

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
SPRING 2005**

5/11/2005

Religious Studies 205 L20 – The Nature of Religion

TR 10:00-12:45 p.m.

Instructor: Geoffrey McVey

Office: SS 1322

Phone: 220-3285

Email: gmcvey@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Wednesdays 13:00-15:00

Required Texts: William Paden, *Religious Worlds*
Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*
Wendy Doniger, *Other Peoples' Myths*

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the academic study of religion, with an emphasis on the history and uses of the comparative method in religious studies: what can we learn about the nature of religion by studying it cross-culturally? Does it provide us with a better understanding of ideas such as "god," "myth," or "ritual," or does the search for similarities cause us to overlook the uniqueness of the various forms of religious expression? Can we even talk about "religion" at all, or must we always talk about "religions"?

Core Competencies:

Students in this course will learn how to

- think critically about the complex religious environment in which they live
- read primary and secondary texts analytically and sensitively
- organize and interpret information from multiple sources
- appreciate the value of historical and comparative study of religion and culture

Evaluation:

10 short in-class writing exercises: 2% each	20%
Take-home test (assigned May 24, due May 26):	10%
Oral presentations (June 7 to June 23):	15%
Take-home test (assigned June 9, due June 14):	10%
Participation in class discussions:	15%
Registrar-scheduled final exam:	30%

Schedule of Readings: Readings from the texts and from outside sources will be assigned at the beginning of each week. Please remember that the attainment of any learning endeavour requires that students commit time and energy to that endeavour.

Attend lectures, read assigned materials, and complete all course work.

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.

Safewalk Programme:

"You don't have to walk alone...." Call 220-5333 and a member of the Safewalk Team will walk you to your car, the LRT, or any destination on campus. Safewalk is available to all students, staff and faculty any time of the day or night. Look for the Campus Security Help Phones located throughout the University. Please don't hesitate to call!

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>.