

Gender and Religion: Women in Islamic Civilization

Society Culture And Religion 3FF3

Women's Studies 3FF3

Professor: Dr. Ellen Amster

Online course (no synchronous class meetings)

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Zoom office hours weekly on Mondays at 4pm

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Course Description

This online interdisciplinary course is a series of 13 digital modules exploring how women in the Islamic world have lived and defined themselves through religion, politics, family, medicine, literature, and art.

We begin with the Islamic religious texts and move to society—how have women defined themselves in and with Islam?

The course covers the time period from late sixth century A.D. to the present and focuses on women's voices and women's experiences.

Course materials include sacred texts, art, secondary texts, anthropology, film, comics, novels, music videos, comedy, and other digital resources.

Learning outcomes:

In this course, students will gain the following:

- Familiarity with Islamic texts, including the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic mysticism (Sufism), and Islamic modernism.
- The ability to use textual evidence and formulate a thesis in one to two page essays.
- Knowledge of topics in women's history and feminism in the Islamic world.
- Knowledge of modern politics and history in the Middle East and North Africa.
- Familiarity with contemporary women's issues in politics, art, music, medicine, and culture in the Islamic world.

Required Texts:

Coursepack: A coursepack of articles is required and embedded in the A2L modules.

Required Books:

I am providing digital access to these books through A2L /university library/online.

But I list the books here in case you prefer to order them online to have paper copies:

Year of the Elephant: A Moroccan Woman's Journey, Leila Abouzeid

Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood, Fatima Mernissi

Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood (book 1), Marjane Satrapi

Class Format:

- The course is on-line and asynchronous.
- The course is a series of 13 modules for the 13 weeks of the fall 2020 semester, all on Avenue to Learn.

- **Each module has start and end dates, and the writing assignment is due by 11:59 p.m. on the end day of the module.** No late assignments can be accepted. The end date is always a Tuesday at 11:59 p.m. Modules will be open a day before “start date” for your convenience.
- The time needed to complete work for each module is approximately 7 to 10 hours—read ahead and budget time accordingly.
- **All course materials are accessible through the module** (links, pdfs).
- The translation of Qur’an we are using is from *Quran.com*.

Course Evaluation, Assignments:

The required course assignments are as follows:

- **Ten short writing assignments (1-2 pages), each worth 10% of the grade.** There are a total of 13 weeks in the course, 13 modules. Each module has a writing assignment.
- **You must complete and upload 10 of the possible 13 writing assignments.**
- **For format,** consult the **Guidelines for Writing History Essays** on A2L.
- **A grading rubric** is also provided on A2L.
- In weeks you do not complete the writing assignment, you will still want to do the content assignment (readings, film, short lectures) to keep up and understand the material.
- If you wish to complete more than 10 writing assignments, you may. At the end of term, the lowest grades will be dropped and the highest grades counted.

Grading Policy:

Assignments for the course and respective weights in the total grade are as follows:

- 10 short writing assignments (1-2 pages), each worth 10% of the grade = 100%

Course Policies:

***All written work must be word-processed,** in 12 point font, submitted to A2L by the deadline in Word .doc or .pdf format. *Other formats are not accepted.*

***No papers can be turned in late.** Due dates are at the end date of each module (due date reminders on module and syllabus as well).

Muslim Studies/Arabic/ Jewish Studies

You may wish to consult the Department of Religious Studies, which offers interdisciplinary minors in Muslim Studies and Jewish Studies, Biblical Hebrew and Modern Standard Arabic (*fusha*).

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Women in Religious Texts and the Law

Module 1 Week 1: Introduction: Women in Islamic religion, art and the media

Module dates: September 8-September 15, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we open the discussion about Islam and women's lives, how Muslim women have defined themselves with and through religion.

How do we think about religion—what is it and does it intersect with culture, feminism, history, and identity?

Scholar Dr. Amina Wadud argues that how the Qur'an is read and interpreted has direct impact on women's lives and women's status—this is one of the reasons she calls for a women's *tafsir* (or Qur'anic interpretation).

If we watch performances by Muslim women artists, they may draw from religion or not, or engage cultural views of Muslim women.

How does our perception shift when we listen to women's voices?

Watch introductory lecture.

Reading due:

*Links to all readings are in the module

Interview with Amina Wadud, "Islam Belongs to All Its Believers," *Qantara.de*.

Amina Wadud, "Alternative Qur'anic Interpretation and the Status of Muslim Women," from *Windows of Faith*, p. 3-21.

Watch Videos (see module for full instructions):

1. Shappi Khorsandi, British-Iranian stand up comedian
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8I5KmlXCLIk>
2. Interview with Lebanese singer Haifa Wehbe from 2002 on CNN
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmVU1952S2I>
3. Little Mosque on the Prairie, Canadian sitcom, episode 2, season 1—(only watch maximum **8 minutes** of the sitcom)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dxe24ozHUd4>
4. Mona Haydar, American Muslim rapper, talking about her song "Hijabi"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8Jn1AYgB-k>
5. Shirin Neshat, Iranian artist, talking about her latest art installations
<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-latin-america-32759052/shirin-neshat-iranian-creates-art-in-exile>

Comment paper #1: Answer question in module #1 and upload to A2L.

Comment paper #1 is due no later than September 15 by 11:59 p.m.

Module 2 Week 2: Women in the Qur'an

Module dates: September 16-September 22, 2020

Summary:

This module is a basic introduction to the Qur'an as a text, prominent women figures in it, and the issue of interpretation.

Like every other religious tradition, men are the scholars who have interpreted the sacred texts in Islam historically. Now a new generation of women scholars is doing Qur'anic commentary (*tafsir*).

What difference does a woman's interpretation make?

Several women are featured in the *Qur'an* (Hagar, Mary, the Queen of Sheba, Sara, the wives of the Prophet), who set an example for women's lives.

In the assigned reading, Barbara Stowasser walks us through the layers of male scholarship that have interpreted women figures in the Qur'an.

Watch first lecture, "Introduction to the *Qur'an*"

Watch second lecture, "Women in the *Qur'an* and Interpretations"

Reading due:

*[Links to all readings are in the module](#)

Barbara Stowasser, *Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation*
p. 13-16, 20-24.

Qur'an, Sura 7: The Heights (*Al- A'raf*): Verse 189.

Barbara Stowasser "The Chapter of Eve" p. 25-38

"The Women of Abraham" p. 43-49

"The Chapter of Bilqis" and "The Chapter of Mary," p. 62-82

**Qur'an*

(Mary)

Sura 19: Mary

Sura 3: The Family of Imran, Verses 33-70.

Sura 22: The Pilgrimage, Verses 89-94.

(Hagar)

Sura 14: Abraham, Verse 37.

Optional: (Sara)

Sura 11: Hud, Verses 69-72.

Sura 51: The Winnowing Winds, Verses 24-29.

Optional: (Queen of Sheba)
Sura 27: The Ant, Verses 15-44.

Comment paper #2: Answer question in Module #2 and upload to A2L.
Comment paper #2 is due no later than September 22 by 11:59 p.m.

Module 3 Week 3: Life of the Prophet and Introduction to Hadith

Module dates: September 23-September 29, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we have an introduction to the Prophet Muhammad's life, the *Hadith* as a sacred text, and the Prophet's wives, the "mothers of the believers."

The Prophet Muhammad lived between 580-632 AD. A description of his life in words and deeds forms a sacred text in Islam, called the *Hadith*. (An analogous type of text might be the gospels in Christianity).

The Prophet's life provides an ideal model for gender relations, through his marriages, his family life, and his leadership of the Islamic community.

The Prophet's life in *hadith* is a basis for law and an example for believers to follow in their personal lives.

Watch lecture (in 2 parts, really 2 lectures):

"The Life of the Prophet Muhammad and Intro to Hadith" part 1

"The Life of the Prophet Muhammad and Intro to Hadith" part 2

Watch film: *The Message* (first 60 minutes only, you can watch more if you wish)

Reading due:

*Links to all readings are in the module

--Choose one chapter from the hadith of al-Bukhari to read (visit this website):

<https://sunnah.com/bukhari>

On this website, there are **97 different thematic chapters listed.**

Choose one of the chapters to read in its entirety.

In your chapter, pay attention to women as narrators, subjects, and what you notice around the themes of gender, and the Prophet's words related to women.

Martin Lings, Muhammad, p. 32-36, 43-45, 105-107, 163-166, 270-273, 274-279, 337-341.

Optional reading from the *Qur'an*

Sura 4: Women (*An-Nisa'*): Verses 1-45, 127-130, 177.

Sura 2: The Cow (*Al-Baqarah*), Verses 221-223, 226-237.

Sura 65: Divorce (*Talaq*)

Optional reading: Stowasser, “The Mothers of the Believers in the Qur’an,”
from *Women in the Qur’an*, p. 85-103.

Comment paper #3: Answer question in Module #3 and upload to A2L.
Comment paper #3 is due no later than September 29, 2020

Module 4 Week 4: Assisted Reproductive Technologies and Bioethics. Islamic Law in Classical Sources and Today

Module dates: September 30-October 6, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we deal with an area that is new for Islamic jurisprudence, assisted reproductive technologies.

Islamic law is drawn from the *Qur’an*, the *hadith*, the consensus of the jurists (called “*ijma*”) and analogical reasoning (called “*qiyas*”).

Islamic law developed into four schools of Sunni law and two of Shi’ite law.

Today, most Islamic countries apply “Islamic” jurisprudence in matters of personal status (marriage, divorce, filiation, child custody, inheritance), and secular civil law in other areas (crime, civil law, property). Italy also uses religious law (Catholic) similarly in its national law code.

Through one woman’s medical journey to have a baby, we consider how (and whether) religious law is a factor shaping women’s reproductive options and choices.

Watch lecture: “Introduction to Islamic Law”

Reading due:

*Links to all readings are in the module

Susan Spector, “Introduction,” from *Women in Classical Islamic Law*, pp. 1-3.

”Prologue: Rania’s Reproductive Journey,” from Marcia Inhorn, *Cosmopolitan Conceptions: IVF Sojourns in Global Dubai*, p. xi-xxviii.

“Assisted Reproductive Technology: Islamic Perspective” from M.A. Al-Bar and H. Chamsi-Pasha, *Contemporary Bioethics: Islamic Perspective*, p. 173-186.

Ellen J. Amster, “Global IVF, Infertility, and Emergency Contraception in the Middle East and North Africa,” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies*, p. 343-347.

Comment paper #4: Answer question in Module #4 and upload to A2L.
Comment paper #4 is due no later than October 6, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Module 5, Week 5: Sufism and Women's Spirituality

Module dates: October 7-October 20, 2020 (fall break included in the dates)

Summary: In this module, we address Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, which is often called the "heart" of Islam.

In Sufi thought, gender relationships are transcended. Women are active in Sufi spirituality; Rabi'a al-Adawiyya is known as a great woman Sufi saint, and women often visit Sufi figures for prayer, contemplation, and sociability.

What is Sufism?

Watch lecture: "What is Sufism?"

Reading due:

*Links to all readings are in the module

["Going Home," and "The Enraptured Ones," from Women of Sufism: A Hidden Treasure, p. 51-52, 44-45.](#)

"A Doorkeeper of the Heart," from [Women of Sufism: A Hidden Treasure](#), p. 25-29.

[Selections from Rabi'a al-Adawiyya, translated Charles Upton, *Doorkeeper of the Heart*.](#)

"A Jewel of Knowledge," (about Lady Nafisa), from [Women of Sufism](#), p. 56-59.

[*Watch short video to complement this reading about Lady Nafisa](#)

"Musical Remembrance, Sufi Women of Fez," from [Women of Sufism](#), p. 229-232.

To complement this reading about Sufi women and music **choose one or more of these short videos** to watch:

- a. [Moroccan Sufi Women Musicians \(Hadra\) from Chefchauen](#)
- b. [Abida Parveen, Pakistani Sufi woman singer \(1994\)](#)
- c. [Ragini Rainu, Indian Sufi woman singer \(2014\).](#)
- d. [Persian Sufi women's ensemble \(instrumental and song\)](#)
- e. [Pankisi women in *Dhikr* \(in Georgia, former province of Soviet Union, Muslim minority community\).](#)

Comment paper #5: Answer question in Module #5 and upload to A2L.

Comment paper #5 is due no later than October 20, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

The Medieval Period: Harem Life, Literature, Politics

Module 6, Week 6 The Harem in Abbasid and Ottoman Empire, and in the Home (Domestic)

Module dates: October 21-October 27, 2020

Summary:

In this module we ask, what is a “harem?”

This module deals with the imperial households of the great empires like the Abbasids and Ottomans, where “harem” was a place of power, intrigue, and politics.

But “harem” is also a “sacred space” in the homes of middle and upper class Muslim families.

Fatima Mernissi writes “I grew up in a harem in Fez,” in her memoir, and she gives us an inside view of her life experiences.

Harems now no longer exist—what did they mean for women’s status, and what is their legacy?

Watch Lecture, “The Imperial Harems (Abbasid and Ottoman) and 1001 Nights”

Reading due:

***Links to all readings are in the module**

Fatima Mernissi, Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood, p. 1-91.

Comment paper #6: Answer question in Module #6 and upload to A2L.
Comment paper #6 is due no later than October 27, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

The Modern Period: Women in Colonial and National Politics

Module 7, Week 7: European Orientalism, Colonialism, and Women

Module dates: October 28-November 3, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we consider colonialism and how French and British imperialists (and Americans) viewed Muslim women and Islam. What were their ideas and assumptions? What ideas about Muslim women still circulate with us today?

Britain and France conquered most of the Middle East and North Africa in the 18th and 19th centuries, with profound impact on politics, economics, resources, and cultural and intellectual life.

Post-colonial theorist Edward Said argues that colonialism continues to the present as a set of ideas, perpetuating oppressive power relations.

Watch Lecture: “European Colonialism: Opportunities and Limitations”

Reading due:

***Links to all readings are in the module**

Edward Said, Orientalism, p. 1-9, 31-41.

Orientalist image exercise.

See Module 7 on A2L for images of the Muslim world created by Western artists and observers.

Follow the instructions for viewing and analyzing these images and write—

Comment paper #7: Answer the question in Module #7 and upload to A2L.

Comment paper #7 due no later than November 3, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Module 8, Week 8 Feminism in the Islamic World—Nationalism, Education, and Women’s Choices

Module Dates: November 4-November 10, 2020

Summary:

In this module we consider definitions of feminism--What do we mean by “feminist?” How did women in the Islamic world seize new opportunities presented by schools and nationalism to create a new world?

It is often said that the Egyptian (male) nationalist, Qasim Amin, is the “first feminist” in the Islamic world.

But is he?

Qasim Amin challenged cultural beliefs and practices preventing Egyptian Muslim women from accessing education, work, and public life.

But like many nationalist men, Amin wanted women to support the nation, but not “so” liberated that they would not obey husbands or traditional gender roles.

What do we mean by “feminist”?

Watch Lecture: “Feminism in the Islamic World, an Overview”

Reading due:

***Links to all readings are in the module**

Qasim Amin, “Introduction,” *The Liberation of Women*, p. 3-34.

Graham-Brown, “The Spread of Education,” and “Campaigning Women,” from Images of Women, p. 192-238.

Nora Caplan-Bricker, "In the Gendered Economy, Women are Perpetual Debtors," *The New Yorker*, August 10, 2020.

A quick overview of Egyptian feminism timeline:

<https://origins.osu.edu/article/feminism-egypt-new-alliances-old-debates/page/0/1>

OPTIONAL reading: Graham-Brown, “Women in the Public Eye,” from Images of Women, p. 170-191

Comment paper #8: Answer question in Module #8 and upload to A2L.
Comment paper #8 due no later than November 10, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Module 9, Week 9: Women in Nationalist Struggles: Egypt 1914-1952

Module dates: November 11-November 17, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we consider how women struggled for national independence from European rule, but were excluded from voting and civil rights.

Egyptian women were central to the struggle for formal Egyptian independence in 1919, but found themselves excluded from full political rights in the first constitution. The first feminist organization in the Islamic world was created soon after, the Egyptian Feminist Union.

Um Kulthum, the great Egyptian singer, had a career spanning the two Egyptian revolutions of 1919 and 1952. Her life illuminates Egyptian culture and gender, and why people across the Arab world know her songs.

Watch Lecture: “Women in Nationalist Struggles: Egypt 1914-1952”

Watch Film: *A Voice Like Egypt, Um Kulthum*

Reading due:

*Links to all readings are in the module

“Huda Sha’rawi, Founder of the Egyptian Women’s Movement,” p. 193-200, from Middle Eastern Women Speak.

Start reading *Year of the Elephant*, so you can finish it for next module.

Comment paper #9: Answer question in Module #9 and upload to A2L.
Comment paper #9 is due no later than November 17, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Module 10, Week 10: Women in Independence Struggles: Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco

Module dates: November 18-November 24, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we consider how nationalism and patriarchy go together.

In Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, women were fighters, running guns, hiding partisans, and sacrificing for independence.

We watch the award-winning film, *The Battle of Algiers*, which shows not only the revolution, but how torture by the French army of Algerians caused a crisis of conscience at home in France.

In the beautiful translated Moroccan novella *Year of the Elephant*, narrator Zahra fought in the independence revolution but now finds herself divorced. She reflects on her life and finds a new future.

Watch lecture: “A History of the Algerian Revolution”

Watch Film, “The Battle of Algiers” You only have to watch the first 55 minutes, but you can watch the whole film if you wish!

Reading due:

*Links to all readings are in the module

Leila Abouzeid, *Year of the Elephant: A Moroccan Woman’s Journey Toward Independence*. Be sure to read the whole novella, and give yourself time to do it—this is a longer reading.

Comment paper #10: Answer question in Module #10 and upload to A2L.

Comment paper #10 is due no later than November 24, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Women in the Postcolonial—Secularism, Women’s Rights, and the Islamic Revival

Module 11, Week 11: Political Islam (the Muslim Brothers) and Women

Module dates: November 25-December 1, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we consider the philosophy and history of political Islam, especially around gender, and how women members of the Muslim Brothers define themselves within it.

Countries of the Islamic world first turned to parliamentary politics in the revolutions of 1919 (Egypt), 1909 (Turkey) and 1911 (Iran).

These were followed by Arab socialist revolutions, which promised economic justice.

A third way, Islamic politics, was proposed by Hassan al-Banna in 1928. The Muslim Brothers are the first Islamic political organization, and they present another social and political vision.

Today many members of the Muslim Brothers are women.

Watch Lecture: “Political Islam and Women”

Reading due:

*Links to all readings are in the module

Sayyid Qutb, Social Justice in Islam, p. 51-53, 73-78, 261-263, 303-313.

An Islamic Activist: Zaynab al-Ghazali,” in Fernea, Women and the Family in the Middle East, p. 233-254.

Amira Nowaira, “The Muslim Brotherhood has shown its contempt for Egypt’s women,” *The Guardian*, 18 March 2013.

Anwar Mhajne, “How the Muslim Brotherhood’s women activists stepped up in Egypt,” *Middle East Eye*, March 11, 2018.

Comment paper #11: Answer question in Module #11 and upload to A2L.

Comment paper #11 is due no later than December 1, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Module 12, Week 12: The Arab Spring Revolutions (2011) and Women

Module dates: December 2-December 8, 2020

Summary:

In 2011, a series of revolutions across the Arab world swept authoritarian strong men from power. Women were central to these protests and to the democratic processes afterwards. Not all revolutionary movements had a happy ending, but the best outcome was in Tunisia.

In this module, we consider how two very different women in the Tunisian revolution, a secular feminist blogger and an Islamist party parliamentary representative, fought to create a more democratic and equitable Tunisia today. We focus on a documentary about the two women, and a history of the Arab Spring.

Watch Lecture: “The Arab Spring and Women”

Watch the documentary film: “A Revolution in Four Seasons.” This is about the Arab Spring in Tunisia and its aftermath.

Reading due:

***Links to all readings are in the module**

Start reading *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, in preparation for Module 13.

Comment paper #12: Answer question in Module #12 and upload to A2L.

Comment paper #12 is due no later than December 8, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Module 13, Week 13: The Iranian Revolution (1979) and *Persepolis*

Module dates: December 9, 2020-December 15, 2020

Summary:

In this module, we consider what life is like for women living under an Islamic government, in this case, the Islamic republic of Iran.

The first Islamic government came to power in Iran in 1979, which removed the Shah of Iran and brought Ayatollah Khomeini to power. As Marjane Satrapi's graphic novel/memoir *Persepolis* shows, many different groups in Iranian society came together for the 1979 revolution, and they did not anticipate an Islamist government.

Satrapi describes her own experience growing up during the Iranian revolution, in this comic book format. Her graphic novel has also become a film (all 3 volumes), but here we focus only on volume 1.

Watch Lecture: "A (Brief) History of Modern Iran"

Reading due:

***Links to all readings are in the module**

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* (book 1)

Comment paper #13: Answer question in Module #13 and upload to A2L.
Comment paper #13 is due no later than December 15, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

Have a great break!

University and Departmental Policies

Submission of assignments

All assignments must be word-processed, in 12 point font, and uploaded as a .doc or .pdf to A2L. No late assignments can be accepted.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

No late assignments can be accepted for the course.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. 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.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism.

University Policies

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. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

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

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, 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 a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

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Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. 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”.

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 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.

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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.