

# TESP 82, WITCHES, SAINTS, AND HERETICS: RELIGIOUS OUTSIDERS

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Wellcome Images

## *COURSE SYLLABUS*

**A note to the Summer TESP 82 Student:** usually, I get to go over a syllabus in class and field all sorts of questions. As I can't do that here, this syllabus is far more detailed than what I normally produce for conventional courses at SCU. So, pour yourself a large cup of coffee, reserve some time, and go through each of the following sections carefully. Note any places that still seem unclear and contact me with any question you have.

**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** through the various processes of this course (CLO 3).

Every assignment will actively pursue one or more of these Core Learning Objectives. (See the particular CLO in the course assignments below.)

**Texts: All readings for this course are either found on the web or on Camino.** This learning platform is our ‘classroom’ for the summer. There, students will find all essential information about the course, especially **announcements** that—in the absence of classroom meetings—occur several times a week. Included in these announcements are **reading questions** that guide student interaction with texts and other sources along with details about weekly **discussion** forums.

**Assessment, Evaluation and Feedback:** course learning objectives are assessed in three main ways—discussions, weekly journals, and a final exam.

- **Discussions**, each having its own prompt, are mainly places for both learning community and demonstrating **analytical/critical thinking**.
- **Journals** (2 pages) are of a **more reflective** nature and give students a chance to ponder more personal connections with ideas, events, and issues encountered in the course. (See the Administration Module on Camino: ‘How to Write a Journal for TESP 82.’) All journals, except the last one, are due anytime the week assigned *by Friday, midnight*. As with everything else in this quick course, you want to balance your work in such a way that allows you some moment of ‘reflection’ toward the end of the week for these journals!
- **The final** exam calls for a **synthesis** of major themes regarding religious outsiders.
- A modest 5% of the final grade comes from **“quick-grab participation points.”** These aren’t ‘bonus points’ as such—they’re part of your participation score for the course and include the opening ice-breaker discussion (2 points) and three trivia questions (3 points) sent out at various times during the course. Be on the watch for these!

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

Discussions (4)	40% (each worth 10 points)
Journals (5)	40% (each worth 8 points)
Quick-Grab	5%
Final Exam	15%

**Submitting Work:** All written work (Journals and Final Exam) should be uploaded to Camino. The discussions are, of course, also Camino-based.

**Instructor feedback** reaches students through comments on journals and online discussions. Given the nature of both kinds of assignment in a five-week course, this feedback comes often. But, if students want some time with me, I can arrange office hours to suit a student's schedule. Contact me, either through Camino or my SCU email account: [wdohar@scu.edu](mailto:wdohar@scu.edu) and we can arrange a meeting via Skype.

**“Ask Dohar”:** There's a standing course forum in the first module called “Ask Dohar.” This is a wide-open forum 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 where 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.

**Scoring Rubric:** to better anticipate assessment standards for the course (or to understand more clearly the rationale behind scoring practices for TESP 82), see the **scoring rubric** located on pp 6-7 of the syllabus.

## **COURSE MODULES AND A SUGGESTED SCHEDULE:**

All materials for the course are located in **four course modules**. The first is a ‘catch all’ under the name “**Administrative Module**.” That's where you'll find materials that are about the course in general—the ‘Ask Dohar’ forum, a guide for writing journals, the course syllabus and, in time, the final exam. But I may use it for other things and will let you know when they appear and for what reason.

The three **modules that follow** are devoted to our trio of subjects: **heretics, witches, and saints**. The modules typically begin on a Monday and end on a Friday, so they present a kind of structure for the course.

Speaking of structure: 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 participating in 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 weekend before and then again midweek—on Wednesdays. Mondays, Tuesdays,

and Thursdays, according to this suggested schedule. become your ‘class days.’ But keep this general flexibility in relationship to the only two things with weekly due-dates: your **journals**, which are due anytime on or before **Wednesday** midnight (most weeks) and the **discussions** that typically run from Wednesday noon to Thursday midnight. (Obviously, you need to manage your time well in relation to reading assignments, journals, and discussions!)

Where you see a time reference in the syllabus, PDT (Pacific Daylight Time) is indicated. So, if you’re in another **time zone** somewhere on the globe, be aware of West Coast time and when certain things begin and end on Camino.

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’ll read (watch or listen to) is short, but it requires some **time to think**. I’ll be giving you plenty of guides for \*how\* to encounter course materials in **Camino Announcements**.

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## **MODULE I INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE**

(all content here is located in Module I on Camino)

(Thursday, June 22)

**Listen to:** Dohar’s audio introduction, ‘Welcome to TESP 82’

**Read:** the Course Syllabus *very carefully*.

**Participate in:** OPENING DISCUSSION: an easy ice-breaker, worth 2 points

**Listen to:** Dohar’s audio ‘Approaches to TESP 82’

*Use the weekend of June 24-25 to prepare for Week 1*

## **MODULE II HERETICS (June 26 – June 30)**

**WEEK 1**

(Monday, June 26)

**Listen to:** Dohar’s ‘Introduction to Heretics’

**Watch:** YouTube video, ‘A Class Divided’

**Read:** ‘Eve’s Various Children’

(Tuesday, June 27)

**Listen to:** ‘Heretics’ from NPR’s “This American Life”

**Read:** Chip Berlet, ‘Dancing with Devils: the Logic of Oppression’

(Thursday, June 28)

**DISCUSSION 1:** ‘How to become a Heretic’ (CLO 1, 2, 3)

(This discussion will open on Camino **Wednesday noon** and end **Thursday** night at 12 am)

**JOURNAL 1** is due by Friday (June 29) midnight; the prompt for this—and all journals—will appear in an announcement at least three days before the journal is due. Before you write your first journal, take a look at the document, ‘How to Write a Journal’ located in the ‘Administration’ module.

*Use the weekend to prepare for Week 2*

**MODULE III                    WITCHES (July 3 – July 14)                    WEEK 2**

(Monday, July 3)

**Listen to:** Dohar’s ‘Introduction to Witches’

**Read:** P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, ‘Witchcraft, Europe and the New World’ (from *in Europe and the New World, 1400-1800*)

‘Folktales about Witches’ (specific folktales to be assigned in a course announcement)

(Tuesday, July 4)

**Read:** ‘*Malleus Maleficarum*’ (‘The Hammer of Witches’), Part I

**Watch:** “Witches: a Documentary”

(Thursday, July 6)

**DISCUSSION 2:** ‘Witches on the Web’ (CLO 1, 2, 3)

(This discussion will open on Camino **Wednesday noon** and end **Thursday** night at 12 am)

**JOURNAL 2** due by Friday midnight

*Use the weekend to prepare for Week 3*

**WEEK 3**

(Monday, July 10)

**Read:** ‘*Malleus Maleficarum*,’ Part II

**Read:** ‘The Trial of Suzanne Gaudry’

(Tuesday, July 11)

**Listen to:** ‘Habeas Schmabeas’ (from NPR’s ‘This American Life’)

(Thursday, July 13)

**Listen to:** Dohar’s ‘Farewell to Witches’

**DISCUSSION 3:** ‘Are Terrorists the new ‘Witch?’’ (CLO 1, 2, 3)

(This discussion will open on Camino **Wednesday noon** and end **Thursday** night at 12 am)

**JOURNAL 3** due by Friday midnight

*Use the weekend to prepare for Week 3*

**MODULE IV                    SAINTS (July 17 – July 26)                    WEEK 4**

(Monday, July 17)

**Listen to:** Dohar, 'Introduction to Saints'

**Read:** Saints and Canonization

**Read:** 'The Strange Phenomenon of the Anorexic Saints'

(Tuesday, July 18)

**Read:** 'What Remains: the Lure of Relics in a Secular Age'

(Thursday, July 20)

**DISCUSSION 4:** 'Relics I Have Known' (CLO 1, 2, 3

(This discussion will open on Camino **Wednesday noon** and end **Thursday night** at 12 am)

**JOURNAL 4** due by Friday midnight

*Use the weekend to prepare for Week 3*

## WEEK 5

(Monday, July 24)

Read: Sandra Cisneros, 'Little Miracles, Kept Promises'

(Tuesday, July 25)

**JOURNAL 5** due by Tuesday midnight

(Wednesday, July 26)

**FINAL EXAM**

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## Assignment Scoring Rubric:

You might be tempted to skip this section, but even if you glance at it, you'll understand better the scores you receive—on journals, discussions, and the final exam.

Most course assignments in TESP 82 have a 15, 10 or 8-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:

15, 10, 8      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 **solid evidence for points made**. 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.

13, 9, 7 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.

There's more summary of basic points than there is critical thinking.

12, 7, 5 Effort is minimal and overly casual or repetitious of points others have made; simple agreement with a point rather than engagement.

<12, 7, 5 There's very little by way of critical thinking or personal involvement in the assignment. The student was a no-show.

### **Expression:**

15, 10, 8 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 **not so much expected** 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.)

13, 9, 7 There's an effort at sound and creative expression, but there's too much imprecision or mistakes in form.

12, 7, 5 The student makes his or her point but without much originality or quality of expression.

<12, 7, 5 A minimalist contribution with too many errors in form; lacks focus.

The argument or points are sketchy and rushed; many errors in form.

### **Participation (in timeliness and overall quality)<sup>1</sup>:**

15, 10, 8 Contributions are prompt, relevant and proactive; remarks are posted freely on all assignments within the guidelines set out for the assignment.

13, 9, 7 The overall quality of participation is good but some critical contribution is missing such as thoughtfulness, creativity, promptness, etc.

12, 7, 5 Something of the above but with greater compromises to the quality of participation.

<12, 7, 5      The contribution is sketchy, hasty or off-point; errors in form make it difficult to understand or respond to

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.

### **Academic Integrity**

*The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of -- and commitment to -- a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:*

*I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.*

*Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. For more information about Santa Clara University's academic integrity pledge and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see [www.scu.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.scu.edu/academic-integrity).*

### **Disabilities Resources**

*If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, <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 discuss them with me during my office hours.*

*While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from Disabilities Resources. The Disabilities Resources office will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assisted technology. (Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible). Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations. The Disabilities Resources office would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks. For more information you may contact Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109.*

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<sup>i</sup> Participation might not seem that relevant to a fully online course, but in the case of Summer TESP 82, this aspect of the course shows up very much in **class discussions**. So, I'll be looking for these various aspects of participation in your approaches to and engagement with online discussion topics.