University of Calgary
Faculty of Arts
Department of Classics and Religion

Course Outline – Fall 2021

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 309:
RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE
(An asynchronous, online course)

Course	Religious Experience		
Time	Asynchronous		
Room	*All course materials will be posted on D2L*		
Instructor	**Office Hours**	**Office**	**Contact Information**
Dr. Joy Palacios	Tue. and Thur., 5:00-6:00 p.m. MT	SS 534	E: joy.palacios@ucalgary.ca
Dr. Palacios' Office Hour Zoom Link:			
https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/91904171471 Meeting ID: 919 0417 1471 Passcode: 886455			

Instructor Email Policy:
Please note that all course communications must occur through your @ucalgary email. I will do my best to respond to emails sent via students' @ucalgary emails within 48 hours.

Course Calendar Statement:
https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.html

Required Text(s):
Martin, Craig, Russell T. McCutcheon, and Leslie Dorrough Smith, eds. 2012. *Religious Experience : A Reader*. Sheffield, UK and Bristol, CT: Equinox Publishing. (This text is available as an e-book through the university's library website.)

Rankin, Marianne. 2008. *An Introduction to Religious and Spiritual Experience*. London and New York: Continuum Publishing. (This text is available as an e-book through the university's library website.)

Course Description:

Many religions, charitable institutions, and personal stories of radical change attribute their source to or include in their origin stories the account of a transformative religious experience. Experience, however, is a slippery category. What is a religious experience and how can such experiences be studied? This course will provide students with a historical overview of the role played by religious experience in the major religious traditions and in the lives of a selection of famous mystics and historical figures, a survey of the types of and triggers for religious experiences, and an introduction to the theoretical approaches and philosophical questions that guide the academic study of religious experience. Reflective writing assignments,

exams, and a final research project will enable students to interrogate the category of "experience" both personally and critically.

Online Elements for This Course:
This course will use an **asynchronous format**, which means it does not require you to be online at a specific time (although some elements may need to be downloaded or completed within a given timeframe). In this class, asynchronous elements will include, for example, pre-recorded lectures that you download and watch, readings you will do on your own from the required texts (which are available through the university's library website as e-books), primary sources posted as PDF files, assignments submitted through D2L, and an exam conducted online via D2L. My office hours will be held via Zoom and I will schedule optional synchronous Zoom sessions (which will be recorded) at least once during each unit of the course so that students have the opportunity to meet each other and discuss the materials, if they wish. I will schedule these sessions after the semester starts so that I can take a poll to find out which times work best for the most people.

Core Competencies:
Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

Knowledge:

- Explain the role played by religious experience in the Christian tradition
- Identify the religious and non-religious triggers of religious experience
- Compare, apply, and evaluate the most important theoretical approaches and philosophical questions that guide the academic study of religious experience

Skills:
- Make detailed observations of the physical sensations, emotions, thoughts, ideas, and questions that arise from repeatedly engaging in a practice or action associated with spiritual experience
- Describe, categorize, and analyze the sensory, intellectual, and cultural inputs that make "experience" possible
- Gather, evaluate, and use secondary sources to investigate a research question
- Apply a theoretical framework to analyze the historical, contextual, and cultural construction of "experience" as a category in the accounts of famous religious experiences

Course Requirements:
This course will involve the following assessments/assignments:

1. Participation = 15%

   Your engagement with the course material is essential to the learning you will do in this course. Five short assignments throughout the semester (worth 3% each) will help guide and structure your responses to the course materials. I will provide a handout to explain each participation assignment.

2. Theory Exam = 20%

   We will start the semester with a four-week Theory Unit, during which we will read essays by scholars whose work will provide us with a conceptual framework for the study of religious experience. An exam will conclude the Theory Unit to assess your understanding of the frameworks covered. The exam will be administered via D2L and will open at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, October 5th

and remain available for 24 hours. Once you begin the exam, you will have 115 minutes to complete it. I will provide more detailed information about the types of questions on the exam closer to the exam date so that you can prepare.

3. Experiential Learning Project = 35%
    *   Project proposal (5%)
    *   Critical reflection entries (2 x 5% = 10%)
    *   Visual representation of experience with short analysis (20%)

    After establishing the theoretical framework for our work, we will undertake an Experiential Learning Unit, designed to guide you through a personalized interrogation of the category of "experience" by applying the theories from the beginning of the semester to first-hand observations. You will receive detailed handouts in class explaining each part of the project, which has three components. First, you will select an activity that in Rankin's terms can sometimes serve as a trigger of spiritual experience. The activity you choose can be either religious or non-religious in nature, for example, saying the Catholic Rosary, performing yogic sun salutations, spending time in nature, or listening with intention to your favorite music. Once your proposal is approved, you will engage in this activity for at least ten minutes twice per week for two weeks on your own time. Each week in which you engage in your practice, you will produce a Critical Reflection Entry in which you record your observations about what you sense, think, feel, and use concepts from our Theory Unit to analyze your experience. To conclude the Experiential Learning Project, you will build and post a visual representation of your experience, accompanied by a short analysis. Your visual representation and analysis will be shared with the class in an online exposition. Each student will view and respond to at least three projects from other class members to foster the creation of a learning community.

4. Historical Analysis Paper = 30%

    To conclude the semester, each student will write a final research paper (1500-1800 words) on a religious experience from the past. The paper must use at least one primary source (a document that gets us as close to the religious experience you are studying as possible – for example, a journal entry, eye-witness account, image, etc.), five secondary sources, and one theoretical reading from the semester. The goal of this assignment is to guide you through the academic exploration and analysis of the representations that mediate our knowledge of religious experience. A handout will detail the required elements of the research paper, instruction will be provided via videos, and I will hold extra office hours to support your progress.

Summary of dates and weights:
I will post materials to D2L each Tuesday by 2:00 PM. In general (with one or two exceptions), your assignments will be due the following Monday by 2:00 PM.

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)	Required pass/fail
14 September 2021	Week 1 Engagement Log and Journal	*Ungraded*	
21 September 2021	Week 2 Engagement Log and Journal	3%	No
28 September 2021	Week 3 Engagement Log and Journal	3%	No
5 October 2021	Theory Exam	20%	No
8 October 2021	Project Proposal	5%	No

19 October 2021	Critical Reflection Entry #1	5%	No
26 October 2021	Critical Reflection Entry #2	5%	No
5 November 2021	Visual Representation of Experience with Short Analysis	20%	No
16 November 2021	View and Comment on at least three Visual Representations and Analyses from class	3%	No
23 November 2021	Participate in organic discussion	3%	No
30 November 2021	Participate in organic discussion	3%	No
9 December 2021	Historical Analysis Paper	30%	No
This course does not have a final exam			

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, 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

 N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

Syllabus:

A schedule of readings will be distributed on the first day of class and posted to D2L.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

Policy with regard to missed assignments/assessments:

Unless you have made a prior arrangement with me for an extension, assignments will be **marked down by 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late**. This policy is meant to encourage the timely submission of work.

At the same time, I know that we all juggle multiple, competing deadlines in our lives (me too!), and I am willing to work with you. **I want you to succeed in this course**. For this reason, each student has three Extension Days that they can apply to any assignment. An Extension Day pushes the deadline back by 24 hours (for example, if the assignment was due by 2:00 PM on Tuesday, when you apply an Extension Day it would be due by 2:00 PM on Wednesday). You can apply your Extension Days to separate assignments, or use all of them on one assignment, as you see fit. To use an Extension Day, you must email me before the original deadline. Please use the phrase "Extension Day" in the subject line of your email.

If health or family crises emerge that impact your ability to meet course deadlines and the above options are not sufficient, **please email me so that we can work together to find a solution**.

Expectations for student conduct in this course:
Your active participation is important for your own learning as well as the learning of your peers. In this class, your participation will largely be conducted in written form (although I strongly encourage you to come to office hours and to attend the optional Zoom sessions, if you can.) In written communication, we do not have the benefit of vocal intonations and facial expressions to help us interpret tone and meaning, which makes it all the more important to strive for courteousness and kindness in online comments and posts. Common forms of written courteousness include:

- Using greetings (Dear Jensen / Hi Carlos / Hello Sarah)
- Using complete sentences
- Using transitions ("As Julia said, I think…, ""I want to build on Mohad's idea")
- Noting points of agreement as well as of disagreement
- Using vocabulary that signals observation, description, analysis, scholarly argument, and hypothesis formation rather than judgement

Electronic Device Policy:
The materials I post for this class are to be used for your own personal study and are protected by copyright (see below, 'Copyright Regulations'), by the University of Calgary's regulations for recording of lectures (see Calendar, section E.6: https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html), and by federal and provincial privacy legislation. This means that:

- you must not distribute, copy, post elsewhere, or share **any course materials** with people outside our class.
- you must not make, distribute, copy, post elsewhere, or share **recordings of synchronous sessions or presentations by your fellow students**.
- you must not share with others or on any social media platforms **the Zoom link or password for synchronous sessions**. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course.

By taking this class you agree to these conditions. If you have any questions about this, please contact the instructor.

Learning Technologies and Requirements:
This course will use a D2L site to post required readings, lecture videos, handouts, and other relevant class resources and materials. We will use Zoom for office hours and for any optional synchronous sessions.

In order to successfully engage in this course, you will need the following:

- Access to a computer, laptop, or tablet with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates
- A current and updated web browser
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone
- Broadband internet access
- Your UCID
- A webcam (built-in or external) is strongly recommended

For the office hours and for the optional synchronous sessions, I encourage you to use your microphone and camera, because this helps us all get to know each other and feel comfortable working together. We are a learning community and it is easier to build a sense of collaborative camaraderie when we can see each other. If you have concerns about this, or if you will not have access to a microphone and camera during synchronous sessions, please contact me to let me know.

Guidelines for Zoom Sessions:
Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a "live" video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as per the Code of Conduct). When entering Zoom or other video conferencing sessions (such as MS Teams), you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behaviour in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your zoom sessions visit: https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/ .

If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review a recorded session). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they are expected to turn on their webcam (for group work, presentations, etc.).

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

Expectations for Writing:
All written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the writing support services in the Learning Commons. For further information, please refer to the official online University of Calgary Calendar, Academic Regulations, E. Course Information, E.2: Writing Across the Curriculum: http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html. A detailed handout and rubric will be provided for each writing assignment.

Course Evaluations and Feedback:
Student feedback will be sought at the end of the course through the standard University Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) and Faculty course evaluation forms. A midterm evaluation may also be included to provide students an opportunity to provide feedback, for the instructor to adjust their approaches to teaching and learning, and to continuously improve the course. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

Academic Misconduct:
Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance;

failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit:
https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf
https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-procedure.pdf
Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity.

Copyright Regulations:
Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright Policy and understand their copyright responsibilities. Instructor created content (lecture presentations, assignments, exams, etc.) have been designed for use as part of this course at the University of Calgary and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters and articles) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copyright-protected materials may only be copied or distributed provided it is permissible to do so under Canadian Copyright law, university agreements and permission from the copyright holder. Find out more about copyright at library.ucalgary.ca/copyright.

Student Accommodations
It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The Student Accommodations policy is available at https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations.
Students needing an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf). Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than Disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.
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/ .

Instructor Intellectual Property
Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

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 Protection of Privacy:
This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP): https://www.ucalgary.ca/hr/freedom_of_information_and_protection_of_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.

Sexual Violence Policy:
The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf

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.

Health and Wellness:
There are services available to students to help with physical and mental health, including the SU Wellness Centre: http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/

Learn more about the Campus Mental Health Strategy here: https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/

Other Important Information:
Please visit the Registrar's website at: https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines for additional important information on the following:
- Emergency/Assembly points
- Student Success
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information