

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**RELS 367.03 L01**

*Comparative Studies in Western Religions – Religion and Violence*

**COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2012**

<b>Logistics</b>	<b>Time</b>	Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 1:00-1:50pm
	<b>Location</b>	ST 064
	<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. David A. Bergen SS 1308 <a href="mailto:dabergen@ucalgary.ca">dabergen@ucalgary.ca</a> 403-220-7063
	<b>Office Hours</b> (by appointment)	Monday, 2:00-3:00pm
	<b>Required Text-books</b>	<i>Princeton Readings in Religion and Violence</i> (eds. Jurgensmeyer and Kitts; Princeton University Press 2011).  <i>Violence</i> (Slavoj Zizek; Picador 2008)

**Course  
Description**

Clouds of religious violence have hovered dark for millennia and (given recent global events) seem forecast to extend their holy terror well into the future. This course will sample and analyze original sources (from ancient texts to writings of modern-day suicide bombers) to demonstrate the complex relationship between violence and religion. The course will also employ such theorists as Durkheim, Girard, Freud, Burkert, and Zizek to analyze both violence *within* religion (i.e., ritual sacrifice) and violence *in the name of* religion (e.g., Sept 9/11).

In its most academic mode, this course takes as its mandate the following article by Bruce Lincoln:

*When one permits those whom one studies to define the terms in which they will be understood, suspends one's interest in the temporal and contingent, or fails to distinguish between 'truths,' 'truth-claims,' and 'regimes of truth,' one has ceased to function as a historian or scholar. In that moment, a variety of roles are available: some perfectly capable (amanuensis, collector, friend and advocate) and some less appealing (cheerleader, voyeur, retailer of import goods). None, however should be confused with scholarship. ("Theses on Method," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 8, 225-7; 1996)*

**Learning Assessment**

**Analytical Responses (100%)**

Students will demonstrate and develop their analytical skills in six, equally-weighted responses to the materials presented and discussed the previous two weeks (Mondays and Wednesdays only). The length of each analytical response will be limited to 600 words. These responses will be completed in a special PDF form (made available in Blackboard) and submitted electronically by midnight on the following dates: Sept 29, Oct 14, Oct 28, Nov 11, Nov 23, and Dec 10).

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

**Dialogical Engagements (bonus mark: 10% maximum)**

On Fridays, students will engage the instructor on topics related to the course topic. The Zizek textbook will play an important part in these engagements.

**NOTE:**

- responses 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 counselor). You should contact the instructor within twenty-four hours of a missed exam or deadline.
  - The University Calendar states: “It is the responsibility of students who have prolonged absences from class because of physical and/or emotional health problems to present to the faculty office offering the course a statement from a physician/counselor attesting to the physical or emotional health of the student.”
- a penalty of 5% per day will be applied to any responses not submitted by the stated deadline.
- a passing grade on any of the graded components is not essential for passing the course.
- no remedial assignments are available in this course.
- if you are anticipating a class absence you should find a classmate willing to loan his/her notes; no lecture notes will be available from the instructor.
- class schedule, readings, and additional relevant materials will be posted online.
- all submissions should be backed up electronically. No concessions will be made for lost responses.

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

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

**Important Dates**

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

**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.

- Lecture Recording** 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 Program** "You don't have to walk alone...." Call 403-220-5333 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](mailto:gnosis@ucalgary.ca) or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

### **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.

### **Blackboard Help**

Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/computersupport/onlineservices/blackboard> for Student Help and FAQ's about Blackboard. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are available at <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/blackboard/students>. Instructions for using the Digital Drop Box are available here: [http://library.blackboard.com/docs/r6/6\\_1/student/bbbs\\_r6\\_1\\_student/digital\\_drop\\_box.htm](http://library.blackboard.com/docs/r6/6_1/student/bbbs_r6_1_student/digital_drop_box.htm).

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

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new 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 at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- 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.

### **Student Ombudsperson and Students' Union Representative**

The Office of the Student Ombuds provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. See [www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds](http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds) for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at [arts1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@ucalgary.ca).

### **Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at [www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints](http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints). Please check this website and not the nearest assembly point for this course.