

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION

FALL 2019

RELS 377 RESEARCH and CRITICAL INQUIRY in RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11am-12:15pm

Instructor: Dr. Wendi L. Adamek

Office Hours: Thursdays 2-3pm and by appointment

Office: Social Science 520

E-mail: wadamek@ucalgary.ca

Telephone: (403) 220-3073

### Course Description

This course has two primary aims: 1) providing a workshop process for each stage of writing a research paper, and 2) acquainting students of Religious Studies with examples of major methodological approaches. We focus on how to do interdisciplinary and comparative work. Specific examples are drawn from the sub-field of the instructor: Buddhist Studies. The course is designed to provide opportunities to get feedback during the writing process and provide a forum for experimentation with different methods. The approaches introduced here are heuristic categories, students are not expected to “pick one” and then write a paper. Rather, it is hoped that experience with a range of possibilities will help students develop their own approaches, based on their particular interests. Students will also have the opportunity to learn about topics chosen by their fellow-students.

### Required Texts

Required Texts, available for purchase in the bookstore:

Booth, Wayne C., et al. (2016). *The Craft of Research*, 4th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4785166>

Freiberger, Oliver (2019). *Considering Comparison: A Method for Religious Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Available on reserve at the library:

Abe, Stanley K. (1990). “Art and Practice in a Fifth-Century Chinese Buddhist Cave Temple.” *Ars Orientalis* 20: 1-31. <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/4629399>

Adamek, Wendi L. (2009). “A Niche of Their Own: The Power of Convention in Two Inscriptions for Medieval Chinese Buddhist Nuns.” *History of Religions*, 49.1: 1-26.  
<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/10.1086/605900>

Faure, Bernard (1998). “The Buddhist Icon and the Modern Gaze.” *Critical Inquiry* 24.3: 768-813.  
<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/1344089>

Gold, Jonathan C. (2006). “No Outside, No Inside: Duality, Reality and Vasubandhu’s Illusory Elephant.” *Asian Philosophy* 16.1: 1-38.  
<http://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/doi/abs/10.1080/09552360500491817>

McMahan, David (1998). “Orality, Writing, and Authority in South Asian Buddhism: Visionary Literature and the Struggle for Legitimacy in the Mahāyāna.” *History of Religions* 37.3: 249–274.  
<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/3176607>

Solinger, Dorothy J. (2006). "Interviewing Chinese People: From High-level Officials to the Unemployed." In Maria Heimer and Stig Thogersen, ed. *Doing Fieldwork in China*. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, pp. 153-167.

Walsh, Michael J. (2007). "The Economics of Salvation: Toward a Theory of Exchange in Chinese Buddhism." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*: 1-30.  
<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/40006374>

**Skills emphasized ("Core Competencies")**

- Intensive practice in the research paper process
- Analysis of research methods: understanding how arguments are constructed and supported, different styles of writing are used, and appeals to sources of authority are made
- Development of an individual writing style

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

See Course Schedule items marked \*\* for Details

All written assignments due by 11:59pm of due date to my email (adamekw@gmail.com) and the email of your peer-editor (if applicable)

- PDF format, Times or Calibri font.
- PDF file title: Surname, Course number, Assignment. (Example: Smith 377 Proposal)
- Include your name and the date on the first page

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)	Notes
Oct. 3	1 page written Evaluation of a secondary source	5%	PDF document due via email by 11:59pm
Oct. 8	2-3 sentence description of your Paper Topic for use in class Oct. 10	5%	PDF document due via email by 11:59pm Oct. 8
Oct. 24	1 page paper Proposal outline plus bibliography	5%	PDF document due via email by 11:59pm
Nov. 1	4-5 page First Draft	Pass/Fail, must pass to continue	PDF document due via email by 11:59pm
Nov. 5-7	Peer Editor's presentations and workshopping	Pass/Fail, must pass to continue	In-class
Nov. 19-21	Peer Editor's presentations and workshopping	Pass/Fail, must pass to continue	In-class
Nov. 26	8-10 page Second Draft	20%	PDF document due via email by 11:59pm
Nov. 28-Dec. 5	Paper Presentations	15%	In-class
Dec. 20	16-18 page Final Paper	35%	PDF document due via email by 11:59pm
Ongoing	Participation	15%	Attendance and participation in workshop process

Students must fulfill all assignments in order to pass this course.

Note Regarding Participation Assessment (15%):

- Attendance sheets will be circulated. Attendance is mandatory. If you miss more than 30% of the total classes (beginning from Week Two), you will fail the course.
- Your grade will be based on your ongoing participation and attention to the details of the project throughout the course. This means meeting deadlines for specific assignments and participating actively in classroom, group, and paired discussions. Importantly, this includes acting as peer-editor and reading the drafts of your writing partner.

### Grading

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement except the Pass/Fail paper draft mark. Numerical marks are assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme, usually used within the Department of Classics and Religion:

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

### Policy with regard to missed assignments/assessments

All exams, tests, presentations, and assignments are to be fulfilled on the assigned dates. Make-up exams/tests and deadline extensions **will only be given in cases of documented emergency**. In the case of a missed exam/test, students **must** contact the instructor no later than 24 hours after the missed exam. Make-up exams/tests will be entirely different from the exams/tests given on the regularly scheduled day.

### Expectations for student conduct in this course

- Entering the classroom late, eating, private conversations, and talking or texting on mobile phones signal lack of respect for the instructor and the other students. Abuses in this regard will be noted and will be detrimental to your grade. Phones will be confiscated if used. Disruptive behavior will result in expulsion from the class.
- Announcements at the beginning of class often contain crucial information about class procedures and updates. If you will be late due to the distance of your previous class, please let the instructor know and make arrangements to get information from a classmate.

### Electronic device policy

You may use laptops and pads for taking notes only. Use of phones is not permitted for any purpose. If you use your laptop to go online rather than focussing your attention on what is happening in class, you will not do well on the assessments. If you have a question about a term or an idea, raise your hand and ask the instructor rather than Googling it! Other students may also have the same question.

## FINAL RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES

- **All papers must be based on a combination of primary sources and scholarly secondary sources.**
- **The paper must utilize at least one primary-source text.** Primary sources are texts or works that you discuss and analyze. Secondary sources are the research of others whom you use as support for your arguments.
- Source material must include at least **800 pages from non-assigned materials** (books, selections from edited collections, and/or articles). If you are in doubt about whether or not your source meets acceptable standards, consult with the instructor. Bibliographies and “further readings” suggestions in the assigned texts are good places to start searching for material, in addition to consulting with the instructor and/or library staff.

## PAPER ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### 1) Aims:

- **You are not writing a journalistic general descriptive essay**, you are writing an original research paper focussed on specific texts, questions, topics of exploration, arguments, aims, etc.
- You are not writing for the instructor, you are writing for an educated person who does not know your particular subject.
- All papers should show attention to structure: the **introduction** explains what the paper is about and gives a **thesis statement** outlining the writer’s arguments and methods. Throughout the paper there are good **transitions** between different sections, and the **conclusion** summarizes the main points of the paper.
- Regardless of what you may have been told, there is no reason to avoid first-person pronouns! It is not only acceptable but preferable to say things like “I intend to argue that....” or “my research has led me to the conclusion that....” Use of first-person pronouns signals your intention to take responsibility for your claims. Be sure to acknowledge **all** the sources on which your claims are based.
- For graduate students, the benchmark to aim for is professional (publication quality) work.

### 2) Format:

- Drafts and paper format: US Letter, double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point Calibri or Times font. Include page numbers and title page.
- Pay attention to grammar, always spell-check and **proof-read**.
- Give a brief definition in parentheses the first time you use any foreign language term. Example: *upaya* (skillful means).
- Give dates (if that information is available) for each person or period you discuss. Example: Wuzhu (714-774). Tang Dynasty (618-906)
- Word limit includes notes and bibliography.

### 3) Citations and Bibliographies

The Department of Religious Studies uses the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style and requires references and bibliographies to adhere to the Chicago citation system. You can find a quick guide here: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). Alternatively, please consult with the library staff for help with using the Chicago citation style.

If you must cite online material (keep this to a minimum!) make sure they are academic sources with **identified authors** (not Wikipedia, etc.) and include the full url and date accessed.

### 4) Qualitative standards

**Fail** (Below 50%)

Work may fail for any of the following reasons: plagiarism; lack of sufficient research using appropriate

sources; irrelevance of content; failure to address the specified question or treat the specified theme; lack of analysis or interpretation; unacceptable levels of paraphrasing; excessive reliance on quotations; presentation, grammar or structure so deficient that work cannot be understood; very late submission without an extension.

**D (50-54%)**

Work meets basic requirements in terms of topic selection and demonstrates some understanding of the chosen topic. However, it has major gaps or inadequacies in research, comprehension, and editing for grammar and spelling.

**C (55-69%)**

Work may be reasonably well-researched and show signs of attempts to organize material, but remains weak in areas like formulating a thesis statement, providing transitions, maintaining the thread of an argument or theme, and summarizing relevant conclusions.

**B (70-84%)**

Work has considerable merit; contains evidence of an accurate command of the subject matter and a sense of its broader significance, offers synthesis and evaluation of material, and demonstrates an effort to engage with challenging reading. It maintains clear focus on the principal issues and shows understanding of relevant scholarly arguments and diverse interpretations, though there may be some weaknesses in clarity or structure. Articulate writing, with research properly documented.

**A (85-96%)**

Work shows evidence of extensive reading and initiative in research, sound grasp of subject matter and appreciation of key issues and context. Engages critically and creatively with questions, proposes an original and valid thesis, and attempts an analytical evaluation of material. Makes a good attempt to critique various interpretations and offers a pointed and thoughtful contribution to an existing debate. Shows evidence of ability to think theoretically as well as empirically, and to conceptualize and problematize issues in terms of the relevant discipline. Well-written and documented.

**A+ (96-100%)**

Work of superior standard that demonstrates initiative and ingenuity in research, pointed and critical analysis of material, and innovative interpretation of evidence. Makes insightful contributions to debate in the relevant discipline, engages with values, assumptions and contested meanings in primary source texts, and develops abstract or theoretical arguments on the strength of detailed research and interpretation. Writing is characterized by creativity, style, and precision as well as proper documentation. Work may suggest that the author has advanced research potential in the following ways: critical insights into the work of established scholars; the proposal of a new perspective from which to view a problem; the identification of a problem not adequately recognized in the existing literature.

**Syllabus:**

A complete syllabus will be made available the first week of class.

**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 (section K, which can be found here: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>.) If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor or librarian staff.

### **Student Accommodations**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; 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/).

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.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf).

### **Desire 2 Learn (D2L) Help**

Go to <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students> for Student Help and FAQ's about D2L. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are also available on this website.

### **Freedom of Information and Privacy**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP): <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act indicates that assignments given by you to your course instructor will remain confidential unless otherwise stated before submission. The assignment cannot be returned to anyone else without your express permission. Similarly, any information about yourself that you share with your course instructor will not be given to anyone else without your permission. As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number on each subsequent page.

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

The Student Ombuds Office provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/> for more information.

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

### **Safewalk**

The Safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout

campus to request a walk.

### **Health and Wellness**

There are services available to students to help with physical and mental health, including the SU Wellness Centre: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/>

Learn more about the Campus Mental Health Strategy here: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>

### **Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration**

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided and the student should provide the documentation they feel best supports their case. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>.