



RELI 489: Research Essay CRN 1559

Trimesters 1 and 2, 2011

Religious Studies

School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies

Victoria University

1 Basic Information

- Meeting place: To be arranged with your supervisor.
- Meeting Time: Wednesdays To be arranged with your supervisor.
- Start date: Feb 29, 2011.
- Coordinator: Dr. Joseph Bulbulia: Email: joseph.bulbulia@vuw.ac.nz tel: 463 5043, office HU 322. Office hours Monday 2pm→3pm and by appointment.
- A website of materials related to RELI 489 is being maintained in Blackboard. You are expected to visit the course site every week <http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz>.¹
- Final work must be submitted to Blackboard.
- Students are responsible for keeping copies of all submitted work.
- Students are responsible for assuring that their work has been successfully uploaded to Blackboard.
- Reli 489 will be assessed by a 10,000 word essay, 100% of a student's final mark.
- Students are expected to have nominated and met with their supervisors by April 1, 2011.
- Students are expected to provide their nominated supervisor's names to the course coordinator (joseph.bulbulia@vuw.ac.nz) by April 4, 2011.
- Students are expected to submit a 1000 abstract and bibliography by June 24, 2011 (This outline will not be assessed).
- Students are expected to confirm submission of this abstract and bibliography to the course coordinator (joseph.bulbulia@vuw.ac.nz) by June 27, 2011.
- The final research essay is due October 28, 2011.

¹Your user name is the one issued to you by Student Computing Services. Your password is your Student ID Number. If in doubt, please contact the Student Computing Services Help Desk, 463-5050 (extension 5050 from VUW phones) or by email scs-help@vuw.ac.nz

Trimester dates

Trimester 1

Teaching dates: 28 February→3 June 2011.

Mid-trimester break: 18 April→1 May 2011.

Study week: 6 June→10 June 2011.

Examination/Assessment period: 10 June→2 July 2011.

Trimester 2

Teaching dates: 11 July→16 October.

Mid-trimester break: 22 August→4 September.

Study week: 17 October→21 October 2011.

Examination/Assessment period: 25 October→13 November.

Withdrawing dates

Information about withdrawing from courses and refunds may be found at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Course delivery

The delivery component of this course consists of: **Regular meetings with a student's advisor**

Communication of additional information

- Additional information or information on changes will be conveyed to students by Blackboard.
- Because information about the course will change from time-to-time, students are expected to check Blackboard for updates at least once a week.
- Urgent updates will be sent through Email (Students are required either to check their VUW email, or set up forwarding with ITS to an account that they do use and check regularly).

Content

This course provides a guided introduction to scholarly research in the Study of Religions. Candidates select a topic within one of the areas of staff expertise and are supervised by a nominated member of staff. Students who wish to pursue this option are asked to discuss their interests and research topic with the Honours Coordinator.

Learning objectives

1. **Knowledge of Discipline:** to learn how to produce an original research article for a scholarly audience in study of religions by attempting such a production.
2. **Writing and verbal expression:** to promote clear, well-structured, persuasive writing that is grounded in scholarly evidence.

Students passing this course will be better able to write an original scholarly research article in the study of religions. They will also improve on their ability to write persuasive arguments grounded in reliable evidence and reasoning.

Readings

All readings are to be determined in light of the specific topic a student chooses within one of the areas of staff expertise. Students will be largely responsible for finding their own readings: developing the skills required to do so is a significant component of the course.

Research essays

- Students are assigned a 10,000 word scholarly essay.
- Each essay should be no more than 12,000 words and no fewer than 10,000 words inclusive of notes and bibliography.

Marking criteria

- 33.3% for clarity.
- 33.3% for critical engagement.
- 33.4% for creativity.

Due dates

- Students are expected to have nominated and met with their supervisors by April 1, 2011.
- Students are expected to provide their nominated supervisor's names to the course coordinator (joseph.bulbulia@vuw.ac.nz) by April 4, 2011.
- Students are expected to submit a 1000 abstract and bibliography by June 24, 2011 (This outline will not be assessed).
- Students are expected to confirm submission of this abstract and bibliography to the course coordinator (joseph.bulbulia@vuw.ac.nz) by June 27, 2011.
- The final research essay is due October 28, 2011..

Penalties

- No response paper received after its final due date will be assessed.

Minimal requirements

The minimal requirements to gain a pass in this course:

- Submit a final research essay to Blackboard by October 28, 2011.

Withdraw dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

2 The Course Schedule

After selecting a supervisor and topic, students are encouraged to meet regularly with their supervisor. As a rule of thumb, the programme suggests that such meetings should be arranged every fortnight.

However students and supervisors are encouraged to develop a plan that is tailored to each student's needs, which may require more or less frequent meetings.

3 Important Information

Class representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, to the Course Coordinator, and to the class. The class representative will provide a communication channel to the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. Someone else's work means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

General university policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcademic/Publications.aspx

More information

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.