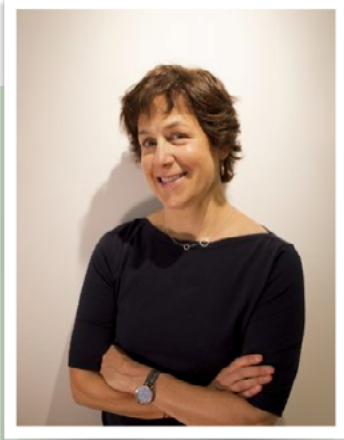


GTU DEAN'S NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the Spring 2022 semester, day #2!

I hope everyone enjoyed a restful, relaxing, rejuvenating break and is ready to jump into the new semester. There's lots to look forward to – engaging courses, interesting events, and meaningful conversations. In other good news, we've had enough rain to quell fire season and enough snow to reduce the drought. From my home office desk, I can see my neighbor's magnolia in bloom. It makes me happy to know that by the time of the March Dean's Newsletter, we'll have gained a full hour of daylight!

Having waxed optimistic, I can't ignore the obvious: we are exhausted by the pandemic, politics, and the intersection of the two. The omicron variant has meant that many more of us have been gotten sick or have family and friends who have been unwell – though thanks to our vaccines and boosters, these illnesses have generally been less severe than they had been before.

Inside This Issue

From the Dean.....	1
Borsch-Rast Lecture.....	4
Surjit Singh Lecture.....	5
Announcements.....	6
Academic Achievements/ Deadlines.....	8
Library News.....	10
CAR.....	12
CIS.....	14
CJS.....	15
CLGS.....	16
CTNS.....	17

Regarding COVID, we all have different notions of what “safety” means, based on our own family circumstances, lifestyles, and dispositions. At the GTU, we want to continue to honor and empower individual perspectives. Once again, this semester we've left the choice about teaching in-person (concurrent hybrid) or via Zoom to faculty and instructors. Once again, students who select an in-person course have the option of attending in-person or selecting the hybrid option.

I know I'm not the only one who is tired. A few days ago, a poem arrived in my in-box (I recommend signing up for the [poem-of-the-day!](#)) that helped draw me outside of myself and re-appreciate the “fragile paradise” in which we live, with sunsets juxtaposed against social ills. I hope you'll click to read [In California: Morning, Evening, Late January by Denise Levertov](#), and like me, appreciate:

the poignance of all that is constantly
threatened, invaded, expended

and constantly
nevertheless
persists in beauty



Elizabeth S. Peña, PhD

Interim Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Save the Date!

Tuesday, February 15 | 5 pm



As Interim Dean Peña's term comes to a close at the end of the Spring 2022 semester, we look forward to welcoming a new Dean.

The GTU community is invited to hold time on their calendar for a virtual Town Hall with the incoming Dean.

[Register here](#)

Assistant Professor of LDS/Mormon Studies to Join the GTU

We are pleased to announce that, thanks to the support of the Bay Area Mormon Studies Council (BAMSC), a search is underway for an Assistant Professor of Latter-day Saints/Mormon Studies! Stay tuned for more details as the search progresses. We hope to have a new faculty member on board on July 1, to begin teaching in Fall 2022.

We are excited to work with BAMSC to make these plans come to fruition!

Please plan to attend the candidates' lectures via Zoom. More details to come!

Hewlett Building Update

The alterations at the Hewlett Building are moving right along! The third floor administrative offices, along with the staff lounge, will be completed by mid-March. Those offices can then be occupied, but we'll still be in transitional mode, using temporary furniture and waiting through the work on the rest of the building.

We are in the thick of the permit application process for work on the basement and floors one and two. While that's underway, we are working with the architects to finalize plans and order materials so that work can proceed quickly and smoothly once it begins. Right now, we anticipate that our major construction period will be July 2022 through July 2023.

As we move through the permitting phase and get closer to a finalized construction timeline, we'll be able to plan staffing and student service availability. We will keep you posted about how to use the library's resources during that time.

Marie Lucero
Chief Operating Officer



The Fifth Annual Borsch-Rast Lecture

Thursday, March 31 | 6 pm (Pacific)

The Graduate Theological Union is pleased to announce that Dr. Ashley L. Bacchi (GTU, PhD 2015), Assistant Professor of Jewish History and Ancient Mediterranean Religions at Starr King School for the Ministry, has been awarded the fifth annual Borsch-Rast Book Prize and Lectureship for her 2020 work, ***Uncovering Jewish Creativity in Book III of the Sibylline Oracles: Gender, Intertextuality, and Politics*** (Brill).



[Learn more about Dr. Ashley L. Bacchi](#)

We hope to be able to offer an opportunity for a limited in-person audience. More details will be forthcoming as we get closer to the event.

[Register to attend here](#)

The 2022 Surjit Singh Lecture

Friday, April 8 | 6 pm (Pacific)

The Graduate Theological Union is pleased to announce that Dr. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Alice Drysdale Sheffield Professor of History and Director of the Institute for Historical Studies at the University of Texas, Austin, will be presenting the 2022 Surjit Singh Lecture entitled **The Virgin Mary as Warrior: Marian models of women's religious experience in colonial Latin America.**



[Learn more about Dr. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra](#)

The historiography of women's piety in Latin America usually focuses on discrimination and dominant colonial ideologies of religious passivity. Yet a study of Mariology suggests that Hebrew Bible models of Mary were not only numerous (Song of Songs, Book of Wisdom, Ruth, Judith, Yael) but deeply contradictory, creating enough room for women to gain and wield immense religious power. This talk explores these contradictions to find surprising forms of religious experience that challenge our understanding of Marianism and the power of women in Latin American colonial societies.

We hope to be able to offer an opportunity for a limited in-person audience. More details will be forthcoming as we get closer to the event.

Starting in 1991, the annual Surjit Singh Lecture in Comparative Religious Thought and Culture builds upon the GTU's tradition of ecumenical theological education and dedication to interreligious dialogue and understanding. Each year, the endowed lectureship brings to the GTU a distinguished scholar to address religion and culture from a cross-cultural perspective. Learn more about past Singh Lecturers, or view past lectures [here](#).

[Register to attend here](#)

Announcements

Professional Development Program

SPRING '22

WORKSHOPS

- Feb 9** How to search for jobs?
Facilitated by Dr. James Nati
- Feb 16** Crafting a Cover Letter
Facilitated by Dr. Mahjabeen Dhala
- March 2** Teaching Philosophy
Facilitated by Dr. Diandra Erickson
- March 16** Diversity Statement
Facilitated by Dr. Sharon Jacob
- April 6** Teaching Scholars' Luncheon
Newhall Fellows with Dr. Mary McGann
- April 20** Mock Interview
Facilitated by Dr. Henry Kuo
- May 4** Job Talk and Small Talk
Facilitated by Dr. Elizabeth Peña and Dr. Wendy Arce

All workshops will be on Zoom: 978 6840 4257, from 11 am to 12 noon.

For more information: cmotupalli@gtu.edu

Koret Fellowship '20-21 Reflections

Congratulations to the Koret Fellows of '20-21: Daniel Stein, Gideon Mbui, Lwan May Oo, Meera Tanikella, Rachelle Syed, and Zulunungsang Lemtur!

The fellows have successfully completed their project and their reflections are published in the Berkeley Journal of Theology and religion (See the Special Project):

<https://bjrt.gtu.edu/v7/>



DEAR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS:

MID-YEAR ORIENTATION

FEB 2, 2022, WED, 12 NOON - 1 PM

Zoom ID: 995 9991 5692



GTU

DialCare[®] Mental Wellness

Let's talk about mental health.

DialCare Mental Wellness is a safe, secure and private way for graduate students and staff to seek help from state-licensed mental health professionals via virtual and telephonic counseling sessions.

Our mental health professionals work with a number of conditions, and consultations are available in both English and Spanish.

HAVE YOU REGISTERED YET?

DialCare is a free mental health service for all GTU students.

Contact Chai at cmotupalli@gtu.edu if you are having difficulty registering.



Please avail free access to two popular online mental health resources: *myStrength* and *Headspace* that the City of Berkeley Mental Health Division is providing

<https://helpathandca.org/berkeley/>

ALL GTU STUDENTS:

MEET SUSIE HOGANSON

A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ON FEB 17, THURSDAY, 4 PM - 5 PM

TO SHARE YOUR IDEAS, CONCERNS, AND VISION FOR A THRIVING GTU COMMUNITY

ZOOM ID: 952 3858 9394

PS: If the meeting is in-person, those details will be shared, and you'll still have the opportunity to participate virtually.

Academic Achievements & Deadlines

Comprehensive Proposal Approved

Sung Woo Cho, REPR
Geoffrey Nelson-Blake, REPR
Sanghyun Park, THET
Henry C. Washington, IDS

Oral Comprehensive Passed

Reem Kosba, HCSR, Distinction
Raphael Mkuzi, HCSR, Distinction
Zipei Tang, REPR, Distinction
Porsia Tunzi, HCSR
Sang Pil Yun, THET, Distinction

Dissertation Successfully Defended

Uzma Husaini, HCSR
Cassie Lipowitz, CRLG
Ismael Ruiz Abaunza, ETHC

MA Capstone Defense

Sakinah Alhabshi, REPR
Bill Eldridge, THET
Jonah Gelfand, HCSR, Honors



Deadline for Submitting Dissertation Proposals

submit by **(Noon)** for March Doctoral Council is **Monday February 21, 2022**

Intent to Graduate form for Spring 2022

MA Intent to graduate form <https://forms.gle/pZAurpRcDSc2hHAa8>

PHD Intent to graduate form <https://forms.gle/vNNsKH321HHMzE8x5>

Modern Foreign Language Exam

Deadline to register for the examination is February 9, 2022

<https://forms.gle/pJh48tptqUMjzqUU6>

Student Awards

Student Travel Grants, Cycle #2

Doctoral 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. Winner 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.

We are now accepting applications for Cycle #2 Student Travel Grants for meetings occurring between **February 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022**, the deadline is **February 15, 2022, 11:59PM**.

For more information see: <https://www.gtu.edu/student-travel-grants>

To apply, submit a completed [GTU Student Travel Grant Application Form](#)



Library News

Happy Beginning of the Semester from the Library!

Select Pacific and Asian American Center for Theology and Strategies (PACTS) Publications Available Online



GTU's Special Collections and Archives has uploaded a selection of publications from the Pacific and Asian American Center for Theology and Strategies (PACTS) Collection to one of our online sites:

<https://bit.ly/32i8ZXE>

The content includes newsletters, journals, and a reader. Issues and topics vary. Some are denominational in focus. Other articles discuss issues within an ethnic community. Some focus on a particular subject, such as women or aging. Liberation theology is often at the forefront of discussions. Operating from 1973 to 2002, the Center was a vital institution, advocating awareness and actions on religious and cultural issues for Pacific and Asian Americans.

David Stiver
Special Collections Librarian

Access Library Resources from Anywhere

If you haven't used the library in a while, we have two new orientation videos available on our workshop page. One is if you are in the Bay Area and will be coming in the building or using our curbside pickup service, and the other is if you are at a distance and will be using our library online.

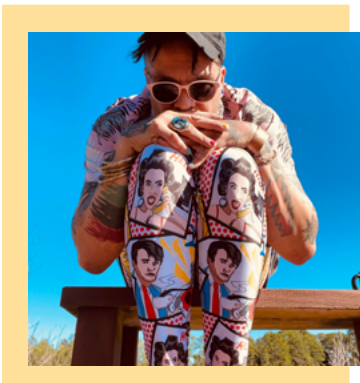
<https://www.gtu.edu/library/get-help/library-workshops>

Do you have research questions or need help logging in? We are continuing our popular Ask-a-librarian chat service, which is linked from the library website, every Moodle page, and in our guides and tutorials. Chat is available on weekdays from 9am-4pm (Pacific). We still have in-person reference, phone reference, video appointments, and our email library@gtu.edu, but both students and faculty love to chat with us.

Local students: Love the library? Want to work with us? We are embarking on a large digitization project and need student help to box and move materials around. Consider applying to be a Collection Management Assistant: <https://www.gtu.edu/about/employment>

Student Spotlights

Every month, the Dean’s Newsletter will feature a selection of incoming students representing a range of GTU departments. Welcome to all!



Lenny Duncan

PhD Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

Lenny Duncan. they/them/jawn. Writer. Witness. Agitator. Ordained in the ELCA. Chaplain to the revolution in PDX. Esoteric Stranger. Probably more queer than you think. PRX Podcaster for Ben and Jerry’s. Baba Awo. Here to study Black esoterica as resistance. Here for liberation. Here for counter system building. Here for abolition. Jesus optional.

Palenapa Mataafa

PhD Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

It is my pleasure to meet new scholars from various cultural backgrounds. Being part of this learning environment will create new learning experiences. I am Palenapa Mataafa from American Samoa. My area of interest falls under Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion with a concentration on the history of Christianity.



Hanitra Ralaiarisedy

MA Theology and Ethics

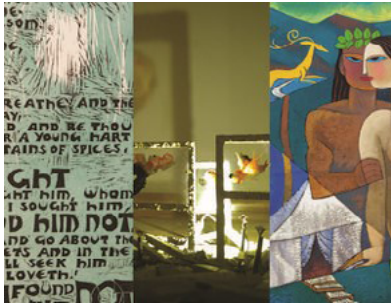
Hanitra enjoys creating new paths for exploration while planting her feet across countries and continents. Rooted in Christian unity, she positions her consulting work at the intersection of Theology, Ethics, Business Strategy and Innovation in a multicultural setting. Hanitra authored *The Shift: Choose Life, Self-Knowledge Follows* (Wipf and Stock, 2020).



Center for the Arts and Religion

“Draw me after you”: A Visual Song of Songs

Doug Adams Gallery ONLINE, Tuesday, February 1, 2022



An exhibition of artwork inspired by The Song of Songs, the third and final megillah (scroll) in the Ketuvim, or "Writings," of the Hebrew Bible. With work by artists Hedi Bak, James (Qi) He, and Shirin Khalatbari, this multi-media exhibition explores the long-lasting impact the sensual poetry of the Song continues to exert on contemporary art.

[Learn more](#)

CARe Spring 2022 exhibition opening celebration!

Thursday, February 10 | 5-5:30 pm (Pacific)

Join CARe on Zoom to celebrate the opening of our very first Doug Adams Gallery ONLINE exhibition, Draw me after you: a virtual Song of Songs. Bring a beverage of your choice to raise a toast to the start of a new semester! [Register here](#)

The Broken Mishkan: Creativity, Healing, and the Journey in between

Tuesday, February 8 | 1-2 pm (Pacific)

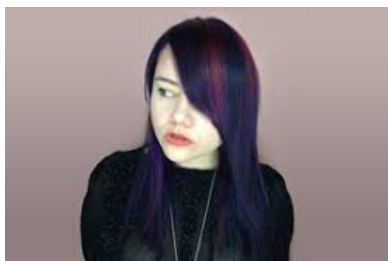
Join CARe and the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies (CJS) for a special event featuring a performance and conversation with GTU alumna Sara Nesson!

See CJS page 15 for more information. [Register for this free public event!](#)

Apocalypse and the Early Print - Art Break with Emily Pothast

Friday, February 25 | 12-1 pm (Pacific)

Join CARe online for an Art Break with GTU Art & Religion PhD Student Emily Pothast! Emily will be talking about her recent work.



Among the most popular and riveting subjects to issue from the print shops of the late 15th and early 16th century were illustrations of scenes from the Book of Revelation. This presentation will trace the early modern reception of Revelation through the development of these printed apocalypses, with attention to how they helped shape politics and faith before, during, and after the Reformation.

[Register here](#)

Madrasa-Midrasha Program

Wednesday, February 16 | 12 pm (Pacific)




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

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

Art & Creativity in Spiritual Care / Chaplaincy

WEDNESDAY, FEB 16TH, 12PM PT




TAQWA SURAPATI
Stanford Health Care



AMY SHOEMAKER
Stanford Health Care

Join us for this special Madrasa-Midrasha Program webinar that focuses on how local Chaplains use art and creativity in their work.

FOR MORE INFO AND TO REGISTER VISIT: [GTU.EDU/EVENTS/MADRASA-MIDRASHA-ART-CREATIVITY-SPIRITUAL-CARE-CHAPLAINCY](https://gtu.edu/events/madrasha-midrasha-art-creativity-spiritual-care-chaplaincy)




MIA TRACHTENBERG
GTU Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies



SAKINAH ALHABSHI
GTU Center for Islamic Studies and Interreligious Chaplaincy Program

This event is co-sponsored by:



Center for the Arts & Religion
Doug Adams Gallery



Interreligious Chaplaincy Program

Join us for a special Madrasa-Midrasha Program event on “Art & Creativity in Spiritual Care / Chaplaincy.” The event will feature local Chaplains Taqwa Surapati and Amy Shoemaker and will be led by MA students Mia Trachtenberg and Sakinah Alhabshi.

This event is a Zoom webinar co-sponsored by CARE and the Interreligious Chaplaincy Program; please visit the [event page](#) for more information and register.

Center for Islamic Studies



Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies and Director of the Madrasa-Midrasha Program Dr. Mahjabeen Dhala is giving an upcoming talk on “Preparing the Self and the Society for a Just Life” at the Congregational Church of San Mateo on Feb. 6, 2022 at 10:30 am. For more information please contact Sheryl Johnson at sjohnson@ses.gtu.edu.

Congratulations to Dr. Dhala for recent presentations:

“Bound by Justice: Raising Social Ethical Consciousness in the Sermon of Fatima” at the Society for the Study of Muslim Ethics Annual Conference in January.

“The Multi-Dimensional Aspects of Ashura” through the Project of Shi’ism and Global Affairs at Harvard University’s Weatherhead Center for International Affairs in December.

Congratulations to the following students on their academic achievements:

Sakinah Alhabshi defended her MA Capstone Thesis with Honors

Uzma Husaini defended her PhD dissertation

Reem Kosba passed her Comprehensive Exams with Distinction

Congratulations to Dr. Munir Jiwa

Dr. Munir Jiwa is a [Visiting Scholar in Global Studies at Stanford University’s Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies](#), while on sabbatical from the GTU January through June 2022.

For CIS related questions and information, please contact Matthew Hartman: mhartman@gtu.edu

CIS Upcoming Events

CIS is delighted to share that Dr. Sulaiman Mappiasse, a Fulbright Scholar from Indonesia at CIS/GTU, will present his research, “Trends and Issues in Interreligious Education in Indonesia,” as part of the [Islamic Studies @ GTU](#) gathering on Friday, February 25 | 4 pm (PST)

For Zoom information, email Matthew Hartman: mhartman@gtu.edu

CIS is delighted to be hosting student-led events during Black History Month and beyond. Please visit the CIS webpage for more information at: <https://www.gtu.edu/centers/cis>

Center for Jewish Studies

The Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies

CJS is pleased to present the following events in the coming Spring 2022 semester:

Tuesday, February 8 | 1-2 pm (Pacific)



Join the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies (CJS) and CARE for a special event featuring a performance and conversation with GTU alumna **Sara Nesson!** [Dr. Deena Aranoff](#), Director of CJS & Senior Lecturer in Medieval Jewish Studies, will open with an introduction.

Sara Nesson is an artist, writer, and actress who learned to draw after being diagnosed with a chronic illness. A lifelong creative, she has led Taizé candlelight services in churches, performed with A Traveling Jewish Theatre, mentored Jewish teenagers, and traversed the United States as a travel writer. [Learn more about Sara](#) and [watch a trailer for the show.](#)

[Please see the event page for more info and registration link for this webinar.](#)

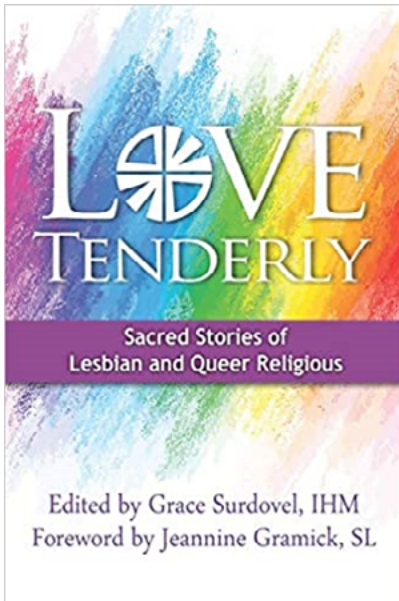
Tuesday, March | 1-2 pm (Pacific)

Join CJS for a conversation between author (and CJS alum!) Angela Botelho and CJS Director Deena Aranoff about Botelho's new book *German Jews and the Persistence of Jewish Identity in Conversion: Writing the Jewish Self*.

[Please see the event page for more info and registration link for this webinar.](#)



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



A CLGS Lavender Lunch with Sister Grace Surdovel, IHM

Love Tenderly: Sacred Stories of Lesbian and Queer Religious

Tuesday, February 8 | 12:15-1:15 pm (Pacific) | Online

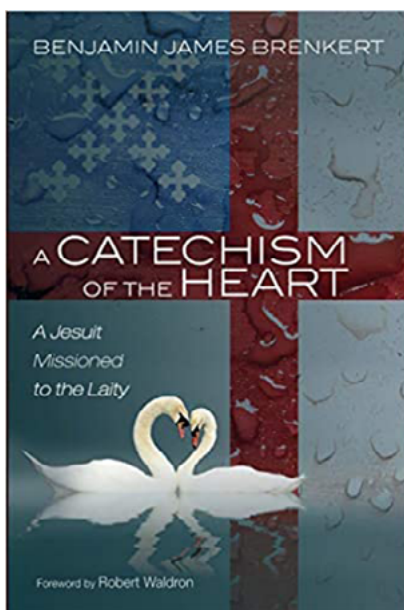
[Join via Zoom](#)

A CLGS Jewish Queeries Series event with Rabbi Erik Uriarte and Rae Antonoff

Jewish Views of Polyamory

Thursday, February 17 | 1:00-2:15 pm (Pacific) | Online

[Join via Zoom](#)



A CLGS Lavender Lunch with Benjamin Brenkert

The Future Church for LGBTQ+ People and Their Allies

Tuesday, February 22 | 12:15-1:15 pm (Pacific) | Online

[Join via Zoom](#)



Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences

Robert Russell's 40-Years of Leadership, Welcomes Dr. Braden Molhoek as New Director



The Graduate Theological Union is pleased to celebrate 40 years of visionary leadership from Dr. Robert Russell, who recently announced his retirement as Ian G. Barbour Professor of Theology and Science and Director of the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (CTNS). Dr. Russell will conclude his tenure on June 30, 2022.

“Over the past 40 years, Dr. Russell has paved the way for scholars around the world working at the intersection of science and theology. By establishing CTNS and growing it into what it is today, Dr. Russell leaves a living legacy, which will, no doubt, continue to advance innovative scholarship for decades to come,” said Dr. Elizabeth Peña, Interim Dean and VP for Academic Affairs.

Looking ahead, CTNS is proud to welcome Dr. Braden Molhoek as the next Director of CTNS and Ian G. Barbour Assistant Professor of Theology, Science, Ethics, and Technology.



Dr. Molhoek joined the CTNS staff in 2005, during the first year of his doctoral work at the GTU. After earning his PhD at the GTU in Ethics and Social Theory in 2016, Dr. Molhoek became a GTU rostered faculty member and a lecturer in Science, Technology, and Ethics; he also taught courses on software and bioengineering ethics in the School of Engineering at Santa Clara University. He played a key role in CTNS becoming an Academic Center at the GTU in 2016.

Berkeley Journal of Religion & Theology (BJRT)

The BJRT is pleased to present Volume 7, Issue 1, published in December 2021!



The issue once again contains important contributions from scholars and students working at the intersection of religious and theological studies, including:

Dr. Eduardo Fernández's 2020 Distinguished Faculty Lecture

Dr. Jacob Olupona's 2020 Surjit Singh Lecture

Dr. Kathryn Barush's 2021 Reading of the Sacred Texts Lecture

Dr. Devin Zuber's 2021 Borsch-Rast Lecture

Articles from Maddie LaForge, Jaesung Ryu, Kevin Sneed, and Ronald Boyer

Special Project from various Koret Fellowship student scholars

Three Book Reviews



The BJRT is now accepting article submissions and book review requests for Volume 8, to be published in 2022. Please visit our website at bjrt.gtu.edu for more information, as well as the BJRT Style Guide. This is a great way to gain experience with an academic journal, convert a term paper or writing project into a published article, and contribute to the discourse of current scholarship in your field by writing a book review.

The deadline for publishing consideration in Volume 8 is March 1st; however, the BJRT accepts submissions on a rolling basis for future consideration.

Additionally, the BJRT is looking for candidates to serve in various roles including Copy Editor, Department Editor, and on the Peer Review Board. If interested, please send an email to bjrt@ses.gtu.edu.



The GTU Dean's Office wishes you a Happy Lunar New Year!!



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
Sabrina Kennedy, Executive Assistant to the Interim Dean

Graduate Theological Union Office of the Dean

2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709
www.gtu.edu | 510-649-2442