

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
College of the Humanities-Religion Program

SEMINAR IN THE DISCIPLINE

RELI 5801F – (Fall 2018); Mondays 8:35-11:25, PA 2A46

Professor Johannes C. Wolfart

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

“This mandatory seminar introduces students to graduate level work in Religious Studies. A faculty team addresses current debates and practices...”

[<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/courses/RELI/>]

This course fulfills the function of a traditional “proseminar” [on the meanings of which, see <https://www.chronicle.com/forums/index.php?topic=15990.0>]. Ultimately, a proseminar should provide the basis for a conversation between scholars in any field even while they are each preparing to work on their own particular research topics. Here, its purpose is to provide advancing scholars with an opportunity to explore the shared challenges of scholarship in the disciplinary sub-field “religion and public life.” To that end, we will read and discuss certain works together, with an eye towards the larger theoretical issues; we will also consider the common practices of scholarship in our field, including in conversation with a range of working scholars on faculty at Carleton.

Finally, the seminar presupposes your acceptance of the principles of the modern research university, and especially: **1) that a seminar differs fundamentally from a lecture course; 2) that the academic study of religion is not the same thing as confessional apologetic or pastoral theology.** Your understanding and appreciation of such principles will hopefully develop further during over the course of the seminar.

EVALUATION

As is conventional with a proseminar, performance will be evaluated solely on the basis of contributions to seminar discussions (i.e. term papers or examinations are not customary in proseminars), using a pass-fail grading scheme. It is for this reason that attendance is mandatory. More than minimal non-attendance be considered unacceptable performance. Any member of the seminar who arrives after 9am or leaves before 11am will be considered absent. Since it is impossible to make up a missed seminar, a member who does not attend regularly cannot really be said to have taken the course. **Therefore, any member who is absent from more than 2 meetings of the seminar will not receive course credit.** In other words, all members of the seminar must be present (and active!) for (minimally!) 10 meetings of the seminar. Period.

READINGS

All required readings are available to seminar members via the MacOdrum Library (Reserves), or electronically. Please note that readings are a prerequisite for seminar participation. Your ability to contribute effectively will depend on having done the common reading. Furthermore, all members of the seminar are encouraged to “read around” the seminar as much as possible, and to share their experience with the seminar.

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours will be held Monday and Tuesday from 1-2pm.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

Carleton communications policy states that faculty must conduct email communications with students only through their Carleton email accounts. Please be advised, further, that students can normally expect up to a 24hour turn-around time on e-mail communication, especially during high volume times (i.e. before examinations, at essay time, etc.).

SEMINAR MEETING SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

[please note that further guests, including the subject librarian for Religion, Denize Tan, will be added at a later date]

Week I (10 September) – **General introduction and discussion: who or what makes a “seminar in the discipline”?** Read: Bonnie G. Smith, “Gender and the Practices of Scientific History: The Seminar and Archival Research in the Nineteenth Century,” *American Historical Review* 100 (1995), 1150-1176.

Week II (17 September) – **‘Conjunction, what’s your function?’: How seriously do we take what happens after the ‘and’?** Read: “Russell T. McCutcheon, “Redescribing ‘Religion and...’” Film: Teaching the Insider/Outsider Problem,” *Teaching Theology and Religious Studies* 1 (1998), 99-110 [reprinted in: idem, *Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion* (SUNY Press, 2001), 179-199.]; Lori G. Beaman, “Between the Public and the Private: Governing Religious Expressions” in: S. Lefebvre and L. Beaman, eds., *Religion in the Public Sphere: Canadian Case Studies* (Toronto: UTP, 2014), 44-65.

Week III (24 September) – **From genealogies of “religion” to genealogies of “public life”?** Read: Talal Asad, “Toward a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual,” in: idem, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 55-79; Peter van der Veer, “The modernity of religion,” *Social History* 20 (1995), 365-371[= Review Article on Asad’s book]; Craig Martin’s interview with Talal Asad, here: <http://bulletin.equinoxpub.com/2015/11/genealogies-of-religion-twenty-years-on-an-interview-with-talal-asad/>

Week IV (1 October) – **Differentiating “public life” from the “rational public sphere” (and other enchanted publics).** Read: Harold Mah, “Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians,” *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 153-182; Simon Susen, “Critical Notes on Habermas’s Theory of the Public Sphere” *Sociological Analysis* 5 (2011), 37-62.

THANKSGIVING

For optional consideration (if you don’t want to be stuck talking to relatives the whole time): Margit Warburg, “Much Ado about a Christmas Tree: A Conflict Involving Danish Civil Religion,” *Implicit Religion* 20 (2017) [DOI: [10.1558/imre.32878](https://doi.org/10.1558/imre.32878)].

Week V (15 October) – Aisha Geissinger

FALL BREAK

Week VI (29 October) – Kim Stratton

Week VII (5 November) – Zeba Crook...suggests reading: Judith M. Lieu, *Jewish Identity in the Graeco-Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), Chapter 3.

Week VIII (12 November) – Chris Jensen...suggests reading: Robert F. Campany, “On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and Early Medieval China),” *History of Religions* 42 (2003), 287-319.

Week IX (19 November) – Deidre Butler; Richard Mann...suggests reading: Richard Mann, “Media framing and the myth of religious violence: The othering of Sikhs in *The Times of India*,” *Sikh Formations* 12 (2016), 120-141.

Week X (26 November) – Angela Sumegi

Week XI (3 December) – Shawna Dolansky... suggests reading: Shawna Dolansky, “Rejecting “Patriarch”: Reflections on Feminism, Biblical Scholarship, and Social Perspective” *forthcoming* [available via CULearn]

Week XII (7 December*) –

* please note that 7 December is a Friday, but Carleton considers it a Monday, in lieu of



University Regulations for 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.

Academic Integrity at Carleton

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the internet. More information can be found [here](#).

Academic Accommodation Policy

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 the instructor 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 see the [Student Guide](#)

Religious obligation: write to the instructor 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 see the [Student Guide](#)

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at

613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Grading System at Carleton University

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion is below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value. Where the course credit is greater or less than one credit, the grade points are adjusted proportionately.

[Grading System](#)

Course Sharing Websites and Copyright

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or

distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Statement on Class Conduct

The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

Deferred Term Work

In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work.

Students who claim illness, injury or other extraordinary circumstances beyond their control as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor and **in all cases this must occur no later than three (3.0) working days after the term work was due.**

The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. More information is available [in the calendar](#).

Deferred Final Exams

Students who are unable to write a final examination because of a serious illness/emergency or other circumstances beyond their control may apply for accommodation. Normally, the accommodation for a missed final examination will be granting the student the opportunity to write a deferred examination. In specific cases when it is not possible to offer a deferred examination, and with the approval of the Dean, an alternate accommodation may be made. [More information.](#)

The application for a [deferral](#) must:

1. be made in writing or online to the Registrar's Office no later than **three working days** after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination; and,
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation and, in cases of illness, by a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination, or by appropriate documents in other cases. Medical documents must specify the date of the onset of the illness, the (expected) date of recovery, and the extent to which the student was/is incapacitated during the time of the examination. The University's preferred medical form can be found at the Registrar's Office [forms and fees page](#).

Any questions related to deferring a Final Exam or Final Assignment/Take Home Examination should be directed to the [Registrar's Office](#).

Withdrawal From Courses

Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA. WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term (noted in the Academic Year section of the Calendar each term). Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

Important dates can be found [here](#):

Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal

Make sure that you are aware of the separate deadlines for Financial and Academic withdrawal!

Making registration decisions in Carleton Central involves making a financial and academic commitment for the courses you choose, regardless of attendance. If you do not attend – you must withdraw in Carleton Central within the published deadlines to cancel your registration. [More information](#)

Department Contact Information

College of the Humanities 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for CLCV, HUMS LATN GREK Term Papers and assignments is outside 300 P.A.

Greek and Roman Studies 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

Religion@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for RELI and SAST Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

Registrar's Office 300 Tory (613)520-3500

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/>

Student Resources on Campus

[CUKnowHow Website](#)

[Academics: From registration to graduation, the tools for your success.](#)