

GTU Dean's Newsletter



These are unprecedented times in our country and our world. Here in California, for the first time in history, the governor has ordered a statewide shelter-in-place as an extreme, yet necessary measure to mitigate further transmission of the novel coronavirus. Across the nation, individuals and communities are seeking to do what we can to care for ourselves and one another, making decisions about which activities, businesses, and works are essential, and which can be suspended. At a time when community and connection seem more important than ever, we are nonetheless asked to maintain social distance. This is no less true at the GTU, where over the past few weeks, we have shifted all in-person courses to remote learning modalities;

cancelled numerous public events; and put provisions in place for staff to work remotely. And yet, in these past weeks, there is a sense in which we remain remarkably intertwined: engaging with one another through Zoom, chat platforms, email, old fashioned phone calls, and at a fundamental human level, in our shared experience of unfathomable circumstances.

As a biblical scholar, in good times and more challenging moments alike, I often turn to the Hebrew Scriptures for inspiration. In the Book of Numbers, we read of a moment when Moses' sister Miriam has been struck with leprosy, necessitating her isolation outside of the Israelites' camp for seven days (Numbers 12:15a). We are not told how she acquired the illness. But we know that her community refused to leave her behind, and the people did not continue their journey until Miriam was reintegrated to the community once more (12:15b). The story reminds us of the need for a community in crisis to come together in solidarity, to care for the afflicted, and to recognize that our futures are bound together.

From faculty, to students, staff, and alumni, the GTU is a community of scholars and seekers committed to exploring the very nature of spirituality, drawing illumination from the remarkable reservoir of wisdom in our world's religious traditions and bringing those insights into conversation with our modern moment. And as this crisis has made clear, this work—now more than ever—is an urgent necessity. Among us are spiritual caregivers, pastors, religious scholars and educators, and community leaders may be called upon to venture into unknown risk in order to offer compassion, connection, and care through moments of greatest need. As these events continue to unfold, may we all be led by “the better angels of our nature,” drawing inspiration from faith and scholarship to help our world as we navigate this crisis, and together shape the brighter future to which we are all bound.

Uriah Kim, PhD.

President (Interim)
 Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs
 John Dillenberger Professor of Biblical Studies

*To read a full version of this article on our website, please click this link:
[**“Community and Connection: Calling on “Our Better Angels” through Crisis”**](#)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Associate Dean of Students 2

Digital Learning Workshops . . . 3

Library Workshops. 4

CIS 4

CARe 5

CLGS 5

CTNS—**Myoung-Ho Sin** 2020 Charles H. Townes Fellow. . . . 6

Honorable Mentions 7

From the Associate Dean of Students

Chai Motupalli's Office Hours:

Monday: 2 - 3 pm

<https://gtu.zoom.us/j/268495634>

Thursday: 11 am – noon

<https://gtu.zoom.us/j/851034303>
Wendy Arce's Office Hours:

Tuesday: 2 - 3 pm

<https://zoom.us/j/139990081>

Friday: 11 am – noon

<https://zoom.us/j/693119289>
Joint Office Hour:

Wednesday: 4 - 5 pm

<https://zoom.us/j/769750878>
Happy Hour with Wendy and Chai
Wednesday: 4 - 5 pm

Topic: Happy Hour with Wendy and Chai

Wednesdays, 4pm Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Every week on Wed, until May 20, 2020,

9 occurrences

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/769750878>

Meeting ID: 769 750 878

Dial by your location:

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 769 750 878

Dear Students,

We know things are very different now from just a week or so ago. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need some extra support at this time.

Stay healthy and be well!

Wendy




PDP WORKSHOP
 Syllabus Development and
 Course Designing
 with Dr. Judith Berling
APRIL 1, 10 - 11 AM
[HTTPS://GTU.ZOOM.US/J/897405716](https://gtu.zoom.us/j/897405716)

Jobs in religion

Jobs in religion and philosophy

Jobs in religion and ethics

assistant professor jobs

Are you ready for the job search?

PDP WORKSHOP with Dr. James Nati

April 15, 10 - 11 am

<https://gtu.zoom.us/j/969304917>

Digital Learning Department

The Digital Learning department will provide additional resources for the remainder of the semester that may help instructors and students adjust to remote courses.

[Weekly Virtual Office Hours for Faculty and Students.](#)

The Director of Digital Learning will hold virtual office hours twice each week on Zoom for faculty on **Wednesdays and Fridays at 11:00am-12pm**. If instructors have any questions about using online teaching pedagogies and using Moodle or other educational technologies for teaching, they are welcome to attend the office hour to address concerns.

For faculty who would like to attend any of these office hours, please use the following link: <https://gtu.zoom.us/j/756904753>

The Director will also offer virtual office hours for students every **Wednesday at 1pm** starting the week after Spring break. If students have any questions about using Moodle, VoiceThread, Zoom or other tools they are using for their classes, they are welcome to come to the office hour and ask questions.

For students wanting to attend this office hour, please use the following link: <https://gtu.zoom.us/j/668254584>

[Course Design Workshops](#)

The regularly scheduled course design workshops will continue to take place via Zoom for the remainder of the semester. There are two workshops taking place in April:

Virtual Collaborative Learning: Community Building and Reflective Learning in an Online Course

Thursday, April 2, 1:30-2:30pm (online via zoom)

Friday, April 3, 10:00am-11:00am (online via Zoom)

Virtual Collaborative Learning is an essential aspect of a successful online course. It is important for students to interact and work together in order to build community and undergo transformative learning experiences. This workshop discusses strategies for adding both asynchronous and synchronous interaction to your online course using tools including VoiceThread, Zoom, discussion forums, and chatrooms.

If you would like to attend this workshop, please RSVP to derickson@gtu.edu for the Zoom link.

Developing Online Learning Content for Diverse Learning Styles

Thursday, April 16 1:30-2:30pm (online via Zoom)

Friday, April 17 10:00am-11:00am (online via Zoom)

When teaching, it is important to acknowledge that different students learn in different ways. Some students are audio learners, visual learners, inesthetic/tactile learners, and more. This workshop provides strategies for delivering online learning content in a variety of ways that can help accommodate a diverse set of learning styles in the online classroom.

If you would like to attend this workshop, please RSVP to derickson@gtu.edu for the Zoom link.

Along with the regularly scheduled workshops, the Director will provide a **"Moodle overview" workshop every Wednesday at 2pm** starting the week of 03/23. In this workshop, the Director will provide a walkthrough of Moodle's most helpful features for developing good quality online courses.

If you would like to attend any of these Moodle Training Sessions please use this link: <https://gtu.zoom.us/j/721201277>

Library News

- As you might have read in the most recent issue of *Insight*, the library is providing a myriad of resources to help faculty and students working remotely. Most importantly, reference librarians are available via chat (Ask-a-librarian) and email (library.gtu.edu) from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. They can also meet with you via Zoom by appointment; send an email to library.gtu.edu and a librarian will be happy to set up a day and time to meet virtually.
- Need a study break or looking for a distraction? Check out the **At Home Book Group** hosted by SFTS branch librarian Stephanie Miller, Wednesdays at 12:30 pm via Zoom. Open to all. No reservation required. Zoom meeting ID is 510-649-2501.
- Due dates for checked-out materials have been extended.
- The book-drop is open.
- For more information about library services and remote resources: <https://www.gtu.edu/library/remote-resources-gtu-library>
- Lastly, a reminder about new title requests. Students can request specific topics for acquisitions, and particularly for major/long term research projects, we can strengthen specific subjects or disciplines which are in scope during the coronavirus crisis. Send suggestions to Colyn Wohlmutter at: cwohlmutter@gtu.edu.

We hope everyone is staying healthy and safe!

Center for Islamic Studies (CIS)

CIS Director and Program Coordinator are available by appointment online. Please feel free to email us with any questions you have and to schedule a meeting:

mjiwa@gtu.edu and mdhala@gtu.edu

CIS has either cancelled, postponed or moved our public programs online. The annual Islamophobia Studies conference at UC Berkeley cosponsored by CIS is postponed, but we welcome you to ongoing discussions and resources online. Please visit:

<https://irdproject.com>

<https://iphobiacenter.org>

Saturday, April 11— Mahjabeen Dhala will be offering a webinar with the ICCNC on the Islamic month of Sha'ban, "**Recounting the Blessings of Sha'ban.**" Please visit the CIS webpage for more info and/or contact: mdhala@gmail.com

CIS wishes all those observing many blessings for Passover, Easter and the upcoming month of Ramadan.

CIS especially wishes everyone good health, peace, safety, and well-being at this difficult time.

Center for the Arts & Religion Events (CARE)

In these destabilizing times, connecting with the arts is even more important than before! The Doug Adams Gallery may be closed thanks to COVID-19, but we are ready to provide arts experiences for the GTU community through our social media platforms. Be sure to subscribe to the following channels:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CARE.DougAdamsGallery

Instagram: www.instagram.com/caregtu

Twitter: www.twitter.com/caregtu

Wordpress: carepackagegtu.wordpress.com



If you haven't had a chance to see **AFTER/LIFE** yet, you can experience it online, via 360-degree interactive views created by our intern Gino Abrajano: goo.gl/maps/U2XKtMxo6SQbJnyZ7

Center for LGBTQ and Gender Studies in Religion (CLGS)

Upcoming Events

6 April 2020: A CLGS Book Reading
Unoma Azuah: Embracing My Shadow: Growing Up Lesbian in Nigeria
 6:30pm—ONLINE at www.clgs.org

7 April 2020: A CLGS Lavender Lunch
Dev Cuny: #Born Perfect
 12:10pm—ONLINE at www.clgs.org

23 April 2020: **The 13th Annual CLGS John E. Boswell Lecture**
Jay Johnson, PhD, Professor of Theology and Culture
 Pacific School of Religion

***“Enfleshing Eros, Healing Earth:
 A Queerly Christian Performance of Ecological Renewal in Three Acts”***

6:30pm, Pacific School of Religion Chapel

TBD: pending GTU COVID-19 policies updates



CTNS announces 2020 Charles H. Townes Fellow in Theology and Science, Myoung-Ho Sin

CTNS is pleased to announce that **Myoung-Ho Sin** has been selected as the Charles H. Townes Fellow in Theology and Science for 2020. Myoung came to the GTU in 2016 with a background in Economic Engineering, Photonics and Digital Image Processing, a Masters in Divinity and a Masters in Early Reformation Theology from Honam Theological University and Seminary, Seoul, South Korea. He passed his GTU Oral Comps with distinction in 2019, and is currently writing his dissertation.

Myoung's dissertation begins by rebutting the challenge from Lynn White Jr. that "the anthropocentric view of Christianity has contributed to the ecological crisis" in a profound way.

Instead he places the crisis of climate change within the broader context of climate justice in which "the rights of the most vulnerable need to be protected."

Myoung expands this to include both the most vulnerable human communities and those non-human species most vulnerable to climate change. To meet this crisis, he makes a bold proposal: We should not seek to revise the Christian doctrine of creation. Instead we should focus on theological anthropology and expand the traditional meaning of humans created in the image of God to being part of what he terms the

"Homo Oikos Sacralis" (the human sacred household). According to Myoung-Ho, this will help us "see our neighbors with different eyes" and "encourage the church to take the environmental concerns seriously."



He supports this claim by drawing on the writings of the GTU's Professor Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, as well as the writings of Sallie McFague, Jürgen Moltmann and UC Berkeley's Richard Norgaard. He then offers a technical scientific model, an "Integrated Assessment Model" to support his claim that damages due to climate change must be addressed from the point of view of environmental economics as well as equity.

Congratulations, Myoung! We look forward with great expectation to the publication of his dissertation and believe it has the potential to have a significant impact on the academic, church and public communities all of which stand in real need of a new vision to spurn our renewed commitment to addressing climate change and climate justice.

The CTNS Graduate Student Fellowship in Theology and Science is named in honor of Nobel Prize Laureate Charles H. Townes (1915-2015), a member of the CTNS Board of Directors for nearly thirty years.

Honorable Mentions

MA/MABL

Renato Aguila, REPR
Brianna Deutsch, HCSR, Honors
Huzaifa Shahbaz, HCSR, Honors
Ryoze Wada, HCSR, Honors

Comprehensive Proposal Approved

Laurent Okitakatshi Odjango, SATX

Dissertation Successfully Defended

Lindsey G. Dean, IDS
Hamza Yusef Hanson, HCSR
Nathaniel C. Michon, HCSR
Pasesa Sapolu, BIBL



Graduate
Theological
Union

The Dean's Newsletter

The Dean's Newsletter is for official notices from the GTU Dean's Office regarding academic affairs and for announcements of educational events (lectures, conferences) focusing on academic research and thus of particular interest to faculty and MA and PhD students. Send submissions to:
Melissa Haddick, Executive Assistant to the President (interim) and Dean's Office, mhaddick@gtu.edu

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