

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION

COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2016

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Course</b>       | RELS 367.5 Comparative Study of Western Religions: Sufis, Rabbis and Nuns |
| <b>Time</b>         | TR 9:30-10:45   |
| <b>Instructor</b>   | Dr. Rachel Schmidt  |
| <b>Office Hours</b> | TR 11:00-11:50  |
| <b>Office</b>       | SS 504  |
| <b>E-mail</b>       | rlschmid@ucalgary.ca  |
| <b>Telephone</b>    | 403-220-6383  |

**Required Text(s):**

**Ibn Arabi. *Sufis of Andalusia*. Beshara Publications, 2014.**

**Moses de León. *Zohar. The Book of Enlightenment*. Paulist Press, 1983.**

**Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. *Selected Writings*. Paulist Press, 2005.**

**San Juan de la Cruz. *Selected writings*. My translation (available on D2L)**

**Santa Teresa de Avila. *Selected writings*. My translation (available on D2L)**

**Optional Text(s):**

**Course Description:** Medieval Spain was unique in Europe for its religious diversity, not only due to the presence of Christian and Islamic states on the Iberian peninsula but also because Jewish populations lived in all regions as well as minority Islamic and Christian peoples who resided under Christian and Islamic governments. On the one hand, institutional strategies arose during the medieval period for managing minority religious populations. On the other hand, all three religions experienced a flowering of mystical religious expression, a form of religious experience that promotes individual access to the divine and in its practice can obscure the theological and authoritative differences that distinguish religions.

The first half of this course will concentrate on Islam and Judaism in the Iberian peninsula during the Medieval period, whereas the second half of the course will center on Catholicism in early-modern Spain and colonial New Spain (Mexico). Focusing on the Iberian context, forms of religious expression to be studied include Iberian Sufism, Jewish Kabbalah, and Catholic mysticism. Questions to be considered include the nexus between religious institutions and political power, the status of religious minorities, the construction and questioning of gender and gender roles through religion, the character of mystical experience and expression, the cultural function of non-normative forms of religious expression and belief, and the interaction of persons of different religious traditions.

**Online elements for this course: Use of D2L site**

**Core Competencies:**

1. Think critically and comprehensively about religion and religious traditions (that is their definitions, constructions, histories, and roles in culture and society). Appreciate the cultural and intellectual heritage of these civilizations as expressed through their religious traditions in a variety of expressions.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the complex, plural perspectives and sociohistorical contexts in/from which religion is negotiated/communicated.
3. Participate in discussion and debate in a thoughtful, well-informed, and respectful manner.
4. Learn to read and interpret religious texts within an academic framework, taking into account the sociohistorical context and lived realities of the author as well as the religious tradition in which he or she is writing.
5. Analyze the construction of arguments and ideas through rhetoric, appeal to authority and tradition, and style.
6. Learn to communicate effectively your own analyses in written and oral forms.
7. Learn basic skills using secondary sources and bibliography in order to present original ideas and analysis.

**Course Requirements:**

| Date   | Assessment  | Weight (%) | Required pass/fail |
|--|---|------------|--------------------|
| Oct. 11, 2016                                      | Essay (1000 words)  | 20%        | Required           |
| Nov. 1, 2016                                       | Midterm   | 20%        | Required           |
| Dec. 6 handed out at 9:30, Dec. 8 returned at 9:30 | Midterm take-home exam  | 20%        | Required           |
| Dec. 13  | Final paper (1700-2000 words plus bibliography)   | 35%        | Required           |
| Throughout course                                  | Participation (to be determined by attendance and oral participation in classroom discussion) | 5%         | Required           |

**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.

**Policy with regard to missed assignments/assessments:**

**Late assignments will be accepted only in consultation with the professor. All missed assignments will be give the score of 0.**

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

**Students are expected to arrive at class having done the reading indicated in the syllabus. All communication with the professor and fellow students will be undertaken in a thoughtful, respectful manner to facilitate classroom discussion.**

**Electronic Device Policy:**

**The use of electronic devices in this classroom is not permitted.**

**Syllabus:**

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

**References and Bibliography:**

The Department of Classics and Religion 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](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, 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 [as-carts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:as-carts@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.

## **Freedom of Information and Privacy**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP): <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/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 [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.