

# **Introduction to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam**

## **RELI 1710 A (Fall 2023)**

Religion  
College of the Humanities  
**Professor Z.A. Crook**  
2a43 Paterson Hall  
[zeba.crook@carleton.ca](mailto:zeba.crook@carleton.ca)

**Office Hours** (no appointment needed):  
Mondays and Wednesdays 1-2pm  
(masks must be worn for in-person office meetings)

Other ways to get answers: send an email; or ask for a Zoom session

## **Course Objective**

This course presumes no previous knowledge about Judaism, Christianity, or Islam. However, many students arrive with things they know, and things they think they know, about these three religions. Learning about a religion from an academic as opposed to a confessional approach can require some students to learn some new things, other students sometimes to learn old things differently, and others to relearn things. It can take, for some students, a thick skin. This material is taught in a critical, historical, but most importantly also a non-judgemental manner. We will focus on the historical development of these religions, their complex array of competing beliefs, and the many practices of the smaller groups that make up each religion. You should never feel pressured to change your religious perspective, nor should you pressure each other to do so.

## **Course Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should:

- know the basic facts about the religions covered in the course, namely their histories and the vocabulary pertaining to their beliefs and practices
- understand some foundational elements of the academic study of religion
- be able to think critically about religion as a human, historical, and cultural phenomenon
- be able to explain the great diversity that exists within each religion

## Religion Program Learning Objectives

This course contributes towards the Program Learning Objectives. By the end of a degree in Religion, students should:

- be able to employ the methods of the academic study of religion, which stresses outsider discourse, methodological atheism, and the ability to differentiate between advocacy and the critical study of religion
- be able to describe the history of and relationship among the major religions of the world in their local and global contexts
- be able to examine characteristic features and experiences of religious people in a global environment
- be able to describe the integral role of religion as a category helping to shape cultures, identities, political systems, and public life
- be able to demonstrate religious literacy, which includes facility in terminology native to religions as well as to the discipline

## Course Evaluation

General Theory Quiz (10%; in Brightspace, Sept. 27)

Field Work Assignment – 30% (4 pages; submit in Brightspace by 11:59pm October 20)

Midterm (25%, Nov 13; in class)

Final Cumulative In-Person Exam (35%)

## Required Textbook

Zeba A. Crook, *Religions of a Single God* (Sheffield, UK: Equinox, 2019)

Ordered through the Carleton Bookstore. Also available from the publisher:

<https://www.equinoxpub.com/home/religions-single-god/>

## Email Communication

- This is an entirely on-line course. Email is my only means to contact you, and Carleton's Connect e-mail is the official mode of email communication for all matters having to do with the university and with this course. Therefore, you must check your Carleton email daily (at least). All communications sent to your Carleton address are official, and you are expected to get them. It is not an option to claim you did not get some announcement or request because you have another email address or took a break from email. You can configure your Connect account to forward university emails to another address, but you must be reachable through your Connect account. Also, any communication between you

and me involving your personal information (like grades) must originate from a Connect account (FIPPA).

## Lecture Schedule and Assigned Reading

<b>Sept 6</b>	Course Introduction
<b>Sept 11</b>	How To Study Religion: Part I (Ch. 1)
<b>History (Events That Happened)</b>	
<b>Sept 13, 18, <u>20</u>, <u>25</u>, 27, Oct 2, 4, (no class Oct 9), 11</b>	Judaism (Part 1 Intro + Ch. 2) Christianity (Ch. 3) Islam (Ch. 4)
<b>Orthodoxy (Things They Believe)</b>	
<b>Oct 16 + 18</b>	Judaism (Part 2 Intro + Ch. 5)
<b>Oct 23 + 25</b>	<b>(Fall Break)</b>
<b>Oct 30 + Nov 1</b>	Christianity (Ch. 6)
<b>Nov 6 + 8</b>	Islam (Ch. 7)
<b>Nov 13</b>	Midterm Exam (In class)
<b>Orthopraxy (Stuff They Do)</b>	
<b>Nov 15 + 20</b>	Judaism (Part 3 Intro + Ch. 8)
<b>Nov 22 + 27</b>	Christianity (Ch. 9)
<b>Nov 29 + Dec 4</b>	Islam (Ch. 10)
<b>What's Next?</b>	
<b>Dec 6 + (Fri) 8</b>	Latter-Day Saints and Baha'i (Part 4 Intro + Ch. 11)

## Assessments

### General Theory Quiz (10%)

- On-line quiz; in Brightspace
- Will be available all day (6am-11pm Sept 27)
- Once you open the quiz, you have 30mins to answer 20 questions. Do not open the quiz until you are ready to write it.
- Based on material from the Sept 11 lecture and Chapter 1

- **Open book:** have your notes from the lecture and your textbook ready

**Field Work Assignment – 30% (4 pages; submit in Brightspace by 11:59pm, Friday Oct 20)**

- See **Field Work Assignment Instructions** in Brightspace for extensive and detailed instructions. Failure to follow the instructions exactly will make achieving a high grade unlikely.
- Electronic Submission in Brightspace; MS Word submissions only (no PDFs, Pages, etc).
- Papers that are longer than 4 pages will be marked, but nothing beyond the 4<sup>th</sup> page will be read. Therefore, information past the 4<sup>th</sup> page will not contribute to your grade.
  - A title page is not required for Brightspace submission, but if you include one, it **does not count** as one of the 4 pages.
- **Late Penalty Policy:** 2% per day, including weekends

**Midterm (25%, Nov 13, in class)**

- Midterm happens in our classroom during class time.
- Quiz starts at 10:05am, and ends at 11:25am
- 80mins long, 60 questions
- Based on material covered and readings assigned Sept 11—Nov 8
- **Not open book;** no aids or other material can be used
- COVID-19 is still in our community. Keep in mind that while make-up exams are available if you get sick: a) make up exams never seem to result in as high a grade as the original exam, likely because of the time lost; and b) lectures cannot be re-delivered if you get sick. Staying healthy will improve your performance in this course.
- **If you miss the midterm:**
  - medical documentation must be provided to me by Nov 15 so that I know how large a room I need to book.

**Final Exam (35%)**

- 100 questions in 120 mins
- Covers the whole term, including the theory lecture
- In-person, formally scheduled by Exam Services

**Academic Integrity and Being an Ethical Student**

- I take academic integrity extremely seriously. Assignments are carefully scrutinized. You must write your paper independently and in your own words.
  - Avoid sharing your paper with a classmate
    - It can lead to trouble
  - Avoid websites that present themselves as “plagiarism checkers”

- They do not operate with Carleton's definition of plagiarism and therefore will not give you an accurate assessment (please see the last page of this document). If you have written the assignment entirely on your own, you do not need to use such a tool. And conversely, "A plagiarism checker told me my assignment was fine" is not a defense when faced with questions about academic integrity.
- Avoid on-line "rewording," paraphrasing, or word-spinning tools
  - These tools also present themselves as legitimate ways of avoiding plagiarism, but it is not true. They exist not to help students, but to make money, and students are often fooled.
- Avoid ChatGPT
  - It produces writing that is very easy to spot. Therefore, it will not help you achieve the grade you're hoping for by using it.
- It is an academic offense to use any of these practices / tools (or similar) in the writing of your paper. Please take me at my word: I have been doing this a long time, and I know what undergraduate and human-produced writing looks like.