



AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO

Renison University College
Affiliated with the University of Waterloo
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Renison University College Land Acknowledgement

With gratitude, we acknowledge that Renison University College is located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples, which is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

Fall 2018

Course Code: SDS 242/RS 242

Course Title: Religious Diversity and Social Development

Class Times/Location: 10:00-11:20 am (Mon/Wed); REN 1918

Instructor: Douglas E. Cowan

Office: REN 0217

Office Phone: (519) 884-4404 x28607

Office Hours: 1130-1:00 pm (Mon/Wed), or by appointment

Email: decowan@uwaterloo.ca (preferred way to reach me)

Course Description

This course explores the interrelationship of religious diversity, multiculturalism, and attitudes towards social issues. Religious traditions and beliefs contribute both positively and negatively to social development. In this course, we will explore not only what we mean when we say "religion," but also how we understand the concepts of "diversity" and "social development" in terms of the most powerful meaning-making force in human history.

Cross-listed Course

Please note that this is a cross-listed course, and will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Identify aspects and influences of religious diversity as exemplified through various issues, concerns, and problems of social development, both in Canada and globally.
- B. Describe how various religious groups approach specific issues of social development, civil liberties, and human rights, and how those stances are related to particular religious worldviews.
- C. Critically analyse and explain social development issues in terms of the religious dimensions involved.

Required Text

There is no required textbook for this class.

Readings Available on LEARN

As necessary, required readings or viewings may be posted on LEARN.

Course Requirements and Assessment

| Assessment | Date of Evaluation | Weighting |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Class Participation | Ongoing | 15% |
| Case Analysis #1 | October 12 | 15% |
| Case Analysis #2 | November 2 | 20% |
| Video Response #1 | October 17 | 15% |
| Video Response #2 | November 12 | 15% |
| Video Response #3 (optional) | November 28 | 15% |
| Take-home Final Examination | | 20% |
| Total | | 100% |

Class Participation (15%)

Because so much of what we learn happens in the context of class discussion, class participation is crucial to success in the course. Beginning in Week 2, each student will be permitted two unexcused absences; any others require proper documentation per university policy. Simply, "letting you know I won't be there today" is not sufficient. Note well that class participation is not the same as class attendance. Learning happens most effectively when we are actively engaged with the material. Mid-way through the course, I will be in contact with each student to let you know where I see you in terms of your participation. This will not be a "participation mark" for half the

semester, but my sense of your effort in the class. If, throughout the course, you are concerned about your participation, don't hesitate to come and see me.

Case Analyses (1x 15%; 1x 20%)

These are written assignments, each one 900-1200 words (3-4 pages of essay text, typed and doublespaced). For each assignment, students will choose some aspect of social development and write a case analysis of it in terms of the religious issues involved. Your approach can be related to the social service, education, and/or cultural diversity dimensions of Social Development Studies and/or written from the perspective of Religious Studies. This MAY NOT be one of the specific cases we consider in class, though it may be related (e.g., there are far more issues related to women and religion than we can cover during the semester). In each case analysis, you will (a) identify the specific issue you are discussing and (b) present the view of two constituencies which have different views on the issue, and, most importantly, the grounds on which they hold those views. This last part is very important: often, far more is learned by engaging viewpoints with which we disagree than with which we agree. Thus, part of the task is to understand and represent these views fairly. Note well that fairly representing someone's views in no way entails agreement with or endorsement of those views. Each case analysis must consider a different issue, and follow the guidelines below. You are, of course, welcome to come and discuss your ideas with me.

- (1) Case from the perspective of two different denominations within a single religious tradition (or constituencies within a denomination), but which take opposing views on the issue.
- (2) Case from the perspective of two different religions with opposing views on the issue.

Video Reflection and Response (2x 15%; 3x optional)

These are written assignments, 900-1200 words (3-4 pages of essay text, typed and doublespaced). This is NOT a review assignment; whether you like a video or not is not germane. Rather, I expect that you will (a) reflect on the video as a whole, (b) identify one or two key issues or questions raised, then (c) write a response paper in which you discuss what religious aspects are implicated in the question(s),

and how religion influences the issue(s) (either positively, negatively, or both). That is, in terms of religion and social development, what's at stake here? NOTE: There are three videos scheduled, but you are only required to write on two of them. Should you wish to do all three, I will take the best two marks when calculating your grade.

Take-home Examination (20%)

There will be a take-home examination at the end of the course. This will be an essay-style exam in which students are expected to bring the tools, concepts, and learnings from the course to bear on a particular issue of social development. More details will be provided as the course proceeds.

Course Outline

Should readings be assigned, they will be made available on LEARN.

| Week | Date | Topic |
|------|------------|---|
| 1 | Sept 10-12 | Introduction to the course Introduction to the Case Study |
| 2 | Sept 17-19 | Religion, Religious Diversity, and Social Development |
| 3 | Sept 24-26 | Religion, Religious Diversity, and Social Development Guest Speaker: Dr. Wendy Fletcher |
| 4 | Oct 1-3 | Religion, Colonialism, and Social Development Video: "Budrus" |
| | Oct 8 | Thanksgiving Day – University closed |
| | Oct 10-11 | Fall Mid-Term Study Break – No classes |
| 5 | Oct 12* | Case Discussion: "Budrus" Case Analysis #1 due: Friday, Oct. 12 |
| 6 | Oct 15-17 | Women, Religion, and Social Development Video Reflection #1 due: Wednesday, Oct. 17 |
| 7 | Oct 22-24 | Video: "Who Owns Yoga?" Religion, Development, and Cultural Appropriation |
| 8 | Oct 29-31 | Guest Speaker: Dr. Jeff Wilson Religion, Development, and Education Case Analysis #2 due: Friday, Nov. 2 |
| 9 | Nov 5-7 | Religion, Development, and Freedom of Expression Religion, Development, and Social Policy |
| 10 | Nov 12-14 | Religion, Development, and LGBTQ Issues Video: "An Act of Love" Video Reflection #2 due: Monday, Nov. 12 |
| 11 | Nov 19-21 | Guest Speaker: Rev. Megan Collings-Moore |

| Week | Date | Topic |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| | | Religion, Development, and Sexuality |
| 12 | Nov 26-28 | Religion, Religious Diversity, and Social Development in the Future Video Reflection #3 due: Wednesday, Nov. 28 |
| 13 | Dec 3 | Course Recap and Preparation for Final Exam |

General Notes and Tips on doing well:

- *All assignments will be submitted through a Dropbox on LEARN.*
- *For any of these assignments, do not write only what you think I want to hear. The intention of all assignments is to encourage you to think critically about the course content, the primary examples we consider, and the course readings.*
- *All assignments will be graded on the depth of thought presented and how well those thoughts are articulated.*
- *Think and write in terms of asking questions and solving problems. Do not simply synopsise the material. If you want to critique it, that's fine, but you have to make an argument for your critique. You can't simply say whether you liked something or not.*
- *Use concrete examples to support the argument you are making or your solution to the problem you present.*
- *Start early and rewrite or rework your project often. The single most common reason for students doing poorly on any assignments—bar none—is leaving them until the last moment. Speaking of that...*

Late Work

Assignments turned in past the due date will be assessed a penalty of 10% per business day late, including the day on which you turn it in. If a paper is due on Wednesday and you turn it in Friday, that is a 20% penalty. Unless I specify otherwise, I expect you to turn assignments in, not simply email them to me. I do not grant extensions except for reasons of medical and family emergency, and documentation is required in both instances. Please note that I submit my grades as soon as I have finished marking those assignments turned in on the due date. Unless you have made arrangements with me prior to the

due date, once grades are submitted, they are final. Extensions beyond the end-of-semester require that students complete a Request for Incomplete form, available at the Renison University College registrar's office, and provide medical (or other) documentation supporting their request.

Classroom Etiquette

Respect the opinions of others. During class discussions, it is very likely that contradictory opinions will emerge, especially when we are dealing with highly emotional topics such as religion and social development. There is no requirement in our class that students agree with each other, or with the instructor, but there is the mandate that opinions expressed be respected.

Please be on time. We will begin each class promptly, and I expect students to be in the room and ready to proceed. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class and if you are late, it will count as an absence.

Electronic Device Policy

Electronic devices are allowed in class, provided they do not disturb teaching or learning. Use of these devices which disrupts either teaching or learning WILL negatively affect a student's participation grade.

Attendance Policy

See above under Class Participation.

Final Examination Policy

For **Fall 2018**, the established examination period is **December 6-21, 2018**. The schedule will be available after mid-October. Students should be aware that student travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time (see:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/registrar/final-examinations>

Accommodation for Illness or Unforeseen Circumstances:

The instructor follows the practices of the University of Waterloo in accommodating students who have documented reasons for missing quizzes or exams. See

http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/students/accom_illness.html

Academic Integrity:

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage \(https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage \(https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behaviour\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behaviour) for more information.

Discipline: Every student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their own actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration, should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or Academic Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties are imposed under the University of Waterloo Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties).

Students should also be aware that copyright laws in Canada prohibit reproducing more than 10% of any work without permission from its author, publisher, or other copyright holder. Waterloo’s policy on Fair Dealing is available here: <https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-guidelines/fair-dealing-advisory> Violation of Canada’s Copyright Act is a punishable academic offence under Policy 71 – Student Discipline.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70), Section 4 (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant, who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there are grounds. Students who believe

they have grounds for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72).

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo):

<http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities, without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AAS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Intellectual Property. Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of the instructor, which can include:

- lecture handouts and presentations (e.g., PowerPoint slides)
- lecture content, both spoken and written (and any audio or video recording thereof)
- questions from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams)
- work protected by copyright (i.e., any work authored by the instructor)

Making available the intellectual property of instructors without their express written consent (e.g., uploading lecture notes or assignments to an online repository) is considered theft of intellectual property and subject to disciplinary sanctions as described in Policy 71 – Student Discipline. Students who become aware of the availability of what may be their instructor’s intellectual property in online repositories are encouraged to alert the instructor.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

On Campus

- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 xt 32655
- **MATES**: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7

- **Good2Talk**: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
- **Here 24/7**: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME**: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

A respectful living and learning environment for all

1. It is expected that everyone living, learning or working on the premises of Renison University College will contribute to an environment of tolerance and respect by treating others with sensitivity and civility.
2. Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of jokes, insults, gestures, gossip, or other behaviours that are meant to intimidate. Some instances of harassment are against the law in addition to Renison University College policy.
3. Discrimination is treating people differently because of their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, colour, age, creed, marital status, or other personal characteristics. The Ontario Human Rights Code considers actions and behaviours rather than intentions.