

**Course Syllabus – DRAFT**  
**KNP 1651 – Interfaith Leadership in a Multi-faith Context**  
**Knox College**  
**Toronto School of Theology**  
**Fall 2024**

***Instructor Information***

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Instructor: Rabbi Dr. Geoffrey Haber  
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***Course Identification***

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Course Number: KNP1651  
Course Format: Remote learning (synchronous video conferencing with Zoom)  
Course Name: Interfaith Leadership in a Multi-faith Context  
Course Location: For Fall of 2024 this course will only be offered through remote learning  
Class Times: Monday evenings 600 – 800 pm  
Prerequisites: none

***Course Description***

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In a post-Christian and multi-cultural society there is a growing need for interfaith spiritual leadership from spiritual leaders who are grounded in their own tradition but knowledgeable and respectful of the variety of ways people experience God/Divine and/or adhere to diverse beliefs. Spiritual leaders are called upon to offer support and spiritual guidance to individuals and with communities in times of crisis, distress, transition and celebration. This course recognizes the importance of developing the knowledge, skills and aptitude of students who study theology, spirituality and psychotherapy. In order to provide leadership through public prayer, ritual and or ceremony. These are now considered essential skills for people who find themselves as chaplains, spiritual care practitioners, religious congregational leaders, social service agency providers, psycho-spiritual therapist and para church workers. This course will help students to understand the current religious and spiritual landscape in Canada along with providing a brief foundation to the major religious and cultural groups in the GTA and across Canadian society. Students will learn about the importance of developing rituals and ceremonies to bring healing and hope. We will confront our own biases while learning about diversity in social location, including sexual orientation and gender fluidity. Students will learn about the contexts of leadership and how to reflect theologically and spiritually upon our practice. The methodology used in the course includes lectures, guest speakers from a variety of faith traditions, and class presentations. The means of evaluation include class participation, research paper, book review and class presentations.

## ***Course Resources***

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### **Required Course Texts/Bibliography**

- Beck, Renee and Metrick, Sydney Barbara (2018). The Art of Ritual: Creating and Performing Ceremonies for Growth and Change. Apocryphile Press. (Amazon - \$23 or Kindle \$10)
- Hamid, Mohsin (2008). The Reluctant Fundamentalist. Harvest Books. (Amazon new \$20; used \$6)
- Ingham, Michael (1997). Mansions of the Spirit: The Gospel in a Multi-Faith World. Anglican Book Centre (Amazon - \$17; used from \$3.10)
- McLaren, Brian (2012). Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha and Mohammed Cross the Road? Jericho Books (Amazon new \$18.55; used for \$9.71)
- Mabry, John and Mendelsohn (2014). Spiritual Guidance across Religions: A Sourcebook. Skylight Paths Publisher (Amazon - \$30 or Kindle \$16)
- Patel, Eboo (2016). Interfaith Leadership. Beacon Press. (Amazon - \$17 or Kindle \$14)
- Prothero, Stephen (2010). God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions that Run the World. HarperOne (Amazon - \$13; used \$6.88)
- Robinson, Thomas & Rodrigues, Hillary (eds.) (2006). World Religions: A Guide to the Essentials. Henrickson Publishers (Amazon \$34; used from \$18)
- Sachs, Jonathan (2017). Not in God's Name: Confronting Religious Violence. Schocken (Amazon \$23.95; used \$14.43)

Textbooks may be purchased from Chapters/Indigo or Amazon or ordered through Cavasham Booksellers on Harbord. In 2024 we have not set up a bookstore website link for students to facilitate ordering books since our students are not on campus and are using a variety of bookstores closer to home or online. Each of these books are an investment to be used following the course in your spiritual care-giving career.

### **Course Website(s)**

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> . Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Knox College Assistant Registrar for further help.

## ***Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes***

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### **Knox College**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

#### **(A) GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS**

- Demonstrate ability to read and assess literature related to the area of interfaith prayer and dialogue and to apply these concepts in written work and in practice

(B) UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF ONE OR MORE THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

- Demonstrate understanding of the tenets, contemporary practices and rituals, and the place of spiritual guidance for the major religious traditions in the GTA
- Understand the changing spiritual and religious landscape in Canada and how this impacts their own theological understandings

(C) PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- Understand the role of personal, spiritual and cultural bias and how this impacts their practice
- Demonstrate respect for inter-religious dialogue
- Able to describe their capacity for interfaith leadership

(D) MINISTERIAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

- Identify the skills and aptitude needed to be an effective interfaith leader
- Demonstrate openness to dialogue with and learn from people of different communities, beliefs and practices from their own
- Able to describe the importance of interfaith ritual or ceremony

## ***Evaluation***

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### **Requirements**

**The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in five areas:**

**(1) Participation and completion of Readings (10%)** – Students will participate in the regular activity of the class. In addition, students will be provided with a form that lists the readings for the course. Students will indicate on the form provided the extent to which they have completed the assigned readings. Due: Reading completion form will be submitted through Quercus on the last day of class.

**(2) Opening or Closing Devotion/Reflection (15%)** – Students will take turns offering a ten-minute opening devotion or reflection (or closing devotion depending on class size) that would be welcoming to persons of any faith tradition. The devotion/reflection may include a number of elements such as music, reading from sacred texts or poetry, prayer or meditation, movement, personal sharing etc. Most students will be familiar with offering a devotion from a Christian perspective based in Christian scriptures and worship. This exercise requires students to imagine that the people with whom they will be gathering may be from a diverse religious population and therefore students will use inclusive language that is not Christo-centric. Students will provide a copy of their opening or closing devotion to each classmate and to the lecturer.

- I. Use inclusive language; identify the text from which you are sharing and your own spiritual home
- II. Choose a theme and support the theme with words, music, images or movement, response
- III. Create a reflection that is not exclusive to one faith tradition
- IV. Demonstrate leadership skills of being the presenter, welcoming the class, communicate clearly
- V. Content should flow into a unified whole and engage the listener

**Due:** Students will choose their date on the first day of class.

(3) **Research paper on one of the following topics (25%)** – Choose one of the following three topics, begin reading and develop your own thesis related to the topic. Write a 6-8 page paper, double spaced (1500 – 2000 words). Include citations from a minimum of 6 sources. Include a reference section (bibliography is not included in the word count or page limit). **Due: Week Four of the course: Monday, September 30, 2024**

- Interfaith dialogue (challenges and opportunities)
- Inter-religious prayer
- Globalization, Multi-culturalism and Religion

(4) **Person Statement on/Theology of Multifaith/Interfaith (25%)** – Submit a paper, no longer than 2500 words/10 pages double spaced, with a cover page or use of header to identify name and assignment. Using primary sources of your faith tradition as well as the Ingham, McLaren and Sachs readings, and at least two other references, state your PERSONAL belief statement/theology of multifaith/interfaith engagement. While using the sources to support your thoughts, this exercise is meant for you to articulate your personal position after reflecting on the course material and your faith tradition. **Due: Week Nine of the course: Monday, November 4, 2024**

(5) **Creation of a Ritual or Ceremony (25%)** – Persons with theological and spiritual training are often called upon to provide a ritual or ceremony to mark significant events or transitions, to help promote healing, and often to bring a sense of community and hope. You will select a theme and context for the ritual you create, noting the appropriate population for its use. You will submit a paper using the outline found in Beck, Renee and Metrick, Sydney Barbara (2018). [The Art of Ritual: Creating and Performing Ceremonies for Growth and Change](#) for your chosen ritual. The ritual or ceremony may be rooted in the student's faith tradition but modified to be respectful of the context under which it may be presented. **Due: Week Thirteen of the course: Monday, December 2, 2024**

Students will be graded on the following:

- I. Population and Context for which the ritual is appropriate is clearly identified
- II. Instructions for participation by group members are clearly articulated and easy to follow
- III. All aspects of the ritual have relevance and form a cohesive whole
- IV. Spiritual and theological relevance of ritual to the context is clear to participants
- IV. Author demonstrated creativity and originality
- V. Author demonstrated leadership skills
- VI. Handout to participants demonstrated was clearly written and relevant

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### Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

**Late work (BD).** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

## **Policies**

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**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of*

*Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges [https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library\\_archives/theological\\_resources/theological\\_guides/avoiding\\_plagiarism.html](https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library_archives/theological_resources/theological_guides/avoiding_plagiarism.html)

**Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools.** The use of generative artificial intelligence tools or apps for assignments in this course, including tools like ChatGPT and other AI writing or coding assistants, is prohibited.

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019> .

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

**Obligation to check email.** At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

**Email communication with the course instructor.** The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

## Course Schedule

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### Week 1

Mon, Sept 9

#### Pluralism in Spiritual Care

- Syllabus
- Language of Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care
- Reading—Introduction in Robinson & Rodriguez, *World Religions*
- Reading—Altruistic Evil in Sacks, *Not in God’s Name*

### **Spiritual Care in a Multifaith Context**

- What is Spiritual Care
  - Awareness of Assumptions
- Reading—Chapters 1-3 in Ingham, *Mansions of the Spirit*  
Reading—Introduction in Prothero, *God is Not One*  
Reading—Violence and Identity in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

## **Week 2**

Mon, Sept 16

### **Multiculturalism and the Law**

- Charter of Rights and Freedoms
  - Human Rights and Religion
- Reading—Section 2: Charter of Rights and Freedoms:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/how-rights-protected/guide-canadian-charter-rights-freedoms.html#a2b>  
Reading—Article 18: United Nations Universal declaration of Human Rights  
<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

### **Role of a Spiritual Leader providing support/guidance to public**

- Public prayers and services
- Reading—Chapters 1-4 in Patel, *Interfaith Leadership*  
Reading—Chapters 7-10 in Ingham, *Mansions of the Spirit*  
Reading—Dualism in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

## **Week 3**

Mon, Sept 23

### **Spiritual and Religious Landscape in Canada (Guest Speaker: Dr. Stuart MacDonald)**

Reading on Reserve – Clark and Macdonald (2018). "Introduction" and "Quo Vadis Canada," in *Leaving Christianity: Changing Allegiances in Canada since 1945* (McGill Queen's), pp. 3-23 and pp. 232-245, respectively on Quercus

### **Chaplaincy and Spiritual Leadership across the Sectors (Guest Speaker: Dr. Angela Schmidt)**

Reading—Schmidt & McCarroll, "The Present & Future of Spiritual Care & Chaplaincy in Canada" in *"Faith in the Public Square? A comprehensive study of the segments of Canadian society,"* (Reading on Quercus)  
Reading—The Scapegoat in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

## **Week 4**

Mon, Sept 30

### **Introduction to Spiritual Guidance among Adherents to the Major Faiths**

Reading – Introduction in Mabry and Mendelsohn, *Spiritual Guidance...*  
Reading – Chapters 5-Conclusion in Patel, *Interfaith Leadership*.  
Reading—Sibling Rivalry in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

### **Spiritual Guidance and the Buddhist Community (Guest Speaker: Dr. Jennifer Bright)**

- Buddhism and Psychotherapy
- Buddhism and Spiritual Care

Reading—Pages 109-145 in Mabry and Mendelsohn, *Spiritual Guidance...*

Reading—Chapter 5 in Prothero, *God is Not One*  
Reading—Chapter 7 in Robinson & Rodrigues, *World Religions*

### **Spiritual Guidance among Jewish Adherents**

- Denominationalism in Judaism
- Judaism and Caring for the Sick

Reading—Pages 201-217 in Mabry and Mendelsohn, *Spiritual Guidance...*  
Reading—Chapter 7 in Prothero, *God is Not One*  
Reading—Chapter 3 in Robinson & Rodrigues, *World Religions*

## **Week 5**

Mon, Oct 7

### **Spiritual Guidance with Muslim Adherents (Guest Speaker: Dr. Nazila Isgandarova)**

- Muslims and Spiritual Guidance

Reading—Pages 218-230 in Mabry and Mendelsohn, *Spiritual Guidance...*  
Reading—Chapter 1 in Prothero, *God is Not One*  
Reading—Chapter 5 in Robinson & Rodrigues, *World Religions*  
Reading—The Half-Brothers in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

### **Spiritual Guidance and Christian Ecumenical (Guest Speaker: Rev. Dong-Ha Kim)**

- Spiritual Guidance in Christianity

Reading—Pages 247-328 in Mabry and Mendelsohn, *Spiritual Guidance...*  
Reading—Chapter 2 in Prothero, *God is Not One*  
Reading—Chapter 4 in Robinson & Rodrigues, *World Religions*  
Reading—Chapters 4-6 in Ingham, *Mansions of the Spirit*

## **Week 6**

Mon, Oct 14

### **Thanksgiving Holiday (No Class)**

## **Week 7**

Mon, Oct 21

### **Spiritual Guidance among Indigenous Peoples (Guest Speaker: Jonathan Hamilton-Diablo)**

- Spiritual Guidance on Native American Religion

Reading—Pages 3-49 in Mabry and Mendelsohn, *Spiritual Guidance...*  
Reading—Chapter 6 in Prothero, *God is Not One*  
Reading—Wrestling with the Angel in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

### **Spiritual Guidance on Neo-Pagan Traditions (Guest Speaker: Brian Walsh)**

- *Spiritual Guidance on Neo-Pagan Traditions*

Reading—Pages 50-72 in Mabry and Mendelsohn, *Spiritual Guidance...*  
Reading—Chapter 2 in Robinson & Rodrigues, *World Religions*  
Reading—An Introduction to Neo-Paganism for Non-Pagans  
<https://csmaccath.com/blog/introduction-neo-paganism-non-pagans>



Reading—A Non-Pagan's Guide to Understanding Modern Paganism  
<https://medium.com/world-tree-heritage/a-non-pagans-guide-to-understanding-modern-paganism-6ee0cd3591fa>

## **Week 8**

Mon, Oct 28

### **Reading Week (No Class)**

## **Week 9**

Mon, Nov 4

### **Creating Meaningful Ceremonies and Rituals**

- Multi-faith Memorial Services
- Grief rituals – Withdrawal of life support; Still birth

Reading – Beck, Renee & Metrick S. B. *The Art of Ritual: Creating and Performing Ceremonies for Growth and Change*.

Reading—Role Reversal in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

## **Week 10**

Mon, Nov 11

### **Creating Meaningful Ceremonies and Rituals (2)**

- Naming and Re-naming Ceremonies
- Dedicating a Space; Cleansing a Space
- Transitioning Ritual

Reading—Beck, Renee & Metrick S. B. *The Art of Ritual: Creating and Performing Ceremonies for Growth and Change*.

Reading— Chapter 7 (When Prayer is Not Enough: The power of Ritual to Heal.) in Rouse, Rick. *Beyond Church Walls: Cultivating a Culture of Care*. (Pages 117 – 133 on Quercus).

Reading—The Rejection of Rejection in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

## **Week 11**

Mon, Nov 18

### **Facing Our Biases – Social Location and Intersectionality (Guest Speaker: Michael Latz)**

- Diversity and Inclusion; Oppression and Power
- LGBTQ+ (Sexual orientation, gender fluidity, alternative families)
- Racism and Sexism and Beliefism

Reading—Hamid, Mohsin (2008). *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

Reading—Fensham, Charles (2020) Chapter One in *Misguided Love: Christians and the Rupture of LGBTQI2+* (Reading on Quercus)

Reading—The Stranger in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

## **Week 12**

Mon, Nov 25

### **Leadership in Context**

- Spiritual leadership within a public institution  
(staff support/wellness/advocacy/ethical consultation i.e. MAID/  
debriefing/ resiliency rounds)

- Spiritual leadership within community (responding to large scale crisis or trauma/ CISM)

Reading—Universality of Justice and Hard Texts in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

## **Week 13**

*Mon, Dec 2*

### **Leading Spirituality and Support Groups**

- Facilitation skills (forming, maintaining and closing groups – rituals)
- Spirituality, Grief, Mental Health, and Recovery Groups
- Tools for engaging spirituality groups (labyrinth; visio divina; meditation, centering prayer; breath prayers; meaning making stories; song)

Reading – Nichols, Keith and Jenkinson, John, *Leading a Support Group*  
(On reserve)

Reading—Relinquishing Power and Letting Go of Hate in Sacks, *Not in God's Name*

### **Theological and Spiritual Reflection in Practice**

Reading – Chapter 1 in Meakes and O'Connor, *Theological and Spiritual Reflection*  
(On reserve).

## **Exam Week**

*Mon, Dec 9*

***Rituals and Ceremonies Project Due***