

Luther College is a federated college at the University of Regina. Grounded in the liberal arts tradition, Luther College is committed to personalized education in a community of scholars who value excellent teaching and engaged learning. Luther courses are student-centred and open to students from all faculties and federated colleges at the University of Regina, and count towards a University of Regina degree.

ᓄᓯᓄᓯᓄᓯᓄᓯᓄᓯ miyo-wâhkôhtowin “good relationships”: Luther College respectfully acknowledges that it is situated on Treaty Four lands and the home of the Métis people. Our College considers this shared history to be especially significant as we seek truth and reconciliation. We are reminded that we are all treaty people and of the responsibility we have to one another.

RLST 290BB-L01 CRN 32563 Religion, Spirituality and Health Fall 2023

Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 – 2:15 p.m. Luther College 215

Pre-Requisite: Completion of 12 Credit Hours or RLST 100

Instructor: Dr. Franz Volker Greifenhagen, Professor of Religious Studies

<https://www.luthercollege.edu/university/academics/faculty-profiles/volker-greifenhagen>

Office Location: Luther College 226

Phone Number: 306.206.2109



Email: Please contact the instructor through the email on the UR Courses website for this course. Only in exceptional circumstances use the following email:

franzvolker.greifenhagen@uregina.ca (Please put “RLST 290BB” in the subject heading!)

Phone Number: 306.206.2109

Office Hours: available by appointment, either in person or via Zoom

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations should discuss these with the course instructor, and contact the Centre for Student Accessibility at 306.337-2200, Paskwaw Tower 119 (ground floor: Student Wellness Centre), <https://www.uregina.ca/student/accessibility/>

A. The Opportunity Presented by this Course

Course Description

If you are considering a career in a healthcare related profession, or are personally interested, this course will help you to determine how religion/spirituality relates to health, potentially providing an asset for healthcare and sometimes a challenge. We will explore beliefs and practices regarding health, disease, healing, and mortality in a variety of religious/spiritual traditions from around the world, and examine how these affect, positively and negatively, both individual and community health. We will consider empirical studies of religion’s effect on health outcomes, and ask what kind of place, if any, religious or spiritual considerations should have in the delivery of modern health care, in the practice of doctors and other health care specialists and workers, and in government health care policy.

Learning Objectives and/or Outcomes:

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with some of the religious beliefs and practices related to health in the major religious/spiritual traditions in the world.

2. Listen empathetically to people's religious/spiritual worldviews as they relate to individual and public health.
3. Critically analyze claims, both positive and negative, linking religious/spiritual beliefs or practices to health and healing
4. Understand (and develop) policy for health care practitioners, institutions and government regarding religion/spirituality and health care.

Meta-skills and/or Capabilities:

This course will help you to work on certain skills and capabilities that employers look for generally in university graduates. These skills will be developed by specific parts of the course:

1. Reading and research skills: by engaged reading of the textbooks and other assigned readings and working on various assignments and the final project.
2. Written communication: by the quizzes and written assignments.
3. Team work: by group discussion and work in class and possibly on the final project.
4. Cross-cultural competence and religious literacy: by the course content, especially guest presentations, and the media analysis.
5. Critical thinking and analysis: by the course content, quizzes, assignments, and final project.
6. Information literacy: by the readings, media analysis, assignments, and final project.

B. What You Need to Do to Realize the Opportunity Presented by this Course

Required Readings or Texts:

1. *World Religions for Healthcare Professionals*, 2nd edition, edited by Siroj Sorajjakool, Mark F. Carr, Julius J. Nam & Ernest Burney. New York: Routledge, 2017. ISBN: 9781138189140 [WRHP on the class schedule below]. **Available as an e-book through the UR library system.**

This book addresses the concerns and challenges that healthcare professionals face when working with people of faith. The chapters explore how a wide range of religious traditions deal with sickness and health, birth and death, hoping to offer healthcare professionals a greater awareness of religious beliefs and practices so they can provide better care to patients from religious backgrounds. Controversial biomedical issues that impact certain religious beliefs and practices, such as abortion and medical assistance in dying, are also touched upon.

2. *Religion and Medicine: A History of the Encounter Between Humanity's Two Greatest Institutions* by Jeff Levin. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9780190867335 [R+M on the class schedule below]. **Available as an e-book through the UR library system.**

“Though the current political climate might lead one to suspect that religion and medicine make for uncomfortable bedfellows, the two institutions have a long history of alliance. From religious healers and religious hospitals to religiously informed bioethics and research studies on the impact of religious and spiritual beliefs on physical and mental well-being, religion and medicine have encountered one another from antiquity through the present day. . . Dr. Jeff Levin outlines this longstanding history and the multifaceted interconnections between these two institutions” (amazon.ca). We will be reading two chapters in this book.

3. *Religion as a Social Determinant of Public Health*, edited by Ellen L. Idler. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. ISBN: 9780199362219 [RSDPH on the class schedule below]. **Available as an e-book through the UR library system.**

Professionals and the public are increasingly aware that social conditions play an important role in determining health. Among these social determinants are the religious or spiritual worldviews and practices that many individuals, institutions, and populations bring into the context of healthcare. This volume of essays describes a selection of religious practices, looks at the history of religion and public health, examines religion and public health across the life course and around the world, and then focusses on three public health challenges: AIDS/HIV, influenza, and Alzheimer's disease. We will be adding the COVID-19 pandemic to this list.

In addition, selected readings will be assigned from other sources; they will be posted on, or linked to, the URCourses website for this course. Note especially the following resource which you will be expected to use, and which is available as an e-book through the UR library system:

Handbook of Religion and Health, 2nd edition, by Harold Koenig, Dana King and Verna B. Carson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. ISBN: 9780199714599

Authored by three physicians, this reference volume is the seminal source on scientific research on religion, spirituality and health. It reviews and explores the relationship between religion and physical and mental health, covering specific topics such as heart disease and cancer, and addresses applications to clinical practice.

Finally, note that this syllabus is also required reading!

UR Courses:

You will need to access the URCourses website for this class (<https://urcourses.uregina.ca/>):

- To participate in discussion forums, strategy sessions with the instructor and other resource people, and other online activities.
- To find up-to-date information on readings and assignments.
- To access various course materials.
- To check your marks.

The course website will be continually updated, so please refer to it often. [Use of the course website counts toward your participation in the course].

Helpful People

The following people will be helpful in assisting you in properly completing your assignments, particularly the final project..

Carla Flengeris is the Luther College Library Coordinator. She can help you locate, use, evaluate and cite your research for the assignments and projects in this course.
[306.206.2125](tel:306.206.2125) carla.flengeris@uregina.ca



Scott J. Wilson teaches English and coordinates the [Writing Across the Disciplines Program at Luther College](#). Among other topics, he teaches about medicine and mortality, and media discourse. He can especially help you with the structuring and writing of a policy paper.

[1-306-206-2091](tel:1-306-206-2091)

scott.j.wilson@uregina.ca



Class Schedule

It is your responsibility to keep informed on assignments and their due dates. We will attempt to generally follow this schedule but circumstances such as the availability of guest speakers will require modifications along the way. Please watch for announcements in class and on the course website.

Note: WRHP = *World Religions for Healthcare Professionals*; R+M = *Religion and Medicine*; RSDPH = *Religion as a Social Determinant of Public Health*

Class Dates	Focus/Topic	Activities/Assessments	Readings
Aug 31 Sept 5, 7	Introduction: What is Religion/ Spirituality? What is Health?		WRHP chapters 1,3, R+M, chapter 1
Sept 12, 14	Hinduism Jainism Buddhism	Quiz (#1) due F Sept 15, by 12:00 noon Interview Notes due W Sept 20 by 11:59 p.m.	WRHP chapters 4, 5, 6
Sept 19, 21, 26	Judaism Christianity Recent Religious Movements	Quiz (#2) due W Sept 27 by 12:00 noon	WRHP chapters 10, 11, 12
Sept 28 Oct 3, 5	Sikhism Islam	Quiz #3 due Oct 6 by 12:00 noon	WRHP chapters 8. 9
Oct 9 - 13	Fall Break		
Oct 17, 19	Indigenous Religions Chinese Religions	Media Assignment due M Oct 16 by 11:59 p.m.	WRHP chapter 3, 7
Oct 24, 26	Empirical Studies and Practitioner Narratives	Quiz (#4) due W Oct 25 by 12:00 noon	R+M, chapter 5
Oct 31, Nov 2	Empirical Studies and Practitioner Narratives		TBA
Nov 7, 9	Empirical Studies and Practitioner Narratives	Project Proposal due W Nov 8 by 11:59 p.m.	TBA
Nov 14, 16	Religion, Public Health and Policy	Chapter Summary due F Nov 17 by 11:59 p.m.	RSDPH selections
Nov 21, 23	Religion, Public Health and Policy		RSDPH selections
Nov 28, 30	Religion, Public Health and Policy	First Two Pages and Annotated Bibliography Due M Nov 27 by 11:59 p.m.	RSDPH selections
Dec 5	Religion, Public Health and Policy		Pandemic selections

Final Project Due: Dec 12

There is no final exam in this course.

Think deeply. Act passionately. Live faithfully.
Luther College

C. How You (and Your Instructor) Will Understand Your Progress in Realizing the Opportunity Presented by this Course

Evaluation Components and Due Dates

1. *Quizzes* (5% each): Four short take-home open-book quizzes will be given in the first half of the course. They will be based on the reading assignments and class sessions. These quizzes will motivate you to keep up with the material, acquire good reading habits, and provide you with an early measure of your progress. Please convert your completed quizzes into pdfs and submit them by the due date and time. You must apply to the instructor for permission to submit a quiz late.
2. *Interview (Intentional Conversation)* (10%): You will find someone from a religious/spiritual background different from your own and invite them into a (virtual?) conversation on how their religious beliefs and practices inform their behaviour and their view of health and healing, and death. Further instructions will be given in class. Due in pdf format by 11:59 p.m. on Sept 20.
3. *Religion/Spirituality and Health Media Analysis* (10%): You will write an analysis of print media reporting on a particular issue dealing with religion/spirituality and health. Further details will be provided. Due in pdf format by 11:59 p.m. on Oct 16.
4. *Chapter Summary* (10%): You will compose a two page summary of an assigned chapter from *Religion as a Social Determinant of Public Health*. Further details will be provided. Due in pdf format by 11:59 p.m. on Nov 17.
5. *Final Project*: You will write a policy paper of 10 -12 pages on a particular issue relevant to the relationship of religion/spirituality and health. The instructor must approve your choice of issue.
 You will write this project in three stages:
 - a. 5% a proposal outlining your initial investigation of the issue you have chosen, raising possible questions and avenues for analysis and intervention, and a bibliography of at least 5 items. Due in pdf format by 11:59 p.m. on Nov 8.
 - b. 10% the first two pages of your project, and a complete annotated bibliography. Due in pdf format by 11:59 p.m. on Nov 27.
 - c. 20% the final complete version of your project. Due in pdf format by 11:59 p.m. on Dec 12.
6. *Participation* (10%): You are expected to attend class and to have completed the assigned readings for each class period. You are also expected to post in the discussion forum on the course website, to submit quizzes and assignments on time, to meet with the instructor for a strategy session at least once, and to complete debriefing forms, evaluations, and other exercises. You will begin the class with a full 10 marks for participation; marks will be deducted for lack of participation. You will be invited to evaluate your participation twice during the course.
7. *Bonus Marks*: A bonus mark may be earned by attending an event such as a public lecture, film, presentation, etc. related to the content of this class, and submitting a two page description of the event and your reactions to it in pdf format. The instructor must approve all bonus mark opportunities in advance. Suggestions for bonus mark opportunities will be noted, if and when they arise.

Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
Short Quizzes (4 X 5%)	20%	Sept 15, 27, Oct 6, 25
Interview	10%	Sept 20
Media Assignment	15%	Oct 16
Chapter Summary	15%	Nov 17
Final Project: Proposal	5%	Nov 8
Final Project: 2 Pages & Annot. Biblio.	5%	Nov 27
Final Project: Complete Version	20%	Dec 12
Participation (2 X 5%)	10%	
Bonus Marks	Maximum of 5	
Total	100%	

Professional Conduct & Policies

Written Work:

All written assignments for this course must be *typewritten* in 11 or 12 point font, double-spaced, on 8½" by 11" white paper, and provided with a cover page with your name and student number. Written assignments should be properly paginated and referenced with consistent citations and a properly formatted bibliography. The authenticity and scholarly reliability of sources from the Internet must be carefully evaluated before being used; if in doubt, consult the instructor.

With some exceptions, written work should generally follow the format of the *Style Sheet* published by the University of Regina; see:

<https://www.uregina.ca/arts/english/assets/docs/pdf/stylesheet2017.pdf>

For further guidance, consult the *MLA Handbook* or Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*.

Written work, including assignments, quizzes and the final take home final, must be submitted as pdf's through the course website.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offences and will result in severe academic penalties that can include a failing mark or even expulsion from the university. See the academic regulations regarding cheating and plagiarism in the *U of R Undergraduate Calendar* section on "Student Code of Conduct and Right to Appeal"

(<https://www.uregina.ca/student/registrar/resources-for-students/academic-calendars-and-schedule/undergraduate-calendar/assets/pdf/2019-2020/Student-Code-of-Conduct-and-Right-to-Appeal.pdf>); see also <https://www.uregina.ca/president/executive-team/ed-governance-univ-secretary/student-appeals/student-behaviour.html>. On plagiarism, see the information at <https://www.uregina.ca/student/ssc/writinghelp/plagiarism-resources/index.html>.

Generative AI

You are permitted, if you wish, to use generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT or others, to brainstorm for written assignments, but any work that is submitted should reflect your own original understanding and insights. Note that generative AI tools often produce rather general, inconsistent, and mediocre work, and may also contain entirely fabricated material. If you choose to use AI tools, you are required to submit an appendix to your

submitted written work containing the AI generated content, the tool used, and any prompt(s) used in content generation.

Late Submission Policy:

Written work is due on the deadlines specified in the class schedule. If, for circumstances beyond your control (e.g. medical reasons, death in the family), you are unable to submit quizzes and written work on time, you must apply, in advance if possible, with the instructor for an extension. Assignments submitted late without permission of the instructor are liable to a grade reduction.

Attendance Policy:

Please attend class sessions punctually, complete the assigned readings for each class period, and participate in online discussions. Your attendance constitutes a significant part of your participation mark.

Professionalism:

The overwhelming majority of future employers believe that universities should develop professionalism in students regardless of their field of study. A job applicant's professionalism has a huge impact on the likelihood of being hired. Therefore, it is well worth the effort for you to cultivate a professional attitude and behavior as a student. Aspects of professional student conduct have already been touched on above, but here is a list of some things to which you will want to pay attention in order to develop your sense of professionalism:

1. Be on time for classes. If you are late, join without disrupting the class.
2. Stay for the whole class. Do not log out until the instructor has indicated that the class is over.
3. During class, be attentive to the instructor.
4. Turn cell-phones off or set them to vibrate during class.
5. Do not distract other students by texting or surfing the web during class.
6. Submit assignments on time, clearly labelled with your name.
7. Respect the opinions of other students in the class; avoid rudeness.
8. Use a formal approach to communicating with your instructor whether verbally or in emails; do not assume familiarity unless the instructor permits or encourages it.
9. Never ever plagiarize! It is stealing and unprofessional and not worth it in the long run.

Teaching and Learning Philosophy:

You, as a student, are responsible for your own learning; I, as an instructor, am responsible for assisting you with your learning. I do not claim to have all the answers on the subject matter; rather, together we will generate productive questions and explore possible answers. Instead of competing with other students in class, make friends and collaborate.

I will strive to be prepared for each class; I expect you also to be prepared. I will work hard, be involved and enthusiastic; I expect the same from you. I expect you to read the required readings, take notes, ask questions, and talk about what you are learning. I expect you to take the written assignments seriously as a way of thinking and improving your written communication skills. I will respect your contributions and alternative views of the material.

I will maintain standards to ensure learning. I will endeavour to inform you of your standing in the class in an ongoing manner.

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor about any questions or problems connected with the course.

Helpful Stuff:

The University of Regina Student Mental Health at the Student Wellness Centre, 119 Paskaw Tower (306-337-2200) provides personal counseling and emergency counselling. See <https://www.uregina.ca/student/counselling/>.

The University of Regina Student Success Centre offers writing tutoring, student success workshops, and one-on-one learning skills consultations. See <http://www.uregina.ca/student/ssc/>.

See the attached pages for helpful information on various university procedures and deadlines.

“A mind is not a vessel to be filled. It is a fire to be kindled”

-Plutarch

