



Religion and Film

Religious Studies RS 2191/2291

Lecture Times: W 2:30 - 5:30 pm

Course Location: Mother Saint James Memorial Building, Rm 19

Course Instructor: Nigel Fernando

Office Hours: W 5:30, Rm 19 or UH 214

Email: nferna49@uwo.ca

This is a provisional syllabus - the final syllabus will be set at the beginning of the term.

Course Description: Our course will examine Catholic Social Teaching in dialogue with other religious traditions. We will explore how religious ethics can shape how we interpret popular films.

Required Course Materials:

1) All the primary and secondary readings can be found on OWL.

Teaching Methodology and Expectations of Students: The course will consist of in-class lectures and film screenings. Students are expected to read all the required readings prior to class and attend all the in-class film screenings.

Evaluation:

Component	Weight 2191/2291	Date/ Deadline
Shot by Shot Analysis	7.5%	
Narrative Analysis	7.5%	
Quizzes	15%	
Mid-Term or First Essay	15%	
Final Essay	25%	

Final Exam	30%	
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Copyright and Intellectual Property: PowerPoint lecture slides and notes, lists of readings, in-class activities, assignment guidelines, and other components of the course materials are typically the intellectual property of the instructor. Unauthorized reproduction through audio-recording, video-recording, photographing, sharing on social media, or posting on course-sharing websites is an infringement of copyright and is prohibited. Such action may be considered a Code of Conduct violation and lead to sanctions.

Academic Accommodation: For course components worth 10% or more of the total course grade, please see the Academic Policies and Regulations section at the end of this course outline or consult the Academic Calendar.

Email Policy: Please only email the course instructor concerning matters of course administration. Any questions about course content should be reserved for lectures, tutorials, and office hours. Emails regarding course administration can expect a reply within 48 hours, Monday – Friday.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at Brescia. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the Brescia degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Religion and Film Weekly Readings

Week 1: **Course Introduction/ The Context of Catholic Social Teaching in the Modern Era / The Jewish Biblical Tradition and the Family - Sept. 11**

Course Introduction: Religion and Film, Policies and Procedures

Primary Readings:

Edmund Burke - Reflections on the Revolution in France

John Lyden - Film As Religion, Chapter 1-3

Secondary Reading: Thomas Woods - The Church in Modernity, Chapter 1

Film: Noah (2014) - Darren Aronofsky - 138 minutes

Week 2: **Religious Ways of Knowing: Revelation vs Reason - Sept. 18**

Primary Readings:

Bordwell - Film Art, Part Three

Plato's Republic (Excerpt)

Aeterni Patris - Pecci

Secondary Reading: Hedeidgger's Lectures on Truth

Film: Take Shelter (2011) - Jeff Nichols - 121 minutes

**Week 3: Truth Claims, Disclosure and Scientific Ways of Knowing - Sept. 25
(Shot by Shot Analysis Due)**

Primary Readings:

David Bordwell - Film Narration, Introduction and Part One: Some Theories of Narration

Vladimir Propp - Morphology of a Folktale

Plato's Theaetetus (Excerpt)

Karl Popper - The Logic of Scientific Discovery, Chapter 4

Kuhn - The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Chapter 6 & 7

Secondary Readings:

Film: Dekalog 1: You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me (1988) - Kieslowski, 53 minutes

Week 4: Modernism and Historical Criticism - Oct. 2 (Narrative Analysis Due)

Primary Readings: Ernest Renan - The Life of Jesus

Pascendi Dominici gregis - Sarto

Humani generis - Pacelli

Secondary Readings:

Spinoza - Theological Political Treatise, Chapter 6 & 7

Bultmann - The New Testament and Mythology

Von Harnack - What is Christianity, Lecture 1

Film: The Last Temptation of Christ (1988) - Scorsese, 184 minutes

Week 5: Simulacra in Modernity - Oct. 9

Primary Readings: Jean Baudrillard - Simulation and Simulacra, Chapter 1 & 13

Secondary Reading: Gilles Deleuze - Difference and Repetition

Film: Fahrenheit 451 (1966) - Truffaut, 112 minutes / The Matrix / The Social Network/ Ex Machina/ Striking Vipers/San Junipero

Week 6: Death and Dying in Islam - Oct 16

Primary Reading: Roncalli - Nostra Aetate

Secondary Texts:

Atighetchi, Chapter 10 - End of Life

Film: Taste of Cherry (1997) - Abbas Kiarostami , 95 minutes

Week 7: Death and Dying in Secular Modernity - Oct 23 (First Essay Due)

Primary Readings: Wojtyla - Evangelium Vitae

Secondary Reading: John Paul II's Teaching on Human Dignity and the

Implications for Bioethics

Film: Me Before You (2016) - Thea Sharrock, 110 minutes

The Fault in Our Stars (2014) - Josh Boone, 126 minutes

Week 8: Eternal Recurrence in Eastern Traditions, Part I - Oct 30

Primary Reading:

Eastern Traditions - Oxtoby

Cosmos and History, Chapter 1, 3 and 4 - Eliade

Eternal Now - Lyden

Secondary Readings:

Nietzsche's Life Sentence, Chapter 4, 5, and 7 - Hatab

Film: Before I Fall (2017) - Ry Russo Young, 99 minutes

Nov. 4 - 10, - No Class - Fall Reading Week

Week 9: Finitude and the Afterlife in Eastern Traditions, Part 2 - Nov. 13

Primary Reading:

Eastern Traditions Continued - Oxtoby

Secondary Readings:

Immortality of the Soul as a Postulate of Practical Reason - Kant

The Confessions, Chapter 9 - Augustine

Film: About Time - Richard Curtis (2013)

Week 10: Devaluing the Body in Modernity - Nov. 20

Primary Readings:

Humanae Vitae - Montini

Called to Love - Ten Eyck and Borrás

Secondary Readings:

Introduction to the Theology of the Body - Waldstein

Film: The Apartment (1960) - Billy Wilder, 125 minutes

Week 11: Catholic Bioethics - Nov. 27

Primary Readings:

Secondary Readings: Openness with Caution and Suspicion, About Human Enhancement - James Keenan

Film: Gattaca (1997) - Andrew Niccol, 106 minutes

Week 12: The Path of Nature and Grace / Environmentalism and the End of Times - Dec. 4 (Last Class) Final

Essay Due

Primary Readings: Bergoglio - Laudato Si'

Secondary Readings: Heidegger - Question Concerning Technology

Film: Tree of Life (2011) Terrence Malick, 139 minutes

Course Objectives and the Seven Competencies

Students will learn about the history of film	Inquiry and Analysis
Students will explore the relationship between cinema studies and religious studies	Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving
Students will learn to identify features of film style	Inquiry and Analysis
Students will learn to identify narrative structure	Inquiry and Analysis, Problem-Solving
Students will gain an understanding of religious ethics in the modern era	Valuing, Critical Thinking, Social Awareness and Engagement
Students will analyze the representation of religious ethics in popular films	Valuing, Communication, Self-Awareness and Development

2019-20 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

The complete policy regarding [Accommodation for Illness - Undergraduate Students](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12) can be found at http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12.

Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions which may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities should seek Academic Accommodation through Student Accessibility Services (http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10).

Personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

Students who experience an illness or extenuating circumstance sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

1. Submitting a **Self-Reported Absence** form provided that the conditions for submission are met;
2. For medical absences, submitting a **Student Medical Certificate (SMC)** signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner;
3. For non-medical absences, submitting **appropriate documentation** (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to their Academic Advisor. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Advisor to clarify what documentation is acceptable.

Requests for Academic Consideration Using the Self-Reported Absence Portal

Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance of 48 hours or less that is sufficiently severe to render them unable to meet academic requirements should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours. Note that the excused absence includes all courses and academic requirements within the up to 48 hours, it is not intended to provide an excused absence from a single course while students fulfill their academic responsibilities in other courses during that time.

The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:

1. Students will be allowed **a maximum of two self-reported absences** between September and April and one self-reported absence between May and August;
2. The duration of the absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30 am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30 pm;
3. The excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period if the student undertakes significant academic responsibilities (writes a test, submits a paper) during that time;
4. Self-reported absences will **not** be allowed for scheduled final examinations; midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations scheduled during the final week of term;
5. Self-report absences may **not** be used for assessments worth more than 30% of any course;
6. Any absences in excess of 48 hours will require students to present a Student Medical Certificate (SMC), or appropriate documentation;
7. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24** hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence.

Request for Academic Consideration for a Medical Absence

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such

requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

The following conditions apply for students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds:

1. Students must submit their Student Medical Certificate (SMC) along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. An SMC can be downloaded from http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf ;
2. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period;
3. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, scheduled tests or examinations, and other academic requirements;
4. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by the SMC to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence;
5. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the course instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements, arranging Special Exams (make-ups), re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawal without academic penalty.

The [full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness](#) can be viewed at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines; please refer to the [Registrar's website](#), <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>).

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work, and arrange academic accommodations if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_68).

4. SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at: http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, they may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, they may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal and if the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the SRBA. For information on academic appeals consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14.

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. Students can access supports through Brescia's Student Life Centre (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/student-life/>) and Learning Skills Services at Western (<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>)

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can obtain information about how to obtain help for yourself or others through **Mental Health & Wellness at Brescia** (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>) and **Health and Wellness at Western**, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.
