

**The University of Calgary**  
**Faculty of Arts**  
Department of Religious Studies  
Winter 2012

**Religious Studies 437 L01: Hermeneutics & Religion**  
**W 14:00-16:45**  
**SS 1332**

**Instructor**  
**Office**  
**Office Hours**  
**Email**  
**Phone**

Dr. Tinu Ruparell  
SS1320  
T 15:00-16:00 or by appointment  
[ruparell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ruparell@ucalgary.ca)  
403-220-7069

**Course Texts:**

David Palmer. *Hermeneutics*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press  
David Klemm: *Hermeneutical Inquiry, Vol 1: The Interpretation of Texts* Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press.  
David Klemm: *Hermeneutical Inquiry, Vol 2: The Interpretation of Existence* Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press  
Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory, Discourse and the surplus of meaning*. Texas Christian

Some additional required readings may be assigned.

**Course Description:**

This course will consider philosophical issues arising from hermeneutics and interpretation theory. Within a historical context beginning in the west with Schleiermacher and Dilthey, we will be concerned with three main areas: definition of the 'text' and interpretation theory; the development of method in the interpretation of religious texts; and contemporary developments in hermeneutics. The aim of the course is to provide students with a basic appreciation of the variety of ways that hermeneutics has been employed, of the complex problems involved in its definition and use, and of the major issues that continue to be debated with regard to its nature and practice.

**Core Competencies:**

Dedicated students in this course will learn both the modern history of hermeneutics as well as practice the kinds of arguments employed in hermeneutics theory. As this is a course in theory in the study of religion, students will gain an appreciation of the ongoing discussion on the nature and role of context, subjectivity and history in our understanding of religious texts as well as the wider functions to which hermeneutical theory has been put in more recent times. 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:

| Element                                   | Weight | Date  |
|---|--------|---|
| In-class presentation                     | 30%    | TBA   |
| Final research essay (3-4 thousand words) | 50%    | Written essays due in hard copy in class on Mar 28, 2012  |
| Plus Oral Defense (30 minutes)            | 20%    | Oral to take place between April 3-12, 2012, schedule TBA |

**Note on Oral Defense:**

The oral examination is meant to be an opportunity for the student to discuss further and thereby strengthen their research essay. It is a way by which feedback on the essay can become a springboard for further analysis and discussion. Questions will be based on the student’s submitted essay, though, of course, some understanding of the authors and issues covered in class and through the assigned readings will be assumed. The aim of the oral is for students to support the essay and verbal performance in the oral will not be assessed.

**Grading:**

A numerical grade will be given for each course requirement with a letter grade awarded as the cumulative grade for the course. Below is the table standardized within the Dept. of Religious Studies:

|             |          |           |
|-------------|----------|-----------|
| A+ 96 –100% | A 90-95% | A- 85-89% |
| B+ 80-84%   | B 75-79% | B- 70-74% |
| C+ 65-69%   | C 60-64% | C- 55-59% |
| D+ 53-54%   | D 50-52% | F < 50%   |

**NB. POLICY WITH REGARDING MISSED/LATEASSESSMENTS**

**In-class presentation 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 assessments will be awarded an ‘F’. If there is an issue with your assigned date for the presentation, please see me as soon as possible.**

**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.**

**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. Missing the presentation will result in an F in that component of the final grade.**

**Syllabus:**

A complete syllabus will be made available in 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 University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.*

**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.

**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](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](mailto: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 new 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 Office of the Student Ombuds 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 ca