

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF THE HUMANITIES
RELI 1731A FALL 2009
VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE**

Instructor:	Angela Sumegi	TA:	TBA
Office:	2A53 PA	Office hours:	Mondays 11:30am – 1:30pm
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Lectures:	Mondays 8:35 – 11:25 a.m.	Location:	303 PA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will explore the nature of religious experience and the ways in which such experiences are interpreted. Our study begins with a review of various definitions of religion in order to better understand what could be meant by “religious” experience. In examining the experiential aspect of religion, we will first consider the non-literate mode of religious expression that scholars categorize as ‘primal’ or shamanic. Students will then discuss readings that represent the soteriological (salvation-oriented) world-views found in the major world religions as well as readings on the nature of mysticism. Finally, in Hesse’s novel *Siddhartha* we will explore themes relating to shamanic world-views, belief in individual salvation, and mystic experience. Video and audio material will form part of the course content and students will have an opportunity to do some personal exploration of meditative states for themselves.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha*. (New Directions, 1957)
Available from Carleton University Bookstore

- *Varieties of Religious Experience* RELI 1731 Course Pack 2009
Available from Carleton University Bookstore

COURSE CALENDAR:

- **Sept. 14** **Course Introduction**
Awareness Assignment

- **Sept. 21** **The Nature of Religious Experience**
Reading: #1 Kessler, “Experiencing the Sacred”
 #2 Otto, from “The Idea of the Holy”

- **Sept. 28** **The Ancient Matrix**
Reading: #3 Gill, “Non-literacy and Native American Religions.”
 #4 Lame Deer, “Symbols all around”

Yom Kippur: For students who miss this class due to the Jewish High Holidays, please try to get notes from a classmate. You may email me any questions regarding the reading.

▪ **Oct. 5** **Becoming a Shaman**
Reading: #5 Leonard Crow Dog, “The Quest for Vision”
 #6 Jakobsen, “The Greenlandic Angakkoq”
 [AWARENESS ASSIGNMENT DUE]

OCTOBER 12 **THANKSGIVING STATUTORY HOLIDAY**

▪ **Oct. 19** **Shamanic Experience: Trance and Possession**
Reading: #7 Lewis, “Trance and Possession”
 #8 Anisimov, “The Shaman’s Tent”
 [AWARENESS ASSIGNMENT SECOND CHANCE]

OCTOBER 26 **IN-CLASS EXAM (2 hrs)**

▪ **Nov. 2** **Western traditions and the idea of Heaven**
Reading: #9 McDannell & Lang, “The Dawn of Heaven”

▪ **Nov. 9** **Eastern traditions and the idea of liberation**
Reading: #10 Zimmer, “The Parade of Ants”

▪ **Nov. 16** **What is Mystical Experience?**
Reading: #11 Katz, from “Language, Epistemology and Mysticism”

▪ **Nov. 23** **The Language of the Mystics**
 Read #5 again
 #12 Green, “Living Between the Worlds”
 Handouts
 (TERM PAPER DUE)

▪ **Nov. 30** **Themes from *Siddhartha***
Reading: Hesse, *Siddhartha*
 (TERM PAPER SECOND CHANCE)

▪ **Dec. 7** **Conclude themes from *Siddhartha***
Reading: Hesse, *Siddhartha*

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

Awareness assignment due Oct. 5 or 19	10%
In-class exam Oct. 26	30%
Term paper (approx. 1500 words) due Nov. 23 or 30	30%
Final exam, during formal exam period	30%

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Please consult your TA as the first point of contact for questions.
2. There are no grade-raising exams or assignments for this course.
3. The Awareness Assignment will not be accepted after the second chance date and you will forfeit the 10%.
4. If you miss the midterm due to illness or family crisis or emergency, in order to be allowed to write a make-up exam, you must provide a letter signed by your doctor or minister or counsellor stating the reason for missing the exam.
5. Term papers handed in after the second chance date without prior arrangement will be penalized 5% per day.
6. If you miss the final exam, you are required to apply for a deferral from the University.

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 range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of “F” for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

GRADING SYSTEM

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

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

F	Failure. No academic credit
WDN	Withdrawn from the course
ABS	Absent from the final examination
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 November 16, 2009. The last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter (full year) and Winter term courses is March 12, 2010.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: 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. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Religious obligation: 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. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

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 are 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 I receive 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 the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term. For more details visit the PMC website: http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/acad_accom.html

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to complete a **final** term paper or write a **final** examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply in writing within five working days to the Registrar’s Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar’s Office will be considered.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Classics and 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	500 Unicentre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	4 th floor Library
Learning Commons 520-1125	4 th floor Library