

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
WINTER 2013**

RELIGIOUS STUDIES 398 L01
RELIGION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

INSTRUCTOR: Anne White, Ph.D.
COURSE TIME AND DAYS: MWF 12:00-12:50
OFFICE: SS 1322
OFFICE HOURS: MWF 10:30 – 11:30am
TELEPHONE: 403-220-3285 or 403-220-5886 (Dept. office)
E-MAIL ADDRESS: awhite@ucalgary.ca
WEBSITE ADDRESS: Blackboard

REQUIRED TEXT: Roger S. Gottlieb, ed., *This Sacred Earth* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

SUGGESTED READINGS: (Not mandatory but helpful in selecting an essay topic).

Foltz, Richard	<i>Worldviews, Religion, and the Environment</i>
Gottlieb, Robert	<i>A Greener Faith</i>
Hawken, Paul	<i>The Ecology of Commerce</i>
Kinsley, David	<i>Ecology and Religion</i>
Naess, Arne	<i>The Ecology of Wisdom</i>
Nash, Roderick Frazier	<i>The Rights of Nature</i>
Pogman, Louis P.	<i>Environmental Ethics</i>
Tremblay, Rodrigue	<i>The Code for Global Ethics: The Humanist Principles</i>
Waldau and Patton, eds.	<i>A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science & Ethics</i>

The Earth Charter <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/pages/read-the-charter.html>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to present factual information and informed discussion on the subject of religions and their perspectives on environmental ethics and sacred space. Through a review of many leading eco-theologians and environmentalists who seek social and environmental justice, students will be introduced to a variety of global perspectives that address our conduct in and towards nature. What will become evident from this study is that spiritual sensitivity towards the environment has long been a self-evident reality encoded within the world's religions. In contrast to this relevant and enduring system of insight and values, our secular world's perspective has led to an unbalanced and sterile view of physical reality, habitat space, and significance of place, as expressed in and through the environment. Through the perspectives and interpretations of the various writers under review, this course will endeavour to present an alternative to "the death of birth" philosophy that pervades our cultures. Students will be presented with challenging, viable alternatives to this decimation based on knowledge, fact, and insight into human nature and the problems we face as a species, living ethically in the environment which supports all life forms. Using the diversity and creativity of the perspectives presented, students will be introduced to the richness of ethical thought and depth of meaning that religions offer the enquiring mind.

Course presentation will consist of lectures, assigned readings, films, website information and class discussion.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students will develop a number of the skills identified in the University of Calgary statement of learning outcomes. These include: communication, thinking, ethical reasoning, computer literacy, information retrieval, and group effectiveness.
- The assigned readings, lecture material and methodology within the course should develop a student's ability to think critically (i.e. judge, reflect, and analyze); web notes will further provide dissemination of information and enhance computer skills; preparation for examinations should foster the development of information retrieval and writing competency.
- It is important to remember that the attainment of any learning endeavour requires that students **regularly attend lectures**, read the required material, and complete all course work.

SELF DIRECTED STUDY:

Students are encouraged to read web notes and the assigned pages of text before each lecture, and come prepared to ask questions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Feb. 25	-	Test	15%
Mar. 18	-	Test	15%
Apr. 8	-	Paper Essay: (2500 words) plus 1 page bibliography with a minimum of six sources – four textbook and two from academic journals. Double spaced with footnotes. CHICAGO STYLE FORMAT ONLY Essay topics to be discussed and posted on Blackboard.	30%
TBA	-	Registrar scheduled final exam	40%

Essay specifications: 2500 words. Pages to be numbered. Chicago style format. Footnotes or endnotes. If you have extensive footnotes, factor that in to the page count. Endnote page is not part of the page count. Separate bibliography - at least six sources Two academic/scholarly website sources permitted.

NOTES: Missed examinations or assignments must be accompanied by a medical certificate, or in the case of domestic affliction, a note from a counsellor. The instructor must receive notification within 24 hours of the missed examination by telephone, e-mail, or by calling the Department of Religious Studies at 403-220-5886. Missed assessments without this required proof will be awarded a 0 (zero). Late written assignments will be assessed a 5%/day grade deduction.

This policy is intended to encourage principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class who have met their assignment dates.

The required essay component can also be submitted for the Gnosis Environmental Ethics Colloquium (date TBA) towards the end of the semester. Accepted papers will provide students with the opportunity to present to their peers in a conference setting and these papers will be compiled into a Gnosis publication. This will provide student with the added bonus of having a published work and experience as a conference presenter.

Grading:

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme:

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

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

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and 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. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than **fourteen (14) days** after the start of the course.

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/bbls_r6_1_student/digital_drop_box.htm.

Gnosis

Gnosis is the Religious Studies Student Club. For membership or more information please email: gnosis@ucalgary.ca or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~gnosis>.

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. 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 3rd 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 for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at 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. 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

NOTE: All subjects will be covered but scheduling may vary slightly due to class discussions.

JANUARY

9, 11

Introduction

+ Part 1 pp 21-60

Plus webnotes

Facts and perspectives.

14, 16, 18

Pp 73-122

Plus webnotes

Truth, justice and physicality
Confusion versus clear perspectives

21, 23, 25

Pp 124-185

Plus webnotes

Various environmental philosophies.
Religious Belief versus relevancy

28, 30

Webnotes

The Earth Charter – perspectives on humankind's place and conduct.

FEBRUARY

1

Documentary

4, 6, 8

Pp 189-272

Plus webnotes

Transforming tradition
Addressing the ecological crisis

11, 13, 15

Pp 273-350

Plus webnotes

Transforming tradition
Addressing the ecological crisis

17 - 24

READING WEEK – NO CLASSES

25

TEST – 50 MINUTES' DURATION (15 points)

27

Pp 351-427

Plus webnotes

Addressing oppression in its many faces

MARCH

1

Pp 351-427

Plus webnotes

Addressing oppression in its many faces

4, 6, 8

Pp 351-427

Plus webnotes

Addressing oppression in its many faces

11, 13, 15

Pp 351-427

Plus webnotes

Addressing oppression in its many faces

18 **TEST – 50 MINUTES’ DURATION (15 points)**

20, 22
Pp 492-560
Plus webnotes
Ecology and Relationship

25, 27
Pp 492-560
Plus webnotes
Ecology and Relationship
Documentary

GOOD FRIDAY – MARCH 29

APRIL
1, 3, 5
Pp 564-612
Plus webnotes
Eco justice – reclaiming voice and power

8, 10, 12 **PAPER TO BE HANDED IN ON APRIL 8.**
Pp 644-694
Eco Justice = reclaiming voice and power

15
Pp 721-744
Declarations