Dr. Nevin Reda is a strong believer in the power of dialogue, both within the Muslim communities and with other religious communities. Nevin, who came to Canada nearly 20 years ago from Egypt, has a B.Sc (Cairo University), an M.A. in Biblical Hebrew Language and Literature (University of Toronto) as well as a Ph.D. (University of Toronto), specializing in the Quran with a minor in Islamic thought and education. Her thesis is entitled “Textual Integrity and Coherence in the Quran: Repetition and Narrative Structure in Surat al-Baqara.”

Nevin has been published internationally, her research papers include “Women in the Mosque: Historical Perspectives on Segregation”, “The Quranic Talut (King Saul) and the Rise of the Ancient Israelite Monarchy: An Intertextual Reading” and “Holistic Approaches to the Qur’an: A Historical Background”. Perhaps her most widely read paper deals with the issue of female-led prayers. Based on thorough academic and theological research, Nevin argues that women led prayers are part of the Muslim tradition. To support her view she cites the example of Umm Waraqah, a woman who was asked by the Prophet (pbuh) to lead the people of her area in prayer. Nevin also finds validation for her stance in the Quran, (Surat al-Naml 27:23-44) wherein it affirms the suitability of women in leadership roles, as seen in the example of the Queen of Sheba and in the example of Mary, whom the Quran portrays as an ancient Israelite Nazirite. She goes on to highlight that the Quran addresses the issue of gender discrimination (16:58-59), and denying women the right to give sermons/lead congregational prayers is gender discrimination and a way of preventing the community from benefiting from much-needed women’s perspectives.

Nevin is also one of the moving forces behind the Muslim Studies program at Emmanuel College in the University of Toronto. The course aims to help students better understand what it means to be a Muslim in a Canadian context. According to Nevin, “learning to live in Canada's multicultural society can be a big adjustment for many recent immigrants.” She goes on to add “Besides the diversity of the wider society, the Muslim community draws from many cultures, with people from Arab countries, Africa and East Asia. We're a multicultural community within a multicultural community.”

The idea of the certificate course arose out of scriptural reasoning seminars organized by Victoria University in the University of Toronto. Nevin was one of the point persons for these seminars, and spent two years enthusiastically working, with Muslim and non-Muslim individuals and organizations, to set up the program.

Nevin currently lives in Toronto with her husband and four daughters.