

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

RELS 367.03 L01

Comparative Studies in Western Religions – Religion and Violence

FALL 2014

Place and Time: SB 105, on Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-1:45 pm

Instructor: Dr. David A. Bergen, SS 540, 403-220-7063, dabergen@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Between 11:00 am and 12:00 pm on Tuesday

Textbook: *Princeton Readings in Religion and Violence* (eds. Jurgensmeyer and Kitts; Princeton University Press 2011; 228 pages) *Violence* (Slavoj Zizek; Picador 2008).

Description and Objectives:

Clouds of violence have threatened populations for millennia and, given recent global events, appear forecast to extend their holy terror well into the future. This course will sample original sources (from ancient texts to writings of modern-day suicide bombers) to demonstrate the complex relationship between violence and religion. The course will also employ such theorists as Durkheim, Girard, Freud, and Bataille to analyze violence within religion (i.e., ritual sacrifice) and violence in the name of religion (e.g., Sept 9/11). Each Thursday will feature student-led discussions of Zizek's provocative book on systemic violence in contemporary society.

Course Assessments:

The assessments in this course are focused on the development of two principal academic skills: written analysis and engaged discussion.

Analytical Responses (60%)

Students will demonstrate and develop their skills of writing and analysis in six, equally-weighted responses to lecture presentations and discussions related to the Princeton Readings textbook. These responses ought to be thoughtful and succinct, to be submitted electronically by midnight on the following dates: Sept 25, Oct 9, Oct 23, Nov 6, Nov 20, and Dec 4.

Discursive Engagements (40%)

On Thursdays, students will take turns in leading a class discussion on the assigned readings for the day. Those leading the discussion will be graded on their ability to lead discussion and on their demonstration of knowledge of the readings. The remainder of the class will also be graded on their willingness to engage in thoughtful, informed discussion of the readings. The marks for each Thursday's discussion will be posted in D2L.

Participation Bonus (10%)

Additionally, students will have the opportunity to gain a bonus of up to 10% by engaging with the instructor on materials presented in the Tuesday lectures. This bonus will be applied at the end of term, once all other assessments have been completed.

Please note these important details:

- no exceptions will be made for submission deadlines, except for death, significant illness, or domestic affliction (corroborated by a valid, original note from a physician or counselor). You should contact the instructor within twenty-four hours of a missed deadline.
The University 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."
- a penalty of 5% per day will be applied to any responses not submitted by the stated deadline.
- a passing grade on any of the graded components is not essential for passing the course.
- no remedial assignments are available in this course.
- no lecture notes will be available from the instructor.
- there is no registrar-scheduled final exam for this course.
- class schedule, readings, and additional relevant materials will be posted online.
- all submissions should be backed up electronically. No concessions will be made for lost responses.

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

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.

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 the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre 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>.

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

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@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.