

Monday, April-11-16

Graduate Course Offerings
2016-2017

Summer

632AA/1 Religion and the Secular Sphere Marc Lalonde MW 14:00–16:15 R 103

Fall

613F/2 Islam and the Other Lynda Clarke T 18:00-20:15

628E/2 Issues of Faith and Reason in Ira Robinson J 16:00-18:15

Medieval Judaism, Christianity and Islam

632B/2 The Development of Religious Ethics Marc Lalonde W 18:00-20:15

Ethics Today

637C/2 Ancient Christianity: Asceticism Carly Daniel-Hughes J 14:30-16:45

Winter

610/4 Methods Norma Joseph W 16:00-18:15

614L/4 Tantric Traditions in Asia Marc des Jardins M 16:00-18:15

630/4 Religion & Film in NA Norm Ravvin T 16:00-18:15

641C/4 The Christian Bible Carly Daniel-Hughes T 13:00-15:15

670A/4 Food, Sex, Death in Judaism Naftali Cohn J 16:00-18:15

890/3 Joint Doctoral Seminar L. Clarke TBA

Fall

613F/2 Islam and the Other L. Clarke T 18:00-20:15

The course considers past and present attitudes of Muslims toward other religions as well as outgroups such as sectarian and sexual minorities. We will examine scriptures, law, and modern statements of various kinds to analyze the theory and practice of Muslim relations with the Other.

628E/2 Issues Of Faith and Reason in Medieval Jewish, Muslim and Christian Thought I. Robinson J 16:00-18:15

This course will address the common problem faced by medieval thinkers of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian traditions: how to deal with perceived differences between the teachings of divinely revealed scripture and the findings of rationalistic Platonic and Aristotelean philosophies.

The writings of major Jewish, Muslim and Christian thinkers will be examined in order to present a rounded picture of the strategies pursued by medieval rationalistic thinkers of all three religious traditions in dealing with this problem, and the revolution caused by this clash of world views.

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632B/2 The Development of Religious Ethics Today M. Lalonde W 18:00-20:15

The purpose of this course is to compare and contrast two types of Religious-Philosophical Ethics. While both types contend that ethics is not an optional extra for the genuine human life, each endeavours to establish this fact in an opposing way. On the one hand, we will study the ethics of Emmanuel Levinas that entails a Judaic inspiration. For Levinas, ethics must be "otherwise than being," that is, meonotological. On the other hand, we will explore the ethics of Charles Taylor that entails a Christian inspiration. For Taylor, ethics demands an ontological articulation of the full human life. Which approach is most compelling for religious ethics today? Or is it a matter of finding a middling position between the two? These will be just some of the concerns that guide our analyses.

637C/2 Ancient Christianity: Asceticism C. Daniel-Hughes J 14:30-16:45

Why did some ancient Christians periodically starve themselves? Why did they run to the desert to sit atop poles, steal themselves away alone in mountainous caves, or reject urban life to reside in austere communities? What solicited the hostility of many Christians toward sexual reproduction and marriage in favor of perpetual virginity and rigorous chastity? This course explores some varieties of ascetic lifestyles and practices in the first-five centuries of Christian history. Through a sampling of different ascetic treatises and communities from the Latin West, Greek East, and the deserts of Egypt and Syria, this course will consider how and why ancient Christian men and women variously disciplined their fleshly bodies in order to become somehow more divine. Central to our investigation will be to expose the connections between ascetic practices, especially fasting and sexual renunciation, and speculations about the nature of God and the possibility of human perfection.

Winter

610/4 Methodological Problems in the Study of Religion N. Joseph W 16:00-18:15

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the possibilities (and pitfalls) involved in the academic study of religion. Through a consideration of the work of some classic and more contemporary authors in the field, we will explore the various kinds of questions, approaches and techniques that are used in doing "comparative religion," "the history of religions" and "the social-scientific study of religion". Our investigation will focus on methodologies used and the ways in which these colour, control and reflect the representation of the distinct religious experience and expression under discussion.

614L/4 Tantric Traditions in Asia M. des Jardins M 16:00-18:15

This course examines the history, textual sources, ritual, philosophies, and social contexts of the tantric or "esoteric" traditions of South and East Asia, and explores the roles of tantric practice

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in the broader landscape of Asian religions and cultures. The course will focus on major trends in Indian religions in South Asia as well as in the Buddhist world beyond.

630/4 Religion & Film in North America N. Ravvin J 16:00-18:15
What are the special challenges and outcomes of addressing religious themes in film? Cinema has in the course of its development usurped some of the power of organized religion. In what way are films suited or unsuited to exploring religious narratives and ideas? This course will limit itself to a North American context, with special attention to Canada and Quebec. It will highlight independent films and the output of the National Film Board of Canada.

Students interested in a range of traditions, in the relationship of religion and popular culture, in religion in Quebec and the rest of Canada, will find openings toward their own research interests.

Films to be viewed will include:

Deepa Mehta, Water

Jim Jarmusch, Dead Man

Robert Lepage, Le Confessionnal

Denys Arcand, Jesus of Montreal

Joel and Ethan Cohen, A Serious Man

NFB films will include:

Lights for Gita

The Indian Trip

Me and the Mosque

Summer Legend

641C/4 The Christian Bible C. Daniel-Hughes T 13:00-15:15

Christian scripture is comprised of divergent themes, vastly different genres (history, poetics texts, apocalypses, letters), and even conflicting views of the religious life, God, and Jesus Christ. How did Christians come to include these books in their canon, and why? How did, and do, Christians account for the cacophony of voices in them? Do all Christians have the same Bibles? What are the different ways that Christians have understood the Bible's authority? Are its words sacred, or the ideas contained in it? What about the Bible as a material object? How have they understood the role of interpretation and translation? Or the relationship between biblical books, such as the Old and New Testaments? Considering key moments in Christian history from the Roman world to global Christianities today, we will explore the complex interactions between Christians and their Bibles.

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670A/4 Food, Sex, Death in Judaism N. Cohn J 16:00-18:15

This course explores three activities associated with the body – food, sex, and death – as they have been constructed throughout the past 2,000 years of Jewish history. Special attention is given to the cultural contexts in which Jewish practices and attitudes have been shaped, to the relationship between ritual practice and the construction of supernatural worlds, and to the interaction between embodiment and religious experience.

890/3 Joint Doctoral Seminar L. Clarke TBA

The aims of the seminar are (1) to introduce you to a range of approaches to and issues in the study of religion (as well as to faculty members of our Department and of our sister departments at UQAM and Laval); and (2) to help you develop professional skills and gain experience – in terms of collegial interaction, self-expression, teaching, and gaining access to funding and opportunities for presenting your research to scholarly audiences. The seminar is held within the framework of our joint doctoral program with UQAM and Laval, and there will be several opportunities to collaborate with your colleagues from these universities.