

University of Calgary
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Religious Studies

May 9, 2006

Religious Studies 205 L60

Summer, 2006

Instructor:

Office:

Office Hours:

Telephone:

E-mail:

The Nature of Religion

Lecture: MW (14:00 - 16:45)

Dyron Daughrity, PhD

SS 1322

By appointment

220-3285

Daughrity@shaw.ca

Textbooks:

Elie Wiesel

Daniel Pals

Michael Guillen

Night

Eight Theories of Religion

Can a Smart Person Believe in God?

Course Description:

Religion seems to be a fundamental part of human societies. Why are humans religious? Is religion a creation of the human psyche or is it a coping mechanism stemming from childhood fears? Is it a mechanism for upper classes to keep lower classes under control? Is it a projection of our fantasies, dreams, and hopes? Why do humans seem hard-wired for religion? This course has been designed to introduce students to the academic study of religion. We will be asking a variety of questions to explore the phenomenon of human religiosity. Sociological, anthropological, and psychological analyses of religious belief will be investigated throughout the term.

Core Competencies:

The student should acquire and develop a number of skills such as critical reading, analytical interaction with academic writing, in-depth appraisal of arguments and theories, and the clear expression of ideas.

Course Format:

The pedagogical format for this course includes lectures, discussions, use of video, and critical reflection on various themes through writing and discussion. Being an introductory-level course, the student will acquire skills that will prepare her/him for upper-level academic study, particularly in the area of religion. It is important to note that the course involves readings and lectures and examinations will include material from both.

N.B. Each class period will introduce new themes and concepts that may be unfamiliar to the student. Therefore, it is important that students do all readings on time and come carefully prepared to discuss them.

Assessment:

In-class written assignment on Elie Wiesel's *Night* (July 17)

20%

Mid-Term Exam (July 26)

30%

In-class written assignment on Guillen text (August 9)

20%

Final Exam (August 17-19, TBA by Registrar)

30%

In-Class Written Assignments:

Students will write a short essay dealing with the Wiesel text, and another short essay dealing with the Guillen text. Each writing assignment is worth 20% of the course grade. The instructor will have a question or topic prepared beforehand and students will receive it immediately before writing. We

will discuss this assignment at length prior to the date of writing.

Examinations:

Students will take two exams, each worth 30% of the course grade. Exams will be made up of short answer, fill in the blank, matching, true/false, and other evaluative methods. All examination/assignment dates and times must be honored, except in unforeseen circumstances such as accident or personal illness. No makeup exams/assignments will be administered except in these extraordinary situations.

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.

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>.