

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**RELS 343 L01: *Religion and Social Morality*
COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2011**

Logistics

Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00 – 3:15 pm

Location: SH 274

Instructor: Dr. David A. Bergen
dabergen@ucalgary.ca
403-220-7063

Office Hours (SS 1308): Tuesday and Thursday 11:00-12:00, by appointment

Textbooks: *By the Grace of Guile: The Role of Deception in Natural History and Human Affairs* – Loyal Rue

Do Morals Matter? – Ian Markham

Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion – Carrette and King

American CBS *Survivor, South Pacific* (23rd Season)

Additional PDF materials posted in Blackboard, “Course Documents.”

Course Description

This course defines social morality as “*a (hide-and-seek, give-and-take) game with perceived high stakes, an enterprise internalized through socialization, modified through experience, fuelled by desire.*” In exploring this most serious game, we will focus on key concepts that are prevalent to the discourse of morality. We will also describe and analyze the presence and function of *deception* within social systems. The data for our discussions will range from the animal world to our own classroom, from global scenarios to local situations, with frequent assessments of that most deceptive of human inventions: religion.

Learning Assessment

The learning assessments for this course will constitute three components, the value of each to be stated and signed by the student no later than Tuesday, September 27. (A passing grade in any one component is not required to pass RELS 343.)

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| Three Equally-Weighted Tests (Oct 11, Nov 8, Dec 13) | 20-50% |
| These tests will draw on any of the subjects/materials presented directly or indirectly in the lecture and group-project sections of the class. (<i>The third midterm exam will be take-home, to be handed out on Dec 6 and submitted by Dec 13.</i>) | |
| Group Game-Project | 20-50% |
| Beginning the third week of the term, each Thursday class will be devoted to the game-project, the details of which will be explained in the first week of class. | |
| Essay (Dec 8) | 20-50% |
| An eight-page essay will analyze a specific question relevant to the topic of “social morality” as developed in this course. | |

Combined Total: 100%

N.B.:

1. **Default Grade Weighting:** In the absence of a signed contract by the stipulated due date, the default weighting for each of the grade components will be one third of the final grade total.
2. **Academic Study of Religion:** This course will adopt as its primary objective and *modus operandi* the following statement by Lincoln:

*When one permits those whom one studies to define the terms in which they will be understood, suspends one's interest in the temporal and contingent, or fails to distinguish between 'truths,' 'truth-claims,' and 'regimes of truth,' one has ceased to function as a historian or scholar. In that moment, a variety of roles are available: some perfectly capable (amanuensis, collector, friend and advocate) and some less appealing (cheerleader, voyeur, retailer of import goods). None, however should be confused with scholarship. ("Theses on Method," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 8, 225-7; 1996)*
3. **Tests**
 - tests (and assignments) must be written/submitted on the dates scheduled. No exceptions will be made, except for death, significant illness, or domestic affliction (corroborated by a valid, original note from a physician or counselor). The student should contact the instructor within twenty-four hours of a missed exam or deadline.
 - tests are non-cumulative and will entail typical academic testing formats. The assessments employed will be geared to rewarding students who are conscientious in their attendance, participation, and preparation of classes.
4. **Participation:** this course assumes that students who attend a brick-and-mortar university do so to engage "publicly" with the academic related topics and discussion.
5. **Late Registration:** while it is permissible to register in this class as late as the end of the second week, it is not advisable, especially in this course where a significant decision on the grade value of each component must be made on September 27th.
6. **Plagiarism:** the University of Calgary regulations strictly prohibit the following acts/activities during examinations (the penalty for which is suspension or expulsion or such other penalty as may be determined):
 - speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever;
 - bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, or document not authorized by the examiner;
 - leaving answer papers exposed to view
 - attempting to read other student's examination work.
7. **Electronics:** the use of electronic devices for purposes other than note-taking is not recommended. Should the use of such devices distract the instructor or any student in the class, the person responsible will lose the privileges of such devices after an initial warning. The recording of lectures is not permitted.
8. **Student Submissions:**
 - all submissions must "back up" all submissions ; no concessions will be made for papers purportedly "lost" by the yourself or the instructor.
 - a 5%/day late penalty will be levied for all late submissions. Late submissions must be placed in the Department's assignment drop-box (SS 1301), where they will be date-stamped.
9. **Classes Absences:** if a student anticipates an absence s/he should find a classmate willing to loan his/her notes; *no lecture notes will be available from the instructor.*
10. **Blackboard:** a comprehensive reading schedule will be posted in Blackboard by the first day of class. Students should frequently check this website for updates and changes to the class schedule, assigned readings, and additional relevant information.

Grading Scale	A numerical grade is assigned for each course requirement. Following the final graded component, a letter grade is assigned, using the department-approved table of equivalencies:			
	A+ 100-96	B+ 84-80	C+ 69-65	D+ 54-53
	A 95-90	B 79-75	C 64-60	D 52-50
	A- 89-85	B- 74-70	C- 59-55	F under 50

N.B. All written assignments will be graded for its 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.*

Important Dates Please note the information regarding withdrawals and fee refunds in the current University Calendar.

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 403-220-8237. 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.

Lecture Recording 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 Program "You don't have to walk alone...." Call 403-220-5333 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>.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@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 program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 4th Floor of MacEwan Student Centre.
- 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 Block.