

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION**

**COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2017**

**Course**           **RELS 205 – Section 01 - Religion and the Good Life**  
**Time**             Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 10:00am – 10:50am  
**Instructor**     Jacqueline Ho, PhD  
**Office Hours**   Available by Appointment  
**Office**           To be announced  
**E-mail**          [jdho@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jdho@ucalgary.ca)  
**Telephone**     (403) 667-2689  
**Teaching Assistant** Laura Jurgens                    [lkjurgen@ucalgary.ca](mailto:lkjurgen@ucalgary.ca)

I can be reached by telephone or text message on Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 9:00pm. I do not have a voice mail. Text message or e-mail is the preferred method for *making appointments* (please ensure that your name, the course number, and university is included in the text, as I also teach at other universities). For *all other inquiries* involving lengthy reply, such as clarification about class material, please contact me by e-mail. All queries will be returned within 48 hours (usually on the same day). E-mails received on the weekend will be responded to on Sunday evening.

**What are the Required Text(s)?:** No required textbook. All readings will be uploaded into digital format each week onto D2L. Please check D2L each week for regular reading updates.

**What are the Optional Text(s)?:** None

**What is the Calendar Description?:** An introduction to the academic study of religion with particular emphasis on the nature of religion, its role as a response to existential questions, and the relationship of religion to contemporary thought and culture.

**What will you study in this course?:**

This course will compare interpretations of the “good life” between Eastern and Western religious traditions. More specifically, we will look at the underlying assumptions of individualist and collectivist societies, which shape, for instance, different perceptions of happiness, the role of the individual, the societal ideals, the intended outcome of religious practices, and the expressions of belief.

We will begin with a historical overview of the influence of Egyptian thought in the Old Testament and Greek thought on ideals within Christianity, followed by an investigation of the role of pre-Islamic Arabian thought in Islam. Finally, we will study the role of the Chinese Cultural Sphere in shaping ideas about harmony in Buddhism, Daoism, Chinese Popular Religion and Shinto.

**What are the online elements for this course?:**

Lesson plans, additional readings, announcements, important updates, grades, feedback for tests, and external links will be regularly updated on D2L. It is the student’s responsibility to check the D2L page for this class periodically (once a week is recommended).

D2L can be accessed at: <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/login.asp> (student login required)

It is crucial for you to attend class, as the textbook and powerpoint slides will *not* provide a comprehensive account of the material covered in class (they only account for 50-60% of the course content). The PowerPoint slides are posted as a study reference for students but they are not a replacement for attending class.

### **What core competencies will I learn?:**

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- 1) Comprehend how cultural assumptions inform religious beliefs and practices, and vice-versa.
- 2) Explain different perspectives about the “good life” between collectivist and individualist societies.
- 3) Apply critical thinking to journal articles and other academic sources.

### **What are the Course Requirements?:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Weight (%)</b>
Midterm #1	Non-Cumulative <u>Format:</u> Short Answer	30%
Midterm #2	Non-Cumulative <u>Format:</u> Short Answer	30%
Final Exam	Non-Cumulative <u>Format:</u> Short Answer	30%
*Pop* In-Class Assignments	Group Discussion or Participatory Activity	10% (2.5% x 4)

Dates for the midterms and final exams will be provided on the course syllabus, which will be distributed on the first day of class (and also uploaded onto D2L).

Test material will include lectures, class discussions, PowerPoints, guest speaker’s visits (tentative), and assigned readings. \*The last day to withdraw from a course is Wednesday, April 12.\*

### **Can I make-up for an in-class assignment if I miss one?**

In-Class Assignments will be given during class at *random* throughout the semester. The in-class assignment is a participatory activity typically involving group discussion that is intended to encourage and reward class attendance. If you miss an in-class assignment, then you will not be able to make up for it at a later date. Doctor’s appointments will not qualify as a valid reason for make-up assignments. Please see page 3 for qualifying reasons for deferrals.

### Grading and Rounding Marks

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme, usually used within the Department of Classics and Religion:

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

Grades will be posted on D2L. Percentage scores will be rounded up if they exceed 0.5% For example, a percentage of 69.5% C+ or higher will be rounded up to 70% B-. A percentage of 69.4% C+ will not qualify for being rounded up.

**Policy with regard to missed classes:** At the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to exchange contact information with two study buddies. They will be crucial to your performance in this course if you miss a class.

If you cannot attend class, then please follow these steps:

- 1) Check D2L for the Lesson Plan and Powerpoints on the missed day
- 2) Check with your study buddy for further missed information
- 3) Do the readings and review the Powerpoint slides
- 4) If you have questions about the **course content ONLY**, then contact the instructor

\*\*Please do not skip to step #4 without performing steps #1-3. In other words, please do not ask the instructor about what you missed without checking the available resources first (listed above).

**Expectations for student conduct in this course:** In order to foster peer-learning and sharing, students may be broken into small groups or pairs during class to discuss course-related topics. At this time, please keep personal conversation to a minimum, so as not to disrupt the concentration of your peers. Please do not schedule doctor's appointments during class time.

**Requesting Extra Work:** In order to ensure equality for all students, extra work will not be assigned to individual students who wish to boost their mark. If you have concerns about your grade, then please consult with your instructor or teaching assistant for consultation and suggestions about how to improve your learning and study habits at the earliest possible time.

**Exam Deferrals:** Students must be present for midterms, final exams and sign an exam attendance sheet. **Emailing the instructor on the same day or the night before the midterm or exam, and promising to get a doctor's note at a later time does not guarantee a deferral.** A deferral is decided based on the instructor's discretion and not the presence of a doctor's note.

Valid reasons for requesting deferral of a midterm or final exam include but are not restricted to:

- personal grave illness, bereavement, personal injury, and unavoidable and unanticipated demands in caring for dependents
- religious observance or conviction

Vacations, travel, doctor's appointments, common cold/not feeling well, exams that are only a few hours apart, and employment are NOT valid excuses for deferring a midterm or final exam. Like-

wise, a student must have three or more exams on the same day to be granted a deferral.

**Electronic Device Policy:** If cellular phones must be used for emergency purposes on *occasion* during class, then please do so discreetly. If cellular phone use becomes disruptive and distracting to the instructor and other students, then your privileges will be revoked. Likewise, laptops and tablets should be used for note taking only. Please do not distract your peers by watching videos or browsing social media/internet.

**Syllabus:**

A complete syllabus with weekly lecture topics will be made available on the first week of class.

**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 (section K, which can be found here: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>). If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor, or librarian staff.

**Student Accommodations**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/). Students with accommodations needs should notify the instructor at the earliest possible time (preferably during the first week of classes). Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing or in person to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf).

**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.

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources**

- For program planning and advice, students in the Faculty of Arts will contact The Arts Students' Centre (ASC). Drop in at SS102, call at 403-220-3580 or email at [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@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 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.

**Freedom of Information and Privacy**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP): <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act indicates that assignments given by

you to your course instructor will remain confidential unless otherwise stated before submission. The assignment cannot be returned to anyone else without your express permission. Similarly, any information about yourself that you share with your course instructor will not be given to anyone else without your permission. As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number on each subsequent page.

### **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](http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds) for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at [arts1@ucalgary.ca](mailto: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](http://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.