



The Search for Meaning – RELS 180

University Studies Program

Course Outline

COURSE IMPLEMENTATION DATE: January 2012
OUTLINE EFFECTIVE DATE: September 2023
COURSE OUTLINE REVIEW DATE: April 2028

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the question of meaning in modern life. The breakdown of given meanings and the proposition of a universe without objective value poses several questions: Where is meaning found? Is it merely subjective? What role does God, religion, spirituality, nature, science, culture, society, and relationships play? We first explore the philosophical context that structures the question of modern meaning, then examine diverse solutions. Sources include Marx, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Camus, Sartre, Freud, Jung, Frankl, Russell, and Eastern, Indigenous, and Feminist perspectives.

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:

Vance Mattson, MA McGill

Signature

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

Department Head
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Department Head Signature

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EDCO

Valid from: September 2023 – April 2028

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.

Hesse, Hermann. *Demian*. 2008. BN Publishing

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 <https://textbook.cotr.bc.ca/> for a complete list of the currently required textbooks.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

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

- Describe the philosophical context that structures the modern search for meaning;
 - Compare the traditional division of meaning between theistic and atheistic orientations;
 - Explain critical approaches to meaning, especially those of Marx and Nietzsche;
 - Discuss how Indigenous identity and communities use their worldviews in opposition and resistance to settler-colonial positions;
 - Differentiate varied analyses of human nature/being as informative of theories of meaning;
 - Appraise diverse theories of meaning in terms of origin, limitations, and utility; and
 - Construct arguments and theories on modern meaning.
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COURSE TOPICS:

- Introduction and Theoretical Foundations
- The Modern Tone: Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Sartre
- The Classic Debate: Theism Versus Atheism
- Case Studies: Camus, Frankl, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, Hesse
- Critical Views: Marx, Fanon, and Decolonization
- The Ways of: Nature; Ecstasy (A Jungian Response); Inner Freedom (A Buddhist Approach); Mysticism; Myth (Joseph Campbell)
- Conclusions

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

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Assignments	% Of Total Grade
Attendance and Participation	10%
Assignments	10%
Essays	<u>30%</u>
Exams	<u>50%</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.