

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

COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2020

## Religious Studies 335: Ritual and Religion

<b>Course</b>	Ritual and Religion		
<b>Time</b>	Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:15 PM		
<b>Room</b>	SS 541		
<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Office Hours</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Dr. Joy Palacios	Mon. 3:00-4:00 PM Tue. 3:30-4:30 PM	SS 534	E: <a href="mailto:joy.palacios@ucalgary.ca">joy.palacios@ucalgary.ca</a> T: 403-220-3285

### Required text(s):

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. 2nd ed. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

- This text can be purchased or rented online as an e-book from the following vendors. I will also place the library's physical copy on reserve:
- Amazon – Kindle - \$18.79 - <https://www.amazon.ca/Writing-Ethnographic-Fieldnotes-Second-Emerson/dp/0226206831>
- iBooks - \$21.99 - <https://books.apple.com/us/book/writing-ethnographic-fieldnotes-second-edition/id566717477>
- Google Play - \$15.67 (buy) or \$3.88 (rent) - <https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=k83BlbBHubAC>
- Chegg - \$18.25 - <https://www.chegg.com/etextbooks/writing-ethnographic-fieldnotes-second-edition-1st-edition-9780226206868-0226206866>

*All other readings will be posted to D2L as PDFs or available as e-books through the University's library website.*

### Course description:

This course offers an introduction to major theoretical frameworks and methods from the interdisciplinary field of Ritual Studies. Ritual theory proposes answers to and shapes academic debates about the nature and origins of religion, the relationship between what people do and what they believe, and the function of religious practice in constructing cultures, societies, traditions, and identities. More generally, ritual theories provide tools for analyzing behaviors and activities – whether sacred or secular – that foster feelings of community and difference, facilitate transitions between life stages, commemorate the past, and imagine the future.

During the half of the semester, we will consider the big questions posed by ritual theory, build a vocabulary for ritual analysis, and prepare students to work in groups to observe a local ritual event using ethnographic research methods. Next, we will read canonical works from theorists who have left a lasting mark on ritual studies. Finally, the semester will conclude with a mini in-

class conference in which students present their research findings in small groups before submitting individually-authored research papers based on the ethnographic observations they conducted during the semester.

**Core Competencies:**

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

**Knowledge:**

- Identify the big questions posed by ritual theory
- Explain, compare, and contrast the foundational concepts used in Ritual Studies for studying religious practices
- Outline and apply the basic principles of research ethics

**Skills:**

- Collaborate with a team of fellow researchers to design an ethnographic observation
- Write a successful ethics application
- Make detailed ethnographic observations of a live ritual event
- Record their observations in the form of field notes
- Craft a “thick description” of a ritual event based on their field notes
- Evaluate, select, and justify a theoretical framework in Ritual Studies and use it to analyze a ritual event

**Course Requirements:**

This course will entail the following assessments:

1. Participation = 10%

Your contribution to class discussions and participation in in-class activities fosters your own learning and helps produce the knowledge examined by this course. Accordingly, a portion of your grade (10%) will reflect your in-class engagement with course material. See the handout on participation for more information.

2. Ethnographic Research Project = 45%
  - a. CORE Certificate (required but not graded)
  - b. Team Field Site Proposal (15%)
  - c. Fieldnotes (15% 20%)
  - d. ~~Team presentation (15%)~~

One of this course’s objectives is to give you first-hand experience observing and analyzing rituals using tools and methods developed in Anthropology and Religious Studies. Each student will therefore undertake an ethnographic research project. This project will entail individual elements and team elements. First, each student will complete the CORE Certificate, which will introduce you to the standards for ethical research involving human participants outlined in the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS). Then you will work in teams of 4-6 to select a ritual event to

observe and to prepare a proposal detailing how each member of your group will conduct their observations in conformity with the university's ethical standards. Once your group's Field Site Proposal is approved, you will attend the chosen ritual event. Each team member will write up their own fieldnotes, which include "jottings" of your observations and a "thick description" of the event based on those jottings. ~~Lastly, the team will give a 10-minute presentation to the class based on their ethnographic observations.~~

*Research Ethics*

*The course (or assignment) has obtained course-based ethics approval from the Faculty of Arts Research Ethics Committee. Whenever you perform research with human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are required to follow the [Tri-Council Policy Statement \(TCPS2\)](#). Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research.*

3. Exam = ~~20%~~ **25%**

An ~~in-class~~ **online** exam will assess your mastery of the ritual theories and case studies covered in class. The exam will consist of a combination of **multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions**. I give more details closer to the exam date.

4. Final Paper = ~~25%~~ **30%**

- a. Thesis Statement Draft (~~3%~~ **5%**)
- b. Paper (~~22%~~ **25%**)

At the end of the semester, each student will write a final paper (1200-1500 words, or approximately 5-6 pages double-spaced). Your paper will use at least one of the ritual theories we studied during the semester to analyze the ritual event you observed, and should draw on your own fieldnotes as well as the fieldnotes produced by at least two other members of your research team. In preparation for the paper, you will submit a draft of your thesis statement and discuss it with me in office hours.

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)	Required pass/fail
------	------------	------------	--------------------

30 Jan 2020	CORE Certificate		<i>Not graded, but required in order to complete the Ethnographic Research Project</i>
13 Feb 2020	Team Field Site Proposal	15%	
17 Mar 2020 31 Mar 2020	Fieldnotes	15% 20%	
19 Mar 2020 24 Mar 2020	Online Exam	20% 25%	
24-31 Mar 2020	Team Presentation	15%	
2 Apr 2020 7 Apr 2020	Thesis Statement Draft	3% 5%	
14 Apr 2020	Final Paper	22% 25%	
<i>This class does not have a registrar-scheduled final exam</i>			

### 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, 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%

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

### Policy with regard to missed assignments/assessments:

Deferral of the exam will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness or family emergency. Requests for extensions should be accompanied by supporting documentation, as per the Supporting Documentation and use of a Statutory Declaration regulation stated at the end of this course outline. For more information about the Statutory Declaration process, see also:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals>

Late work will be marked down by one third of a grade per day (for example, from an A to A-).

In this course, however, each student has an **Extension Bank** of two days that can be used at your discretion when you need a little more time on any of the individual assignments other than the exam. The individual assignments include the fieldnotes, the thesis statement draft, and the final paper. Extension Days can be used all at once on a single assignment, or applied to different assignments. To use your days, all you need to do is email me at least 24 hours before the original due date and tell me how many Extension Days you would like to apply. Each Extension Day extends your deadline by 24 hours from the original due date.

If you find yourself in an exceptional circumstance (severe illness, family emergency, etc.) for which the extension days are not sufficient, please email me as soon as possible so that we can arrange a solution.

**Expectations for student conduct in this course:**

Your active participation is important for your own learning as well as the learning of your peers. I will structure in-class time in ways that foster and facilitate your engagement with the course materials. Readings assigned for a given date on the schedule should be completed before class begins. Often, I will begin class with a brief lecture highlighting what I think is important in the readings. However, I will design interactive activities that will prompt you to explain, analyze, compare, or apply the ideas and information covered in the readings. Your participation grade will be based on your involvement in these activities. Come to class ready to think and share.

During class discussions and activities, I expect each member of the course to help me create a positive learning environment by listening respectfully to each other, using transitions (“As Julia said, I think...”, “I agree/disagree with Mohad because...”, “I want to build on that idea...”), and by refraining from statements that signal judgment. We will be discussing material that can be sensitive and about which members of the course may have strong feelings. For this reason, all members of the class will be asked to use vocabulary that signals observation, description, analysis, scholarly argument, and hypothesis formation.

**Electronic Device Policy:**

Electronic devices are allowed in this course and will sometimes be used for in-class activities. (I, too, after all, will have my laptop with me to provide PowerPoint presentations and my phone so I can use its timer to keep our activities on track.) I do, however, expect that all members of the class show respect to their fellow students and the instructor(s) by not wearing headphones, answering phone calls, playing music, or watching their own videos. If a student’s use of electronic devices disrupts others, he/she may be asked to leave the room.

Recording any part of the lectures or class sessions in any form must first be approved by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only.

**Syllabus:**

A complete syllabus will be made available the first week of class and will be posted to D2L.

**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 who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing 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 <https://arts.ucalgary.ca> 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 Block.

**Freedom of Information and Privacy:**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP): [https://www.ucalgary.ca/hr/freedom\\_of\\_information\\_and\\_protection\\_of\\_privacy](https://www.ucalgary.ca/hr/freedom_of_information_and_protection_of_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 <https://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/> for more information. The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.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 hours per day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout campus to request a walk.

**Health and Wellness:**

There are services available to students to help with physical and mental health, including the SU Wellness Centre: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/>

Learn more about the Campus Mental Health Strategy here: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>

**Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration:**

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided and the student should provide the documentation they feel best supports their case. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>.