

The College of the Humanities: Religion
RELI 4850A/5850F: Seminar on Gender, Sexuality, Religion and Public Life

Professor A. Geissinger

Office: 2A41 Paterson Hall

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00-12:00 am,

Office Phone: (613) 520-2600, ext. 3108

Or by appointment

Classes: Tuesdays, 11:35 am-2:25 pm (2A46 Paterson Hall)

Course Description

Gender and sexuality are central elements of religion and public life. This seminar course examines several aspects of this complex topic, with a particular focus on how some contemporary Jewish, Christian, Mormon fundamentalist (FLDS) and Muslim communities and religious discourses construct gender categories, sexualities, families, and communities, as well as the bodies of individual believers, and the varying ways that such constructions intersect with public life.

NOTE: It is assumed that all students who take this course have already taken at least RELI 1710 (Introduction to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and that as a result, they are broadly familiar with the basic beliefs, practices and history of these three religious traditions. Any student lacking this background is expected to acquire it through extensive reading.

Course Evaluation: Students registered in 4850

- Active class participation—15%
- Leading class discussion based on one day's assigned readings—10%
- Six response papers (1-2 pages each)—30 percent
- Paper proposal—10%
- Research paper (11-14 pages)—35%

Course Evaluation: Students registered in 5850

- Active class participation—15%
- Leading class discussion based on one day's assigned readings—10%
- Six response papers (2-3 pages each)—30 percent
- Paper proposal—10%
- Research paper (14-17 pages)—35%

NOTE: The readings assigned for this course are fairly heavy, and as this is a seminar course, regular attendance and informed participation are essential. Before deciding to take this course, students should consider whether their other time commitments will permit them to carry out its requirements.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity

“Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, is destructive to the values of the university, and risks harming the university’s reputation as a place of learning and innovation. Furthermore, it is unfair and discouraging to those students who pursue their studies honestly.”

It is expected that all students are fully familiar with and abide by Carleton’s policies relating to plagiarism and other issues regarding academic integrity.

For details, see:

<http://carleton.ca/studentsaffairs/academic-integrity/>

Course Readings

Links to the course readings are available through cuLearn. These are mostly library resources—therefore, for the links to work, you need to be either on campus, or signed into the library website. Please bring the readings to class with you on the days for which they are assigned.

Participation

As this is a seminar course, doing the assigned readings and coming to class prepared to discuss them is expected of all students, as is regular class attendance. A student who does not come to class regularly, or who routinely comes unprepared, cannot be regarded as having taken the course.

Class attendance will be taken and participation will be graded (1% at the end of each class for active participation). If you are absent, participation marks cannot be made up in any way.

When preparing for class, write down questions which the readings bring to mind, particularly focusing on the central issues for this course: How are gender, sexuality, religion and public life being represented in this reading? Why do they matter here? What purpose(s) does the writer appear to have in mind by highlighting (or downplaying) them? What sources and methodological approaches are being utilized and how insightful are they?

Leading class discussions

At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up for the class that they will lead the discussion. Leading the discussion must involve the following: (1) a 15-minute presentation about one of the secondary source readings assigned for the class, which briefly summarizes the main issues that it raises, highlights at least two critical questions that it raises for you in light of the course materials, and critically evaluates the central arguments made/methodologies that it uses, (2) followed by class discussion, which the presenter leads, and (3) fielding questions.

The Response Papers

The response papers must contain (1) a clear summary of the several of the main points made in all of the various readings assigned for the class, and (2) at least two critical questions that these readings raise, in light of the course materials. One of the response papers is to be done for the class that you lead the discussion; the other four are open to your choice. They are to be typed, double-spaced, with 12-point type. All response papers are due at the beginning of the class which they are associated with.

The Paper Proposal and the Research Paper

Topics must be directly related to this course, and approved by the professor before you proceed. This is a research paper, which must be written in standard essay format, with proper citation and bibliography, following the Chicago style.

The paper proposal must contain: a working title, a thesis statement, an outline of the paper, as well as an annotated bibliography containing at least seven sources. Each student must present their paper proposal in class on the day that proposals are due.

The annotated bibliography must provide complete citations of the sources used in the essay. Each source is to be followed by a paragraph, explaining why it was selected and how it will be used. Students are expected to make extensive use of academic, peer-reviewed secondary sources in their research papers, and to use all primary source materials analytically. The use of sources will be discussed in detail in class.

The due date for submitting the paper proposal is given in the course schedule (see below for policies regarding late submissions). Failure to submit the proposal by the deadline will mean that your research paper will not be accepted, and will therefore receive a grade of zero.

Papers which do not follow the instructions given in class will be returned ungraded for revision and resubmission. Late penalties will accrue from the due date, regardless of when the problem was discovered.

All students will give a class presentation on their completed research papers in the last class of the semester. This presentation includes fielding questions and leading a discussion.

Lateness Policy

All written work is due at the beginning of class on the dates specified.

Late response papers can only receive a maximum of half the grade, and will not be accepted for marking later than two days past the due date. If the written assignment or the research essay are submitted late, 2 marks per day (including weekends) will be deducted, unless an extension has been prearranged with the professor at least a week in advance of the due date. Any requests for extensions must be accompanied by acceptable and verifiable documentation (police reports, death certificates, etc).

Please note that under all circumstances, the paper proposal must be submitted within five (5) days of the due date, or the research paper will not be accepted for marking.

Email communication

Please be aware that in order to ensure compliance with the federal privacy act known as FIPPA, Carleton communications policy states that faculty may only communicate with students through their Carleton Connect accounts. Therefore, ensure that any emails you may send me are from your Carleton Connect account. Otherwise, your email will not receive a response.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Sept. 8: Introduction to the study of gender, sexuality, religion and public life

Readings: Lincoln's theses; Mohanty, "Under western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses," 333-58.

I. Religious constructions of gender categories, sexualities, and families and public life

Sept. 15: Analyzing categories such as "gender" "sexuality" "family" and "community"

Readings: Wolosky, "Foucault and Jewish feminism: the mehitzah as dividing practice," 9-32
Najmabadi, "Genus of sex or the sexing of *jins*," 211-31; Puar, "Queer times, queer assemblages," 121-39.

Sept. 22: Fundamentalist Mormon polygamies: between religious discourses, lived realities, and public life

Readings: Embry, "Effects of polygamy on Mormon women," 56-61; *A guidebook for law enforcement and human services agencies*, 59-65, 5-51.

Sept. 29: Muslim polygamies: contested religious ideals, internal debates, and public life

Readings: Philips and Jones, *Polygamy in Islam*; Al-Sherbiny, "The case of the first wife in polygamy," 18-26.

Oct. 6: LGBTQ identities, ancient texts, and contemporary religious discourses I

Readings: (from the Bible) Genesis chapters 18-19; Reimer, "'She sleeps with her girlfriend': A twentieth century excommunication," 213-27; Thomas and Olson, "Evangelical elites' changing responses to homosexuality 1960-2009," 239-72.

Oct. 13: LGBTQ identities, ancient texts, and contemporary religious discourses II

Readings: Wilcox, "When Sheila's a lesbian: religious individualism among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Christians," 497-13; (from the Qur'an) 11:74-83, 26:160-75; Boellstorff, "Between religion and desire: being Muslim and *gay* in Indonesia," 575-85.

Oct. 20: **Paper proposals due today; class presentations of paper proposals**

Oct. 27: Fall Break (no class)

II. Religious constructions of believing bodies

Nov. 3: Ritual approaches to bodily functions and gender

Readings: Reinhart, "Impurity/no danger," 1-24; Steinberg, "From a 'pot of filth' to a 'hedge of roses' (and back): Changing theorizations of menstruation in Judaism," 5-26.

Nov. 10: Gender, individual bodies, and constructions of sexual moralities

Readings: Fahs, "Daddy's little girls: On the perils of chastity clubs, purity balls, and ritualized abstinence," 116-42; Unnever, Bartkowski and Cullen, "God imagery and opposition to abortion and capital punishment," 307-22.

Nov. 17: Gendered bodies and religious dress codes

Readings: Fuchs, "Hair covering for single women: A new reading of Mizrahi halakhic rulings," 35-59; Arthur, "'Clothing is a window to the soul': The social control of women in a Holdeman Mennonite community," 11-30; Siraj, "Meanings of modesty and the hijab amongst Muslim women in Glasgow," 716-31.

Nov. 24: Gender, sexuality, violence, and public life

Readings: Keefe, "Rapes of women/wars of men," 79-97; Olwan, "Gendered violence, cultural otherness, and honour crimes in Canadian national logics," 533-55.

Dec. 1: Preparation for research paper presentations

Dec. 8: Research paper presentations; course conclusion

- Note that the research paper is due by Dec. 15, 4 pm, in hard copy in the drop box in the Religion department

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 7, 2015**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 8, 2016**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by **Nov. 6, 2015** for the Fall term and **March 6, 2016** for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please [contact](#) the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of a final assignment or take home, in courses without a final examination, must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125	4 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library