

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

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES 201 L01
WORLD RELIGIONS - WESTERN
FALL SEMESTER 2011**

INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Wees
COURSE TIME AND DAYS: MWF 11:00 – 11:50am
OFFICE: SS 1330
OFFICE HOURS: TR 11:30am – 12:30pm
TELEPHONE: 403-220-5612 or 403-220-5886 (main office)
E-MAIL ADDRESS: jwees@ucalgary.ca
WEBSITE ADDRESS: Blackboard
TEACHING ASSISTANT: Oren Steinitz (oren.steinitz@gmail.com)

REQUIRED TEXT: Willard G. Oxtoby, Amir Hussain, *World Religions: Western Traditions*, (3ed), Oxford University Press, 2011.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce the three major religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Utilizing a lecture based format, both historical and phenomenological perspectives will be considered. Textbook material will be augmented with additional historical data, selections from each of the sacred scriptures, an analysis of selected ritual observances and pertinent videos. Employing this methodology, the course will examine the development of all three religions from their inception through to recent times. This analysis will provide the student with a general level of religious literacy for understanding the three Western monotheistic faiths.

COURSE OUTLINE:

- (1) Identification of historical events, perceptions of divine revelation and development of phenomenological interpretations, including ritual.
 - (2) Analysis of the three major traditions: similarities and differences.
 - (3) Introduction to the sacred scriptures: Tanak, Bible, Qur'an, respectively.
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COURSE OBJECTIVE:

To enable students to organize and evaluate various historical events and religious concepts as perceived and interpreted by each of these religions.

SELF DIRECTED STUDY:

Students are encouraged to read web notes and the assigned pages of text before each lecture, and come prepared to ask questions.

NOTE: LINKS TO ASSIGNED READINGS WILL BE POSTED ON BLACKBOARD.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students will develop a number of the skills identified in the University of Calgary statement of learning outcomes. These include: communication, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, computer literacy, information retrieval, and group effectiveness.
- The assigned readings, lecture material and methodology within the course should develop a student's ability to think critically (i.e. judge, reflect, and analyze); web notes will further provide dissemination of information and enhance computer skills; preparation for examinations should foster the development of information retrieval and writing competency.
- It is important to remember that the attainment of any learning endeavour requires that students regularly attend lectures, read the required material, and complete all course work.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

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|----|--|--------------|
| 1) | Section Test on Judaism - Oct. 7 | 30% |
| 2) | Section Test on Christianity - Nov. 9 | 30% |
| 3) | Registrar scheduled final exam – Section Test on Islam | 30% |
| | for final essay component. | + 10% |

The tests will examine basic knowledge and the ability to critically analyze aspects of the religious traditions. The tests will be a combination of multiple choice, short definitions, and two short essays. The tests on Judaism and Christianity will each be of 50 minutes' duration. The Registrar scheduled exam (final exam) will be scheduled for two hours. The final exam will include the additional essay component. This will require a comparison and contrast of one aspect shared by the three religions. Essay length will be two pages, double spaced.

GRADING:

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. Following the final examination, a letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme:

A+	96-100	A	90-95	A-	85-8
B+	80-84	B	75-79	B-	70-74
C+	65-69	C	60-64	C-	55-59
D+	50-54	D	45-49	F	44 or less

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Students should be familiar with the University regulations regarding academic honesty. See the current University Calendar for details.

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.

GNOSIS:

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: 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. 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 (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 4th Floor of MacEwan Student Centre.
 - 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.
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PROPOSED LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE:

PLEASE NOTE: Although all material indicated will be discussed in class, there may be times when one week's material may slightly overlap the next week. Allowances must be made for questions and some discussion.

JUDAISM

September 12 – October 5

Sept 12

Webnotes INTRODUCTION to the Abrahamics

14-16

Webnotes Monotheism, the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), Covenant and accountability – the Chosen People.

19-23

Pp 68-97 Timelines, contexts and concepts – the development of thought.
Documentary

26-30

Pp 98-127 The essence of Judaism: Development of central institutions, Talmudic law, mysticism, the Hasidic movement.

Oct

3-5 Development of practice and passages; emergence of specific groups – Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist.
Pp 127-159 Modern developments.

7

Test on Judaism – 50 minutes' duration

10 THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS

CHRISTIANITY

October 12 – November 4

Oct.

12-14 Jesus of Nazareth (Yeshua), the Jesus Movement, the Gospels,
Pp 166-178 the writers and the founders. Central doctrines.

17-21 Organization, the Church Fathers and Mothers, mysticism,
Pp 179-191 creeds and Gnosticism. Mary, St. Augustine, Original Sin.

24-28 The major branches of Christianity.
192-212 Medieval Christianity: Popes, Crusades, Hersey and the Inquisition.

31 The Reformation and the Protestant traditions.
Pp 212-226 Missions and the worldwide Church.

Nov.

2-7 Modern developments, fundamentalist/literalist/liberal traditions.
Pp 226-261 Ecumenicism, Liberation Theology. Documentary.

9 Test on Christianity – 50 minutes' duration

11 REMEMBRANCE DAY – NO CLASS

Islam

Please note: Mr. Oren Steinitz will be lecturing on Islam

Nov 14 – Dec. 9

Nov.

14 Introduction, the problem of studying Islam, conceptions and misconceptions

16-18 The origins of Islam, life of Muhammad,
268-274

21-25 The Quran, sources of Islamic Law, philosophy and theology
274-283

28-30 Five pillars of Islam
297-302

Dec.

2-5 Sects in Islam: Shi'a, Sufism, Ahmadiyya
283-291, 306-307

7-9 Islam and modernity, Islam and the West, Women in Islam
305-317