

RRE4206 – Ritual in Early Judaism, Christianity and Islam

Assessment Guidelines

Brief description of the course

This course is an investigation of the worship traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam throughout the first millennium CE. The first part of the course is intended to give students a general knowledge of ritual theory and terminology and of methods in ritual studies. During the second part of the course, we focus on selected themes in a comparative perspective. Themes for analysis and discussion are ritual meals and fasts, purification, initiation and rites of passage, prayer, pilgrimage, mortuary ritual, hymns, ritual participation, ritual efficacy and the relationship between ritual and materiality. There will be an emphasis on applying ritual and liturgical theory to the examples that we study.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course students will:

- acquire knowledge and understanding of ritual practices and concepts in Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the first millennium CE.
- acquire an understanding of how these historical practices and concepts relate to contemporary practices and concepts in Abrahamic religious traditions.
- be able to compare these three Abrahamic worship traditions and recognize their similarities and differences. This will enhance the student's general knowledge and understanding of these three religions.
- acquire knowledge and understanding of ritual and liturgical theory and will develop a skill in applying this theory to concrete empirical examples.

Formal Examination Requirements

The student writes a paper between eight and ten pages in length (19,200 to 24,000 characters including spaces and references but excluding bibliography and table of contents) on a subject, question or material chosen by the student and approved by the teacher.

Grading Criteria

The exam paper will be graded in accordance with the University of Oslo's grading scale: <https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grades/index.html>

The scale has six steps from A, "Excellent", to F, "Fail". An E, "Sufficient", is a passed grade.

Criteria for the assessment of the exam paper should be:

- The exam paper demonstrates that the student has general knowledge and understanding of ritual practices and concepts in Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the first millennium CE.
- Based on this general knowledge and understanding (see above), the exam paper demonstrates that the student has good or very good knowledge and understanding of particular selected ritual concept(s) or practice(s) in Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the first millennium CE.
- The exam paper demonstrates the student's ability to select an example of a ritual practice or concept for investigation, to select one or more theories with which to study the selected data, and to formulate a research question related to the selected data.
- The exam paper demonstrates that the student has good knowledge and understanding of selected ritual and liturgical theories, and that the student is able to apply ritual and liturgical theory to selected data (such as a source text, a structure or an artefact) in a thoughtful, critical and relatively independent way.
- The exam paper demonstrates the student's ability to present and discuss their findings and their argument in a critical and cogent manner.
- The exam paper demonstrates the student's ability to produce a piece of academic writing that is fair, unbiased, critical and self-critical in its presentation of data, in its summary of scholarly standpoints and arguments, and in its view of religious traditions and their literature and material culture.

Academic Integrity

The student is expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials earned by the student are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. Such behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is the responsibility of the student to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examination

For more information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please consult the University of Oslo's website: <https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/sources-citations/>