

## RELI 2713A Mysticism – Fall 2018

**Meeting:** Thursday, 8:35 AM - 11:25 AM  
Tory Building 340

**Instructor:** Mourad Laabdi

**Email:** mourad.laabdi@carleton.ca

**Office:** 2A61 Paterson Hall

**Office Hours:** Tuesday & Thursday, 4:00 - 5:00 PM, or by Appt.

**Office Phone:** 613-520-2600, extension 1954

**Teaching Assistant:** TBD

### Course Description

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This course explores the intricate worlds of mysticism as concept, experience and field of academic study. Students in this course undertake a historical and functional study of mystical experience in its religious context, relying on examples from selected traditions such as the Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim. Through the writings of key past and present mystics and scholars engaged in its study, students will look into several important topics associated with the mystical experience, such as pure consciousness events (PCEs), conjunction with the divine, and the relationship between empiricism and ineffability.

### Course Evaluation

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In-Class Reflections .....	20%	(10 x 2%)
Mid-Term Test .....	20%	Oct. 18
Comparative Essay (four components) .....	30%	Nov. 15
Final Exam .....	30%	During the examination period

### Required Readings

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- Whitall N. Perry, ed. *The Spiritual Ascent: A Compendium of the World's Wisdom* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2007). Available at Carleton's Bookstore.
- All other assigned readings will be made available on Ares.

### Learning Outcomes

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By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Gather, review, interpret, present and critically evaluate several arguments, assumptions and concepts related to “religious experience” in general and “mysticism” in particular.
- Show a good grasp of the central scholarly debates concerning mysticism and its attendant problems.
- Critically approach materials from different religious traditions in which mystical themes and ideas are prevalent.
- Express information, arguments and analyses accurately and with clarity in writing.

## Important Dates and Deadlines

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Sep. 30:	Last day to withdraw from this course with a full fee adjustment
Oct. 16:	Mid-Term
Oct. 22-26:	Fall break. No Classes.
Nov. 1:	Outline and Bibliography Due
Nov. 15:	Comparative Essay Due
Dec. 6:	Self-Review Due
Dec. 9-21:	Examination period. Exact date of the final exam TBD.

## RELI 2741A Website (cuLearn)

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The course website on [cuLearn](#) is your most important resource. There, you will find key updates, announcements and all necessary information about the course, including the syllabus, instructor and TA’s contact information and much more. All announcements will be sent via cuLearn to your Carleton account. Please, consult this account regularly. Failing to do so which results in missing a deadline or overlooking important information about an assignment will NOT be accepted as an excuse.

## Course Requirements

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### 1. Reading

By signing up for this course, you agree that it is your responsibility to read and absorb on your own all assigned materials. It is important that you read not for content only, but use guiding questions such as:

- What does the author want to communicate?
- How they develop the arguments?
- What type of evidence they provide?
- Does the content of the text agree or disagree with what I know about the subject?

Reading the assigned materials is your first and decisive step to doing well in this class, since all the tests and exams will contain questions that engage the readings’ content.

### 2. In-Class Reflections (20 % = 2%x10)

- They will be written in class **between Sep. 13 and Nov. 29**.
- They are 10 in total, each one of them is worth 2% of your total grade.
- They respond to a question on an issue discussed in class, and handed back to the instructor.
- They must be written on a standardized sheet available for download from the course website.
- Reflections written on regular paper or sent by email before or after class WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

### 3. Mid-Term Test (20 %)

- It will be written in class on **Thursday, October 18.**
- It will cover all lecture materials and assigned readings until the Mid-Term.
- It will consist of a mixture of multiple choice and short essay questions.

More details will be posted on the course website and communicated in class.

### 4. Comparative Essay (30%)

This assignment consists of three main components or stages.

#### Stage One: The Research (5%)

- **Due on Thursday, November 1.**
- Compare two scholarly articles that discuss a similar issue in the field of mysticism. You may refer to the journal list of “Islamic Studies Resources at Carleton” posted on cuLearn.
- To complete this exercise successfully, you also need to orient yourself with the technique or “argument reconstruction.” Two detailed documents with samples on how to reconstruct arguments will be posted on cuLearn.
- Finally, write an outline of your comparative essay and the full citations of your sources and submit it online by the due date.

#### Stage Three: The Comparative Essay (20%)

- **Due on Thursday, November 15.**
- Write a **comparative essay** comparing and reflecting on the arguments in the two articles you chose.

#### Stage Four: The Self-Review (5%)

- **Due on Thursday, December 6.**
- After you retrieve your graded essay, you will have about one week to implement some of the changes suggested by your instructor/TA and resubmit your essay.

Further instructions on how to complete each component of the Field Research Essay will be posted on the course website and communicated in class.

### 5. Final Exam (30%)

- **Will take place during Carleton’s examination period, between December 9-21. Exact date TBD.**
- Cover all assigned readings and lecture materials covered from the first to the last class.
- Consist of a mixture of multiple choice and short essay questions.
- More details will be communicated in class and posted on the course website.

## Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Point Equivalence	Grade Definition
A+	90-100	12	Excellent: Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	85-89	11	
A-	80-84	10	
B+	77-79	9	

B	73-76	8	Good: Evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.
B-	70-72	7	
C+	67-69	6	Adequate: Student who if profiting from his/her university experience; understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.
C	63-66	5	
C-	60-62	4	
D+	57-59	3	Marginal: Some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.
D	53-56	2	
D-	50-52	1	
F	0-49	0	Inadequate: Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Read more about the [Grading System at Carleton](#).

## Academic Integrity

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**Plagiarism WILL NOT be tolerated in this class.** Cases of plagiarism will be dealt with following Carleton's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

**Plagiarism is presenting, intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own.**

Plagiarism includes 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.

Examples of plagiarism in this class include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting a take-home exam, essay or other assignment, in whole or in part, by someone else.
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material without proper acknowledgment in any academic assignment.
- Failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

For more, check [Academic Integrity at Carleton](#).

## Late Penalty, Online Submission, File Format, Citation System

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### 1. Late Penalty:

Assignments **must be submitted by 6:00PM of their due date**. Late submissions without a legitimate reason (sickness, injury, etc.) **will be deducted 10% of the assignment's grade per day** (including weekends). There will be no exceptions.

Missing the mid-term without a legitimate reason will automatically result in a grade of zero. There will be no exceptions.

In a case of illness or injury, you must submit [Carleton's official medical certificate](#).

## 2. E-Submission:

Essays, outlines, revisions and take home-exams **must be submitted electronically through the course website (cuLearn)**. Paper submissions are not required.

It is your responsibility to submit all assignment on time. No exceptions will be made for students who uploaded the wrong file or run into technological difficulties (e.g., Internet service down, course website temporarily out of work, laptop broke down, etc.).

## 3. File Format:

Writing assignments **must be submitted as Microsoft Word files** (.doc or .docx). Mac users, please, convert your PAGES files into WORD, then upload them. Assignments submitted as a PDF will be graded, but will not receive any in-text feedback.

## 4. System of Source Citation:

The citation system used in this course is [Chicago Notes and Bibliography](#). Carleton library provides free access to *The Chicago Manual of Style Online*. Refer to Chapter 14, entitled “Documentation I: Notes and Bibliography.” You are required to use this system in all written assignments that require citations.

## Academic Accommodation Policy

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You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to the instructor 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. For more detail, see the [Student Guide](#).

**Religious obligation:** write to the instructor 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. For more details, see the [Student Guide](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC a 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

## Class Protocols and Etiquettes

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### 1. Cellphones, Laptops and Tablets:

The use of cellphones, laptops or tablets in class is **absolutely prohibited**. Be prepared to take notes using pen and paper. If you have a special need to use a laptop in class or prefer to use it for taking notes, **you must talk to me in advance and receive my permission in writing (by email)**. Students found using their phones in class will have 2 points deducted from their total grade.

## 2. Teaching Assistants:

Our TA in this course, Ms./Mr., is a skillful researcher who has excellent knowledge of various aspects of the Islamic tradition. We are fortunate to have her/him with us. Take advantage of her/his skills and be sure to interact with them with full respect. Email the TA only about issues related to the written assignments. For inquiries about all other aspects of the course (mid-term, final, lectures), write to me directly or come talk to me during office hours.

## 3. Email Communication:

I have made a considerable effort to provide extensive details on every component of this course. So, please, keep your emails to me ONLY for information that cannot be found easily in the syllabus and on cuLearn.

To email me or your TA, use your Carleton account. Emails sent through other systems (gmail, Hotmail, etc.) risk being automatically spammed, therefore not read.

Emails are answered normally within two business days, but may take longer at times.

## 4. Course Sharing Websites and Copyright:

If you have a special need to audio/video record the lectures, **you must talk to me in advance and receive my permission in writing (by email).**

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

## Student Resources

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### 1. Writing Services:

Writing is a major component in this course. To do well in this class, you will need to improve your writing. To improve your writing, I highly recommend that you visit the [Centre for Student Academic Support](#) and benefit from their excellent [Writing Services](#). You can meet with a writing consultant during their drop-in hours on the 4th Floor of MacOdrum Library or book an [appointment online](#).

2. Learn more about a wide range of **student resources on campus** at [CUKnowHow Website](#).

## Department Contact Information

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**Religion Program**, 2A39 Paterson II 613-520-2100 || [religion@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:religion@cunet.carleton.ca)

Office Hours: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Drop box for RELI Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

## Lectures Schedule

Lectures	Topics	Readings	Assignments
Sep. 6	Introduction	The Syllabus	
Sep. 13	The Subject Matter of Mysticism	Perry, "Separation-Sin" and "Faith;" and James, "Mysticism."	Refl. 1
Sept. 20	Mysticism and Modes of Thought	Perry, "Renunciation-Detachment;" and Russel, "Mysticism and Logic."	Refl. 2
Sep. 27	The Problem of Mystical Experience I	Perry (ed.), "Illusion" and "Reality;" and Price, "The Objectivity of Mystical Truth Claims."	Refl. 3
Oct. 4	The Problem of the Mystical Experience II	Perry, "Charity" and "Ecstasy;" and Prigge/Kessler, "Is Mystical Experience Everywhere the Same?"	Refl. 4
Oct. 11	Mysticism and Modern Epistemology	Perry, "Knowledge;" and Katz, "Language, Epistemology and Mysticism"	Refl. 5
Oct. 18	Comparative Essay Workshop	"Argument Reconstruction"	<b>Mid-Term</b>
Oct. 25	<b>No Class. Fall break.</b>		
Nov. 1	Mysticism and Data Interpretation	Perry, "Metanoia" and "Love;" and Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism."	Refl. 6 <b>Intro/Bibliography</b>
Nov. 8	Pure Consciousness Events I	Perry, "Beauty" and "Peace;" and Forman, "Mysticism, Constructivism, and Forgetting."	Refl. 7
Nov. 15	Pure Consciousness Events II	Perry, "Prayer-Meditation-Contemplation;" and Ogunnaike, "An Akbari Approach to the Problem of PCEs"	Refl. 8 <b>Comparative Essay</b>
Nov. 22	Critique of Reductionism	Perry, "Grace;" and Shah-Kazemi, "Against the Reduction of the Transcendent."	Refl. 9
Nov. 29	Apophysis and the Limits of Language	Perry, "Mysterium Magnum;" and Sells, "Unsayings."	Refl. 10
Dec. 6	Apophysis and Radical Empiricism	Perry, "Realization and Identity;" Blum, "Radical Empiricism;" and Wittgenstein, <i>Tractatus</i>	<b>Essay Self Review</b>
Dec. 9-21	<b>Final Exam. Date TBD</b>		



## University Regulations for All Humanities Courses

### Copies of Written Work Submitted

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Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

### Academic Integrity at Carleton

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Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the internet. More information can be found [here](#).

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613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

## Grading System at Carleton University

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Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion is below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value. Where the course credit is greater or less than one credit, the grade points are adjusted proportionately.

[Grading System](#)

## Course Sharing Websites and Copyright

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## Statement on Class Conduct

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The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

## Deferred Term Work

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In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work.

Students who claim illness, injury or other extraordinary circumstances beyond their control as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor and **in all cases this must occur no later than three (3.0) working days after the term work was due.**

The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. More information is available [in the calendar](#).

## Deferred Final Exams

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Students who are unable to write a final examination because of a serious illness/emergency or other circumstances beyond their control may apply for accommodation. Normally, the accommodation for a missed final examination will be granting the student the opportunity to write a deferred examination. In specific cases when it is not possible to offer a deferred examination, and with the approval of the Dean, an alternate accommodation may be made. [More information.](#)

The application for a [deferral](#) must:

1. be made in writing or online to the Registrar's Office no later than **three working days** after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination; and,
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation and, in cases of illness, by a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination, or by appropriate documents in other cases. Medical documents must specify the date of the onset of the illness, the (expected) date of recovery, and the extent to which the student was/is incapacitated during the time of the examination. The University's preferred medical form can be found at the Registrar's Office [forms and fees page](#).

Any questions related to deferring a Final Exam or Final Assignment/Take Home Examination should be directed to the [Registrar's Office](#).

## Withdrawal From Courses

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Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA. WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term (noted in the Academic Year section of the Calendar each term). Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

Important dates can be found [here](#):

## Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal

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**Make sure that you are aware of the separate deadlines for Financial and Academic withdrawal!**

Making registration decisions in Carleton Central involves making a financial and academic commitment for the courses you choose, regardless of attendance. If you do not attend – you must withdraw in Carleton Central within the published deadlines to cancel your registration. [More information](#)

## Department Contact Information

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**College of the Humanities** 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

[CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca)

Drop box for CLCV, HUMS LATN GREK Term Papers and assignments is outside 300 P.A.

**Greek and Roman Studies** 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

[GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca)

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

**Religion** 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

[Religion@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:Religion@cunet.carleton.ca)

Drop box for RELI Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

**Registrar's Office** 300 Tory (613)520-3500

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/>

## Student Resources on Campus

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[CUKnowHow Website](#)

[Academics: From registration to graduation, the tools for your success.](#)