

Spirituality, Medicine, and Health

Wesley J. Wildman — Boston University — Fall, 2011 — STH TT845/TT945

Description

The general aim of this science-religion course is to learn about the complex entanglements among religious traditions and spirituality, medical traditions and healing modalities, and norms for physical and mental health. This will involve (i) in Part 1 of the course, gaining a basic grasp on the history of the medical traditions of China, India, the Middle East, and the West, including the metaphysical frameworks that inform those traditions; (ii) in Part 2 of the course, studying the complex controversy over spirituality and health research and attempting to decide whether and how the efficacy of healing modalities is to be evaluated; (iii) in Part 3 of the course, understanding how western biomedicine interacts with the array of medical traditions and spiritually inspired healing modalities that thrive in the West; and (iv) throughout the course, addressing philosophical, theological, and ethical questions about norms for mental and physical health and comparing metaphysical frameworks for health and healing.

The class is intended for advanced masters students and doctoral candidates interested in the science-religion dialogue, and particularly in spirituality and health. Classes will meet once a week on Thursdays from 9:30 to 12:30. Each class will be conducted in the seminar discussion format with lectures given by the instructor as needed or requested. The 800-level version of this course counts as an MTS Core Concentration course for Science and Religion, for Theology, and for Area B.

Grading

The main product of the course will be a research paper on some aspect of the course material, topic to be approved in advance by the instructor (50%; 3,000 words for 800-level students, 5,000 words for 900-level students). There will also be several 1,500-word reviews of books and articles presented in class and annotation of links to relevant web sites, all to appear on the class website (30%). The remainder of the grade (20%) will be based on the quality of seminar participation, including attendance, timeliness, and discussion.

In addition to the public website, the class will have a private website at blackboard.bu.edu. This site will contain announcements, a discussion board, and places to claim assignments to avoid overlap with other students. In addition to the 800-level work, 900-level students will read more broadly in the literature (especially Monte, Wisneski & Anderson, and Whorton), and expand an existing annotated bibliography for the public website.

Policies

Incompletes are not allowed—as a matter of fairness—except in cases of serious emergencies. Don't leave your emergency to the last minute. Paperwork is necessary.

Students with Disabilities—Any students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should meet with the instructor as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure your full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

Students taking the course for doctoral credit are required to do all work at a doctoral level. In addition, students should submit one 1000-word review of a recent book related to the course content for publication in an appropriate journal. This review is in addition to regular coursework.

The STH Academic Code of Conduct may be found on the STH website at: www.bu.edu/sth/academic/academic-conduct. All students are required to familiarize themselves with this code, its definitions of misconduct, and its sanctions. Students should especially familiarize themselves with the section on plagiarism.

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Seminar Schedule

Introduction

- 9/8 *Issues in Spirituality, Medicine, and Health*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** nothing required for class but see below.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** none.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** none.
 - > **Task for ALL:** none.
 - > **Task for TT945:** none.

Part 1: History and Metaphysics of Spirituality and Medicine

- 9/15 *China*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Holland, all.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** read half of Monte.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** read the parts of Monte bearing on Chinese medicine's interpretations of the human body, its approach to organs and illnesses.
 - > **Task for ALL:** Find three online sources on the theme of spirituality, medicine, and health. Write a 100-word review of each site. Confine the scope of each review to the usefulness of the site for understanding spirituality, medicine, and health. Rate each site out of four stars (number of stars allowed: 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, 4). Reserve your review site using the class website's discussion board designated for that purpose. *Voice:* Aim the three reviews for web browsers like yourself. The review should be formal, fair, and helpful. Writing quality matters. *Deadline:* via email to the instructor by 11:59pm Wed 9/28.
 - > **Task for TT945:** search the web for bibliographies on spirituality, medicine, and health, and ponder whether the organizational structure for the bibliography we already have needs to be changed. Prior to next week's class meeting, consult with other TT945 students and produce a consensus plan for improving the bibliography. The delivery date for the bibliography is the class session prior to the Thanksgiving break, which is Thu Nov 17. You do not need to annotate every entry. But annotate whatever entries you can, with longer annotations for books than for articles or book chapters.
- 9/22 *India*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Frawley, part 1.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** Frawley parts 2-3.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** Heyn, all.
 - > **Task for ALL:** Find three more online sources on the theme of spirituality, medicine, and health. Write a 100-word review of each site. See above for details. *Deadline:* via email to the instructor by 11:59pm Wed 9/28.
 - > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.
- 9/29 *Middle East and West*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Bynum, all.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** selectively read the remainder of Monte.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** read the parts of Monte bearing on western medicine's interpretations of the human body, its organs and illnesses.

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- > **Task for ALL:** Find three final online sources on the theme of spirituality, medicine, and health (a total of nine online sources per student). *Deadline:* via email to the instructor by 11:59pm Wed 10/5.
- > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.

Part 2: Contemporary Spirituality and Health Research

- 10/6 *Spirituality and Health Research: Health Effects of Embodied Practices*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Koenig, all.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** Wisneski & Anderson, chs. 1-2.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** none.
 - > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.
- 10/13 *Spirituality and Health Research: Health Effects of Long Distance Prayer*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Galton.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** Wisneski & Anderson, chs. 3-4.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** none.
 - > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.
- 10/20 *Critique from Some in the Medical Establishment*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Sloan, parts 1, 2, 4.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** Sloan, part 3; Wisneski & Anderson, chs. 5-6.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** the rest of Sloan.
 - > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.
- 10/27 *An Emerging Consensus?*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Levin, parts 1-2.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** Levin, part 3; Wisneski & Anderson, chs. 7-8.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** the rest of Levin.
 - > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.
- 11/3 *The Ethics of US Health Care Policy*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Simmons, chs. 1-6.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** Simmons, chs. 7-11 and appendices; Wisneski & Anderson, chs. 9-11.
 - > **Recommended Reading:** the rest of Simmons.
 - > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.

Part 3: Western Biomedicine Encounters Other Healing Modalities

- 11/10 *Speculative Theories of Alternative Healing Modalities*
- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Dossey, chs. 1-4.
 - > **Required Reading for TT945:** Dossey, chs. 5-6; Whorton, part 1
 - > **Recommended Reading:** the rest of Dossey.
 - > **Task for TT945:** continue work on the bibliography.

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11/17 *Immigrant Community Healing Modalities*

- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Barnes & Sered, six chapters from among the following: 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28.
- > **Required Reading for TT945:** Whorton, part 2.
- > **Recommended Reading:** more of the listed chapters in Barnes & Sered.
- > **Task for TT945:** Deliver the annotated bibliography by email to the instructor prior to today's class.

11/24 *No Class: Fall Recess*

12/1 *Religious Community Healing Modalities*

- > **Required Reading for ALL:** Barnes & Sered, six chapters from among the following: 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31.
- > **Required Reading for TT945:** Whorton, part 3.
- > **Recommended Reading:** more of the listed chapters in Barnes & Sered.

Conclusion

12/8 *The Meaning and Methods of Maintaining and Restoring Mental and Physical Health*

- > **Required Reading for ALL:** none.
- > **Required Reading for TT945:** none.
- > **Recommended Reading:** none.
- > **Task for ALL:** Submit essay on a topic approved by the instructor. *Deadline:* via email to instructor before 11:59pm Tuesday Dec 13.

Required Books

- Barnes, Linda L.; Sered, Susan S. (eds.). *Religion and Healing in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005 (pbk: 978-0195167962).
- Bynum, William. *The History of Medicine: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008 (pbk 978-0199215430).
- Dossey, Larry. *Reinventing Medicine: Beyond Mind-Body to a New Era of Healing*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 1999 (pbk 978-0062516442).
- Frawley, David. *Ayurvedic Healing: A Comprehensive Guide*, 2nd ed. Lotus Press, 2000 (pbk 978-0914955977).
- Galton, Francis. *Statistical Inquiries into the Efficacy of Prayer*. 1872 (available online at <http://www.abelard.org/galton/galton.htm>).
- Holland, Alex. *Voices of Qi: An Introductory Guide to Traditional Chinese Medicine*. North Atlantic Books, 2000 (pbk 978-1556433269).
- Koenig, Harold G. *Medicine, Religion, and Health*. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2008 (pbk 978-1599471419).
- Levin, Jeff. *God, Faith, and Health; Exploring the Spirituality-Healing Connection*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2001 (pbk 978-0471218937). Available online through the BU library system.
- Simmons, Paul D. *Faith and Health: Religion, Science, and Public Policy*. Mercer University Press, 2008 (978-0881460858).
- Sloan, Richard P. *Blind Faith: The Unholy Alliance of Religion and Medicine*. St. Martin's Griffin, 2006 (pbk 978-0312348823).

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Recommended Books (*Required for TT945)

- Heyn, Brigit. *Ayurveda: The Indian Art of Natural Medicine and Life Extension*. Healing Arts Press, 1990 (pbk 978-0892813339).
- *Monte, Tom. *World Medicine: The East-West Guide to Healing Your Body*. Tarcher, 1993 (pbk 978-0874777338).
- *Wharton, James. *Nature Cures: The History of Alternative Medicine in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002 (2004 pbk 978-0195171624).
- *Wisneski; Leonard A.; Anderson, Lucy. *The Scientific Basis of Integrative Medicine*, 2nd ed. CRC, 2009 (pbk 978-1420082906).