

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

**Rels 373.01 L01**

*Topics in Religious Studies: Humanized Space and Religion*

FALL BLOCK WEEK 2009

**COURSE OUTLINE**

<b>Logistics</b>	<b>Prerequisite</b>	Any RELS 200-level course ( <i>please notify the department administration assistant [r.e.leblanc@ucalgary.ca] of your intention to enroll in the course and she will take care of the registration details</i> )
	<b>Time:</b>	Monday-Friday, 9:00-5:00
	<b>Location:</b>	SA 129
	<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. David Bergen
	<b>Office:</b>	SS 1308
	<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment
	<b>Telephone:</b>	403-220-7063
	<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:dabergen@ucalgary.ca">dabergen@ucalgary.ca</a>
	<b>Textbooks:</b>	<i>Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion</i> 2006 (Thomas A. Tweed; Harvard University Press).  <i>The West as Promised Land</i> 2007 (R. Douglas Francis and Chris Katzan, eds.; University of Calgary Press).  <i>PDF Readings</i> (Blackboard)

**Course  
Description**

Recent shifts in the academic study of religion increasingly question standard attentions awarded to the major “world religions” sited in remote places and times. In response to these critical shifts, this course adopts a “100-Mile Diet” approach by investigating the effects of human space and religion within our own backyard. To think about and explore regional “material correlates of human behaviour” (ABD III:553b), this course will introduce you to such theoretical frameworks as human ecology, evolutionary biology, place studies, and ritual theory. In the process of thinking and exploring (note the involvement of mind *and* body!) our local world, you should better understand how humans past and present, here and everywhere, have rendered ordinary space extraordinary in the process of embodied life experience.

The learning outcomes of the course will be driven by your own individual interests. Your learning will also be shaped by instructor facilitation and developed (perhaps even challenged) in real-life explorations of your own geographical, cultural, and religious environment. The result of these outcomes will be an awareness of how humans as place-makers and myth-makers have constructed the multiple worlds in which Albertans breathe and move.

**Learning  
Assessment**

Four short equally-weighted tests written at the beginning of each day	30%
Four equally-weighted summary presentations of assigned readings	25%
Responses to summary presentations	15%
Query Paper (5-7 pages; due Oct 1)	30%

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

Total: 100%

**Four Tests (30%)**

Each day of Block Week (Tuesday-Friday) will begin with a brief test so that you can demonstrate your intellectual engagement with the material presented the day before.

**Summary Presentations of Assigned Readings (25%)**

In addition to lectures and general discussion given by the instructor, you will hear daily presentations from your classmates on five different assigned articles. You too must participate in these presentations by preparing for each class a verbal presentation of *one* assigned article. In addition to your own daily verbal presentation, you must also hand in a one-page written summary of the specific article you have been assigned (due at the beginning of class). Your submitted summary will contain two paragraphs: the first will briefly summarize the assigned reading while the second will highlight those points you think are most pertinent to the objectives of our course (i.e., space and religion in southern Alberta). NOTE: Equal grading-weight (50/50) will be given to the verbal and written versions of your article summary.

**Responses to Summary Presentations (15%)**

Lest you think that you can lapse into a cognitive coma (or twiddle buttons on your Blackberry) while your classmates present their article summaries, you should know that you will be graded each day on the informed quality of the questions that you ask the presenters. The purpose of this presentation-plus-question format (20-30 minutes for each article) will be to engage all of us in a lively discussion with the assigned materials and course topic.

**Query Paper (30%)**

Finally, you will have the opportunity to explore two sites of religious significance in southern Alberta and, after reflecting on our theoretical discussions, write a 5-7 page paper which will propose in its conclusion a significant research question of interest to yourself. This paper must be submitted by Oct 1.

**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.*

**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.

**Course  
Withdrawal**

Please note the information regarding withdrawals and fee refunds in the Academic Schedule of the current University Calendar

**Lecture  
Recording  
Safewalk  
Program**

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.

"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>.