

# TESP 82, **Witches, Saints, and Heretics: Religious Outsiders**

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## ***COURSE SYLLABUS***

**Fair warning:** this is an unusually detailed syllabus, mainly because I don't get the chance of going through it with you in some Santa Clara classroom and entertaining a lot of Q&A. So, give it a careful read and if you *\*do\** have questions, bring them up on the "Ask Dohar" discussion forum in the top module of our Camino course page.

**Course Description:** This **fully online** course *is* about its title but the underlying subject is religious difference and its penalties regarding theological orthodoxy (heretics), the natural world (witches and magic), and extraordinary (if not excessive) virtue (saints). Our emphasis lies on the borders of religious convention and what can broadly be described as the "normative religious experience." But that description is subject to change according to culture, community, time and place. Because our course-length is a factor, our emphasis is on religious outsiders from the perspective of Christianity. The course shares equal measure of historical and contemporary religious outsiders.

**Core Learning Objectives:** Since our main focus is on religious outsiders and how the boundaries are established within various historical and cultural settings,

Our first Core Learning Objective (CLO 1) is to **think critically and analyze diverse (and divergent) religious phenomena** including the ways in which these so-called outsiders are judged. The medieval Inquisition, for example, cannot be understood apart from the heresies it hoped to curtail.

Second, we approach these phenomena from **a variety of historical and theological source perspectives** including, scripture, law (civil and canon), fiction, folk-lore (story and art), theological and scientific treatises, biography, letters and personal journals (CLO 2).

Since ventures into the realms of magic, religious dissent and holiness touch upon the core beliefs of others, we are invited to **consider our own world-views and ways of believing** (CLO 3). Every assignment will actively pursue one or more of these objectives. (See the particular CLO in parentheses below.)

**Texts: All readings for this course are either found on the web or have been uploaded to our course site at SCU's online learning platform, Camino.** That course site also contains announcements for the class (sent out on a nearly daily basis), reading questions and all the discussion forums. I'll be sending out in advance of reading assignments, **guide questions** that help you look for particular things in an article or film.

For any passages from the **Bible**, students may consult a printed copy of the scriptures or find pertinent passages on-line.

**Assessment, Evaluation and Feedback:** course learning objectives are assessed in three main ways—**essay-writing**, reflective and critical participation in **discussions** and a final **exam**. The essays are 2-3 pages in length and set on specific due-dates but with topic options (see p 6 below). Discussions account for most the course participation, but students can secure an **additional 5% in participation** points. These are not ‘bonus points’ over and above the course credit of 100%, but they’re easy grabs and yours to lose. All you need to do is pay attention and be on top of things.

**Course Credit** is apportioned in the following ways:

2 Essays:	10 points each (20%)
6 Discussions:	10 points each (60%)
Final Exam	15 points (15%)
‘Participation Points:	5 points (5%)

**Instructor feedback** reaches students through comments on papers and online discussions and, in more general ways, during online office hours. Students can arrange to find me at Skype or arrange for a chat at Camino anytime they’d like—just let me know.

**Scoring Rubric:** in order to see how I evaluate your work in the course—in all respects—take a look at the scoring rubric at the end of the syllabus

**“Ask Dohar”:** There’s a standing course forum in the first module called “Ask Dohar.” This is a grab-bag for questions about the course, some particular assignment, perhaps an interpretation of one of the course readings or that film music from one of our videos that you’ve just got to have. In other words, it’s a place you can go to raise some query about the class. And it’s a good idea to go there **first** rather than email me individually: a question you have about the course may very well be one that other students would like to ask, too. I’ll answer all inquiries **within 24 hours**, likely far less time. Furthermore, I am happy to consult with students on papers before, during or after they’re written. In addition, students will be encouraged to assess critically their own experience of the course in the standard end-of-term narrative evaluation.

**Due dates:** Because all of you are on different schedules (if not time zones), whenever anything comes due, it should be completed and submitted **by midnight** of the due-date. Keep this in mind when strategizing your work for each week.

**Disabilities:** If you have a **documented disability** for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, [www.scu.edu/disabilities](http://www.scu.edu/disabilities), as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please initiate a conversation with me about your

accommodations during my office hours within the first two weeks of class. Students who are pregnant and parenting may also be eligible for accommodations. Accommodations will only be provided after I have verification of your accommodations as approved by Disabilities Resources, and with sufficient lead time for me to arrange testing or other accommodations. For more information you may contact Disabilities Resources at [408-554-4109](tel:408-554-4109).

**Plagiarism:** All assignments—reading and writing—are due the day assigned. Plagiarism *in any form* will result in certain failure of the project in question and may result in a failing grade for the entire course according to University policies and procedures. Please read carefully: <http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/resources/academicintegrity/>.

## COURSE MODULES

Obviously, we're not meeting as a group three days a week as would happen in a conventional Summer Session course at SCU. Nevertheless, it's helpful if a student constructs his or her week as if there were a **set schedule**. What you want to have in mind are six hours a week for 'in class' work: this means discussion forums, listening to audio presentations and watching assigned videos. The structure I'm suggesting below is simply that—a suggestion: that you do most of the reading for the coming week over the previous weekend and on Wednesdays (due dates will typically fall on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays). However, certain weekly activities (like the discussions) **do** have set times and the papers are due on **specific days**.

Try to use your time well and not let the readings pile up. Again, the course goes by quickly and you don't have the standard pressures of weekly attendance to serve as a goad. Most of what you read here is short, but it requires **time to think**. For all of this, make sure you're checking **Camino Announcements** on a daily basis.

The **six course discussions** serve as our weekly 'classrooms.' In these discussions you respond to a prompt and demonstrate, by references to the course materials, that you've read, listened to and watched what we've been doing so far. The **first discussion** due on Saturday (7/18) is a quick and easy ice-breaker; discussions **2, 3, 4 and 5** are all due on a Thursday (by midnight) but will open the day before at noon. (As with everything else in this course, follow the prompts and my Camino announcements for details.) The **last discussion** is due on Tuesday, 7/19 in the final days of the session.

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### Date / Topic

#### Module I Introduction to the Course (June 16 -17)

6/16 (Thursday) Read the Course Syllabus  
**Discussion 1: Course Introductions**  
Listen to Dohar's "Welcome to TESP 82"  
Read: 'How to Write a Paper for TESP 82'

*Between Friday, 6/17 and Wednesday, 6/22, complete all scheduled readings, videos, and podcasts for Week 1. The key in all of this is **pace yourself!***

**Module II Heretics (June 20 – June 24)**

**Week 1**

Over the previous weekend and **Monday thru Wednesday** of this week:

Listen to: **Dohar's 'Introduction to Heretics'**

Watch: YouTube video, 'A Class Divided'

Read: 'Eve's Various Children'

Listen to: 'Heretics' from National Public Radio's "This American Life"

Read: Chip Berlet, 'Dancing with Devils: the Logic of Oppression'

Read: Bernard Gui, 'A Manual for Inquisitors'

*Later this week comes your first 'real discussion.' While the due date as indicated here is \*Thursday\* (6/23), the discussion will open mid-day on Wednesday, 6/22.*

6/23 (Thursday) **Discussion 2:** 'How to become a Heretic' (CLO 1, 2, 3)

*Between Thursday, 6/23 and Monday, 6/27, write Paper #1 based on options below.*

**Module III Witches (June 27 – July 1)**

**Week 2**

6/27 (Monday) **Paper 1 Due**

Listen to: **Dohar's 'Introduction to Witches'**

Read: 'Malleus Maleficarum' ('The Hammer of Witches'), Part I

Watch: "Witches: a Documentary"

6/28 (Tuesday)

Read: K. Briggs, 'A Sampler of British Folktales' (select tales to be announced)

6/30 (Thursday) **Discussion 3:** 'Witches on the Web' (CLO 1, 2, 3)

*Between Friday, July 1 and Tuesday, July 5, read what's required for early in Week 3.*

7/4 – 7/8

**Week 3**

7/4 (Monday)

Read: 'Malleus Maleficarum,' Part II

Read: 'The Trial of Suzanne Gaudry'

7/5 (Tuesday)

Listen to: 'Habeas Schmabeas' (from NPR's 'This American Life')

Listen to: **Dohar's 'Summary of Witches'**

7/7 (Thursday) **Discussion 4:** ‘Witches at Guantanamo?’ (CLO 1, 2, 3)

*Between Friday, 7/8 and Monday, 7/11, write Paper #2 based on options below.*

**Module 4 Saints (July 14 – July 23)**

**Week 4**

7/11 (Monday) **Paper 2 Due**

7/12 (Tuesday)

Listen to: **Dohar, ‘Introduction to Saints’**

Read: ‘The Letters of Christina of Stommeln’  
‘Pancho Villa: a Saint on the Borders’

Read: ‘What Remains: the Lure of Relics in a Secular Age’

7/14 (Thursday) **Discussion 5:** ‘Relics I Have Known’ (CLO 1, 2, 3)

*Between Friday, 7/15 and Monday, 7/18, read the only reading for Week 5*

**Week 5**

7/18 (Monday)

Read: Sandra Cisneros, ‘Little Miracles, Kept Promises’

*The following—your last discussion—is due by midnight, 7/19 and will open midday 7/18*

7/19 (Tuesday) **Discussion 6:** ‘Praying to the Saints’ (CLO 1, 2, 3)

*After the discussion, you can turn attention to the final exam which is due by Thursday midnight, 7/21*

**7/21 Final Exam**

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**Grading Scale:**

A	100-95	exceptional
A-	94-90	excellent
B+	89-87	very good
B	86-83	good
B-	82-80	solid performance
C+	79-76	average
C	75-72	
C-	71-69	
D	68-64	
D-	63-60	
F	< 59	

**Contact Info:**

**Office Hours:** online, anytime

**Email:** [wdohar@scu.edu](mailto:wdohar@scu.edu)

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## Paper Topics for TESP 82 (Summer, 2015)

Below are four options to consider in writing your two papers for this course. Look at them carefully (along with their due-dates). There are **two options that involve film analysis; you may choose only one of these**. As you can see, none of these options allows for a topic on ‘Saints.’ Given the shortness of our course and the closeness of Paper 2’s due date to the Final, we’ll entertain the topic of ‘Saints’ on the Final Exam. You can upload your papers through Camino.

### Paper 1 (has two options; choose one) **Due June 27**

1. The “logic of oppression”: a case study. Apply C. Berlet’s logic of oppression to some person or group in **contemporary** society. Try to describe as many of the stages in the logic of oppression as your chosen subject can illustrate. (CLO 1, 2, 3)
2. Discuss social and/or sexual ‘heretics’ in one of the following films (or **any other** that you think may fit the category—just let me know.) (CLO 1, 2, 3)

Saved!  
Jesus Camp  
The Laramie Project  
The Pianist  
Boys Don’t Cry  
Monster

### Paper 2 (has two options; choose one) **Due July 11**

1. Images of the witch: Select one of the following films (or another of your choosing) and comment on the durability of certain stereotypes associated with witchcraft. Be willing to anchor some of your points in historical source materials used elsewhere in this course. (CLO 1, 2, 3)

The Craft  
Hocus Pocus  
Witches  
The Wizard of Oz  
Witch (2015)

2. You’ve learned something about *judicial procedure* in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (also from Bernard Gui’s *Manual of the Inquisitor*). Based on that, discuss judicial procedure in the ‘Trial of Suzanne Gaudry.’ How does the procedure *work*? What is the process of judgment in this trial? (CLO 1, 2, 3)

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## Assignment Scoring Rubric:

Most course assignments in TESP 82 have a 15, 10 or 5-point value in terms of the overall course grade. Reaching the maximum in either category represents ‘outstanding’ work recognized with the letter-grade A. The evaluation of each assignment also focuses on three areas: **critical thinking**, **expression** and **participation** (both in timeliness and overall quality). The final score of any one assignment is the average of all points scored in each of these three areas. Here follow more specific descriptions of the scoring rubric:

### Critical Thinking:

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|----------|---|
| 10, 5    | The work shows that the student has a real grasp of the key concepts in a reading or presentation; there’s an independence of thought and a willingness to critique respectfully the work of others as well as provide <b>solid evidence for points made</b> . This evidence appears in the form of references to content from the readings, audio presentation, videos, etc. It also helps to raise questions and comments that take the discussion to a deeper level. |
| 9 or 4   | The student has a good idea of the key concepts but shows a tendency to withhold rather than follow through with his or her ideas.  |
| 8 or 3   | There’s more summary of basic points than there is critical thinking.   |
| 7 or 2   | Effort is minimal and overly casual or repetitious of points others have made; simple agreement with a point rather than engagement.  |
| < 7 or 2 | There’s very little by way of critical thinking or personal involvement in the assignment. The student was a no-show.   |

### Expression:

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 10 or 5 | The student uses well-constructed, grammatically correct sentences; expression is creative, clear, concise and logical. The writer uses vocabulary emergent in the course. There are no mistakes in spelling, usage or grammar. (This kind of correctness is <b>not so much expected</b> in discussion forums, though too little attention paid to form in those settings can soften the impact a student wants to make in those discussions.) |
| 9 or 4  | There’s an effort at sound and creative expression, but there’s too much imprecision or mistakes in form.  |

- 8 or 3      The student makes his or her point but without much originality or quality of expression.
- 7 or 2      A minimalist contribution with too many errors in form; lacks focus.
- < 7 or 2      The argument or points are sketchy and rushed; many errors in form.

**Participation (in timeliness and overall quality):**

- 10 or 5      Contributions are prompt, relevant and proactive; remarks are posted freely on all assignments within the guidelines set out for the assignment.
- 9 or 4      The overall quality of participation is good but some critical contribution is missing such as thoughtfulness, creativity, promptness, etc.
- 8 or 3      Something of the above but with greater compromises to the quality of participation.
- 7 or 2      The contribution is sketchy, hasty or off-point; errors in form make it difficult to understand or respond to
- <7 or 2      Some important aspect of the activity is missing (e.g., one response is given when two are asked for); the central point of the discussion has been lost or not understood; contributions are minimal and the content hard to follow.