

**University of Calgary**  
**Faculty of Arts**  
**Department of Religious Studies**  
**RELS 341 L01: New Religious Movements**  
**Fall 2011 Block Week**

**Dates:** September 6<sup>th</sup> to September 10<sup>th</sup>

**Times:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Room:** SS 113

**Instructor:** Christopher Morrison

**E-mail:** cdmorris@ucalgary.ca

**Phone:** 403-220-5612

**Office:** SS 1330

**Office Hours:** Tuesday after class (during Block Week), Fridays 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
(for Fall term) and by appointment

**Required Textbooks:**

Needleman, Jacob. *The New Religions*. New York: Penguin Group, 2009.

\*\*\*\*Additional readings supplied on Blackboard or links to readings on the World Wide Web\*\*\*\*

**Course Description:**

An examination of the beliefs, practices and developments of new religious movements of both Eastern and Western origins (e.g. Krishna Consciousness, Transcendental Meditation, Wicca, Scientology, Unification Church, etc.).

**Core Competencies:**

This course will enable us to: 1) develop skills necessary for close textual readings and analysis of relevant materials 2) develop sensitivities and awareness of cross-cultural and inter-religious issues and begin to think through the philosophical and ethical questions concerning various cultural/religious beliefs, practices, and appropriations 3) display adequate understanding of the intellectual histories that shape the formation of many New Religious Movements and to investigate in some detail various particulars associated with selected NRMs 4) develop improved writing skills to better articulate the data/questions/issues extracted from course readings and discussions.

**Assignments:**

Quiz #1 (Multiple Choice)	September 6 <sup>th</sup>	(20%)
Quiz #2 (Multiple Choice)	September 8 <sup>th</sup>	(20%)
Quiz #3 (Multiple Choice)	September 10 <sup>th</sup>	(10%)
Class Participation/Group work		(15%)
Final Essay	September 26 <sup>th</sup>	(35%)

\*\*\*Late Assignments are deducted 5% per day (including weekends).\*\*\*

\*There will be no Registrar scheduled final exam for this course.

**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	95.9 - 90	A-	89.9 - 85
B+	84.9 - 80	B	79.9 - 75	B-	74.9 - 70
C+	69.9 - 65	C	64.9 - 60	C-	59.9 - 55
D+	54.9 - 53	D	52.9-50	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 403-220-8237. 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.

**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>.

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources**

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@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 program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor of MacEwan Student Centre.
- 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 Block.

**Block Week course regulations**

- The last day to drop a Block Week course (without it appearing on the student's transcript) shall be the end of the first day of lectures.

- The last day to withdraw from a Block Week course shall be the final day of lectures during the Block Week.
- Although lectures, etc. are completed during the Block Week, students should be prepared to complete assignments during the remainder of the term.
- Final grades for Block Week courses will not be required until the end of the term in which the course is offered.

### **Reading/Lecture Schedule**

*Tuesday, September 6:* **READINGS: see pre-session readings document on Blackboard**

Morning: Course introduction, **QUIZ #1**, modernism/post-modernism, Theosophy, Vivekananda, Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Aleister Crowley and the Occult

Afternoon: Carl Jung, Counter-culture--Timothy Leary, Maharishi, Tibet in America, Film (TBA), Age of Aquarius, group work

*Wednesday, September 7:* **READINGS: Bhagavad Gita As it Is (Blackboard), "Subud" (chapter 4 in Needleman), LeVay's "Satanic Bible" pp. 1-30 (Blackboard)**

Morning: ISKCON, Subud, Mormonism

Afternoon: Christian Science, Spiritualism, Unification Church (the Moonies), group activity--exploring Charismatic Christianities (Pentecostal, Church of God, Faith Healing, etc.), Film (TBA), The Church of Satan

*Thursday, September 8:* **READINGS: Dawson, "Creating 'Cult' Typologies" (Blackboard), Possamai and Lee, "NRM's and Fear of Crime," (Blackboard), J.Z. Smith, "The Devil in Mr. Jones" (Blackboard), Internet searches on Scientology**

Morning: **QUIZ #2**, Cult typologies (Dawson and Possamai/Lee readings), Church-Sect-Cult, Jonestown (Smith Reading), Heaven's Gate, "Brainwashing, Deprogramming," Film (TBA)

Afternoon: Group activity--(explorations of Klu Klux Klan, Order of the Solar Temple, Branch Davidians, Aum Shinrikyo, Manson Family, Raëlism, Church of Bible Understanding, Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, Film (TBA), Intro to Scientology--is it a cult?

*Friday, September 9:* **READINGS: “Zen Center,” (Needleman, Chapter 2) Gardner, “Witchcraft Today” pp. 1-34 (Blackboard), Internet searches on Wicca and Voodoo**

Morning: Zen in the West, S.G.I., (Film TBA)

Afternoon: Wicca, Neo-Paganism, Santeria/Voodoo/Vodou, Hoodoo, Tarot

*Saturday, September 10:* **READINGS: Selections from the Way of the Shaman (Blackboard), Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (Blackboard), Internet searches on N.D.E.'s and Elizabeth Kubler Ross**

Morning: **QUIZ #3**, "New Age" Healing: Yoga, Edgar Casey, Group activity--- (explorations of Reiki, QiGong, Past-Life Regression, Crystal Healing, Acupuncture, Tai Chi, Meditation, Chakras), Shamanism

Afternoon: Near Death Experiences, Final Essay assignment discussions, course wrap-up

**Monday, September 26: Final Essay due by 4 p.m. either by emailing the essay directly to me or by placing it in the Religious Studies Drop-Box (13th Floor of Social Science).**