



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.

### **Winter 2021**

**Course Code:** RS/SDS 242

**Course Title:** Religious Diversity and Social Development

**Class Times/Location:** Offered remotely in Winter 2021

**Instructor:** Douglas E. Cowan

**Office:** REN 315 (not on campus in Winter 2021)

**Office Phone:** 519-884-4404 (x28607)—rarely checked

**Office Hours:** Monday/Wednesday (10:00-11:30 am)  
by open video conference (links will be provided in Learn.)

**Email:** [decowan@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:decowan@uwaterloo.ca) (this is the best way to reach me.)

### **Course Description**

This course explores the interrelationship of religious diversity, multiculturalism, and attitudes toward social issues. Religious traditions and beliefs contribute both positively and negatively to social development. In this course, we will explore not only when we mean when we say 'religion,' but also how we understand concepts of 'diversity' and 'social development' in terms of the most powerful meaning-making force in human history. As we will discover, this often means very different things to different people.

## **Cross-listed course**

This is a cross-listed course. Please note that a cross-listed course 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 specific required textbook for this class.

## **Class Materials Available on LEARN**

Required readings, videos, and narrated PowerPoints will be available on or through Learn in their appropriate modules.

## **Course Requirements and Assessment**

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Date of Evaluation</u>	<u>Weighting</u>
Discussion Participation	Feb.7; Mar. 7; Apr. 11	20%
Video Response #1	February 5	15%
Video Response #2	March 5	20%
Video Response #3	April 5	20%
Video Response #4	April 14	25%
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Total		100%

## **Discussion Participation (20%)**

Discussion participation is crucial to success in this course. This is even more so, since we are working together remotely this term. It's simply a fact that we learn more effectively when we are actively engaged with course material.

Each student has been placed into one of a number of discussion groups on LEARN. For each module, I will post discussion questions related to the reading, viewings, PowerPoints, and/or mini-lectures. For each of these questions, you are required to contribute at least one initial post, and at least two response posts to your group. The questions are designed to stimulate your thinking and discussion, not simply to be answered with "I agree" or "I disagree"-type responses. In all cases, you must tell your group (and me) why you think what you do.

That is, a response that says, simply, "I agree" or "I disagree" is not an acceptable level of participation. This is the portion of the course that replaces in-class discussion, so it should be taken with the same level of seriousness. Always think about how your own questions and responses contribute to the furthering the module's discussion.

It is important to keep up with class discussion participation. If students consistently post either their initial contributions or their responses at the last moment, this will be considered inadequate for participation. If students only post initially, but make no effort to respond to their group-mates, this too will be considered insufficient. Lastly, students may not 'do all the discussions at the same time'—either ahead of the module or at the end of the semester. Obviously, this defeats the purpose of the assignment, and the different discussion modules will be locked after two weeks.

I will be assigning marks out of 5 for each of the three months of the course, reserving a further 5 for overall evaluation at the end of the semester.

### **Video Reflection and Response (1x15%/2x20%/1x25%)**

These are written assignments, for which you should follow the written submission guidelines below. They constitute the bulk of the written work for the semester, but please note that these are NOT review assignments; that is, whether you liked 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?

The first reflection paper will be 1200-1500 words, the second two 1500-1800, and the last one 200-2400 words. Obviously, the theory is that you are building your skills at analysis and communication throughout the semester.

NOTE: You may reference material from the Discussion Forums, but if you do so you must build on that in some substantive way. You may not simply repeat or replicate this material. Adding a sentence or two of commentary will not be considered adequate.

### Course Outline

For specific readings, viewings, and narrated PowerPoints, see the individual module in the course Learn site. This is a general framework for the course. Topic specifics may change.

Week	Date	Topic
1	Jan 11-17	Introduction to the Course
2	Jan 18-24	Religion and Religious Diversity
3	Jan 25-31	Religion, Religious Diversity, and Social Development
4	Feb 1-7	Religion, Colonialism, and Social Development
5	Feb 8-14	Women, Religion, and Social Development 1
	Feb 15	Family Day
	Feb 16-19	Reading Week
6	Feb 22-28	Women, Religion, and Social Development 2
7	Mar 1-7	Religion, Development, and Cultural Appropriation
8	Mar 8-14	Religion, Development, and Freedom of Expression
9	Mar 17-21*	(Inc. scheduled 2-day pause) Catch-up days
10	Mar 22-28	Religion, Development, and Sexuality
11	Mar 29-Apr 1	Religion, Development, and LGBTQ+ Concerns
	Apr 2	Good Friday
12	Apr 5-14*	(Inc. 2-day make-up) Catch-up days

### Late Work

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 Friday and you turn it in Sunday, that is a 20% penalty. With the exception of drafts, turn in all assignments through the appropriate LEARN Dropbox; do not simply email them to me. I only grant extensions for reasons of medical and family emergency, and documentation is required in both instances. See the University of Waterloo guidelines on Covid-19 to assist you in this. Extensions beyond the end-of-semester require that you complete Request for Incomplete form, available at the Renison Registrar's Office, and supporting documentation may be required.

### **Attendance Policy**

See policy above on Discussion Participation.

### **Final Examination Policy**

There is NO final examination in this course.

### **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](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. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity \(https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity\)](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 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 \(https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71\)](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71). 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 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](mailto:counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca) / 519-888-4567 xt 32655
- [MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) 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: 519-749-4300 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**

Everyone living, learning, and working at Renison University College is expected to contribute to creating a respectful environment free from harassment and discrimination.

If you experience or witness harassment or discrimination, seek help. You may contact Credence & Co., Renison's external anti-harassment and anti-discrimination officers, by email ([info@credenceandco.com](mailto:info@credenceandco.com)) or by phone (519-883-8906). Credence & Co. is an independent K-W based firm which works with organizations toward thriving workplace cultures, including professional coaching, consulting, facilitation, policy development, conflict mediation and ombudsperson functions.

Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of disrespectful comments, unwanted text messages or images, degrading jokes, rude gestures, unwanted touching, or other behaviours meant to intimidate.

According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, discrimination means unequal or different treatment causing harm, whether intentional or not, because of race, disability, citizenship, ethnic origin, colour, age, creed, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, or other personal characteristic.