

VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Tuesdays and Thursdays 16:05 - 17:35

Dr. Timothy Pettipiece

Office Hours: Fri. 10:00-1:00 (Room 2A35 Paterson Hall)

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COURSE OBJECTIVES: In spite of claims that we live in a secular and post-religious world, religion and religious questions continue to be at the heart of major social, academic, and political debates. This course will explore the relevance of religion in the contemporary context and examine the various ways in which human beings experience and attempt to describe the “religious”, “spiritual”, “sacred”, or “holy”. The core themes will be explored from a comparative angle, using examples taken from a range of different traditions and perspectives.

EVALUATION:

Response Paper I	Nov 3	25% (on a film from the list below)
Response Paper II	Dec 1	25% (on a book from the list below)
Midterm Exam	Oct 22	20% (on first half of course material)
Final Exam		20% (on second half of course material)
Class Participation		10% (attendance / participation in discussion groups)

REQUIRED TEXTSJeffery J. Kripal, *Comparing Religions* (Wiley Blackwell, 2014)

Additional readings on CULearn

SEPT 3	INTRODUCTION	<i>Hymn of the Sufferer</i>
SEPT 8	COMPARATIVE PRACTICES	KRIPAL CHAPTER 1
SEPT 10	Discussion: Idea of the Holy	OTTO <i>Idea of the Holy</i>
SEPT 15	FROM THE BIBLE TO BUDDHISM	KRIPAL CHAPTER 2
SEPT 17	Discussion: Way of Liberation	<i>The Eightfold Path</i>
SEPT 22	THE SKILL OF REFLEXIVITY	KRIPAL CHAPTER 3
SEPT 24	Discussion: Divine Language	BUBER <i>I and Thou</i>
SEPT 29	MYTH AND RITUAL	KRIPAL CHAPTER 4
OCT 1	Discussion: Ritual	BURKERT “Sacrifice as Act of Ritual”
OCT 6	RELIGION, NATURE, SCIENCE	KRIPAL CHAPTER 5
OCT 8	Discussion: “Thinking” God	AQUINAS <i>Summa theologiae</i>
OCT 13	SEX AND BODY	KRIPAL CHAPTER 6
OCT 15	Discussion: Good and Evil	BLAKE <i>Marriage of Heaven and Hell</i>
OCT 20	SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION	KRIPAL CHAPTER 7
OCT 22	MIDTERM	
NOV 3	THE RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION	KRIPAL CHAPTER 8 (RP I DUE)
NOV 5	Discussion: Stairways to Heaven	IBN AL-ARABI <i>Meccan Illuminations</i>
NOV 10	THE END OF ALL THINGS	KRIPAL CHAPTER 9
NOV 12	Discussion: Death and Dying	<i>Tibetan Book of the Dead</i>
NOV 17	FAITHFUL RE-READINGS	KRIPAL CHAPTER 10
NOV 19	Discussion: Know Thyself	MEHER BABA <i>Discourses</i>
NOV 24	RATIONAL RE-READINGS	KRIPAL CHAPTER 11
NOV 26	Discussion: Digital religion?	DAVIS “The Spiritual Cyborg”
DEC 1	REFLEXIVE RE-READINGS	KRIPAL CHAPTER 12 (RP II DUE)
DEC 3	Discussion: Post-religious?	<i>Humanist Manifesto</i>

For each assignment, choose one item from the list. You are responsible for acquiring a copy of your selected text/film.

RESPONSE PAPER I: FILM	RESPONSE PAPER II: TEXT
The Last Temptation of Christ (1988)	Hermann Hesse, <i>Siddartha</i>
Agora (2009)	Margaret Atwood, <i>A Handmaid's Tale</i>
Passion of the Christ (2004)	Umberto Eco, <i>The Name of the Rose</i>
Kingdom of Heaven (2005)	Carl Jung, <i>Answer to Job</i>
Persepolis (2007)	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>The Antichrist</i>
Machine Gun Preacher (2011)	Frank Herbert, <i>Dune</i>
Soul Surfer (2011)	Martel, <i>Life of Pi</i>
Noah (2014)	Philip K. Dick, <i>Valis</i>
Of Gods and Men (2010)	Roger Zelazny, <i>Lord of Light</i>
The Seventh Seal (1957)	C. S. Lewis, <i>Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe</i>
The Name of the Rose (1986)	Barbara Kingsolver, <i>The Poisonwood Bible</i>
Jésus de Montréal (1987)	Khaled Hosseini, <i>The Kite Runner</i>
Black Robe (1991)	Nikos Kazantzakis, <i>Last Temptation of Christ</i>
The Apostle (1997)	Fyodor Dostoyevsky, <i>Brothers Karamazov</i>
Gandhi (1982)	Walter M. Miller, <i>A Canticle for Leibowitz</i>
Kundun (1997)	Samuel Becket, <i>Waiting for Godot</i>
Malcolm X (1992)	T.S. Eliot, <i>Murder in a Cathedral</i>
Princess Mononoke (1997)	Thomas Merton, <i>The Seven Storey Mountain</i>

*You cannot do the same book and film adaptation.

What a reader response paper is:

A critical essay that expresses how a text/film deals with the issue of religion. It reflects a close reading/viewing of the work, contains specific examples drawn from the work, and provides your well-considered opinion of the work's strengths and/or shortcomings. The essay demonstrates that you have read/watched the book/film, internalized and contextualized its arguments/themes in light of the course material, and can articulate and substantiate your reactions to it.

What a reader response paper is NOT:

-A descriptive summary of the book/film or of the historical events it describes.

-A research paper. You don't have to consult any other sources.

-A classic "thesis" paper, in which you state a thesis argument at the front end and use the book/film to support this thesis, reiterating the argument in the conclusion. The essay must have an organizing argument but it should be more analytic than descriptive.

-An opportunity for general opinionating, nor an opportunity to make statements of opinion that are not supported by evidence drawn from the text/film.

-A test of whether you had the "right" interpretation of the book/film. This is a venue for you to express what the book means to **you**. It should display thoughtful evaluation of the text and express of how it may have contributed (or not contributed) to your understanding of a particular period, and why.

Ask yourself the following questions as you prepare to write a reader response paper. You don't need to include the answers to these questions in your paper, but they can help you organize your thoughts and decide what you'd like to write about in your response.

-What were the central religious themes of the book/film? Did the author/director, in your opinion, do a decent job of following through on those themes? Why or why not?

How does this book/film relate to what interests you about religion? What did you learn from it? If you didn't learn much, why was that? What questions did this text/film leave you with? What would you like to learn more about?

Sample format for a reader response paper of 3-4 pages (double spaced):

1. **Introduction/theme:** 1-2 paragraphs that “set the stage” for what will follow.
2. **Background:** 2-3 paragraphs that introduce the book/film, its religious themes and the context in which it was written/produced.
3. **Analysis:** use the remainder of the paper to hone in on the religious aspects of the book/film and provide your opinion of them. The analysis should contain examples from the book/film to support your argument (cited with page numbers or time code).
4. **Conclusion:** one paragraph that states the wider significance of this work to you.

RESPONSE PAPER EVALUATION

GENERAL CRITERIA DEFINITIONS

Length: number of pages

Presentation: typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, standard margins, stapled

Style: proper grammar, spelling, and syntax

Organization: information is structured and presented in clear and readable manner

Comprehension: source material has been understood

Critical Analysis: critical reflection upon source material

Criteria	Unacceptable	Inadequate	Adequate	Good	Excellent
Length	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Style	2	4	6	8	10
Organization	2	4	6	8	10
Comprehension	2	4	6	8	10
Critical Analysis	2	4	6	8	10
Deductions					
COMMENTS:				Total:	

***Late papers will receive a 5% deduction per day.**

EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Carleton’s Connect Mail is the official mode of email communication for all matters having to do with the university and with this course. All communications sent by Connect 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. 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).

NOTE ON ATTENDANCE

If you want to succeed in this course, then attending class and keeping up with readings is essential. Please note that this is not an independent reading course or self-directed study. You are ultimately responsible for all course material (readings and lectures).

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. 7, 2015**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 8, 2016**.

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. 6, 2015** for the Fall term and **March 6, 2016** 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 a final assignment or take home, in courses without a final examination, 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