



**FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION  
COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2022  
RELS 200 LEC 1 – RELIGIOUS MYTHS AND WORLDVIEWS**

**COURSE NUMBER:** RELS 200 LEC 1

**COURSE NAME:** Religious Myths and Worldviews

**CLASSROOM LOCATION:** Education Classroom Block (EDC), Room 179  
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/calendar-scheduling/room-edc-179>

**CLASS DAYS & TIMES:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30–13:45 (normally, classes are in person)

**INSTRUCTOR NAME AND UCALGARY EMAIL:** George Ferzoco, [george.ferzoco@ucalgary.ca](mailto:george.ferzoco@ucalgary.ca)

**INSTRUCTOR EMAIL POLICY:** The instructor will only be opening e-mails sent from a @ucalgary.ca address; e-mails sent from other domains (e.g., gmail.com) will be deleted unopened. The instructor will respond on Mondays to Fridays to e-mails sent on Mondays to Fridays. Response will normally be within 2 business days of receipt; if you have not received a response within that timeframe, please send a (gentle) reminder. This correspondence is of a business nature, so you are expected to write by starting with 'Dear' then name (e.g., 'Dear George'); do not begin with 'Hey' or 'Yo'. Please include the subject of your email and clearly identify yourself by your full name and the course and section in which you are registered. Please do not send email enquiries related to dates and deadlines. Students shall refer to the university calendar, course outline, and D2L for schedule and other information. Enquiries related to tests or assignments must be sent no less than 24 hours before a deadline.

**NAMES & EMAIL CONTACTS OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS:**

Natasha Prosser ([natasha.prosser@ucalgary.ca](mailto:natasha.prosser@ucalgary.ca)) and Nick Fieseler ([nicholas.fieseler@ucalgary.ca](mailto:nicholas.fieseler@ucalgary.ca))

**COURSE CALENDAR STATEMENT:**

Readings (in English translation) from the classical literatures of middle Eastern and Asian religions. Introduction to the evolving mythological traditions from three geo-cultural centres (the middle East, India, and China) by examining religious themes: cosmology; existential values and goals; destinies of humans, the world, and the cosmos. This course may not be repeated for credit. Course hours: H(3-0)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION [SUBJECT TO CHANGE]:** What is a myth? What is a worldview? How do religious myths express and inform worldview? This course will provide an introduction to the study of religious myths, focusing on the myths of practiced religion. The primary religious traditions studied in this course will include Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Additional traditions and worldviews will be considered, including early civilizations, Indigenous traditions, and other religious traditions.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completing this course students will be able to:

- identify and apply key terms and concepts in the study of religion and mythology
- describe the role of myth in shaping religious worldviews

- explore the dimensional view of religion with a focus on the mythic-narrative dimension
- discuss representative myths in world religions
- distinguish types and functions of myths
- describe chronological developments in religions and mythical traditions
- examine the formation of religious myths in their historical and cultural contexts
- discuss higher criticism, demythologizing, and hermeneutical approaches
- contribute to a group presentation and presentation materials

## LEARNING RESOURCES

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Irving Hexham, *Understanding World Religions: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2018. **Note:** The textbook is required as listed above. If a student acquires an older edition of this book in any format and intends to use the older edition rather than the required edition, it is the responsibility of the student to compare the older edition with the newer edition to determine the material that may be different between the editions. If a student has access to an online version that is without page numbers, it is the responsibility of the student to synchronize the readings with the required textbook.

**Other readings** will be made available on D2L. The website [www.understandingworldreligions.com](http://www.understandingworldreligions.com) provides extensive supporting materials for this course.

## LEARNING REQUIREMENTS AND LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

The D2L site for this course will contain required readings and other relevant class resources and materials (see [d2l.ucalgary.ca](http://d2l.ucalgary.ca)). Some classes will be devoted to screenings of videos.

For any eventual online portion of this course, in order to successfully engage in your learning experience, you are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- a computer with a supported operating system as well as the latest security and malware updates
- a current and updated web browser and Zoom application
- a webcam
- a microphone and speaker or a headset with microphone
- a current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled
- broadband internet connection

## CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS – main dates [subject to change]

**6 September** – first class

15 September – last day to drop without financial penalty; end of refund period

16 September – last day to add or swap a course

23 September – tuition fee payment deadline

**29 September** – Test 1 (worth 25% of final grade)

**20 October** – Test 2 (worth 30% of final grade)

6–12 November – term break (no classes)

**17 November** – Test 3 (worth 30% of final grade)

**6 December** – Test 4 (worth 15% of final grade) and final class

## MISSED CLASSES, AND MISSED TESTS OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students who have joined the course after it started, or who have missed class due to illness or other reasons, must consult other students (e.g., via group chat) in regard to what was missed.

If a student misses a test, the student must provide the instructor with supporting documentation (note from doctor, note from counselor, accident report, etc.) within 48 hours of the absence. If

documentation is not provided within 48 hours, the student will not ordinarily be provided an opportunity to make up the test and will receive a numerical mark of zero.

## 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. Below you will find: letter grade; numerical mark; and grade point value

<b>A+ 96–100 4.0</b>	<b>B 75–79 3.0</b>	<b>C- 55–59 1.7</b>
<b>A 90–95 4.0</b>	<b>B- 70–74 2.7</b>	<b>D+ 53–54 1.3</b>
<b>A- 85–89 3.7</b>	<b>C+ 65–69 2.3</b>	<b>D 50–52 1.0</b>
<b>B+ 80–84 3.3</b>	<b>C 60–64 2.0</b>	<b>F 0–49 0.0</b>

A student's final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each element separately in order to pass the course.

### 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+).

Do not send emails asking the instructor to increase or 'round up' or 'bell' your final grade. Also, do not tell the instructor you: 1) always get higher marks in your other courses; 2) must get a certain grade in order to get your degree or to be admitted to another program; 3) should get a higher mark because you worked very hard.

### 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 Module Tests:

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

### Reviewing Tests:

Tests for this course may not be returned.

## CONDUCT

Students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. As members of the University community, students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html> In general, please be courteous toward other students in the course, and to the instructor. Be respectful of people's feelings, and of classroom facilities (e.g., do not put feet up on chairs or desks), or unduly take up desk space.

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 your instructor's voice and hearing; to this end, please sit closer to the front of the class

than the back, and speak loudly and clearly when asking questions. (Of course, do not enter into discussions with classmates during lectures unless otherwise instructed.)

Be respectful of classroom 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.

**Students who flagrantly or repeatedly abuse these any of these guidelines of conduct (including in reference to what follows below) will be asked to leave the class; the Security Office will be called if the instructor deems it to be necessary.**

### **USE OF INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES IN CLASS**

Be aware that if you care about your marks, you will not use your notebook computer to take notes in class, as studies consistently demonstrate that students who use pen/pencil and paper in class outperform those who use electronic devices. Under no circumstances must anyone 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. No video or audio recording is permitted. Students who 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 Regulation 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.**"

### **GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS**

Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a "live" video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community. It seems unlikely the course will have Zoom sessions, but it is possible.

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.

### **COURSE EVALUATIONS AND STUDENT FEEDBACK**

Student feedback will be sought at the end of the course through the standard University Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) and Faculty course evaluation forms. A midterm evaluation may also be included to provide students an opportunity to provide feedback, for the instructor to adjust their approaches to teaching and learning, and to continuously improve the course. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

## **UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS**

### **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 ACCOMMODATION**

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:

<https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access>

### **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>.

### **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