



**FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION
COURSE OUTLINE
Fall 2022**

COURSE NUMBER: RELS 399.13 L01

COURSE NAME: Religion in Popular Culture (Religion in Popular Music)

CLASSROOM LOCATION: ST 126

CLASS DAYS & TIMES: Tuesday & Thursday 2:00-3:15

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 11:00-12:00 (alternate hours by appointment)

INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT: Craig Ginn, PhD cwcginn@ucalgary.ca

INSTRUCTOR EMAIL POLICY: Email must be sent through your U of C email account. Please do NOT send from other accounts, such as gmail or hotmail. Please include the subject of your email and clearly identify yourself by name and the course you are registered in. Please do not send email inquiries related to dates and deadlines. Students shall refer to the university calendar, course outline, and final exam schedule for schedule information. Inquiries related to exams or assignments must be sent no less than 24 hours before a deadline. The instructor will reply to emails on business days.

COURSE CALENDAR STATEMENT: The intersection of religion with popular culture is explored through specific topics.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Music, fundamental to many religious traditions, has served an important role in worship, ritual, ceremony, expression, and religious experience. From the earliest musical traditions to contemporary genres, texted music has been a critical part of how people have experienced and shape their worlds, including how they have understood their existence, experiences, feelings, relationships, and religious piety. From the Vedic hymns to the songs of Hare Krishna devotees or the psalms of David to U2 rock anthems music has been a deliberate means of expressing belief in the Transcendent and, arguably, constructing religion.

What is the role of music in popular culture? Is music a critical part of how people experience and shape their worlds. Do songwriters use music as a deliberate means of expressing religiosity or spirituality such as belief, worship, confession, and prayer? Are musicians venerated or deified? Can they rise to the status of prophet, priestess, god, or goddess? Does music reinforce religion? Reject religion? Is music a religion?

This course will examine religion and music, with a focus on popular music in North American culture. Musicians and songs will be explored in their context for religious and anti-religious references derived from both eastern and western religions, though students can expect the majority of songs to reflect Judeo-Christian influence. Various lenses will be used to investigate religion and music, including philosophical (nature of music, metaphysics, aesthetics, ethics), musicological (history of music, role of music and musician, music as industry), doxological (expression of veneration, praise, and devotion),

theological (doctrinal expression in lyrics), and phenomenological (music and spiritual experience, confession, conversion, and enlightenment).

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- identify key terms and methods in the study of religion and music
- explore the intersection of religion and music
- analyze religion and music using the dimensions of religion
- evaluate the (non)distinction between secular and sacred music
- recognize the use of religious themes in popular music
- evaluate scriptural and liturgical sources used in lyrics
- use a range of hermeneutical approaches to interpret lyrics
- research individual artist or group, investigating their (anti)religious background
- prepare and communicate research related to an individual artist or group in a research paper and presentation

LEARNING RESOURCES: *Gods and Guitars*. Michael J. Gilmour. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2009. Available at the UCalgary Bookstore online shopping:

https://www.calgarybookstore.ca/shop_main.asp

Additional readings will be posted on D2L

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS: There is a D2L site for this course which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials (see d2L.ucalgary.ca).

CLASS SCHEDULE: To be posted on D2L

EXAMINATIONS: *There is no Registrar-scheduled final exam for this course.*

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS:

Date	Assessment	Weight (%)	Required pass/fail
October 4	Test 1 (Includes all course materials from September 6 – September 29)	20%	No
November 3	Test 2 (Includes all course materials from October 6 – November 1)	20%	No
November 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, December 1	Research Assignment (due on day of presentation)	30%	No
November 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, December 1	Student Presentation	15%	No
December 6	Test 3	15%	No

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT: Students will select three songs (recorded and performed by one artist/group) and analyze the lyrical content. The analysis must include the following:

1. Background information on the artist
2. Religious and cultural influences
3. Genre and its correlation with religious themes
4. Analysis of the songs using specified methods provided in class materials
5. Assessment of the artist in the discussion of music as religion

Please provide a title page with assignment title, course name, date, student name, and instructor name. Length: 1300-1500 words. Do not exceed 1500 words. Assignments that exceed 1500 words will be deducted 5% per 100 excess words. Students must submit their research paper as a **word document** in Dropbox between November 15 – December 1.

CLASS PRESENTATION: Each student will present a 7-8 minute summary of their research paper. Following the presentation please be prepared to field questions related to your presentation (2-3 minutes). The student must provide a hard copy of your presentation to the course instructor for marking, e.g. script and/or copy of PowerPoint presentation on the day of their presentation.

MISSED ASSESSMENTS: If a student misses a test or student presentation, they must notify the instructor in writing within 24 hours to discuss options to submit and/or make-up for that assessment.

LATE SUBMISSIONS: Late submissions of the research assignment will be deducted 10% per day. Students seeking an extension for the research assignment must make a written request by email at least 48 hours before the deadline.

GRADING: A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned based 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

ADJUSTED FINAL GRADES: The instructor will implement a standard measure of adjustment (.5%) for final grades. For example, a final grade of 64.5% (C) will be rounded up to 65% (C+). Please do not send email inquiries asking the instructor to increase or 'round up' your final grade. Only final grades are adjusted (individual tests are not rounded up).

EXTRA ASSIGNMENTS: There are no extra assignments for this course. Students will not be given an opportunity to submit extra work or retake tests to increase their grade.

WEIGHTING OF ASSESSMENTS: The weighting for assessments is identified above. The weighting of assessments (including tests) will not be changed to accommodate individual student requests.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING: All written assignments will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but

also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the writing support services in the Learning Commons. For further information, please refer to the official online University of Calgary Calendar, Academic Regulations, E. Course Information, E.2: Writing Across the Curriculum:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

WRITING ASSISTANCE: The instructor will not read a student's research assignment in advance of the due date. The instructor is available to meet with students to assist with their research design, introductory paragraph identifying task, method(s), and thesis, and to evaluate sources required. For assistance in writing, students are advised to consult Writing and Learning Services.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT IN THIS COURSE: Please be courteous toward other students in the course. Please do not engage in behavior that is distracting to other students. For students who raise questions during class, please contribute to the resourceful use of classroom time by limiting the number of questions you ask in each class. While evaluative inquiries are permitted, students are encouraged to steer inquiries toward objective investigation rather than confessional or adversarial agendas.

USE OF INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES IN CLASS: Cell phones must be turned off during the entire class time. If you are expecting an important phone call, please notify the instructor at the beginning of class. Taking pictures in the classroom during a lecture or presentation is not permitted, including picture-taking of data projector images and slides. The use of a laptop is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Please refrain from accessing websites and resources that may be distracting to you or for other learners during class time. Students are responsible for being aware of the University's Internet and email use policy, which can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/electronic-communications-policy.pdf>

COURSE EVALUATIONS AND STUDENT FEEDBACK: Student feedback will be sought at the end of the course through the standard University Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) and Faculty course evaluation forms. Students are welcome to discuss the process and content of the course at any time with the instructor.

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY POLICIES AND SUPPORTS

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit:

<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>

<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-procedure.pdf>

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION: It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The Student Accommodations policy is available at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.

Students needing an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>). 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.

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/.

INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY: Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY: Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION: All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>.

MEDIA RECORDING: Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students: https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf

****Media recording for lesson capture***

The instructor may use media recordings to capture the delivery of a lecture. These recordings are intended to be used for lecture capture only and will not be used for any other purpose. Although the recording device will be fixed on the Instructor, in the event that incidental student participation is recorded, the instructor will ensure that any identifiable content (video or audio) is masked, or will seek consent to include the identifiable student content to making the content available on University approved platforms.

***Media recording for self-assessment of teaching practices**

The instructor may use media recordings as a tool for self-assessment of their teaching practices. Although the recording device will be fixed on the instructor, it is possible that student participation in the course may be inadvertently captured. These recordings will be used for instructor self-assessment only and will not be used for any other purpose.

***Media recording for the assessment of student learning**

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY:

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk