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Theology and Religious Studies

The original Faculty of Divinity not only taught theological courses for ordinands, it also engaged in teaching undergraduates in other faculties a selection of courses of more general interest, such as philosophy and psychology of religion and comparative religion. This selection grew over the years into the present B.A. Honours, Major and Minor Concentration programs in Religious Studies within the Faculty of Arts.

In 1970 the name of the Faculty was changed to the Faculty of Religious Studies to reflect the new emphasis on "the academic study of religion" in higher education.

1.4 Facilities

The Faculty of Religious Studies is located in the handsome building, erected in 1931, known as the William and Henry Birks Building, formerly Divinity Hall, at 3520 University Street. Besides the usual classrooms, offices and common rooms, this building contains the University Chapel and the Birks Reading Room.

1.5 Birks Lectures

An annual series was established in 1950 through the generosity of the late William M. Birks. The lectures are given by distinguished visitors, usually in late September or early October. The first lecturer was the Right Reverend Leslie Hunter.

More recent lecturers have included Huston Smith,

1.2 Administrative Officers

B. BARRY LEVY, B.A., M.A., B.R.E.(Yeshiva), Ph.D.(N.Y.U.)
Dean

LUVANA DI FRANCESCO Administrative Assistant

1.3 History

The Faculty and the Colleges

During the nineteenth century several Theological Colleges in Montreal became affiliated with McGill. In 1912 they formed a Joint Board for the academic study of Theology, leaving each denominational College to provide its own professional training for Christian ministry. These relationships between the colleges and the University led naturally to the creation in 1948 of a Faculty of Divinity which assumed the academic functions of the Joint Board. This University Faculty now offers the B.Th. and graduate degree programs.

Today, the Colleges affiliated with the Faculty are: Montreal Diocesan Theological College of the Anglican Church of Canada; Presbyterian College of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; United Theological College of the United Church of Canada. They are all located close to the University Campus. In 1973 the Colleges pooled their resources in the In-Ministry year to provide joint professional training for ministry. The Colleges now also confer a Master of Divinity degree on their successful candidates for ordination.

2 Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Religious Studies

Honours, Major Concentration and Minor Concentration programs in Religious Studies are offered in cooperation with the Faculty of Arts. These programs are described in the Faculty of Arts [section 11.41 on page 158](#) though Religious Studies B.A. Honours, Majors and Minor students may take any of the courses described below except where otherwise indicated.

Admission is to the Faculty of Arts and all admission requirements and procedures, academic rules and regulations of that Faculty apply to students in these programs.

For general information on B.A. Honours, Major Concentrations and Minor Concentrations and courses, consult the Adviser. For specific course information, consult the instructor.

Honours, Major and Minor students must consult the Chief Adviser prior to registration each year. Appointments can be made by telephoning (514) 398-4121 or visiting the Reception Office in the Birks Building.

3 Master of Divinity (M.Div.)

Students who have completed a first degree prior to the B.Th. with a minimum CGPA of 2.70 are eligible to apply the B.Th. degree towards the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree conferred by the Theological Colleges. This degree requires, in addition to the B.Th. degree, successful involvement in integrative seminars during the two B.Th. years and a year of

professional pastoral study beyond the B.Th., the "In-Ministry Year" offered by the three affiliated theological colleges under the auspices of the Joint Board of Theological Colleges.

The affiliated Colleges underwrite the cost of tuition for their properly registered candidates for ministry. Information about church requirements and the professional year should be sought from the College Principals.

It should be noted that one biblical language, usually Greek, is required by some of the Colleges. Ministerial candidates should consult with the College advisers regarding biblical language requirements.

Prospective candidates for ordination with a B.A. Honours or Major in Religious Studies and a CGPA of 3.30 (B+) may apply for the S.T.M. degree followed upon completion by the professional year.

Applicants for the M.Div. program apply for entry into the McGill B.Th. program (for procedure see below) *as well* as to one

4.6 Course Selection

Candidates for the ministry from the three Theological Colleges

With permission of the B.Th. Committee and the instructors concerned, students may substitute courses for any of the courses specified above if they have already taken them or similar courses for credit elsewhere.

Students proceeding towards the M.Div. degree are required, in addition, to participate in pre-term ministry seminars.

Additional Complementary courses

Permission is needed from the B.Th. Committee for courses selected from the curriculum of other departments of the University.

By permission of the Dean and the Chair of the B.Th. Committee, students may also enrol for courses at any university in the province of Quebec. See Inter-University Transfer Agreement in the General University Information section for details.

Professional and vocational courses (e.g., leading to ordination) are available through the In-Ministry Year (see Section 3 above) upon the completion of the B.Th. degree.

Returning students are required to pre-register prior to the end of the previous academic year.

Summer Session Courses for B.Th. Students

B.Th. students may, **with their Advisor's prior consent**, take summer courses offered through the Faculty of Religious Studies as electives within their B.Th. program. Any B.Th. student in satisfactory standing may take 260-280C "New Testament Greek" as a B.Th. elective. No student, however, may take both summer and regular term versions of the same course, e.g., 260-280C and 260-280D; 260-336L and 260-336A or B, etc.

B.Th. students wishing to use summer courses to satisfy specific B.Th. requirements (e.g., the non-Christian religion requirement) must apply to the B.Th. Committee for permission before registering.

B.Th. HONOURS

Students who have achieved a CGPA of 3.30 at the end of B.Th. 2 year may apply to the B.Th. Committee for permission to enter the Honours program. They will be required to complete 260-494A/495B in the B.Th. 3 with a grade of B or better, to complete the degree with Honours.

5 Courses

The names of course instructors are listed on the Course Timetable available on **infoMcGill** via the Web <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/courses/>.

The course credit weight is given in parentheses after the title.

- Denotes courses not offered in 2001-02.
- ★ Denotes courses offered in alternate years.

260-201A THE RELIGIONS OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST. (3) Deities, death and rebirth in the religions of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and Canaan; myth and ritual with reference to the geographical, historical and cultural conditions which influenced religious expression.

260-202B THE RELIGION OF ANCIENT ISRAEL. (3) (Not open to students who are taking or have taken 260-302A.) An examination of the religion of Ancient Israel by a study of selected texts (narratives, laws, prophetic sayings, wisdom traditions, and psalms) from the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament in translation.

260-203A THE BIBLE AND WESTERN CULTURE. (3) To provide students of the humanities with knowledge of the Bible as a tool for interpreting religious references in Western literature, art and music. Biblical stories (e.g. Creation, Exodus), key figures (e.g. David, Job, Mary), and common motifs (e.g. Holy City, Pilgrimage, Bride) are explored, then illustrated by later cultural forms.

260-204B JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM. (3) (Not open to B.Th. students.) An introduction to the beliefs, practices, and religious institutions of these three world religions.

260-207A THE STUDY OF WORLD RELIGIONS 1. (3) An introduction to the study of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Primal Religions.

260-210A JESUS OF NAZARETH. (3) A critical study of selected ancient and modern accounts of the aims and person of Jesus. Attention will be given also to the question of the historical sources and to the relationship between faith and history.

260-232B EASTERN ORTHODOX MYSTICISM AND CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE. (3) A survey of Eastern Orthodox mystical thought in 19th - 20th century authors studied against the background of early texts (in translation) of the Syro-Byzantine and Russian spiritual tradition and examined in light of modern literary-religious trends.

260-252A HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM. (3) The interaction of Hinduism and Buddhism in India with special reference to the law of Karma, caste, women, ritual, death, yoga, and liberation. Determination of interpretative principles for understanding the religious psychology of Hindus and Buddhists.

260-253B THE RELIGIONS OF EAST ASIA. (3) Harmony with nature, society, and cosmos to be explored through the religions of the Far East (Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Shinto).

260-256B WOMEN IN JUDAISM AND ISLAM. (3) The role of women in Judaism and Islam from the point of view of institutionalized religious traditions and of women's religious subjectivity; how women's spiritual and social roles within their religious traditions are shaped by Revealed Law, Holy Text and the Authority of Interpretation. Comparative sociology of religion approach.

260-257D SANSKRIT I. (6) To develop basic language and reading skills.

260-270A,B RELIGIOUS ETHICS AND THE ENVIRONMENT. (3) (Given on the Macdonald Campus "A" term.) A general survey of the issues and debates in environmental ethics, with particular consideration given to the values of humanity in relation to the environment and the connection between those values and religious conviction.

260-271A,B SEXUAL ETHICS. (3) A study of the social construction of sexual identity and of selected issues regarding sexual behaviour.

260-280D ELEMENTARY NEW TESTAMENT GREEK. (6) (Open to students in the Honours and Major programs in Religious Studies. Other Arts and Science students may take the course as an elective outside their faculty, in accordance with Arts and Science regulations.) An introduction to the grammar and syntax of New Testament Greek.

- ★ **260-285B THE Gnostic WORLDVIEW.** (3)
- **260-300A POST-BIBLICAL JEWISH TRADITION.** (3)

260-301B JEWISH SECTARIAN THOUGHT (200 B.C.E. – 200 C.E.). (3) (Prerequisite: 260-300A or the consent of the instructor.) The religion and literature of sectarian groupings; Apocalyptic thought; Wisdom; Dead Sea Scrolls; Josephus.

260-302A LITERATURE OF ANCIENT ISRAEL I. (3) An introduction to pCpFQ(iaqRhoCH9geV

260-306B RABBINIC JUDAISM. (3) (Prerequisite: 260-202B or 260-204B or permission of instructor.) (Not open to students who have taken 260-206.) The beliefs, practices and religious institutions of the Jews from ancient times to the present.

★ **260-307B SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION.** (3) Jewish, Christian, Moslem responses to the Hebrew Bible. The debates, polemics, interpretative strategies and intellectual and spiritual sharings produced by these three religions in explaining, applying, amplifying, modifying, and selectively rejecting the sacred literature of Ancient Israel.

260-311A NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES I. (3) An introduction to the interpretation of the New Testament.

260-312B NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES II. (3) An introduction to the critical study of the Gospels.

260-315B SPECIAL TOPICS IN RELIGION. (3) This course focuses on a topic of current interest in, or between, world religions. For example: Death and Dying; Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice; New Methodologies in the Study of Religion. (Awaiting University approval)

260-316A NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS. (3) A critical analysis of the origins, character and influence of one or more religious movements of the 19th century and beyond, with special attention to their religious principles and social functions. (Awaiting university Approval)

260-320A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT I. (3) The development of Christian theology in the Patristic and Medieval periods. Focus on the controversial development of Christian doctrines and disciplines.

260-322A THE CHURCH IN HISTORY I. (3) A survey of major developments in the history of Christianity from the end of the apostolic age to 1500. Selected readings from primary and secondary sources will be used.

260-323B THE CHURCH IN HISTORY II. (3) Significant events and persons in the history of western Christianity from 1500-1948 will be studied. Attention is focused on mainline denominations in Britain and continental Europe.

● ★ **260-326A THE ANCIENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH (64-604 C.E.).** (3) (Not open to students who have taken 260-322A or 260-323B.)

260-327B HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT II. (3) The development of Christian theology in the Reformation, Post-Reformation and Modern periods.

★ **260-330A REFORMED THEOLOGY.** (3) Selected topics illustrating the Reformers' theological agenda, with special reference to Luther, Zwingli and Calvin.

260-333B PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY I. (3) An introduction to the central categories of Christian theology. The course will

of grammar and syntax with an emphasis on rapid reading of sections chosen from different parts of the New Testament.

260-390D ELEMENTARY BIBLICAL HEBREW. (6) An introduction to the grammar and syntax of Biblical Hebrew. Emphasis is placed on both the oral and the written language.

260-399B TEXTS OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY. (3) Texts from the tradition of Christian spirituality will be studied in order to explore the phenomena of internal religious experience in relation to received formularies of Christian thought and practice. Seminar discussion will focus on the interpretation of selected primary texts, e.g., Augustine's Confessions. (Awaiting University approval)

★ **260-407A THE WRITINGS.** (3) (Prerequisites: 260-202B, or 260-302A and 260-303B, or equivalent.) A study of Job with some attention to Proverbs and Ecclesiastes (in English translation).

● ★ **260-408A THE PROPHETS.** (3) (Prerequisites: 260-202B, or 260-302A and 260-303B.)

260-409A SCRIPTURE AND HERMENEUTICS. (3) Comparative approach to the interpretation and meaning of scriptures and sacred texts, and to the ways that scriptures are composed by various practices of reading as by practices of writing.

● **260-410A MAJOR MOTIFS IN NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY.** (3) (Prerequisite 260-311A and 260-312B or equivalent.)

260-411B NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS. (3) (Prerequisites: 260-311A and 260-312B) A seminar in exegesis on the basis of representative passages chosen from different parts of the New Testament in English.

● **260-412A MORAL TEACHING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.** (3) (Prerequisite 260-311A and 260-312B or equivalent.)

260-420B CANADIAN CHURCH HISTORY. (3) (Prerequisite: 260-323B) A survey of the major Christian traditions in Canada from the settlement of New France to the present. Lectures and seminars with use, where possible, of primary source materials.

● ★ **260-423A REFORMATION THOUGHT.** (3)

260-434A PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY II. (3) (Prerequisite: 260-333B) This course is a continuation of 260-333B.

260-438B TOPICS IN JEWISH THEOLOGY. (3) A topic in Jewish Theology will be studied from a variety of approaches, including historical sociological and phenomenological.

260-442A PURE LAND BUDDHISM. (3) (Prerequisite: 260-252A and 260-253B, or 260-342A or 260-344B, or permission of instructor.) The concept of Buddha Countries and Pure Lands in Buddhism, the Western Pure Land of Amida (Jodokyo) and its basic scriptures, the Chinese Buddhist schools, the introduction to Japan and the foundation of the Pure Land school by Honen, the Pure Land School of Shinran and its development, and the other Pure Land related schools.

● **260-443B JAPANESE ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.** (3) (Prerequisites: 260-252A and 260-253B, or 260-342A, or 260-344B.)

● **260-451A ZEN: MAXIMS AND METHODS.** (3) (Prerequisites: 260-252A, 260-342A/B or 260-344A/B, or permission of instructor.)

260-452B TOPICS IN EAST ASIAN RELIGIONS. (3) (Prerequisite:

260-555B HONOURS COLLOQUIUM. (3) (For Religious Studies Honours students or with permission of the Chair of the Religious Studies B.A. Committee.) Religion and Pluralism Debates: Foucault, Said and Feminists will be used to explore the presuppositions and methods of current scholars reflecting on the nature of pluralism from the perspectives of particular religious traditions, comparative studies, metaphysics, politics, ethics and law.

260-556A ISSUES IN BUDDHIST STUDIES. (3) (Prerequisite: permission of instructor.) A graduate seminar taught by the Numata Visiting Professor on critical issues in contemporary Buddhist Studies. Emphasis will be placed on the intensive application of different methods – philological, philosophical or social scientific – to some area of modern Buddhist research. (Awaiting University approval)

260-557A ASIAN ETHICAL SYSTEMS. (3) (Prerequisites: 260-252A, 260-253B, or permission of instructor.) An examination of the ethical ideals that have evolved in Asia with reference to Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Issues to be explored include competing views of the individual's duties to social and political institutions, the individual's right to non-conformity, the relationship between morality and metaphysics, and a comparison of moral principles in theistic and atheistic contexts.

260-571B BIOETHICS AND WORLD RELIGIONS. (3) A study of the resources of major world religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and Shinto) for thinking about ethical issues related to modern medicine, e.g., health, illness, suffering; new reproductive technologies; genetic engineering; euthanasia; palliative care; animal research; transplants.

6 Academic Staff

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