

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2014

Course: RELS 398.01 Religion and the Environment
Time: MWF – 13:00-13:50
Instructor: Anne White, Ph.D.
TA(s)
Office: SS 1322
Office Hours: 10-00-10:45 or by appointment
E-mail: awhite@ucalgary.ca
Telephone: 403 220 3285

Required Text(s): Roger S. Gottlieb, ed., *This Sacred Earth* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Optional Text(s):

Foltz, Richard	<i>Worldviews, Religion, and the Environment</i>
Gottlieb, Robert	<i>A Greener Faith</i>
Hawken, Paul	<i>The Ecology of Commerce</i>
Kinsley, David	<i>Ecology and Religion</i>
Naess, Arne	<i>The Ecology of Wisdom</i>
Nash, Roderick Frazier	<i>The Rights of Nature</i>
Pogman, Louis P.	<i>Environmental Ethics</i>
Tremblay, Rodrigue	<i>The Code for Global Ethics: The Humanist Principles</i>
Waldau and Patton, eds.	<i>A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science & Ethics</i>

The Earth Charter <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/pages/read-the-charter.html>

Course Description:

This course is designed to present factual information and informed discussion on the subject of religions and their perspectives on environmental ethics and sacred space. Through a review of many leading eco-theologians and environmentalists who seek social and environmental justice, students will be introduced to a variety of global perspectives that address our conduct in and towards nature. What will become evident from this study is that spiritual sensitivity towards the environment has long been a self-evident reality encoded within the world's religions. In contrast to this relevant and enduring system of insight and values, our secular world's perspective has led to an unbalanced and sterile view of physical reality, habitat space, and significance of place, as expressed in and through the environment. Through the perspectives and interpretations of the various writers under review, this course will endeavour to present an alternative to "the death of birth" philosophy that pervades our cultures. Students will be presented with challenging, viable alternatives to this decimation based on knowledge, fact, and insight into human na-

ture and the problems we face as a species, living ethically in the environment which supports all life forms. Using the diversity and creativity of the perspectives presented, students will be introduced to the richness of ethical thought and depth of meaning that religions offer the enquiring mind.

Course presentation will consist of lectures, assigned readings, films, website information and class discussion.

Online elements for this course:

Blackboard course notes augment the Gottlieb text.

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.

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

Course Requirements:

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)	Required pass/fail
February 24	Test	15	No
March 17	Test	15	No
April 7	Research 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.

Policy with regard to missed assignments/assessments:

Medical certificate is required for exams missed due to illness. The instructor must be notified of sickness occurring on the same day as any test is scheduled to be written .

Penalty for late essay, unless prearranged with instructor due to proof of extenuating circumstances, is one point per day.

Expectations for student conduct in this course:

Participation, courtesy, classroom etiquette in considering other students' rights to listen to the lectures without noisy disruption or loud conversation.

Electronic Device Policy:

These should be used only for classroom notes and not for emails, texting, or listening to music.

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.

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.

Blackboard Help

Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/computersupport/onlineservices/blackboard> for Student Help and FAQ's about Blackboard. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are available at <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/blackboard/students>. Instructions for using the Digital Drop Box are available here: http://library.blackboard.com/docs/r6/6_1/student/bbbs_r6_1_student/digital_drop_box.htm.

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 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.