

**Carleton University
College of the Humanities
Religion Program
Religion and Violence
RELI 3722
Winter 2020**

Instructor Information

Professor: Kimberly Stratton
Office Location: 2A47 Paterson Hall
Office Hours: W1:00-2:30pm
Email: kim.stratton@carleton.ca

Course Information

Class Location: SA 409
Class Meetings: T 2:35 - 5:25pm
Course Website: Available on cuLearn
RELI Site: www.carleton.ca/religion/

Course Description

A thematic course that examines putative cases of “religion and violence” from a range of world traditions, but also interrogates aspects of the “religion and violence” rubric itself.

Prerequisite(s): third-year standing or permission of the department.

Lecture three hours a week.

Course Objectives

This course seeks to inculcate a better understanding of the complex and dynamic relationship between religion and violence. Eschewing dichotomies that either blame religion for violence or present religion as a prophylactic against violence, this course examines a series of topoi where religion and violence intersect, ranging from gender to genocide, terrorism to self-sacrifice. Part and parcel of this investigation is an attempt to complicate the very categories that most often define conversations about religion and violence. For example, this course will question what differentiates holy war, or “just war,” from an act of terrorism, and how/why violence is precipitated by religious beliefs or against religious communities. Additionally we will ask: How are responses to and interpretations of violence shaped by religious narratives and beliefs? What makes a death martyrdom? Who defines an act of violence and controls the narrative? In the process of answering these questions the very definitions of Religion and Violence will be reconsidered.

Students in this course will gain not only a sensitive theoretical understanding of the complex interrelationship of religions and forms of violence, but through an experiential project will have an opportunity to engage this theoretical knowledge and nuanced awareness to resolve real-world problems where violence impacts people in concrete ways.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course successful students should be able to:

- explain various ways that religion and violence intersect in different contexts, historical periods, and cultures

- identify religious beliefs or narratives that have *legitimized* violence in different cultures and contexts
- explain how religions have helped make *sense* of and *respond* to violence in specific cases
- critically discuss and explain various theories about Religion and Violence
- understand academic debates over the definitions of “Religion” and “Violence”
- differentiate between an etic, scientific, academic approach to religious studies and insider, theological, faith-based approach by demonstrating the former in this class
- apply knowledge gained in the course to solving a real-world social problem involving violence and religion
- work collaboratively with others to solve a real-world problem involving violence and religion

Experiential Learning (EL)

Experiential learning is the application of theory and academic content to real-world experiences that advance program (i.e., Religion) or course-based (i.e., RELI 3722) learning outcomes that are specifically focused on employability skills. Experiential learning requires the student not only to engage in the experience activity, but also requires them to reflect upon their learning and how their skills learned through their academic studies can be applied beyond the classroom (<https://carleton.ca/experientialeducation/>).

EL components of this course include:

- Applying critical thinking and application of theory in reading summaries and in-class exercises
- Role play and work-place simulation in EL Project
- Problem-based learning and use of Case studies in in-class exercises and EL Project
- building and curating an ePortfolio that charts learning and self-reflection about the learning process

Experiential-Learning Project Options:

- 1) Work for UN commission or NGO on ending religiously motivated genocide
- 2) Work for (religious) organization on ending religiously sanctioned gender-based violence (or violence against LGBTQT)
- 3) Develop school curriculum to prevent religious radicalization
- 4) Work for organization to help traumatized populations develop religious resources to recover
- 5) Participate in task force on the rise of religious fundamentalism and violence (alt-right, Islamicist, Zionist, Hindu, or other)
- 6) Develop policy to mitigate religiously inflected violent discourse on social-media
- 7) Work for governmental or non-governmental agency to curtail violence against cultural heritage
- 8) For those with an academic career in mind, you can pursue a traditional research paper, but must submit a proposal to me first
- 9) Other suggestions are welcome!

Evaluation

- Participation in in-class exercises (recorded in cuPortfolio) 25%
* Will drop the lowest 2 marks (or absences beginning with week 2)
- Weekly reading summaries (1 paragraph in cuPortfolio; **DUE by 9:00am Tues.**) 30%
* Will drop the lowest 2 marks
- EL project (5-7pp submitted on cuLearn; Due: April 7th) 20%
- Research Blog (in cuPortfolio) 15%
- Final class workshop and write up (recorded in cuPortfolio) 10%

Assignments

All assignments (except the EL project) and in-class exercises will be recorded in your cuPortfolio. Please make sure to bring a laptop or tablet to class so you can record your work during in-class exercises. Your eportfolio will provide a clear chronicle of your work and a space for reflection on your learning.

I will use cuLearn to provide comments, evaluations and grades in a secure and private format.

Course Readings

All Readings are available on cuLearn; follow the link to ARES (see Bibliography below for full citation info).

Course Schedule

- Jan 7** **What is *Religion* and How to Study it Academically**
Read: Zeba Crook, *Religions of a Single God*, Ch. 1
- Jan 14** **What is Violence: Theories of Violence and Religious Violence**
Read: 1) Bruce Lincoln "Violence" in CCAMR; and 2) René Girard "Sacrifice" and 3) Walter Burkert "Homo Necans" in PRRV
- Jan 21** **Holy War**
Read: 1) "Bhagavad Gita" (excerpt in PRRV); 2) book of Joshua (Chs. 1-8; if you don't have a bible follow link on cuLearn)
- Jan 28** **Holy War**
Read: 1) Kennedy, Caroline, "The Manichean temptation: Moralising rhetoric and the invocation of evil in US foreign policy;" 2) "Last Instructions of 9/11" in PRRV
--Decide on your EL project--
- Feb 4** **Martyrdom**
Read: 1) "Martyrs of Lyon" in ACM; and 2) "Collective Martyrdom: Branch Davidians and Heavens Gate" In MSS

- Feb 11** **Martyrdom**
Read: Cynthia Mahmoud, "Playing the Game of Love," in *Fighting for Faith and Nation*
--EL project workshop--
- Feb 18** **Winter Break**
- Feb 25** **Gender/LGBTQ**
Read: Thomas Dunn "Remembering Matthew Shepard"
- Mar 3** **Gender**
Read: "The Roop Kanwar Case" in *Sati: the Blessing and the Curse*.
--EL project Workshop--
- Mar 10** **Genocide:**
Read: Katherine Pettipas, *Severing the Ties that Bind*, Ch. 1 (pp. 17-41)
- Mar 17** **Genocide**
Read: Jackie Feldman, "Nationalizing Personal Trauma, Personalizing National Redemption: Performing Testimony at Auschwitz-Birkenau," in RV (pp. 102-134)
--EL Project Workshop--
- Mar 24** **Terrorism**
Read: 1) Juergensmeyer, "Religious Terrorism as Performance Violence" (Ch. 17 in OHRV); 2) Hafez, Mohammed, "Apologia for Suicide: Martyrdom in Contemporary Jihadist Discourse" in MSS (pp. 126-139)
- Mar 31** **Terrorism**
Read: 1) Michael Bray, 2) Adb Al-Salam Faraj, and 3) Meir Kahane in PRRV
--EL Project Workshop--
- April 7** **The Myth of Religious Violence**
Read: "The Anatomy of the Myth" in *The Myth of Religious Violence*
--EL Projects due--

Course Bibliography

Argenti, Nicholas, and Schramm, Katharina (eds.). *Remembering Violence*. New York: Berghahn Books (2011) = RV

Cavanaugh, William T. *The Myth of Religious Violence*. New York: Oxford University Press (2009)

Crook, Zeba A. *Religions of a Single God: A Critical Introduction to Monotheisms from Judaism to Baha'i*. Sheffield: Equinox (2019).

Dunn, Thomas R. "Remembering Matthew Shepard: Violence, Identity, and Queer Counterpublic Memories," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, Volume 13, Number 4, Winter 2010, pp. 611-652

Hawley, John Stratton (ed.). *Sati, the Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India*. New York: Oxford University Press (1994)

Juergensmeyer, Mark et al (eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Violence*. New York: Oxford University Press (2013) = OHRV

Juergensmeyer, Mark and Kitts, Margo (ed.) *Princeton Readings in Religion and Violence*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (2011) = PRRV

Kennedy, Caroline, "The Manichean temptation: Moralising rhetoric and the invocation of evil in US foreign policy," *International Politics* (2013) 50, 623–638.

Kitts, Margo (ed.). *Martyrdom, Self-Sacrifice and Self-Immolation: Religious Perspectives on Suicide*. New York: Oxford University Press (2018) = MSS

Mahmoud, Cynthia Keppley. *Fighting for Faith and Nation*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press (1996)

Musurillo, Herbert (ed.). *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*. London: Oxford University Press (1972)

Spaeth, Barbette (ed.). *Cambridge Companion to Ancient Mediterranean Religion*. Cambridge University Press (2013) = CCAMR



University Regulations for All College of the 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.

Academic Integrity at Carleton

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

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 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

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

[CUKnowHow Website](#)

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