



**REL 3111: Religion and Philosophy through Film**  
**Department of Philosophy**  
**University of Central Florida**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**

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Instructor:	Dr. Christy Flanagan-Feddon	Term:	Spring 2017
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### **Course Overview**

In this course we use film as a medium to explore different concepts in philosophy and religion. We will consider issues related to metaphysics, ethics, temporality, the “death of God,” feminism, the portrayal of religion in culture, the understanding of religious traditions through practice, and the representation of religion.

### **Course Objectives**

- i. Students will discover, identify, and explain issues related to religion and philosophy in both critical texts and film.
- ii. Students will actively engage in dialogue by critically discussing and evaluating important arguments in both religion and philosophy.
- iii. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of and critical thinking about philosophical and religious concepts.
- iv. Students will be able to identify theoretical and critical principles in philosophical and religious thinking from diverse historical and cultural contexts.
- v. Students will have a greater awareness of issues of religious and philosophical importance that are displayed in popular cinematic culture.

**Required Texts and Materials:** Articles accessed online through Canvas.

**Basis for Final Grade:** After the introduction, we will spend two weeks on each unit. In the first week, we will discuss the assigned readings in the discussion forum, and in the second week you will watch the assigned film, complete a quiz, and on 2 weeks of your choosing you will write a response paper.

Discussion Posts (20 points each): You will respond to the discussion topic (listed below in Course Schedule) for each unit. Discussion posts should be at least 350-400 words, interacting with the assigned texts and properly cited using APA format. After you make your initial post (15 points and due on Thursdays), you should respond to the posts of at least two of your classmates, raising substantive questions or challenging their assertions (5 points and due by Sunday of each week of discussion). **The discussion forums close on Sundays and no additional posts will be accepted.** Your responses must go beyond “nice post” or “good

work.” Ask a probing question of your classmate or make observations based on the readings to help further the discussion.

When making your initial post in the forum (responding to the question), please start a new thread. When responding to your classmates’ posts, please select the specific post, address the original author by first name in your response, and hit “REPLY”. This makes the discussion easier for all of us to follow in the forum.

Paper Assignments (25 points): You will write 2 papers out of 7 possible assignments (you have 5 weeks to “skip.”) Papers will be 2-3 pages, 12 pt Times New Roman font (approximately 750 words) responding to the paper topics found below in Course Schedule. I will return the papers to you with comments as soon as possible, but please allow up to 2 weeks to receive grades and feedback. Papers will be due on **Sundays** immediately following film screening weeks. You must turn the paper in on time when you choose to write. **Late papers will not be accepted. The dropbox will time out after the due date.**

Movie Quizzes (5 points): There will be a short quiz on each week of the movie screening, accessible through Webcourses. The quizzes will have a 15-minute time limit for completion. You must complete the quizzes on or before the day the papers are due that week (the Sunday immediately following the week of the film assignment).

Syllabus Quiz (5 points): The Registrar’s office needs to document student activity the first week of class in order for financial aid to be disbursed on time. Please review the syllabus and complete the brief syllabus quiz in order to satisfy this requirement no later than Friday, January 13 at 5:00 pm. If you complete the quiz after this time you will still receive your financial aid but it may be late. Even if you are not receiving financial aid you should complete this quiz in order to receive credit for the 5 points.

**Please print out the syllabus and take note of the due dates and plan accordingly.** You cannot make up an assignment if you forget the due date. This is a fast-paced, self-directed course and it is your responsibility to keep up with the assignments and when they are due. **Extensions are granted in rare, documented, emergency situations for the discussion posts only.** If you have a week that you are unable to write a paper that will count as a “skip” week.

**There will be NO extra credit offered in this class. You cannot write extra papers for extra credit.**

Discussion Posts =	160 points
Paper Assignments =	50 points
Quizzes=	35 points
Syllabus Quiz=	5
<b>TOTAL =</b>	<b>250 points possible</b>

<hr/> Grading Scale (%) <hr/>	
94-100	A
90-93.5	A-
87-89.5	B+
84-86.5	B

Grading Scale (%)	
80-83.5	B-
77-79.5	C+
74-76.5	C
70-73.5	C-
67-69.5	D+
64-66.5	D
60-63.5	D-
0 – 59.5	F

#### Grade Dissemination

You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades.

#### Course Policies:

**Late Work Policy:** This class operates in Eastern Time Zone (US & Canada) and assignments are due by 11:59 pm of the date specified in the course schedule. Late posts in the forum will be deducted by .5/pts per day late. The discussion forum closes at the end of the day on Sunday and no additional posts are accepted. If you have a special circumstance that prevents you from posting to the forum on time, then please notify me as soon as possible and I will determine extensions on a case-by-case basis.

Plan the weeks you choose to write the papers wisely. Make your choices early in the semester so you do not run out of opportunities to complete the papers. A late paper will count as a “skip” and will not be accepted.

**Grades of "Incomplete":** The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the “I” will automatically be recorded as an “F” on your transcript.

**Email:** Since this is a Webcourse, email will be our form of communication. In most circumstances, you can expect a response from me immediately, but please allow 24 hours for a response. If something arises and I will be away from email, I will let you know in advance. **If you have a question about an assignment or something else to do with the course, please send me an email rather than posting a question in Discussions or on Announcements.**

**Movie screening:** Most of the movies are accessible online through Webcourses. If a movie is not able to be streamed online (due to licensing issues), then I will notify you in advance and it will be your responsibility to obtain the movie through Netflix, Redbox, Amazon, etc.

**Course Access:** The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

**Professionalism Policy:** I look forward to lively and engaged discussions in the forum, although please keep your posts respectful and appropriate for the classroom environment at all times.

**Academic Conduct Policy:** Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University. In this course we will utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission.

Please see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> for information on APA citation format.

**University Writing Center:** The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu>, stop by MOD 608, or call 407.823.2197.

The dates and assignments listed in the syllabus are tentative, and can be changed at the discretion of the professor.