

The University of Calgary
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Religious Studies

05/05/03

Religious Studies 331 L20 Spring 2005
Religious Perspectives on Suffering
Day/Time

TR 14:00-16:30

Instructor
Office
Office Hours
Telephone
Email

Dr. Tinu Ruparell
SS1320
T 12:00-14:00 or by appointment
220 7069
ruparell@ucalgary.ca

Texts:

Bowker, John. *Problems of Suffering in the Religions of the World*. Cambridge University press.
Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Bantam Books.
Voltaire. Trans. John Butt. *Candide*. Penguin books.

Some additional materials may be used and will be made available at student expense through the Student's Union Copy centre or through the dept of Religious Studies.

Course Description:

This course will consider how the major religious traditions of the world have dealt with the existence and depth of suffering in the world. After a consideration of the definition of suffering and its relationship to the philosophical problem of evil, we will go on to consider the various theodicies and anti-theodicies offered by the major religious traditions. We will conclude by looking at how suffering is portrayed in literature and popular culture.

Core Competencies:

Committed students in this class will have the opportunity to reflect on central issues in the religious responses to suffering, both human and non-human. In so doing students will gain an understanding of the philosophical issues raised by the concepts of evil and suffering and of the limits of religious discourse thereon. Students will gain a greater understanding of the role that suffering and/or evil has played in the development of theological discourse(s) in the world's religions and have the opportunity to reflect on how the facts and experience of suffering have been dealt with in literature and popular culture. Students will be given opportunities to further develop their communication skills in written and oral forms as well as their research skills through a written piece.

Course Requirements

There will be two assessments for this class. Details and form of assessments will be discussed in class.

Assessment	Date	Weight
Midterm in-class essay	2 June 2005	50%
Final research paper	23 June 2005	50%

There will be no registrar-scheduled final exam.

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.

NB. POLICY WITH REGARDING MISSED ASSESSMENTS

Test dates are firm. Without acceptable documentation (official medical certificate, police report, bereavement notice, confirmation of religious observance, or court summons) or without PRIOR arrangement with the instructor, missed assessments will be awarded an 'F'. No alternative arrangements will be made for previously scheduled vacations or trips.

This policy is intended to encourage diligence and integrity among students as well as to uphold principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class. Excuses other than those listed above will receive little attention.

Academic Honesty:

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

Syllabus:

A complete syllabus will be made available in the first week of class.

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>.