I. **OVERVIEW**  
The following information will appear in the 2010 - 2011 catalog

**ANTHR 140 Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion**  
3 Units

Formerly listed as: ANTHR - 140: Magic, Witchcraft and Religion  
Recommended for Success: Before enrolling in this course, students are strongly advised to complete ENGL 101 with minimum grade of C.

A cross-cultural study of the forms, functions and politics of supernatural beliefs and associated rituals in a diverse world. Emphasis on investigating belief systems and rituals within particular cultural contexts, including their emergence and the effect of their practice. Additional emphasis is on broad ethnographic comparison, to derive insight into the power and cultural work of religious and supernatural frameworks in various societies. Religious and supernatural worlds are also analyzed for their local and global connections with other cultural institutions, movements, forms, politics, and processes.

Field trips might be required.  (A-F or P/NP - Student choice) Lecture  
Transfer: (CSU, UC) General Education: (MJC-GE: B ) (CSU-GE: D1 ) (IGETC: 4A )

II. **LEARNING CONTEXT**
Given the following learning context, the student who satisfactorily completes this course should be able to achieve the goals specified in Section III, Desired Learning:

A. **COURSE CONTENT**

1. **Required Content:**

   a. Introduction to anthropology

   b. Cultural anthropology and its approaches to the study of religion and the supernatural

      i. Methodology and analysis

         a. Cultural anthropology and its holism

         b. Cultural anthropology, the scientific method and humanistic perspectives

      ii. Ethnographic fieldwork and data collection

         a. Ethnographic methods including field observation

         b. Problems associated with fieldwork: ethnocentrism and culture shock

      iii. The concepts of culture, cultural relativism and cultural ethnocentrism as they relate to supernatural behavior

      iv. Anthropological holism

   c. History of anthropological investigations of the supernatural, including theoretical paradigms used

   d. Anthropological theories of myth, symbolism and ritual
e. Cultural analysis, diverse cross-cultural comparison, and explanation of supernatural and religious beliefs and practices through examining
   
i. Types of supernatural practitioners
   
ii. Rites of passage: birth, adolescence, marriage, adulthood, and death.
   
iii. Forms of magic, magical rites, and divination techniques
   
iv. Trance and dance, possession states, ecstatic religious and magical rituals.
   
v. Varieties of cults and religious movements
   
vi. Sorcery, shamanism and witchcraft
   
vii. Social-cultural context and major religious and orthodox/fundamentalist sects
   
viii. Traditional medicine, healing and curers
   
ix. Ritual and myths as related to social structure and economic practices
   
x. The connection among economies, gender, kinship forms, social organization, and supernatural beliefs and practices cross-culturally
   
xi. Change in supernatural beliefs and practices through cultural contact via processes of colonialism, transnationalism and/or globalization
   
xii. The politics of religious and cultural identities in wider, socio-cultural context

2. **Recommended Content:**

   Recommended course content: broad use of relevant ethnographic articles or books that document historical and contemporary religious and supernatural materials and practices from around the world.

B. **ENROLLMENT RESTRICTIONS**

1. **Advisories**

   Before enrolling in this course, students are strongly advised to complete ENGL 101 with minimum grade of C.

C. **HOURS AND UNITS**

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   3 Units

D. **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION (TYPICAL)**

   *Instructors of the course might conduct the course using the following method:*
   
   1. Lecture, discussion, reading, writing projects
   
   2. Photographic slides, films/videos, discussion, and reading
   
   3. Writing assignments emphasizing descriptive, analytical and evaluative skills
E. ASSIGNMENTS (TYPICAL)

1. **EVIDENCE OF APPROPRIATE WORKLOAD FOR COURSE UNITS**

   *Time spent on coursework in addition to hours of instruction (lecture hours)*

   a. Student workload outside of class may include, but is not limited to:

      i. Weekly reading of textbook and other assigned readings, reading of extra source materials both primary and secondary as provided in class, encouragement of independent research in areas of interest that may be discussed in weekly lectures.

      ii. Weekly preparations for exams using lecture notes, reviewing textbook readings and other assigned readings, answering study questions, writing of response papers, and group study sessions.

2. **EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL THINKING**

   *Assignments require the appropriate level of critical thinking*

   a. Writings emphasizing descriptive, analytical and evaluative skills.

      i. Example essay prompt on exams:

         a. In reference to the book *Calling in the Soul*, how might we consider death to be a rite of passage with a liminal period that has gendered expectations outside the norms of everyday life? In answering this, *illustrate* how the Hmong in Flower Village ritually deal with the crisis of a dead body. Remember to tell me who does what, why women (in relation to men) are important during this process, and how it seems that the transition for the dead person's souls give cultural value to women in a world where "Hmongness is male."

      ii. Example response paper:

         a. In the "You Are What You Eat" article, Jill Dubisch asks us to understand that Health Food Converts experience their relationship to food in particular ways. Dubisch sees the movement as a religious “system of symbols.” What does she mean by that? How does the movement work as a set of symbols, meanings and practices?

F. **TEXTS AND OTHER READINGS (TYPICAL)**


III. **DESIRED LEARNING**

A. **COURSE GOAL**
As a result of satisfactory completion of this course, the student should be prepared to:

(1) demonstrate a broad understanding of how anthropologists research and analyze the various components and processes of religious and supernatural cultures; (2) assess the role of ritual and beliefs within cultural contexts and compare them cross-culturally; and (3) appraise the relevancy and contributions of cultural anthropology in the study of religion in a multicultural society and a global world.

B. **STUDENT LEARNING GOALS**

*Mastery of the following learning goals will enable the student to achieve the overall course goal.*

1. **Required Learning Goals**

   *Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the student will be able to:*

   a. Describe a large range of religious, ritual and magical beliefs throughout the world and over time. (mc)

   b. Describe and analyze the anthropological implications of differing belief systems in a multicultural society. (mc)

   c. Analyze the socio-cultural context of religious and magical beliefs within a culture and between cultures. (mc)

   d. Explain the anthropological approaches to the study of supernaturalism (including magic ritual, and religion).

   e. Explain anthropological approaches to data gathering and the analysis of ceremonial, magical and supernatural practices and beliefs.

   f. Evaluate the role of the supernatural (including magic, witchcraft, religion ritual, and other belief systems) in contemporary society, with particular emphasis on the students' own culture.

   g. Demonstrate the anthropological approaches to the processes and politics of religious identity formation, rites of passage, and embodiment, such as cult affiliation or religious conversion. (mc)

   h. Describe and analyze healing and curing practices and the underlying beliefs about health cross-culturally. (mc)

   i. Demonstrate the various connections between economics, gender, kinship, social organization, and supernatural beliefs and practices cross-culturally. (mc)

   j. Explain anthropological approaches to change in supernatural belief and practices as a result of cultural contact, with a particular emphasis on colonialism, transnationalism or globalization. (mc)

   k. Explain anthropological approaches to the politics of religious and cultural identities in wider, socio-cultural contexts. (mc)

IV. **METHODS OF ASSESSMENT (TYPICAL)**

A. **FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT**

1. In-class discussions

2. Research projects (group and/or individual)

3. Writing projects (group and/or individual)

4. Response papers

B. **SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT**
1. Essay exams (required)
2. Objective testing
3. Research paper