

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
Summer 2005

05/06/29

Religion 201 L60- Introduction to World Religions—Western

Time: T/R, 2:00-5:00

Instructor: Dr. David A. Bergen

Office/Hours: SS 1322/One hour prior to class

Telephone: 220-3285

Email: burgndy@telus.net

Textbooks: *A History of God*, Karen Armstrong (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993).

Course Description: This course will examine the major western religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam from three perspectives, moving from macro to wide analysis. First, the outstanding features, concepts, and personalities of each tradition will be examined up-close (i.e., synchronic analysis). Then, a historical trajectory of each religious tradition will be sketched, from ancient beginnings to modern developments (i.e., diachronic analysis). Finally, the deep human impulses and concerns underpinning each tradition will be identified within the broad context of grand cosmic-time (i.e., hyperchronic analysis). At each level, comparative assessments will be made between the three western religious streams. Class instruction will include lectures, films, assigned readings, and discussions.

Core Competencies

This course promotes the following academic competencies:

- Knowledge of the common concerns and multiple differences in world religions.
- Understanding of the competing claims of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam concerning humanity's place and purpose within the cosmos.
- Awareness of the role of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in history and society and their individual and combined impact on modern thought and life.
- Skill in reading and interpreting secondary materials on topics of religion.
- Ability to critically assess religion from a secular perspective.
- Realization of the role which religious forces play in contemporary global dynamics.
- Recognition of the insider/outsider differential in religious studies.

Student Responsibilities

- Attendance of lectures
- Comprehension of presented materials
- Conceptual control of basic facts, concepts, and issues
- Study of assigned readings

Learning Assessment

Four mini tests (5% each; see schedule)	20%
Four (out of eleven possible) "single paragraph" assignments (7% each)	28%
Unscheduled Quizzes	7%
Midterm Exam (see schedule)	20%
Registrar scheduled final exam	25%
	Total: 100%

PLEASE NOTE:

- exams and assignments must be written/submitted on the dates scheduled. No exceptions will be made, except for death or significant illness (corroborated by a valid note).

- a variety of testing styles will be employed in the midterm and final exams (multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching, short answer, etc.).
- only the material presented in lectures will be on the tests and exams. Material covered in the textbook will be addressed in the single-paragraph assignments.
- students anticipating a class absence should find a classmate willing to loan his/her notes; no lecture notes will be available from the instructor.
- recording of lectures is not permitted, except by special permission.
- a 5%/day late penalty will be levied for all late submissions. Late submissions must be dated or stamped by the department's administrative assistant. (Single-paragraph assignments must be handed in by no later than 5:00 pm on the date specified.)
- students must maintain "back up" copies of all submissions and be able to reproduce them if required; no concessions will be made for "lost" papers.

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:

A+	100 - 96	A	95 - 90	A-	89 - 85
B+	84 - 80	B	79 - 75	B-	74 - 70
C+	69 - 65	C	64 - 60	C-	59 - 55
D+	54 - 53	D	52-50	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:

If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Once registered, please discuss any upcoming tests/examinations with the instructor two weeks before the scheduled date.

Withdrawing from courses:

Please note the information regarding withdrawals and fee refunds in the Academic Schedule of the current University Calendar.

Recording of lectures:

Recording any part of any lectures in any form must be first approved by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only. See current Calendar, Tape recording of Lectures.

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>.

RELS 201 L60
CLASS SCHEDULE

I. COMPARATIVE FEATURES OF WESTERN RELIGIONS (Synchronic Approach)

July

5 Introduction to RELS 201
Introduction Academic Study of Western Religions
Comparative Ideologies in Western Religions

7 Test #1
Comparative Ideologies in Western Religions
Single-Paragraph Assignment #1

12 Test #2
Comparative Authority Systems in Western Religions
Film: Half the Kingdom (or Women Serving Religion)
Single-Paragraph Assignment #2

II. WESTERN RELIGIONS IN HISTORY (Diachronic Approach)

14 Test #3
Comparative Ritual/Ethical Systems in Western Religions
Single-Paragraph Assignment #3

19 Test #4
Judaism in History
Film: Night and Fog
Single-Paragraph Assignment #4

21 Christianity in History
Film: The Protestant Spirit
Single-Paragraph Assignment #5

26 Islam in History
Film: Islam - Empire of Faith
Single-Paragraph Assignment #6

III. WESTERN RELIGIONS IN DEEP-TIME (Hyperchronic Approach)

28 Midterm Exam
Excursus: Religion in Deep-Time
Single-Paragraph Assignment #7

Aug

2 Judaism in Deep-Time
Single-Paragraph Assignment #8

4 Christianity in Deep-Time

Single-Paragraph Assignment #9

9 Islam in Deep-Time
Single-Paragraph Assignment #10

11 Film: Shattered Dreams of Peace
Single-Paragraph Assignment #11

16 The Jerusalem Myth in Western Religion
Single-Paragraph Assignment #11

17-19 Final Exam (registrar scheduled)