

Religious Diversity of Canada

RELI 2307A – Selected Topics in Religion (Fall 2008)

Professor Johannes C. Wolfart

Office: 2A62 Paterson Hall; Telephone: x2932

Teaching Assistant _____ (TBA)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course explores the religious behaviours of the inhabitants of this land from around the time of Confederation to the present. Particular attention will be paid to the role of religion in construction (and destruction?) of social and cultural identities. Thematic coverage will include: indigenous religions, colonialism and religion, the privileged 'establishment' of Christian churches, and immigration and world religions in Canada. Ultimately, the class will work towards an understanding of the significance of religious diversity, and the differences such diversity entails, in our collective story. Finally, it is one of the aims of this course to meet the challenge of considering both 'religion' and 'Canada' in such a way as to reflect prevailing social and cultural conditions at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

GENERAL STATEMENT

Among other things, the class will work towards an understanding of some of the many religious traditions that shape Canadian culture and society. Please note, however, that it is not possible to give due consideration to every religious tradition currently represented in Canada (for example, Orthodox Christianity is not covered in this course). Please note also that while some of the worldviews studied in this course are explicitly theological, the academic procedures and critical methods employed in the academic study of religion are not. **This course presupposes your acceptance of the principles of the modern research university.** Your understanding of these, especially as they pertain to the study of religion, will undoubtedly develop during this course.

EVALUATION

Mid-term test – 20% (in-class on 16 October)

Term essay – 40% (due on 11 November)

Final exam – 40% (in December examination period)

Certainly, it is my aim as a teacher to get to know you as individuals, to recognize your individual strengths and weaknesses, and to foster individual intellectual development. At the same time, however, I am obliged also to treat individuals equally in certain key respects. As a marker, therefore, I cannot take into consideration anything other than your actual performance on the items above.

ESSAYS ARE DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DATE SPECIFIED. For the sake of equity the following **penalties for late assignments** will be strictly enforced: 2 marks (i.e. 2% of total course grade) per day or partial day. **No assignment will be accepted more than one week past its due date.** Exceptions will be made only in extreme cases (snow storm, documented medical emergency, etc.) and when an extension has been granted by me (and for very good reasons, of course) at least one week in advance of the due date.

THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP EXAMINATION FOR THE MIDTERM! If you must miss the Midterm Examination you must choose whether to add the 20% value of the midterm to your term essay or to your final examination. In order to do this, however, you must a) supply adequate documentation of the reason why you missed the mid-term (i.e. illness, family emergency, etc.) and b) apply to have the normal grade distribution changed using the form available from my office.

TERM ESSAY

In this course you will be expected to produce a term essay on a topic of your choice, within certain parameters. An essay is different in certain key respects from other forms of academic writing. Certainly, a term essay is not a book report or a research paper. An **essay brief** with detailed instructions will be distributed to you in due course.

SET TEXTS

There are two assigned textbooks for this course. Both of them are available from Octopus Books on Third Avenue (just off Bank – www.octopusbooks.ca). I used Bramadat and Seljak last year too, so there may be a number of used copies of this floating around locally. The online market for Canadian religion textbooks is probably less than lively.

- 1) Robert Choquette, *Canada's Religions* (Ottawa, 2004).
- 2) Paul Bramadat and David Seljak, eds., *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada* (Toronto, 2005).

From time to time I shall also distribute handouts via WebCT or, rarely, in class. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to find out what (if anything) was handed out and to obtain a copy, either from a classmate or from my office. All assigned readings are obligatory in this course.

LECTURES

These will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:05-11:25 in Room 624 Southam Hall. Late arrivals are very distracting to me and to your fellow students, so please be punctual. This is a lecture course, which means that your success in this course will depend in large part on regular attendance and careful attention to my oral presentations. Please note that the assigned readings are a prerequisite and not a substitute for lectures and class discussion. Finally, please note also that I do not permit the use of audio or a/v recording devices in my lectures. Please ensure that all electronic communication devices are turned off during class.

OFFICE HOURS

I shall hold regular office hours on Mondays 16:30-17:30 and Tuesdays 11:30-12:30.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION

In order to ensure compliance with the federal privacy act commonly known as FIPPA (i.e. for your protection), Carleton communications policy states that faculty must communicate with students only through their Carleton Connect account. To ensure that this policy is upheld without too much trouble, I shall be communicating with students in my courses only via course-specific WebCT e-mail. Please be advised, further, that students can normally expect up to a 24-hour turn-around time on e-mail communication, especially during high volume times (i.e. before examinations, at essay time, etc.).

CLASS SCHEDULE AND LIST OF TOPICS

(as of 17 August 2008 – subject to change or correction)

Week I (4 September) – Introduction to the course.

Week II (9, 11 September.) – Some general themes and problems for the study of Religion in Canada.

Read: Choquette, 1-5, 433-38; Bramadat and Seljak, 1-29.

Week III (16, 18 September) – What is Indigenous Religion? In Canada?

Read: Choquette, 7-26, 51-65.

Week IV (23, 25 September) – Two examples of Indigenous Religion in resistance to colonialism: The Ghost Dance Movement and the Northwest Rebellion.

Read: Choquette, 275-83; Handout via WebCT

Week V (30 September, 2 October) – The establishment of Catholic Christianity in Canada.

Read: Choquette, 67-115.

Week VI (7, 9 October) – The establishment of Protestant Christianity in Canada.

Read: Choquette, 159-73, 181-90, 211-24.

Week VII (14, 16 October) – Excursus on religion and “ethnic identity” in Canada: The example of Anabaptist communities in Canada.

Read: Handout via WebCT

Mid-term examination in-class on 16 October

Week VIII (21, 23 October) – Evangelical and Charismatic Christianity in Canada

Read: Choquette, 225-53, 311-22, 329-38.

Week IX (28, 30 October) – Judaism in Canada.
Read: Bramadat and Seljak, 111-31; Choquette, 384-89.

Week X (4, 6 November) – Islam in Canada.
Read: Bramadat and Seljak, 133-49; Choquette, 389-93.

N.B. 7 NOVEMBER IS THE LAST DATE TO WITHDRAW FROM FALL TERM COURSES

Week XI (11, 13 November) – South Asian religions in Canada.
Read: Bramadat and Seljak, 30-67; Choquette, 393-96; 401-07.
Term essay due on 11 November

Week XII (18, 20 November) – New Religious Movements and religious pluralism in Canada.
Read: Choquette 409-31; Handout via WebCT

Week XIII (25, 27 November) – Implications and Conclusions.

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 “*to use and pass off as one’s own idea or product the work of another without expressly giving credit to another.*” This can include:

- Copying from another person's work without indicating this through appropriate use of quotation marks and footnote citations.
- Lengthy and close paraphrasing of another person's work (i.e. extensive copying interspersed with a few phrases or sentences of your own).
- Submitting written work produced by someone else as if it were your own work (e.g. another student's term paper, a paper purchased from a term paper "factory", materials or term papers downloaded from the Internet, etc.).
- Handing in "substantially the same piece of work to two or more courses without the prior written permission of the instructors...involved." (University Senate)

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 range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of "F" for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B+ = 77-79 (9)	C+ = 67-69 (6)
A = 85-89 (11)	B = 73-76 (8)	C = 63-66 (5)
A - = 80-84 (10)	B - = 70-72 (7)	C - = 60-62 (4)
D+ = 57-59 (3)	D = 53-56 (2)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. No academic credit
WDN	Withdrawn from the course
ABS	Absent from the final examination
DEF	Official deferral (see "Petitions to Defer")
FND	"Failed, no Deferral" – assigned when the student is absent from the final exam and has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from Fall term courses is November 7th, 2008. Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter (full year) and Winter term courses is March 6th, 2009.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

For Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive 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 require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by November 7, 2008, for December examinations, and March 6, 2009, for April examinations.

For Religious Obligations:

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious obligation should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance. (613-520-5622)

For Pregnancy:

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to complete a **final** term paper or write a **final** examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply in writing within five working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered.

ADDRESSES

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Classics and Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608	500 Unicentre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	4 th floor Library