

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

**RELS 344.01**  
*The Bible as Literature*

**COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2015**

**Time:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 11:00 – 11:50am

**Instructor:** David A. Bergen, 403-220-7063, [dabergen@ucalgary.ca](mailto:dabergen@ucalgary.ca)

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

**Textbooks:** *The Bible as Literature: An Introduction* (John B. Gabel *et al*; fifth edition; Oxford University Press), and *The HarperCollins Study Bible*.

**Description and Objectives:**

This course will explore the various literary genres that make up the sixty-six books of the western Bible (Protestant canon), understood in this course as a compilation of human literature that reflects some 1500 years of communal struggle, vision, and development within the complex geo-politics of the Eastern Mediterranean area. Centuries of intense debate and engaged reception have subsequently interwoven this library of human expression into the literature, arts, law, politics, philosophy, and cultures of western society. In reading the Bible as literature (in English translation), we will frequently draw attention to the hermeneutical impact that any given theoretical lens (whether skeptical or devotional, or anything between) has on a reading. Additionally, students will have opportunities throughout the term to reflect analytically on their own literary encounters with biblical texts.

**Assessments:**

**Three Equally-Weighted Mid-Term Tests**

**50%**

Testing format will involve mostly short-answer questions, with the occasional long-answer and/or fill-in-the-blank questions. Tests will be written on October 2 and 30, and November 20.

**Five Reflective Reader-Response Analyses**

**50%**

Students will write a 750-word reflective analysis on five different biblical passages, reflecting the academic approach adopted in this course and utilizing the hermeneutical methods introduced in class. These reflections are due on the following Mondays: October 5 and 19, November 2 and 23, and December 7.

**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* smart, allotting sufficient time prior to each test 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;
- a 5% late penalty will be applied to any assignment handed in after the due date/time;
- 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/](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.

### **Gnosis**

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: [gnosis@ucalgary.ca](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds) for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at [arts1@ucalgary.ca](mailto: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](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 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout campus to request a walk.