

# UH 300 Section 027: Primate Religion & Human Consciousness

## Spring 2013

3 Credit Hours

Primary Instructor: Dr. Christopher Lynn  
Core Designation: University Honors, Writing  
Syllabus subject to change.

### Office Hours

Office: 339 Capstone Medical Center (700 University Blvd, next to College of Nursing)  
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Office hours: MW 2-4 or by appointment

### Prerequisites

From the Student Records System

Prerequisites for this course cannot be retrieved automatically. See the course schedule or any additional notes from the instructor for further information.

### Course Description

Human consciousness is often held aloft as one of the distinguishing characteristics of humanity with higher consciousness, self-awareness, and truth generally considered worthwhile lifelong pursuits. But at what cost? Have evolutionary mechanisms propelled humans toward “analysis paralysis”? Do cultural and psychological adaptations maintain the blinders of blissful ignorance? We will consider these questions in reading about the 'religious' behavior of non-human primates and the chemistry of altered states of consciousness, and engage in experiments and activities to expand and limit our own consciousnesses. Additionally, you will engage in original research as part of the Religious Ecology Study, which will involve establishing relationships and collecting data among a local religious group of your choice. The course will consist of a series of readings, discussions, and activities to explore human consciousness from psychological, biological, and cultural aspects with a focus on operationalizing it for a practical research agenda.

### Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to

- Define a complex system like human consciousness in operationalizable terms—that is, define it by the parts that comprise it and how to test for them
- Provide examples for elaborated culture (such as religious behavior) in non-humans and humans and examples of behavior that does not require consciousness in human behavior.
- Summarize technical material and communicate it experientially or in lay terms to a group of peers.
- Collaborate with a group to design and conduct a pilot study, write up the results as a scientific paper, and give a presentation to an educated audience.
- Recognize the synergistic outcomes of mind/body processes in behavior and culture.

### Attendance Policy

As this course involves active participation and activities, attendance is expected and mandatory on days you are scheduled to present. If you are absent without a valid excuse on a day you are scheduled to present, you will receive a 0 for that portion of your presentation grade, regardless of the preparation you may have otherwise done for the presentation. If you are aware of a conflict in your presentation date, it is up to you to arrange with classmates to switch presentations with someone.

### Required Texts

UA Supply Store Textbook Information

- **BULBULIA, JOSEPH / EVOLUTION OF RELIGION:STUDIES, THEORIES, AND CRITIQUES**  
(Required)

- **KING / EVOLVING GOD**  
(Required)

Barbara King. 2007 *Evolving God: A Provocative View of the Origins of Religion*. New York: Doubleday.

David Sloan Wilson. 2002 *Darwin's Cathedral: Evolution, Religion, and the Nature of Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Joseph Bulbulia et al. (eds). 2008 *The Evolution of Religion: Studies, Theories, & Critiques*. Santa Margarita, CA: Collins Foundation Press.

## Other Course Materials

### Blackboard

Supplementary information may be posted to Blackboard, and I will use this avenue to contact the class about syllabus changes. The syllabus is likely to be altered slightly over the course of the semester. I will not reprint it, but you can download and print the most current version from the link on Blackboard at any time. I will contact you when it has been substantively revised. Access Blackboard via myBama. There is a box called Blackboard on the Academics tab that should list your courses that are currently let up with Blackboard.

### Facebook

This course has a Facebook group for sharing information relative to the course. Please join us for online discussions at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/uh300.37/>.

## Exams and Assignments

**Dream Diary:** Keep a journal by your bed to record your dreams upon waking. Take 5 minutes every morning to take notes on your dreams before your memories fade. They fade quickly so the quicker you can do this the better. We will make use of this later in the semester. You will not receive points for this but will be penalized 10 course points if you don't have a dream journal to draw from when we use them for discussion. If you miss a day here or there, it is OK, but try to be as consistent as possible so you have a lot of material upon which to draw when we begin these discussions.

**Reading Presentations (30 points):** You will be responsible for summaries and discussions regarding several readings through the course of the semester. On days you are assigned to present, you must provide a typed one-page summary of the selection WITH AN ACTIVITY for group work. This summary must be emailed to me NO LATER THAN 8 AM on the morning of class so I can make copies for your classmates and bring them to class. You will be responsible for leading the group activity and will be graded accordingly. Half your score will be based on the summary you provide, which your classmates can use as a study guide for exams, and half will be based on your presentation. You will present three readings during the course of the semester. Each will be worth 10 course points.

**Midterm & Final Exams (40 points):** Each exam will consist of 5-10 short answer or essay questions. Exams will cover all material included in the course, including readings, lectures, discussions, and activities.

**Group Research Presentation (15 points):** The class will be divided into 3 groups. Each group will collect and present data as part of the Religious Ecology Study Tuscaloosa (REST). This is a systematic study of local church life from an ecological perspective. Each group will choose a church to study, obtain permission to collect data at the church. The instructions and materials to conduct this study will be provided.

**Research Paper (15 points):** Research papers should be 10-12 pages and use a scholarly style guide. Every scholarly journal published its "author guidelines," which include a style guide. Here is an example from *Ethos*, the journal for the Society for Psychological Society: <http://www.wiley.com/bw/submit.asp?ref=0091-2131>. These guidelines will give you the required manuscript style of the respective scholarly journal (obviously, the page count specified here supersede those of your respective style guide). When you turn in your report, you will include a professional cover letter that indicates what journal's style you are using for your report and the roles taken by each group member in your collaboration. I recommend you use RefWorks bibliographic software, as it will drastically improve your efficiency and accuracy and is free through the UA library (<http://refworks.ua.edu/>). In using RefWorks, I also recommend choosing a journal style that is loaded in RefWorks.

I recommend preparing your paper before your group presentation, as you will use the same material in the presentation. You will then use the constructive feedback you receive the presentation to improve the report. For writing projects, your group will spend about a third of the time researching your topic and the rest composing and revising your presentation and report. The

process of writing should inevitably send you back to your sources to clarify points so there is some additional research time folded into writing time. Research papers usually represent approximately 4-8 hours of research and 8-16 hours of writing. You will use primary sources for theoretical background and discussion. This means that, while being integrative and creative, your project will build on research that has come before. This will provide your validity. Reports must be grammatically and carefully proofread and, therefore, not suffer the flawed organization and logical gaps that first and second drafts almost always do. In writing, keep in mind your audience. Papers written “for the instructor” often make unwarranted assumptions about the expertise of the reader. The result is that you may assume the reader “knows what you mean” and you may fall into the trap of obscuring an otherwise good (or hiding poor) results and implications with jargon. Despite all these restrictions in terms of format that have the tendency to suck the life out of an otherwise fun project, I want you to convey the excitement of your results. Given the limited potential for interpreting pilot data from a small, biased sample, I want you to go out on a limb and be more speculative than you otherwise would for a true scholarly publication. Let me know how neat and fun this study or its results are. Finally, you will be evaluated using the following rubric:

	1=poor	2=fair	3=satisfactory	4=good	5=exceptional
<b>Coherence</b> (adherence to style, internal logic, organization, spelling/grammar, prose style)					
<b>Intellectual merit</b> (relevance to course, relevance to previous research)					
<b>Broader impacts</b> (importance or implications to discipline or society)					
<b>Source material</b> (choice of appropriate sources & comprehension of them)					
<b>Overall impression</b> (originality/creativity, collaboration, compelling/convincing, interesting)					

## Grading Policy

30 points = Reading presentations

20 points = Midterm exam

15 points = Group presentation

15 points = Group research paper

20 points = Final exam

## Policy on Missed Exams & Coursework

**Dream Diary:** You must make a consistent effort to record your dreams. If you forget to record a dream here or there, it is OK. Should you fail to complete this task whatsoever or only record a few dreams and do not substantively contribute to the discussion, you will be penalized 10 course points.

**Attendance:** If you miss a class, it is your generally your responsibility to utilize Tegrity to view lectures or contact a classmate to get notes. However, I cannot guarantee that every lecture will be posted to Tegrity. Furthermore, discussions will be an important aspect of this course, which is difficult to re-experience via Tegrity. The exception is missing a class on a day you are

scheduled to present. If you know you are going to miss a class in advance, arrange to switch with someone. I will not do the switching for you. Get to know your classmates and work something out. If you fail to do this or do not show up without a valid DOCUMENTED excuse, you will lose 10 course points, even if you have provided the written summary.

**Exams:** If you miss an exam due to ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WHATSOEVER, whether excused or not, you can make it up by writing an additional 25-page research paper on a topic of my choosing to be turned in by the last day of the semester.

**Research Presentation:** If you miss your own presentation for any reason whatsoever, you can make it up by writing a 25-page research paper on a topic of my choosing using the same format outlined for the group research paper above. This will be due by exactly two weeks after the final exam date.

**Term Paper:** If hypotheses or research design outlines are not received when they are due, I will begin deducting 5% from the paper grade for each group member for each day they are late. Collaboration is essential on this project. No excuses will be accepted. If any group members do not pull their weight, they will be penalized individually, but this will not be an acceptable excuse for not completing assignments as directed.

Late submissions will only be accepted by prior arrangement and/or with a very good reason. Otherwise, I will deduct 10% from each group member's paper grade for each day (or part of a day) they are late. Many assignments being due at the same time is *never* a good reason, and extensions will never be authorized on that basis, so please don't ask. No extensions will be authorized during the 3 days immediately prior to the due date except in the case of a legitimate medical emergency.

### Outline of Topics

<u>Date</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Assignment/Activity</u>	<u>Presenters</u>
Thurs, Jan 10		syllabus/schedule presenters	
Tues, Jan 15	King 1		Nick Atchison
	Wilson 1		Josh Blair
Thurs, Jan 17	King 2	Mirror test	Corey Burrage
Tues, Jan 22	King 3		Lindsey Chiantello
	Wilson 2		Elizabeth Ernstberger
Thurs, Jan 24	King 4	SPQ	Brandon Izor
Tues, Jan 29	King 5		Morgan Lee
	Wilson 3		Annie Lenox
Thurs, Jan 31	King 6	Sally & Mary	Kaycee McFalls
Tues, Feb 5	King 7		Lauren Parker
	Wilson 4		Amy Pippin
Thurs, Feb 7	King 8	Mind-in-the-eyes	MG Proaps
Tues, Feb 12	Wilson 5		Kelly Roy
	Whitehouse		Reese Tolbert
Thurs, Feb 14	Wilson 2	TAS	Douglas Weathers
Tues, Feb 19	Wilson 3		
	Geertz		
Thurs, Feb 21	Wilson 4	DES	
Tues, Feb 26	Wilson 5		
	Irons		

Thurs, Feb 28	Wilson 6	Hypnosis	
Tues Mar 5	Wilson 7		
	Kirkpatrick		
Thurs, Mar 7	MIDTERM EXAM		
Tues, Mar 12	Richerson & Newson		
	Harris & McNamara		
Thurs, Mar 14	Sosis	Body Postures	
Tues, Mar 19	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>		
Thurs, Mar 21			
Tues, Mar 26	Boehm		
Thurs, Mar 28	Bulbulia		
Tues, Apr 2	Soler	Neurofeedback	
Thurs, Apr 4	Slone		
	Xygalatas		
Tues, Apr 9	Schloss		
Thurs, Apr 11	Taves		
	Cohen		
Tues, Apr 16	Alcorta		
Thurs, Apr 18	McCorkle		
	Barrett (ch 36)		
Tues, Apr 23	Bering	Group Presentations	
Thurs, Apr 25		Group Presentations	
		PAPER DUE	
	FINAL EXAM 8-10:30 AM		

### Extra Credit Opportunities

I will offer extra credit for attending ALLELE lectures. Details will be announced thru the course of the semester.

### Classroom Decorum

The Code of Student Conduct requires that students behave in a manner that is conducive to a teaching/learning environment. Students who engage in behavior that is disruptive or obstructive to the teaching/learning environment will be subject to disciplinary sanctions outlined by the Code of Student Conduct. Disruptive/obstructive behavior is not limited to but may include the following: physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, stalking, intimidation, harassment, hazing, possession of controlled substances, possession of alcoholic beverages, use of cell phones and beepers in class, reading of newspapers, talking to fellow students during faculty or student presentations.

### Undergraduate Research

The Anthropology Department offers several avenues for getting involved in undergraduate research. We offer a course in Undergraduate Research that you can take in conjunction with mentoring by a department faculty member. There is a portal on the department website that will help us guide you to appropriate mentor and project: <http://anthropology.ua.edu/ugres.php>. Additionally, I take new students into the Human Behavioral Ecology Research Group (HBERG) every semester who are interested in getting involved in the kind of research I conduct and which is related to this course. Under some circumstances, I may offer extra credit for such participation, but you can also get involved without receiving credit, if you simply desire research experience. You can learn more about HBERG activities here: <http://anthropology.ua.edu/hberg/>. To apply to work with me, fill out the form at this portal: <http://anthropology.ua.edu/hberg/4/>.

## Policy on Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at the University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student.

The [Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Policy](#) will be followed in the event of academic misconduct.

## Disability Statement

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call 348-4285 or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to see me during office hours. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services, 133-B Martha Parham Hall East, before receiving academic adjustments.

## Severe Weather Protocol

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar, sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life saving actions.

**When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the [National Weather Service](#) and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take. The Office of Public Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:**

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
- Weather advisory sent out through Connect-ED--faculty, staff and students ([sign up at myBama](#))
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
- Weather advisories are broadcast via WUOA/WVUA-TV, which can be viewed across Central Alabama. Also, visit [wuatv.com](http://wuatv.com) for up-to-the-minute weather information. A mobile Web site is also available for your convenience.