

The College of the Humanities
Religion Program: RELI 2713A Fall Term
Mysticism

Instructor: Prof. Mohammed Rustom
Email: mohammed.rustom@carleton.ca
Lecture: Recorded; posted on Sundays, beginning Sept. 13th, on Kaltura Personal Capture

Office: Paterson 2A61, 520-2600, ext. 1954
Office hours: By appointment (Zoom)

Course Description

This course offers an investigation into the main historical expressions of mysticism, as well as the various debates in the academy surrounding its definition and interpretation. Drawing on the writings of the foremost past and present representatives of mysticism on the one hand, as well as the work of some major scholars engaged in its study on the other, we shall explore such key topics as mystical “experience,” PCEs or “Pure Consciousness Events,” and the relationship between empiricism and ineffability.

Learning Objectives

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

- ❖ Engage with primary texts
- ❖ Analyse secondary texts
- ❖ Distinguish descriptive, explanatory, and prescriptive modes of discourse
- ❖ Properly cite references in a paper
- ❖ Understand the main contours of the academic study of what is commonly referred to as “religious experience” in general, and “mysticism” in particular
- ❖ Come to a better understanding of the central scholarly debates concerning mysticism and its attendant problems
- ❖ Critically analyze a wide range of materials from different religious traditions in which mystical themes and ideas are prevalent

Required Texts

Readings in Mysticism (course site) = *RM*
Perry (ed.), *The Spiritual Ascent* (bookstore)
Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (bookstore)

Requirements and Due Dates

/20	Book Report	Oct. 20 th
/40	Research Paper	Nov. 24 th
/40	Take-Home Exam	Dec. 23 rd

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Week 1 **The Subject Matter of Mysticism**

Readings

Perry, “Separation—Sin” (pp. 53ff.) and “Faith” (pp. 499ff.)
James, “Mysticism” in *RM*

Week 2 **Mysticism and Modes of Thought**

Readings

Perry, “Renunciation—Detachment” (pp. 135ff.)
Russel, “Mysticism and Logic” in *RM*

Week 3 **Illusion vs. Reality**

Readings

Perry, “Illusion” (pp. 83ff.) and “Reality” (pp. 771ff.)
Price, “The Objectivity of Mystical Truth Claims” in *RM*

Week 4 **The Problem of Mystical Experience**

Readings

Perry, “Charity” (pp. 595ff.) and “Ecstasy” (pp. 634ff.)
Prigge/Kessler, “Is Mystical Experience Everywhere the Same?” in *RM*

Week 5 **Book Report Workshop**

Listen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPV0RC9CDIs>

Week 6 **Mysticism and Modern Epistemology**

Readings

Perry, “Knowledge” (pp. 731ff.)
Kant, “Introduction” to *The Critique of Pure Reason* in *RM*

Week 7 **No Lecture**

Week 8 **Interpreting the Data of Mysticism**

Readings

Perry, “Metanoia” (pp. 479ff.) and “Love” (pp. 612ff.)
Katz, “Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism” in *RM*

Week 9 **Pure Consciousness Events (PCEs) I**

Readings

Perry, “Beauty” (p. 659) and “Peace” (pp. 692ff.)
Forman, “Mysticism, Constructivism, and Forgetting” in *RM*

Week 10 Pure Consciousness Events (PCEs) II

Readings

Perry, “Prayer—Meditation—Contemplation” (pp. 520ff.)

Forman, “Mysticism, Constructivism, and Forgetting” in *RM*

Week 11 The Critique of Reductionism

Readings

Perry, “Grace” (pp. 550ff.)

Shah-Kazemi, “Against the Reduction of the Transcendent” in *RM*

Week 12 Apophasis and the Limits of Language

Readings

Perry, “Mysterium Magnum” (pp. 971ff.)

Sells, “Unsayings” in *RM*

Week 13 Apophasis and Radical Empiricism

Readings

Perry, “Realization and Identity” (pp. 855ff.)

Blum, “Radical Empiricism” in *RM*

Wittgenstein, *Tractatus* 6ff. in *RM*

Book Report Guidelines

Instructions

Carefully read Seyyed Hossein Nasr's book, *Knowledge and the Sacred*. The first part of the report must thoroughly summarize the book's content (but not chapter-by-chapter). The second part must offer an analysis of the author's underlying argument. This assignment is designed to provide you with an opportunity to think critically about this important book. It will also help you hone your academic writings skills. Moreover, close study of this text will prove to be very beneficial in preparing for the research paper and the take-home exam.

Method of Evaluation

The report is out of 20, and is worth 20% of the total course mark. For a "good" mark, you have to (1) follow the format guidelines to a tee; (2) offer an effective summary of the text; (3) demonstrate to me, through your analysis of the work in question, that you have given considerable thought to the material.

Due Date

Book reports are due **at 8:00 am via email submission on October 20th, 2020.**

Penalties

Reports not handed in on the due date will receive a mark of zero. Absolutely no exceptions will be made to this rule. Papers submitted late due to a medical or other compassionate reason must be accompanied by relevant documentation (i.e., a medical certificate, etc.). Plagiarized reports will be assigned a zero, and the issue will be taken up with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Format

1. Your report should be **six** full pages in length, double spaced, and written in Times New Roman font (size 12). It must use the normal page layout which comes standard on all Word programs, and page numbers must be on the bottom right corner of the page.
2. Diction is to be formal, and each piece is to be written in Canadian English. Grammar, syntax, spelling, and style must be impeccable. You may write in the first person.
3. At the top right of the first page of your report, include the course code, your full name, and the assignment's due date. This should be in Times New Roman font (size 12).
4. All paragraphs—except the first paragraph of your piece—must be indented. Every paragraph of the paper—including isolated quotations—must be justified. This can easily be done by using the "paragraph" function on your Word program.

5. There are to be no title pages, footnotes, endnotes, or bibliographies. If you want to directly cite the book or article in your report, provide the passages in quotation marks, and then, in brackets directly following the quoted passage, include the page number, preceded by a “p.” For example, (p. 29).
6. If you cite from the book or article, do not put your quotations in italics, bold, or a combination of the two. Sentences which are more than 3 lines long are to be isolated, single spaced, and reduced to font size 11 with their margins indented to 1 inch on both the right and the left. This can easily be done by using the “paragraph” function on your Word program.

Research Paper Guidelines

Instructions

Address one of the following topics/questions:

1. Critically assess the worldview of one particular mystical figure. By drawing extensively from his/her works, provide a careful, textually-grounded presentation and analysis of his/her major teachings.
2. Why is the love of God so central to Sufism?
3. Explain the notion of non-duality in Advaita Vedanta.
4. How does the Jesus Prayer function in Eastern Orthodox Christianity?
5. A topic of your choice in consultation with the Professor.

Evaluation

Essays are graded out of 40, and are worth 40% of the total course mark. Each essay will be evaluated in terms of (1) the quality of its language, including grammar, spelling, and style; (2) the clarity of its thesis, (3) the coherence of its argument(s), (4) evidence of original research and its careful integration into the fabric of the essay; and (5) faithful adherence to the content and formatting guidelines mentioned below.

Content

The paper must have a clear thesis which is defended consistently throughout. An essay without a thesis cannot receive more than a C+. A thesis essentially summarizes, in one or several sentences, the entire point of your essay. It is simply not enough to say “This essay is going to talk about x, y, and z”; you must be more specific than that. A good thesis should be concise and straightforward, and must endeavour to prove a point: “In this essay, it shall be demonstrated that, because of x, y and z obtain.” You may not use the wording of this example in your essay.

Due Date

Essays are due **at 8:00 am via email submission on November 24th, 2020.**

Penalties

Essays not handed in on the due date will receive a mark of zero. Absolutely no exceptions will be made to this rule. Papers submitted late due to a medical or other compassionate reason must be accompanied by relevant documentation (i.e., a medical certificate, etc.). Plagiarized essays will be assigned a zero, and the issue will be taken up with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Form

1. Essays are to be **ten** full pages in length (excluding the title page and bibliography), double spaced, and written in Times New Roman font (size twelve).
2. Diction is to be formal, and the essay is to be written in Canadian English. Grammar, syntax, spelling, and style must be impeccable.
3. All paragraphs—except the first paragraph of your essay—must be indented. Every paragraph in your essay—including isolated quotations and footnotes—must be justified.
4. Use footnotes as opposed to endnotes and/or internal citations. Footnotes are to be single spaced and written in Times New Roman font (size ten). A bibliography must be appended to the essay. Your method of citation must follow the rules laid out in the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
6. Do not put your quotations in italics, bold, or a combination of the two. Sentences which are more than three lines long are to be isolated, single spaced, and reduced to font size eleven with their margins indented to one inch on both the right and the left.
7. Your essay must have a title page. All pages—excluding the title page and bibliography—are to be numbered at the bottom right corner of the page.

Content

The take-home exam will cover all of the course's lectures and assigned readings, from the first lecture to the last.

Dates

The exam questions will be made available on the course website on **December 1st, 2020**. The completed exam will be due at **8:00 am via email submission on December 23rd, 2020**.

Structure

The exam is divided into two sections. The entire exam is out of 40, and is worth 40% of the total course mark.

Part I will consist of ten items, all of which must be defined/described in a clear and detailed manner. Each question is out of two. The first part of the exam, therefore, is out of 20, and is worth 20% of the total course mark.

Part II will consist of seven questions, four of which must be answered. Each question is out of five. This part of the exam, therefore, is out 20, and is worth 20% of the total course mark. The questions in Part II are response-type questions. This means that responses do not have to be in essay format. They simply have to address the question asked in as thorough and thoughtful a manner as possible. Answers must be both descriptive and analytical.

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 “*presenting, whether intentional 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 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 can include a final grade of “F” for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

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

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

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see "Petitions to Defer")
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 9, 2016**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 7, 2017**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me 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. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives 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 only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by **Nov. 11, 2016** for the Fall term and **March 10, 2017** for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please [contact](#) the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of a final assignment or take home, in courses without a final examination, must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic & Career Development Services 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	4 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library



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
CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca