UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION

COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2020

Course: RELS 205 – Section 01 - Religion and the Good Life
Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00am – 12:15pm in Room ST 135
Instructor: Jacqueline Ho, PhD
Office Hours: Thursdays 10:00-11:00am. Also available before class or by appointment; Before midterms and final exams, specific office hours will be made available and posted on D2L.
Office: SS 502
E-mail: jdho@ucalgary.ca
Telephone: (403) 667-2689

Teaching Assistant: To be announced. Contact info will be made available on D2L.

What is the most ideal method of contact?
I can be reached by telephone or text message on Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 9:00pm. Please do not call or text outside of these hours (which means weekday evenings and on weekends). I do not have a voice mail. Text message or e-mail is the preferred method for making appointments (please ensure that your name, the course number, and university is included in the text, as I also teach at other universities). For all other inquiries involving lengthy reply, such as clarification about class material, please contact me by e-mail. All queries will be returned within 48 hours (usually on the same day).

What are the required text(s)?: No required textbook. All readings will be uploaded into digital format each week on D2L either as an online library link or a pdf file. Please check D2L each week for regular reading updates.

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 offer a survey about the “good life” and basic development patterns among the major ancient religious traditions. For example, how did the natural environment influence lifestyle? How were beliefs about the sacred informed by local culture and major historical events? How did the ancient people define happiness? How was storytelling or narratives used to pass on values and beliefs about identity? By answering these questions in an inquired-based approach, students will reflect on the shared development patterns that religious traditions share globally through the following themes: environment & landscape, storytelling & narratives, leadership & community, and identity & values. Finally, for each
religion, there will be dialogues on how these patterns continue to shape contemporary religious forms as they pertain to ideas about survival, safety, stability, anticipation of the future, and so forth.

We will begin with investigating development patterns in Egyptian religion, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Finally, we will examine the same themes in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Chinese Religion (time permitting). Due to the introductory nature of the course, there may be content that overlaps with other introductory religious studies courses. However, the nature of the discussions will be unique to this course. As this is a survey course that focuses on the ancient/formative period of religious traditions, there will not be an in-depth study of individual religious traditions. However, students are encouraged to enroll in higher level religious studies courses to expand their learning and research.

**What are the online elements for this course?:**
Lesson plans, additional readings, announcements, important updates, grades, feedback for tests, and external links 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](https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/login.asp) (student login required)
It is crucial for you to attend class, as the textbook and PowerPoint slides will not provide a comprehensive account of the material covered in class (they only account for 50-60% of the course content). The PowerPoint slides are posted as a study reference for students, but they are not a replacement for attending class.

**What core competencies will I learn?:**
By the end of the course, you will be able to:
1) Comprehend how cultural assumptions inform religious beliefs and practices, and vice-versa.
2) Explain different perspectives about how views of the “good life” are informed by local environments, culture and major historical events.
3) Apply critical thinking to journal articles and other academic sources.

**Film Clips:**
You can access missed film clips directly on the PowerPoints by right-clicking on the posted link, and selecting “open link.” Please note that this feature is not available in presentation/slide show mode. If you are in the presentation/slide show mode, click ESC to exit that mode. Occasionally, there may also be film links that are posted directly in the lesson plan section of D2L.

**What are the Course Requirements?:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm #1</td>
<td>Non-Cumulative Format: Multiple Choice, Short Answer, True/False</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Thursday, Feb. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm #2</td>
<td>Non-Cumulative Format: Multiple Choice, Short Answer, True/False</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Tuesday, Mar. 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Non-Cumulative Format: Multiple Choice, Short Answer, True/False</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Registrar Scheduled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A detailed lecture schedule will be posted on D2L within the first week of class.
Test material will include lectures, class discussions, PowerPoints, guest speaker’s visits (tentative), and assigned reading questions (that will be given in advance). The last day to withdraw from a course without financial penalty is Thursday, Jan. 23rd, and the very last day to withdraw is Wednesday, April 15. *

**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 found within the Department of Classics and Religion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100 - 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 - 90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89 - 85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>84 - 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>79 - 75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>74 - 70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>69 - 65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>64 - 60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>59 - 55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>54 - 53</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>52-50</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Under 50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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. Grades will be automatically rounded up manually at the end of the semester. You do not need to email the instructor to request this.

**Midterm and Final Exam Tutorials *Important Info*:** Prior to midterms and the final exam, there will be a class dedicated to tutorials. During the tutorials, there will be Kahoot quizzes or Jeopardy-style games (accessed through your mobile phone) to review potential questions on the test. Links to the quizzes will not be available after the tutorial in order to encourage attendance. **Please ensure that you bring all PowerPoint-related questions to the tutorial.** After the tutorial, I will not be answering PowerPoint-related questions via email. This is due to the fact that in the past, students chose to skip the tutorial and sent lengthy emails the night before the midterm asking for the answers to PowerPoint material.

**Study Tips:** In order to encourage student attendance and discussion, the PowerPoints do not provide heavy content. Therefore, taking thorough notes are important for doing well on the tests. It is recommended that students study the PowerPoint slides simultaneously with the lecture notes to prepare for the tests. For example, you may want to print out the slides to help you with your review. The content on the tests will appear in chronological order as they were taught. There will not be deductions for spelling errors, though knowledge of key foreign terms will be important (more information will be given during the tutorial). A study guide and a list of assigned reading questions will be provided prior to the midterms.

**Policy with regard to missed classes *Important Info*:** At the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to exchange contact information with two study buddies. They will be crucial to your performance in this course if you miss a class.

If you cannot attend class, then please follow these steps:
1) Check D2L for the Lesson Plan and Powerpoints on the missed day,
2) Check with your study buddy for further missed information,
3) Do the readings and review the Powerpoint slides,
4) If you have questions about the course content ONLY, then contact the instructor OR
   Bring your questions to the midterm or final exam tutorials. They will be answered in class.
**Please do not skip to step #4 without performing steps #1-3. In other words, please do not ask the instructor about what you missed without checking the available resources first (listed above).

**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. Office hours will also be made available before midterms and the final exam.

**Exam Deferrals:** Students must be present for midterms, final exams and sign an exam attendance sheet. Emailing the instructor on the same day or the night before the midterm or exam and promising to get a statutory declaration/doctor’s note at a later time does not guarantee a deferral. A deferral is decided based on the instructor’s discretion and in keeping with current university policy. Also keep in mind that free time in an instructor’s schedule can be extremely limited, so unless the reasons for a deferral pertain to serious matters (as listed below), please re-consider your deferral request.

Valid reasons for requesting deferral of a midterm or final exam include but are not restricted to:

1) **Illness or medical emergency**
   If you personally experience an illness or medical emergency, which physically prevents you from attending a midterm/final exam.

2) **Religious observance or conviction**
   In the event of a religious observance causing a direct conflict with a midterm/final exam, which prevents you from attending.

3) **Domestic affliction**
   In the event of a domestic affliction, compassionate or other circumstance, e.g. death or illness of a family member, that prevents you from attending a midterm/final exam.

4) **Three exams within 24 hours**
   Students with three final exams scheduled to start and finish within a 24-hour period.

5) **Other**
   If your attendance is required due to civil obligations or a Faculty approved activity, such as jury duty, academic competitions, or high-level athletic competitions.

Vacations, travel, doctor’s appointments, common cold/not feeling well, exams that are only a few hours apart, and employment are NOT valid excuses for deferring a midterm or final exam. Midterm deferrals will take place in the instructor’s office in Social Sciences 542. Final exam deferral locations will be determined later.

**Electronic Device Policy:** If cellular phones must be used for emergency purposes on occasion during class, then please do so discreetly. Likewise, laptops and tablets should be used for note taking only. Please do not distract your peers by watching videos or browsing social media/internet.

**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:**
The student accommodation policy can be found at: ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy. Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy. Though not required, it will be much appreciated if you inform the instructor about accommodations needs at the beginning of the semester or at the earliest possible time in order to help facilitate your needs.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

**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.

**Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration:**
Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided and the student should provide the documentation they feel best supports their case. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see [https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html](https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html).