

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

**COURSE OUTLINE “REVISED”– Winter 2020**

**Course:** RELS 344-01 The Bible as Literature  
**Time:** Tuesday 3:30-6:15  
**Instructor:** Craig W. C. Ginn, PhD  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday 1:00-2:00 by appointment (alternate hours by appointment)  
**Office:** SS 516  
**E-mail:** cwcginn@ucalgary.ca  
**Telephone:** (403) 220-5695

**Required Text(s):**

*Literary Study of the Bible: An Introduction.* Christopher Hodgkins. New Jersey and West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2020.

Note: The textbook is required as listed above. If a student has access to an online version that is without page numbers, it is the responsibility of the student to synchronize the readings with the required textbook.

Bible Readings: Sections from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament will be assigned. Students will be directed to online sources. Additional readings will consist of journal articles. Readings will be posted on D2L.

**Course Description:**

“An exploration of the various literary genres that make up the sixty-six books of the Bible, understood as a compilation of human literature reflecting millennia of communal struggle, vision, and engaged reception.” – U of C Calendar

This course will explore the Bible (consisting of the Hebrew Bible and Christian New Testament) through a survey of its major episodes, themes, and literary styles emphasizing the particular significance of the Hebrew Bible to Jewish readers and the New Testament to Christian readers. Matters of reception will be discussed, including its reception by western culture and other western religious traditions such as Islam, Mormonism, and Jehovah’s Witnesses. Course material will introduce students to the historical context(s) of the writers, the process of redaction and canonization, methods in higher criticism, and a variety of hermeneutical approaches.

**Online Elements for this Course:**

Accessing D2L, online texts, and websites.

## Core Competencies:

Upon completing this course students will be able to:

- identify key terms and concepts in the study of religion
- apply key terms and concepts to the study of Judaism and Christianity
- describe the historical background of Judaism and Christianity
- describe the biblical legacy and textual tradition of Judaism and Christianity
- explain the canonization of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament
- explore hermeneutical approaches in biblical exegesis
- distinguish literary genres of the Bible
- describe foundational stories and major themes in the biblical narrative
- examine critical methods in the study of the Bible
- differentiate views of revelation and biblical inspiration
- examine and analyze the reception of the Bible in western culture

## Course Requirements:

Assessment	Date	Weight (%)
Assignment #1	February 25 Due at the beginning of class (3:30)	20%
Midterm Exam	March 3	30%
Assignment #2	April 14 Due by 6:00 pm. Directions for electronic submission of the assignment will be provided on D2L.	20%
Final Exam (optional)	The final exam will not be a Registrar-scheduled exam as indicated in the first version of the course outline. The final exam will be a take-home final exam. <b>The take-home final exam will be optional.</b> If students are satisfied with their midterm exam mark, the instructor will use their midterm mark in place of their final exam. For students who would like to complete the take-home final exam, the take-home final exam will be made available on D2L on April 15 and due for submission by April 22. Each student must contact the instructor with their decision to complete the final take-home exam or opt out of the final take-home exam. Directions for communicating with the instructor will be provided on D2L.	30%

## Assignment #1 Hebrew Bible:

Select from ONE of the following:

1. Interpretation. Select a passage from the Hebrew Bible. Compare and contrast three differing interpretations.

2. Translation. Select a passage from the Hebrew Bible and discuss how three different translations affect meaning.
3. Artistic Influence. Discuss the use of the Hebrew Bible in music, movies, visual art, or literary works.
4. Social influence. Discuss the use of the Hebrew Bible in law, ethics, social morality, or politics.
5. Other ideas? Students may propose a different assignment topic. Proposals must be submitted for approval by the instructor by February 4.

Length: 800-1000 words. A word count must be clearly identified at the end of the assignment. Do not exceed 1000 words. Assignments that exceed 1000 words will be deducted 5% per 100 excess words. The assignment must be double spaced. Chicago, MLA, or APA are acceptable citation formats.

Due at the beginning of class (3:30) on February 25. For students unable to attend class on February 25, there is a drop box for assignments at the Department of Classics and Religion located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the Social Sciences Building.

### **Assignment #2 New Testament:**

Select from ONE of the following:

1. Interpretation. Select a passage from the New Testament. Compare and contrast three differing interpretations.
2. Translation. Select a passage from the New Testament and discuss how three different translations affect meaning.
3. Artistic Influence. Discuss the use of the New Testament in music, movies, visual art, or literary works.
4. Social influence. Discuss the use of the New Testament in law, ethics, social morality, or politics.
5. Other ideas? Students may propose a different assignment topic. Proposals must be submitted for approval by the instructor by March 31.

Length: 800-1000 words. A word count must be clearly identified at the end of the assignment. Do not exceed 1000 words. Assignments that exceed 1000 words will be deducted 5% per 100 excess words. The assignment must be double spaced. Chicago, MLA, or APA are acceptable citation formats.

Due April 14. Directions for electronic submission of the assignment will be provided on D2L.

### **Writing Assistance:**

The instructor will not read a student's research assignment or research summary in advance of the due date. The instructor is available to meet with students to assist with their research design, introductory paragraph identifying task, method(s), and thesis, and to evaluate sources required. For assistance in writing, students are advised to consult Writing and Learning Services.

**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, standardized 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.

**Adjusted Final Grades:**

The instructor will implement a standard measure of adjustment (.5%) for final grades. For example, a final grade of 64.5% (C) will be rounded up to 65% (C+). Please do not send email inquiries asking the instructor to increase or 'round up' your final grade.

**Extra Assignments:**

There are no extra assignments for this course. Students will not be given an opportunity to submit extra work or retake tests to increase their grade.

**Weighting of Coursework:**

The weighting for coursework is identified above. The weighting of coursework cannot be changed per the University Calendar - *E.1 Course Outlines*.

**Policy with regard to missed assessments:**

If a student misses an assessment (a test or their scheduled class presentation) due to illness or an emergency, the student must provide the instructor with supporting documentation within 72 hours of the absence. Per M.1. Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration, "This could be a medical certificate/documentation, references, police reports, invitation letter, or a statutory declaration, etc." Except in cases of extenuating circumstances, if documentation is not provided within 72 hours the student will not be provided an opportunity to make up the assessment and will receive a numerical mark of zero.

If a makeup assessment is approved by the instructor, the student must take the initiative to arrange a time to complete the assessment within one week from the date of the missed assessment. If a student is unable to complete the assessment within a week, an extension will

be provided if a student provides supporting documentation. NOTE: If a student cancels or fails to show up for the makeup assessment, the student must provide supporting documentation to account for the cancellation or absence.

### **Reviewing Tests:**

Exams for this course will not be returned. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with the instructor or TA to review their test results.

### **Midterm Test Deferrals:**

To accommodate students that have scheduling conflicts between the RELS 344 midterm exam and midterm exams from other U of C courses, the instructor's policy is as follows: A student may request to write the RELS 344 midterm exam on an alternate date if the student has, in addition to the RELS 344 midterm exam, two or more other midterm exams scheduled on the SAME day that are each worth more than 25% of their final grade. The RELS 344 midterm exam will not be rescheduled to accommodate an assignment deadline in another course. The instructor must receive the deferral request at least two weeks before the scheduled date of the RELS 344 midterm exam. Please request accommodation in writing (email).

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

In general, please be courteous toward other students in the course. Be respectful of class time. For students who raise questions during class, please contribute to the resourceful use of classroom time by limiting the number of questions you ask in each class. Be respectful of class space. Be considerate of the shared learning environment. Avoid distracting behavior and activities. Focus on objective inquiry. While critical evaluation is permitted in this course, students are encouraged to steer inquiries toward objective investigation rather than confessional or adversarial agendas.

### **Expectations for email correspondence in this course:**

All email correspondence from students must be sent from a U of C email account. Please do NOT send emails from other accounts, such as Gmail or Hotmail. Please include the subject of your email and clearly identify yourself by name and the course you are registered in. Please do not send email inquiries related to dates and deadlines. Students shall refer to the university calendar, course outline, and final exam schedule for schedule information. Inquiries related to tests or assignments must be sent no less than 24 hours before a deadline. The instructor will reply to emails on business days.

### **Electronic Device Policy:**

Laptops are permitted during class if used for the purpose of taking lecture notes. Do not use laptops during class for email, Facebook, or other social or recreational activities. Cell phones must be turned off during the entire class time. Texting during class is not permitted. Taking pictures in the classroom is not permitted, including picture-taking of data projector images and

slides. Students that distract the instructor or other students due to the misuse of electronic devices during class will be asked to leave the classroom for the duration of the lecture.

Recording of lectures is prohibited without the consent of the instructor. According to Academic Regulations E.6, "With the permission of the instructor, students may tape record lectures, provided that the student and instructor sign a Release form available from departmental and faculty offices. A copy of the Release form shall be retained by the instructor and by the department in which the course is offered." Regulation E.6 includes the notification to students, **"Any use other than that described above constitutes academic misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion."**

### **Policy on Inviting Guests:**

Seating in the course is reserved for students registered in the course. Guests are permitted to attend a lecture if seats are available. Students wishing to invite guests to attend a lecture must obtain the permission of the instructor in advance. NOTE: Guests will not be permitted to ask questions or participate in class discussion.

### **Office hours:**

Office hours are structured in 15-minute appointments. Sign-up sheets for appointments are posted on the instructor's door at SS 516. If a student is not able to meet with the instructor during office hours, the student may request to meet at an alternative time during department hours. If a student requires an extended meeting, the student must make an appointment outside of the instructor's scheduled office hours during department hours. Generally, extended meetings will not exceed 30 minutes and will be scheduled on a weekly basis according to the instructor's availability. Students wishing to schedule an extended appointment must provide rationale in their request, e.g. a list of specific items requiring attention.

Note: The instructor will not be available for office hours after 4:00 pm on weekdays, at any time during the weekends, or during the Term Break (February 17-21).

### **Syllabus:**

A complete syllabus (class schedule) will be made available the first week of class.

### **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 hrs/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>.