

Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan-Kaplan, Pastor Dr. Don Mackenzie, Imam Jamal Rahman
Vancouver School of Theology
Faculty contact: Rabbi Laura, LDKaplan@vst.edu

COURSE OUTLINE

IPS/SP512, **Interfaith Spirituality for Polarized Times**

July 8 - 12, 2024, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm (Pacific)

Via Zoom only

PURPOSE:

How do we practice spiritual presence in challenging times? And let spirituality lead us to action? When communities are polarized, and peace is unpopular, these are urgent questions. Together, we will explore answers from Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each tradition offers powerful tools to critique institutional power, confront the ego, open the heart, and explore shared mysteries of being. Teaching collaboratively, Rabbi Laura, Imam Jamal, and Pastor Don will lead the class in exploring selected scriptures, spiritual practices, and ethical reflections from the three traditions.

PREREQUISITES: None

COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

- Describe selected contemporary challenges for each tradition's institutions
- Summarize each tradition's varied ways of responding to the religious Other
- Articulate selected shared spiritual and ethical themes from the three traditions
- Name and interpret stages of interfaith journey
- Practice respectful listening and dialogue
- Engage in reflective spiritual practice

FORMAT AND CONTENT:

Each class meeting will include lecture, text study, spiritual practice, and small group discussion. A specific outline of topics will be available on the first day of class.

CORE TEXTS:

Duhan-Kaplan, Laura. "Approaching Inter-Religious Studies" in *Before Theological Studies: A Thoughtful, Engaged, and Generous Approach*, eds. Richard Topping, Harry O. Maier, and Ashley Moyses (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2021), 170-179. [Posted to Populi]

Mackenzie, Don, Ted Falcon, and Jamal Rahman, *Religion Gone Astray: What We Found at the Heart of Interfaith*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2009. [Available for purchase on line]

Duhan-Kaplan, Laura. "The Violence of Othering," paper presented at "Religion and Violence" conference, Vancouver School of Theology, May 26, 2019. [Posted to Populi]

Interfaith Amigos, "On the Crisis in Israel and Gaza," Youtube video, December 8, 2023
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3obLU7Yrmw&t=5s>

Selected short texts from the Tanakh, New Testament, and Qur'an TBA

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES: SPIRITUALITY IN THREE TRADITIONS

Judaism: Prager, Marcia. *The Path of Blessing*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 1998.

Christianity: Borg, Marcus J. *Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary*. New York: HarperOne, 2015.

Islam: Rahman, Jamal. *Spiritual Gems of Islam: Insights & Practices from the Qur'an, Hadith, Rumi & Muslim Teaching Stories to Enlighten the Heart & Mind*. Woodstock, VT: SkyLight Illuminations, 2013.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES: INTERSPIRITUALITY

Duhan-Kaplan, Laura. *The Infinity Inside: Jewish Spiritual Practice Through a Multi-Faith Lens*. Boulder, CO: Albion-Andalus, 2019.

Mackenzie, Don, Ted Falcon, and Jamal Rahman. *Finding Peace Through Spiritual Practice: Interfaith Amigos Guide to Personal, Social, and Environmental Healing*. Woodstock, VT: SkylightPaths, 2016.

Rahman, Jamal, Kathleen Schmitt Elias, and Ann Holmes Redding. *Out of Darkness, Into Light: Spiritual Guidance in the Quran with Reflections from Jewish and Christian Sources*. New York: Morehouse, 2009.

EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS, AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

For all students:

- Attendance (100%) in accordance with VST policies
- Thoughtful, engaged participation in class discussion and activities
- Completion of assigned readings

For Certificate-level students:

- One 1000-1500 word reflection paper demonstrating mastery of course material and engagement with it.

For Basic-level students (MATS, M.Div, MAPPL, MAIS):

- A 1500-2000 word research paper on a topic of the student's choice, related to the course competencies, involving research (5 sources) beyond the core course readings. If

relevant to your topic, we encourage you to choose some of the recommended resources.

For Advanced-level students (Th.M.):

- A 1850-3000 word research paper on a topic of the student's choice, related to the course competencies, involving research (5 sources) beyond the core course readings. If relevant to your topic, we encourage you to choose some of the recommended resources

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Available on the first day of class.