

The University of Calgary
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Religious Studies

04/08/30

Religious Studies 701 L01

Fall 2004

Method and Theory in the Study of Religion

W 10:00-13:00

This class will meet along with Religious Studies 437 L01 in Fall 2004

SS1332

Instructor

Dr. Tinu Ruparell

Office

SS1320

Office Hours

W 15:00-16:00 or by appointment

Telephone

220 7069

Email

ruparell@ucalgary.ca

Course Texts:

David Palmer. *Hermeneutics*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press

David Klemm. *Hermeneutical Inquiry, Vol 1: The Interpretation of Texts* Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press.

Paul Ricoeur: *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of meaning*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press

Additionally, there will be required readings made available at student expense through the Student Union Copy centre in MacEwan Hall.

Course Description:

This course will consider philosophical issues arising from hermeneutics and interpretation theory for the wider academic study of religion. Within a historical context beginning in the west with Schleiermacher and Dilthey, we will be concerned with three main areas: definition of the 'text' and interpretation theory; the development of method in the interpretation of religious texts; and contemporary developments in hermeneutics. Where possible we will also consider Indian discussions of interpretation in order both to broaden the scope of our study as well as to act as a foil for the primarily western context of most of our authors. The aim of the course is to provide students with an appreciation of the variety of ways that hermeneutics has been employed as methodology, of the complex problems involved in its definition and use, and of the major issues that continue to be debated with regard to its nature and practice.

Core Competencies:

Dedicated students in this course will learn both the modern history of hermeneutics as well as practice the kinds of arguments employed in hermeneutics theory within the context of theory and method in the study of religion. Students will gain an appreciation of the ongoing discussion of the nature and role of context, subjectivity and history in our understanding of religious texts as well as the wider functions to which hermeneutical theory has been put in more recent times. Committed students will gain in their abilities of analysis, verbal and written communication and critical self-reflection in the context of the study of religion.

Course Requirements:

There will be three components to the grade for this course:

Element	weight	date
In-class presentations	15%	TBA
Lecture presentation on topic to be arranged with instructor, relevant to student's research area	15%	TBA
Final research essay (5 – 7 thousand words) and oral discussion (30 minutes)	70%	Written essays due noon on Nov 24 ^h , Oral exams to take place Dec 1 st and 8 th

There will be NO registrar scheduled final exam in this course.

Note on oral discussion:

The oral examination part of the final paper is meant to be an opportunity for the student to discuss further and thereby strengthen their research essay. It is a way by which feedback on the essay can become a springboard for further analysis and discussion. Questions will be based on the student's submitted essay, though, of course, some understanding of the authors and issues covered in class and through the assigned readings will be assumed. The aim of the oral is for students to support the essay and verbal performance in the oral will not be assessed.

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+ 96 –100%	A 90-95%	A- 85-89%
B+ 80-84%	B 75-79%	B- 70-74%
C+ 65-69%	C 60-64%	C- 55-59%
D+ 53-54%	D 50-52%	F < 50%

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

NB. POLICY WITH REGARDING MISSED/LATE ASSESSMENTS

In-class presentation dates are firm. Students are expected to attend and participate in all presentations. Without acceptable documentation (i.e. medical certificate, police report, bereavement notice, confirmation of religious observance, or court summons) or without PRIOR arrangement with the instructor, missed assessments will be awarded an 'F'. If there is an issue with your assigned date for the presentation, please see me as soon as possible.

This policy is intended to encourage diligence and integrity among students as well as to uphold principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class. Excuses other than those listed above will receive little attention

LATE SUBMISSION OF FINAL PAPERS WILL BE PENALISED 5%/DAY. Missing the oral examination without acceptable cause (as above) will result in a 20% penalty on the essay.

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 University Calendar. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.

Syllabus:

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

Recording of lectures: Recording any part of any lectures in any form must first approved be by the instructor in writing and is for individual private study only. See current Calendar, Tape recording of Lectures.

Academic Accommodation: If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 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.

Safewalk Program :

"You don't have to walk alone...." Call 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!

Withdrawing from courses:

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