

**The College of the Humanities  
Religion Program: RELI 2720B Winter Term**

Instructor: Manvitha Singamsetty

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Lecture: M/W 11.35 – 12.55, Online Synchronous - Zoom link on Brightspace

Office hours: by appointment, Zoom link on Brightspace

**Course Calendar Description:**

Religions of Inuit, First Nations and Métis peoples, past and present. Considerations include concepts of tradition, syncretism and “creative ritual.” Primary sources may include textual, visual and oral materials. Course may include fieldwork, as well as in-class presentations by community elders.

**Course Description:**

This course begins with an overview of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) nations on Turtle Island and a history of contact between indigenous and settling nations. Then students are introduced to the cosmological, metaphysical, philosophical, and ritualistic elements of religious/spiritual traditions that form part of FNMI worldviews. Students will study origin stories, rituals, beliefs, practices, and ideas of land, healing, and justice that taken together encompass the religious/spiritual belief systems of FNMI traditions. In doing so, students will not only gain a critical historical perspective on FNMI religious traditions, but they will also be equipped to understand and make meaningful interventions in contemporary issues of religious diversity faced by FNMI nations today.

The course will include weekly lectures, class discussions, audio and video materials, and guest lectures from Indigenous Elders and scholars. This pedagogy will enable students to have a thorough understanding of each of the religious traditions in the course, and it will equip them with the skills required to navigate contemporary issues related to indigenous spirituality. In addition, students will gain analytical and critical thinking skills, reading and writing skills, and engage in deliberative pedagogies all of which are crucial to their University Undergraduate career.

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:**

By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the basic history, rituals, and social contexts of FNMI religious traditions on Turtle Island
- Develop critical thinking skills in studying various religious traditions
- Be able to construct an argument and support it with evidence
- Write coherent English prose at a university level

**Teaching Philosophy:**

This course has been designed to enhance student-centered learning. Critical analysis, self-reflection and class discussion are all key to the learning mechanisms in this course. Learning involves not only gaining new information but also a critical and ethical application of this newly gained knowledge. In this course we will focus on both of these aspects of learning.

## Assignments:

### 1. Quizzes - 25%, 10 quizzes X 2.5%

Online quizzes, hosted on Brightspace, will include questions from readings and class discussions on select topics. Students will benefit greatly if they attempt quizzes soon after the relevant topics are discussed in class. Quiz dates are clearly mentioned on the reading list of this syllabus, as well as on Brightspace. All quizzes will close on the last day of classes.

### 2. Midterms\* – 20% each, in total 40%

Midterms will be held online on Brightspace and will focus on topics covered in class. The midterm will comprise of short-, and long-answer questions. Midterm Review documents including the dates and time of the midterm, syllabus, format, sample questions, tips on how to answer questions etc. are posted on Brightspace.

### 3. Final Exam\* – 35%

This will be an online scheduled exam and will contain a mix of multiple choice, short and long answer questions. Format of the final exam and a final exam review document is available on Brightspace. The date of the final exam will be determined and announced by Examination Services. The examination period runs between 11 – 26 April 2025.

Students who furnish a valid medical note or a [self-declaration form](#) are permitted to reschedule assignments.

\* The two midterms and final exam are required to earn credit for this course.

## Required readings:

- Electronic versions of all the required readings and materials are available on Brightspace
- PPTs used in class are available on Brightspace

Cost of educational materials - \$0. There is no separate or additional cost incurred by students in this course. Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course. All readings and course materials are made available to students on Brightspace.

## Reading Schedule:

**06 Jan** – Class cancelled due to Carleton University's technical issues related to the website and Brightspace.

**08 Jan** - Introduction to the course – Classroom as a decolonial space

- Introduction to the syllabus, course overview and themes, decolonial classrooms, technology required etc.
- Please make sure to attend class as this information will equip you to excel in this course.
- Quiz 1 – Studying Religion

**13 Jan** – What are Indigenous Religions?

- Reading - Wright, R., 2013, “Indigenous Religious Traditions” in L. Sullivan (ed), *Religions of the World: A Cultural Introduction to the Making of Meaning*. Minneapolis: Fortress. Pp.33-45
- Reading in pdf and class PPTs posted on Brightspace

**15 Jan** – What are Indigenous Religions? Contd.

- Reading - Wright, R., 2013, “Indigenous Religious Traditions” in L. Sullivan (ed), *Religions of the World: A Cultural Introduction to the Making of Meaning*. Minneapolis: Fortress. Pp.33-45
- Reading in pdf and class PPTs posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 2 – Indigenous Religions and Colonization

**20 Jan** – [Story of Turtle Island](#)

- No class – watch the full video using the link provided.

**22 Jan** – Story of Turtle Island – Class Discussion

- Class PPT posted on Brightspace

**27 Jan** – Understanding Land Based Religion

- Reading – ‘We are the land Native American views of nature’ by Annie L Booth, H. Selin (ed)., *Nature Across Cultures: Views of Nature and the Environment in Non-Western Cultures*, pp. 329-349.
- Reading in pdf and class PPTs posted on Brightspace

**29 Jan** – [Religion and Spirituality of First Nations peoples](#)

- Reading in pdf and class PPTs posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 3 – FN Spiritualities

**03 Feb** – [‘The Sacred Sundance: The Transfer of a Ceremony’](#) by Brain J Francis

- Class materials posted on Brightspace

**05 Feb** – **Midterm 1**

- Link to Midterm 1 available on Brightspace

**10 Feb** – [Grammar of Animacy](#)

- No class - watch the full video using the link provided

**12 Feb** – Grammar of Animacy - Class discussion

- Class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 4 – Grammar of Animacy

**17 Feb** – **Reading Week. No Class.**

**19 Feb** - **Reading Week. No Class.**

**24 Feb** – Religion, Land, and Urban Settings

- *Biidaban: First Light* by Lisa Jackson – link on ARES
- [God's Lake Narrows](#) by Kevin Lee Burton and Alicia Smith
- Links to materials and posted on Brightspace
- Experiential Learning Component

**26 Feb** – Métis – peoples and traditions

- ['Lii Michif Niiyanaan: We are Métis'](#) by Jeannine Carriere
- Links to materials and class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Experiential Learning Component

**03 Mar** – Métis Spiritualities

- Reading: Métis Spiritualism - entry by Darren R. Préfontaine, Todd Paquin and Patrick Young. Source: Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research, pp. 1-22
- Reading in pdf and class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 5 – Métis Spiritualities

**05 Mar** – Medicine Wheel and *Minobimaatisiwiin*

- Reading: M. A. Hart, Seeking Minobimaatisiwiin, *Native Social Work Journal*, Vol 2(1), pp. 91-99
- Reading in pdf and class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 6 – Minobimaatisiwiin

**10 Mar** – **Midterm 2**

- Link to Midterm 2 available on Brightspace

**12 Mar** – [Inuit Origin Stories](#)

- Reading in pdf and class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 7 – Inuit Origin Stories

**17 Mar** – Inuit – Shamans, Rituals, and Practices

- Reading: Bahr, Ann Marie B., 2005, *Religions of the World: Indigenous Religions*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publisher, pp 90-104
- Reading in pdf and class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 8 – Inuit Rituals

**19 Mar** – ‘Angry Inuk’ by Alethea Arnaquq-Baril

- Link and PPT available on Brightspace

**24 Mar** – Angry Inuk - Class Discussion

- Class PPT posted on Brightspace

**26 Mar** – [Religion, Art, and Reconciliation](#)

- Link on Brightspace – please watch the video in full

**31 Mar** – Religion, Art, and Reconciliation - Class discussion

- Class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 9 – Religion and Reconciliation

**02 Apr** – Religion, Decolonization, and TRC

- Class PPT posted on Brightspace
- Quiz 10 - Decolonizing religion

**07 Apr** – Final Exam Review

**April 11 - 26** – Final Exam Period. Final exam date will be decided and announced by Examination Services.

**Tips for doing well:**

1. Students are expected to do the readings before class.
2. On average, you will spend about five hours on this class every week – 3 hours in lectures and 2 hours in preparation and reading for class. Approximately, you will spend another 6 hours each preparing for the Midterms and the final exam, so please schedule your semester accordingly.
3. The course website on Brightspace will be updated regularly after each class. The presentations used in class will be available online. All course related announcements and communication will also be channeled through Brightspace.

**Class resources and policies:**

1. You are encouraged to approach the academic writing help center in case you need any assistance with learning how to write essays etc. The CSAS holds regular workshops on writing, taking notes etc. that you may find helpful. You can learn more about these workshops and services [here](#)
2. If you feel stressed or overwhelmed you are encouraged to access the resources on the University website to manage your time, stress levels, seek mentors etc. More information can be found [here](#)
3. You are expected to be on time to the lectures.
4. You are required to be respectful of your colleagues and the professor during class discussions and interactions
5. Please note that lectures will not be recorded, and you are prohibited from recording online classes and discussions
6. My lectures and course materials including all PowerPoint presentations, videos, outlines, notes, and similar materials are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright and intellectual property of all course materials. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial purposes without my express written consent.

If I can ensure your full participation in any way not already addressed in this syllabus/course outline, please do not hesitate to contact me with your queries/requests.



## Humanities

# University Regulations for All College of the Humanities Courses

## Academic Dates and Deadlines

This [schedule](#) contains the dates prescribed by the University Senate for academic activities. Dates relating to fee payment, cancellation of course selections, late charges, and other fees or charges will be published in the Important Dates and Deadlines section of the Registration Website.

## Online Learning Resources

While online courses offer flexibility and convenience, they also present unique challenges that traditional face-to-face courses do not. [On this page](#), you will find resources collected by Carleton Online to help you succeed in your online courses; Learning Strategies and Best Practices, Study Skills, Technology and Online Interaction and Engagement.

## 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.

## Academic Integrity Policy (updated June 2021)

**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, material on the internet and/or conversations.

**Examples of plagiarism** include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts 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.

[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Academic Integrity Process](#)

## Academic Accommodation Policy

Carleton University is committed to providing access to the educational experience in order to promote academic accessibility for all individuals.

Academic accommodation refers to educational practices, systems and support mechanisms designed to accommodate diversity and difference. The purpose of accommodation is to enable students to perform the essential requirements of their academic programs. At no time does academic accommodation undermine or compromise the learning objectives that are established by the academic authorities of the University.

### Addressing Human Rights Concerns

The University and all members of the University community share responsibility for ensuring that the University's educational, work and living environments are free from discrimination and harassment. Should you have concerns about harassment or discrimination relating to your age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, creed (religion), disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, place of origin, race, sex (including pregnancy), or sexual orientation, please contact the [Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities](#).

### Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your [academic obligations](#) during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

#### Religious Accommodation

Please contact your 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, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation](#).

### **Pregnancy Accommodation**

Please contact your 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, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation](#).

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities website](#).

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your 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 [Senate Policy on Accommodation for Student Activities](#)).

### **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](#).

## **Grading System at Carleton University**

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 can be found [here](#). 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.

## **Course Sharing Websites and Copyright**



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). More information

## Student Rights and Responsibilities at Carleton

Carleton University strives to provide a safe environment conducive to personal and intellectual growth, free of injustice and characterized by understanding respect, peace, trust, and fairness.

The [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#) governs the non-academic behaviour of students. Carleton University is committed to building a campus that promotes personal growth through the establishment and promotion of transparent and fair academic and non-academic responsibilities.

## Deferred Term Work

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.

1. 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) 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. In all cases, formative evaluations providing feedback to the student should be replaced with formative evaluations. In the event the altered due date must extend beyond the last day of classes in the term, the instructor will assign a grade of zero for the work not submitted and submit the student's earned grade accordingly; the instructor may submit a change of grade at a later date. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.
2. In cases where a student is not able to complete term work due to illness or injury for a significant period of time/or long term, the instructor and/or student may elect to consult with the Registrar's Office (undergraduate courses) or Graduate Registrar (graduate courses) to determine appropriate action.
3. If a student is concerned the instructor did not respond to the request for academic accommodation or did not provide reasonable accommodation, the student should consult

with the department/school/institute chair/director. If a mutually agreeable accommodation to complete course requirements prior to the course grade submission deadline cannot be achieved, the Associate Dean will become involved. If academic accommodation is not granted, and the student receives word **after** the academic withdrawal deadline, the student may submit a petition to the Registrar's Office (undergraduate courses)/Graduate Registrar (graduate courses) for a final grade of WDN (Withdrawn) in the course(s). If academic accommodation is not granted, and the student receives word **prior** to the academic withdrawal deadline, the student may elect to withdraw from the course(s).

4. Furthermore, if academic accommodation is granted, but the student is unable to complete the accommodation according to the terms set out by the instructor as a result of further illness, injury or extraordinary circumstances beyond their control, the student may submit a petition to the Registrar's Office (undergraduate courses)/Graduate Registrar (graduate courses). Please note, however, that the course instructor will be required to submit an earned final grade and further consideration will only be reviewed according to established precedents and deadlines. [More information of deferred Term Work](#)

## Deferred Final Exams

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.

The application for a deferral must:

1. be made in writing 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 [here](#).

[More information on Final Exam Deferrals Registrar's Office "Defer an Exam" page](#)

## Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal

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. A fee adjustment is dependent on registration being canceled within the published [fee deadlines](#) and dependent on your course load. A course dropped after the deadline for financial withdrawal will receive a grade of Withdrawn (WDN), which appears on your official transcript.

Even if you miss the deadline for financial withdrawal, you might decide to drop a course to avoid a failure or a poor grade showing up on your student record and bringing down your CGPA. It is your responsibility to drop the course via Carleton Central within the published [deadlines](#) (see Academic Withdrawal).

If you are considering withdrawing from a course, you may want to talk to an advisor first. Course withdrawal may affect your student status, as well as your eligibility for student funding, immigration status, residence accommodation and participation in varsity sports, etc. Additionally, remember that once you choose your courses, you must use the “Calculate amount to pay” button to determine the correct amount of fees to pay.

Carleton Central is your one-stop shop for registration activities. If you are interested in taking a course, make sure to complete your registration. Simply attending a course does not mean you are registered in it, nor is it grounds for petition or appeal.

## Department Contact Information

*Bachelor of the Humanities* 300 Paterson Hall [CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca)

*Greek and Roman Studies* 300 Paterson Hall [GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca)

*Religion* 2A39 Paterson Hall [Religion@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:Religion@cunet.carleton.ca)

*Digital Humanities (Graduate)* 2A39 Paterson Hall [digitalhumanities@carleton.ca](mailto:digitalhumanities@carleton.ca)

*Digital Humanities (Undergraduate Minor)* 300 Paterson Hall  
[digitalhumanities@carleton.ca](mailto:digitalhumanities@carleton.ca)

*MEMS (Undergraduate Minor)* 300 Paterson Hall [CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca)