

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

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2015

Course	RELS 345 L01: God and Transcendence
Time	MWF 12:00-12:50
Instructor	Anne White, Ph.D.
TA(s)	Hany Ibrahim
Office	SS 534
Office Hours	MWF 1:00-1:45
E-mail	awhite@ucalgary.ca
Telephone	403 220 3285

Required Texts

Keith Ward, *Concepts of God: Images of the Divine in Five Religious Traditions*, One World Publications, 1998.

Harold Westphal, *Transcendence and Self-Transcendence*, Indiana University Press, 2004.

Suggested reading:

Eugene d'Aquili, *The Mystical Mind*, Fortress Press, 1999.

John Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, Oneworld Publishing, 1999.

David Shulman, et al. eds., *Self and Self-Transformation in the History of Religions*, Oxford, 2002.

Optional Text:

John Bowker, *God: A Very Short Introduction* Oxford University Press, 2014.

Course Description

This course will examine various philosophical and theological ideas pertaining to what constitutes transcendence and how it is realized. We will discuss concepts such as the nature of God and the perceived 'relationship' with an entity who is absolute Being and essentially personal. The identity of God, and the belief in God's existence, will be examined with reference to the attributes of God as transcendent, immanent, omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, perfectly free and perfectly good. The course will address why these attributes are considered to be essential to human transcendence from a broad theistic perspective. The course will also address issues such as: everlasting life, faith, idolatry, laws of nature, miracles, the metaphysical and the physical. To illustrate these concepts, examples will be taken from great philosophers such as Sankara, Ramanuja, Buddhaghosa, Augustine, Pseudo Dionysus, Maimonides, Al Ghazali, Aquinas, Pascale, Barth, Levinas, Otto, Buber, and Kierkegaard. The intent of this directed study is to present to the student a wide variety of ways in which to understand the concepts of God and transcendence in its various forms.

Online elements for this course

D2L Course Lecture Notes

Core Competencies:

Students will develop a number of the skills identified in the University of Calgary statement of learning outcomes. These include communication, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, computer literacy, writing competency, information retrieval, and group interaction.

NB. It is important to note that the attainment of any learning endeavor requires that students regularly attend classes, read the required material, and complete all course work.

Course Requirements

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)	Required pass/fail
February 2	Test	15	No
March 3	Test	15	No
April 8	Essay	30	No
(Registrar scheduled)	Exam	40	No

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 Religious Studies:

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.

Syllabus

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

References and Bibliography

The Department of Religious Studies uses the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style and requires references and bibliographies to adhere to the Chicago citation system. You can find a quick guide here: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. Alternatively please consult with the library staff for help and advice using the Chicago citation style.

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.

Writing Support

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. 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.

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>.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts Students' Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us 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 program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- 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.