

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
FALL SEMESTER 2005  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES 333 L01  
RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON DEATH AND AFTERLIFE

05/08/16

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Anne White  
COURSE TIME: T/R 14:00-15:15  
OFFICE: SS 1322  
OFFICE HOURS: By appointment  
TELEPHONE: 220-3285 or 220-5886 (main office)  
E-MAIL ADDRESS: awhite@ucalgary.ca  
WEBSITE ADDRESS: Blackboard

REQUIRED TEXT: Chidester, David, *Patterns of Transcendence: Religion Death, and Dying*

Suggested Readings:

Airies, Philippe, *The Hour of our Death*

----- *Western Attitudes to Death*

Bailey, Lloyd R., *Biblical Perspectives on Death*

Coward, Harold, *Life After Death in World Religions*

Johnson, Christopher, ed., *How Different Religions View Death and Afterlife*

Kubler-Ross, Elisabeth, *On Death and Dying*

Kea, Michael C., *Endings: A Sociology of Death and Dying*

Lewis, James R., ed., *Encyclopedia of Afterlife Beliefs and Phenomena*

Obayashi, Hiroshi, ed., *Death and Afterlife: Perspectives of World Religions*

Reynolds, Frank E. et al. eds., *Religious Encounters with Death: Insights from the History and Anthropology of Religion*

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will study the issues surrounding the finality of death and the hope of an afterlife as expressed within diverse religious traditions throughout the ages. These studies will take us from the cosmological belief systems (religious world view) of primitive man, through to modern religious thought expressed within secular society. The religions studied will provide perspectives within historical and cultural contexts in order for the student to gain a working knowledge of the complexity and sophistication that has evolved over millennia concerning these issues.

In addition to utilizing a lecture based format, there will also be class discussion as we review video documentaries pertinent to course content. We will consider how people use religious beliefs in order to negotiate the five basic steps in the human recognition of death: (I) denial and isolation; (ii) anger; (iii) bargaining; (iv) depression; (v) acceptance. We will then consider how the variety of religious beliefs are incorporated to provide those suffering and sorrowing with courage, hope, and often great assurance.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

The student will learn to organize, evaluate, and understand various religious approaches to the reality of physical mortality.

### SELF DIRECTED STUDY:

Students are encouraged to read web notes and the assigned pages of text before each lecture, and come prepared to ask questions.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Oct. 25	- Test	30%
Nov. 17	- Paper - Eight pages, plus one page bibliography Suitable topics to be discussed in class <b>CHICAGO STYLE SHOULD BE USED</b> Eight pages, double spaced, one inch margins. Bibliography – not more than two websites, six text sources, cover page (name, student ID, course number, title)	30%
Registrar Scheduled Final Exam (TBA)		40%

### 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

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

### 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 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.

### Withdrawing from courses:

Please note the information regarding withdrawals and fee refunds in the Academic Schedule of the current University Calendar.

### Gnosis:

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: [gnosis@ucalgary.ca](mailto:gnosis@ucalgary.ca) or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

PLEASE NOTE: SCHEDULE MAY VARY SLIGHTLY DUE TO CLASS DISCUSSIONS AND TIME CONSTRAINTS.

### SEPTEMBER

- 13-15 - Chapter 1 - Religion, death, and dying – plus video.  
Various concepts of transcendence.
- 20-22 - Chapter 2 - Indigenous beliefs - plus video. (Tribal typology: Australian, N. American, African)
- 27-29 Indigenous continued. Class handouts of case studies.

### OCTOBER

- 4-6 - Chapter 3 - Asian beliefs, karma and reincarnation – plus video.
- 11-13 Asian beliefs .- Introduction to the India Tree (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism)
- 18-20 - Tibetan Book of the Dead, the three Bardos – plus video.
- 25 - TEST (75 MINUTES)
- 27 - Video

### NOVEMBER

- 1-3 - Chapter 5 - Introduction to the monotheistic belief systems – antecedents and Zoroastrianism.
- 8 - The Abrahamic Tree ( Judaism, Christianity, Islam).

#### READING DAYS

- 15-17 - Abrahamic Tree continued – plus video

RESEARCH PAPER TO BE HANDED IN.ON 17TH.

- 22-24 - Chapter 6 - Hell, purgatory, heaven. Class discussion.  
WEBNOTES: The concepts of near death experiences; and the religious questions raised
- 29 Video and discussion

### DECEMBER

- 1 Chapter 7 – Elizabeth Kubler Ross – the five stages of grieving approaching death.
- 6-8 Grieving and mediating grief, growing beyond the mortality.  
Video in summation.