

# GTU DEAN'S NEWSLETTER



## Happy New Year!

A couple of weeks ago, I overheard someone say that they couldn't believe we were so far along in the year, and I experienced a moment of disorientation. "But the year is just about to begin," I thought. In fact, I keep wanting to wish everyone a Happy New Year when I see them. I guess that's part of the joy of being in the academic world. We get to experience a lot of new beginnings, not just one a year. (Of course, at the GTU we get to celebrate even *more* new years than that because of our many cultural and religious traditions that are present here as well.)

The start of our new academic year feels even more special this year because we are also settling into our new space. After about two years of living through major building alterations, we are thrilled to find ourselves moved into new classrooms and offices. For the first time, all our GTU classrooms, centers, faculty, staff, and administrators are located in the same building. We are enjoying many happy collisions as we move about the space and start to carve new pathways in the hallways.

While lots may be new and different, we are also carrying forward our mission in ways that are consistent with who we have been as a community. At this year's new student orientations, we asked students to share what they are excited about at the GTU and why they chose to come here to do their studies. Students said things like, "I always heard the advice to go where the best advisor is, and I know I've done that!" and "I found my people here!" and "I'm excited about the sheer variety of classes across the whole consortium!" and "I love the professors I've met, and the classes are awesome!" and "I love the interfaith and interdisciplinary context!" and "I love that there is a lot of space to explore, a lot of freedom, and an invitation to be academically rigorous!"

Just as we welcome our new students at the start of this semester, we are also thrilled to welcome Dr. Daniel Aucutt to the GTU as the new Senior Director of Student Success for the interim. Daniel comes to us with extensive experience in student support and most recently served as the Director of Tutoring and Academic Skills Center at the College of the Desert in Palm Desert, CA. He is passionate about working with students and helping them thrive! Daniel will be the primary contact for our international students, MA students, student services and support, and the Student Advisory Committee. He will also track program completion for PhD, MA, and GTU certificate students. Dr. Diandra Erickson will be the primary contact for PhD students with administrative questions, serve as the Disability Resource Officer for accommodation requests, and take the lead in modern foreign language exams. I encourage you to stop by or send a note to Daniel to introduce yourself. His office is in the (new!) student services wing on the second floor of the Hewlett Building (room #202C). You can reach him at [daucutt@gtu.edu](mailto:daucutt@gtu.edu).

May your new academic year be filled with meaningful conversations, transformative learning, happy collisions, boisterous laughter, thrilling a-ha moments, and deepening friendships. Thank you for being a part of what makes the GTU such a beautiful place.

*Jennifer W. Davidson, PhD*

*Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs*

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## Confidential Email Account for WSCUC Accreditation Visit

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The Graduate Theological Union is hosting a site visit by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) on October 4-6, 2023, in connection with its accreditation.

The team typically schedules open meetings with students, staff, and faculty to provide an opportunity for informal input from all members of the campus community about their experiences with the institution. Students are encouraged to comment on issues of academic rigor and consistency, availability of student support services, accuracy of information provided by the institution, and other matters related to the quality of the educational experience.

WSCUC understands that not everyone who may wish to participate can attend these meetings, and has therefore established a confidential email account to give everyone the opportunity to communicate with the team.

The email account is created by a WSCUC staff member and only authorized WSCUC staff and team members have access to it. The emails are not viewed by any representative of the institution.

The email account is created for this visit only and will be closed once the WSCUC team leaves the campus. Only comments made before or during the visit will be considered as part of the review process.

Institutional reports, on-campus interviews, open sessions, and email comments become part of the information collected and reviewed by the team. Please note that team members will not respond individually to comments provided through any of these venues, including the confidential email account. However, the input from comments, along with other forms of information, will be considered as the team undertakes its work and develops recommendations to the institution.

The team is not able to meet individually with members of the campus community, so please do not use the email account to request private appointments.

To write to the WSCUC team, please address your email to: [gtu@wscuc.org](mailto:gtu@wscuc.org)

# GTU Welcome Reception!

The GTU Dean's Office cordially invites all members of the GTU Consortial Community, new and returning MA and PhD students, faculty, and staff to the GTU Welcome Reception!

***Wednesday, September 20 | 4 pm (Pacific) | Hybrid Event***

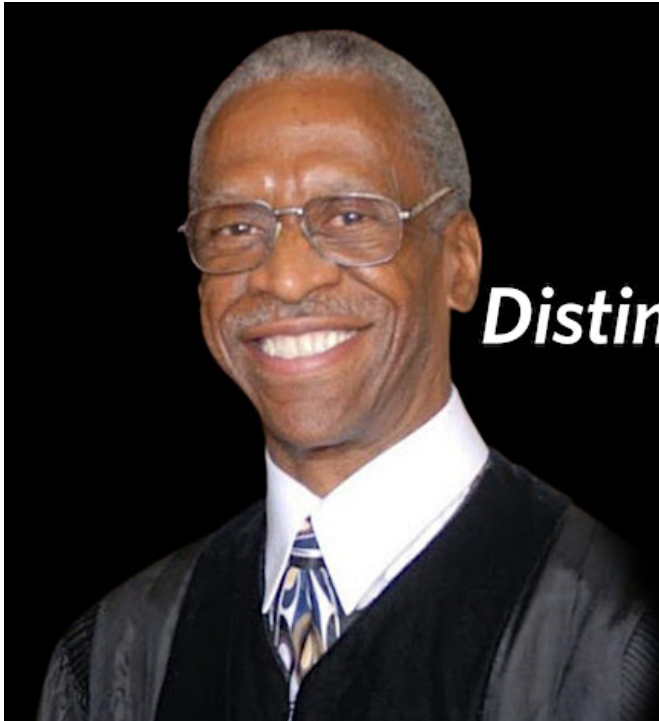
**GTU Library, Richard S. Dinner Boardroom, 3rd Floor  
2400 Ridge Road, Berkeley**

Please RSVP to Sabrina Kennedy [skennedy@gtu.edu](mailto:skennedy@gtu.edu) by Thursday, September 18th noon for in-person attendance.

**For remote attendance use the Zoom link  
<https://gtu.zoom.us/j/9239621138>**

**Please join us in celebration of the new academic year!**

**Refreshments provided!**




GTU Dean Presents

# 48th Annual Distinguished Faculty Lecture

Presented by  
**Dorsey Odell Blake**

November 7, 2023



***Tuesday, November 7 | 5 pm (Pacific) | Hybrid Event***

Rev. Dr. Dorsey Blake will present the 48th Annual Distinguished Faculty Lecture titled, “Howard Thurman: Seeking, Queering, and Transcending” on November 7, 2023, at 5:00 PM PST.

Each November, the GTU faculty honors a distinguished professor who embodies the scholarly standards, teaching excellence and commitment to ecumenism that defines the GTU. Nominations are made by GTU faculty and are then considered by the Council of Deans, which selects the lecturer.

The Rev. Dr. Blake is Faculty Associate, Leadership and Social Transformation, at Pacific School of Religion, a member school of the GTU. He also served for six years as Dean of Faculty and Visiting Professor of Spirituality and Prophetic Justice at Starr King School for the Ministry, a former member school of the GTU.

The event will be hybrid with an in-person audience located in the GTU Dinner Board Room, Flora Lamson Hewlett Library. Contact Sabrina Kennedy by October 25th by 5:00 pm at [skennedy@gtu.edu](mailto:skennedy@gtu.edu) if you would like to attend in person. Register on [Eventbrite](#) to attend online.

# Academic Achievements & Deadlines

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## *Comprehensive Proposal Approved*

Emily Pothast, Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion  
Ai Lian Pau, Theology and Ethics

## *Oral Comprehensive Examination Passed*

Rondall Reynoso, Art and Religion, Distinction  
James David Smith, Religion and Practice, Distinction  
Victoria Price, Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

## *Dissertation Successfully Defended*

Yong Park, Theology and Ethics  
Donghwi Kim, Theology and Ethics  
Christian Suba, Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion  
Christina Atienza, Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion



*Congratulations to all!*

**Deadline for submitting dissertation proposals by (Noon) for October's Doctoral Council Meeting Monday, September 25**

## Modern Language Exam

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*Wednesday, September 27 | 1:00 – 4:45 pm*

The GTU Modern Foreign Language Exam will be offered again this semester using remote modalities. The exam is offered in Chinese, French, German, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish, depending on interest and need. Students should contact Diandra Erickson, [derickson@gtu.edu](mailto:derickson@gtu.edu), Associate Dean well in advance if they wish to be examined in an alternative language; in these cases, we will need student's help to secure the examiner. Please visit <https://www.gtu.edu/students/academic-milestones> for more information.

**Deadline to register for the examination is Wednesday, September 6, 2023**

**[Register Here](#)**

# Fall 2023 Student Awards

## Newhall Fellowship

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*Applications due Friday, November 10 | by 5pm*

Newhall Fellowships are competitive awards for GTU Doctoral students to collaboratively teach or conduct research with faculty mentors. Newhall awards offer an opportunity to work closely with professors whose interests and approaches parallel the student's on projects that often would not be possible under other circumstances. The awards are designed to support both students (through grants) and faculty (through offering assistance to their research and teaching). Applications must come from both the student and the professor for a project involving both of them. Applications for the Newhall Fellowship must be submitted to the GTU Dean's Office.

[Learn more and apply now!](#)

## Student Travel Grants

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*Applications due Friday, September 15 | by 5pm*

Students who have papers accepted for the program of the Annual Meeting of the AAR, SBL, or other comparable national meeting or conference may compete in the GTU's Student Travel Grant competition. Winners are given cash awards to support the costs of attending the meeting. The Dean and Core Doctoral Faculty Awards Committee select recipients for this award.

[Learn more and apply now!](#)

## Chan Essay Prize

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*Applications due Thursday, September 14 | by 5pm*

The Chan Essay Prize is an annual award of \$2500, established in 1987 by the Lionel Chan Family Endowment. To enter, any student at a GTU Member School, Center or Affiliate must submit an original essay, a term paper for a course, or a chapter of a thesis or dissertation, with an introduction and conclusion to frame it as an independent essay.

This semester's topic is "Identity and Practice across Religious Boundaries: exploring a particular concept, theme, or practice in two or more religions."

[Learn more](#)



# GTU LIBRARY WELCOME TO THE FALL SEMESTER

## Ask a Librarian

Get research help in person and online weekdays 9 AM - 4 PM



## Get Research Help

Librarians are available at your GTU “Ask Here” reference desk 9am-4pm each weekday. Not in the building? Chat a librarian at the library website or email [library@gtu.edu](mailto:library@gtu.edu). Librarians are online 9am-4pm Pacific time.

## New! Qur’anic Studies Online

A wealth of Qur’anic reference and exegetical tools is now available to the GTU community via the library’s new subscription to [Qu’ranic Studies Online](#). This resource includes encyclopedias, concordances, a dictionary, and a collection of 16th-19th century Koran editions. In addition to this resource, librarians collect helpful books, databases and links relevant to Islamic Studies in [this guide](#).



## Library Workshops in September

For all online workshops, join from the app or web (<https://zoom.us/join>) and use meeting number 510-649-2501

### Orientation for Faculty

Tues., Sept. 5th at 1pm (online)

### Orientation for Students

Wed., Sept 6th at 1pm (in person)

Thurs., Sept. 7th at 3pm (online)

### Zotero

This research tool will help you collect and organize sources. You can also create bibliographies and end or footnotes with a few simple clicks.

You can use Zotero to create and organize a personal database of references, import references automatically from many Web sites and library E-resources, and cite sources in perfect Turabian with a click in Microsoft Word.

Fri., Sept. 1st at 11am (in person)

Thurs., Sept. 7th at 1pm (in person)

Thurs., Sept. 28th at 2pm (online)



## Biblical Exegesis

Writing an exegesis paper can be a daunting but rewarding process.

Learn to use both print and online resources for biblical exegesis available through the GTU library and on the Internet.

Tues., Sept. 5th at 11am (online)

Thurs., Sept. 7th at 11am (in person)

## AI Tools for Literature Reviews

Learn how to leverage tools and apps to gather relevant articles and seamlessly import them into Zotero. Follow relevant journals and get notified when a new article matches your research interests.

Thurs., Sept. 21 at 3pm (online)



## Find your Quiet Library Nook

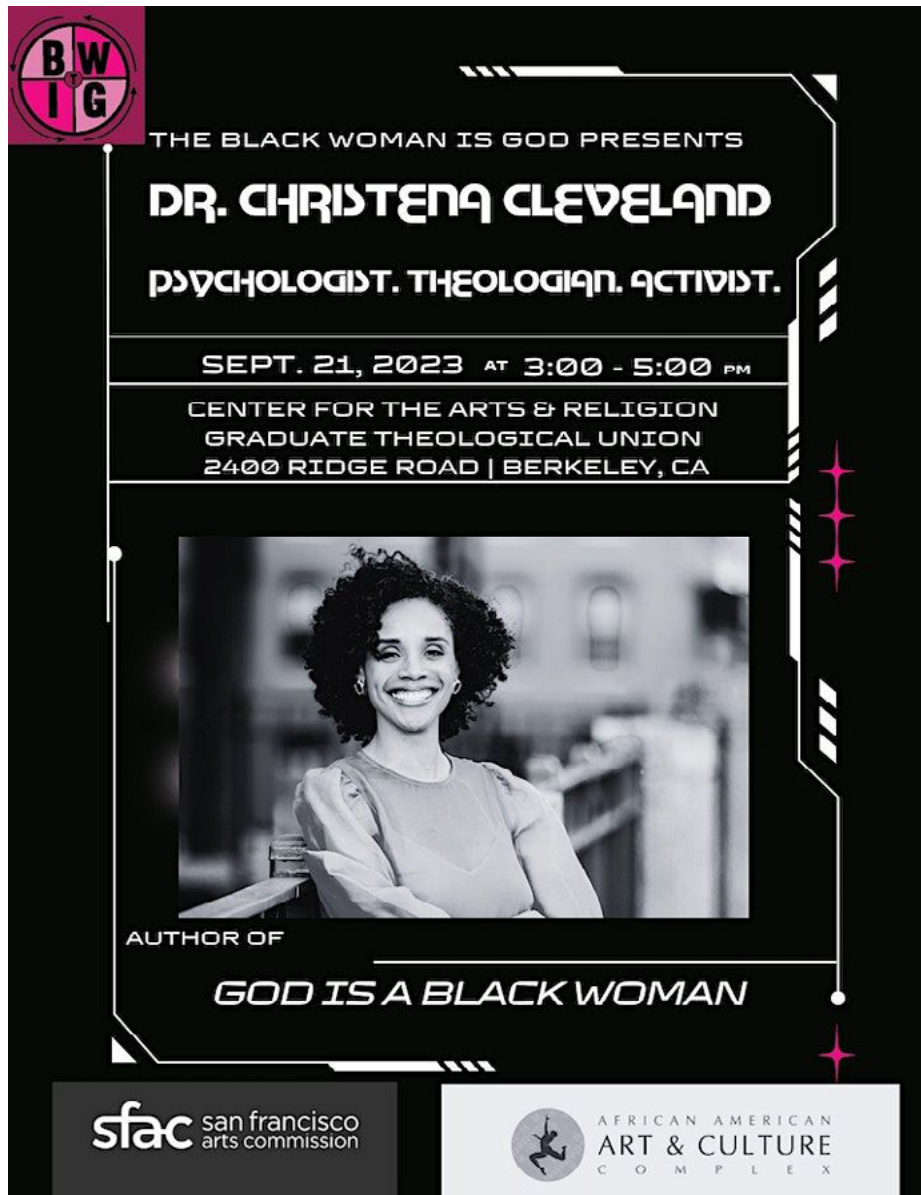
The library welcomes both quiet study and collaborative work in the library. There are designated desks for quiet study along the east wall just beyond the compact shelving units (these are the shelves that roll). The southeast corner features a place for prayer and more quiet desks. Each desk has an outlet and a lamp. Tables near the current periodicals and in the northwest corner are for collaborative work, as is the oculus table in the middle of the circular reference collection shelves.



## Meet in the Library

In addition to the tables for group work, the library offers reservable spaces and tables just for GTU and consortial students, faculty and staff. There are two seminar rooms for hybrid meetings and presentations: Seminar B seats 8 people and Seminar A seats about 4 people comfortably. Both rooms feature smart screens and outlets for everyone to plug in their devices. You may also reserve two oak tables in the northwest corner of the library: Collaborative Tables 1 and 2. For more information and to reserve these spaces, visit the [library website](#).

# Center for the Arts and Religion



**Thursday, September 21 | 3:00-5:00pm (Pacific)**

Multiuse Room (2nd floor), 2400 Ridge Road Berkeley, CA 94709

Christena Cleveland, Ph.D. is a social psychologist, public theologian, author, and activist. She is the founder and director of the Center for Justice + Renewal which supports a more equitable world by nurturing skillful justice advocacy and the depth to act on it.

She recently published her third full-length book, *God is a Black Woman* (Harper Collins), which details her 400-mile walking pilgrimage across central France in search of ancient Black Madonna statues and examines the relationship between race, gender, and cultural perceptions of the Divine.

[\*\*Sign up here!\*\*](#)

# Madrasa-Midrasha Program

The Madrasa-Midrasha Program joins the GTU community in welcoming new and returning students and faculty for the start of the Fall 2023 semester! We are excited to present several public events throughout the 2023-2024 academic year, made possible once again by the generous support of the Walter & Elise Haas Fund.

## Emerging Scholars in Islamic & Jewish Studies

To start things off, please join us **Wednesday, September 20th at 11:30am PT** for a special Madrasa-Midrasha Program event on “Emerging Scholars in Islamic & Jewish Studies.” The event will feature CJS MA student Carey Averbook and recent CIS graduate Dr. R. David Coolidge. CJS Director Dr. Deena Aranoff and CIS Director Dr. Munir Jiwa will facilitate the discussion. This event will take place in the GTU Library’s Multiuse Room. [Please visit the event page for more information.](#)



The poster features a dark blue background with white and yellow text. At the top left is the GTU logo and the text "The Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies & the Center for Islamic Studies Madrasa-Midrasha Program". At the top right, it says "The Madrasa-Midrasha Program is made possible by the generous support of the Walter & Elise Haas Fund". The main title "Emerging Scholars in Islamic & Jewish Studies" is in yellow. Below it, the date and location "Sept. 20th, 11:30 AM PT | GTU Library Multiuse Room" are listed. The "Panelists:" section includes Carey Averbook (MA Student in Jewish Studies, GTU) and R. David Coolidge (PhD Graduate, GTU Center for Islamic Studies). The "Respondents:" section includes Deena Aranoff (Director of the GTU Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies & Senior Lecturer in Medieval Jewish Studies) and Munir Jiwa (Director of the GTU Center for Islamic Studies & Associate Professor of Islamic Studies & Anthropology). A URL for more information is provided at the bottom.

GTU The Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies & the Center for Islamic Studies Madrasa-Midrasha Program

The Madrasa-Midrasha Program is made possible by the generous support of the Walter & Elise Haas Fund

### Emerging Scholars in Islamic & Jewish Studies

Panelists: Sept. 20th, 11:30 AM PT | GTU Library Multiuse Room

**Carey Averbook**  
MA Student in Jewish Studies, GTU  
Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies

**R. David Coolidge**  
PhD Graduate,  
GTU Center for Islamic Studies

Respondents:

**Deena Aranoff**  
Director of the GTU Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies & Senior Lecturer in Medieval Jewish Studies

**Munir Jiwa**  
Director of the GTU Center for Islamic Studies & Associate Professor of Islamic Studies & Anthropology

For more info, please visit the event page:  
[gtu.edu/events/madrasa-midrasha-emerging-scholars-fall-2023](http://gtu.edu/events/madrasa-midrasha-emerging-scholars-fall-2023)

# Haas Summer Grant Recipients

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Congratulations to the 2023-2024 Haas Student Research Grant recipients. Haas Student Research Grants are awarded each Spring semester for research to be conducted in the summer, and are for GTU students working on interreligious projects related to Judaism and/or Islam. The grants range from \$250 to \$500 for individual projects and \$500 to \$1000 for joint projects. This year's recipients are

**Amy Shoemaker** - *The Tales We Tell: What Islamic and Jewish Stories Reveal about Our Religions and Ourselves*

**Jibreel Delgado** - *Anxieties of Authenticity, Resurgence/Re-Existence, Bordera Thinking, and Muslim-Jewish Conditions of Modernity*

**Katy Dickinson** - *The Same and Different: Supporting Muslim and Jewish Inmates*

**Omar Naisan** - *The Anointed One: A Comparative Textual Inquiry of Messianism in the Hebrew Bible and Qur'an*

**Zeinab Vessal** - *The Symbolism of Khamsa in Shi'i Tradition*

**Morey Lipsett** - *Khamsa and Hamsa: An Inter-Religious Object in Islamic and Jewish Societies*

**Carey Averbook** - *Menstruation in Judaism and Islam: Feminist and Queer Approaches*

Recipients will present their research in a lunchtime gathering on October 18. Please be on the lookout for more information about that gathering, and in the meantime see more info at this [GTU announcement link](#).

## Madrasa-Midrasha Colloquia Series

With much enthusiasm from colleagues, the Madrasa-Midrasha Program will continue to lead the Faculty Colloquia for the 2023-2024 academic year. The colloquia includes faculty in Jewish Studies and Islamic Studies from the GTU, UC Berkeley, Stanford University, and the University of San Francisco.

# Center for Islamic Studies



The Center for Islamic Studies extends greetings of peace and a warm welcome to all new and returning students, faculty, visiting scholars and staff for the academic year 2023-2024!

We are grateful for the creative and diverse contributions from the CIS community, and especially our generous donors, and we look forward to public programs and events this year that highlight the many wonderful achievements of our students, alums, faculty, visiting and research scholars, staff, and our academic and community partners.

Please join us for the monthly gathering of Islamic Studies @ GTU where we present and discuss the academic work of our students, alums and scholars. We will meet in person for our first gathering of this academic year date and room to be confirmed. This will be a welcome celebration with refreshments. Please email to confirm your attendance, and as always, we welcome your ideas and suggestions: [mjiwa@gtu.edu](mailto:mjiwa@gtu.edu)



Our deep gratitude to **Nosizwe Breaux-Abdur-Rahman**, GTU doctoral student and Newhall fellow, for her ongoing leadership and participation in the Race, Religion and Belonging working group at the Berkeley Center for the Study of Religion, and also for her service as the HCSR department rep to the GTU Student Advisory Committee



Congratulations to **Jibreel Delgado**, GTU doctoral student and current CARE research scholar, for being selected as a 2023-2024 Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI) scholar at Princeton Theological Seminary.



Congratulations to GTU PhD candidate, **Paula Thompson**, on receiving a Newhall Award. She will be teaching a course this fall 2023 titled, *Religion, Surveillance, and Racialized Bodies*.



CIS gratefully acknowledges **Carol Bier**, CIS/GTU Research Scholar, for her scholarship, public events and global partnerships advancing dialogue and understanding, including her three-week trip in Sept to Central Asia visiting familiar Islamic architectural monuments about which she has published, museums exhibiting crafts and technologies she has documented, and cultural performances of traditions she has studied for nearly half a century! Countries include, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

Congratulations also for her preparing of a publication on textile technologies of the Silk Roads for a conference that was hosted by the UC-Berkeley Tang Center for Silk Road Studies, and for an exhibition at the San Diego Museum of Art scheduled to open in September 2024, serving on the scientific advisory council, and preparing an essay on the awe and wonder of geometry in Islamic arts and architecture. Congratulations Carol!



CIS gratefully acknowledges **Dr. Ahmed Khater**, CIS/GTU faculty, for offering a series of public engagement classes and lectures at UC Berkeley and at Berkeley Law School in spring 2023, cosponsored by the CIS, which will continue throughout this academic year. Please visit the CIS events webpage for more information.



Congratulations to **Dr. Mahjabeen Dhala**, Assistant Prof of Islamic Studies and Director of the Madrasa-Midrasha Program for her participation in the upcoming Symposium on *Women's Spiritual Leadership: Transforming Lives, Embodying Wisdom* on Sept 9th 2023. This will be a virtual conference hosted by Sustainability 360 at the GTU. Her presentation is titled, "Ecofeminist Readings of the Qur'an: Muslim Women Leading Change."



CIS Director, **Dr. Munir Jiwa**, is delighted to lead a series of conversations on religion, race, justice and belonging, with a focus on Muslims in America with partners at UC Berkeley. For interest in participating in research and community-engaged learning, please contact: [mjiwa@gtu.edu](mailto:mjiwa@gtu.edu)


# Center for Jewish Studies

The Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies

CJS welcomes all new and returning students for the start of a new academic year! Please join us for these upcoming events:

## Fall Welcome Lunch

Please join us in kicking off the new academic year at our Fall Welcome Lunch on **Tuesday, September 5th at 12:30pm** in the GTU Library with Dr. Gregg Drinkwater, Program Director for the Antisemitism Education Initiative which is a project of UC Berkeley’s Center for Jewish Studies. Dr. Drinkwater’s talk is titled “Queer Healing: AIDS, Gay Synagogues, Lesbian Feminists, and the Origins of the Jewish Healing Movement” and will trace the origins of the Jewish healing movement as it emerged in the late 1980s. [Visit the event page for more info.](#) A light lunch will be served.



Graduate  
Theological  
Union

The Richard S. Dinner  
Center for Jewish Studies


## CJS Fall 2023 Welcome Lunch

**with Dr. Gregg Drinkwater**

**Program Director for the Antisemitism Education Initiative,  
UC Berkeley Center for Jewish Studies**

**"Queer Healing: AIDS, Gay Synagogues, Lesbian Feminists, and  
the Origins of the Jewish Healing Movement"**

Tuesday, Sept. 5 @ 12:30pm | Dinner Board Room, GTU Library



Co-sponsored by:  
**UC Berkeley | Center for Jewish Studies**

Learn more and register at:  
[gtu.edu/events/group/cjs](http://gtu.edu/events/group/cjs)

## Sukkah Building Party

Join us Tuesday, September 26 at 12:45pm on the West Side Landing of the GTU Library (on Scenic Rd.) for our annual [CJS Sukkah Building Party!](#) Pizza will be provided, and all are welcome to attend. Here are a few images from last year:





## Interreligious Chaplaincy Program

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### **Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Perspectives on Spiritual Care**

*Thursday, September 7 | 9:00 - 10:30 am (Pacific) | Virtual Event*

Join this free interactive virtual discussion with four chaplains from four traditions—Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish—to explore how spiritual care is understood and practiced within their contexts. Conversation will include information on what spiritual care providers need to know when providing care to someone from these traditions and what are common misconceptions.

To register, visit <https://icjs.org>.

### **CPE Day @ the GTU**

*Wednesday, October 18 | 3:00 - 5:00 pm (Pacific) | Virtual Event*

The ICP invites all GTU students and field educators to the annual Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Day and meet chaplaincy educators from California and beyond.

The annual program is sponsored by the Pacific Community of Practice of the ACPE in partnership with the field and contextual education programs of the member schools at the Graduate Theological Union.

Join the virtual Zoom program: <https://gtu.zoom.us/j/96703890167> (Passcode: 083011)

### **Chaplaincy Hour / Starting Thursday 9/7/2023**

*Every Thursday | 12:30 pm (Pacific) | Virtual Event*

The GTU Interreligious Chaplaincy Program welcomes its current students and prospective students in a weekly virtual gathering that serves as a way for students to join, discuss any issues--professional or academic--and strengthen bonds and friendships.

<https://gtu.zoom.us/j/93737590763>

## **The Taube Family Jewish Studies Fellowship**

The ICP welcomes applications from current and prospective GTU students to join the Taube Family Jewish Studies Fellowship for the Interreligious Chaplaincy Program. The fellowship covers partial tuition for required courses for the Certificate in Interreligious Chaplaincy.

To apply for the fellowship, visit [ICP Jewish Studies Fellowship](#).

For additional information, contact the ICP program director at [kshamsieh@gtu.edu](mailto:kshamsieh@gtu.edu).

## **The Motwani-Jadeja Foundation Hindu Chaplaincy Fellowship**

The MJF Fellowship supports training and certifying Hindu Chaplains to serve in the growing global networks of chaplains from all major faiths, especially in universities, hospitals, nursing homes, and hospice settings.

To apply for the fellowship, visit [Hindu Chaplaincy Fellowship](#)

For additional information, contact the ICP program director at [kshamsieh@gtu.edu](mailto:kshamsieh@gtu.edu).

## **Save the Date**

### **Sultan Program in Arab Studies: Scholarly Initiatives UC, Berkeley Center for Middle Eastern Studies**

***Thursday, November 9 | 8:30 am - 12:15 pm (Pacific) | Virtual Event***

A half-day symposium that addresses the Islamic approach to disability, how it is shaped by the Qur'an and the practice of Prophet Muhammad, secular legal construction of disability laws in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and other human rights treaties and national and local legislation.

Schedule Conference [Tentative]:

9:00-10:30 Panel 1: Mental Disabilities: Comparative perspectives of Islam and international and national secular law.

10:45-12:15 Panel 2: Experience of Muslims with mental disabilities in Arab-Muslim-minority countries in customary and social service practices.

Cosponsored by: Interreligious Chaplaincy Program at the GTU

## Women's Studies in Religion

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The Women's Studies in Religion Certificate Program would like to welcome all new students to GTU along with extending a warm welcome back to continuing students.

The Women's Studies in Religion (WSR) works to sustain, promote, and advance the commitment to the study of women, gender and religion, emphasizing conversations across differences of race, sexual and gender orientation, ethnicity, class, culture, nationality, and religious orientation.

Ways to be involved:

**Sign up to be on the WSR email list.** You will receive updates on upcoming events sponsored by the WSR Certificate program along with learning of events from the Gender Consortium at UC Berkeley and other organizations that share in the support of Women studies in theological and religious disciplines.

**Attend events sponsored by the WSR Certificate program.** Each Semester the WSR program hosts two special programs for a total of four events throughout the year. We additionally co-sponsor events with other groups that focus on Women's Studies. You can view pictures from events on our website.

**Take the WSR Seminar.** Each year during the Spring semester the WSR program offers a seminar on Women's Studies. The seminar is taught by faculty and students who serve on the Advisory Steering Committee.

**Pursue the WSR Certificate** which involves taking the WSR Seminar Class, taking 3 classes related to themes pertaining to women's studies and attend WSR events to earn six co-curricular points.

**Suggested Courses** - A collection of classes from each semester is listed on our website that focus on issues and scholarship related directly or indirectly to Women's studies.

**Become a member of the Advisory Committee** which involves a one hour monthly meeting and assisting with the promotion and implementation of WSR events.

# September Events

Saturday, Sept. 9 - WSR will be Co-sponsoring an all day conference with Dr. Rita Sherma, Women’s Spiritual Leadership: Transforming Lives, Leading Change. Be watching for more details soon on the GTU website and through the WSR email listings.

Thursday, Sept. 21st we are Co-sponsoring with CARE this upcoming event, “The Black Women is God” with Dr. Christena Cleveland, Ph.D. who recently published her third full-length book, *God is a Black Woman* (Harper Collins), which details her 400-mile walking pilgrimage across central France in search of ancient Black Madonna statues and examines the relationship between race, gender, and cultural perceptions of the Divine. For more information about Dr. Cleveland and to register for the event.

[Sign up here!](#)



### Need more info:

To explore more on the opportunities available through the WSR Program go to the website at <https://www.gtu.edu/projects/wsr>.

For any questions or to express interest to be involved email Diane Saunders, WSR Program Coordinator at [wsr@ses.gtu.edu](mailto:wsr@ses.gtu.edu).

## Institute of Buddhist Studies

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Institute of Buddhist Studies  
**Numata Symposium**

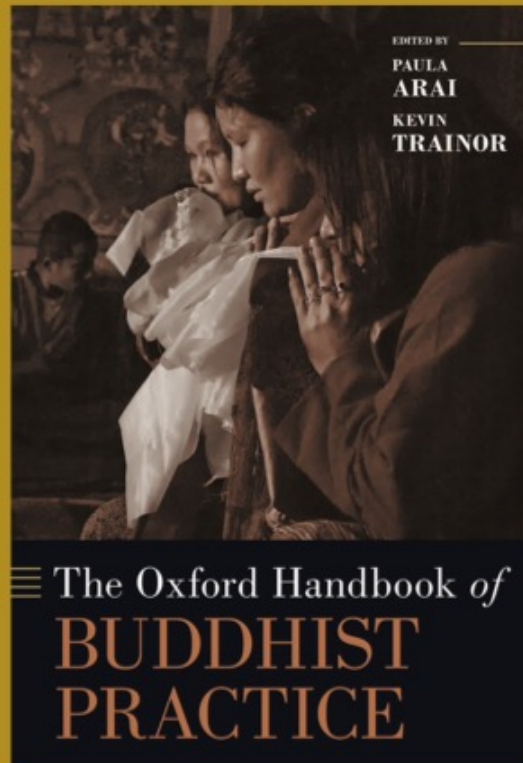
**Buddhist Practice:  
Perspectives On and From the  
*Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Practice***

In Person & Virtual October 6, 2023 (10 am-5 pm)

Registration & Info:

2140 Durant Ave, Berkeley, CA 94704

Keynote Address by Anne M. Blackburn, Ph.D., Cornell University



For more information and to register visit [IBS events](#)

## Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

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# 2023 FOUNDERS' DAY LECTURE

## "Night of Weeping v. Morn of Song"

Wednesday, September 20th  
10:00 am Pacific



**Vance Blackfox (Cherokee Nation)**

Join us in-person or online for our annual Founders' Day lecture. Mr. Vance Blackfox, an Indigenous theologian who serves the ELCA as the Director of Indigenous Ministries and Tribal Relations, will address the foundations of the church and what of healing, reconstruction, and recreation is possible.

Register here!



plts PACIFIC LUTHERAN  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

California Lutheran  
UNIVERSITY

# The Center for LGBTQ and Gender Studies in Religion (CLGS) at Pacific School of Religion

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## **Lavender Lunch: Queer Muslim Organizing**

**Wednesday, September 20 | at 12:30pm PT/3:30pm ET)**

CLGS has a rich tradition of creating dialogues and curriculums for communities of color intersecting queer identity and religious faith. We begin the fall semester focused on the organizing within Muslim communities and the lives of LGBTQ people. Kamal Fizazi and Ramish Nadeem will share their experiences of working for LGBTQ equality from an Islamic perspective.

[Event Details](#)

## **Exploring Fe, Familia, Igualdad Resources: Latinx Curriculum for Faith Communities.**

**Thursday, September 21 | at 1pm PT/ 4pm ET)**

CLGS' Latinx Roundtable is proud to present two clergy who are working for LGBTQ equality through the Metropolitan Community Church in Cuba. Rev. Elaine Saralegui Caraballo and Pastor Yivi Cruz Suárez will share their stories about how they came to the MCC Churches and how their ministry impacts their community. They will share their challenges and joys of organizing LGBTQ Christian communities. Latinx Roundtable member Lenia Salas will be the moderator.

[Event Details](#)

## **Sacred Queerness in the Lectionary for year B**

**Thursday, September 28 | at 1:00 pm PT/4:00 pm ET )**

CLGS' Latinx Roundtable is proud to present two clergy who are working for LGBTQ equality through the Metropolitan Community Church in Cuba. Rev. Elaine Saralegui Caraballo and Pastor Yivi Cruz Suárez will share their stories about how they came to the MCC Churches and how their ministry impacts their community. They will share their challenges and joys of organizing LGBTQ Christian communities. Latinx Roundtable member Lenia Salas will be the moderator.

[Event Details](#)



## The Dean's Newsletter

The Dean's Newsletter is for official notices from the Graduate Theological Union Dean's Office regarding academic affairs and for announcements of educational events focusing on academic research and thus of particular interest to faculty and MA and PhD students.

Send submissions by the second-to-last Friday of the month to [skennedy@gtu.edu](mailto:skennedy@gtu.edu)  
Sabrina Kennedy, Executive Assistant to the Dean

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Graduate Theological Union Office of the Dean

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