Course Description: Since the advent of Christianity, pagans have had an unfortunate reputation. Yet prior to Christianity in the Near Eastern and Greco-Roman worlds, polytheism was the way of the world. How did polytheists come to be called pagans? What does Neo-Pagan mean today? After developing a grounded understanding of ancient Mediterranean polytheism, with a special look at mystery cults and magic, this course will take a tour through early Christian demonization of pagans, early modern witch hunts, esotericism, modern satanism, and the emergence of Neo-Paganism, with a brief look at modern Hinduism for comparison, in order to plumb the misconceptions that have both shaped and plagued polytheistic religious practice since the birth of Christianity.

Prerequisite: NONE. GE credit: World Cultures & Writing Experience
Format: Online, Lectures, Special Guest Lectures, Quizzes, Short Projects, Final Paper
Readings will be provided by the instructor and guest lecturers in electronic format.