

RELI 401: Issues in the Religion CRN

Trimesters 1 and 2, 2011
School of Art History,
Religious Studies Victoria



Methods and Study of 1549

Religious Studies
Classics and
University

1 Basic Information

- Lecture place: HU 320.
- Time: Wednesdays 3pm-5pm.
- Start date: March 9, 2011.
- Coordinator: Dr. Joseph Bulbulia: Email: joseph.bulbulia@vuw.ac.nz tel: 463 5043, office HU 322. Office hours Monday 2pm-3pm and by appointment.
- A website of materials related to RELI 401 is being maintained in Blackboard. You are expected to visit the course site every week <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>.
- All readings can be found as pdf documents under *Course Materials* on Blackboard, or by a url link in the seminar outline below.
- There is no course reader for this course.
- All work must be submitted to Blackboard.
- Students are responsible for keeping copies of all submitted work.
- Students are responsible for assuring that their work has been successfully uploaded to Blackboard.
- Reli 401 will be assessed by a four essays of about 2,500 words, each worth 25% of the final mark.

Trimester dates

Trimester 1

Teaching dates: 28 February-3 June 2011 Mid-trimester break: 18 April-1 May 2011 Study week: 6-10 June 2011
Examination/Assessment period: 10 June-2 July 2011

Trimester 2

Teaching dates: 11 July-14 October. Mid-trimester break: 22 August-4 September, Study week: 17 October-21 October 2011, examination/Assessment period: 21 October-12 November

•Your user name is the one issued to you by Student Computing Services. Your password is your Student ID Number. If in doubt, please contact the Student Computing Services Help Desk, 463-5050 (extension 5050 from VUW phones) or by email scshelp@vuw.ac.nz.

Withdrawing dates

Information about withdrawing from courses and refunds may be found at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx> .

Course delivery The delivery component of this course consists of: **Seminar**

Communication of additional information

- Additional information or information on changes will be conveyed to students by Blackboard.
- Because information about the course will change from time-to-time, students are expected to check Blackboard for updates at least once a week.
- Urgent updates will be sent through email.

Content

This course provides a graduate-level introduction to methods in the scholarly study of religions.

Learning objectives

- 1 **Knowledge of Discipline:** to review prominent research methodologies in the scholarly study of religions.
- 2 **General knowledge:** to broaden perspectives on how scholars of religions conduct their work.
- 3 **Writing and verbal expression:** to promote clear, well-structured, critical and creative writing.

Students passing this course will be able to identify and critically evaluate the theoretical assumptions of scholarship in religious studies.

Readings

All readings can be found on Blackboard under 'course resources', or by a url link in the seminar outline (see below).

Response essays

- Students are assigned four response essays, each worth 25% of the final mark
- Each essay should be no more than 3000 words and no fewer than 2000 words.
- Full instructions and templates to help you organise your response essays are available on Blackboard under 'course resources'.
- 33.3% for clarity.
- 33.3% for critical engagement.
- 33.4% for creativity.

Due dates: FINALS

- 1 Essay 1 and Essay 2: June 24, 2011.
- 2 Essay 3 and Essay 4: October 28, 2011.

Penalties

1. No response paper received after its final due date will be assessed.

Minimal requirements

The minimal requirements to gain a pass in this course:

- 1 Submit and pass four response essays.
- 2 Attend at least six seminars in Trimester 1 and least six seminars in Trimester 2.

2 The Seminar Schedule

Essential texts are given in this outline under the headings 'Required readings' and 'Recommended readings'. These can be found on **Blackboard**, or where appropriate, by the url link next to the title of the reading.

Trimester 1**Topic 1 (March 9): The method of integration: William James.**

Lecturer: Joseph Bulbulia

Required reading

- [James, 1928]lectures I, II, XVI and XVII <http://www.psywww.com/psyrelig/james/toc.htm>

Topic 2 (March 16): Contemporary Neuroscience

Lecturer: Joseph Bulbulia

Required Reading:

- [Schjoedt et al., 2009]
- [Renfrew, 2008]

Topic 3 (March 23): Evolutionary Theories of Religion

Lecturer: Joseph Bulbulia Required reading:

- [Darwin, 1981]

Topic 4 (March 30): Contemporary Evolutionary Approaches

Lecturer: Joseph Bulbulia Required reading:

- [Wilson et al., 2009]
- [Wilson, 2007]

Essay 1 draft due: April 1.

Topic 5 (April 6): Durkheim on Religion and Society

Lecturer: Joseph Bulbulia Required reading:

- [Durkheim, 1995] pp.1-39; 207-241

Topic 6 (April 13): Freud and Religion

Lecturer: Joseph Bulbulia Required reading:

- [Freud, 1962]

Topic 7 (May 4): Religion, Ethnicity, and Fundamentalism

Lecturer: Rick Weiss Required reading:

- [Marty and Appleby, 1997]pp.1-34
- [Embree, 1990]pp.1-18

Topic 8 (May 11): Anthropology and psychology

Lecturer: Rick Weiss Required reading:

- [Obeyesekere, 1981]pp.1-51
- [Kakar, 1991]pp. 15-22

Essay 2 draft due: May 13.

Final Essay 1 & Final Essay 2 Due: June 24.

Topic 9 (July 13): Karl Marx: The Material Truth about Religion

Lecturer: Paul Morris Required reading:

- [Marx, 2002] 'On the Jewish Question' (1843), 'The German Ideology' (1844-6); 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Religion' (1844); 'Concerning Feuerbach' (1845); 'Excerpts from Capital'.

Topic 10 (July 20): Materialistic Interpretations of Religion: Žižek and Badiou

Lecturer: Paul Morris Required reading:

- [Žižek, 2000] chapters: 1, 2, 7, 9, 11 & 12.
- [Badiou, 2003] chapters: 1, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Topic 11 (July 27): Genealogy and Morality

Lecturer: Michael Radich Required reading:

- [Nietzsche, 1887] Prologue, First Essay, Second Essay, Third essay.
<http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/Nietzsche/genealogytofc.htm>

Topic 12 (August 3): Genealogy and Power

Lecturer: Michael Radich Required reading:

- [Foucault, 1984a] pp. 3-29
- [Foucault, 1984b] pp. 76-100

Essay 3 draft due: August 5.

Topic 13 (Aug 10): Historians, Religion and Society

Lecturer: Geoff Troughton Required reading:

- [Collinson, 1999]

Topic 14 (Aug 17): Recent Developments in the Historiography of Christianity

Lecturer: Geoff Troughton Required reading:

- [Brown, 2009]
- [Thayer, 2007]

Topic 15 (Sept 7) Jung: What are archetypes?

Lecturer: Art Buehler Required reading:

- [Jung, 1991]

Topic 16 (Sept 14): Ken Wilber: The pre/trans fallacy

Lecturer: Art Buehler Required reading:

- [Wilber, a]
http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/books/cowokev3_intro.cfm
http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/books/cowokev3_intro.cfm
- [Wilber, b]pp.198-243 **Essay 4 draft due: September 16. Final Essay 1 & Final Essay 2 Due: October 28.**

3 Important Information

Class representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, to the Course Coordinator, and to the class. The class representative will provide a communication channel to the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. Someone else's work means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

More information

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study.

Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.

Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

References

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