FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION
COURSE OUTLINE
Group Study Program 8–29 May 2024

COURSE NUMBER: RELS 399
COURSE NAME: Religion in Popular Culture
CLASSROOM LOCATION: Regions of Abruzzo and Lazio, Italy; Vatican City
CLASS DAYS & TIMES: 8–29 May 2024
INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT INCLUDING UCALGARY EMAIL & PHONE:
George Ferzoco
Email: george.ferzoco@ucalgary.ca
Phone: TBA
Office hours: N/A
Office location: TBA

INSTRUCTOR EMAIL POLICY:
You may email me with queries related to the unit using your ucalgary email. I will normally respond to emails sent via your @ucalgary email within 48 hours during standard work hours (this excludes responding on weekends and holidays). You should check your University of Calgary email account once each weekday.

COURSE CALENDAR STATEMENT:
The intersection of religion with popular culture is explored through specific topics.
(https://clare.ucalgary.ca/manageprofile/courses/w19/RELS399.13?destination=profiles%2F222-28028%2Fcourses)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
We will focus on popular perceptions of popes, hermits, holy women, and spiritual healing. Abruzzo and Rome abound in resources regarding these topics, from the Middle Ages to the present. There are significant home-grown popes and saints; and there are Christian practices and sites in these areas that merge spiritual and medical healing. Many elements associated with hermits and magical/miraculous cures are unique to the landscapes of these regions and cities, showing the importance of the study of local/indigenous practices as a gateway to understanding larger questions of religion, belief, and culture.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Acquired an understanding of popular culture and its relation to Christian religion from the medieval period to the present.
2. Acquired through site visits an excellent understanding of the material culture and its implications regarding Christianity and its relation popular culture.
3. Acquired through reasoned arguments based on evidence, an informed perception of how popular culture and religion complement one another.
4. Acquired skills through written assignments, site visits, presentations, and class discussion of how to reflect upon, present, analyse and evaluate complex ideas and arguments.
5. Acquired a more developed awareness of how knowledge shapes not only other cultures but oneself.

LEARNING RESOURCES
There are no required textbooks. Rather, this unit will rely on a number of texts that are available online via the University of Calgary Library. These include:

General:

Hermits – Abruzzo hermits (e.g., Dominic of Sora, Venantius)

Spiritual Healing – incubation, relics, Manoppello, St John Lateran, Scala Sancta

Popes – Celestine, Benedict XVI, and Francis

Additional weekly readings, including peer-reviewed journal articles, will be posted on D2L.

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS
There is a D2L site for this course which contains links to some required readings and other relevant class resources and materials (see d2l.ucalgary.ca).
Although this is an in-person class, students should aim to have reliable access to technology in order to access D2L and to prepare and submit assignments.

CLASS SCHEDULE
A detailed class schedule will be made available the first day of class.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS
There are four assessment components that all align to learning outcomes 1,2,3,4. These consist of a reflection piece, short essay, group presentation, and diary entry. Criteria for assessment will be discussed in class and posted on D2L.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 May 2024</td>
<td>Submit via Dropbox a 300-word reflective piece. Assignment 1: Write a</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>reflective piece on your understanding of the relationship between</td>
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<td>popular culture and Christianity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 May 2024</td>
<td>Submit via Dropbox a 600-word essay. Assignment 2: Write a 600-word essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>explaining the appeal of hermits to the wider world. (Why are hermits</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>popular?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 May 2024</td>
<td>Submit via Dropbox a 500-word letter. Assignment 3: In a letter explain to</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>a friend/relative why people engage in spiritual healing.</td>
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<td>5 June 2024</td>
<td>Video recording To be submitted via Dropbox Assignment 4: Each student will</td>
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<td>choose three items they have studied in the course and discuss their</td>
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<td>historical and religious significance. One of the items must relate to a</td>
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<td>particular pope or the papacy in general.</td>
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**MISSED OR LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

If you miss a required component of the course, you must contact me in writing within 24 hours to discuss options to submit for that component. Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

**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, usually used within the Department of Classics and Religion:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100 – 96%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89 – 85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>84 – 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>79 – 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>74 – 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>69 – 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>64 – 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>59 – 55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>54 – 53%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>52 – 50%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Under 50%</td>
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N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content. See also https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1.html.

Your final grade for the course is the sum of the separate assignments. It is not necessary to pass each assignment separately in order to pass the course.
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 written assignments must be properly documented. Please be sure to consult a manual of style for your written assignments. I am happy with whatever one you use, but you need to indicate to me which one you are using. If you need recommendations, the latest edition of any of the following would be fine: *The Chicago Manual of Style; MLA Handbook; Turabian: A Manual for Writers.*
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](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html).

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS
Students are expected to attend class, all site visits, and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions. If students miss a class session that is included as a component of participation, they must contact the instructor within 24 hours to discuss options to make-up for that component.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS
All your assignments will be submitted via Dropbox in DTL. Please submit in either Word or PDF format. *(Word is preferred as it easier for me to write feedback on a Word document).* Assignments should have a file name as follows: “First Name Last Name Assignment Number” (e.g., Alex Smith Assignment 2). **Always number your pages.** Assignments must be submitted by 11:59 pm on their due date. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted.

CONDUCT
Students, employees, and academic staff are also expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. As members of the University community, students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at: [http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html)

USE OF INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES IN CLASS
The use of laptop is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Do not access websites and resources distract you and/or other learners during class time. Students are responsible for being aware of the University’s Internet and email use policy.

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 me.

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:
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 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

*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 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 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](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](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