

**University of Calgary
Faculty of Arts
Department of Religious Studies**

**RELS 201 L20 Introduction to World Religions – Western
Course Outline – Spring 2010
ST 139 MW 11:00-13:45 on Mondays and Wednesdays**

Instructor: Sergey Petrov
Office: SS 1330
Office Hours: by appointment only
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Textbook: Roger Schmidt et al., *Patterns of Religion*. 2nd Edition. Belmont, California: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2005.

Course description:

This course provides a general introduction to the study of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will look at the three faiths from an historical perspective and we will also consider these faiths in their contemporary setting. Class time will be devoted to lectures, films, and discussion of assigned readings.

Course objectives:

Students are expected to develop an informed perspective on the main religions of the Western world (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), and an understanding of Religious Studies as a field of academic inquiry. Students should gain a knowledge of and appreciation for the history, teachings, and way of life of the main religions of the Western and Middle Eastern world.

Tentative Course Timeline:

- **May 17th**

Defining religion; forms of religious expression; classifying religions; religion in traditional and secular societies (Text: 1-15).

- **May 19th**

Jewish race, religion, and culture. History of Judaism (Text: 303-314).

- **May 24th**

Victoria Day. No lectures.

- **May 26th**

Judaic beliefs (Text: 314-335).

- **May 31st**

Judaic Practices (Text: 335-342). Contemporary Judaism (Text: 335-344).

- **June 2nd**

History of Christianity (Text: 357-377). **Midterm exam on Judaism**

- **June 7th**

Christian beliefs (Text: 377-384).

- **June 9th**

Christian Practices (Text: 384-387). Contemporary Christianity (Text: 384-390).

- **June 14th**

History of Islam (Text: 407-419). **Midterm Exam on Christianity**

- **June 16th**

Islamic beliefs (Text: 420-426).

- **June 21st**

Islamic Practices (Text: 426-435). Contemporary Islam (Text: 435-439).

- **June 23rd**

Baha'i Faith (Text: readings provided by instructor). Final exam preparation.

- **The Registrar scheduled final exam**

Date, time, and place TBA

Learning Assessment:

First Midterm Test (Judaism) – 30% - June 2nd

Second Midterm Test (Christianity) – 30% - June 14th

Registrar-scheduled final exam, including a Test on Islam (30%), plus a cumulative final essay question (10%) – 40% total

Students are expected and encouraged to attend lectures and participate actively in classroom discussions (such as discussions of hand-out articles, videos, asking relevant questions, etc.) At the discretion of the instructor, **students may earn or lose up to 5% of their final grade** based on their classroom participation.

The tests will examine basic knowledge and the ability to critically analyze aspects of the religious traditions. The first two tests will be in the multiple choice format. **The final exam** will include a short essay, which will account for the 10% of the final grade. The tests on Judaism and Christianity will each be one hour long. The Registrar scheduled exam will be two hours long. If a student cannot write a midterm test on the scheduled date for a valid reason, he/she should provide advance notice or a documented explanation of his/her absence, and a make-up test will be scheduled. In the event that a student misses a midterm exam without prior notice or a valid reason, there will be no make-ups.

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:

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

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. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation:

If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and you 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. Once registered, please discuss any upcoming tests/examinations with the instructor **two weeks** before the scheduled date.