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 1 25% (on a film from the list below)
Response Paper II Dec 8 25% (on a book from the list below)
Midterm Exam Nov 1 20% (on first half of course material)
Final Exam TBA 20% (on second half of course material)
Class Participation 10% (attendance / participation in class activities)

REQUIRED TEXTS
Additional readings on CULearn

SEPT 8 INTRODUCTION
SEPT 13 COMPARATIVE PRACTICES KRIPAL CHAPTER 1
SEPT 20 FROM THE BIBLE TO BUDDHISM KRIPAL CHAPTER 2
SEPT 22 Discussion: Way of Liberation The Eightfold Path
SEPT 27 THE SKILL OF REFLEXIVITY KRIPAL CHAPTER 3
SEPT 29 Discussion: Divine Language BUBER I and Thou
OCT 4 MYTH AND RITUAL KRIPAL CHAPTER 4
OCT 6 Discussion: Ritual BURKERT “Sacrifice as Act of Ritual”
OCT 11 RELIGION, NATURE, SCIENCE KRIPAL CHAPTER 5
OCT 13 Discussion: “Thinking” God AQUINAS Summa theologiae
OCT 18 SEX AND BODY KRIPAL CHAPTER 6
OCT 20 Discussion: Good and Evil BLAKE Marriage of Heaven and Hell
NOV 1 MIDTERM (Response Paper I DUE)
NOV 3 SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION KRIPAL CHAPTER 7
NOV 8 THE RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION KRIPAL CHAPTER 8
NOV 10 Discussion: Stairways to Heaven IBN AL-ARABI Meccan Illuminations
NOV 15 THE END OF ALL THINGS KRIPAL CHAPTER 9
NOV 17 Discussion: Death and Dying Tibetan Book of the Dead
NOV 22 FAITHFUL RE-READINGS KRIPAL CHAPTER 10
NOV 24 Discussion: Know Thyself MEHER BABA Discourses
NOV 29 RATIONAL RE-READINGS KRIPAL CHAPTER 11
DEC 1 Discussion: Digital religion? DAVIS “The Spiritual Cyborg”
DEC 6 REFLEXIVE RE-READINGS KRIPAL CHAPTER 12
DEC 8 Discussion: Post-religious? Humanist Manifesto (Response Paper II DUE)
For each assignment, choose one item from the list. You are responsible for acquiring a copy of your selected text/film.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE PAPER I: FILM</th>
<th>RESPONSE PAPER II: TEXT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agora (2009)</td>
<td>Margaret Atwood, <em>A Handmaid’s Tale</em></td>
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<td>Persepolis (2007)</td>
<td>Friedrich Nietzsche, <em>The Antichrist</em></td>
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<td>Machine Gun Preacher (2011)</td>
<td>Frank Herbert, <em>Dune</em></td>
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<td>Soul Surfer (2011)</td>
<td>Martel, <em>Life of Pi</em></td>
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<td>The Seventh Seal (1957)</td>
<td>C. S. Lewis, <em>Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe</em></td>
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<td>The Name of the Rose (1986)</td>
<td>Barbara Kingsolver, <em>The Poisonwood Bible</em></td>
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<td>Jésus de Montréal (1987)</td>
<td>Christopher Moore, <em>Lamb</em></td>
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<td>Gandhi (1982)</td>
<td>fyodor dostoevsky, <em>Brothers Karamazov</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Into Great Silence (2005)</td>
<td>Thomas Merton, <em>The Seven Storey Mountain</em></td>
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*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 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**

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<th>Criteria</th>
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<th>Good</th>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis</td>
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**Deductions**

**COMMENTS:**

*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)
- A = 85-89 (11)
- A- = 80-84 (10)
- B+ = 77-79 (9)
- B = 73-76 (8)
- B- = 70-72 (7)
- C+ = 67-69 (6)
- C = 63-66 (5)
- C- = 60-62 (4)
- D+ = 57-59 (3)
- D = 53-56 (2)
- D- = 50-52 (1)
- F = Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points

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.

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. 11, 2016 for the Fall term and March 10, 2017 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, 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 due to 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 & Career Development Services 520-7850 302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937 501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632 4th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125 4th Floor Library