

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

COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2019

Course: RELS 399-01 Religion in Popular Culture (Religion in Popular Music)
Time: Tuesday 3:30-6:15
Instructor: Craig W. C. Ginn, PhD
Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00-12:00 by appointment; additional hours by appointment
Office: SS 516
E-mail: cwcginn@ucalgary.ca
Telephone: (403) 220-5695

Required Text(s):

Gods and Guitars. Michael J. Gilmour. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2009.

Additional readings will be posted on D2L

Course Description:

Music, fundamental to many religious traditions, has served an important role in worship, ritual, ceremony, expression, and religious experience. From the earliest musical traditions to contemporary genres, texted music has been a critical part of how people have experienced and shape their worlds, including how they have understood their existence, experiences, feelings, relationships, and religious piety. From the Vedic hymns to the songs of Hare Krishna devotees or the psalms of David to U2 rock anthems music has been a deliberate means of expressing belief in the Transcendent and, arguably, constructing religion.

What is the role of music in popular culture? Is music a critical part of how people experience and shape their worlds. Do songwriters use music as a deliberate means of expressing religiosity or spirituality such as belief, worship, confession, and prayer? Are musicians venerated or deified? Can they rise to the status of prophet, priestess, god, or goddess? Does music reinforce religion? Reject religion? Is music a religion?

This course will examine religion and music, with a focus on popular music in North American culture. Musicians and songs will be explored in their context for religious and anti-religious references derived from both eastern and western religions, though students can expect the majority of songs to reflect Judeo-Christian influence. Various lenses will be used to investigate religion and music, including philosophical (nature of music, metaphysics, aesthetics, ethics), musicological (history of music, role of music and musician, music as industry), doxological (expression of veneration, praise, and devotion), theological (doctrinal expression in lyrics), and phenomenological (music and spiritual experience, confession, conversion, and enlightenment).

Online Elements for this Course:

Journal articles and web-sites will be posted on D2L.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will become familiar with:

- Academic interest at the intersection of religion and music
- Inquiry into the nature and role of music and religion
- Dimensional analysis of religion and music
- The (non)distinction between secular and sacred music
- The use of religious themes in the music of popular culture
- Evaluation of religious expression in lyrics
- Hermeneutical approaches to lyrics as text
- The preparation and presentation of research and analysis

Course Requirements:

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)
February 12	Test 1 (Includes course material from Jan 15 - Feb 5)	25%
March 19	Test 2 (Includes course material from Feb 12 - Mar 12)	25%
March 19, 26, April 2	Research Assignment (due on day of group presentation)	25%
March 19, 26, April 2	Group Presentations	15%
April 9	Test 3 (Includes course material from Mar 19 - Apr 2)	10%

This course will not have a Registrar-scheduled final examination.

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, usually used 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

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.

Midterm Deferrals

To accommodate students that have scheduling conflicts between RELS 399 tests and tests from other U of C courses, the instructor's policy is as follows: A student may request to write a RELS 399 test on a different date if the student has two or more other tests scheduled on the SAME day that are each worth more than 25% of their final grade. A RELS 399 test will not be rescheduled to accommodate an assignment deadline in another course. The instructor must receive the request in writing via email at least two weeks before the scheduled date of a RELS 399 test.

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 Tests:

The weighting for tests is identified above. The weighting of tests will not be changed to accommodate individual student requests.

Research Assignment:

Each student will complete a research assignment from a list of options provided by the instructor. The research assignment will be coordinated with the group presentation and will be due on the date that the student is scheduled to participate in their group presentation, to be submitted in hard copy to the instructor. Please provide a title page with student name and group number. Length: 1200-1500 words. Do not exceed 1500 words. Assignments that exceed 1500 words will be deducted 5% per 100 excess words.

Group Presentation:

Groups will be composed of five students. Each student in the group will present a summary of their research within the context of the group presentation. Each group presentation will be allotted 15 minutes, with each student in the group contributing approximately 3 minutes to the presentation. Groups are expected to prepare an audio-visual presentation and rehearse the timing and continuity of the presentation. A hard copy of the presentation must be submitted to the instructor on the day of the presentation. Please provide a title page with all student names and group number. Each student will be graded based on their individual contribution to the group. Each group will be assigned a presentation date on either March 26, April 2 or April 9. If a student has a conflict with any of the above dates, they must inform the instructor before February 26.

Writing Assistance:

The instructor will not read through or grade a student's research assignment in advance of the due date. The instructor is available to meet with students to assist with research design and evaluate sources. For assistance in writing, students are advised to consult Writing and Learning Services.

Policy with regard to missed assessments:

If a student misses a test or their scheduled group presentation due to illness or an emergency, the student must provide the instructor with supporting documentation (including, but not limited to, a U of C Statutory Declaration) within 72 hours of the absence. 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 test or presentation and will receive a numerical mark of zero.

If a makeup test or presentation is approved by the instructor, the student must take the initiative to arrange a time to take the test or present their research. The makeup test must be completed within one week from the date of the missed test. If a student is unable to take the test within a week, an extension will be provided if a student provides documentation. When extensions are granted, all makeup tests must be completed on or before the last day of classes. The makeup presentation can be arranged for an individual student or the group. The makeup presentation must be presented by April 16.

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. Seating in the course is reserved for students registered in the course. Guests are permitted to attend a lecture if seats are available. All guests must obtain the permission of the instructor in advance to attend a lecture. 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:

Email 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 identify 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 exams 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."**

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 appointments after 4:00 pm on weekdays, at any time during the weekends, or during Reading Week (February 18-22).

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/.

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.

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. 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.

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 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.

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/n-1.html>.