

College of the Humanities: Humanities Program

HUMS 4901A

SAINTS AND PILGRIMS

Many societies and religions identify certain individuals as having a form of special status, or as worthy of special memory, whether it be through a formal process of canonization (for example, in certain branches of Christianity) or a more popular public acclamation (e.g. Elvis Presley, Princess Diana). Both instances involve forms of cult practice, and often special significance is attached to the site of a person's grave, the location of their physical remains (e.g. Jim Morrison or Oscar Wilde in Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris), or to physical objects with which they had been associated.

This seminar will examine the notion of the "holy person" or "saint", primarily but not exclusively in the context of Christianity, with a focus on the cult practices that have evolved, and that are manifested in written texts as well as works of art and architecture. A special emphasis will be given to the practice of pilgrimage to the "shrine" of a "saint". Questions to be examined include: How are "saints" identified, either formally or informally? What issues are important in hagiographic texts? What is the nature and function of relics? How does the architecture of saints' shrines relate to the particular function of the building? And how have these practices changed over time?

The seminar will meet on twelve consecutive Tuesdays from 2:30 to 5:30, beginning September 13th and finishing on November 29th. In the first half of the term, class meetings will comprise a combination of lectures and discussions of related material, aimed at introducing the general theme, providing some background for the research papers, and examining some "case studies". These will also include weekly readings from Peter Brown's *The Cult of the Saints: its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*. Copies of this book will be provided to each student. Over the course of the term, all members of the seminar will be required to undertake a research paper, focusing on the cult of a particular saint (or related group of saints), either "religious" or "secular" -- and in the second half of the course students will present to the class an oral summary of their findings (approx. 45-50 minutes), to be followed by a discussion. Based on an estimated class population of about 10 students, it is anticipated that two students will present their projects each week, commencing Tuesday October 25th. Topics must be discussed with and approved by the course instructor in advance.

Instructor: John Osborne
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Office hours: "Drop in" office hours will be held usually Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00, EXCEPT Thursday October 27 (replacing Tuesday October 25) and Thursday November 24 (replacing Tuesday October 22), again 10:00-11:00. Other times by appointment.

Course Evaluation

1. Short in-class quizzes (5 x 8%), based on the weekly readings, will be given in each Tuesday class from September 20th to October 18th.
2. Short presentation (20%): each student will be required to give a brief oral presentation (approx. 10-15 minutes) on a topic to be assigned the previous week. Two presentations will be made each Tuesday from September 20th to October 18th (inclusive). A short written *précis* (2 pages maximum) of the oral report is due the following Tuesday.
3. Research Paper (40%): following the oral presentation, a final written version will be due **Tuesday December 5th** at the latest. Approximate length: 15 pages double-spaced, not including footnotes and bibliography, 12-point font. Topics may be selected by the student, in consultation with the instructor. Late papers are subject to substantial penalty.
4. Attendance and Participation: **Please note that attendance at student presentations is mandatory, and persistent failure to do so may result in a failing grade. While no specific percentage is awarded for participation in the classroom discussions, the instructor reserves the right to adjust final numerical scores upwards or downwards to a maximum of 10% based on this criterion.**

Please be advised that E-mail submission of written work is perfectly acceptable, as long as the attachment document arrives in a format that I can open. (MS Word is preferred!) As papers can occasionally go astray, it is imperative that students keep a file copy of all work submitted.

HOW DO I GRADE PAPERS?

- F the paper demonstrates an unacceptable grasp of the topic
- D the paper demonstrates a barely acceptable understanding of the topic, but there is considerable confusion about basic ideas and/or serious writing and organizational problems
- C the paper demonstrates a basic knowledge of the topic, but is poorly organized, inadequately researched, and probably contains some errors of fact

- B- the paper demonstrates a good knowledge of the topic, but may not be carefully organized and/or may not have enough specific detail or documentation
- B the paper demonstrates a good knowledge of the topic, but lacks depth in research or analysis, and offers no evidence of original thought
- B+ the paper demonstrates a good knowledge of the topic, is relatively free from error, and shows touches of penetrating research and/or originality
- A- the paper demonstrates an outstanding grasp of the topic, is fully researched, and offers clear evidence of some original and/or critical thought
- A the paper demonstrates an outstanding grasp of the topic, is particularly well researched, and offers fresh insights
- A+ I cannot think of how this paper could be easily improved!

In reading student papers, I look for a comprehensive and succinct presentation of the general topic, demonstrating:

1. knowledge of, and understanding of, the relevant historical and contextual data. Are the facts correct? Has all the important evidence been brought into the discussion? Is the author cognizant of any factors which may condition how we can use the "evidence"?
2. knowledge of, and comprehension of, the secondary literature, including the ability to read critically. Who has said what? What are the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments? What are the questions which remain unanswered?

I don't expect that you will solve all the problems, but I do expect that you will master the topic sufficiently to be able to recognize what the issues are, where they stand in current scholarship, and perhaps to have some ideas about what needs to be done in the future to move the discussion forward.

Reading: The best introduction to the general phenomenon of the origins of the cult of the saints in Christianity remains Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: its rise and function in Latin Christianity*. Copies of this book will be provided.

Some other basic bibliography which may be of use:

Saints and their Cults: studies in religious sociology, folklore, and history, ed. S. Wilson (Cambridge, 1983)
 BX 4655.2 S23
 [remarkable for its enormous annotated bibliography]

Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe, ed. R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski (Ithaca, 1991)
BX 4662 I42

David Hugh Farmer, *Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (3rd ed.) Ref BR 1710 F3
[note: the Library's copy of the original 1978 edition is in the stacks and presumably
may be borrowed: BR 1710 F3. This book is also available on-line as an E-resource.]

The Penguin Dictionary of Saints BX 4655.8 A8

Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie BV 150 L4 8 vols
[in Library Storage facility – must be requested]

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. 5, 2011**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 5, 2012**.

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.11, 2011 for the Fall term and March 7, 2012 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 assignments 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