

**The College of the Humanities
Seminar in “Religion and Public Life”
RELI 5802F**

RELI 5802F (Fall 2014) Fridays 8:35 – 11:25 PA 2A46

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Office Hours: Thursday 10:30 – 12:00 (or by appointment)

A consideration of key thinkers and case studies in the domain of religion and public life from Religious Studies perspectives.

In both popular media and scholarly discourse, much attention has been paid to the apparent resurgence of religion. Academics have tolled the death knell of the ‘secularization thesis’ and public debates in this country and elsewhere have swirled around the place (and limits) of religion in public life. This seminar examines the intersection of the religious and the social and political. We examine the rubrics: ‘religion’, ‘secular’, ‘public’, ‘public vs. private’, ‘public life’, and the ‘public sphere’. Given our location, the course gives considerable attention to the Canadian context and the conceptual development of notions of religion and public life in the European tradition which has informed the Canadian state. However, our consideration is not parochial. It extends to the examination of indigenous re-vitalization in this country, the examination of religious renewal in China, and debates over secularism in India. A unifying thread in the seminar is the question of defining religion and the possibility (or legitimacy) of the category of civil, implicit, or secular religions. Examination of debates surrounding religion and public education (and in particular the case of religious studies as an academic discipline within secular universities) helps us, hopefully, become more self-aware and reflexive about the very exercise represented by the course we are presently engaged in.

EVALUATION

Reading Responses 10 X 2% = 20%

Five reading response papers, each on the order of 2 double-spaced pages. These are not summaries, rather they should indicate a grasp of the key issues in each reading and a grasp of each article’s central argument or thesis. They should also indicate how the week’s readings relate to each other. Responses may include a question you would like to see addressed by the group. These are to be handed in at the beginning of class, late responses are graded down 50%, i.e., they are graded out of 1 instead of 2. These responses are to promote informed engagement at the weekly meeting which is

the *sine qua non* of success in this seminar. Note: ***to miss more than three of the weekly meetings (which would mean, in effect, you had missed a third of the class) is to forfeit credit for the course.***

Seminar Presentation and Participation 20%

Each student will be responsible for presenting on the readings for the week once in the semester. This will be worth approximately 5% and will be added to the assessment of your overall engagement with the course material as reflected in your participation (15%) in the seminar.

Essay Proposal 10%

Suggested topics will be provided. The proposal indicates your choice from among the topics. It is to consist of a working title, a working bibliography, and a preliminary abstract that details a preliminary thesis statement. The tentative thesis statement should indicate how you intend to focus the chosen topic and the argument to be developed. **Due Oct. 24.** Note: This proposal is an absolutely essential feature of the course. Decisions have to be made early regarding your topic as your research essay will probably necessitate using inter-library loan and other research avenues that necessitate being well underway by mid semester.

“Conference” presentation of your research essay 10%

The Paper Conference:

Our final meeting date will be devoted to presentations to the group of your paper. Each student will present on his or her paper for 15 minutes followed by about 5 minutes for questions and discussion. You need to have a completed version of your paper ready for this day. Papers will be amended based on feedback given on this date before final submission.

Research Essay 40%

A research essay on the order of 20-25, double-spaced pages. Topics must be approved by the instructor. Essays must have a clearly articulated thesis. Essays must also include an abstract. **Due Dec. 12. Note:** late papers (except with medical documentation) are docked 4 percentage points per day.

Note: All course requirements listed above must be fulfilled to gain credit for this course

SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE Sept. 5

Introduction to the course: directions and questions of definition

Jurgen Habermas, “Religion in the Public Sphere.” *European Journal of Philosophy* 14:1, 2006: 1-25.

WEEK TWO Sept. 12

‘Civil Religion’ in the U.S. and Canada

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1762), *The Social Contract or Principles of Political Right*. Book 4 ch. 8 on “Civil Religion”

Robert Bellah, "Civil Religion in America." *Dædalus*, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. 96, No. 1 (Winter 1967): 1-21.

Andrew E. Kim, "The Absence of Pan-Canadian Civil Religion: Plurality, Duality and Conflict in Symbols of Canadian Culture," *Sociology of Religion* 54 (1993): 257-275.

WEEK THREE Sept. 19

The question of 'implicit' or 'secular' religions: Environmentalism and (and as) Religion

Andrew P. Morriss, Benjamin D. Cramer, "Disestablishing Environmentalism."

Environmental Law 39 (2) (Spring 2009): 309-

396 <http://www.lexisnexis.com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/hottopics/lnacademic/?verb=sr&csi=7379>

Michael Crichton, "Environmentalism as Religion." Presented as an address to the Commonwealth Club, San Francisco, September 15, 2003.

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/commentaries_essays/crichton_three_speeches.html

Peter Beyer, "Who Shall Speak for the Environment? Translating Religious, Scientific, Economic, and Political Regimes of Power and Knowledge in a Globalized Society." In *Religion and Ecology in the Public Sphere*. Eds. Celia Deane-Drummond and H. Bedford-Strohm. London: T and T Clark, 2011. 21-38.

WEEK FOUR Sept. 26 [Special topic reflecting the visit of Prof. Arvind Sharma, McGill University]

Case study Gandhi's religion: 'private' religion as public experiment and the personal as the political

M.K. Gandhi, Introduction and "Farewell" in *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*

<https://www.gandhiheritageportal.org/mahatma-gandhi-books/the-story-of-my-experiments-with-truth#page/24/mode/2up>

Joseph S. Alter, "Gandhi's Body." *Journal of Asian Studies*. 55 (1996): 301-322.

<http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/stable/pdfplus/2943361.pdf?acceptTC=true&jpdConfirm=true>

Susanne H. Rudolph and Lloyd I. Rudolph, "The Coffee House and the Ashram: Gandhi, Civil Society and Public Spheres." *Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics*, Working Paper 15, (June 2003): 1-13

<http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/volltextserver/3723/1/hpsacp15.pdf>

WEEK FIVE Oct. 3

Canada and Québec

Roger O'Toole, "Religion in Canada: Its Development and Contemporary Situation. *Social Compass* 43 (1996): 119-134

David Seljak, "Resisting the No-Man's Land of Private Religion: The Catholic Church and Public Politics in Quebec." In *Rethinking Church, State and Modernity*. Eds. D. Lyon and M. Van Die, Toronto: UTP, 2001. 131-148.

Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, "Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation." Commission de Consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles. Québec : Québec Government Printing Office, 2008

<http://www.accommodements-quebec.ca/documentation/rapports/rapport-final-integral-en.pdf>

WEEK SIX Oct. 10

Case Study The Canadian churches, the Canadians state, and the residential schools

J.R. Miller, "The State, the Church, and Indian Residential Schools in Canada." In *Religion and Public Life in Canada*. Ed. Marguerite Van Die. Toronto: UTP, 2001. 109-129

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Vol. 1 Looking Forward Looking Back, Part 2, ch. 10 Residential Schools.

http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071211055641/http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sg28_e.html

Various Church apologies (see cuLearn)

WEEK SEVEN Oct. 17

Religious resurgence: indigenous revitalization and the public sphere

Leanne Simpson, "Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Aandisokaanan and Resurgence" ch. 4 in *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring, 2011. 65-83.

Sam Gill, "Mother Earth: An American Myth." In *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies*. Ed. Jame A. Clifton. London: Transaction Publishers, 1990. 129-143.

Frances Widdowson and Albert Howard “Environmental Management: The Spiritual Sell-Out of ‘Mother Earth’.” *Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens Press, 2008. 215-227.

Lori Beaman, “Aboriginal Spirituality and the Legal Construction of Freedom of Religion” *Journal of Church and State* 44 (2002): 135-149.

WEEK EIGHT Oct. 24 Essay Proposal Due

The question of secularism: its trajectory in the West and globally

Charles Taylor, Introduction. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge MA: Harvard UP, 2007. 1–22.

Nikki R. Keddie, “Secularism and its Discontents.” *Daedalus*. 132 (2003): 14-30.

Rajeev Bhargava, “The Distinctiveness of Indian Secularism.” In *Indian Political Thought: A Reader*. Eds. A Singh and S. Mohapatra. London: Routledge, 2010. 99-120.

WEEK NINE Nov. 7

Re-assessing religion and secularity in contemporary China: the case of Confucianism

Feng Yu-lan, “A Criticism of Confucius and Self-Criticism of My Own Past Veneration of Confucius.” In *Selected Articles Criticizing Lin Piao and Confucius*. Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1974. 88 –106

Daniel Bell, “Reconciling Socialism and Confucianism: Reviving Tradition in China.” *Dissent* 57 (2010): 91-99.

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/dissent/v057/57.1.bell.pdf>

Robert Kuhn, “Why Religion Became Important” in *How China’s Leaders Think: The Inside Story of China’s Reform and What This Means for the Future*. Singapore: Wiley, 2010. 359-374.

WEEK TEN Nov. 14

Ritual and public spectacle and curating religion in the public gaze

David Cannadine, “The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the ‘Invention of Tradition’, c. 1820-1977.” In *The Invention of Tradition*. Eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983. 101-164.

Jill Delaney, "Ritual Space in the Canadian Museum of Civilization: Consuming Canadian Identity." In *Lifestyle Shopping: The Subject of Consumption*. Ed. R. Shields. London: Routledge, 1992. 136-148.

Gretchen Buggeln, "Museum Space and the Experience of the Sacred." *Material Religion*, 8 (2012): 30-51.

WEEK ELEVEN Nov. 21

Teaching religion: debates over religion as an academic discipline in public universities

Donald Wiebe, "The Failure of Nerve in the Academic Study of Religion." *Studies in Religion* 13 (1984): 401-422.

Paul Allen, "Curricular Heresy: Theological Religious Studies and the Assessment of Religious Pluralism in Canada." In *Religion in the Public Sphere: Canadian Case Studies*. Eds. Solange Lefebvre and Lori Beaman. Toronto: UTP, 2014. 237-254.

Bruce Lincoln, *Thirteen Theses on Method*

WEEK TWELVE Nov. 28

TBA (to accommodate guest speaker earlier in the semester)

WEEK THIRTEEN Dec. 5

Paper Presentations **[Dec. 12, final papers due]**

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. 8, 2014**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 8, 2015**.

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. 7, 2014** for the Fall term and **March 6, 2015** 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