



## RELS-180 – The Search for Meaning

University Arts and Science

**Effective Term & Year:** Fall 2024

**Course Outline Review Date:** 2029-04-01

**Program Area:** Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

### 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 Peoples' 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 Methods:** On-campus (Face-to-Face), Online

**Credit Type:** College of the Rockies Credits

**Credits:** 3

**Course type/s:** Humanities

### Instructional Activity and Hours:

Activity	Hours
Classroom, Directed Studies or Online Instruction	45

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Seminar/Tutorials	
Laboratory/Studio	
Practicum/Field Experience	
Co-op/Work Experience	
Other	
Total	45

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**Course Requisites:**

None

**Flexible Assessment:** No**Course Transfer Credit:**

For information about receiving transfer credit for courses taken at either British Columbia or Alberta institutions, please see <https://www.bctransferguide.ca/> or <https://transferalberta.alberta.ca> . For more transfer credit information, please visit <https://www.cotr.bc.ca/Transfer>

All requests for course transfer credit from institutions in British Columbia or elsewhere should go to the College of the Rockies Enrolment Services office.

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**Textbook 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, Nietzsche, and Feminism.
- 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.
- Construct arguments and theories on modern meaning.

## 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, Decolonization, and Feminism
- 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 Assessments

**Assessment Type: On-Campus (face-to-face) and Online, or Hybrid**

<b>Assessment Type</b>	<b>% of Total Grade</b>
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Attendance and Participation	10%
Assignments	10%
Essays	30%
Exams (2, 25% each)	50%
Total	100%

## Grade Scheme

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
>=90	89-85	84-80	79-76	75-72	71-68	67-64	63-60	59-55	54-50	<50

**Pass requirements:** None

**Evaluation Notes:** A grade of “D” grants credit, but may not be sufficient as a prerequisite for sequential courses.

### Exam Attendance:

Students must attend all scheduled exams at the appointed time and place. Instructors may approve an alternate exam to accommodate an illness or personal crisis. Department heads will consider other written requests. Any student who misses a scheduled exam without prior approval will receive a “0” on the exam.

### Academic Policies:

College of the Rockies policies related to courses can be found at <https://cotr.bc.ca/about-us/college-policies/> and include the following:

- Policy 2.4.3 Students with Documented Disabilities
- Policy 2.4.4 Student Conduct (plagiarism, other cheating, behavioral misconduct)
- Policy 2.5.8 Academic Performance
- Policy 2.5.3 Grade Appeal
- Policy 2.4.9 Student Concerns Re Faculty

### Equivalent Course(s) and Course Code Changes

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

### Course Changes:

The College of the Rockies updates course outlines regularly to meet changing educational,

employment and marketing needs. The instructor will notify students in writing of any updates to this outline during the semester. The instructor reserves the right to revise, add or delete material while meeting the learning outcomes of this course outline.