

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

**Religious Studies 205 L02: The Nature of Religion
Winter 2010
MWF 12:00-12:50**

**Instructor: Tracy Derynck
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Office : SS 1325
Office Hours: F 13:00-14:00**

Required Texts

- Momen, Moojan. Understanding Religion. Oxford: Oneworld, 2009.
- Additional short readings may be posted on Blackboard.

Course Description

This course will acquaint students with philosophical inquiry within the religious context, covering such topics as arguments for God's existence and the problem of evil. While the emphasis will be upon Christianity, the course will explore the metaphysics and ethics of both Western and non-Western traditions. It will look at well-known thinkers within the philosophical tradition and their contemporary critics, as well as surveying broad trends that pertain to religion, such as secularism, pluralism and spirituality.

Core Competencies

Students will gain a broad introductory knowledge of religion, providing them with a sound background for higher-level religious studies courses. Through opportunities to discuss and write about the subject, students will increase their skills in critical thinking, ethical reasoning, oral communication, written communication, and information retrieval.

Course Requirements

Blackboard quizzes	30%
○ <i>Will be posted on Blackboard under "Quizzes"</i>	
○ <i>Must be completed within the time limits that will be specified on Blackboard</i>	
○ <i>Average taken from 10 quizzes; missed quizzes count as zeroes</i>	
Midterm exam	30%
○ <i>Friday, February 26</i>	
Registrar-scheduled final exam	40%
○ <i>Cumulative with emphasis on the second half of the course</i>	

General Policies and Other Information:

- *Attendance*
This course is designed such that in order to do well on both assignments and the exam, good class attendance is highly recommended.

- *Lecture and reading schedule*
The lecture/reading schedule will be posted and kept updated on Blackboard.

- *Computer usage*
Students are expected to have a functioning, reliable computer with Internet access available for the purposes of this course. If this is an issue for you, please sort this out as early in the semester as possible. Students with computer problems at home are encouraged to use the computer labs on campus: see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/itlabs/> for information. Quizzes must be completed during the date ranges specified in the quiz descriptions on Blackboard. Not getting a quiz done because you waited until the last minute and then found out you had computer problems or no Internet access is not an acceptable excuse.

- *Quiz and midterm completion*
Instructor only grants quiz and exam rescheduling in the case of illness or bereavement. Documentation will be required.

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