

Summer 2015



PURDUE
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Religious Studies Newsletter

I N T E R D I S C I P L I N A R Y S T U D I E S

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Greetings from the Director of Religious Studies!

The academic year 2014-15 turned out to be a very productive and exciting one for the Religious Studies program. We added more courses and faculty to our roster, launched our new webpage, and best yet, our new minor in Islamic Studies was approved and will be in operation in the fall of 2015. I am grateful to Ahmed Idrissi Alami, Stacy Holden, Lynne Dahmen and the Steering Committee for helping me put this program together.

In terms of events, this was also a big year for Religious Studies. Our ISIS Panel Discussion on February 11th in the Purdue Memorial Union was the most well attended event I have ever participated in here at Purdue. The *Journal and Courier* estimated the audience at 500 people. This event was co-sponsored with the Aquinas Educational Foundation and numerous other organizations as well as departments, programs, and schools. I am grateful to Jennifer Bay and Don Mitchell for helping me make this event such a spectacular success.

We have already organized two events for next year I would like to bring your attention. In the fall, our Larry Axel Memorial lecturer is Dr. Sigrun Haude, Associate Professor of History, University of Cincinnati, who will be speaking on "Religion in Conflict: From Martin Luther to the Thirty Years' War (1500-1650)." Her lecture is set for Wednesday, September 30, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Stewart Center, Room 202. Professor Haude is currently writing what promises to be the standard account of the Thirty Years War. Her talk will also help us prepare for the 500 year anniversary of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses at the outset of the Reformation. Secondly, in the spring our own Professor Ashley Purpura will be presenting a talk at the Ringer Gallery in the Stewart Center at the opening of the exhibition of Greek and Russian icons, entitled, "Divine Likeness: Interpreting Orthodox Icons." Dr. Purpura's presentation is set for March 10, at 7:00 p.m.

I look forward to next year with great expectations. I hope we can continue to strengthen our program and highlight the good work we do. Let's hear it for the Liberal Arts!

Melinda Zook, Director



Professor Zook (center) with students.

DISTINGUISH *yourself*

Our Outstanding Faculty (recent awards & publications)

Michael Bergmann (PHIL) was awarded a Senior Research Fellowship in Religious Experience by the University of Notre Dame's Center for Philosophy of Religion, where he will be a visiting scholar for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Paul Draper (PHIL) has two forthcoming articles, "God, Evil, and the Nature of Light," in *Cambridge Companion to the Problem of Evil*, eds., Chad Meister and Paul Moser (Cambridge University Press, 2015) and "Simplicity and Natural Theology," in *Reason and Faith: New Essays in Honor of Richard Swinburne*, eds., Michael Bergmann and Jeffrey E. Brower (Oxford University Press, 2015).

Angelica Duran (ENGL) co-edited volumes, *Mo Yan in Context: Nobel Laureate and Global Storyteller* (Purdue University Press) and *The King James Bible, across Borders and Centuries* (Duquesne University Press), were both published in October 2014. She has been awarded a short-term 2015-16 Harry Ransom Center Research Fellowship in the Humanities.

Daniel H. Frank (PHIL & JS) has two forthcoming books: with Jason Waller, *Spinoza: On Politics* (Routledge Philosophy GuideBooks series) and *Jewish Philosophy, Past and Present: Contemporary Responses to Classical Sources*, co-edited with Aaron Segal (New York: Routledge). This coming February, Professor Frank will deliver the Larwill lecture at Kenyon College on "Dispassion, God, and Nature: Maimonides and Spinoza."

Stacy Holden (HIST) will participate in an NEH Summer Seminar on "American Muslims: History, Culture, and Politics" this summer (July 2015). She also received a Faculty Fellowship for Study in a Second Discipline in American literature here at Purdue University as well as a research grant from the Andersonville National Historic Site Prisoner of War and a Research Fellowship from the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies.

Rebekah Klein-Pejšová (HIST & JS) published *Mapping Jewish Loyalties in Interwar Slovakia* (Indiana University Press, 2015) and was promoted to associate professor.

Daniel V.A. Olson (SOC) was promoted to full professor. Professor Olson was also appointed as a Fellow in the College of Liberal Arts Center for Behavioral and Social Sciences in the spring of 2015, enabling him to continue his research on religious diversity and participation.

Tom Ryba (Theologian in Residence) published "On Reconciliation: New Testament Foundations, the *Justitia Civilis*, and the Witness of Jan Karski" in *In Bridging the Divides: On faith-based reconciliation and peacebuilding commemorating the 30th anniversary of "Reconciliatio et paenitentia" by St. John Paul II and the Year of Jan Karski* (Warsaw: Centre for the Thought of John Paul II, 2014) and "Cowboy Metaphysics, the Virtuous-Enough Cowboy, and Mimetic Desire in Stephen Frears' *The Hi-Lo Country*," in *Mimesis, Movies, and Media: Violence, Desire, and the Sacred*, eds., Scott Cowdell, Chris Fleming and Joel Hodge (New York, 2015).

Jeffrey Turco (GER) had numerous publications this past year, among them, an edited collection, *New Norse Studies: Essays on the Literature and Culture of Medieval Scandinavia* (Cornell University Press, 2015); and several articles, including, "Minnesang, Spruchdichtung, and Religious Discourse: Authenticity, Genre, and Allusion in Walther von der Vogelweide's 'Ein meister las,'" in *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* (DVjs) 89.2 (2015): 153-181, and "Dante's fronde: Making the World Safe for Encyclopedism in *Paradiso* 26" in *Dante Studies* 132 (2014): 145-157.

Melinda S. Zook's (HIST) recent book, *Protestantism, Women and Politics in Britain, 1660-1714* was awarded Best Book on Gender for 2013 by the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women.

Religious Studies

Some Exciting Religious Studies Courses offered this Fall

Students should consult the Religious Studies webpage for a complete schedule of classes and up-to-date information and changes at <https://www.cla.purdue.edu/religious-studies/courses/>

REL 200: Introduction to Study of Religion

Professor Ashley Purpura

MWF 3:30-4:20; BRNG 2290

This course offers an introduction to the interdisciplinary, multicultural, and academic study of religion where students are invited to reflect on religion as a cultural phenomenon and to survey the major facets of nine different religious traditions. This course features multiple field trips, expert guest speakers, religiously-themed films and foods, organized debates, and field research opportunities to develop students as informed global citizens who can recognize, respect, and speak with confidence about religion. All students are welcome! **Counts towards Area A*

REL 230: Religions of the East (meets w/PHIL 230)

Professor Ashley Purpura

MWF 4:30-5:20; HIKS B853

This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to the study of Indian, Southeast Asian, Chinese, and Japanese religious traditions, including: Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, and Zoroastrianism. The philosophical and religious contexts of each tradition will be considered by examining its history, primary texts, key teachings, rituals, present practice, and diverse cultural expressions. **Counts towards Area A*

REL 231: Religions of the West (meets w/PHIL 231)

Professor Thomas Ryba

MWF 12:30-1:20; WTHR 160

This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to the three Abrahamic monotheistic religions of the West: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. We will examine the diversity of practices and belief systems within these religions and address debates within and between communities as well as contemporary concerns. The philosophical and religious contexts of each tradition will be considered by examining its history, primary texts, key teachings, and cultural expressions. **Counts towards Area A*



REL 451: Christology

Professor Thomas Ryba

MWF 11:30-12:20; REC 112

The course examines the historical development of Christological doctrine in the Christian faith from the age of the New Testament to the late 20th/early 21st century, paying special attention to the New Testament and conciliar formulations. **Counts towards Area D-Category III*

ANTH 373: Anthropology of Religion

Professor Ellen Gruenbaum

MWF 11:30-12:20; STON 217

Anthropological theories of the origin, development, and functions of religion, ritual, and myth. Data will be drawn from western and non-western societies, with special emphasis on the relationship of religion to social structure, cultural patterns, and social change.

ANTH 392: Race, Religion & Popular Culture in America (meets w/AAS 373 & IDIS 491)

Professor Su'ad Khabeer

MWF 11:30-12:20; BRNG B242

Using the roles of the "emcee" and the "jihadi" in US popular culture as a backdrop this course introduces students to important theories of popular culture, how to interpret several "mainstream" genres (music, film, and television) of popular culture, and to look critically at the relationship between race, power, and popular culture.



ARAB 230: Arabic Literature in Translation (meets w/AMST 201, CMPL 230 & ENGL 232)

Professor Lynne Dahmen

TTH 9:00-10:15; SC G039

ARAB 281: Introduction to Islamic Civilization & Culture (meets w/CMPL 230, ENGL 232 & IDIS 491)

Professor Idrissi Alami

TTH 12:00-1:15; KRAN G013

CLCS 387: Roman Religion

Professor Keith Dickson

MWF 10:30-11:20; SC G030

A study of the religious beliefs and practices of the ancient Romans. We will learn how they understood, represented, and related to the gods. We will see how they legitimized their view of the world by linking it to a transcendent reality. We will ask whether their use of the sacred continues to influence modern Western religious behavior.



Religious Studies

Courses continued

ENGL 444: Milton

Professor Angelica Duran

TTH 9:00-10:15; KRAN G009

In addition to Protestantism and Biblical themes and characters pervading Milton's works, we will read relevant biblical passages and learn about the Protestant Reformation to illuminate his works and times.



ENGL 462: The Bible as Literature - Old Testament

Professor Sandor Goodhart

MW 4:30-5:45; HEAV 206

A study of the Old Testament - Pentateuch, Prophets, and other books such as Psalms, Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes - with emphasis on its unique literary characteristics.

ENGL 543: 17th-Century English Literature

Professor Angelica Duran

TTH 10:30-11:45; KRAN G009

This course will cover religious readings like, portions of the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Paradise Regained*, Donne's *Holy Sonnets*, English translations of Luther's works, the first English translation of the Koran.

HEBR 121: First Semester First Year Biblical Hebrew

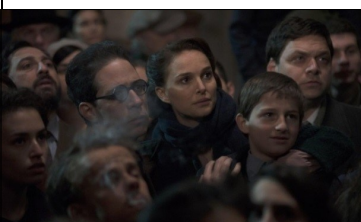
Professor Stuart Robertson

TTH 9:00-10:15; KRAN G013

HEBR 221: First Semester Second Year Biblical Hebrew

Professor Stuart Robertson

TTH 10:30-11:45; KRAN G013



HEBR 280: Modern Israel: Cinema, Literature, Politics & History

Professor Alon Kantor

TTH 1:30-2:45; SC G039

HEBR 284: Ancient Near Eastern History & Culture (meets w/HIST 201)

Professor Stuart Robertson

TTH 3:00-4:15; CL50 129

HIST 103: Introduction to the Medieval World

Professor Melinda Zook

MWF 8:30-9:20; WTHR 320

This course is a survey of medieval history in Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire to the birth of the Renaissance. We explore political, religious, and social changes as well as economic, technological, and cultural developments, seeking to understand the complexity of the medieval past, including an awareness of the experiences of peasants, townsfolk, students, the religious, knights, and nobles. Topics include: the Birth of Christianity and decline of the Roman Empire; Barbarian nations; the Feudal World and Crusades; Chivalry, Medieval Warfare, and the Arthurian legend; Cities, Education and Daily Life; the Church, Heresy and Witchcraft; and The Black Death.



HIST 317: History of the Christian Church I

Professor Deborah Fleetham

MWF 1:30-2:20; UNIV 201



The Christian Church shaped the West, and continues to influence it profoundly. Born within the ancient Roman Empire, Christianity survives in diverse forms throughout the world: the Church is arguably the most influential and long-lived institution in world history. Tracing the Church's evolution from its foundations to the fourteenth century, History 317 will concentrate on five interlocking themes: 1) the Christianization of the Roman Empire and of the Germanic peoples; 2) the hierarchical structure and governance of the Church; 3) the relations between the Church and various monarchies; 4) the rise, triumph, and decline of papal authority; and 5) the principal movements aiming at the reform of the Church.

HIST 403: Europe & the Reformation

Professor James Farr

TTH 3:00-4:15; UNIV 301

Between 1450 and 1650 Europeans experienced religious upheaval of unprecedented proportions. Heresies there had always been, but rival churches to the once universal Christian Church signaled a sundered Christendom that many contemporaries believed could only end in punishment from God. But religious conflict, important as it was, was only part of the "disorder" that marked the experience of Europeans. Economic transformation, social mobility, unprecedented poverty and vagrancy, rebellion, and war all conspired with religious upheaval to make this epoch an age of anxiety. To fathom these changes, we will search for interconnections between and among these historical phenomena, using interdisciplinary methodology to aid in our interpretation of what happened during this epoch and why.

Religious Studies

Courses continued

PHIL 206: Philosophy of Religion

Professor Paul Draper

TTH 10:30-11:45; BRNG 1230

The course encourages critical reflection on traditional and contemporary views about God and other religious ideas. Topics include arguments for God's existence, the problem of evil, understanding the divine attributes, miracles, religious pluralism, and life after death.

PHIL 275: Philosophy of Art

Professor Daniel Smith

TTH 9:00-10:15; BRNG 1230

A survey of the principal theories concerning the nature, function, and value of the arts from classical times to the present, including discussion of the religious origins of art.

PHIL 402: Studies in Medieval Christian Thought

Professor Jeffrey Brower

TTH 12:00-1:15; BRNG 1230

A survey of some of the main trends and major figures of the Christian Middle Ages, with an emphasis on the way thinkers from this period make use of philosophy in theology. Readings (in English translation) may include Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, Abelard, Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham.



SOC 367: Religion in America

Professor Daniel Winchester

TTH 12:00-1:15; HAMP 1252

OR

Professor Daniel Olson

TTH 3:00-4:15; REC 314



Examines the social dimensions of religion in American life; religion in American culture; social profiles of America's religious groups; trends in individual commitment; and religion's impact on American life. *Counts towards Area C-Category II

For more information about all of our courses, please visit:

<http://www.cla.purdue.edu/religious-studies/courses/>

Exciting Fall 2015 Events

Wednesday, September 30

Jewish Studies Noon Lecture Series

Dr. Ashley Purpura, Visiting Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, presents, "Problematic Discourse and Producing Orthodoxy: 'Jews' in Byzantine Christian Hagiography and Hymns."

12:30 p.m., Stewart Center, Room 310

Wednesday, September 30

2015 Larry Axel Memorial Lecture in Religion

"Religion in Conflict: From Martin Luther to the Thirty Years' War (1500-1650)" presented by Dr. Sigrun Haude, Associate Professor of History, University of Cincinnati.

7:00-9:00 p.m., Stewart Center, Room 202

Wednesday, October 21

Jewish Studies Noon Lecture Series

Lukas Plank, Winner of the 2015 *Edward Simon B'nai B'rith Barzillai Lodge No. 111 Prize in Jewish Studies*, presents, "Holocaust Denial."

12:30 p.m., Stewart Center, Room 313

Wednesday, November 11

Jewish Studies Noon Lecture Series

Marcus Smith, Graduate Student, Department of History, Purdue University, presents, "The Jewish Community in Iraq: 1951 to Present"

12:30 p.m., Stewart Center, Room 313

It is now even easier to donate to the Interdisciplinary Studies Programs using *Purdue-gift*. *Purdue-gift* makes it simple to make a gift by credit card to Purdue. Go to the following web address: http://www.purdue.edu/UDO/pages/how_to/egift.html

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