

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 335 L01: RITUAL AND RELIGION
COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2018

Course	Ritual and Religion		
Time	Monday/Wednesday/Friday 2:00-2:50 PM		
Room	SS 109		
Instructor	Office Hours	Office	Contact Information
Dr. Joy Palacios	Mon. and Wed., 3:00-4:00 PM	SS 534	E: joy.palacios@ucalgary.ca T: 403-220-3285
TA			
Hany Ibrahim	Mon, 1:00-2:00 PM	SS 515 (first desk on the left)	Hany.ibrahim@ucalgary.ca

Required Text(s):

Bell, Catherine. 2009. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- This book is available for free through the university's library website: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=472204>

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

- This book can be purchased as an e-book from the platform of your choice:
 - Google Play (\$16.87) - https://play.google.com/store/books/details/Robert_M_Emerson_Writing_Ethnographic_Fieldnotes_S?id=k83BlbBHubAC&hl=en
 - Amazon – Kindle Edition (\$16.87) - <https://www.amazon.ca/Writing-Ethnographic-Fieldnotes-Second-Emerson/dp/0226206831>
 - iBooks (\$27.99)

Grimes, Ronald L. 2014. *The Craft of Ritual Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- This book will be available as an e-book through the university's library website. To avoid access issues, please download each day's readings. The user agreement allows you to download 109 pages per day: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3055864>

Gwynne, Paul. 2017. *World Religions in Practice: A Comparative Introduction*. 2nd ed. Newark: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

- This book can be purchased in hard copy from the university book store
- It is also available as an e-book through the university's library website. To avoid access issues, please download each day's readings. The user agreement allows you to download 77 pages per day: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4875254>

Course Description:

When people practice a religion, what do they do? What distinguishes religious rituals from seemingly secular traditions and practices, like attending sporting events or throwing bridal showers, that foster a sense of belonging or mark life events? This course offers an introduction to the content, theoretical frameworks, and methods of the interdisciplinary field of Ritual Studies. After examining the way scholars have defined “ritual,” we will survey a selection of representative practices from Eastern and Western traditions, with special emphasis on the life cycle (birth, marriage, death) and uses of space, time, text, and image (sites of worship, holy days, sacred books and symbols). We will also consider the way methods and theories from Ritual Studies can be fruitfully used to study non-religious domains like sports, music, and theater.

Core Competencies:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

Knowledge:

- Identify and describe the basic ritual practices in Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism
- Explain, compare, and contrast the foundational concepts used in Ritual Studies for studying religious practices
- Outline and apply the basic principles of research ethics

Skills:

- Make detailed ethnographic observations of a live ritual event
- Record their observations in the form of field notes
- Craft a “thick description” of a ritual event based on their field notes
- Evaluate, select, and justify a theoretical framework in Ritual Studies and use it to analyze a ritual event
- Write a literature review in which they select, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize secondary sources related to a research topic

Course Requirements:

This course will entail three types of assignments/assessments:

1. Theory Exam = 20%

One exam, focused on the readings from Bell, will assess your fundamental knowledge of the theoretical frameworks used in the academic study of rituals. I will provide more detailed information about the types of questions on the exam closer to the exam date so that you can prepare.

2. Ethnographic Fieldnotes Project = 55%
 - CORE certificate (5%)
 - Field site proposal (15%)
 - Fieldnotes and analysis (35%)

The ethnographic fieldnotes project is designed to guide you through a firsthand investigation of the ethical, logistical, and theoretical challenges and rewards of studying ritual practice. You will receive detailed handouts in class explaining each part of the project, which has three components. First, you will complete the CORE Certificate, which will introduce you to the standards for ethical research involving human participants outlined in the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS). Then you will select a ritual site or event to observe and prepare a proposal detailing how you will conduct your observation in conformity with the university's ethical standards. Finally, once your field site proposal is approved, you will attend or participate in the ritual event and write up fieldnotes, which include "jottings" of your observations, a "thick description" of the event based on those jottings, and an analysis of the event using one of the theoretical approaches from the Bell readings.

3. Literature Review = 25%

The literature review (1200 words) of at least 8 academic sources will provide you with a preliminary level of expertise in the secondary literature on a research topic based on the questions arising from your ethnographic fieldnotes. A detailed handout will be provided in class.

Summary of dates and weights:

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)	Required pass/fail
2 February 2018	CORE certificate	5%	
16 February 2018	Field site proposal	15%	
19 March 2018	Theory exam	20%	
28 March 2018	Literature review	25%	
13 April 2018	Fieldnotes and analysis	35%	
<i>This course does not have a final exam</i>			

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

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

Policy with regard to missed assignments/assessments:

In accordance with university policy, deferred examinations are permitted only in exceptional circumstances such as serious illness (only with official 'Physician/Counsellor Statement' form), religious observance, or domestic affliction. For further details see http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred_final.

Unless exceptional circumstances such as those listed above prevent you from submitting an assignment on time or a prior agreement has been made with me, late work will be marked down by one third of a grade per day (from an A to A-).

In this course, however, each student has an **Extension Bank** of three days that can be used at your discretion when you need a little more time on any of the assignments other than the theory exam. Extension Days can be used all at once on a single assignment, or applied to different assignments. To use your days, all you need to do is email me 24 hours before the original due date and tell me how many Extension Days you would like to apply. Each Extension Day extends your deadline by 24 hours from the original due date.

Expectations for student conduct in this course:

Your active participation is important for your own learning as well as the learning of your peers. I will do my best to structure in-class time in ways that foster and facilitate your engagement with the course materials. Readings assigned for a given date on the schedule should be completed before class begins. Often, I will begin class with a brief lecture highlighting what I think is important in the readings. Whenever possible, I will design interactive activities that will prompt you to explain, analyze, compare, or apply the ideas and information covered in the readings. Please come to class ready to think and share.

During class discussions and activities, I expect each member of the course to help me create a positive learning environment by listening respectfully to each other, using transitions (“As Julia said, I think...”, “I agree/disagree with Mohad because...”, “I want to build on that idea...”), and by refraining from statements that signal judgment. We will be discussing material that can be sensitive and about which members of the course may have strong feelings. For this reason, all members of the class will be asked to use vocabulary that signals observation, description, analysis, scholarly argument, and hypothesis formation.

Electronic Device Policy:

Electronic devices are allowed in this course and will sometimes be used for in-class activities. (I, too, after all, will have my laptop with me to provide PowerPoint presentations and my phone so I can use its timer to keep our activities on track.) I do, however, expect that all members of the class show respect to their fellow students and the instructor(s) by not wearing headphones, answering phone calls, playing music, or watching their own videos. If a student’s use of electronic devices disrupts others, he/she may be asked to leave the room.

Recording any part of the lectures or class sessions in any form must first be approved by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only.

Syllabus:

A schedule of readings will be distributed on the first day of class and posted to D2L.

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

The student accommodation policy can be found at: ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

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.