

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES  
Fall 2006**

Religious Studies 347 L01- Scripture and Religions

*Tentative Course Outline August 17, 2006)*

<b>Logistics</b>	<b>Prerequisite</b>	RELS 201, 203, 205, 273, or consent of department
	<b>Time</b>	TR 2:00-3:15
	<b>Instructor</b>	D. Bergen
	<b>Office/Hours</b>	SS 1322 / TR 12:00-2:00 or by appointment
	<b>Telephone</b>	220-3285
	<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:burgndy@telus.net">burgndy@telus.net</a>
	<b>Course Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dabergen/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dabergen/</a>
	<b>Textbooks</b>	Online sources (see above website)

**Course Description**

This course will assess comparatively the phenomenon of scripture in human history and analyze humanity's proclivity to "scripturalize" matters deemed ultimately important. The course will begin with an overview of the content and form of the scriptures of six world religions: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Then, students will analyze from three perspectives (Dialogic, Possible Worlds Theory, and Cognitive Science) the role and function of religious texts within each of these traditions. The learning format for this offering of RELS 347 will be a combination of lectures, discussions, films, and group presentations.

**Learning Assessment**

Comprehension Exams (see schedule below for dates)	50%
Critical Essay (due Nov 2)	30%
Group Presentation (December 5 and 7)	20%

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- *Comprehension Tests*: these tests are designed to assess the students' basic comprehension of the materials discussed and presented in class. Though not directly cumulative, an increasing level of understanding for each exam is expected as we proceed through the course.
- *Critical Essay*: a five-page critical essay will utilize quality library resources to compare an aspect of scripture from one western and one eastern religious tradition.

*Group Presentation*: students will be divided into small groups to present both verbally before the class and in writing a scripted panel discussion that critiques a film viewed in the course. Each member of the group will be required to represent a particular perspective, based on articles distributed during the term.

**General Comments**

- given the nature of the subject and the approaches adopted, it is vital that students attend the first week of class to gain an understanding of the nature and methodology involved.
- tests must be written/submitted on the dates scheduled. No exceptions will be made, except for death, significant illness, or domestic affliction (corroborated by a valid original note from a physician or counsellor). The instructor must be contacted within twenty-four hours of a missed exam or deadline.
- students anticipating a class absence should find a classmate willing to loan his/her notes; no lecture notes will be available from the instructor.
- recording of lectures is not permitted, except by special permission.
- students must maintain “back up” copies of all submissions; no concessions will be made for “lost” materials.
- students are encouraged to discuss the course materials with the instructor. An appointment can be set up for this purpose, either in person or through email. When arranging to see the instructor, students are asked to be specific in terms of the issues or topics they wish to discuss.

**Core Competencies**

This course promotes the following academic competencies:

- Knowledge of the common concerns and multiple differences in world religions.
- Understanding of the competing claims of religion over humanity’s place and purpose within the cosmos.
- Awareness of the role and impact of scripture in history, thought, and life.
- Skill in reading, organizing, interpreting, and summarizing information from multiple sources.
- Ability to critically assess religion from a number of academic perspectives.
- Realization of the role which religious forces play in contemporary global dynamics.
- Recognition of the insider/outsider differential in religious studies.
- Effective verbal and written communication skills.

**Grading Scale**

A numerical grade is assigned for each course requirement. Following the final graded component, a letter grade is assigned, using the department-approved table of equivalencies:

A+ 100-96	B+ 84-80	C+ 69-65	D+ 54-53
A 95-90	B 79-75	C 64-60	D 52-50
A- 89-85	B- 74-70	C- 59-55	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.

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>.

<b>COURSE SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>September 12/14</b>	Introduction to RELS 347 Introduction to the <u>Academic</u> Study of Scripture and Religion
<b>19/21</b>	<b>Test #1</b> The Scriptures of Judaism
<b>26/28</b>	<b>Test #2</b> The Scriptures of Christianity
<b>October 3/5</b>	<b>Test #3</b> The Scriptures of Islam
<b>10/12</b>	<b>Test #4</b> The Scriptures of Hinduism
<b>17/19</b>	<b>Test #5</b> The Scriptures of Buddhism
<b>24/26</b>	<b>Test #6</b> The Scriptures of Confucianism
<b>October 31/ November 2</b>	<b>Test #7</b> <b>Comparative Essay Due (Nov. 2)</b> Dialogical Analysis of Scripture and Religion
<b>7/9</b>	<b>Test #8</b> Possible Worlds Analysis of Scripture and Religion
<b>14</b>	<i>Reading Day – No Lecture</i>
<b>21-23</b>	<b>Test #9</b> Cognitive Scientific Analysis of Scripture and Religion
<b>28/30</b>	<b>Test #10</b> Filmic Representations of Scripture and Religion
<b>December 5/7</b>	Group Presentations