



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION

COURSE OUTLINE – Spring 2017

Course	RELS 205 – Section 01 - Religion and the Good Life
Time	Online Course
Instructor	Jacqueline Ho, PhD
Office Hours	Available by Appointment or via Skype on Fridays 10:00am-11:00am
Office	SS 542
E-mail	jdho@ucalgary.ca
Telephone	(403) 667-2689

The instructor can be reached via e-mail and replies will be given within 24 hours (or 48 hours maximum). E-mails received in the evenings (after 6pm) will typically be responded to the next day, and e-mails received on the weekends will receive a response on Sunday evening or Monday morning.

What are the Required Text(s)?: No required textbook. All readings will be uploaded into digital format each week onto D2L. Readings will appear in either PDF format or an html link to a webpage or online scholarly article. Please check D2L each week for regular reading updates.

What are the Optional Text(s)?: None

What is the Calendar Description?: An introduction to the academic study of religion with particular emphasis on the nature of religion, its role as a response to existential questions, and the relationship of religion to contemporary thought and culture.

What will you study in this course?:

This course will examine ideals about the good life through the lens of various religious traditions by considering how the environment, landscape, climate, and cultural values inform the way of life and narratives particular to each ancient civilization. For instance, a dry desert environment and a lush forest environment create distinctive needs and values for each respective civilization, influencing the type of relationship between the ancient peoples and their understanding of sacredness. Local landscapes also provide the vivid imagery and symbolism in scriptures, which inform the backdrop of religious narratives that are retold through antiquity.

We will begin with a historical overview of the influence of Egyptian thought in the Old Testa-

ment and Greek thought on ideals within Christianity, followed by an investigation of the role of pre-Islamic Arabian thought in Islam. Finally, we will study the role of the Chinese Cultural Sphere in shaping ideas about harmony in Buddhism, Daoism, and Chinese Popular Religion.

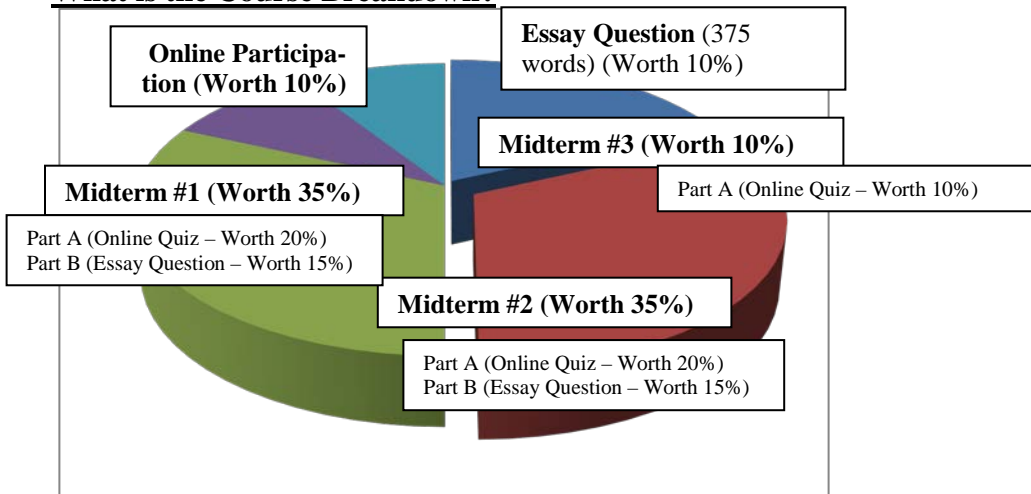
Will Powerpoint lectures be posted online?

Yes, each Friday (with the exception of Statutory and university holidays), Powerpoint lectures (with narration) and assigned readings will be posted onto D2L. Students will be expected to keep up with the lectures and readings each week. Short film clips are also embedded in the Powerpoint slides and students may also be assigned to watch online films.

What resources will be posted online?

Weekly lesson plans, announcements, important updates, grades, and links to films will be regularly updated on D2L. It is the student's responsibility to check the D2L page for this class periodically (once a week is recommended). D2L can be accessed at: <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/login.asp> (student login required)

What is the Course Breakdown?



What is the format of the midterms?

The **midterms** (each worth 35%) will consist of two parts: 1) An online timed quiz with fill-in-the-blank, true/false, and multiple choice questions that will be posted onto D2L (worth 20%), and 2) A two-page short essay (minimum 500 words; double spaced) pertaining to a lecture topic that will be posted on the day of the test (worth 15%). [Exception: The short essay at the end of the term will be a 1 ½ page minimum 375 words; double spaced] The essay question topics will be given at the start of the time period (see chart of page 3), and will be based on forum discussion topics, readings and lectures. Students should use the readings as supporting sources to validate their discussion. Students will NOT be expected to use sources outside the course readings and lectures. Because the essay question responses are timed, students should ensure that they have studied the materials ahead of time. Keeping up with forum discussions will be a helpful strategy for completing the essay responses. The midterms are NOT cumulative. There will be no registrar scheduled final exam.

What is the format of the mini assignment?

The mini assignment will consist of a 1-2 page reading, followed by answering 4-5 short answer questions. Please e-mail your assignment to the instructor on the scheduled due date. You will receive a confirmation e-mail within 24 hours.

How should I prepare for the midterms and final exams?

Study guides with helpful tips and study questions will be posted on D2L approximately 1 week prior to the tests. Notes taken from Powerpoint lectures and assigned readings, and participation in online discussion forums should serve as the content for the essay question component of the midterms and final exam.

What citation style should I use for the essay question component?

Students may use a citation style of their choosing. Students should cite the readings. However, a works cited list or bibliography will not be necessary. Further details will be provided in the study guide, posted 1 week before the tests.

How will online participation be assessed?

Online participation will be worth 7%. Each week, discussion questions related to the Powerpoint lectures will be posted on the D2L forum online. Forum discussion is intended to serve as an alternate form of discussion that would otherwise occur in a classroom setting. All students are not required to post *each week* in the discussion forums, since not every individual asks questions or make comments in a typical classroom setting. However, at the end of the course, students will be graded based on their overall performance, and the frequency and depth of their responses. The instructor will also periodically offer feedback and raise further questions in the forums to drive discussion.

What are the dates and deadlines for the course components?

Date	Topic	Weight (%)	Date
Online Participation	Discussion topics will be posted on the D2L forum each week	10%	Weekly participation
Midterm #1	Good Life in Egyptian Religion and Judaism	35%	
		Online Test 20%	Friday, May 26 11:00am to 12:00pm
		Essay Question 15%	Friday, May 26 12:00pm to 1:00pm
Midterm #2	Good Life in Christianity and Islam	35%	
		Online Test 20%	Friday, June 16 11:00am to 12:00pm
		Essay Question 15%	Friday, June 16 12:00pm to 1:00pm
Midterm #3	Good Life in Hinduism, Chinese Religion, and Buddhism	10%	
		Online Test 10%	Monday, June 26 11:00am to 12:00pm
Essay Question (375 words)	Good Life in Hinduism, Chinese Religion, and Buddhism	10%	Tuesday, June 27 11:00am to 12:00pm

**Topics subject to testing may be subject to change. Please check D2L for regular updates.

There will be no registrar scheduled final exam.

Grading and Rounding Marks

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

Grades will be posted on D2L. Percentage scores will be rounded up if they exceed 0.5% For example, a percentage of 69.5% C+ or higher will be rounded up to 70% B-. A percentage of 69.4% C+ will not qualify for being rounded up.

Requesting Extra Work: In order to ensure equality for all students, extra work will not be assigned to individual students who wish to boost their mark. If you have concerns about your grade, then please consult with your instructor or teaching assistant for consultation and suggestions about how to improve your learning and study habits at the earliest possible time.

Syllabus:

A complete syllabus with weekly lecture topics will be made available on 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 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

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; 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 www.ucalgary.ca/access/. Students with accommodations needs should notify the instructor at the earliest possible time (preferably during the first week of classes).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing or in person to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf.

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.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week #1	Monday, May 8 What is the good life in the Egyptian Religion? How to prepare for a good death? Egypt's death industry and mummies
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- Week #2** Monday, May 15
 What is the good life in Judaism?
 How the narrative of God's chosen people is fulfilled; the Jewish lifestyle and kosher diet
- Week #3** Monday, May 22
 What is the good life in Christianity?
 How the ministry and gospel of Christ is upheld; the Greek worldview and individualism.
- Week #4** Monday, May 29
 What is the good life in Islam? Bedouin tribal values and the 5 pillars of Islam.
- Week #5** Monday, June 5
 What is the good life in Hinduism?
 The law of karma and maintaining order in the cosmos. The paths of knowledge, devotion, duty, and yoga.
- Week #6** Monday, June 12
 What is the good life in Buddhism?
 Seeing through the illusion of the ego and attaining self-liberation. What it means to live a noble life? Merging the ideals of wisdom and compassion in the bodhisattva path.
- Week #7** Monday, June 19
 What is the good life in Confucian thought?
 Social harmony and maintaining order in the five relationships. The role of morality and duty in a collectivist society.
- Week #8** Monday, June 26
 What is the good life in Chinese Popular Religion?
 Remembering and maintaining filial piety with the ancestral realm. The ledger of merit and demerits & the realm of the gods.

**Schedule may be subject to change