

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
FALL SEMESTER - 2005**

05/08/16

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 337 L95
FEMALE IMAGES AND FIGURES IN WESTERN RELIGIONS

INSTRUCTOR:	Dr. Anne White, Ph.D.
VENUE, TIME, DAY:	The Jewish Centre, 6:30-21:20 R
OFFICE:	SS 1322
OFFICE HOURS:	By appointment
TELEPHONE:	220-3285 or 220-5886 (main office)
E-MAIL ADDRESS:	awhite@ucalgary.ca
WEBSITE:	Blackboard

REQUIRED TEXT: Serinity Young, ed., *An Anthology of Sacred Texts By and About Women*, New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1993.
Plus Webnotes.

RECOMMENDED BUT NOT REQUIRED READING:

Lucinda Joy Peach, *Women and World Religions*, Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2002.
Nancy Auer Falk, and Rita M. Gross, *Unspoken Worlds: Women's Religious Lives*, Toronto: Wadsworth, 2001.
Ellen M. Umansky and Dianne Ashton eds., *Four centuries of Jewish Women's Spirituality: A Sourcebook*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.
Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker eds., *Women Preachers and Prophets Through Two Millennia of Christianity*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998
Asma Barlas, *"Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In his work, *Anatomy of the Sacred*, J. C. Livingston states that "religion is a universal and abiding dimension of human expression." The human species has further been defined as *homo religiosus* – a religious animal. Our species routinely forms and reforms religion to find meaning, purpose and solace for life. As full members of our species, women have played an indispensable role in this construction of religious identity and religious worlds of meaning (cosmologies). This course is designed to introduce the student to the voice and presence of some of the strong, passionate women of faith in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. As major contributors to the construction and enduring relevance of the three Abrahamic religions, women's role and influence has been sporadically acknowledged, but often only with broad qualifiers such as "different spheres" or "different temperamental interpretations due to gender," or even as the "weaker vessel." Due to many social prejudices, and subsequent misunderstandings, the true impact, influence and validity of these women's worlds of meaning have been consistently diluted. Using examples of heroines, victims, and reformers, this course will discuss how women constructed their religious identities, managed to retain their strong belief systems, endure repressive circumstances, and often construct worlds of meaning, freedom and leadership that changed society in general. Among the many mythological and historical figures to be discussed will be Lilith and Eve, Rachel and Akiba, Sara Copia Sullam, Glukel of Hameln; Mary of Magdala, Perpetua, Thecla, Brigid, Catherine Booth; Khadija, Aisha, Eve (Hawwa), Khansa, Rabi'ah and Zeyneb. In addition to this

material, there will be an overview of myths and stories of gender conflict based on religious laws and other writings.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

The student will be enabled to organize and evaluate various historical events and religious concepts as perceived and interpreted by each of these religions and some of the women within them.

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 OUTLINE:

(i) Analysis of socio-historical contexts; (ii) examination of author, text and topic.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Section Test (Judaism) - October 6 = **25%**
- 2) Section Test (Christianity) - November 17 = **25%**
- 3) Section Test (Islam) - December 8 = **25%**
- 4) Eight page essay – Chicago style format, plus bibliography. NOTE: only two websites allowed for referencing. All other sources must be from texts or journals.
SUBJECT: one figure taken from relevant textbook material
TO BE HANDED IN DECEMBER 8th = 25%

Each test will consist of five short essay type answers – each worth five points – total 25 points. Each test will be 90 minutes in duration.

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.

Recording of lectures:

Recording any part of any lectures in any form must be first approved by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only. See current Calendar, Tape recording of Lectures.

Safewalk Programme:

"You don't have to walk alone...." Call 220-5333 and a member of the Safewalk Team will walk you to your car, the LRT, or any destination on campus. Safewalk is available to all students, staff and faculty any time of the day or night. Look for the Campus Security Help Phones located throughout the University. Please don't hesitate to call!

Gnosis:

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

COURSE SCHEDULE:

READINGS:

SEPTEMBER 15 - 29

Judaism – General introduction.

- pp 1-39, plus overview of Introduction (ix-xxvii), augmented by webnotes.
- the image of the feminine – ancient ideas.
- essential Judaism.
- modern ideas. Video - Discussion.
- examples of the faith and culture.
- samples of modern writers' (photocopies) works.

Unit test: - Judaism - October 6 (90 minutes)

OCTOBER 6 -NOVEMBER 3

PLEASE NOTE: NO CLASS ON OCTOBER 13 – Centre closed.

Christianity – General introduction.

- pp 41-93, augmented by webnotes.
- Judeo-Christian matrix.
- the Roman perspective.
- essential Christianity.
- modern ideas. – Video - Discussion
- examples of faith and culture.
- samples of modern writers' (photocopies) works.

PLEASE NOTE: NO CLASS ON NOVEMBER 10 – Reading Days

Unit test – Christianity – November 17 (90 minutes).

NOVEMBER 17- DECEMBER 3

Islam – General introduction.

- pp 95-125. augmented by webnotes.
- Qur'anic teachings.
- the problem of the Hadiths.
- essential Islam.
- modern ideas versus traditional beliefs. Video
- Examples of faith and culture.
- Samples of modern writers' (photocopies) works.

RESEARCH PAPER TO BE HANDED IN ON 8th DECEMBER.