

## IPI5/710 (3) Encountering the Other, Fall 2021

**Instructor:** Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan-Kaplan

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**Office hours during term:** W, Th 2:00-5:00 pm & by appointment

**Purpose:** This course encourages students to identify issues in inter-faith communication, become aware of personal barriers, and develop skills for working with them. Students will be introduced to (1) critical concepts about the politics of identity and cultural complexes; (2) philosophical discussion of inner stances towards welcoming the other; and (3) practical techniques for listening and shared change. Discussions will emphasize Canadian cultural milieu, and faith-based contexts.

### **Competence Objectives:**

Drawn from the IIS program:

- Articulate theoretical perspectives on the social dynamics of identity and prejudice
- Demonstrate personal awareness of these dynamics
- Articulate and demonstrate practices and strategies for respectful communication
- Articulate tensions and respectful approaches around inter-cultural issues such as collision, appropriation, and assimilation
- Develop the ability to strategize and plan in the areas of conflict resolution and inter-religious and cross-cultural communication and education approaches

**Format:** The course is available both in person and via zoom. *Zoom students must be synchronous only.* The class meets Tuesdays, 6:00-9:00 pm, on the following dates: Sept 14, 21, 28; Oct 5, 12, 19; Nov 2, 16, 23, 30. (Reading week, no class: Oct 26.)

Classroom activities will include lecture, discussion, small and large group dialogue activities, student presentations, guest speakers, and a “virtual field trip.”

**Identification of Levels at Which Course Can Be Taken:** Audit, Certificate, Basic and Advanced.

### **Required Reading:**

*Book: Available via amazon and other sellers*

Stanley, Jason. *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*. New York: Random House, 2018.

Chapter in Free E-book: Available on-line

McPherson-Derendy, Susan. "Reflections on Reconciliation: A Journey of Sharing, Learning, and Change" in *Spirit of Reconciliation*, ed. Ray Aldred and Laura Duhan-Kaplan. Toronto: Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2020.

Articles and Book Chapters: Available on Canvas

Bohm, David. "Participatory Thought and the Unlimited" in *On Dialogue*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Buber, Martin. "I and Thou" (excerpt) in *The Martin Buber Reader*, ed. Asher D. Biemann. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

De Beauvoir, Simone. "Introduction," in *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989/1952.

Duhan-Kaplan, Laura. "Imagining Consciousness" in *Mouth of the Donkey: Re-imagining Biblical Animals*. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021.

Duhan-Kaplan, Laura. "The Violence of Othering: Hate Your Neighbour As Yourself." Paper presented at Religion and Violence Conference, Vancouver School of Theology, 2019.

Ellithorpe, Anne-Marie. "Co-existing Friendship Worlds" in *Towards Friendship-Shaped Communities*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, forthcoming.

Levinas, Emmanuel. "The Name of a Dog or Natural Rights" in *Difficult Freedom*, trans. Sean Hand. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

Lugones, Maria. "Playfulness, 'World'-Traveling, and Loving Perception," *Hypatia* 2:2 (1987): 3-19.

Mackenzie, Falcon, Rahman, "Exclusivity: Staking Claim to a One and Only Truth" in *Religion Gone Astray: What We Found at the Heart of Interfaith*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2009.

Methot, Suzanne. "What it Means to be Colonized" in *Legacy: Trauma, Story, and Indigenous Healing*. Toronto: ECW Press, 2019.

Rosenberg, Marshall B. Excerpt from *Practical Spirituality: Reflections on the Spiritual Basis of Nonviolent Communication*. Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press, 2005.

Wiebe, Todd. "The Myth of the Beleaguered Majority: Grievance Posing as Faith in Evangelical Subculture." Paper presented at Religion and Thoughtful Activism Conference, Vancouver School of Theology, 2021.

**Assignments:**

For all students, including auditors:

- Attendance meeting VST policies
- Attentive class participation
- Thoughtful preparation of assigned reading

Additional for all students in certificate or degree programs:

- **Two 750-word reflection papers on a specific question TBA**, due October 5, November 2.
- **One in-class group presentation**, guidelines below
- For each missed class, students must do the following within a week: Watch the recording and send the instructor an email of 250 words that (a) lists three key points from the class, and (b) engages with one of them by either commenting or asking and answering a question about it.

Additional for Basic-level degree (Diploma, MA and MDiv) students:

- **A 3000-word final paper** on a topic of the student's choice, demonstrating course competencies, following the research paper style guide, and involving research (5 sources) beyond the assigned course readings. Due December 17.

Additional for Advanced-level (Th.M., GradDip) students:

- **A 4000-word final paper** on a topic of the student's choice, demonstrating course competencies, following the research paper style guide, and involving significant research (10 sources) beyond the course readings. Due January 17.

**Guidelines for written assignments:**

- Before you write, consult the style guide on our course page. Follow the suggestions for clear, specific writing.
- Follow VST citation format: <https://vst.edu/https-vst-edu-citation-style-at-vst-chicago-turabian/>
- Before you send the file, re-title it: Your name, Assignment Name (e.g., reflection 1, research paper)
- Email your completed papers *in MS Word format* to LDKaplan@vst.edu

**Guidelines for in-class group presentation:**

Presentations will take place November 9 and 16, in class. Each presentation will be 20-30 minutes long, followed by 15 minutes of questions from the class to the presenters about their process and choices. Group assignments will be made after the first class meeting.

Presentations will be based on the articles by Buber, De Beauvoir, Duhan-Kaplan (2021), Lugones.

Preparation:

- Pre-read your assigned article carefully and thoughtfully.
- Meet as a group over email, zoom, or in person.
- Be prepared to present on November 9 or 16, as assigned.

Content of Presentation should include:

- Summary of the article's main ideas
- Something you experience and understand differently in light of the article
- A question or critical perspective on the article
- An activity for the class that helps us gain insight into the article's message

Process:

- Everyone in the group must participate in preparation and presentation.
- During the brainstorm phase: Try to value and respond to all interpretations & suggestions.
- During the decision-making phase: Use the assignment guidelines to make final decisions.
- During all phases: Be mindful of your responses to your co-presenters.

**Course prerequisites:** None

**Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments**  
**Additional details at our first class**

**Sept 14**

Reading due: Bohm

**Sept 21**

Reading due: Mackenzie et al

**Sept 28 (Canvas-based day)**

Watch: On-line lecture; Roots video

Reading due: Rosenberg

**Oct 5**

Reading due: Stanley

Writing due: First reflection paper

**Oct 12**

Reading due: Wiebe, Duhan-Kaplan (Violence of Othering)

Guest speaker: Rev. Todd Wiebe

**Oct 19**

Reading due: Methot, McPherson-Derendy

**NO CLASS OCT 26 (Reading Week)**

**Nov 2**

Reading due: Ellithorpe, Levinas  
Guest speaker: Dr. Anne-Marie Ellithorpe  
Writing due: Second reflection paper

**Nov 9**

Presentation groups 1, 2: De Beauvoir, Buber

**Nov 16**

Presentation groups 3, 4: Lugones, Duhan-Kaplan (Imagining Consciousness)

**Nov 23**

Virtual field trip / dialogue event; reading TBA

**Nov 30**

Integrative activity

**VST COURSE POLICIES**

1. **Attendance:** For a weekly course, VST requires at least 80% attendance. For an intensive course, VST requires 100% attendance.
2. **Reading and assignments:** Students are expected to read all required assignments before class and to complete all assignments as outlined in the syllabus within the specified dates of the course and term.
3. **Academic honesty:** Students are expected to adhere to VST's requirements for academic honesty as published in the Student Handbook.
4. **Inclusive language:** In speaking and writing, inclusive language is expected when making reference to humans and a variety of metaphors are anticipated when making reference to God.
5. **Assignment and Course Evaluation:**
  - Course evaluations at VST combine a letter grade system (A+ to B-; course failure is "Not Approved") including narrative comments based on the competencies of the course. No number grades or weights of assignments are calculated, nor are final grades given numerical equivalents.
  - Individual assignments within a course are given narrative evaluations, that is, APP (Approved) or INC (Incomplete) with narrative comments, based on the competencies and expectations set for that assignment. One re-write is allowed on any assignment that is INC. The re-written assignment is due two weeks after the work is returned. The final evaluation for an assignment can be APP or NAPP after a re-write.
  - For a passing grade in the course, all assignments must be Approved.
6. **Late assignments**

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Failure to submit an assignment on time will be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course.

**7. Limitation on use of social media**

Ordinarily, the use of electronic devices in the contexts of classrooms or meetings will be to support the learning, formation, or agenda at hand

**8. Learning needs**

VST is committed to creating safe space and an inclusive learning environment. If you have a diagnosed or suspected learning disability, chronic condition, mental health concern, or physical requirement which you anticipate may impact your participation in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs with the instructor and the Dean within the first week of classes.