

PHIL 3030 – Science & Religion – Fall 2025

Tuesdays & Thursdays – 9:25-10:40pam – Columbine322

Instructor Information:

Karen deVries, Ph.D.

kdevries@uccs.edu

I typically respond to emails on weekdays, within 24 hours of receipt.

In-person office hours

Columbine 4056

First Thursday of a month: 12:30-1:30pm

All other Thursdays: 12:30-2:30

Sign up for a meeting slot at

<https://calendly.com/kdevries-uccs/15-minute-meeting>

We can also arrange virtual or in-person meetings at other times. Email me.



Welcome to PHIL 3030, Science and Religion. I've designed this course to challenge conventional understandings (*religious and scientific*) of the worlds we inhabit, what we mean when we talk about knowledge, and the ways we know our worlds and each other.

Throughout the semester, we'll be assessing and reassessing the relationship between what we call "religion" and "science." Are these knowledge domains similar, different, antagonistic, complementary, and/or something else entirely? Perhaps most importantly, why do the answers to these questions matter? And to whom? To dig into these questions, we'll be using a range of interdisciplinary approaches and tools drawn from the Histories of Religions; Science and Technology Studies; Feminist Theory; Indigenous Studies; Cultural Studies; Biology; and Philosophy.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will:

- Develop an understanding of the historical, social, and theoretical context and debates that have shaped major fields of inquiry around "religion and science"
- Develop a basic working knowledge of the paradigms structuring three areas of science – physics and astrophysics, evolutionary biology, and ecology – as well as the issues each of these fields raises for understandings of religion

- Be challenged with difficult, theoretical, and counterintuitive materials thereby strengthening their critical thinking skills and testing the limits of existing knowledge
- Improve their ability to synthesize and critically evaluate complex theoretical arguments and evidence to think about and effectively communicate an understanding of discourses surrounding religion and science

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course has five segments. **The first part** looks at the dominant paradigms for understanding religion and science: the conflict model, the complementary model, and the co-constitutive model. In the process, we'll survey the dynamic histories of the concepts of science and religion and some of their contested landscapes. We'll look at changing cosmologies and thinkers associated with not only the idea of "religion" but also the emergence of modern physics, astrophysics, and observational science in the 17th century CE. **The second segment** delves into the ways that science studies, particularly through the work of Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour, has begun and continues to refigure ideas of science and religion for creating more livable worlds with more earthly flourishing. **The third segment** investigates Donovan Schaefer's cutting-edge work on secularism, affect, and Darwin to challenge conventional understandings of rationality. The **fourth segment** looks Charles Taylor's landmark work on *Secular Age*. regarding **The final segment** considers the botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer's, proposals for weaving traditional/Indigenous ecological knowledge with scientific ecological knowledge.

REQUIRED TEXTS and ACCESS



- (1) *Territories of Science and Religion* by Peter Harrison. University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- (2) *An Introduction to Science and Technology Studies* by Sergio Sismondo. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- (3) *Wild Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism after Darwin* by Donovan Schaefer. Duke University Press, 2022
- (4) *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Milkweed Editions, 2013.

Textbook Affordability and Accessibility Program (TAAP)

For the required texts are available through TAAP (Textbook Affordability and Access Program). Log into your portal through uccs.textbookx.com, where you can review your personal value sheet (PVS) to see if TAAP benefits you. You have the option to “TAAP out” if the program does not fit your needs.

TAAP Materials Pick-up: Course materials can be picked up at the Campus Store unless you opted for a home delivery.

For more information:

- [Textbook Affordability and Access Program | UCCS](#)
- [University of Colorado Colorado Springs Online Bookstore \(textbookx.com\)](#)

For help troubleshooting backordered items, TAAPing out, deadlines, returns, etc. Email: shop@uccs.edu

To access your e-textbooks in Canvas.

- On the left side of the course home page, locate and click on the **Vital Source Course Materials** link.
- You will need to access the content via Canvas using the **Chrome browser**. Safari does not yet work with this program’s content
- If you prefer to buy your own copy of the books, you will have until the *opt out* date (listed in the Vital Source content) to discontinue use and not incur the cost.
- For issues and inquiries regarding VitalSource eBooks & Day One Access you can reach a technical specialist 24/6/365 via chat, text, email, and phone <https://support.vitalsource.com/hc/en-us/requests/new> 1-855-200-4146.
- If you have any questions that the technical specialist is unable to answer, contact the bookstore at 719-255-3846.

Nota Bene! Some of the readings for this course are *challenging*. Do not be surprised if you don’t immediately understand part of a reading. Part of the job of philosophers is to try to make sense of what an author is saying, and we will work together to do this. You should complete the readings for the week *before* they are discussed in class, although it will often be helpful to re-read them afterwards as well. See the course schedule at the end of this document for reading assignments.

EVALUATION and ASSIGNMENTS

Absences and Late Work

Late assignments will be accepted without deduction only on *sufficient prior* arrangement with me. Please get in touch with me as soon as practicably possible if you know that you might be late with an assignment. If you have not made arrangements because of the suddenness of the emergency, let me know as soon as possible. Be sure to include an authorized note from a professional who is familiar with your situation (e.g. a doctor).

Grade Breakdown

Your evaluations and assignments contribute to your overall grade as follows:

25% - Engagement

25% - Discussion/TPQ Reading Responses

25% - Midterm Paper

25% - Final Paper

Grading Scale

A	100-95
A-	94-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D	60-69
F	60-0

For your final grade, I round up to the nearest tenth of a percent. If you finish with an 89.5, that is rounded up to an A-, but if you finish with an 89.499999999999, that is still a B+

Engagement, i.e. participation and attendance (25% of grade)

Engagement is a major component of this class, but how you participate is largely up to you. Attendance, in-class discussions, group discussions, contributions to Canvas discussions, and correspondence with me will all be factored into your participation grade. Attendance is a major component of your participation grade. If you're not in class, you can't participate.

Discussion/TPQ Reading Responses (25% of grade)

Throughout the semester, you will respond to a weekly discussion prompt that I call a "TPQ." TPQs ask you to submit a discussion note containing Two Points and a Question that you've come up with from the readings. These memos have two purposes: first, to give you a formal opportunity to reflect on the readings in a connective or synthetic way and second, to serve as a starting place for class discussions. The memos – and the class as a whole – will require you to read carefully, looking up terms you do not understand, and keeping notes as you read. Once you have completed a week's reading, ask yourself:

Which ideas or themes are most important, controversial, enlightening, difficult to understand, provocative? What are the disagreements or debates in this set of readings? How do these readings connect/disconnect to other texts we have read? And finally, what do you think about these arguments, concepts and analyses?

You must post your first TPQ by 11:59pm on Fridays. You must then reply to at least two of your classmates' TPQs by 11:59pm the following Monday.

These assignments are not meant to be difficult but will show me that you are doing the readings in depth while also creating an ongoing written record of your engagement with the course texts. This record will be a resource for you when you write your papers.

Midterm Paper (25% of grade) and Final Paper (25% of grade)

For your midterm paper, I will give you a prompt that will address material from the first half of the semester. For your final paper, I will give you a prompt that will address the last half of the semester. Both of these papers will have a 5-7 pages length requirement.

Both papers will require you to have developed and to demonstrate your critical thinking skills about the materials we've covered. They will not require outside research or reading beyond the weekly assignments.

Writing is a skill that not only enables good communication but also helps to organize your thoughts. Thinking and writing are both lifelong disciplines that can always be improved. UCCS's Writing Center has great resources to help you with your papers and with your overall writing skills. The sooner you get in touch with them, the better.

AI/ChatGPT Policy

Anything generated by AI can be considered to have been plagiarized. Given that anything generated by AI has been culled from the web and restated or recreated without attribution (and sometimes even with false attribution), that content can be considered plagiarized.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). To stay within university policies on academic honesty, your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited, using quotation marks or other appropriate indicators of quoted material.

Acceptable uses of AI

The use of generative AI tools is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts
- Checking grammar and style

The use of generative AI tools is NOT permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board replies or content that you put into a Teams or Zoom chat
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments

RECORDING CLASSES

Students are prohibited from making audio or video recording of any class activity conducted in person or online unless (1) I have given you explicit permission or (2) the student has provided the instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Letter from Disability Services. These letters must be presented to the instructor prior to any recording done and recording should be reserved for that individual's educational use only. Students who are permitted to record are prohibited from distributing recordings without consent. Distribution without consent will be forwarded to the Dean of Students for consideration under the student code of conduct. Recording class activity without consent is a violation of instructor and student right to privacy, copyright, and intellectual property.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to have access to a working computer and the internet during the course. Minimal technical skills required include the ability to:

- use Canvas, UCCS's learning management system,
- use emails (and sometimes with attachments) to communicate with instructor,
- create and submit files in .doc, .docx, and .pdf formats
- copy and paste assignment questions, and
- download and install software.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus as appropriate. Should this happen, I will inform you as soon as possible.

COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION

Tuesday
August 26 Review syllabus and expectations.

DOMINANT PARADIGMS

Thursday
August 28 Preface, Draper's *History of the Conflict Between Religion & Science* (Canvas)
Albert Einstein's *New York Times* article, "Science and Religion" (Canvas)
Stephen J. Gould's "Non-Overlapping Magisteria" (Canvas)

WEEK 2 CO-CONSTITUTIVE PARADIGM

Tuesday
September 2 Chapter 2 of *Territories of Science and Religion* (34pp)
"The Cosmos and the Religious Quest"

**Thursday
September 4** Chapters 3 of *Territories of Science and Religion* (28pp)
“Signs and Causes”

WEEK 3 CO-CONSTITUTIVE PARADIGM

**Tuesday
September 9** Chapter 1, “Historical Landmarks” from Alister McGrath’s *Science and Religion* (Canvas) (25pp)
Sir Isaac Newton’s “General Scholium” (Canvas) (4pp)
Chapter 4 of *Territories of Science and Religion* (34pp)
“Science and the Origins of ‘Religion’”

**Thursday
September 11** Chapters 5 and 6 of *Territories of Science and Religion* (66pp)
“Utility and Progress” and “Professing Science”

WEEK 4 GLOBAL & CRITICAL ANGLES

**Tuesday
September 16** Epilogue of *Territories of Science and Religion* (16pp)
“Introduction” to *Critical Approaches to Science and Religion* (Canvas)

**Thursday
September 18** *No class today. Watch pre-recorded lecture on Canvas*
Sujit Sivasundaram’s “A Global History of Science and Religion” from *Science and Religion: New Historical Perspectives* (Canvas) (21p)

WEEK 5 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY STUDIES

**Tuesday
September 23** Preface & Chapters 1-2 from *Intro to Science and Technology Studies* (25pp)
“Prehistory of STS” and “The Kuhnian Revolution”

**Thursday
September 25** Chapter 3 & 4 from *Introduction to Science and Technology Studies* (24pp)
“Questioning Functionalism” and “Stratification and Discrimination”

WEEK 6 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY STUDIES cont.

**Tuesday
September 30** Chapters 5 & 6 from *Introduction to Science and Technology Studies* (24pp)
“The Strong Program” and “Social Construction”

**Thursday
October 2** Chapters 7 & 8 from *Introduction to Science and Technology Studies* (21pp)
“Feminist Epistemologies” and “Actor-Network Theory”

WEEK 7 STS COMPOSTS & COMPOSITIONS

**Tuesday
October 7** Part I Syntactics (18pp) & Chapter 7 Facts, Witnesses, Consequences (5pp)
 from Donna Haraway's *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium...*
Joseph Dumit's "Writing the Implosion: Teaching the World One Thing at a
 Time" (Canvas)

**Thursday
October 9** Chapter 3 "Thou Shall Not Freeze-Frame" from Bruno Latour's *On the
 Modern Cult of the Factish Gods* (25pp)

WEEK 8 STS COMPOSTS & COMPOSITIONS cont.

**Tuesday
October 14** Donna Haraway's "Present to Bruno" from *Social Studies of Science* (9pp)
Get started on readings for Thursday!

**Thursday
October 16** *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences*
 Introduction: To Classify is Human (32pp)
 Chapter 1: Some Tricks of the Trade in Classification (17pp)
 Chapter 9: Categorical Work and Boundary Infrastructures (32pp)

WILD EXPERIMENT

**Tuesday
October 21** Introduction, "Cogency Theory" from Donovan Schaefer's *Wild Experiment:
 Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (29pp)

**Thursday
October 23** No class today.
Work on your midterm, which is due tomorrow by 11:59pm

**Friday
October 24** **Midterm is due by 11:59pm today.**

WEEK 10 WILD EXPERIMENT cont.

**Tuesday
October 28** Chapter 1, "The Longing to Believe" from Donovan Schaefer's *Wild
 Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (24pp)

**Thursday
October 30** Chapter 2, "Sensualized Epistemology" from Donovan Schaefer's *Wild
 Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (23pp)

WEEK 11 WILD EXPERIMENT cont.

**Tuesday
November 4** Chapter 3, "Science as Intoxication" from Donovan Schaefer's *Wild
 Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (27pp)

**Thursday
November 6** Chapter 4, “Feeling is Believing” from Donovan Schaefer’s *Wild Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (26pp)

WEEK 12 WILD EXPERIMENT cont.

**Tuesday
November 11** Chapter 5, “Only Better Beasts” from Donovan Schaefer’s *Wild Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (32pp)

**Thursday
November 13** Read Chapter 6, “The Secular Circus,” from Donovan Schaefer’s *Wild Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (31pp)

WEEK 13 WILD EXPERIMENT and A SECULAR AGE

**Tuesday
November 18** Chapter 7, “The Four Horsemen” and “Epilogue” from Donovan Schaefer’s *Wild Experiment: Feeling Science and Secularism After Darwin* (39pp)

**Receive final paper prompt by end of this week.
Final paper is due by 11:59 on Tuesday, December 16th**

**Thursday
November 20** **No class today.**
Use this time to keep up with the reading, especially Dec. 2 assignment!
Introduction to Charles Taylor’s *A Secular Age* (22pp)
Get started on chapter 1, “The Bulwarks of Belief” of *A Secular Age* (89pp)

WEEK 14 FALL BREAK

**November
24-29** *No class this week! Enjoy your break!*


WEEK 15 A SECULAR AGE and BRAIDING SWEETGRASS

**Tuesday
December 2** Chapter 1, “The Bulwarks of Belief” of *A Secular Age* (89pp)

**Thursday
December 4** Excerpts from Robin Wall Kimmerer’s *Braiding Sweetgrass*
Preface (2pp)
Skywoman Falling (7pp)|
Learning the Grammar of Animacy (11pp)
Allegiance to Gratitude (12pp)

WEEK 16 BRAIDING SWEETGRASS cont.

**Tuesday
December 9** Excerpts from Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*
The Honorable Harvest (26pp)
In the Footsteps of Nanabozho: Becoming Indigenous to Place (11pp)

**Thursday
December 11** Excerpts from Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*
Windigo Footprints (7pp)
Shkitagen: People of the 7th Fire (14pp)
Defeating Windigo (6pp)
Epilogue: Returning the Gift (5pp)

Final paper is due by 11:59 on Tuesday, December 16th

ADDITIONAL UCCS POLICIES and RESOURCES

Academic Advising

UCCS Academic advising offers advising for degree programs and an opportunity to ask questions about all things regarding your academic career. See <https://advising.uccs.edu/>.

Excel Multiliteracy Center

The Excel Multiliteracy Center (Communication, Languages, Mathematics, Science, and Writing) provides students with academic support, particularly for writing and oral presentations, both in-person and remotely. See <https://excel.uccs.edu/excel-support>.

Technology Help

UCCS Help Desk – 719-255-3536. See also <https://oit.uccs.edu/get-help>.

For Canvas issues, use the Help link at the bottom of the global navigation in the Canvas course (black nav bar at the far left of the window). You can also call the Canvas Support Hotline at 844-802-9230. Or access Canvas's Support via Live Chat at <https://uccs.edu/lms/>.

Disabilities Services

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to register with Disability Services and provide them with documentation of your disability. They will work with you to determine what accommodations are appropriate for your situation. To avoid any delay, you should contact Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and disability accommodations cannot be provided until a Faculty Accommodation Letter has been given to me. Please contact [Disability Services](#) for more information about receiving accommodations at Main Hall room 105, 719-255-3354 or dservice@uccs.edu.

ADDITIONAL UCCS POLICIES and RESOURCES cont.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Mental health challenges can interfere with academic performance. The source of symptoms might be related to your course work; if so, please speak with me. However, problems with other parts of your life can also contribute to decreased academic performance. If you are unsure if you need assistance, free online mental health screenings can be found [here](#).

If you are experiencing a mental health emergency (*i.e.*, you do not feel physically safe), please immediately contact one of the resources listed below:

- **Call UCCS Public Safety at 719-255-3111, call or text the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988, call 911, or go to the nearest emergency room.**

Remember, we care about your wellbeing, so if you are struggling (even if this is *not* an emergency) please reach out for help.

For confidential mental health services, visit the Wellness Center located inside the [Gallogly Recreation and Wellness Center](#). The first 3 visits are free. Phone: 719-255-4444. Hours: Monday–Friday, 8am–5pm. You can also contact Telus Health Student Support for free, confidential 24/7 mental health and wellbeing support through the Telus Health app or visit our free mental health and resilience digital platform. Resource information can be found at 24/7 Mental Health Resources | [Gallogly Recreation and Wellness Center](#).

Student Code of Conduct

UCCS expects all students to conduct themselves as honest, responsible and law-abiding members of the academic community and to respect the rights of other students, members of the faculty and staff and the public to use, enjoy and participate in the University programs and facilities. For additional information, see UCCS's Student Conduct Code at: <https://www.uccs.edu/dos/student-conduct>

Student Educational Records

All records related to this course are confidential and will not be shared with anyone, including parents, without a signed, written release. If you wish to have information from your records shared with others, you must provide written request/authorization to the office/department. Before giving such authorization, you should understand the purpose of the release and to whom and for how long the information is authorized for release.

Religious Accommodation

If, due to religious obligations, you plan to request adjustments with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance in this class, please contact me as soon as possible. I will work with you and university counsel's office to ensure a reasonable accommodation is made.

ADDITIONAL UCCS POLICIES and RESOURCES cont.

Veteran and Military Affairs

If you are a military student with the potential of being called to military service or training during the semester, you are encouraged to contact your UCCS course instructor no later than the first week of class to discuss the class attendance policy. Please see the [Veteran and Military Affairs](#) website for more information.

Plagiarism

Read the UCCS LAS Plagiarism Policy which you can find at <https://las.uccs.edu/plagiarism-policy>. Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. All work for this course must be completed by the person submitting it for evaluation.

Anyone found guilty of plagiarism, cheating, forgery, falsification, or other forms of academic dishonesty will FAIL the course. If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification. You plagiarize, you fail. Seriously. When in doubt, just ask me. I am here to help!

Informational Resources to Help You Avoid Plagiarism

[UCCS Physics Plagiarism User's Guide](#)

[Purdue University's OWL \(Online Writing Lab\) Plagiarism Overview](#)

[University of Oxford Plagiarism Guide](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

[Bowdoin College's Common Types of Plagiarism](#)

Responsible Reporting: Institutional Equity / Title IX Statement

The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE), administers the University of Colorado (CU) Sexual Misconduct policy (including Title IX), the UCCS Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and the CU Conflict of Interest in Cases of Amorous Relationships Policy. All UCCS faculty and staff, including student employees, are considered "responsible employees" and *must* report any suspected or known conduct that may be in violation of these policies ("prohibited conduct") directly to the OIE. This reporting requirement exists to support the safety of our campus community, and there is no statute of limitations. Prohibited conduct includes unwanted verbal or physical conduct that is sexual in nature, or based on a protected class (such as, gender, race, veteran status, disability, etc.).

You may review the Applicable Policies and OIE's Resolution Procedures and here:

<https://equity.uccs.edu/>. While reporting prohibited conduct to the OIE is required by UCCS employees, participation in an OIE resolution process though the OIE is voluntary. Confidential reporting, and access to medical and mental health services, are available to students through the UCCS Wellness Center at 719-255-4444.