

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

COURSE OUTLINE – SPRING 2014

Course	RELS 200 – Origin and Nature of Religious Worldviews
Time	Electronic Online Course – <i>All</i> course information, test assessments, and group discussions to be accessed or completed in University of Calgary's Desire2Learn course management system.
Instructor	Dr. David A. Bergen
Office Hours	Monday-Friday, 9:00-10:00
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Textbook

Introduction to Mythology: Contemporary Approaches to Classical and World Myths (2013 third edition; Eva M. Thury and Margaret K. DeVinney, eds; Oxford University Press). (Links to any relevant electronic notes, articles, video clips, blogs, etc. will also be posted in the D2L website.)

Course Description

It is a contemporary commonplace that humans are inveterate story-tellers. This course will analyze the content and structure of stories that have possessed mythological power, binding the cosmos into an ordered, purposive, and meaningful order to the satisfaction of the human being whose principal adaptation is symbolic cognition. During the course of this term, students will also encounter some important theories that scholars have used to understand mythmakers and their myths.

Each of the six modules of the spring term will unfold in a three-step weekly process:

1. *Weekend*: reading of assigned textbook sections and preparation for the online test. Schedule of readings to be posted in D2L.
2. *Monday-Wednesday*: testing of descriptive knowledge of assigned readings in online tests.
3. *Wednesday-Friday*: assessment of structural and theoretical understanding of assigned readings in electronic group discussions.

Course Requirements

Assessments in Brief:

Start-Up Quiz - Course Bonus of up to 5% (deadline: May 18, midnight)

Six Online Tests - 50% of course grade (tests accessed online over a 48-hour period beginning at noon on the following dates: May 14, May 19, May 26, June 2, June 9, and June 16). Notable exception: The access period for the first test is extended to 96 hours instead of typical 48 hours for tests 2-6.

Five Group Assignments - 50% of course grade (discussions to be held over a 48-hour period beginning at noon on the following dates: May 21, May 28, June 4, June 11, and June 18)

Assessments in Detail:

In each of the six modules of this course, students will be given a 48-hour window in which to write the module test, with the exception of the first module, where a 96-hour period is set for the writing of the first test. All six tests will be set for multiple, unlimited attempts. The highest grade achieved in any one attempt will be recorded as the student's grade for that particular module. In the unlikely event that the university servers are incapacitated for more than 4 hours during the testing period, a commensurate extension of time will be reset for the affected module.

In addition to the six module test, students will also participate in a group discussion and group paragraph composition. Immediately after the add/drop date for the term, each student will be assigned randomly to a small

D2L discussion group in which they will critically discuss an assigned question. The discussion of the assigned question will culminate in a formal, "publishable" paragraph (200 words maximum), concisely written, thoroughly edited, succinctly articulated, grammatically correct, and academically sound. If deemed publishable, the group's paragraph will then be posted to the general class so that all students can compare and learn from the shared outcomes of their peers. (Students will have 48 hours to discuss their assigned group question and to write/polish their paragraph response. Paragraphs submitted after the deadline will receive a 5% / day late penalty.)

The grade for the group-work assignments is comprised of two parts, each worth 25% of the total course grade. First, each student receives an individual mark, based on the quality (and secondarily, quantity) of their online contribution to their group's discussion and paragraph response. Second, the mark for the collaborative paragraph will be assigned to each student of the group for his/her remaining 25% of the group-work assignment grade. If a student contributes nothing to the group discussion, s/he will receive a zero grade for both group discussion *and* paragraph components.

Given that this an online course (accessible anywhere, anytime), and, given that the group discussions and test writing take place over an extended period, no concession for missed tests or discussions will be granted, except for cases of significant illness or domestic issue (adequately described, verifiable with proper medical documentation noting the significance of the illness, to be submitted electronically within 24 hours subsequent to the test period). (Note: travel, work schedule, weddings, funerals, sore throats, vehicle repairs, children's soccer/ballet competitions, or computer/technical issues ... these and their like are not excusable.) In the event of such exceptional circumstances a make-up will be scheduled during the final exam period (June 27-8), to be written in person in the Religious Studies Department (exam time to be announced). Please note: unlike the online tests, all make-up tests will be in short-answer format with no access to external materials (textbook or notes) permitted.

Other Course Details

Students should remember that spring-term courses are condensed versions of a regular term; it is very easy to lag behind the scheduled pace. Also, students should be aware that an online course brings added responsibilities--students must be self-motivated in their efforts and self-diligent in their attention to detail. *(There will be no remedial assignments available in this course, nor will there be any curving of individual or class grades.)*

The potential to succeed in this course is increased if students:

- *enter* in their personal calendar all deadlines pertinent to the assessments of this course (see schedule in D2L);
- *ensure* that their computer and internet provider are fully operational and stable. No exceptions will be made for technical glitches (e.g., server crash, browser freeze-up, battery drain, wi-fi dropout ... in short, anything between the university's system and the student's computer) other than significant outages in the University's system. *It is therefore the responsibility of the student of an online electronic course to ensure that s/he possesses (or has access to) the proper equipment and secure signal necessary to complete all components of the course.*
- *read* thoroughly the assigned pages prior to the first writing of each module test (see schedule posted in D2L, Course Information);
- *participate* meaningfully in discussions of an assigned question. Begin each discussion early in the 48 hour period scheduled, to prevent pre-deadline anxiety and to ensure a high level of quality in the discussion and in the paragraph submission;
- *study* hard, allotting sufficient time prior to each test for rereading of textbook material;
- *write* each test early in the time-frame scheduled, to ensure adequate time to improve the grade achieved;
- *reread* vigilantly all vital information and documents pertinent to this course: outline, syllabus, schedule, email messages, announcements, theoretical overviews, publishable paragraphs, and so on.

Course Syllabus

A syllabus containing additional information for this course will be made available in the first week of the term.

Grading

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme, standardized within the Department of Religious Studies:

A+	100 - 96	A	95.9 - 90	A-	89.9 - 85
B+	84.9 - 80	B	79.9 - 75	B-	74.9 - 70
C+	69.9 - 65	C	64.9 - 60	C-	59.9 - 55
D+	54.9 - 53	D	52.9-50	F	Under 50

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is not tolerated at the University of Calgary and has serious consequences. Your essays/presentations must be your own work and inadequate referencing may be seen as plagiarism. Please see the relevant sections on Academic Misconduct in the current University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than **fourteen (14) days** after the start of the course.

Desire 2 Learn (D2L) Help

Go to <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students> for Student Help and FAQ's about D2L. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are also available on this website.

Gnosis

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: gnosis@ucalgary.ca or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Student Ombudsperson and Students' Union Representative

The Student Ombuds Office provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. See www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at arts1@ucalgary.ca.

Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints. Please check this website and not the nearest assembly point for this course.

Safewalk

The Safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout campus to request a walk.

