

## Important?

ALL TIMES EASTERN - Please see the [University Policies](#) section of your Syllabus for details.

Module	Readings and Other Assigned Material	Activities and Assignments	End / Due Date
<a href="#">Module 1: Introduction to Religion and Film</a>	<b>Movie:</b> <i>Saved!</i>	Groups for the <a href="#">Discussions</a> will be created by Technical Support	Check after September 6, 2018, at 4:30 PM
	<b>Course Reserves:</b> Prothero, "Religion Matters"	<b>Introduce Yourself</b>	Saturday, September 8, 2018, 11:55 PM
	<b>Course Reserves:</b> Berger, "Home Ridiculus: Social Construction of the Comic"	<b>Module 1: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Initial Discussion Posts	Wednesday, September 12, 2018, 11:55 PM
<a href="#">Module 2: What is Religion? What is Film?</a>	<b>Course Reserves:</b> Same as Module 1	<b>Module 1: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Discussion Responses	Friday, September 14, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Module 1: <a href="#">Short Answer Paper</a></b>	Monday, September 17, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Module 2: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Initial Discussion Posts	Wednesday, September 19, 2018, 11:55 PM
<a href="#">Module 3: Jesus on the Silver Screen</a>	<b>Movie:</b> <i>Life of Brian</i>	<b>Module 2: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Discussion Responses	Friday, September 21, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Modules 1 &amp; 2: <a href="#">Critical Reflection Paper</a></b>	Tuesday, September 25, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Module 3: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Initial Discussion Posts	Wednesday, September 26, 2018, 11:55 PM
<a href="#">Module 4: The Interface of Interpretation</a>	<b>Course Reserves:</b> Same as Module 3	<b>Module 3: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Discussion Responses	Friday, September 28, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Module 3: <a href="#">Short Answer Paper</a></b>	Monday, October 1, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Module 4: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Initial Discussion Posts	Wednesday, October 3, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Module 4: <a href="#">Questions 1 and 2 Discussions</a></b> - Discussion Responses	Friday, October 5, 2018, 11:55 PM
		<b>Modules 3 &amp; 4: <a href="#">Critical</a></b>	Friday, October

[Reflection Paper](#) 12, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Fall Break - Study Days (Tuesday, October 9, 2018 and Wednesday, October 10, 2018)**

**[Module 5: Buddhism and Orientalism](#)**

**Movie:** *Little Buddha*

**Course Reserves:** Mullen, "Orientalist Commercializations"

**Course Reserves:** Lopez, "New Age Orientalism"

**[Module 6: The Lenses of History and Sociology](#)**

**Course Reserves:** Same as Module 5

**[Module 7: Religion and Horror](#)**

**Movie:** *The Exorcist*

**Course Reserves:** Cowan, "Religion and Cinema Horror"

**Course Reserves:** Cowan, "Mainstreaming Satan"

**[Module 8: The Lens of the Mind](#)**

**Course Reserves:** Same as Module 7

**[Module 9: The Quest for Transcendence](#)**

**Film:** *Contact*

**Course Reserves:** Cowan, "Seeing the Saviour in the Stars: Religion, Conformity, and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*"

**Course Reserves:** Cowan, "First Contact"

**[Module 10: The Philosophical Lens](#)**

**Course Reserves:** Same as Module 9

**Module 5: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Discussion Posts Saturday, October 13, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 5: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Responses Monday, October 15, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 5: [Short Answer Paper](#)** Monday, October 15, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 6: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Discussion Posts Saturday, October 20, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 6: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Responses Monday, October 22, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Modules 5 & 6: [Critical Reflection Paper](#)** Friday, October 26, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 7: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Discussion Posts Saturday, October 27, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 7: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Responses Monday, October 29, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 7: [Short Answer Paper](#)** Monday, October 29, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 8: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Discussion Posts Saturday, November 3, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 8: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Responses Monday, November 5, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Modules 7 & 8: [Critical Reflection Paper](#)** Friday, November 9, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 9: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Discussion Posts Saturday, November 10, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 9: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Responses Monday, November 12, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 9: [Short Answer Paper](#)** Monday, November 12, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 10: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Discussion Posts Saturday, November 17,

**[Module 11:](#)**  
[Religion and](#)  
[Popular Culture](#)

**Movie:** *Princess Mononoke*

**Course Reserves:** Thomas, "Shukyo Asobi and Miyazaki Hayao's *Amime*"

**Course Reserves:** Wright, "Forest Spirits, Giant Insects and World Trees: The Nature Vision of Hayao Miyazaki"

**[Module 12: The](#)**  
[Theological Lens](#)

**Course Reserves:** Same as Module 11

Discussion Posts 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 10: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Monday, November 19, 2018, 11:55 PM  
 Responses

**Modules 9 & 10: [Critical Reflection Paper](#)** Friday, November 23, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 11: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Saturday, November 24, 2018, 11:55 PM  
 Discussion Posts

**Module 11: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Monday, November 26, 2018, 11:55 PM  
 Responses

**Module 11: [Short Answer Paper](#)** Monday, October 26, 2018, 11:55 PM

**Module 12: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Initial Saturday, December 1, 2018, 11:55 PM  
 Discussion Posts

**Module 12: [Questions 1 and 2 Discussions](#)** - Discussion Monday, December 3, 2018, 11:55 PM  
 Responses

**Modules 11 & 12: [Critical Reflection Paper](#)** Friday, December 7, 2018, 11:55 PM

**There is no final examination for this course.**

Discussion Participation = **25%**

Short Answer Papers = **25%**

Critical Reflection Papers = **50% (10% each)**

## Official Grades and Course Access

Official Grades and Academic Standings are available through [Quest](#).

Your access to this course will continue for the duration of the current term. You will not have access to this course once the next term begins.

# Contact Information



## Announcements

Your instructor uses the **Announcements** widget on the **Course Home** page during the term to communicate new or changing information regarding due dates, instructor absence, etc., as needed. You are expected to read the announcements on a regular basis.


To ensure you are viewing the complete list of announcements, you may need to click **Show All Announcements**.

## Discussions

A **General Discussion** topic\* has also been made available to allow students to communicate with peers in the course. Your instructor may drop in at this discussion topic.

## Contact Us

Who and Why	Contact Details
<p><b>Instructor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course-related questions (e.g., course content, deadlines, assignments, etc.)</li> <li>• Questions of a personal nature</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post your course-related questions</b> to the <b>Ask the Instructor</b> discussion topic*. This allows other students to benefit from your question as well.</p> <p><b>Questions of a personal nature</b> can be directed to your instructor.</p> <p>Instructor: Dr. Denis Bekkering  <a href="mailto:dbekkering@uwaterloo.ca">dbekkering@uwaterloo.ca</a></p> <p>Your instructor checks email and the <b>Ask the Instructor</b> discussion topic* frequently and will make every effort to reply to your questions within 24–48 hours, Monday to Friday.</p>
<p><b>Technical Support,</b> Centre for Extended Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical problems with Waterloo LEARN</li> </ul>	<p><a href="mailto:learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca">learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca</a></p> <p>Include your full name, WatIAM user ID, student number, and course name and number.</p> <p>Technical support is available during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM (Eastern Time).</p>

[LEARN Help Student Documentation](#) 

**Learner Support Services,**

Centre for Extended Learning

- General inquiries
- WatCards (Student ID Cards)
- Examination information

[Student Resources](#) 

[extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca)

+1 519-888-4002

Include your full name, WatIAM user ID, student number, and course name and number.

\*Discussion topics can be accessed by clicking **Connect** and then **Discussions** on the course navigation bar above.

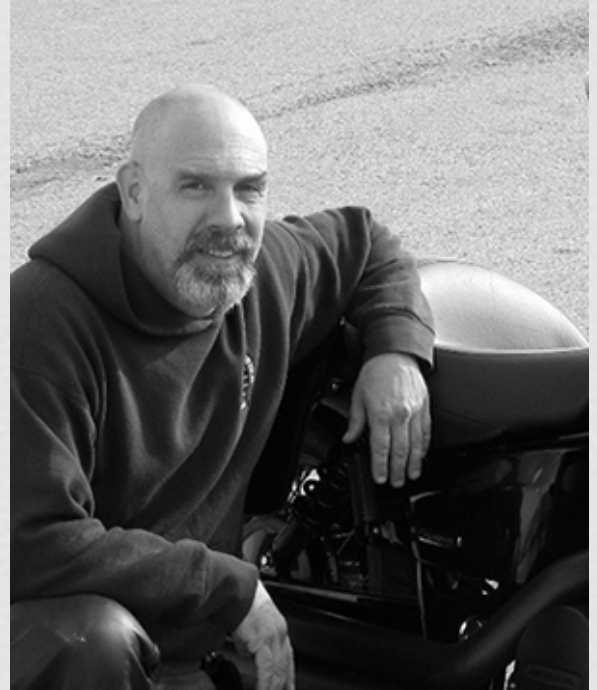
# About the Course Author



## Doug Cowan

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Douglas E. Cowan is Professor of Religious Studies and Social Development Studies at Renison University College at the University of Waterloo. Before moving to Renison in 2006, he taught Religious Studies and Sociology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Dr. Cowan has a number of intellectual interests, including: new religious movements, religion on the Internet, religion and popular culture, and, of course, religion and popular film. He has written a number of books, his two most recent are *Sacred Terror: Religion and Horror on the Silver Screen* and *Sacred Space: The Quest for Transcendence in Science Fiction Film and Television*, both of which are published by Baylor University Press. Dr. Cowan actively participates in the Joint Laurier-Waterloo PhD Program in Religious Studies and is a former director of the program. When not teaching or writing, he practices Shido-kan Shorin Ryu karate and rides his motorcycle.



# Course Description and Goals



## Course Description

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Religion reflects both humankind's search for meaning and its attempts to maintain particular meanings in the face of cultural challenge and social pressure. Film and television are two of the most important lingua francas—the "common languages"—of popular discourse. We use them as ways of establishing shared interests and in-groups, as well as exploring questions both mundane and momentous. In this course, we will use a number of films to examine ways in which religious understandings are highlighted, reinforced, and challenged, both onscreen and off. While some films deal with obvious and easily recognizable religious topics, others reveal their relationship to religion only upon closer, more critical examination. As our culture passes relentlessly from literacy to visuality, discerning how the various dimensions of religious belief and practice are reflected and refracted in film and television is an important element in understanding the nature of religion in late modern society.

N.B., should unforeseen circumstances arise, I reserve the right to modify the syllabus as necessary to ensure the academic and pedagogical integrity of the course.

**Also, please note that this is a Religious Studies course that has been cross-listed for the convenience of students in Fine Arts. It is not a Fine Arts course that deals with religious topics. This is an important distinction of which all students should be aware.**

## Course Goals

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In this course, students will:

- ✓ Learn to appreciate different genres of popular film as significant cultural texts that both reflect—and reflect on—the religious diversity, theological struggle, and ethical and moral dilemmas of late modern society;
- ✓ Develop their understanding of how these texts come to constitute and influence, not merely represent or imitate, religious belief and practice;
- ✓ Engage in critical dialogue with these texts and experiences, with scholars who have contributed to their interpretation, and with each other;
- ✓ Improve communication skills through written assignments and class participation; and continue to foster skills in critical thinking and analysis.

This online course was developed by Dr. Doug Cowan, with instructional design and multimedia development

support provided by the Centre for Extended Learning. Further media production was provided by Instructional Technologies and Multimedia Services.



# Materials and Resources




## Required Movies

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1. *Saved!* (2004). United Artists
2. *Life of Brian*. (1979). Warner Bros.
3. *Little Buddha*. (1993). Miramax Films
4. *The Exorcist*. Director's Cut. (1973). Warner Bros.
5. *Contact*. (1997). Warner Bros.
6. *Princess Mononoke*. (1997). Miramax Films

For ordering information, please contact the [Waterloo Bookstore](#) .

For your convenience, you can compile a list of required and optional course materials through [BookLook](#)  using your Quest userID and password. If you are having difficulties ordering online and wish to call the Waterloo Bookstore, their phone number is +1 519-888-4673 or toll-free at +1 866-330-7933. Please be aware that textbook orders **CANNOT** be taken over the phone.




## Course Reserves

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Course Reserves can be accessed using the **Library Resources** widget on the **Course Home** page. Here is a copy of the [Course Reserves Reading List](#) (pdf).

## Resources

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- [Internet Movie Database](#) 
- [Journal of Religion and Film](#) 
- Journal of Religion and Popular Culture (available through the library)
- Journal of Popular Culture (available through the library)
- [Library services for co-op students on work term and distance education students](#) 

# Grade Breakdown



The following table represents the grade breakdown of this course.

Activities and Assignments	Weight (%)
Introduce yourself	Ungraded
Discussion Participation	25%
Short Answer Papers	25%
Critical Reflection Papers	50% (10% each)

There is no final examination for this course.

# Course and Department Policies



## Late Assignments

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Assignments turned in past the due date will be assessed a penalty of 10% per day late, including the day on which you turn it in. If a paper is due on Monday and you turn it in Wednesday, there will be a 20% penalty. I do not grant extensions except for reasons of medical and family emergency, and documentation is required in all 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.

## Discussion Etiquette

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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. There is no requirement in our class that students agree with each other, or with the instructors, but there is the mandate that the opinions expressed be respected.

## Cross-listed Courses

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Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

**Also, please note that this is a Religious Studies course that has been cross-listed for the convenience of students in Fine Arts. It is not a Fine Arts course that deals with religious topics. This is an important distinction of which all students should be aware.**

\* Please see the link to [University Policies](#) for such things as Accommodation Due to Illness, Grievances, Academic Integrity, etc.

# University Policies



## Submission Times

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Please be aware that the University of Waterloo is located in the **Eastern Time Zone** (GMT or UTC-5 during standard time and UTC-4 during daylight saving time) and, as such, the time that your activities and/or assignments are due is based on this zone. If you are outside the Eastern Time Zone and require assistance with converting your time, please try the [Ontario, Canada Time Converter](#).

## Accommodation Due to Illness

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**If your instructor has provided specific procedures for you to follow if you miss assignment due dates, term tests, or a final examination, adhere to those instructions.** Otherwise:

### Missed Assignments/Tests/Quizzes

Contact the instructor as soon as you realize there will be a problem, and preferably within 48 hours, but no more than 72 hours, have a medical practitioner complete a [Verification of Illness Form](#).

**Email** a scanned copy of the Verification of Illness Form to your instructor. In your email to the instructor, provide your name, student ID number, and exactly what course activity you missed.

Further information regarding Management of Requests for Accommodation Due to Illness can be found on the [Accommodation due to illness](#) page.

### Missed Final Examinations

If this course has a final exam and if you are unable to write a final examination due to illness, seek medical treatment and have a medical practitioner complete a [Verification of Illness Form](#). Email a scanned copy to the Centre for Extended Learning (CEL) at [extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca) within 48 hours of your missed exam. Make sure you include your name, student ID number, and the exam(s) missed. You will be **REQUIRED** to hand in the original completed form before you write the make-up examination.

After your completed Verification of Illness Form has been received and processed, you will be emailed your alternate exam date and time. This can take up to 2 business days. If you are within **150 km** of Waterloo you should be prepared to write in Waterloo on the additional CEL [exam dates](#). If you live outside the 150 km radius, CEL will work with you to make suitable arrangements.

Further information about [Examination Accommodation Due to Illness](#) regulations is available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

## Academic Integrity

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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. **If you have not already completed the online tutorial regarding academic integrity you should do so as soon as possible.** Undergraduate students should see the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and graduate students should see the [Graduate Students and Academic Integrity](#) website.

Proper citations are part of academic integrity. Citations in CEL course materials usually follow CEL style, which is based on APA style. Your course may follow a different style. If you are uncertain which style to use for an assignment, please confirm with your instructor or TA.

For further information on academic integrity, please visit the [Office of Academic Integrity](#).

## Turnitin

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**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.

## Discipline

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A student is expected to know what constitutes [academic integrity](#) to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her 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 instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. 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](#).

## Appeals

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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 is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground



for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

## Grievance

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A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

## Final Grades

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In accordance with [Policy 46 - Information Management](#), Appendix A - Access to and Release of Student Information, the Centre for Extended Learning does not release final examination grades or final course grades to students. Students must go to [Quest](#) to see all final grades. Any grades posted in Waterloo LEARN are unofficial.

## AccessAbility Services

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[AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, 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 accommodation to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term and for each course.

## Accessibility Statement

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The Centre for Extended Learning strives to meet the needs of all our online learners. Our ongoing efforts to become aligned with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) are guided by University of Waterloo accessibility [Legislation](#) and policy and the [World Wide Web Consortium's \(W3C\) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0](#). The majority of our online courses are currently delivered via the Desire2Learn Learning Environment. Learn more about [Desire2Learn's Accessibility Standards Compliance](#).

## Use of Computing and Network Resources

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Please see the [Guidelines on Use of Waterloo Computing and Network Resources](#).

## Copyright Information

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### UWaterloo's Web Pages

All rights, including copyright, images, slides, audio, and video components, of the content of this course are owned by the course author, unless otherwise stated. These web pages are owned or controlled by the University of Waterloo, Centre for Extended Learning. By accessing the web pages, you agree that you may only download the content for your own personal, non-commercial use. You are not permitted to copy, broadcast, download, store (in any medium), transmit, show or play in public, adapt, or change in any way the content of these web pages for any other purpose

whatsoever without the prior written permission of the course author and the University of Waterloo, Centre for Extended Learning.

### **Other Sources**

Respect the copyright of others and abide by all copyright notices and regulations when using the computing facilities provided for your course of study by the University of Waterloo. No material on the Internet or World Wide Web may be reproduced or distributed in any material form or in any medium, without permission from copyright holders or their assignees. To support your course of study, the University of Waterloo has provided hypertext links to relevant websites, resources, and services on the web. These resources must be used in accordance with any registration requirements or conditions which may be specified. You must be aware that in providing such hypertext links, the University of Waterloo has not authorized any acts (including reproduction or distribution) which, if undertaken without permission of copyright owners or their assignees, may be infringement of copyright. Permission for such acts can only be granted by copyright owners or their assignees.

If there are any questions about this notice, please contact the University of Waterloo, Centre for Extended Learning, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, N2L 3G1 or [extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca).