

# GTU DEAN'S NEWSLETTER



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At the start of this new academic year, we also launch our celebration of the GTU's 60th Anniversary. In the months ahead, we will be reflecting on the truly radical vision that went into forming the GTU and celebrate our history of groundbreaking interdisciplinary and interreligious scholarship. But we won't only look back. We will also look ahead.

On the evening of August 25, our community gathered (in person!) to begin this year of celebration. Four former GTU deans, Judith Berling, Margaret Miles, Arthur Holder, and Uriah Kim, brought remarks and offered words of wisdom and welcome as I step into the dean's office. I was asked to offer the closing remarks and to focus on the vision for the GTU's next 60 years. What follows is a shortened version of my address that night.

To paraphrase Samuel Goldwyn, only a fool would predict the future! But what we can predict is that whatever the future holds, what we do now is actively shaping what will be. The great historian Howard Zinn pointed this out so beautifully nearly twenty years ago in a September 2004 issue of *The Nation*:

If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory.

The celebration of our sixtieth anniversary is our way of remembering where the people in our past have behaved magnificently. Even more so, it is a charge to us to muster the energy to act magnificently as well—as together we take small steps to send this spinning top of our world in a different, a better, direction. Not for us—and this is the part that might be easy to miss—rather, for the beloved ones to come who will gather for the 120th anniversary celebration of the GTU.

Indeed, we are called today to be good ancestors. Public philosopher Roman Krznarick in his book *The Good Ancestor*, writes that the “tyranny of now” and “short-term thinking must be corrected with long-term thinking.” Long-term thinking can be fostered through an awareness of what he calls “deep time” or “cosmic time,” which is to say time beyond us, or to say it slightly differently, time beyond us.

In this moment now, yes, we – you beautiful people – are the GTU. And those who went before us, our beautiful GTU ancestors, are the GTU. And when we reach that 120th anniversary, they too, those beautiful ones yet unknown to us, are the GTU. What we do now is shaping their present moment. So, I say, let us live now as we think the GTU should live, as good ancestors, in defiance of all that is bad around us. And let's do it magnificently.

*Jennifer W. Davidson, PhD*

*Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs*

# GTU REACCREDITATION

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For the next two years, the GTU will be engaged in reaccreditation processes with both of our accrediting agencies. This year, we are preparing a self-study report for the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) in preparation for their visit in October 2023. Then we will get to work on another report for the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) prior to their visit in March 2024.

Accreditation is very important to a school for many reasons. Because we are accredited, GTU MA and doctoral students are eligible for federal student aid, and credits earned here are easily transferable to other institutions. Beyond those practicalities, accreditation is a valuable means of quality control and continual improvement.

Especially in a time of rapid change throughout higher education, it is essential for the GTU to focus on learning outcomes, student success, and our institutional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The entire GTU community is invited to participate in this intensive process of self-evaluation. Leading this effort is the Reaccreditation Steering Committee: Dean Jennifer Davidson, Joshua Garcia (PhD student), Heidi Hadsell (trustee), Arthur Holder (accreditation liaison officer), and Naw San Dee KD (staff). They will facilitate two online Community Forums to be held on Zoom:

## **Academic Programs and Student Success**

**Tuesday, September 20 | 12:30-1:30 pm**

## **Institutional Context, Sustainability, and the Changing Higher Education Environment**

**Thursday, September 29 | 12:30-1:30 pm**

In the coming weeks, all GTU students, staff, and faculty will receive a copy of the draft WSCUC report by email, along with a link to the Zoom meetings. Please mark your calendars for these two forums and plan to add your voice to the ongoing conversation.

## 2022 47th GTU Distinguished Faculty Lecture: Dr. Richard Payne

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*Tuesday, November 15 | 6pm (Pacific) | Online Event*



Dr. Richard Payne will present the 47th Annual Distinguished Faculty Lecture titled, “From Ritual to Religion: The Consequences of Taking Nondualism Seriously” on November 15, 2022, at 6:00 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.

Dr. Richard K. Payne is the Chair of IBS Publications Committee and is also the Buddhism and Contemporary Psychology Certificate Program Director at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and is a member of the Core Doctoral Faculty.

During his dissertation research into tantric fire ritual (Skt. *homa*, Jpn. *goma*) on Mt. Kōya in Japan, Payne also completed training as a Shingon priest (*ajari*). Clustering around his core research program on tantric ritual are broader theoretical concerns about the conduct of such research. This includes the study of ritual across cultural boundaries and over long durations, and the use of language in tantric Buddhist ritual. He is co-editor with Georgios Halkias of the Oxford Research Encyclopedia/Religion/Buddhism, and with Glen Hayes is co-editing The Oxford Handbook of Tantric Studies.

[Register to attend here](#)

# Announcements

*Professional Development Program*

## FALL '22

### WORKSHOPS

<b>Sep</b>	<b>7</b>	Excellence in Academic Writing <i>Facilitated by Dr. Ashley Bacchi</i>
	<b>21</b>	Doctoral Council <i>Facilitated by Dr. Kathryn Barush &amp; Charissa Jaeger-Sanders</i>
<b>Oct</b>	<b>5</b>	Comprehensive Exams <i>Facilitated by a Student Panel</i>
	<b>19</b>	Newhall Fellowships <i>Facilitated by Dr. Diandra Erickson</i>
<b>Nov</b>	<b>2</b>	How to Prepare Conference Presentations? <i>Facilitated by Dr. Scott MacDougall</i>
	<b>16</b>	Networking <i>Facilitated by Payson Johnston CEO, Crowdz</i>
<b>Dec</b>	<b>7</b>	Dissertation Writing and Dissertation Defense <i>Facilitated by Dr. Arthur Holder and Dr. Wendy Arce</i>

**All workshops will be on Zoom: 999 1525 1254,  
from 10 to 11 am.**  
For more information: [cmotupalli@gtu.edu](mailto:cmotupalli@gtu.edu)

SEPTEMBER PDP WORKSHOPS

GTU  
*Professional Development Program*  
**Excellence in Academic Writing**  
*Facilitated by Dr. Ashley Bacchi*  
Sep 7, Wednesday, 10 - 11 am  
ZOOM ID: 999 1525 1254

**Doctoral Council**  
*Facilitated by Dr. Kathryn Barush & Charissa Jaeger-Sanders*  
Sep 21, Wednesday, 10 - 11 am  
ZOOM ID: 999 1525 1254  
RSVP: [cmotupalli@gtu.edu](mailto:cmotupalli@gtu.edu)

MEDICAL INSURANCE

**COVERED CALIFORNIA****Attn: Incoming Students**

If you are moving from out of state to California, you are eligible to apply for medical insurance through Covered California. Please check out the website: [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com)

You may also contact Christiane Broner, a local insurance agent, at [christianebroner@gmail.com](mailto:christianebroner@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

More questions? Contact: [cmotupalli@gtu.edu](mailto:cmotupalli@gtu.edu)

# GTU Welcome Reception

***Wednesday, September 21 | 4 pm (Pacific) | Online***

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

Join Zoom Meeting <https://gtu.zoom.us/j/92964592336>

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 a virtual GTU Welcome Reception.

Dean Dr. Jennifer W. Davidson will present a brief program introducing new faculty and visiting scholars and an opportunity to socialize together!

**Bring your beverage of choice for a toast!**

# Academic Achievements & Deadlines

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## *MA Capstone Defense*

Austin Keith, IBS  
Morris Alexander Lipsett, HCSR, Honors  
Elvira (Bat Sheva) Miller, Jewish Studies

## *Comprehensive Proposal Approved*

John Roderick Heller, HCSR  
Carmelo B. Sorita, SATX

## *Oral Comprehensive Examination Passed*

Wan-Ting Tsai, REPR  
Abraham Addam, HCSR, Distinction  
Hyung-Joo Lee, THET, Distinction  
Erika Katske, THET, Distinction

## *Advanced to Candidacy*

Porsia Tunzi, HCSR

## *Dissertation Successfully Defended*

Laura Jean Torgerson, IDS  
Matata Mukengeshayi, HCSR  
May T. Kosba, HCSR  
Loretta E. Johnson, THEO



**Deadline for submitting dissertation proposals by (Noon) for October's Doctoral Council Meeting Monday, September 26**

## Modern Language Exam

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*Wednesday, September 28 | 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 Fredonia Thompson, [ftompson@gtu.edu](mailto:ftompson@gtu.edu) Academic Programs Coordinator, 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 14, 2022**

**[Register Here](#)**

# Fall 2022 Student Awards

## Newhall Fellowship

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*Applications due Friday, November 11 | 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 Thursday, 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 15 | 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 "Religion and Economics"

[Learn more](#)



## Student Spotlights

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



### Euta Asifoa

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MA Sacred Texts and Their Interpretation

I was born in American Samoa. Lived there my whole life. I am the youngest out of nine, happily married with three kids. My grandfather was a minister in Samoa. I believe fellowship is the best medicine in the world..



### Geonyul Byeon

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PhD Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

Geonyul Byeon is a Korean international student. He served as a pastor in The Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, and now he serves churches in Disciples of Christ in the US. He studied Minjung theology and Process theology before and wants to explore how art enlivens churches and Christianity in our time at GTU.



### Jibreel Delgado

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PhD Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

I am a PhD student affiliated with the Center for the Arts & Religion as well as the Center for Islamic Studies. After growing up in the Manhattan metropolitan area, I lived for several years in the Tampa Bay area in Florida, Baja Arizona, and on the Anatolian Side of Istanbul. I hold a Bachelor's in Creative Writing, a Master's in Near Eastern Studies, and my doctoral research is on religion and literature in the Americas and in the greater Mediterranean region.



### **Marcie Gibson**

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PhD Religion and Practice

I am a diaconal minister with the United Church of Canada, coming from Hamilton, Ontario. I am passionate about social justice and theological education program design. I currently teach in a program called Diaconal Ministries: Studies in Transformation and Action, and research equity in ministry for the UCCan.



### **Chandrakant P. Giri, PhD**

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MA Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion

I earned my Ph.D. in molecular genetics from Georgetown U, Washington, DC, in 1978, and a postgraduate diploma from the U of Edinburgh, Scotland, U.K., in philosophy, science, and religion, in 2020. I had been a tenured Research Microbiologist with the FDA/NIH. Also, I have been an initiated devotee with the ISKCON and have been teaching online Gaudiya Vaishnava scriptures/philosophy for the past ~25 years. Because of my unique background in science and Hindu scriptures and philosophy, I have developed a hypothesis on the epigenetics of bhakti traditions. I aim to place this hypothesis in the academic domain and eventually publish a book. To complement my credential in science, I have decided to earn graduate degrees in Hindu theology and science even at the age of 78.

# From the Library

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## Library News and Updates

Welcome to the new school year! There have been a lot of changes at the library, as we are near the end of a large collection move and mid-way through a digitization project. The lower level (Level 1) is closed for the first part of the Fall Semester. You will still have full access to level 2, where the reference desk, circulation desk, the reference collection and current periodicals are located.

Some things to know:

1. All items located on Level 1 can be requested, with next-day (or sometime same-day) availability. To request an item, find it in the online catalog and use the red request button to put it on hold. A member of our staff will pull the item for you. If you haven't been in the library in a while, consider attending the make-up orientation (info below) or view the recording.
2. The Exegesis collection (biblical commentaries) have been merged with the reference materials. So now you'll find the commentaries located with the bible dictionaries, concordances, and encyclopedias, instead of on their own. There are additional copies you can request from Level 1 for checkout. And we have online subscriptions to more of the Exegesis collection than ever before! Consider attending one of the Exegesis workshops if this is an area of study for you
3. We are moving collections around to prepare for our late Fall re-opening of Level 1. If you need help finding something, ask a librarian either in person or on chat. We are looking forward to you seeing the newly re-arranged collections in the building, and next year we will have much more of our collection available online for you to read from anywhere. Items that are part of the digitization project are listed in the catalog as temporarily unavailable until the scanning is complete. If you need one of these items, ask a librarian- we can find an available copy for you.
4. **Access to UC-Berkeley libraries:** UC-Berkeley libraries have all reopened, so all GTU consortia students, faculty, and staff have access to the 11 million items in their libraries. See their website for locations, hours, and catalog: <https://www.lib.berkeley.edu/> To set up your card, visit the privileges desk in Doe Library on a weekday afternoon with your proof of GTU enrollment, such as your GTU ID card or class schedule. They will make you a library card, and you can check out materials. For electronic items (such as journal articles and eBooks), visit any public access computer on their campus. Please note, we do not provide interlibrary loan services for local patrons for items that are available from UC-Berkeley, and there is no delivery service between the libraries. Chat with us if you have questions.

### **Ask-a-librarian:**

Chat Hours: 9am –4pm on Weekdays. (or email [library@gtu.edu](mailto:library@gtu.edu))

In Person at the Reference Desk: 9 am –4 pm Monday-Thursday

Librarians are also available by appointment, in person, or online.

### **Building Hours:**

9am –6pm Monday-Thursday & 9 am –5 pm Fridays

Hours will vary during holidays and reading week.

### **September Library Workshops**

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**Zotero** in-person - Wednesday 09/14 at 2-3 pm (in the Collaborative Learning Space)

**Make-up Orientation** online - Thursday, 09/15 at 10-11 am (in zoom room 895-3193-9975)

**Biblical Exegesis** online - Monday 09/19 at 11 am -12 noon (in zoom room 510-649-2501)

**Zotero** online – Tuesday 09/20 at 3-4 pm (in zoom room 898-3670-5703)

**Zotero** online – Thursday 09/22 at 3-4 pm (in zoom room 898-3670-5703)

**Zotero** in-person - Wednesday 09/28 at 1-2 PM (in the Collaborative Learning Space)

**Biblical Exegesis** in person – Wednesday 10/05 at 2-3 pm (in the Collaborative Learning Space)

No RSVP required! All times listed are Pacific. If you can't make these, check out our pre-recorded workshops on the library website. <https://www.gtu.edu/library/get-help/library-workshops>

**What's Zotero?** Zotero is a free citation management tool that will keep track of your research and create bibliographies for you in thousands of citation styles. This software is highly recommended for PhD, MA, and other academic programs. You can learn how to use it in less than an hour, and it will save you hours of time every time you write a paper. When you are turning that paper into an article, a click will reformat all your citations into the journal's citation style.

# Early GTU Newsletters Available Online

Three more sets of newsletters and publications from GTU's Special Collections and Archives have been uploaded to one of our online sites: <https://bit.ly/3QNzPuy>. These join the publications from the Center for Women and Religion and the Pacific and Asian American Center for Theology and Strategies.

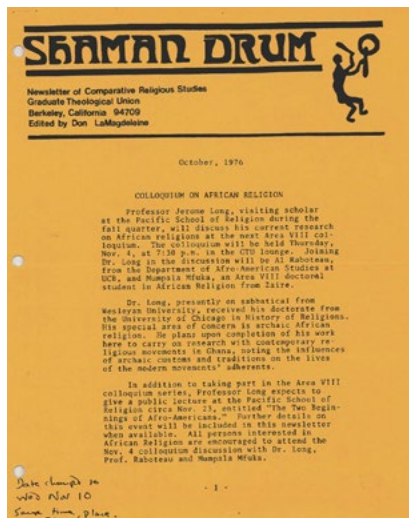


The first set is one of the earliest student publications, The Advocate, part of the Student Activities collection. The paper ran from 1969 through 1970 and was acknowledged by the Religion Editor of Time Magazine. The contents are an intense mixture of Holy Hill activities, Vietnam protests, ecology, and popular culture.

The Center for the Study of New Religions published only three issues of the newsletter, aimed at publicizing its work. Jacob Needleman, the director, writes: "These issues pass beyond the limits of merely academic interest, important though they are from that aspect. What we are dealing with is a key component in the cultural crisis through which American civilization is currently passing."

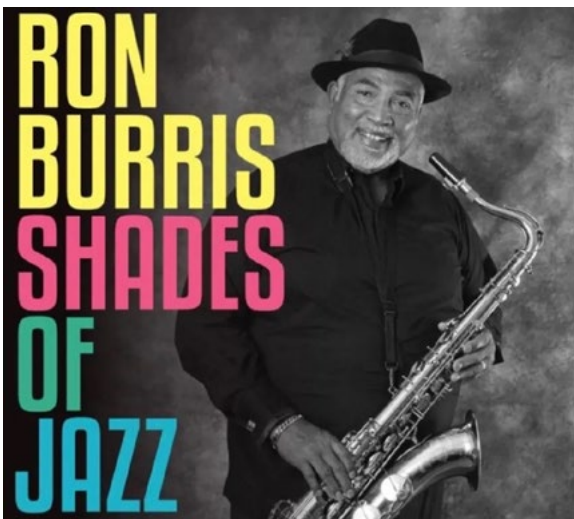
The final newsletters came from the Office of the Programs of Comparative Religions. First called Shaman's Drum (1975-1983) and then OPCR (1985-1989), the newsletters promoted people and an amazing number of activities related to what was GTU's Area VIII, the History and Phenomenology of Religion. This upload was made possible through the help of Charly Stoehr, a summer intern from the University of Denver's MLIS program, who distilled the metadata for the publications.

David Stiver  
Special Collections Librarian



## Center for the Arts and Religion

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### Jazz Break with the Dr. Ronald Burris Quartet

Thursday, September 22 | 6-7 pm (Pacific)

Outside the Hewlett Building, 2400 Ridge Rd.

Dr. Ronald Burris, Associate Professor of Church History at Berkeley School of Theology, will be playing live jazz for us with his quartet outside the Hewlett Building!

Vallejo-born saxophonist Ron Burris started playing sax at an early age and continued playing through high school when he joined a band called Project Soul, which later became super group Con Funk Shun. Ron's early years were filled with the great R&B singers and groups of his day, as well as inspiration from his family as his sister Barbara (Bobbie) sang in the church choir and his mother would sing hymns daily around the house. With a solid background in R&B and sprinkles of gospel, Ron went on to major in Music at U.C Davis. He graduated with a B.A. in Music and followed up with a teaching credential from Sonoma State University.

Ron taught music in the public school system for 10 years, while leading a jazz band that played throughout Vallejo and the Bay Area. It was during this time that his love for jazz fully took hold, after hearing Gene Ammons at the famed jazz club Keystone Korner in San Francisco. Ron also admired and was inspired by players like John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins for their technique, Stanley Turrentine for his soulful bluesy style, and Cannonball Adderley for his articulation, technique, and sound.

In 2019, Ron released his debut self-produced CD, Mr. Cool. A 9-tune set with 7 originals, Mr. Cool displays Ron's excellent writing, arranging, and production skills as well as his defining sound of tenor, alto and soprano saxophone.

**No need to RSVP for this free, public event** – just turn up! There will be a limited number of chairs available, as well as room to sit on the grass patio. You are welcome to bring your own blankets and low-backed folding chairs.

## Support the Arts! Become a CARE member

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Please help us re-create the CARE community! CARE has re-started our membership program following a pandemic lapse. Membership has a lot to offer for the \$100 minimum annual contribution:

- A free exhibition catalog from a past Doug Adams Gallery exhibition, plus a discount on the catalog for our forthcoming exhibition Geografías Paralelas
- Special members-only events
- Priority invitations and discounts to CARE partner events, including concerts and tours
- NARM membership, which offers reciprocal privileges at 1,231 museums and galleries across North America!

Learn more and become a member now at [www.gtu.edu/supportcare](http://www.gtu.edu/supportcare)

## 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 2022 semester!

We are excited to present a number of public events throughout the 2022-2023 academic year, made possible once again by the generous support of the Walter & Elise Haas Fund. To start things off, please join us Wednesday, September 21st at 12 pm PT for a special Madrasa-Midrasha Program event on “Emerging Scholars in Islamic & Jewish Studies.” The event will feature PhD Candidate Leah Macinskas-Le and Dr. May Kosba, who recently defended her dissertation. CJS Director Dr. Deena Aranoff and CIS Director Dr. Munir Jiwa will facilitate the discussion. This event will be hosted on Zoom; [please visit the event page](#) for more information and to register.



The poster is for an event titled "Emerging Scholars in Islamic & Jewish Studies" held on September 21st, 2022, at 12 PM PT. It lists two panelists: May Kosba, a PhD Candidate in Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion at GTU, and Leah Macinskas-Le, a PhD Candidate in Sacred Texts and Their Interpretation at GTU. Two respondents are also listed: Deena Aranoff, Director of the GTU Richard S. Diner 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. The poster includes the GTU logo, the name of the program, and a registration link: [gtu.edu/events/madrassa-midrasha-emerging-scholars-fall-2022](http://gtu.edu/events/madrassa-midrasha-emerging-scholars-fall-2022).

Be on the lookout for additional information on Madrasa-Midrasha events in November and December covering themes of mysticism in Jewish and Islamic traditions, as well as a calligraphy workshop. For more, visit the [Madrasa-Midrasha Program Events page](#).

### Madrasa-Midrasha Colloquia Series

With much enthusiasm from colleagues, the Madrasa-Midrasha Program will continue to lead the GTU-UCB series of faculty colloquia for the 2022-2023 academic year, and we are delighted to share that colloquia gatherings going forward will include faculty in Jewish Studies and Islamic Studies from Stanford University and the University of San Francisco in addition to our continued collaboration with faculty from the University of California, Berkeley.



## Center for Islamic Studies

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The Center for Islamic Studies extends a warm welcome to all new and returning students, faculty, visiting scholars and staff for the academic year 2022-2023!

We are especially grateful and delighted as the GTU celebrates 60 years and the CIS celebrates its 15th year anniversary – congratulations! We look forward to collaborative programs and events this year that highlight the many wonderful achievements of our students, alums, faculty, visiting and research scholars, staff, and our community partnerships.

We welcome your suggestions: [mhartman@gtu.edu](mailto:mhartman@gtu.edu)

**Congratulations** to David Coolidge, GTU PhD Candidate, on his publication:

“Dharma of Bhakti, Dharma of Mlecchas: *Muslim Engagement with Gaudīya Vaisnavism as a Living Tradition*,” published in the *Journal of Dharma Studies* 3, [121–130 \(2020\)](#). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42240-020-00065-z>, is being republished in the ISKON Communications Journal.

**Congratulations** to Carol Bier, CIS research scholar, on the following:

"Arts of Royalty in Sasanian Iran," public lecture for Ancient Art Council at San Francisco's Legion of Honor, 14 May 2022.

"Isfahan's Architecture Considered in Light of the Philosophy of Mulla Sadra," conference presentation for "A Light Footprint in the Cosmos," Substantial Motion Research Network at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver BC, 27 June 2022.

"Persian Velvets of the 17th Century: Symmetry, Craft, and Technology," conference presentation for 12th SIS-Symmetry Congress, Porto, Portugal, 14 July 2022 (published in *Symmetry: Art and Science* 1-4 (2022), pp. 168-75).

**Congratulations** to Huzaifa Shahbaz, CIS MA alum 2020, and former Project Coordinator for the GTU Luce Covid-19 Community Partnerships Grant 2020-2021, who will begin his doctoral work in the Politics Department at UC Santa Cruz, with a research focus on Islamophobia and US politics. Congratulations also on the publication of Huzaifa's national report on Muslim Civil Rights while Senior Researcher at the Council for American Islamic Relations:

<https://www.cair.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Still-Suspect-Report-2022.pdf>

**Congratulations** to our amazing Islamic Studies graduates on their incredible achievements:

**Sakinah Alhabshi** (MA with Honors, Spring 2022), thesis title, *Spiritual Wellbeing and Resilience During a Prolonged Crisis: An Analysis and Integration of Contemplation-based and Action-based Practices from an Islamic Perspective*.

**Dr. Uzma Husaini** (PhD, Spring 2022), dissertation title, *The Centrality of the Link Transmission (Isnād), Both Oral and Written, in the Preservation of Qur'anic Orthoepy, Orthography, and Variant Readings and Recensions*.

**Dr. May Kosba** (PhD, Fall 2022), dissertation title, *The Race Question: Egyptian Intellectualism on the Periphery of the African Diaspora*.

Congratulations to the graduates and their families, friends, and communities. We celebrate and commend the graduates for their scholarly excellence, for the wonderful and diverse ways they are advancing the work of the Center for Islamic Studies and the GTU, and for their important leadership roles in bridging academia with the larger public. We also gratefully acknowledge the faculty who served on these thesis and dissertation committees and to the staff for their support.

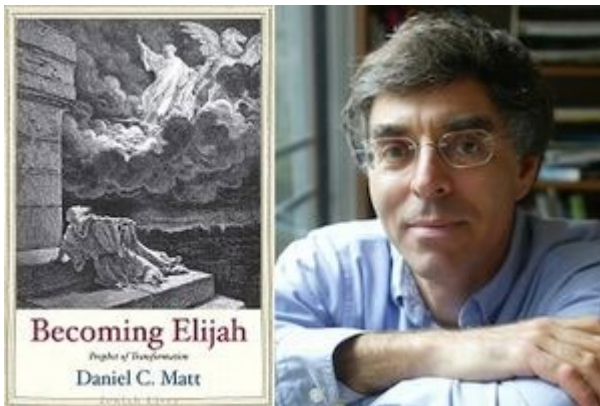
The CIS congratulates and celebrates **Dr. May Kosba**, who is a **Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Program in African Studies** at Princeton University. This is an extraordinary accomplishment and we are so proud of Dr. Kosba and wish her every success at Princeton! <https://piirs.princeton.edu/people/visiting-scholars?page=1>

## 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 in kicking off the Fall 2022 semester with two programs on **Thursday, September 8:**

**Student Welcome Lunch** – Join CJS in celebrating the return of students for the beginning of a new academic year with a light vegetarian lunch and refreshments. We will gather at 12:30pm PT on the West Side Landing (on Scenic Rd.) outside the GTU Library. We look forward to celebrating together!



### **“Becoming Elijah: Prophet of Transformation”**

Later that day, join us in the GTU Dinner Board Room for a talk with former GTU professor, and current GTU Scholar in Residence, Dr. Daniel C. Matt. Dr. Matt will speak about his new book *Becoming Elijah: Prophet of Transformation* (Yale University Press, 2022). The book explores the zealot-turned-compassionate hero, tracing how Elijah develops from the Bible to Rabbinic Judaism, Kabbalah, and Jewish ritual (as well as Christianity and Islam).

This event will be held in-person, and attendance will be limited. [Please register in advance here.](#)

## Friedman-Lowenthal Essay Prize

CJS is delighted to announce a call for submissions for the [Friedman-Lowenthal Essay Prize](#). The prize awards \$1,000, or part thereof, to author of a winning essay in the field of Jewish studies. First and second prize may be awarded. Essays will be evaluated for academic excellence, writing style, persuasiveness, as well as originality of ideas.

Essays eligible for consideration are those authored by CJS graduates and current CJS students (MA, PhD, certificate). GTU member school students enrolled in a CJS course in the spring of 2022 as well as fall of 2022 are also eligible. Essays should be a minimum of ten pages and may not exceed twenty-five pages.

Essays must be submitted by **Monday, December 19th** to CJS Director Dr. Deena Aranoff ([daranoff@gtu.edu](mailto:daranoff@gtu.edu)).

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

A CLGS Jewish Queeries Series event with Rabbi Dr. Jay Michaelson and Professor Naomi Seidman



**The Queernesses of Jewish Heresy: Sabbetai Zevi, Jacob Frank, and the Eros of Hasidism**

Thursday, September 8 | 1:00-2:15 pm (Pacific) | Online [Register Here](#)



**A CLGS Lavender Lunch with Maij Mai**

**Decolonizing Spiritual/Faith-Based Exploration and Formation**

Tuesday, September 13 | 12:15- 1:15 pm (Pacific) | Online

[Register Here](#)

**A CLGS Book Launch with Rabbi Jane Rachel Litman and Rev. Jakob Hero-Shaw**

*Out of the Closet and Into the Libraries: Book Launch for *Liberating Gender for Jews and Allies: The Wisdom of Transkeit**

Sunday, September 18 | 6:00-7:30 pm (Pacific) | Online

[Register Here](#)

**A CLGS Queer & Latinx Faith Conversation with Manuel Frank-Lampon and Rev. Dr. Carla Roland Guzmán**



**Queering Pre-Marital Counseling**

Thursday, September 22 | 1:00-2:15 pm (Pacific) | Online

[Register Here](#)

## Women's Studies in Religion

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### **The WSR Program Welcomes New and Returning Students to the GTU!**

The program for Women's Studies in Religion affirms the Graduate Theological Union's long-standing commitment to women's studies in theology and religion. It builds upon the network of academic and community centers, as well as initiatives established by GTU member schools and affiliates, for the study and support of women in religion. The program recognizes the innovative work contributed by women faculty in theological and religious disciplines.

### **WSR Welcomes Dr. Mahjabeen Dhala as 2022-23 WSR Faculty Chair!**

For INTERESTED STUDENTS:

Explore the WSR Certificate Program on the GTU Website found under Schools and Centers/ Programs and Initiatives. There you will find the following information and more!

**Program Info:** Discover program specifics and meet faculty and student members of the Steering Committee: <https://www.gtu.edu/projects/wsr/womens-studies-about-program>

**Certificate Requirements:** Learn what is involved in pursuing the WSR Certificate and how to apply here: <https://www.gtu.edu/centersandaffiliates/womensstudies/certificate>

**Resources and Suggested Courses for the Certificate:** Explore resources and forms to become involved. Each semester a list of suggested courses is available that will fulfill certificate requirements: <https://www.gtu.edu/projects/wsr/womens-studies-resources-and-suggested-courses>

### **WSR Sponsored Programs:**

**WSR Associated Faculty Mentoring Night:** Mark your calendars for **Oct. 20th from 5:30-7:00pm in the Dinner Boardroom!** Meet the Associated Faculty of WSR to engage in dialogue on various issues related to women in religion and academia. Learn helpful skills to be successful in reaching your goals at the GTU.

**WSR SPEAKS:** WSR Speaks is a lunchtime program that is offered regularly to engage women scholars and their work in a relaxed and personal way. Scholars' presentations involve sharing recent research, passionate areas, and publications. Students engage through a question and answer period. To watch lectures from the 2021/22 WSR Speaks Series follow the link: <https://www.gtu.edu/wsr-speaks-lectures-2021-2022>

**Contact Information:** Interested students contact the WSR Program Coordinator for more information or to be added to the WSR email list. Diane Saunders at [wsr@ses.gtu.edu](mailto:wsr@ses.gtu.edu).

## Church Divinity School of the Pacific

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# Developing Faithful Leaders for Public Life

BAY AREA  
ORGANIZING  
COMMITTEEONE-DAY  
ORGANIZING TRAINING

Friday, September 30, 2022  
9:00am–4:30pm

*How do we cultivate congregations and institutions with the capacity to respond to the trauma we are experiencing and rebuild communities?*

Join us for a one-day training on broad-based organizing for congregational development.

### Session Topics Include:

- Building a relational culture
- Leadership in challenging times
- Understanding and addressing the pressures facing individuals and families
- A scriptural understanding of power
- The habits and practices of organizing

The training is hosted by Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP) and will be taught by senior organizers with the Industrial Areas Foundation, the nation's oldest and largest organizing network dedicated to strengthening institutions, non-partisan political action, and making democracy work. It is open to CDSP students, faculty, and staff, leaders in IAF organizations, and community members.

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Training will take place at the CDSP campus:  
**2451 Ridge Rd, Berkeley, CA 94709.**

Cost is \$25 per person, payable to CDSP.

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Please contact [bayareaiaf@gmail.com](mailto:bayareaiaf@gmail.com) to indicate your interest in attending this session and receive a registration link and logistics information.

## The Institute of Buddhist Studies

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### **Dr. Paula Arai to Join IBS Faculty: She Will Be First Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of Women and Buddhist Studies**



The Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) is pleased to announce that acclaimed scholar and author Dr. Paula Arai will be joining the faculty in January 2023 as the first Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of Women and Buddhist Studies. Dr. Arai is well known for her scholarship on women in Buddhism, in particular, her books, *“Women Living Zen”* and *“Bringing Zen Home: The Healing Heart of Japanese Women’s Rituals.”*

Dr. Arai blends a rigorous academic background with a compassionate, embodied, and person-centered approach to teaching.

“History sweeps us along in currents that rage with tumultuous whitewater -- threatening to destabilize and disorient us -- as well as nourish us with streams that inspire us to live out of our ideals,” Dr. Arai said about the announcement. “The establishment of The Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of Women and Buddhist Studies chair is an historic moment for the empowerment of women committed to the Dharma.

“I am profoundly humbled and honored to be its first steward,” she continued. “Joining the core faculty of IBS feels like a homecoming. With gratitude and enthusiasm abounding in my heart, I am committed to refining and deepening our understanding of the contributions, teachings, challenges, and triumphs of Buddhist women and look forward to working in an enriching community and environment in which we develop our wisdom, strengthen our compassion, and blossom as lotuses rising from the mud.”

In November 2020, IBS Board of Trustees formally established “The Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of Women and Buddhist Studies Endowment Fund” to support an IBS professor specializing in the academic study of women and Buddhism, particularly Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, and/or related disciplines.

[Learn More](#)

# CDF Committee Members (2022-2023)

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## *Awards Committee*

- Munir Jiwa (GTU/CIS)
- Rossano Zas Friz (JST)

## *Doctoral Council*

- Kathryn Barush (GTU/JST)
- Peter Choi (GTU/NHS)
- Student Rep Charissa Jaeger-Sanders
- Student Rep Keyona Lazenby

## *Faculty Representative to GTU Board of Trustees*

- Rita Sherma (GTU/CDS) (2020-2023)

## *Human Subjects Protocol Reviewers*

- Jerome Baggett (JST)
- Munir Jiwa (GTU/CIS)
- Mary McGann (JST)

## *Faculty Council (Class of 2022-2024)*

- Class of 2023: Jerome Baggett (JST), Ron Burris (BST), Scott MacDougall (CDSP), Susan Phillips (GTU/NCB)
- Class of 2024: Deena Aranoff (GTU/CJS), Aaron Brody (PSR), Laurie Garrett-Cobbina (SFTS), Christopher Hadley (JST)

## *Admissions Committee/Reviewers*

- HCSR: Arthur Holder (GTU), Sam Shonkoff (GTU/CJS), Devin Zuber (GTU/CSS)
- REPR: Eddie Fernández (JST), Shauna Hannan (PLTS), Ruth Meyers (CDSP)
- SATX: James Nati (JST), Matthew Thomas (DSPT)
- THET: Valerie Miles-Tribble (BST), Braden Molhoek (GTU/CTNS), Julie Rubio (JST)

## *Appointments and Review Committee*

- LeAnn Flesher (BST)
- Scott Mitchell (IBS)

## *Grievance Committee*

- Gina Hens-Piazza (JST)
- Gregory Love (SFTS)
- Anselm Ramelow (DSPT)
- Sam Park (BST) (alternate)

## *Department Chairs*

- HCSR: Kirsi Stjerna (PLTS)
- REPR: John Klentos (GTU)
- SATX: Rebecca Esterson (GTU/CSS)
- THET: Anh Tran (JST)



# Berkeley Journal of Religion and Theology

## The Journal of the Graduate Theological Union

The BJRT is currently completing the peer review process and finalizing Volume 8, which will be published by the end of 2022. Be on the lookout for publication announcements in the coming months!

The editorial team has multiple positions currently open:

**Peer Review Board** – The BJRT Peer Review Board is made up graduate students and established scholars who review articles in the Journal’s double-blind review process. Reviewers are typically assigned no more than 2 articles per volume. The Peer Review Board is comprised of volunteer positions. We are particularly in need of reviewers with expertise in Asian religions as well as reviewers with expertise in Catholic studies.

**Department Editors** – Department Editors facilitate the Peer Review process, deciding which articles to submit to reviewers based on matching research interests and expertise and coordinating communication with Peer Reviewers. Department Editors are volunteer positions.

If you are interested in any of these positions, please send an email to the BJRT at [bjrt@ses.gtu.edu](mailto:bjrt@ses.gtu.edu).



Graduate  
Theological  
Union

60 YEARS.  
*Building a better  
world since 1962*

At the turn of the century, few could have imagined the global events that would ultimately lead to the formation of the GTU 60 years later. In that extraordinary year, 1962, a landmark union was formed based on a vision of what a model of collaboration through embracing differences — rather than being divided by them — could achieve. It was a radical vision, as were other movements gaining momentum at the time, such as civil rights, gender equality, and climate justice. The GTU has been at the forefront of advancing theological engagement with these issues, remaining steadfast in its commitment to building a better world through dialogue since 1962.

Visit [gtu.edu/60years](https://gtu.edu/60years) to watch our documentary, share your memories, and explore the legacy — and future — of the GTU.

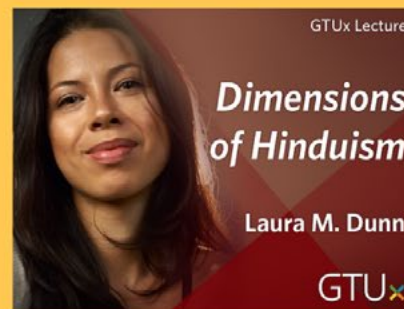


## Explore Our New GTUx Offerings at [gtux.gtu.edu](http://gtux.gtu.edu)



### Psychedelics and Religion Part I

How are scholars of religion and spiritual experience contributing to the conversation on psychedelics? In this GTUx Original, experts examine contemporary psychedelic science, social movements, and public policy, navigate the terrain of sacred plant narratives, and explore how current theoretical frameworks may inform one another.



### Dimensions of Hinduism

Dr. Laura Dunn offers an in-depth look at yoga and its historical and philosophical role in Hinduism. Citing sources from the Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, and sacred Hindu texts, Dr. Dunn details the lineages of yoga, mythical tales of divinities, yogic traditions, sacred philosophies, and practices rooted in ancient Indian practices to the creation of modern yoga.

## Coming Soon:



After the phenomenal response to the first of this pair of Originals, we are delighted to share that the hotly anticipated second installment from Dr. Sam Shonkoff and our panel of experts will be launched this September.





## 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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