: Successful students are able to analyze and interpret significant works of design or visual, spatial, literary or performing arts. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

The course offers students numerous opportunities to analyze and interpret significant works of design or visual, literary or performing arts. For example, in our discussion of the influential magical group, the Golden Dawn, we will first examine some of their basic ritual performances in relation to other religious and spiritual practices. We will then examine the influence of the Golden Dawn on poets such as W.B. Yeats, who drew much inspiration from the group's symbolism and also engaged in occult techniques such as spiritual communication and automatic writing. Similarly, we will examine the work of Aleister Crowley --arguably the most important figure in the revival of modern occultism -- who was also a poet and member of the Golden Dawn. Crowley's influence is pervasive in modern music and film, inspiring countless rock and heavy metal bands such as Led Zeppelin, David Bowie, Iron Maiden, and Tool, as well as many films such as "The Devil Rides Out," "Chemical Wedding," "A Dark Song," and others. We will also examine magical themes in popular fiction, such as the Lord of the Rings, Narnia, and Harry Potter, exploring the ways in which these works incorporate older magical themes while also re-imaging through a largely Christian framework. Students will also be given basic analytical tools drawn from history, religious studies, cultural studies, and other disciplines to help interpret and compare these magical influences.

In their weekly Carmen posts, in-class discussions, and short written papers, students will be asked to engage in thoughtful critical analysis of the intersections between modern magical movements, literature and the arts. For example, in one of the short-written papers, students may be asked to compare the influence of the Golden Dawn on a specific work of modern fiction and the influence of Crowley's magic on one musical group or film. Or they might be asked to compare the role of magic and Christianity in the Narnia series with their role in the Golden Compass. We will also engage these questions through small group discussions, in which students are given a specific example of a visual image, ritual performance, film clip or piece of music and then work together to analyze it in light of themes covered in class.

The final group project at the end of the semester will also be an opportunity to interpret significant works of design or visual, literary or performing arts. In the past, I have had students do projects on films such as Midsommer, novels such as the Percy Jackson series, and musical genres such as Norwegian heavy metal

Expected Learning Outcome 1.2: Successful students are able to describe and explain how cultures identify, evaluate, shape, and value works of literature, visual and performing art, and design. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Students will be asked throughout the semester to describe and explain how cultures identify, shape and values works of literature, visual and performing art and design. One of the key themes we will examine is the backlash against magical influences in modern literature and art: for example, we will discuss the phenomenon in the 1980s known as the "Satanic Panic," when rumors of witchcraft, devil-worship and child sacrifice spread throughout the American media; much of this hysteria was directed at rock and heavy metal music, which did often borrow from occult authors such as Aleister Crowley. Similarly, we will examine the backlash against popular works such as the Harry Potter series, which were widely accused by many conservative Christians of promoting witchcraft. Conversely, we will discuss the question of why other popular works -- such as the Narnia series by C.S. Lewis -- did not generate much backlash and instead were embraced by many Christian communities despite the central role of magic in the books.

Students will be asked to critically examine these questions through in-class discussions, weekly posts on Carmen, and several short papers. For example, they might be asked to compare Christian responses to magical themes in Harry Potter versus the Narnia series. Or they might be asked to critically analyze the way Wiccans were represented in American media during the Satanic Panic and how those representations have continued or not in twenty-first century media.

We will also engage these questions through critical analyses of films. For example, we will watch a documentary on the Satanic Panic and rock and roll during the 1980s and then work in small groups to discuss the larger social, political, and religious forces behind the widespread fear of magic and the occult during this period in American history.

Expected Learning Outcome 1.3: Successful students are able to evaluate how artistic ideas influence and shape human beliefs and the interactions between the arts and human perceptions and behavior. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Throughout the course, students will be asked to evaluate the ways in which artistic ideas influence and shape human beliefs and interactions between the arts and human behavior. One of the recurring themes of the course is the importance of ritual performance in modern magic, which involves a tremendous amount of symbolism, drama, costume, and regalia. We will look in detail, for example, at neo-pagan festival culture, which is highly performance and is a central part of the formation of neo-pagan identity, community and religious experience. We will also look in detail at the use of poetic language in magical ritual -- for example, in Wiccan ceremonies such as "Drawing Down the Moon" -- and the ways in which highly symbolic, evocative language is used to both express and induce certain kinds of altered states of consciousness. Finally, we will also examine the growth of modern fan-cultures around certain works of fiction such as Harry Potter; these have many religious or quasi-religious qualities and show the ways in which fictional worlds can help shape new kinds of community and identity in the twenty-first century.

Students will analyze these themes through their short written papers and also through the final group project. For example, in previous semesters, I have had students do final projects on the role of "pilgrimage" in fan-cultures such as Harry Potter sites in England or the Wizarding World of Harry Potter theme park. They showed the ways in which fan pilgrimage both overlaps with and departs from modern familiar forms of religious pilgrimage, revealing the complex boundaries between belief and fantasy and between the "fictional" and the "real." I have also had students do projects on the use of art, symbolism, and imagination in occult tools such as Tarot cards or Ouija boards and the ways in which these shape both belief and behavior in certain communities.

Expected Learning Outcome 1.4: Successful students are able to evaluate social and ethical implications in literature, visual and performing arts, and design. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

Throughout the course, we examine both the intersections between modern magical groups and larger social and ethical questions. For example, much of the interest in neo-pagan groups such as Wicca and Druidry went hand in hand with the modern environmentalist movement. Many of the most prominent Wiccan authors such as Starhawk are also outspoken environmentalists and political activists, who see the earth as sacred and its protection as a moral imperative. Similarly, the rise of neo-paganism in the United States also went hand in hand with modern feminist movements, particularly second-wave and radical feminism during the 1960s and 70, offering women prominent roles as religious leaders. These social and ethical implications can also be traced through literature, music, and visual and performing arts; for example, Starhawk's "Reclaiming Collective" in San Francisco combines neo-paganism, feminism, environmentalism and ritual performance. At the same time, however, the course also interrogates some of the more problematic aspects of modern magic and its performative dimensions. For example, we examine neo-pagan festival culture and the problem of appropriation of indigenous symbols and arts in ritual performances (wearing Native American head-dresses, belly-dancing, etc).

Students are asked to critically analyze these social and ethical implications in their written work and final projects. For example, they might be asked to examine a particular neo-pagan festival (such as Starwood in Ohio) and discuss the social and ethical dimensions of various aspects of its ritual performances, symbolism, and representations of other cultures. Or they might be asked to discuss the theme of war in the works of Tolkien and Lewis (both of whom fought in World War I) and the ways they use both magical and Christian themes to grapple with larger social and ethical questions of violence.

Goal 2: Successful students will experience the arts and reflect on that experience critically and creatively.

Expected Learning Outcome 2.1: Successful students are able to engage in informed observation and/or active participation within the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design. Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

This course focuses heavily on active student engagement with the materials, including the role of magical themes in modern art, literature, music and film. We will frequently examine a cultural object -- for example, a film such as "The Devil Rides Out" or a piece of music such as Tool's "Parabola" or a painting by Alex Gray -- and ask students to work in small groups to tease out the various magical, religious, and cultural imagery in the work. At the same time, I also regularly take students on field trips to observe various neo-pagan ritual performances in the Columbus area. I have taken them several times, for example, to observe the local Druid group, Three Cranes Grove; their head priest has also spoken to my classes on numerous occasions. Through direct observation of a ritual performance, students are able to connect the more theoretical issues discussed in the readings with the actual role of symbolism, language, and drama in a living community.

The class discussions and short papers ask students to reflect critically on their observation of these examples. One of the short papers is a "field observation report" based on a visit to a local community or ritual performance, such as the local Druid group or a neo-pagan festival. The paper asks students not simply to describe the event but also to analyze the role of symbolism, language, music, and drama in the performance, and then to critically examine in relation to readings discussed in class.

Expected Learning Outcome 2.2: Successful students are able to critically reflect on and share their own experience of observing or engaging in the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design.

Please link this ELO to the course goals and topics and indicate *specific* activities/assignments through which it will be met. (50-700 words)

In addition to observing and analyzing modern magical movements and their expression in literature and art, students are also asked to reflect critically on their own experience of studying these phenomena. Many OSU students come into a class on "Magic in the Modern World" with either a strong Christian bias or an existing involvement in movements such as Wicca and neo-paganism. The course challenges students to reflect upon and work past their previous conceptions about modern magical groups and understand these from a more academically-informed perspective grounded in history, culture, and comparative analysis. For example, when we read texts such as the Lord of the Rings, the Narnia series, or Harry Potter, many students are surprised to realize how much Christian influence is in these texts, most of which they had not noticed when they first encountered them as readers. At the same time, they are asked to reflect on how each of these authors combined Christian themes with elements of magic, pagan mythology, and occultism, and why contemporary readers either are or are not bothered by this combination of Christianity and magic.

One of the most useful classroom exercises I have found is the in-class debate on a key issue that really forces students to reflect critically on their own views and presuppositions. One example we discuss is a group called the Satanic Temple -- an atheistic form of modern Satanism -- which made national headlines when it demanded that a statue of Baphomet be placed next to monuments of the Ten Commandments outside State Court Houses in Arkansas and Oklahoma. We also look at the ways in which the Satanic Temple "performed" their protests and the visual symbolism of their Baphomet statue itself. Although most students are not particularly sympathetic to the Satanic Temple as a religious group, they almost always agree with their broader legal argument that states can't endorse one religion (e.g., Christianity) without endorsing all religions (including Satanism). This example works really well to help students reflect on their own experience of observing these images and think critically about whatever preconceptions they brought into the class with them. We do similar in-class debates on issues such as the performance of Wiccan marriage and the question of its status as a legal form of marriage, the controversy over the performance of Wiccan rituals at U.S. military debates, and other contemporary issues.

GE Rationale: Foundations: Natural Science (4 credits)

Requesting a GE category for a course implies that the course fulfills **all** expected learning outcomes (ELOs) of that GE category. To help the reviewing panel evaluate the appropriateness of your course for the Foundations: Natural Sciences, please answer the following questions for each ELO.

A. Foundations

Please explain in 50-500 words why or how this course is introductory or foundational in the study of Natural Science.