

Department of Religions and Cultures
Course Offering
2018-2019

FALL

619/828	WGS in (South) Asia	LO	W	4:00-6:15	R 103
630	Saints, Singers & Songwriters: Jewish Music from the Psalms to Leonard Cohen	NR	T	4:00-6:15	FA 202
639/838	Comparative Religious Law: Jewish & Islamic	IR	Th	4:00-6:15	R 103
639B/833	Material Christianity	CDH	M	1:00-3:15	FA 202

Winter

610	Methods	LDT	T	5:00-7:15	FA 202
613/835	Islam and Nature	RF	Th	4:00-6:15	R 103
616	Scriptures Numinous: Mysticism in Asia	MDJ	W	6:00-8:15	FA 202
621	Foucault	ML	M	6:00-8:15	R 103

Fall/Winter

890	Doctoral Seminar	IR	T	4:00-6:15	R 103
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Fall

619/828 Women, Gender & Sexuality in South Asian Religions

L. Orr **W 4:00-6:15**

In this seminar, we draw on materials relating to the Buddhist, Jain, Hindu and Islamic traditions in the South Asian context in order to explore issues relating to women, gender, and sexuality. Our approach from an historical perspective will include consideration of: normative and narrative gender models; embodiment and desire; gender, devotion and ritual; and hierarchies and households. Contemporary issues for discussion will include sexualized and gendered labour and gender, religion, and politics.

630 Saints, Singers & Songwriters: Jewish Music from the Psalms to Leonard Cohen

N. Ravvin **T 4:00-6:15**

This course will explore music as part of canonical religious tradition, as part of popular culture, and as creative work. Jewish religious music is little understood – the Psalms were set to musical arrangements that we no longer know about. In Europe, over centuries, Jews could not be part of the mainstream musical undertakings of majority culture. This shifted in the Enlightenment period. A fascinating singular tradition is that of the klezmer musician, a professional position for male Jewish musicians that lasted from the seventeenth century to the beginning of the Second World War (and was transformed in North America into something different and new). Montreal presents an endpoint of sorts for klezmer culture, but its own creative forces can be explored through the musical career of Leonard Cohen, who will provide the course with its own endpoint.

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**639/838 A Comparative Religious Law:
Jewish & Islamic**

I. Robinson

Th 4:00-6:15

This course will examine issues related to religious law through a comparison of two religious-legal systems: Judaism and Islam. In so doing, it will deal with methodological issues in “comparing” religions. It will survey theories of law in both religious traditions and investigate the teaching and enforcement of law in specific religious communities as well as the interface of religious and civil law in contemporary western countries, including Canada. It will explore several issues in the light of religious law including war and peace, women’s compartment and marital status, business, and bioethics.

639B/833 Material Christianity

C. Daniel-Hughes

M 1:00-3:15

This course explores the role of objects, spaces, environments, bodily senses, as well as embodied practices and performances, with a view to how they have informed Christian religious life in different times and places. We will be particularly interested in the ‘felt’ aspects of religious life. We will consider rich examples from across the Christian tradition (e.g. fasting, mourning and grief, dress, relics, images, built spaces, or theatrical productions, from medieval passion plays to evangelical “Hell Houses”). Recent theoretical turns to materialism and affect will also be addressed in order to challenge dualisms in the study of religion, such as mind over matter or body. Offering a broad survey of the Christian tradition, this course allows students to develop a final research project that connects with their interests in Christian history and/or the study of religion.

Winter

610 Methods

L. DiTommaso

T 5:00-7:15

The course introduces MA students to some of the main approaches to the academic study of religion. We will explore the various kinds of questions, approaches, and techniques that inform our understanding of “religion,” “comparative religion,” “the history of religions” and “the social-scientific study of religion”. Our investigation focuses on methodologies used and the ways in which these colour, control and reflect the representation of the distinct religious experience and expression under discussion.

613/835 Islam and Nature

R. Foltz

Th 4:00-6:15

Religions have long played a significant role in how we frame our relationship to nature. An increasing global awareness of the worsening environmental crisis is raising new questions about how religious traditions teach us to value the natural world, whether as stewards or as exploiters. The case of Islam is especially pertinent, given that environmental degradation disproportionately affects the world’s poor, many of whom are Muslims. This course will allow students to explore how discussions on the environmental crisis are playing out in the context of Islam and the Muslim world.

