****

**Introduction to Shamanism**

**NCTH 113/21002**

**Course Syllabus – Spring 2015**

**Non-credit/face-to-face format**

**Instructor:Susan Wolf**

**ss8nb@virginia.edu**

**434.295.9259**

**Instructor Bio:**  Susan Wolf has been studying and teaching shamanism for more than 20 years and holds certifications in hypnotherapy and massage from California’s Heartwood Institute. She earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Virginia, where she began to explore her deep interest in human nature and the nature of reality. After ten years of intensive study with two shamanic teachers, Susan became the recipient and carrier of many teachings of an ancient shamanic lineage, including specialization in shamanic teachings for women. In 2009 she founded the Wolfsongs School of Shamanism which offers seminars and an apprenticeship program.

**Dates/Times:** **Thursdays, 7-9pm, March 19 - April 23**

**Location:** **UVa School of Continuing and Professional Studies, Zehmer Hall, Room B.**

**Course Description:** This course traces the history of shamanism and explores its role as one of the oldest forms of spirituality on Earth. One of the basic tenets of shamanism is that there is a “Spirit That Moves through All Things.” As a nature-based spirituality, similar tenets and practices have been found among the Aboriginals in Australia, Native Peoples of Central and South America, the Native Americans, and the Inuits above the Arctic Circle. This course explores commonalities of indigenous peoples’ philosophies passed down through the oral tradition and how that knowledge has passed from teacher to student. It focuses on how ancient ceremonies and rituals are designed to help practitioners connect the natural world around us to the personal world within. Each class is comprised of weekly readings, lectures, and discussion. There will be hands-on opportunities to explore shamanic practices and meditation as a means of introspection and to relieve stress and anxiety associated with the hectic pace of modern life.

**Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes:** The objective of this classis to learn about the historic and practical relevance of shamanism. As Shamanism is an ancient philosophy, this course will be an exploration of how and why spiritual practices are relevant to our current society.

Participants will learn the historic aspects of Shamanism and it’s origins.  
Participants will understand the meaning of the metaphoric symbol, the Medicine Wheel.  
Participants will identify the significance of the Power Animal.

Participants will demonstrate the intention of meditation through Drumming.  
Participants will gain understanding into the relevance of the Shamanic Ceremony.

Through readings, lecture, and guided hands on activities, participants will gain understanding and experience in Shamanistic philosophy.

**Required/Recommended Texts:**

**Recommended:**

Thomas Mails*, Fool’s Crow: Wisdom and Power,* (Millichap Books)  
Tom Brown, Jr., *Grandfather, A Native American’s Lifelong Search for Truth and Harmony with Nature* (Berkley Trade)  
Shamanic Healing: We Are Not Alone, An Interview of MichaelHarner by *Bonnie Horrigan, Shamanism, Spring/Summer, 1997, Vol. 10, No. 1 (can be found online)*

**Suggested texts, materials, helpful websites, etc.:**   
  
Mercia Eliade, Shamanism*: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy(Mythos: The Princeton/Bollingen Series in World Mythology)*

Roger Walsh, *The World of Shamanism: New Views of an Ancient Tradition(*Llewellyn)

Ted Andrews, *Animal Speak*, (Llewellyn)

Audio Lectures of Black Bear, Cherokee Shaman, available at [www.wolfsongsschool.com](http://www.wolfsongsschool.com)Guided Meditations and Journeys led by Susan Wolf Star, available at [www.wolfsongsschool.com](http://www.wolfsongsschool.com)

**Required Technical Resources or Technical Components:**  *None*

**SCPS Inclement Weather/Emergency Hotline: 434-924-4364**

This line will be updated in the event that ALL SCPS classes are cancelled or if all UVa classes are cancelled (this applies to evening classes as well). Individual SCPS class cancellations due to weather or other instructor issues will likely NOT be included on this phone line, but will be communicated to students via email as soon as a decision has been made. Email your instructor and/or [Buzzoni@virginia.edu](mailto:Buzzoni@virginia.edu) if you are uncertain as to a class’ status. We consider personal safety a priority, so please use your best judgment if travel conditions are questionable.