

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

RELS 343.01
Religion and Social Morality

COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2015

Place: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 3:00-3:50

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

Office hours: Monday 10:00-11:00 (or by appointment)

Textbooks: *By the Grace of Guile: The Role of Deception in Natural History and Human Affairs* (Loyal Rue) and *The Denial of Death* (Ernest Becker).

Description and Objectives: This course defines social morality as a game played between humans, a game whose rules are rooted in human construction rather than heavenly command, whose principal function is to flourish in the here-and-now rather than the hereafter. For the most, our exploration of social morality will be a light-hearted experiential affair. At the beginning of the term, we will dabble briefly in the key concepts of morality discourse. Then we will explore the role that deception plays in religious moral systems (Rue). We will also discuss how the fear of death motivates most (perhaps all) of the mores of human society (Becker). The material for our explorations will be drawn widely, 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.

Assessments:

Five Lecture-Based Quizzes

September 23, October 7 and 21, November 4 and 25 50%

Five Group Presentation-Based Quizzes

50%

Each Friday students will present collectively their knowledge of the assigned textbook (Rue) readings. The format of these presentations is geared for learning that is both enjoyable and experiential for students. Furthermore, every second week students will write a test focused on the materials presented by the groups: September 30, October 14 and 28, November 18 and December 7. While students will not be graded for their participation in these presentations, the stronger the presentation, the better prepared will be the student for the respective quizzes.

Grading Scale:

A+ 100-96	B+ 84.9-80	C+ 69.9-65	D+ 54.9-53
A 95.9-90	B 79.9-75	C 64.9-60	D 52.9-50
A- 89.9-85	B- 74.9-70	C- 59.9-55	F under 50

Student Responsibilities:

The potential to succeed in this course is increased if students:

- enter in their personal calendar all deadlines pertinent to the assessments of this course (see schedule in D2L);
- *read* thoroughly the assigned pages prior to the writing of each quiz (see schedule posted in D2L, Course Information);
- *study* hard, allotting sufficient time prior to each quiz for rereading of textbook material and lecture information;
- *reread* vigilantly all vital information and documents pertinent to this course: outline, syllabus, schedule, email messages, announcements, and so on;
- *attend* (to) all the lectures. Note: A significant advantage to class-based courses is interactive engagement with the instructor and classmates. Students may, if they wish, utilize/access electronic devices during class lectures. However, choosing to do so comes at a cost: electronic device users must sit at the back of the room, where they will not disturb other students and where they will disrupt minimally the professor. Furthermore, students who give their undivided attention to both the course and the instructor will be given priority attention during discussion, Q&A sessions, and office visits. Attention returned for attention given—such is the economy of all human social interactions.

Assessment Details:

Please note these important details:

- 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;
- a passing grade on any of the assessments is not essential for passing the course;
- no remedial assignments are available in this course;
- there is no registrar-scheduled final exam for this course;
- the University of Calgary Calendar states:
“It is the responsibility of students who have prolonged absences from class because of physical and/or emotional health problems to present to the faculty office offering the course a statement from a physician/counselor attesting to the physical or emotional health of the student.”

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, librarian staff or the Chicago manual of style.

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/.

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.

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.

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>.

Classics Student Society

Classics Student Society is the Greek and Roman Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: classsoc@ucalgary.ca or visit <http://grst.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/classics-students-society>.

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. 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 Block.

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 for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at 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. 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.