IPS/SP500 Spiritual Formation in Communities  
Fall 2014

This course explores spiritual formation within three different faith communities or wisdom traditions with a focus on the specific forms of spirituality brought by instructors from each of the communities or traditions. Study of specific spiritual practices will develop the student's skills in understanding the sources and practices of spirituality in general. Research shows this is the outcome in the study of cultural diversity: the skills of understanding transfer to a variety of settings although the cultural specifics change. Students will read or otherwise become acquainted with a variety of resources from the three traditions, cultivate experiential learning by interaction with contemporary practitioners, and document their learning in modalities not restricted to academic-paper formats.

**Competencies:**
1. Define the spirituality of each community/wisdom tradition with accuracy and respect.
2. Document the environmental, cultural, and historical influences on each of the spiritualities under study.
3. Relate the spiritual principles to other aspects of the community/wisdom tradition being studied, including land-theology, law, worship, national continuity.
4. Compare and contrast spiritualities from the locations and traditions of the student's own faith commitments.
5. Demonstrate respectful communication and capacities for inter-religious dialogue in interactions of learning in the classroom.

**Weekend I: Spiritual Formation in the Muslim Tradition**
Friday - Saturday September 19/20
Dr. Seemi Ghazi

Details and Readings TBA

**Weekend II : Spiritual Formation in Indigenous Traditions**
Friday – Saturday October 17/18
Samaya Jardey, Coast Salish, Snuneymuxw First Nation

Indigenous Spirituality is complex. There are more than 600 diverse indigenous tribes across Canada and many have their own Creation story that is rooted to the land. The spirituality of the people is closely bound up with culture and ways of living/being in the world. Spiritual practice is rooted to the unique landscape of the given tribe. In this section we will explore Creation Stories, Myths, First Ancestors and the Transformer of Coast Salish people. Our discussion will focus on the sacredness of the land, and the importance of place, intention and interconnectedness. The readings, discussion and format will support students in building a foundation…a starting point of understanding Indigenous Spirituality.

**During our time together we will**
- Be welcomed to the territory & learn about the history of the place we are in
- Feast with fellow students
Reading list:


Thom, B. (2005). *Coast Salish senses of place: Dwelling, meaning, power, property and territory in the Coast Salish world*. Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D), McGill University, Montreal. Chapter 3


Assignment:
- Choice of 5 – 7 page paper or 5 – 7 pages of journaling of our time together

Weekend III: Spiritual Formation in the Jewish Tradition
Thursday – Friday November 13/14
Rabbi Laura Duhan-Kaplan

We will explore, intellectually and experientially, three key practices in Jewish spiritual formation: Shabbat rituals, Torah (Bible) study, and prayerful blessing. These have been key in forming Jewish values, communal identity, and theology. For example, Shabbat rituals ground spiritual formation in the family; Torah study teaches critical thinking; prayerful blessing teaches theology through a daily practice of gratitude.

Our studies will introduce us to three perspectives, those of (1) the practicing layperson; (2) the academic Jewish studies scholar; (3) the Kabbalistic spiritual seeker. These overlapping lenses will help us understand what is expressed through Jewish practice, and what is understood by the practitioner. In class, we will utilize lecture, large and small group discussion, personal writing, singing and experiential introduction to simple rituals. Active participation in ritual will be optional.
Reading list:


BRING WITH YOU: A copy of the Bible that includes the Hebrew Bible, any translation.

Assignment, to be completed after the course:
Write a 5-page paper exploring your personal response to a spiritual idea or practice from the course that you found moving. Other creative modalities (e.g., poetry or visual art) can be negotiated.