

**College of the Humanities**

**Religion Program: RELI 2732 B/V**

**Death and Afterlife in World Religions**

Professor: Angela Sumegi      Class hours: (In-class) Fridays 8:30 – 11:30 p.m.  
Office: 2A53 Paterson Hall      Class Location: Southam Hall Theatre 'B'  
E-mail: [angela.sumegi@carleton.ca](mailto:angela.sumegi@carleton.ca)  
Office hours: Wednesdays 10:30 – 12:00      TAs: TBA

All information for viewing this course online and for distance students can be found at  
<http://www2.carleton.ca/cuol/>

Back-up viewing options for section B include the kiosks in the CUOL student centre D299 Loeb, the pay-per-lecture rental system or the video on demand service.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the ideas and beliefs associated with death and life after death as they are expressed in various religious and cultural traditions. Our study begins with small-scale tribal beliefs and moves on to concepts of death and afterlife as they are found in the ancient religions of Egypt and Mesopotamia. From there we will explore the development of these ideas in the traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and finally the traditions of India and the Far East. The objectives of this course are: to illustrate the diversity of ways in which human beings conceive of their innermost selves in life and in death; to provide an understanding of the ways in which different religious traditions approach mortality and immortality; and to offer students the opportunity to examine their own conceptions of living and dying.

**Learning Outcomes – at the end of the course, students should be able to:**

- identify the diversity of ways in which human beings conceive of “soul”
- distinguish between the views of afterlife held by eastern and western religious traditions
- recognize where their own views fall relative to the beliefs of others.

**REQUIRED READINGS:**

Available from Carleton Bookstore

- *Understanding Death: An Introduction to Ideas of Self and the Afterlife in World Religions* by Angela Sumegi, Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.
- Supplementary readings will be available on the website or through ARES

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:**

Midterm exam (1.5 hrs.)	50 %	(Covers material from Jan. 10 to Feb. 7)
Final exam (1.5 hrs.)	50 %	TBA within the formal exam period (Covers material from Feb. 14 to Mar. 27)

**EXAMS:**

- The midterm and final exams will be in scantron-graded objective format – multiple choice and true/false questions. Students will be responsible for material covered in the course text, assigned readings, and the class lectures as well as material posted on the course website.
- Exams will not be returned but may be reviewed with the professor or the assigned TA during office hours.
- Exam results will be posted on cuLearn.

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. ALL e-mail correspondence must first be directed to the TA assigned to you. Please consult cuLearn after the first class for your assigned TA's contact numbers.
2. Students with a disability, who require academic accommodations, please feel free to come and discuss this with the professor. Students must contact the Paul Menton Centre to complete the required forms at least two weeks before the exam.
3. There are no grade-raising exams or assignments for this course. If you miss the midterm due to illness or family crisis or emergency, you may write a make-up with a letter signed by your doctor or minister or counsellor stating the reason for missing the exam. Please contact your TA as soon as possible if you have missed the exam.
4. You must write both exams in order to be assigned a grade for the course.
5. There will be no make-up exams scheduled for the finals. If you miss the final exam, you are required to apply for a deferral from the University.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

WP Jan. 10	Course Introduction: Death and the Journey of the Self
W1 Jan. 17	Primal Perspectives
Reading:	<i>Understanding Death</i> Chaps. 1 & 2 ARES: "Death and Immortality in African Religions";
W2 Jan. 24	Death in the Ancient World: Egypt and Mesopotamia
Reading:	<i>Understanding Death</i> Chap. 3
W3 Jan. 31	Jewish Perspectives
Reading:	<i>Understanding Death</i> Chap. 4 ARES: "Jewish Views of the Afterlife"

W4 Feb. 7                      Christian Perspectives  
 Reading:                      *Understanding Death* Chap. 5  
                                       ARES: “Christian Eschatology”

W5 Feb. 14                     Muslim Perspectives  
 Reading:                      *Understanding Death* Chap. 6  
                                       ARES: “Islamic Mystics”

**Feb. 21                      WINTER BREAK**

W6 Feb. 28                     Hindu Perspectives  
 Reading:                      *Understanding Death* Chap. 7  
                                       ARES: “The Last Journey”.

**MID-TERM EXAM**  
**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 29, 5 – 6:30 p.m.**  
**(Covers lectures Jan. 10 – Feb. 7 inclusive)**

W7 Mar. 6                      Buddhist Perspectives  
 Reading:                      *Understanding Death* Chap. 8  
                                       ARES: “The Great Passing Away”.

W8 Mar. 13                     The Tibetan Book of the Dead  
 Reading:                      ARES: “The Process of Dying”.

W9 Mar. 20                     Chinese and Taoist Perspectives  
 Reading:                      *Understanding Death* Chap. 9

W10 Mar. 27                    “The Death of Ivan Ilych”  
                                       Course conclusion and Exam review

W11 Apr. 3                     NO CLASS

Apr. 13-25                     Final Examination Period. The date of the Final Exam TBA.



## University Regulations for All College of the 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](#).

### Academic Accommodation Policy

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#### **Academic Accommodation**

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 details 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 at

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).

### **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 is 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: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### **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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

## **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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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).

## 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 and SAST 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.](#)