

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

RELS 343 L01
Religion and Social Morality

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2015

Place and Time: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, one hour before lunch (11-11:50).

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

Office hours: Monday, 12:00 (until the line-up evaporates)

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

Description and Objectives: This course is an oddity, perplexing even to instructors in the Religious Studies program. Nevertheless, we will soldier on, defining social morality as a game whose rules are rooted in human rather than heavenly realms. On the whole, this course be a light-hearted exploration of the subject. We will dabble in key concepts of the discourse of morality and will search high-and-low for the presence of *deception* within social systems. At times the course will turn heavy, lending academic heft to our engagements as we turn thought to some prominent social theorists, many of whom will have us wondering how on earth our problematic world works as well as it does. The material for our discussions will be drawn widely, from the animal world to our own classroom, from global scenarios to local situations, with frequent assessments of that most odd and deceptive of human inventions, religion.

Assessments:

Four Equally-Weighted Tests

Jan 28, Feb 11, Mar 11, and Apr 1 50%

Group Project and/or Analysis

50%

The first test of the term (Jan 28) will function as a gateway, dividing the class into two halves. One half will become involved in an extensive group project, while the other half will engage in critical analysis of the project presented each Friday by the group projecteers. Both the group project and the analysis of the group project must be wrapped up and submitted on April 17.

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

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content. In other words, what is on the page and what is not on the page.

Missed Assessments:

Every year, perfectly healthy students claim days after a test or assignment due date that they were sick. Every term, many grandmothers pass away. (Grandfathers only seem to perish outside of the term.) Any missed tests, for whatever reason, will be written in the first three days of the Final Exam period. Note: in the event that you miss a class and actually give two-wits about the content presented and discussed, please smooth-talk a willing, hardworking classmate into giving you a copy of their notes. To solicit a positive response, it is suggested that you ply your potential class buddy with a gift card (e.g., Starbucks or Good Earth. Tim Horton's is too low-brow for such a favour.)

Student Expectations:

This is a second-year university class. Do we really need to go through the basic rules of this game again? (Should a student enrolled in the course not understand what is expected of them, please make an appointment to see the instructor within the first two weeks of the term.)

Academic Honesty

Apparently, plagiarism is not tolerated at the University of Calgary and has serious consequences. The instructor of this course would like to insist that student essays/presentations be original work and, if ideas, wording, sentences, or paragraphs are borrowed, then proper documentation *and* citation be provided. Failure to do this may result in a charge of plagiarism brought to the attention of the Dean's office, but only if the instructor has the time and inclination to concern himself with the pursuit of high academic standards, with no tangible benefit (e.g., yearly bonuses) rendered for energy expended.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than **fourteen (14) days** after the start of the course.

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.