

## RELG 204: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

McGILL UNIVERSITY  
School of Religious Studies  
Winter 2017

### I. COURSE DETAILS

<i>Course Coordinator</i>	Frederick S. Tappenden, Ph.D.
<i>Email</i>	<a href="mailto:frederick.tappenden@mcgill.ca">frederick.tappenden@mcgill.ca</a>
<i>Office</i>	Birks 016
<i>Office Hours</i>	Wednesdays, 10.30 AM – 12.30 PM, or by appointment
<i>Judaism Instructor</i>	Eric Caplan (Jewish Studies)
<i>Christianity Instructor</i>	Frederick S. Tappenden (Religious Studies)
<i>Islam Instructor</i>	Charles Fletcher (Islamic Studies)
<i>TA Judaism</i>	Andrew Brockman <a href="mailto:andrew.brockman@mail.mcgill.ca">andrew.brockman@mail.mcgill.ca</a>
<i>TA Christianity</i>	Bradley Rice <a href="mailto:bradley.rice@mail.mcgill.ca">bradley.rice@mail.mcgill.ca</a>
<i>TA Islam</i>	Hadi Fakhoury <a href="mailto:hadi.fakhoury@mail.mcgill.ca">hadi.fakhoury@mail.mcgill.ca</a>
<i>Course Webpage</i>	myCourses
<i>Course Weight</i>	3 Credit Hours
<i>Time</i>	Tuesday and Thursday, 8.35–9.55 AM
<i>Location</i>	MacDonald Harrington Building G-10
<i>Prerequisites</i>	None
<i>Language</i>	Lectures will be in English. In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

### II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

According to the McGill University course description, RELG 204: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is described as follows:

*An introduction to the beliefs, practices, and religious institutions of these three world religions [that is, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam].*

The course will be divided into three units taught by three different instructors, each with separate exams. The course also includes a comparative element that will be tested on the final exam. The instructors are committed to exploring a set of common elements in each section/exam, all of which can be marshaled in the comparative section of the final exam.

### III. REQUIRED, RECOMMENDED, AND RESERVE TEXTS

The following textbooks are **required** for this course. They can be purchased at Le James, the McGill University Bookstore (3544 Avenue du Parc). This book is also on reserve at the McLennan branch of the McGill University Library.

1. Norman Solomon, *Judaism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2014).
2. Linda Woodhead, *Christianity: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2014).
3. Malise Ruthven, *Islam: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2012).

Students are required to have access to the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—these include the **Tanakh/Old Testament** (Judaism/Christianity), the **New Testament** (Christianity), and the **Qur'an** (Islam).

1. The **Tanakh** can be accessed either in print (various translations such as the JPS 1917, JPS 1985) or online. Here are some print and online editions that are recommended.
  - a. *The Jewish Study Bible: JPS Tanakh Translation*. Edited by Adele Berlin, Marc Zvi Brettler, and Michael A. Fishbane. Oxford: OUP, 2004.
  - b. *Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Traditional Hebrew Text*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985.
  - c. Online Tanakh (JPS 1917): [en.wikisource.org/wiki/Bible\\_\(Jewish\\_Publication\\_Society\\_1917\)](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Bible_(Jewish_Publication_Society_1917)).
  - d. Online Tanakh (JPS 1917): [www.chabad.org/library/bible\\_cdo](http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo).
2. The **Old Testament** and **New Testament** are often bound together; they can be accessed either in print (various translations such as the NRSV, ESV, etc.) or online. Here are some print and online editions that are recommended.
  - a. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. Edited by Michael D. Coogan. Fully Revised 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
  - b. *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Including the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books with Concordance*. Edited by Harold W. Attridge et al. Fully Revised and Updated. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2006.
  - c. Online Old and New Testaments (NRSV): [biblia.com/books/nrsv](http://biblia.com/books/nrsv).
  - d. Online Old and New Testaments (ESV): [biblia.com/books/esv](http://biblia.com/books/esv).
3. The **Qur'an** can be accessed either in print (various translations) or online. Here are some print and online editions that are recommended.
  - a. *The Koran Interpreted*. Translated with an Introduction by Arthur J. Arberry. Oxford: OUP, 1992 or other recent editions.
  - b. *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*. Translated with a Commentary by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Maryland: Amana Corporation, 1993 or other recent editions.
  - c. Qur'an online (Arabic and various translations): [quran.com](http://quran.com).
  - d. Qur'an online (three translations, synoptically aligned): [qurango.com/english.html](http://qurango.com/english.html).
  - e. Qur'an online (Tanzil): [tanzil.net/#trans/en.sahih/1:1](http://tanzil.net/#trans/en.sahih/1:1).

#### IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to attend all lectures and to complete all assigned readings. Written material relating to the lectures over and above the assigned readings from the textbook, will be posted on MyCourses before the lectures. There will be two midterm examinations, one for Judaism and one for Christianity. The final exam, scheduled during the final examination period, will include a section on Islam and a comparative section on major themes common to all three religions. The exams will consist of essay questions and a number of brief identifications. Study guides, available on the day of the last lecture of each unit, will specify the essay questions and the names / concepts (for identification) from which the exam questions will be chosen.

Students will be graded on the following requirements:

1. **Midterm 1, Judaism (27%):** In-class examination on the Judaism section of the course; date: 14 February 2016.
2. **Midterm 2, Christianity (27%):** In-class examination on the Christianity section of the course; date: 7 March 2016.
3. **Final Exam, Islam and Comparison (27% + 19% = 46%):** Final examination that tests both the Islam section of the course (27%) and the Comparative sections of the course (19%). The date of the final examination is determined by the University and will be announced during the term. A supplemental examination, which will include both the Islam and Comparative sections, will be available for this course.

#### Grade Breakdown:

Midterm 1 (date: 14 February 2016)	27%
Midterm 2 (date: 7 March 2016)	27%
Final Examination (date: TBD)	46%
	—
Total	100%

#### V. RELATED COURSE INFORMATION

*General Policy:* Our intent and desire is to assist and guide you in the learning of the material of this course, as well as to stimulate your own thinking. Should you have any questions and/or concerns with the course content, readings, assignments, etc., *please do not hesitate* to contact the course coordinator (Dr. Tappenden) by email or in person during office hours. Dr. Tappenden is happy to listen to suggestions about how we use class time, the texts, and the tests. If you need help at any point in the course, please ask. During office hours Dr. Tappenden holds an open-door policy and looks forward to hearing any questions and/or concerns that you may have.

Your responsibility is to come to class prepared, especially in terms of familiarity with the readings, and to be willing to explore ideas. We ask that you be willing to take risks, venture new ideas, ask questions, critique your preconceptions, and respect the perspectives, questions, and statements of your colleagues.

*Grading Scale:* In keeping with McGill University’s grading system, RELG 204 will be graded on the following scale.

Grade	GPA	%	Interpretation
A	4.0	85–100	<b>Very Good</b>
A-	3.7	80–84	
B+	3.3	75–79	<b>Good</b>
B	3.0	70–74	
B-	2.7	65–69	
C+	2.3	60–64	<b>Satisfactory</b>
C	2.0	55–59	
D	1.0	50–54	<b>Conditional Pass</b>
F	0	1–49	<b>Fail</b>

*Academic Integrity:* McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest) for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest)).

*Electronic Devices in the Classroom:* Mobile computing and communications devices are permitted in class insofar as their use does not disrupt the teaching and learning process. Students are permitted to record lectures only with the instructor’s permission.

*Disabilities:* If you have a disability and feel the instructor should be alerted, please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at (514) 398–6009 before you do this. We will make every effort to accommodate your needs and to help ensure successful learning. Such matters will be treated with appropriate confidentiality.

*Course Evaluations:* End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available on Mercury, the online course evaluation system. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

## VI. COURSE OUTLINE

- Jan. 5      **Course Introduction** (Tappenden)
- Jan. 10,      **Part I: Judaism** (Caplan)  
12, 17, 19,  
24, 26, 31      *Read by Jan. 17: Solomon, Judaism: A Very Short Introduction*
- Feb.          **Part II: Christianity** (Tappenden)  
2, 7, 9,  
16, 21, 23      *Read by Feb. 7: Woodhead, Christianity: A Very Short Introduction*  
*Midterm 1, Judaism Section: 14 February 2016 (In-Class)*
- Feb. 27 –      **Study Break** (No Class)  
Mar. 3
- Mar.          **Part III: Islam** (Fletcher)  
9, 14, 16,  
21, 23, 28      *Read by Mar. 14: Ruthven, Islam: A Very Short Introduction*  
*Midterm 2, Christianity Section: 7 March 2016 (In-Class)*
- Mar. 30,      **Part IV: Comparison** (Tappenden, Caplan, and Fletcher)  
Apr.          *March 30: Secularism and Modernism*  
4, 6, 11      *April 4: Pluralism*  
*April 6: Gender and Family*  
*April 11: Politics and Nation States*
- Apr. TBD      **Final Exam**  
*Final Exam, Islam and Comparative Sections: Date TBD*