



The Search for Meaning – RELS 180

University Studies Program

Course Outline

COURSE IMPLEMENTATION DATE: January 2012
OUTLINE EFFECTIVE DATE: September 2018
COURSE OUTLINE REVIEW DATE: April 2023

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the question of meaning in life, especially in the modern setting. The disintegration of externally-provided meanings and the proposition of a universe without objective value poses specific issues and questions for individuals: Where can meaning be found? Is meaning merely subjective? What role does God, religion, spirituality, nature, science and society play? After examining the philosophical context which structures the question of modern meaning, we explore diverse solutions to it (religious, spiritual, atheistic etc.) Sources include Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Camus, Sartre, Freud, Jung, Viktor Frankl, Bertrand Russel and others.

Program Information: This course can be used as either a required course or an elective in several University Studies Programs. Refer to the College Program online calendar for additional information

Delivery: This course is delivered face to face or online

COTR Credits: 3

Hours for this course: 45 hours

Typical Structure of Instructional Hours:

Instructional Activity	Duration
Lecture Hours	45
Seminars / Tutorials	
Laboratory / Studio Hours	
Practicum / Field Experience Hours	
Other Contact Hours	
Total	45

Practicum Hours (if applicable):

Type of Practicum	Duration
On-the-job Experience	
Formal Work Experience	
Other	
Total	

Course Outline Author or Contact:

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Signature

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

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Department Head Signature

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EDCO

Valid from: September 2018 – April 2023

Education Council Approval Date

COURSE PREREQUISITES AND TRANSFER CREDIT

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

Flexible Assessment (FA):

Credit can be awarded for this course through FA Yes No

Transfer Credit: For transfer information within British Columbia, Alberta and other institutions, please visit <http://www.cotr.bc.ca/Transfer>

Students should also contact an academic advisor at the institution where they want transfer credit.

Prior Course Number: N/A

Equivalent Course: Students who have received COTR credit for PHIL 180 may not receive additional credit for RELS 180.

Textbooks and Required Resources:

Textbook selection varies by instructor and may change from year to year. At the Course Outline Effective Date the following textbooks were in use:

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. 1978. Penguin, United States of America

Camus, Albert. *The Outsider*. 1942; 1982. Penguin

Frankl, Victor. *Man's Search for Meaning*. 1946; 1984. Washington Square Press.

Tolstoy, Leo. *A Confession*. 1996. W.W. Norton and Company.

Course Reading Package

Please see the instructor's syllabus or check COTR's online text calculator

http://www.cotr.bc.ca/bookstore/cotr_web.asp?IDNumber=164 for a complete list of the currently required textbooks.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Reflect on the philosophical context that structures the modern pursuit of meaning
 - Reflect on how solutions to the question of meaning traditionally have fallen into theistic and atheistic camps
 - Explore arguments for an atheistic approach to meaning
 - Explore arguments for religious and/or spiritual approaches to meaning
 - Consider the implications of living in a world without objective values
 - Consider opposing analyses of human nature, in particular the degree to which human nature is void of, or laden with, spirituality
 - Consider specific arguments of diverse thinkers/traditions, such as Camus, Frankl, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, Buddhism, Freud, Jung, and Russell
 - Deepen one's appreciation of the question and issue of modern meaning
 - Increasingly be able to articulate personal views on the question of meaning
 - Construct thoughtful, logically consistent essays on the topic of meaning
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COURSE TOPICS:

- Introduction
- Theoretical Foundations: Pascal, Descartes, Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche
- Setting the Modern Tone:
 - Franz Kafka’s “A Hunger Artist”
 - Dostoevsky’s “Notes from Underground”
 - Kierkegaard’s “Leap of Faith”
 - *Satre’s Existentialism*
- Case Study 1: Camus’ “Outsider”
- Case Study 2: Frankl’s “Logotherapy”
- Case Study 3: “Tolstoy’s Confession”
- Case Study 4: Nietzsche’s “Thus Spoke Zarathustra”
- The Way of Nature (Communion with Nature)
- The Way of Ecstasy (A Jungian Response)
- The Way of Inner Freedom (A Buddhist Approach)
- The Way of Myth: “Follow Your Bliss” (Joseph Campbell)
- The Way of Science I: Freud’s Psychotherapy
- The Way of Science II: Russell’s Scientific Materialism
- Conclusions

OPTIONAL COURSE TOPICS:

- Eastern Insights: Interpretations of Meanings from Hinduism and Buddhism
- Indigenous Views of Meaning

See instructor’s syllabus for the detailed outline of weekly readings, activities and assignments.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT (Face to Face Delivery)

Assignments	% Of Total Grade
Essays (one short [10%]; one long [30%])	40%
Midterm	30%
Final Exam	<u>30%</u>
Total	100%

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT (Online Delivery)

Assignments	% Of Total Grade
Essays (one short [10%]; one long [30%])	40%
Midterms	30%
Final Exam	<u>30%</u>
Total	100%

Please see the instructor's syllabus for specific classroom policies related to this course, such as details of evaluation, penalties for late assignments, and use of electronic aids.

EXAM POLICY:

Students must attend all required scheduled exams that make up a final grade at the appointed time and place.

Individual instructors may accommodate for illness or personal crisis. Additional accommodation will not be made unless a written request is sent to and approved by the appropriate Department Head prior to the scheduled exam.

Any student who misses a scheduled exam without approval will be given a grade of "0" for the exam.

COURSE GRADE:

Course grades are assigned as follows:

Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
Mark (Percent)	≥ 90	89-85	84-80	79-76	75-72	71-68	67-64	63-60	59-55	54-50	< 50

A grade of "D" grants credit, but may not be sufficient as a prerequisite for sequential courses.

ACADEMIC POLICIES:

See www.cotr.bc.ca/policies for general college policies related to course activities, including grade appeals, cheating and plagiarism.

COURSE CHANGES:

Information contained in course outlines is correct at the time of publication. Content of the courses is revised on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance to changing educational, employment, and marketing needs. The instructor endeavours to provide notice of changes to students as soon as possible. The instructor reserves the right to add or delete material from courses.