# Evil Winter 2024

## RS 121

Published Jan 04, 2024

## Class Schedule

| Section | Location | Time | Instructor(s) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **RS 121** 081 *[LEC]* | ONLN - Online | | |
| | | | This table is generated automatically |

## Instructor & TA (Teaching Assistant) Information

Use the LEARN Course Discussions forum to communicate with your instructor and classmates. Discussion topics can be accessed in LEARN by clicking **Connect** and then **Discussions** on the course navigation bar.

For questions of a personal nature, please email your instructor:

## Course Description

> *Calendar Description for RS 121*
>
> How do the religions of the world define evil? How do they suggest it can be overcome? Classical and modern writers from Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism will be considered. [Note: This course fulfils an Area 1 requirement for Religious Studies majors.]

This course is about the death of millions, even tens of millions, of people. It is about slavery, colonialism and imperialism, war and genocide, intentional mass starvation, the threat of nuclear weapons, and ecological destruction. While modern society has brought many advances, it has also given us the power to kill on an unprecedented scale. Much of the evil of the 20th and 21st centuries would not be possible without modern technology, bureaucracy, ideology, and the political, economic, and social structures of a modern society. We will examine how religious communities respond to these new forms of evil.

We will look at a number of religious thinkers who attempt to understand modern societies and the unique forms of evil they produce. These thinkers turn to ancient writings, ideas, values, and practices to address the problem of evil in the modern world. They come up with some startling suggestions. For example, many of them find that their own traditions often contribute to the problem. They also find sources of wisdom and goodness in them to offer solutions to confront the evil they see around them. Finally, they allow us to analyze the nature of the evil in the world and in each one of us.

As this is a first-year course in Religious Studies, we will also learn how Religious Studies scholars look at religion and the specific traditions we will be examining. Do not be concerned about the number of readings from ancient religious scriptures. Each passage is only a few paragraphs long.

## Learning Outcomes

No explicit learning outcomes defined for this course.

## Tentative Course Schedule

Please see the **Course Schedule** in LEARN for complete details.

| Week | Content Module | Activities and Assignments |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Module 1: Evil in the Modern Age | Introduce Yourself |
| 2 | Module 2: Judaism, Modernity and The Holocaust | Inform instructor if opting out of Turnitin for your Written Assignment |
| 3 | Module 3: Judaism, the Holocaust, and Israel | Quiz 1: Modules 1-3 |
| 4 | Module 4: Roman Catholicism, Innovation, and Modern Evil | |
| 5 | Module 5: Colonization, Modernity and Evil | |
| 6 | Module 6: Ideology and Evil in Modern Society | Quiz 2: Modules 4-6 |
| 7 | Module 7: Economic Liberalism | |
| 8 | Module 8: The Pope and the Planet | |
| 9 | Module 9: The Environmental Crisis: A Buddhist Perspective: Thich Nhat Hanh, Part I | Quiz 3: Modules 7-9 |
| 10 | Module 10: The Environmental Crisis: A Buddhist Perspective: Thich Nhat Hanh, Part II | |
| 11 | Module 11: Buddhist Eco-Feminism | |

| Week | Content Module | Activities and Assignments |
|------|---------------|---------------------------|
| **12** | Module 12: Conclusion: Religious Responses to Evil in the Modern World | Quiz 4: Modules 10-12 |
| | | Written Assignment |

There is no final examination for this course.

## Texts / Materials

| Title / Name | Notes / Comments | Required |
|-------------|-----------------|----------|
| Wiesel, Elie. (2006). Night. Hill and Wang. | | Yes |
| Kozol, Jonathan. (1995). Amazing Grace. Crown. | | Yes |
| Hanh, Thich Nhat. (1992). Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life. Bantam. | | No |

For textbook ordering information, please contact the W Store | Course Materials + Supplies (https://wstore.uwaterloo.ca/) .

Course Reserves for Students (https://uwaterloo.ca/library/services/course-reserves-students) are used in this course. Course Reserves can be accessed using the **Library Resources** widget on the **Course Home** page.

## Student Assessment

| Component | Value |
|-----------|-------|
| Introduce Yourself | Ungraded |
| Quiz 1: Modules 1-3 | 20% |
| Quiz 2: Modules 4-6 | 20% |
| Quiz 3: Modules 7-9 | 20% |
| Quiz 4: Modules 10-12 | 20% |
| Written Assignment | 20% |

# Assignment Screening

Text matching software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin and alternatives in this course. See Administrative Policy below for more information and links.

## Administrative Policy

# Late Assignments

A late penalty of 5% per day (including Saturday and Sunday) will be strictly enforced. If you are going to be late, contact the instructor before the deadline. No papers will be accepted after one week past the deadline.

# Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory (https://www.caut.ca/content/guide-acknowledging-first-peoples-traditional-territory) .

# University Policy

**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. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity (https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) for more information.]

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

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity (https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) for more information.] 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 (https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71) . For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties (https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/guidelines/guidelines-assessment-penalties) .

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70) (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline (https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71) may be appealed if there is a

ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals (https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72) .

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services (https://uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/)](https://uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/) , located in Needles Hall, Room 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 AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

**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 alternate assignment.