



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

**COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2020**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Religious Studies 447 – Theories of Religion</b>
<b>Time</b>	Wednesday 14:00-17:00
<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Tinu Ruparell
<b>Office</b>	SS 530
<b>Office Hours</b>	Wed 13:00-14:00 or by appointment
<b>E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:ruparell@ucalgary.ca">ruparell@ucalgary.ca</a> ; (please note, emails will be dealt with during business hours only and must occur through your @ucalgary email)
<b>Telephone</b>	403 220 7069

**Required Text(s)**

Strausberg and Engler, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of the Study of Religion*, (Oxford: OUP, 2016)

Recommended:

King, Richard, *Religion, Theory, Critique*, (New York: Columbia Univ Press, 2017)

Both texts are available at the bookstore

**Optional Text(s)**

Further readings may be required and will be made available at student expense or through the Blackboard/Perusal site for the course

**Course Description**

This course will consider current academic discussions concerning theories of religion, their critiques and rejoinders, and the ways in which defining and theorizing religion affects public perceptions, policy development, and the role of religion in the public sphere as well as in academia. Questions concerning theory and method *per se* will also be considered. The course is a seminar, thus student preparation for and participation in each session is essential.

**Online elements for this course:**

This course will take place **online** via D2L, Zoom, and Perusal (see below). To best succeed in the course, students are encouraged to participate in the asynchronous learning tasks using the D2L learning environment and synchronous Zoom sessions. When unable to participate live due to the time difference or unforeseen circumstances, inform the instructor in advance and propose and implement propose an alternative participation activity (e.g., watch the recordings, submit a brief reflection, and actively contribute to the follow-up online discussion).

You will need to use Perusal – a free online tool for readings/discussion/questions – please register here [www.perusal.com](http://www.perusal.com), using the course code RUPARELL-R8BCL

You are expected to attend all synchronous Zoom sessions (see syllabus for times and dates). All Zoom sessions will be recorded and will be posted for a limited time.

**Core Competencies**

Dedicated students in this course will engage contemporary discussions, critiques and theories concerning the nature of religion and its study. Awareness of classical theories of religion is assumed, thus students will build on these theories to consider how they have been shaped by developments in other fields and practices. Students will be given opportunities for discussion, reflection and critique or the academic study of religion and its role in society and academia. Committed students will gain in their abilities of analysis, verbal and written communication and critical self-reflection in the context of the study of religion.

**Course Requirements**

There will be TWO components to the grade for this course:

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)
TBA	Individual in-class presentations	40%
Final essay Due 7 April 2021 with defenses taking place 14 April 2021, times for defenses TBA	Final Research Essay (3-3.5k words) plus	50%
	Oral Defense	10%
(Registrar scheduled)	There is NO registrar scheduled exam for this course	

**Syllabus**

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

**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**

**In-class presentation dates are firm. Without acceptable documentation or without PRIOR arrangement with the instructor, missed assessments will be awarded an 'F'. If there is an issue with your assigned date for a presentation, please see me as soon as possible. If you miss the assigned date for your presentation through no fault of your own, you must contact me in writing by email within 24 hours of the missed assessment to negotiate an alternative. The instructor retains the right to reject inequitable proposed alternatives, though every effort will be made to find a suitable option. Failure to follow these directions and/or meet these deadlines will result in an 'F' for that assessment.**

**This policy is intended to encourage diligence and integrity among students as well as to uphold principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class.**

**You are expected to be in attendance and participate in all seminars (not just the ones you present in). Failure to attend and participate in all seminars will result in reductions in your presentation grades, at the discretion of the instructor.**

**LATE SUBMISSION OF FINAL PAPERS WILL BE PENALISED 5%/DAY. Missing the oral examination without acceptable cause (as above) will result in a 15% penalty on the essay as well as an F on the oral exam component.**

## **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS**

Please submit all assignments electronically using the dropbox in D2L. Assignments may be submitted in Word or PDF format. Assignments should have a file name as follows: "First Name Last Name Assignment Number" (e.g., Alex Smith Assignment 2). Assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm on their due date. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted.

## **GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS**

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as per the [Code of Conduct](#)). When entering Zoom or other video conferencing sessions (such as MS Teams), you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behaviour in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names

do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g. [Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#)). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your zoom sessions visit: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>.

If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review a recorded session). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they are expected to turn on their webcam (for group work, presentations, etc.).

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

### **Internet and Electronic Communication Device Policy**

While we will be using internet resources heavily during this course, recent studies have clearly shown that use of laptops, phones and other electronic tools for notes and in-class work results in poorer learning outcomes and consequently worse grades. (Mueller, *Psychological Studies Online First* May 22, 2014) During Zoom sessions I strongly suggest that you do not use a laptop or computer for notes. The Zoom sessions will be recorded and available to you to re-watch. Note taking using a pen and paper has been shown to aid learning and recall. (Carter, Greenberg, and Walker “SEII Discussion Paper” #2016.02)

### **References and Bibliography**

The Department 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.

### **INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

**Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.**

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY**

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

### **COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION**

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>.

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

**Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.**

**For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit:**

**<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>**

**<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-procedure.pdf>**

**Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website**

**at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>.**

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMODATION**

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The Student Accommodations policy is available at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>. Students needing an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>). 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.

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/).

### **SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY**

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and

violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

#### **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Please visit the Registrar's website at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- **Wellness and Mental Health Resources**
- **Student Success**
- **Student Ombuds Office**
- **Student Union (SU) Information**
- **Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information**
- **Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points**
- **Safewalk**