

**College of the Humanities**  
**Religion Program: RELI 1731A**  
**Varieties of Religious Experience**

Professor: Angela Sumegi      Class hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 2:30 – 4 p.m.  
Office: 2A53 Paterson Hall      Class Location: 240 Tory  
Office phone: 520-2600 ex 2107      E-mail: angela.sumegi@carleton.ca  
Office hours: Thursdays 2:45 – 4:15      TA: TBA

**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, a large part of this course will concentrate on 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 Haven Bookstore, 43 Seneca St. Ottawa. Tel: 613-730-9888
- Weekly Readings available on ARES

**COURSE CALENDAR:**

- **Sept. 9 & 11**                      **Course Introduction and Definitions of Religion**  
Awareness Assignment
- **Sept. 16 & 18**                    **The Nature of Religious Experience**  
Reading:                            #1 Kessler, “Experiencing the Sacred”  
   #2 Otto, from “The Idea of the Holy”
- **Sept. 23 & 25**                    **The Ancient Matrix**  
Reading:                            #3 Gill, “Non-literacy and Native American Religions.”  
   #4 Lame Deer, “Symbols all around”

- **Sept. 30 & Oct. 2**      **Becoming a Shaman**  
Reading:                      #5 Leonard Crow Dog, “The Quest for Vision”  
   #6 Jakobsen, “The Greenlandic Angakkoq”

[Oct. 2 - AWARENESS ASSIGNMENT DUE]

- **Oct. 7 & 9**                      **Shamanic Experience: Trance and Possession**  
Reading:                      #7 Lewis, “Trance and Possession”  
   #8 Anisimov, “The Shaman’s Tent”

[Oct. 9 - AWARENESS ASSIGNMENT SECOND CHANCE]

**October 14**                      **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

- **Oct. 16**                      **Western Traditions and the Idea of Heaven**  
Reading:                      #9 McDannell & Lang, “The Dawn of Heaven”

**OCTOBER 21**                      **IN-CLASS MIDTERM (1.5 hrs)**  
Covers lectures and reading Sept. 9 – Oct. 9 inclusive

- **Oct. 23**                      **Western Traditions and the Idea of Heaven Cont.**

**October 28 & 30**                      **FALL BREAK**

- **Nov. 4 & 6**                      **Eastern traditions and the idea of liberation**  
Reading:                      #10 Zimmer, “The Parade of Ants”
- **Nov. 11 & 13**                      **Mysticism and Mystical Experience**  
Reading:                      #11 Katz, from “Language, Epistemology and Mysticism”
- **Nov. 18 & 20**                      **The Language and Poetry of Mystics**  
Reading:                      #12 Green, “Living Between the Worlds”

(TERM PAPER DUE)

- **Nov. 25**                      **FILM**
- **Nov. 27**                      **Themes from *Siddhartha***  
Reading:                      Hesse, *Siddhartha* (The Brahmin’s Son; With the Samanas; Gotama; Awakening;)

(TERM PAPER SECOND CHANCE)

- **Dec. 2 & 4**                      **Themes from *Siddhartha* Cont.**  
Reading:                      Hesse, *Siddhartha* (Kamala; Amongst the People; Sansara; By the River; The Ferryman; The Son; Om; Govinda)
- **Dec. 9**                      **Catch up class / Exam Review**

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:**

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|--|-----|
| 1. Awareness assignment due Oct. 2 or 9              | 10% |
| 2. In-class Midterm Oct. 21                          | 30% |
| 3. Term paper (approx. 1500 words) due Nov. 20 or 27 | 30% |
| 4. Final exam, during formal exam period             | 30% |

## **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. There are no grade-raising exams or assignments for this course.
2. The Awareness Assignment will not be accepted after the second chance date and you will forfeit the 10%.
3. 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.
4. Term papers handed in after the second chance date without prior arrangement will be penalized 5% per day.
5. 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 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. 9, 2013**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 8, 2014**.

### 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/](http://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. 8, 2013** for the Fall term and **March 7, 2014** for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/](http://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 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library