**RELIGST 3F03 APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF RELIGION**

**FALL 2019—DR. PHILIPPA CARTER**

[COURSE INFORMATION 1](#_Toc17030009)

[Contact Information 1](#_Toc17030010)

[Calendar Description 1](#_Toc17030011)

[LEARNING OBJECTIVES 1](#_Toc17030012)

[COURSE OUTCOMES 1](#_Toc17030013)

[COURSE REQUIREMENTS 2](#_Toc17030014)

[COURSE SCHEDULE (No classes on Friday) 2](#_Toc17030015)

[3, 4 SEP Introduction 2](#_Toc17030016)

[10, 11 SEP The Whys and Wherefores of the Academic Study of Religion 2](#_Toc17030017)

[17, 18 SEP The Prehistory of the Study of Religion 2](#_Toc17030018)

[24, 25 SEP The Academic Study of the Bible and the Academic Study of Religion 2](#_Toc17030019)

[1, 2 OCT Discovering the “Other” (F. Max Müller) 2](#_Toc17030020)

[8, 9 OCT Evolution and the Academic Study of Religion (E.B. Tylor) 3](#_Toc17030021)

[15, 16 OCT READING WEEK—NO CLASSES 3](#_Toc17030022)

[22, 23 OCT Doing and/or Believing (Robertson Smith) 3](#_Toc17030023)

[29, 30 OCT Similarities and Differences (James Frazer) 3](#_Toc17030024)

[5 NOV—Insiders and Outsiders: The Phenomenologists of Religion 3](#_Toc17030025)

[6 NOV—PechaKucha(s) on Max Weber 3](#_Toc17030026)

[12 NOV—The Future of an Illusion (Sigmund Freud) 3](#_Toc17030027)

[13 NOV—PechaKucha(s) on Bronislaw Malinowski 3](#_Toc17030028)

[19, 20 NOV All Facts are Social Facts (Emile Durkheim) 3](#_Toc17030029)

[26 NOV—Homo Religiosus (Mircea Eliade) 3](#_Toc17030030)

[27 NOV—PechaKuchas on “The Postmodern” 3](#_Toc17030031)

[3, 4 DEC PechaKuchas on “The Postmodern” 3](#_Toc17030032)

[THE FINE PRINT 3](#_Toc17030033)

[ACADEMIC INTEGRITY 3](#_Toc17030034)

[AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION 4](#_Toc17030035)

[ON-LINE COMPONENTS 4](#_Toc17030036)

[ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES 4](#_Toc17030037)

[REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) 4](#_Toc17030038)

[ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO) 4](#_Toc17030039)

[EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES 4](#_Toc17030040)

### COURSE INFORMATION

* Tuesdays, Wednesdays 12:30 – 1:20 HSC 1A4 (No class meetings on Fridays)

### Contact Information

* Instructor: Dr. Philippa Carter [carterph@mcmaster.ca](mailto:carterph@mcmaster.ca)
  + UH 125, ext. 23388.
  + Office hours: Tuesday, 10:30 – noon, Thursday, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m., or by appointment.
* Teaching Assistant: Ms. Katharine Fitzgerald [fitzgk1@mcmaster.ca](mailto:fitzgk1@mcmaster.ca)

### Calendar Description

“A study of the various ways religious phenomena can be studied, e.g. psychologically, sociologically, philosophically, theologically, comparatively, etc. Attention is also given to the history of the discipline of religious studies.”

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with leading scholars in, and influential approaches to, the study of religion;

2. To examine the development of the study of religion from the late 19th to early 21st centuries;

3. To evaluate critically the presuppositions of, and challenges to, the academic study of religion.

### COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Describe key differences in two or more approaches to the study of religion and their historical significance;

2. Develop appropriate questions for future research in religious studies;

3. Evaluate the scholarly debates in the past and present concerning the study of religion as an academic field.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

* Ivan Strenski, Understanding Theories of Religion (2nd ed.) NOTE: **This textbook MUST be purchased electronically by logging onto Avenue, following the link to perusall.com, using a credit card.** (Please see me ASAP if you cannot use a credit card.)

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

* 20% Engagement with readings
  + Conducted online each week using perusall.com
  + Class attendance will also be taken into account
* 50% Two written assignments (1000 words, 2@25%)
  + Based on class materials.
  + Due: September 30 (discussion paper) & December 15 (take-home exam)
* 30% One PechaKucha (individual [video presentation] or group [video or in-class presentation])
  + Based on textbook materials not covered in Perusall assignments
  + Staggered due dates based on presentation dates
  + Grade broken down as follows:
    - 15% Content presented
    - 5% Topic discussion with instructor, assignation of group member roles, and peer responsibility (i.e. attendance at all group presentations, offering questions, comments, etc.)
    - 10% Adherence to PechaKucha requirements
      * 20 slides at 20 seconds each;
      * Slides advance automatically;
      * Illustrations rather than text;
      * Script in twenty-second segments;
      * Volume if a video presentation;
      * Etc.

### COURSE SCHEDULE (No classes on Friday)

#### 3, 4 SEP Introduction

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 1” by 6:00 a.m., 10 September

#### 10, 11 SEP The Whys and Wherefores of the Academic Study of Religion

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 2” by 6:00 a.m., 17 September

#### 17, 18 SEP The Prehistory of the Study of Religion

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 3” by 6:00 a.m., 24 September

#### 24, 25 SEP The Academic Study of the Bible and the Academic Study of Religion

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 4” by 6:00 a.m., 1 October
* Submit First Written Assignment on Avenue by 11:59 p.m., 30 September

#### 1, 2 OCT Discovering the “Other” (F. Max Müller)

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 5” by 6:00 a.m., 8 October

#### 8, 9 OCT Evolution and the Academic Study of Religion (E.B. Tylor)

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 6” by 6:00 a.m., 22 October

#### 15, 16 OCT READING WEEK—NO CLASSES

#### 22, 23 OCT Doing and/or Believing (Robertson Smith)

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 7” by 6:00 a.m., 29 October

#### 29, 30 OCT Similarities and Differences (James Frazer)

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 8” by 6:00 a.m. 5 November

#### 5 NOV—Insiders and Outsiders: The Phenomenologists of Religion

#### 6 NOV—PechaKucha(s) on Max Weber

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 9” by 6:00 a.m. 12 November

#### 12 NOV—The Future of an Illusion (Sigmund Freud)

#### 13 NOV—PechaKucha(s) on Bronislaw Malinowski

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 10” by 6:00 a.m. 19 November

#### 19, 20 NOV All Facts are Social Facts (Emile Durkheim)

* Complete Perusall assignment “Strenski 11” by 6:00 a.m. 26 November

#### 26 NOV—Homo Religiosus (Mircea Eliade)

#### 27 NOV—PechaKuchas on “The Postmodern”

#### 3, 4 DEC PechaKuchas on “The Postmodern”

* Take-home test questions distributed

### THE FINE PRINT

##### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

* Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* Improper collaboration in group work.
* Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

##### AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

##### ON-LINE COMPONENTS

In this course we will be using Avenue2Learn, turnitin.com and perusall.com. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

##### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

##### REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. ***If you find it necessary to submit the MSAF during this course, you must submit the missed work before the end of classes. I do not redistribute grades for missed assignments.***

##### ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

##### EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.