

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

**COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2014**

<b>Course</b>	RELS 601.05 L01 - Studies in Western Religions (Jewish Philosophy and Theology)
<b>Time</b>	M 2:00 PM – 4:45 PM
<b>Instructor</b>	Prof. E. Segal
<b>Office</b>	W 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM or by appointment
<b>Hours</b>	
<b>Office</b>	SS 548
<b>E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:eliezer.segal@ucalgary.ca">eliezer.segal@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>Telephone</b>	403.220.3279

**Required Text(s):**

- Maimonides, Moses. *The Guide for the Perplexed*. Translated by M. Friedlander. 2nd Revised edition. Dover Publications, 1956.
- Halbertal, Moshe. *Maimonides: Life and Thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Rudavsky, T. M. *Maimonides*. 1 edition. Chichester, U.K. and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

**Course Description:**

This seminar will be devoted to the religious thought of Moses Maimonides (1135-1204), probably the most influential Jewish philosopher and theologian. We will be focusing principally on his controversial philosophical treatise, the *Guide of the Perplexed*, in which the author strove to achieve a synthesis between traditional Judaism and Aristotelian rationalism. Several of the issues with which Maimonides grappled are still of relevance today.

Topics to be explored include:

- The philosophical conception of divine unity.
- The problems of divine “attributes” and scriptural language about God.
- Philosophy as an esoteric discipline.
- The relationship between Reason and Revelation.
- Religious vs. philosophical understandings of the good life.
- Reconciling science with biblical tradition (especially: the problem of “creation out of nothing”).
- The rationality and purpose of the biblical commandments.
- The ultimate goal of religious life.
- The nature of prophecy.
- Evil and divine providence.
- Maimonides' relationships to Islamic and Christian philosophy.

**Core Competencies:**

The course is intended to develop specific core competencies and skills. These will include: critical and creative reasoning; problem solving; understanding historic texts in relation to their original settings; interpreting information; responding critically to both primary and secondary materials; creating knowledge from information; communication skills and; persuading and influencing others.

The seminar format of the course means students will be interactive participants in the presentation of the course material and they will engage in one major research project.

### Course Requirements:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Weight (%)</b>
Nov. 17	Research paper #1 (6,000 words)	40% or 30%*
Dec. 5	Research paper #2 (6,000 words)	40% or 30%*
To be scheduled individually	Oral presentation	20%
Ongoing	Class participation	10%
*The paper with the highest grade will be counted for 40%.		

*There will be no registrar scheduled final examination in this course.*

### Grading

Graduate Grading System for Course Final Grades

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point Value</b>	<b>Graduate Description</b>
A+	4.00	Outstanding
A	4.00	Excellent—superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	All grades below “B-” are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. Individual programs may require a higher passing grade.
C	2.00	
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	
F	0.00	

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

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

Assignment dates are firm. Without acceptable documentation (i.e. medical certificate, police report, bereavement notice, confirmation of religious observance, or court summons) or without *prior* arrangement with the instructor, missed assignments will be awarded an ‘F’. Late submission of assignments will be penalized 5% per day.

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. Excuses other than those listed above will receive little attention.

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

This is a seminar course which requires students to be present for all classes and participate fully. Your performance and input into class discussions, responses and presentations will inform the grade for the presentation assessment. You will be expected to have read the material for the week and be ready to ask informed and relevant questions.

**Electronic Device Policy:**

Although respectful use of laptops or tablets for academic purposes is allowed, if students use them for non-academic purposes in class, they will be asked to leave, possibly forfeiting some grades. Texting in class is to be limited to emergencies or urgent matters only (i.e., under normal circumstances: *never*). Please respect your fellow students and me by avoiding distracting use of these devices.

**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, 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.

### **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](mailto: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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](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.