



# Course Schedule

Important: ALL TIMES EASTERN - Please see the [University Policies](#) section of your Course Outline for details.

Week	Module	Readings and Other Assigned Material	Activities and Assignments	End/Due Date	Weight (%)
Week 1	Module 01: <a href="#">Evil in the Modern Age</a>	<p><b>Online Video:</b> TED Talk: <a href="#">Philip Zimbardo: The Psychology of Evil</a>.</p> <p><b>Online Reading:</b> Pew Research Center, Religion &amp; Public Life, Demographic Study: <a href="#">The Global Religious Landscape</a>, 2012</p> <p><b>Textbook:</b> Elie Wiesel, <i>Night</i>. Hill and Wang, A division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006.</p> <p><b>Online Reading:</b> Pew Research Center's Religion &amp; Public Life: <a href="#">Jews</a>, 2012.</p> <p><b>Online Video:</b> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: <a href="#">The Path to Nazi Genocide</a></p> <p><b>Online Reading:</b> Hebrew English Bible (Old Testament):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Genesis 12, 15, 17</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Leviticus 16, 19</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Job 38</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Isaiah 40</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Amos 5: 18-24</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Online Reading:</b> Hebrew English Bible (Old Testament), The Ten Commandments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Exodus 20: 1-17</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Deuteronomy 5: 4-21</a></li> </ul>	<a href="#">Introduce Yourself</a>	Friday, January 7, 2022 at 11:55 PM	Ungraded
Week 2	Module 02: <a href="#">Judaism, Modernity and The Holocaust</a>		Inform instructor if opting out of Turnitin for your <a href="#">Written Assignment</a>	Monday, January 10, 2022 at 11:55 PM	
				Quiz 1 <b>OPENS:</b> Thursday,	

<b>Week 3</b>	Module 03: <a href="#">Judaism, the Holocaust, and Israel</a>	<p><b>Online Reading:</b> Rabbi Lerner, Tikkun Magazine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">God: A Jewish Renewal (Kabbalistic-Mystical-NeoHasidic) Approach to God</a>. Stop at this sentence: "So who is God? In my Jewish Renewal account, God is the Force of Healing and Transformation that calls the world to love and mutual caring."</li> <li>• <a href="#">Ten Commitments</a></li> </ul>	<a href="#">Quiz 1: Modules 1-3</a>	January 20, 2022 at 6:00 AM	<b>20%</b>
				Quiz 1 <b>CLOSES:</b> Friday, January 21, 2022 at 9:00 AM	
<b>Week 4</b>	Module 04: <a href="#">Roman Catholicism, Innovation, and Modern Evil</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Genesis 1-3</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Luke 6, 15</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Matthew 5, 25</a></li> </ul>			
		<p><b>Reading:</b> Baum, Gregory. "<a href="#">John Paul II and Structural Sin</a>." In <i>Essays in Critical Theology</i>, 189-204. Kansas City, MO: Sheed &amp; Ward, 1994.</p>			
		<p><b>Online Reading:</b> Miller, Robert. "<a href="#">The Doctrine of Discovery: The International Law of Colonialism</a>", 1970.</p>			
<b>Week 5</b>	Module 05: <a href="#">Colonization, Modernity and Evil</a>	<p><b>Reading:</b> Gutiérrez, Gustavo. "<a href="#">Idolatry and Death</a>." In <i>The God of Life</i>, 49-64. Maryknoll (N.Y.): Orbis Books, 1991.</p>			
				Quiz 2 <b>OPENS:</b> Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 6:00 AM	
<b>Week 6</b>	Module 06: <a href="#">Ideology and Evil in Modern Society</a>	<p><b>Reading:</b> Heywood, Andrew. "<a href="#">Introduction</a>." In <i>Political ideologies: an introduction</i>, 1-14. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.</p>	<a href="#">Quiz 2: Modules 4-6</a>		<b>20%</b>
				Quiz 2 <b>CLOSES:</b> Friday, February 11, 2022 at 9:00	

AM

## Reading Week (Saturday, February 19, 2022 to Sunday, February 27, 2022)

**Online Video:**

Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott and Joel Bakan, [The Corporation](#), (2004).

**Reading:**

McQuaig, Linda. "[Nudists and Capitalists](#)." In *All You Can Eat: Greed, lust, and the new capitalism*, 1-39. Toronto: Penguin/Viking, 2001.

**Optional Reading:**

Klein, Naomi. "[Hot Money: How Free Market Fundamentalism Helped Overheat the Planet](#)." In *This changes everything: capitalism vs. the climate*, 64-95. London: Penguin Books, 2015.

**Online Video:**

NFB: Marilyn Waring: [Who's Counting: Marilyn Waring On Sex, Lies And Global Economics](#), 1995.

- Watch from 0:00 to 6:55
- Watch 29:44 to 36:00. ("Cathy" from 29:44 to 33:15 and "Ben" from 33:16 to 36:00)

**Online Reading:**

Vatican, [Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium of the Holy Father Francis to the Bishops](#).

- Chapter 2, [52-75]
- Chapter 4, [202-216]

**Vatican:**

[Encyclical Letter, Laudato Si', of the Holy Father Francis, On Care for our Common Home](#).

- [10-26]
- [65-75]

**Online Reading:****Week 7**

Module 07:  
[Economic Liberalism](#)

**Week 8**

Module 08: [The Pope and the Planet](#)

Buddhanet, The Illustrated  
Dhammapada:

- [Chapter 14: The Buddha](#)
- [Chapter 3: Mind](#)

Module 09: [The Environmental Crisis: A Buddhist Perspective: Thich Nhat Hanh, Part I](#)

Week 9

**Reading:**  
The Maha Prajna Paramita Hrdaya Stutra - [The Heart Sutra](#), Kwan Um School of Zen.

[Quiz 3: Modules 7-9](#)

Quiz 3  
**OPENS:**  
Thursday,  
March 10, 2022  
at 6:00 AM

20%

Quiz 3  
**CLOSES:**  
Friday, March  
11, 2022 at  
9:00 AM

**Textbook:**

Hanh, Thich Nhat. "Part 1 and 2." In *Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life*, 5-91. Bantam/AJP, 2013.

**Online Reading:**  
Plum Village:

Module 10: [The Environmental Crisis: A Buddhist Perspective: Thich Nhat Hanh, Part II](#)

- [The Five Mindfulness Trainings.](#)
- [The Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings.](#)

Week 10

**Textbook:**

Hanh, Thich Nhat. "Part 3." In *Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life*, 95-134. Bantam/AJP, 2013.

**Reading:**

Kaza, Stephanie. "[Acting with Compassion: Buddhism, Feminism, and the Environmental Crisis.](#)" In *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*, edited by Carol J. Adams, 50-69. New York: Continuum, 1993.

Module 11:  
[Buddhist Eco-Feminism](#)

Week 11

Quiz 4  
**OPENS:**  
Thursday,  
March 31, 2022  
at 6:00 AM

20%

Module 12:  
[Conclusion: Religious Responses to Evil in the Modern World](#)

Week 12

**Optional Reading:**  
Mills, C. Wright. "[The Promise.](#)" In *The Sociological Imagination*, 1-13. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

[Quiz 4: Modules 10-12](#)

Quiz 4  
**CLOSES:**  
Friday, April 1,  
2022 at 9:00  
AM

20%

[Written Assignment](#)

Monday, April  
4, 2022 at  
11:55 PM

# Final Examination

There is no Final Examination for this course.



# Contact Information

## Announcements

Your instructor uses the **Announcements** widget on the **Course Home** page during the term to communicate new or changing information regarding due dates, instructor absence, etc., as needed. You are expected to read the announcements on a regular basis.

To ensure you are viewing the complete list of announcements, you may need to click **Show All Announcements**.

## Discussions

A [General Discussion](#) topic\* has also been made available to allow students to communicate with peers in the course. Your instructor may drop in at this discussion topic.

## Contact Us

### Who and Why

### Contact Details

#### Instructor

- Course-related questions (e.g., course content, deadlines, assignments, etc.)
- Questions of a personal nature

**Post your course-related questions** to the [Ask the Instructor](#) discussion topic\*. This allows other students to benefit from your question as well.

**Questions of a personal nature** can be directed to your instructor.

Instructor: Carmen Celestini  
[ccelesti@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:ccelesti@uwaterloo.ca)

Your instructor checks email and the [Ask the Instructor](#) discussion topic\* frequently and will make every effort to reply to your questions within 24–48 hours, Monday to Friday.

[learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca)

#### Technical Support, Centre for Extended Learning

- Technical problems with Waterloo LEARN

Include your full name, WatIAM user ID, student number, and course name and number.

Technical support is available during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM (Eastern Time).

[IST Knowledge Base: For Students](#)  
[Student Resources](#)

[extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:extendedlearning@uwaterloo.ca)

#### Learner Support Services, Centre for Extended Learning

- General inquiries
- Examination information

Include your full name, WatIAM user ID, student number, and course name and number.

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\*Discussion topics can be accessed by clicking **Connect** and then **Discussions** on the course navigation bar above.





# Course Description

## Description

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.

*This online course was developed by David Seljak, with instructional design and multimedia development support provided by the Centre for Extended Learning.*





# About the Course Author

## Course Author — David Seljak

Professor David Seljak is the author of RS 121 — Evil. Professor Seljak teaches Religious Studies at St. Jerome's University. His major area of specialization is the sociology of religion and social ethics. He has published many works on religion and Canadian society and is co-editor (with Paul Bramadat, University of Winnipeg) of *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada* (Toronto: Pearson, 2005).

Dr. Seljak is not involved in the ongoing delivery and administration of this course. For each term the course is offered, a qualified course instructor is chosen. Communication regarding course content should be addressed to the instructor listed on the [Contact Information](#) page.



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# Materials and Resources

## Textbooks

### Required

1. Wiesel, Elie. (2006). *Night*. Hill and Wang.
2. Kozol, Jonathan. (2012). *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*. Crown.

For textbook ordering information, please contact the [Waterloo Bookstore](#).

For your convenience, you can compile a list of required and optional course materials through [BookLook](#) using your Quest userID and password. If you are having difficulties ordering online and wish to call the Waterloo Bookstore, their phone number is +1 519-888-4673 or toll-free at +1 866-330-7933. Please be aware that textbook orders **CANNOT** be taken over the phone.

## Course Reserves

The course textbooks are also available for a 3 day loan from the library. Course Reserves can be accessed using the **Library Resources** widget on the **Course Home** page.

In order to access the ebooks through Hathi Trust:

1. Click on the "**View Item**" link in course reserves
2. Click on the "**Login**" button for HathiTrust
3. Select "**Waterloo**" from the list of institutions and click "**Continue**"
4. Login with your **uWaterloo username/password**
5. Click on the "**Temporary Access**" link at the bottom of the book's record in HathiTrust
6. Click the "**Checkout**" button

## Resources

- Library services for [Co-op students on work term and students taking online courses](#)
- [Counselling Services](#) website



# Grade Breakdown

The following table represents the grade breakdown of this course.

## Activities and Assignments Weight (%)

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%
There is no Final Examination	

## Official Grades

Official Grades and Academic Standings are available through [Quest](#).



# Course Policies

## 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.

