

**FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION  
COURSE OUTLINE  
Fall 2021**

**COURSE NUMBER:**

RELS 341.01

**COURSE NAME:**

New Religious Movements

**PRE/CO-REQUISITES:**

None.

**CLASSROOM LOCATION:**

Online – D2L

**CLASS DAYS & TIMES:**

Asynchronous delivery using Zoom MWF;  
Optional Online: 10- 10:50 am; 7/9—8/11 2021.

**INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Instructor: Irving Hexham.

Email: [rels341@ucalgary.ca](mailto:rels341@ucalgary.ca)

Phone: (403) 220-3280

Office Hours: Please contact by email if you need to set up an appointment.

**INSTRUCTOR EMAIL POLICY:**

All course communications must occur through your University of Calgary email and will normally be answered within 48 hours.

**NAME OF TEACHING ASSISTANT(S):**

TBD

**COURSE CALENDAR STATEMENT:**

An examination of the beliefs, practices and developments of new religious movements of both Eastern and Western origins. The background, beliefs, practices and development of new religions as well as some specific groups, for example groups like the. Krishna Consciousness Movement, Transcendental Meditation, the Unification Church, and the Children of God, and the religious aspect of Nazism will be discussed.

Course Hours: 3 units; (3-0)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines the intellectual background and social background to the rise of the new religious movements (cults) including National Socialism in Germany. The course attempts to gain an understanding of their appeal to their members. It attempts to place the beliefs of new religions within the context of the great religious traditions and examines the mythologies which give rise to new religions.

**ONLINE, OR BLENDED LEARNING, ELEMENTS FOR THIS COURSE:**

This course emphasizes reading and individual research by the student. This means it is a course where students will be asked to view films, and other items on the internet and may be asked to study other materials including listening to audio lectures online. To succeed in the

course, students are encouraged to participate in the online learning tasks using the D2L learning environment and optional synchronous Zoom sessions.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

By the end of the course students ought to be able to:

- 1) Discuss key issues concerning cults and new religions
- 2) Understand appropriate means of investigating new religions and the methods used to study them
- 3) Explain the way beliefs, worldviews, narrative paradigms and other concepts illuminate new religions
- 4) Begin to conduct their own research into new religions
- 5) Distinguish between propaganda and reality in reports about new religions

### **LEARNING RESOURCES:**

Irving Hexham and Karla Poewe, *Understanding Cults and New Religions* This book is available for free as a pdf download from my website: <http://understandingworldreligions.com/books.html>

### **Journals**

Many journals carry articles on the new religions. In particular you should look at - *Sociological Analysis/Sociology of Religion* and *The Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, and *NovaReligio*.

### **Other readings**

In addition to reading all the textbooks students are encouraged to read as widely as possible. A list of lecture topics and additional readings will be provided at the beginning of the course.



## LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

There is a D2L site for this course. It contains the required readings identified above as on D2L plus other relevant class resources and materials.

This courses involves online elements therefore need to have reliable access to the following technology:

A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates

A current and updated web browser

Webcam (built-in or external)

Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone

Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled

Broadband internet connection.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

The course has the following basic outline which may be modified slightly as the lectures develop:

Week 1	Sept 8-10	Course Introduction
Week 2	Sept 13-17	Studying New Religions
Week 3	Sept 20-24	Brainwashing and Conversion
Week 4	Sept 27-29	Cults and Revitalization Movements
	<b>Oct 1, Friday</b>	<b>First Test - Online</b>
Week 5	Oct 4-8	The Birth of New Religions
Week 6	<b>Oct 11</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Day – No classes</b>
	Oct 13-15	Christian Cults and Mormonism
Week 7	Oct 18-20	The New Paganism
^	<b>Oct 22, Friday</b>	<b>Second Test - Online</b>
Week 8	Oct 25-29	Turning East
Week 9	Nov 1-4	The New Hinduism
Week 9A	<b>Nov 8-12</b>	<b>Mid-Term Break - No Classes</b>
Week 9	Nov 15-19	Buddhist and Acceptability
Week 10:	Nov 22-´	<b>Third Test - Online</b>
Nov 24-26		African New Religions
Week 11	Nov 29 – Dec 3	Varieties of Millennialism
Week 12	<b>Dec 6</b>	<b>Fourth Test - Online</b>
	Dec 8	Summing Up - Term Ends

## EXAMINATIONS:

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)
Friday 1 October	First Test	30% of the Final Grade
Friday 22 October	Second Test	30% of the Final Grade
Monday 22 November	Third Test	30% of the Final Grade
Monday 6 December	Fourth Test	10% of the Final Grade

**There is no Registrar's Scheduled Final Exam**

## GRADING

Tests will be marked according to the departments grading scheme which is:

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

Details about the universities grading scheme is found at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1.html>

Unless otherwise stated on the test paper, each correct answer in a multiple-choice test will be worth 1 grade point. The grading of the tests will be cumulative and out of a final possible mark of 100.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

There are no writing expectations in this course, only tests.

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

There is no mark for attendance and participation, but some test questions will be based on the lectures.

It is strongly recommended that at the beginning of the semester you draw up your own timetable for the weekly readings and keep to it as closely as possible. To help you with this you will be provided with course modules, pdfs or Power Points, and other materials, including audio files that will allow you to better organize your study time.

## CONDUCT

As members of the University community, students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

## GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS

Video conferencing tools such as Zoom may be used as supplementary learning experiences during the course. For those of you who are unfamiliar with Zoom it 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.).

Zoom class sessions may be recorded 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.

### **COURSE EVALUATIONS AND STUDENT 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.

**N.B. Small adjustments may be made to this outline as the course progresses if new issues arise.**

### **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>.

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMODATION**

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/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/)

### **INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Course materials created by instructors, including recorded audio lectures, posted notes, labs, and exams etc. are and 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 and illegal.

Discussing course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time is allowed but course materials must not be shared because all genuinely enrolled students will have equal access to it.

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY**

Student information will be collected in accordance with usual classroom practice. Students' tests will be accessible only by the authorized faculty and teaching assistant. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

### **COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION**

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may

be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy  
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>.

### **MEDIA RECORDING (if applicable)**

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students:

[https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP\\_FINAL.pdf](https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf)

#### **\*Media recording for lesson capture**

The instructor may use media recordings to capture the delivery of a lecture. These recordings are intended to be used for lecture capture only and will not be used for any other purpose. Although the recording device will be fixed on the Instructor, in the event that incidental student participation is recorded, the instructor will ensure that any identifiable content (video or audio) is masked, or will seek consent to include the identifiable student content to making the content available on University approved platforms.

#### **\*Media recording for self-assessment of teaching practices**

The instructor may use media recordings as a tool for self-assessment of their teaching practices. Although the recording device will be fixed on the instructor, it is possible that student participation in the course may be inadvertently captured. These recordings will be used for instructor self-assessment only and will not be used for any other purpose.

#### **\*Media recording for the assessment of student learning**

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

### **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>

### **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

For additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk