



**Religious Studies 0011/1031
Contemporary Religious Quests
2018-2019**

Class Meetings: Tuesdays 10:30 AM-11:30 AM and Thursdays 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

Class Location: BR 204

Professor: Andrew Knight-Messenger

Office: TBA

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30 AM-12:30PM, and Thursdays 11:30 AM-12:30 PM, or by appointment

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to Religious Studies which incorporates the autobiographies and/or biographies of twentieth and twenty-first century men and women representing different religious perspectives and walks of life. It will introduce the student to the theory of religion: its meaning and function in culture and in the lives of individuals.

The life stories of people such as Mohandas Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Elie Wiesel, Oscar Romero, Starhawk, Wangari Maathai, and others will facilitate the exploration of questions such as: What does it mean to be on a religious quest? How do cultural and social influences affect the quest? What experiences are unique to the individual? Are there any experiences that all those on a religious quest share? Particular phenomena prevalent in the 20th and 21st centuries and relevant to the study of religion will be considered, such as environmental and new-age spiritualities.

The course will draw on written materials, films, lectures and in class and on-line discussions.

Course Objectives:

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- a. Identify the basic elements, themes, and trends in the study of religion. (*Critical Thinking*)
- b. Discuss and critique the function and purpose of religion. (*Communication, Critical Thinking*)
- c. Critique, compare and evaluate aspects of contemporary religious quests. (*Critical Thinking*)
- d. Question how culture informs and lends shape to religious experience. (*Inquiry and Analysis*)

- e. Recognize and evaluate new religious phenomenon. (*Social Awareness and Engagement*)
- f. Participate in sustained academic discussion. (*Communication*)
- g. Evaluate the responses of religious movements to contemporary issues of civil liberties and social justice (*Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Valuing*)
- h. Reflect upon the impact of the questions raised by the academic study of religion to our own assumptions about religion and spiritual quests (*Self Awareness and Development*)

Prerequisite(s): None

Antirequisite(s): The former Religious Studies 2154E

Required Readings:

The following materials are **required reading** for students in Religious Studies 0011/1031 E:

1. Paul O. Myhre, *Introduction to Religious Studies* (Winona, MN.: Anselm Academic, 2009). Available for purchase at the Western University Bookstore.
2. Other readings, which are available on OWL, online, and through Brescia and the University of Western's library systems.

Online and Electronic Course Components:

OWL: In this course we will be using OWL for the online components of the course. Please refer to the course site on OWL for the most authoritative and up-to-date course outline, schedule, assignment guidelines, and other resources.

Digital Submissions: Reflection Papers, Case Study Papers, and Research Papers must all be submitted electronically to OWL before the due date. Written assignments will be submitted via the digital "Assignments" tab on OWL. Many file types are compatible with the submission system, including Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, PostScript, Adobe Acrobat (.pdf), or Rich Text (.rtf) files. If your word processing program uses a file type not listed here, please contact the instructor to check compatibility.

Submitting Assignments Electronically: Individual assignments submitted electronically must somehow include your last name in the filename, e.g. Smith_Assignment_5_Article_Assessments.pdf

Late Submissions: All papers (reader response, reflection, case study, and research papers) are due at 11:59 PM on Thursdays on OWL, unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor. Late assignments will be penalized 3% a day (weekends [Saturday and Sunday] will count as one day).

Evaluation and Assignments

Assignment	% of Grade for 0011	% of Grade for 1031	Due Date
First-Term Test	10%	10%	November 8, 2018
Second-Term Test	10%	10%	January 31, 2019
Final Exam	20%	20%	TBA (End of Term, 2019)
Research Paper	N/A	20%	March 28, 2019
Reflection Paper #1	10%	N/A	Term 1 – November 22, 2018
Reflection Paper #2	10%		Term 2 – March 28, 2019
Case Study Presentation on a Contemporary Religious Quest	10%	10%	Throughout the Fall and Winter, 2018-2019 Terms
10 Reader Response Papers (5 Each Term) – Worth 2% Each	20%	20%	5 – Throughout the Fall Term, 2018 5 – Throughout the Winter Term, 2019
Participation and Engagement (This Includes: Attendance, Participatory Activities, In-Class Group Work, AND Spontaneous Submissions [Either Online or In-Class])	10%	10%	Throughout the Fall and Winter, 2018-2019 Terms

Class Participation, and Engagement – 10%: Class participation and engagement is an important component of this course. Therefore, it is expected that all students will be ‘active’ participants in this course. This means attending all classes, being actively involved in class activities and thoughtful discussion, and completing all assignments.

Your participation grade will be significantly influenced by your active involvement in class, and the quality of that involvement. Lack of participation, or ‘negative

participation', will also significantly influence your participation grade (but in a negative way)! And just so you are aware of the types of activities or behaviours that will be considered 'negative' class participation, they include the following: missing classes, talking to classmates about things that are not a contribution to the class discussion, general nonparticipation in or disruption of class/class activities, sleeping during class, coming to class late or leaving early, and distracted use of any of the following electronic devices: cell phones, mp3 players, iPods, iPads, and other electronic devices. Computers may be used in class but ONLY for note taking purposes. Evidence of using the computer for anything other than note taking will be considered negative class participation.

The success of this course depends on you. The students who are most successful in this course fulfill these expectations and engage in all aspects of the course.

Reader Response Papers – 20%: As part of students' participation and engagement marks, students will complete 10 short Reader Response Papers (150-200 words in length). One week prior to the due dates of the Reader Response Papers, the instructor will post a question related to the week's class lectures, discussion and readings. Students must post their Reader Response Papers on OWL in the class Discussion Forum (rather than submit them to Assignments). 5 Reader Response Papers must be submitted before the end of each term. The first 5 (Fall Term) Reader Response Papers are due by November 29, 2018, and the second 5 (Winter Term) Reader Response Papers are due by March 21, 2019. Reader Response Papers need not be written as research papers, but should be written with attention to both grammar and style. Reader Response Papers may take on a variety of forms: personal reflection, response of either agreement or disagreement, a series of follow-up questions, a combination of the former, etc.

Case Study Presentation on a Contemporary Figure on a Religious Quest – 10%: Each student will choose from a list of contemporary figures (and course dates) who have embarked upon a religious quest, and will deliver a 20-minute presentation about their chosen figure. Presentations will be based upon students' research, and a transcript of the student's presentation will be submitted to Assignments on OWL. You may utilize notes during your presentation, but you may not have a 'script'. Students have the *option* to complete the presentation in a group of two. In addition to giving the presentation, students should be prepared to address questions about their chosen figure from other students in a 2-3-minute question period. Students are expected to be able to engage with their peers' questions and concerns about their presentation.

N.B.: Additional guidelines for the Case Study Presentation will be given in class and are available on OWL.

First-Term: Test – 10%: Unit 1 of the course (The Academic Study of Religion: Foundational Knowledge) will conclude with an in-class test on November 8, 2018. Students are responsible for the breadth of information included in the readings and lectures from Unit 1 (i.e. weeks 1-9). Additional details on the First-Term Test will be discussed in class.

Second-Term: Test – 10%: Unit 2 of the course (Modern Religious Responses to the ‘Sacred’ and the ‘Profane’) will conclude with an in-class test on January 31, 2019. Students are responsible for the breadth of information included in the readings and lectures from Unit 2 (i.e. weeks 10-17). Additional details on the Second-Term Test will be discussed in class.

Final Exam – 20%: This is a cumulative exam. Students are responsible for the breadth of information included in the readings and lectures from Units 1-3 (i.e. weeks 1-26), with a special emphasis upon the readings and lectures from Unit 3 (i.e. weeks 18-26). The Final Exam will be set during the university’s Winter, 2019 examination period, and will be set by the Registrar’s Office. Additional details on the Final Exam Test will be discussed in class.

Papers:

General Guidelines: Each submission should include a title page with your name, student number, e-mail address, the topic title of the assignment and the date upon which you submitted the assignment. All submissions should be double spaced and written in 12pt Times New Roman with 1” margins. Reflection Papers and the Research Paper should be submitted to Assignments on OWL.

N.B.: Additional guidelines for papers will be given in class and are available on OWL.

Second Term: Research Paper – 20% (RS 1031 Students Only): In the second term, RS 1031 students will write about a contemporary religious quest, figure, or movement not addressed in the course. A list of suggestions will be provided from which the student may select a topic. Students may write about a different topic with the permission of the instructor. The paper must be 2000 words in length. The due date of the Research Paper is March 28, 2019. The Research Paper will be assessed according to clarity, depth and thoughtfulness of response, attention to detail, creativity, critical analysis, and quality of research. The Research Paper should employ at least five relevant, peer-reviewed sources (journal articles, essays and/or books).

First-Term: Reflection Paper #1 – 10% (RS 0011 Students Only): In the first-term, RS 0011 students will be asked to write a paper in response to a reflection question, which will be given in class. The paper must be 1000 words in length. The due date of Reflection Paper #1 is November 22, 2018. Reflection Paper #2 will be assessed according to clarity, thoughtfulness of response, attention to detail, creativity, and critical analysis.

Second-Term: Reflection Paper #2 – 10% (RS 0011 Students Only): In the second-term, RS 0011 students will be asked to write a paper in response to a reflection question, which will be given in class. The paper must be 1000 words in length. The due date of Reflection Paper #2 is March 28, 2019. Reflection Paper #2 will be assessed according to clarity, thoughtfulness of response, attention to detail, creativity, and critical analysis.

All sources employed in students' papers should be cited properly and include a bibliography. All citations and bibliographies should be complete and consistent. Papers should employ either MLA, APA, or Chicago citation style.

Course Schedule

Date	Required Reading	Assignments Due (By 11:59 PM, Thursdays)	Class Topics
FALL TERM			
September 6, 2018 (Week 1)			Unit 1: The Academic Study of Religion: Foundational Knowledge Introduction
September 11 & 13, 2018 (Week 2)	Myhre, Chapters 1-2	<i>Reader Response Paper 1</i>	What is Religion and How Does One Study Religion?
September 18 & 20, 2018 (Week 3)	Myhre, Chapter 3		Sacred Origin Stories and Sacred Myths
September 25 & 27, 2018 (Week 4)	"Introduction to Religious Quests" (N.B.: Available via OWL)	<i>Reader Response Paper 2</i>	Religious Quests <u>Case Study</u> (September 27, 2018): Mohandas Gandhi
October 2 & 4, 2018 (Week 5)	Myhre, Chapter 4		Religion and Truth Claims
October 9 & 11, 2018			FALL READING WEEK (NO CLASSES)
October 16 & 18, 2018 (Week 6)	Myhre, Chapter 5	<i>Reader Response Paper 3</i>	Religion and Sacred Stories
October 23 & 25, 2018 (Week 7)	Myhre, Chapter 14		Religion and Ritual

October 30 & November 1, 2018 (Week 8)	Andrés-Gallego, J. "Pilgrimage in Modern Spain: Change and Transition" (N.B.: Available via OWL)	<i>Reader Response Paper 4</i>	Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage
November 6 & 8, 2018 (Week 9)		<i>First-Term Test (In-Class on November 8) (10%)</i>	Test 1 – Review (November 6)
November 13 & 15, 2018 (Week 10)	Myhre, Chapter 8		Unit 2: Modern Religious Responses to the 'Sacred' and the 'Profane' Religion and Violence <u>Case Study</u> (February 14, 2019): Thomas Merton
November 20 & 22, 2018 (Week 11)	"Northern Ireland: Religion in War and Peace" (N.B.: Available at: https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/publications/northern-ireland-religion-in-war-and-peace)	<i>For RS 0011 Students ONLY – Reflection Paper #1 (10%)</i>	Religion, Conflict, and Violence
November 27 & 29, 2018 (Week 12)	Myhre, Chapter 9	<i>Reader Response Paper 5</i>	Religion, Conflict and Social Justice <u>Case Study</u> (November 29, 2018): The Dalai Lama
December 4 & 6, 2018 (Week 13)	Iran: Religious Elements of the 1979 Islamic Revolution (N.B.: Available at: https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/publications/iran-religious-elements-of-the-1979-islamic-revolution)		Religion, Conflict and Politics
WINTER TERM			
January 8 & 10, 2019 (Week 14)	Perez, M. "Between Religion and Nationalism in the Palestinian Diaspora" (N.B.: Available via OWL)	<i>Reader Response Paper 6</i>	Religion and Diaspora

January 15 & 17, 2019 (Week 15)	Wiesel, E. Trans. Marion Wiesel. <i>Night</i> (2006), Preface AND pages 3-22 (N.B.: Available at King's Library, and on Reserve at Huron's Library)		Religion and the Problem of Evil <u>Case Study</u> (January 17, 2019): Elie Wiesel
January 22 & 24, 2019 (Week 16)	Myhre, Chapter 7	<i>Reader Response Paper 7</i>	Religion and Ethics <u>Case Study</u> (January 24, 2019): Oscar Romero
January 29 & 31, 2019 (Week 17)		<i>Second-Term Test (In-Class on January 31) (10%)</i>	Second-Term Test – Review (January 29, 2019)
February 5 & 7, 2019 (Week 18)	Myhre, Chapter 6		Unit 3: Contemporary Issues in the Study of Religion Religion and Aesthetics
February 12 & 14, 2019 (Week 19)	Myhre, Chapter 11	<i>Reader Response Paper 7</i>	Asceticism and Mysticism <u>Case Study</u> (February 14, 2019): Dorothy Day
February 19 & 21, 2019			SPRING READING WEEK (NO CLASS)
February 26 & 28, 2019 (Week 20)	Baumgart-Ochse, C. "Opposed or Intertwined? Religious and Secular Conceptions of National Identity in Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" (N.B.: Available via OWL)	<i>Reader Response Paper 8</i>	Religion and Identity
March 5 & 7, 2019 (Week 21)	Myhre, Chapter 13, AND Øyen, S.A., Vaage, N. A., & Lund-Olsen, T. "Scientific Worldviews, Religious Minds." (N.B.: Available via OWL)	<i>Reader Response Paper 9</i>	Religion and Science
March 12 & 14, 2019 (Week 22)	Myhre, Chapter 12		Religion and Technology

March 19 & 21, 2019 (Week 23)	Rigoglioso, M. "Interview with Starhawk." (N.B.: Available via OWL)	<i>Reader Response Paper 10</i>	Feminist Approaches to the Study of Religion <u>Case Study</u> (March 21, 2019): Starhawk
March 26 & 28, 2019 (Week 24)	Myhre, Chapter 10	<u><i>For RS 0011 Students ONLY – Reflection Paper #2 (10%)</i></u> <u><i>For RS 1031 Students ONLY – Research Paper (20%)</i></u>	Eco-Spirituality <u>Case Study</u> (March 28, 2019): Wangari Maathai
April 2 & 4, 2019 (Week 25)	Griffiths, P. J. "On the Future of the Study of Religion in the Academy." (N.B.: Available via OWL)		The Future of the Academic Study of Religion
April 9, 2019 (Week 26)			Term 2 Review

2018-19 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation must be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty

Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are not grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is not adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&Sele%20ctedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar, see the Sessional Dates tab at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/index.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_68).

4. SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, she may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. For information on academic appeals you can consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14.

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>.

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness at Western, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html, for information about how to obtain help for yourself or others.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.