

Introduction to South Asian Religions

RELI 1715 B (Winter 2021)

Religion Program

College of the Humanities

Tuesday, Thursday 14:35 – 15:55 Live on Zoom

Professor Noel Salmond

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Office Hours: Wed. 12:30 – 15:00 (or by appointment) via Zoom

Note: This course is synchronous: 75% of the lectures are delivered live on Zoom at the scheduled class time.

The exceptions to live classes are the following Thursdays: Jan. 14, Jan. 22, Feb. 11, Mar. 11, Mar. 18, Apr. 1. On these dates there will be pre-recorded lectures or short exercises or assignments.

All class lectures are recorded when delivered live. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the live class to ask questions and to stay current with the pace of the course and its content.

Course Description

1715 examines religious traditions that arose in South Asia centred on the Indian subcontinent (today comprising the modern countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal). These traditions include Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. We focus on the historical development of these religions examining their beliefs, ritual practices, and forms of social organization.

The course also touches briefly on the expression of religions such as Islam and Christianity in the South Asian region noting that, despite its overwhelming Hindu majority, India has the second largest Muslim population on the planet. A knowledge of the history of religions in South Asia is absolutely essential in order to understand contemporary social life and political dynamics in the region.

We will also briefly consider the influence of South Asian religions beyond South Asia. Specifically, we will consider the widescale adaptation of yoga (coming largely out of Hinduism) and mindfulness meditation (derived from Buddhism) in the contemporary West. We look at how these religions construe the purposes of human life and advance practices designed to foster and encourage human flourishing. The course also looks at contemporary attempts to apply the ethical teachings of these religions to current issues such as environment and climate change.

Learning Objectives

- To develop basic religious literacy: knowledge of the historical development, fundamental concepts, and vocabulary of each religion and a knowledge of its central practices
- To acquire an introductory facility with the critical and historical study of religion
- To consider the possible utility of some religious ideas and practices originating in South Asia for our own personal and collective lives
- To attain some familiarity with the cultural achievements (both literary and artistic) of South Asian civilization which are so often informed by religion or inseparable from it
- Distinguish primary and secondary sources, and be able to recognize acceptable academic sources for the study of religion
- Recognize personal situated-ness and personal bias in confronting religious phenomena

Texts

Religions of India: An Introduction. 2nd Edition. Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby, eds. New York: Routledge, 2018. [Available in either paperback (recommended) or on Kindle]

The text has a companion website: www.routledge.com/cw/Mittal

Other readings of primary sources will be posted to cuLearn. There will also be links to video clips of rituals and to documentaries on these religions on our cuLearn course site.

Evaluation

- Participation based on submission of short exercises accompanying Zoom lectures: 20%
- Scheduled Test 1: 20% (Feb. 4)
- Scheduled Test 2: 20% (March 11)
- Living Religion Exercise Paper: 15% (due April 8) A detailed handout on the options for this paper will be provided.
- Final exam in formally scheduled examination period (April 16 – 27): 25%

Note: 1) Tests will be based on required text *and* lecture material

2) Both tests, the final exam, and the paper must be fulfilled to receive credit

Schedule

Please note: with the exception of the test dates, this schedule is subject to revision.

ROI below refers to our required text: *Religions of India: An Introduction*. 2nd Edition. Sushil Mittal and Gene Thursby, eds. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Tue. Jan. 12	Introduction to the course. Overview of the religions of the world and of the academic study of religion. Introducing Hinduism. READ: ROI ch. 9; ROI ch. 1
Thur. Jan. 14	Hinduism: History overview (Recorded) READ: ROI ch. 1
Tue. Jan. 19	Hinduism: Vedas and Upanishads READ: ROI ch. 1, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Jan. 21	Hinduism: Bhagavad Gita (Recorded) READ: ROI ch. 1, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Jan. 26	Hinduism: Hindu philosophy and practice: Yoga READ: ROI ch. 1, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Jan. 28	Hinduism in the modern period: Rammohun Roy to Vivekananda READ: ROI ch. 1, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Feb. 2	Hinduism in the modern period: Gandhi Readings on cuLearn
Thur. Feb. 4	Hinduism (Test)
Tue. Feb. 9	Introducing Buddhism: The Life of the Buddha READ: ROI ch. 3, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Feb. 11	Buddhism History (Recorded) READ: ROI ch. 3, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Feb. 16	BREAK
Thur. Feb. 18	BREAK
Tue. Feb. 23	Buddhism doctrine READ: ROI ch. 3, readings on cuLearn

Thur. Feb. 25	Buddhism practice READ: ROI ch. 3, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Mar. 2	Buddhism review
Thur. Mar. 4	Jainism READ: ROI ch. 2, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Mar. 9	Jainism READ: ROI ch. 2, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Mar. 11	Buddhism and Jainism (Test)
Tue. Mar. 16	Sikhism READ: ROI ch. 4, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Mar. 18	Sikhism (Recorded) READ: ROI ch. 4, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Mar. 23	Sikhism, cont., Islam in South Asia READ: ROI ch. 4, ch. 8, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Mar. 25	Islam in South Asia READ: ROI ch. 8, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Mar. 30	Judaism in India READ: ROI ch. 6, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Apr. 1	Zoroastrianism in India (Recorded) READ: ROI ch. 5, readings on cuLearn
Tue. Apr. 6	Christianity in India READ: ROI ch. 7, readings on cuLearn
Thur. Apr. 8	Religion in India and the South Asian diaspora today Readings on cuLearn (Paper due)
Tue. Apr. 13	Review

(April 16 - 27 Examination Period)



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 at Carleton

The University Senate defines **plagiarism** as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- 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;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;

- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

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

Academic Accommodation

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

Parental Leave: The Student Parental Leave Policy is intended to recognize the need for leave at the time of a pregnancy, birth or adoption and to permit a pause in studies in order to provide full-time care in the first year of parenting a child or for health-related parental responsibilities.

Religious obligation: Carleton University accommodates students who, by reason of religious obligation, must miss an examination, test, assignment deadline, laboratory or other compulsory academic event.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Academic accommodation of students with disabilities is available through the [Paul Menton Centre](#) by evaluations that are carried out on an individual basis, in accordance with human rights legislation and University policy, and with the support of relevant, professional/medical documentation.

Survivors of Sexual Violence

Individuals who disclose that they have experienced sexual violence will be provided support services and will be treated with dignity and respect at all times by the University and its representatives. A person affected by sexual violence is not required to report an incident or make a complaint about sexual violence under the formal complaint process of the Sexual Violence Policy in order to obtain support and services, or in order to receive appropriate accommodation for their needs.

[Supports and services available at the University to obtain information about sexual violence and/or 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. [More information.](#)

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. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean."

The [system of grades](#) used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion, is listed below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value.

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.

[7 Student Rights and 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 (3.0) 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. 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.

[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](#)

Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal

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](#). 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. You can do this via the [MyCarleton Portal](#). A fee adjustment is dependent on registration being canceled within the published [fee deadlines](#) and dependent on your course load.

Department Contact Information

Bachelor of the Humanities 300 Paterson Hall CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca

Greek and Roman Studies 300 Paterson Hall GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall
Religion@cunet.carleton.ca

Digital Humanities (Graduate) 2A39 Paterson Hall
digitalhumanities@carleton.ca

Digital Humanities (Undergraduate Minor) 300 Paterson Hall
digitalhumanities@carleton.ca

MEMS (Undergraduate Minor) 300 Paterson Hall
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