

University of Oklahoma Department of Religious Studies

FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Religious Studies Launches New Student Enrichment Programming

This year, the Department of Religious Studies hosted a number of events and opportunities geared toward student academic, community and professional enrichment. In November, the department awarded four Religious Studies students travel grants to attend the American Academy of Religion's annual meeting in Denver. This opportunity was made possible by the generous support of Revs. Barbara Boyd and Larry Angus. Students were able to engage more deeply in academic discourse, attending panel sessions on a diverse array of issues, from Greek mythology to contemporary bioethics. They also had a chance to explore downtown Denver and to share a meal with Angus.



Rev. Angus with Associate Professor Moodie and RELS students at AAR



Professor Emeritus Tom Boyd and Rev. Barbara Boyd

In addition to the visit to AAR, the department held a "Welcome Back" open house in August, student lunches every month of the semester and an end-of-the-year celebration. Students were also able to learn about Diwali at the Hindu Temple of Oklahoma and participate in a Seder event for Passover. The department plans to continue hosting student-oriented events in the coming year.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to our donors and alumni for providing our students with opportunities through your time and generosity that enriched their time here at OU. Your support makes an incredible difference.

Check out pages 5 and 6 of this newsletter for upcoming events and watch for more student opportunities to come in 2023-2024!



Foster Student Enrichment in the Department of Religious Studies

The Department of Religious Studies looks forward to more exciting opportunities for our students in the future. If you are interested in supporting student enrichment within the Department of Religious Studies, please visit [our OU Foundation page](#). We are always grateful for support of any kind to the department to further our mission of preparing our students to honor difference, embrace complexity and lead with integrity.

Support RELS at OU →



Religious Studies Faculty Continue to Advance Humanistic Knowledge and Inquiry

This year, Religious Studies internal and core faculty produced three new scholarly books and engaged the public in important and nuanced conversations to advance knowledge on religion and the humanities.

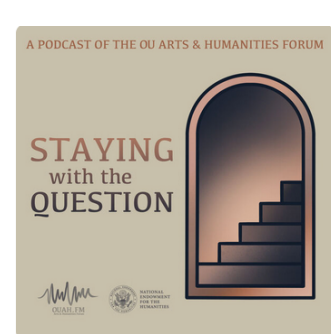
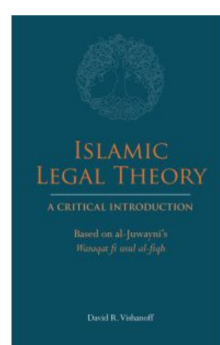
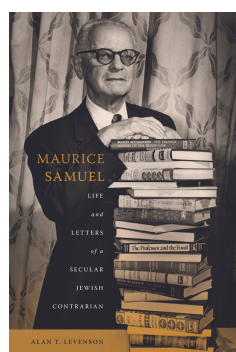
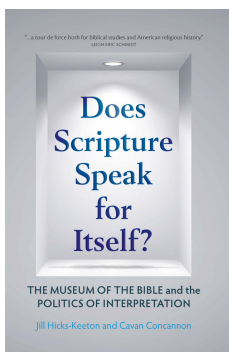
Associate Professor David Vishanoff published an English translation and novel commentary of the classic 11th-century Sunni legal text, *Kitab al-Waraqat fi usul al-fiqh*, in his [Islamic Legal Theory: A Critical Introduction](#). In clear and accessible language, he highlights the significance of classical debates for contemporary concerns.

Associate Professor Jill Hicks-Keeton, with co-author [Cavan Concannon](#), professor of religion at the University of Southern California, published [Does Scripture Speak for Itself? The Museum of the Bible and the Politics of Interpretation](#). Hicks-Keeton and Concannon demonstrate the ways that the Museum of the Bible reinforces a particular and partial interpretation of this text.

Professor Alan Levenson excavated the life and writings of the cosmopolitan 20th-century intellectual, Maurice Samuel, to consider the possibility of a Jewish secularism in his monograph, [Maurice Samuel: Life and Letters of a Secular Jewish Contrarian](#).

Assistant Professor Wendy Mallette and her colleagues professors Mike Sladek (Psychology) and Melinda Chen (Women's and Gender Studies) received an Ed Cline Faculty Development Award to research the question: "How does socioeconomic class intersect with queer pedagogy?" They are coordinating a queer pedagogy workshop with guest Matt Brim (professor of queer studies, College of Staten Island, Staten Island, New York) in the fall 2023 semester.

The OU Arts and Humanities Forum podcast, [Staying with the Question](#), featured Associate Professor Rangar Cline on the subject of maps and their meaning. The episode explores the question: "[Can you tell a story with a map?](#)" Host Kim Marshall talks to Cline and OU scholars Farina King and Asa Randall about the possibilities for learning, teaching and building community using digital, interactive maps that help us make meaningful connections.



Follow us on your favorite social media platforms:

Facebook: [OU Department of Religious Studies](#)

Instagram: [oureligiousstudies](#)

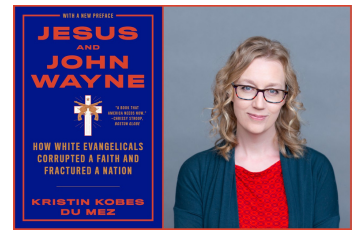
X/Twitter: [@OUReligStudies](#)

YouTube: [OU Religious Studies](#)

Also, RELS alumni have their own group on LinkedIn. Please join us! LinkedIn group: "[University of Oklahoma Religious Studies Alumni](#)"

Guest Speaker Kristin Kobes Du Mez Attracts Enthusiastic Crowd

Du Mez is Professor of History and Gender Studies at Calvin University, Grand Rapids, MI



On Sept. 8, 2022, the Department of Religious Studies with the Department of Sociology, University of Oklahoma Arts and Humanities Forum, Honors College, Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, Department of Women's and Gender Studies and Department of History welcomed noted scholar Kristin Kobes Du Mez to campus. Du Mez's presentation, "Jesus and John Wayne and the Evangelical Reckoning," was followed by a panel discussion with Du Mez, Jill Hicks-Keeton, James Howard Hill Jr. and Sam Perry. We are grateful to Du Mez for her time and an engaging evening. If you'd like to listen to the lecture, you can find it on our [YouTube channel](#).

Tulasi Srinivas Presents Pujari Foundation-Sponsored Lecture

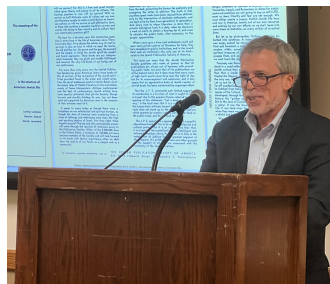
Srinivas is Professor of Anthropology, Religion and Transnational Studies at Emerson College, Boston, MA and Visiting Professor of Women's Studies and South Asian Religions at Harvard Divinity School

On March 28, the Department of Religious Studies hosted the Pujari Foundation Lectureship in Religious Studies with guest speaker Tulasi Srinivas. Her lecture, titled "The Fiery Lake: Water, Caste and Gender in a Climate Apocalypse," discussed her current research. We would like to extend our gratitude to Srinivas for her productive and inspiring talk on religion and climate change in India and to the Pujari Foundation for sponsoring the event. If you'd like to listen to her lecture, you can find it on our [YouTube channel](#).



Professors Share Their Research With the Community in New Horizons Events

Professors David Vishanoff, Alan Levenson, and Jill Hicks-Keeton shared research from their recently published works, (*Islamic Legal Theory: A Critical Introduction: Based on al-Juwayni's Waraqaat fi usul al-fiqh*, *Maurice Samuel: Life and Letters of a Secular Jewish Contrarian*, and *Does Scripture Speak for Itself? The Museum of the Bible and the Politics of Interpretation*, respectively) with the OU community. The lectures and question-and-answer exchanges were engaging and thought-provoking. Thank you, RELS faculty, for sharing your research!



New RELS Courses and Curriculum


OU
DORRANCE E. CARROLL SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

Fall 2023
Religion and Black Pop Music
RELS 2313 001 (CRN 47253)
**This course counts for Gen Ed IV-AF (Arts & Humanities, Artistic Forms) credit.*
Mondays and Wednesdays 3-4:15 p.m.

This undergraduate course examines the historical significance of the relationship between Black regions and Black popular music in the United States and throughout the world from the late nineteenth century to the present. Students will be introduced to the origins and representative works of Black popular music by placing the work of musicologists like Thomas Turino, Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., and Jerma Jackson in conversation with contemporary theorists of Black religions and culture.

By placing renowned musicologists in conversation with contemporary theorists in Black studies, students will then be invited to identify how musicologists throughout history have attempted to account for the sui generis nature of Black music in the Western world. While many musicologists have attempted to claim that the form and function of music is discreet from political, cultural, and religious matters, this course invites students to rigorously interrogate the racialized origins grounding the call to "genre categorical distinction" separating a genre's form from its ritual, political, religious, and cultural afterlives in the world.

Contact the Department of Religious Studies at OU (rels@ou.edu) for more information about the course.




RELS 5825 & WGS/LGBT 5825
QUEER RELIGION
Mondays and Wednesdays 5-6:15 pm

FALL 2023
What is the relationship between queer and religious life?

This interdisciplinary seminar engages a range of methods and theoretical approaches to queer studies and religion. The course explores questions including: Is religion ever queer? Is queerness ever religious? What do scholars mean when they label religion (or other objects of study) as queer or queer-able? What assumptions about race, class, and gender do contemporary usages of queer entail? What are the possibilities and limits of queer and trans methods and practices?

Contact Dr. Wendy Mallette
wendy.mallette@ou.edu
for more information



OU
DORRANCE E. CARROLL SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

Fall 2023
Pilgrims and Pilgrimage
RELS 2613 001 (CRN 48221)
M/W/F 12:30 - 1:20 p.m.

While recent surveys suggest a decline in religious affiliation, similar surveys point to the enduring popularity of pilgrimage. For example, a 2012 Pew survey identified a decline in religiosity in the U.S. and a corresponding rise of the non-religious. However, other studies have found that pilgrimage is more popular than ever, producing 350 million travelers a year – fully one in three tourists worldwide (Heller, NYT, 12-20-24). In this course, we will examine historical and modern-day pilgrimage accounts, consider scholarly treatments of pilgrimage, and view and hear other media produced by and about pilgrims. We will examine historical and modern-day pilgrims and pilgrimage as part of a global phenomenon that appears in every major religion and that is also practiced by the non-religious.

Contact Rangar Cline, Ph.D. (rangar.cline@ou.edu) for more information about the course.



The Department of Religious Studies continues to strive for academic excellence and expand our offerings to the OU student community. This year, we added the following courses to our course list: RELS 2613 Pilgrims and Pilgrimage, RELS/HSTM 4053 History of Magic, RELS/WGS/LGBT 3823 Queer Religion, RELS 3593 Hermeneutics: Approaches to Interpreting the Bible and the Qur'an, RELS 3323 Religion and Social Change, RELS 3173 Women and the Bible, RELS 3103 Famous Bibles and RELS 3233 Money, Power, and God(s): Religion and Economy East and West. To read more about these new courses, visit our [webpage](#) or the visit the [OU General Course Catalog](#).

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting Student Opportunity



OU RELS Students will visit AAR again this year!

The Department of Religious Studies is excited to announce that we will again offer student sponsorships to attend the **American Academy of Religion's annual meeting** to be held in San Antonio this year. The Annual Meeting takes place Nov. 18-21. Students who attend will be able to experience everything the meeting has to offer, including attending academic sessions, receptions and tours. A limited number of sponsorships are available to current RELS students.

Students may apply here: **[AAR Student Funding Application](#)**.

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m., Sept. 7.
All interested OU students are encouraged to apply.



Thank you to Revs. Boyd and Angus for creating such an amazing opportunity for our students!



RELS Alumni: Visit Us at This Year's AAR Meeting in San Antonio Nov. 18-21

If you are in the San Antonio area or attending the AAR on Nov. 18-21, we'd love to see you!

Contact the department (rels@ou.edu) to set up a time to meet with faculty over coffee or lunch.

Upcoming Events in the Department of Religious Studies

Fall Semester Student Lunches with Special Guests

The Department of Religious Studies is excited to announce that this academic year, we will continue to meet with our RELS students for a free pizza lunch (gluten-free pizza is available) and chat in our conference room (**Robertson 118**). This year, we have the added opportunity of special RELS guests to enhance the experience!



12:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 1 - Welcome back, RELS! Help us kick off the academic year with some free Hideaway pizza and good conversation. We will catch up with you all and you can hear about all of the good things that will be happening this year in Religious Studies.



Myo Win

12:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 29 - The entire RELS community is invited to this RELS student lunch with **Myo Win**, human rights activist and founder and executive director of a non-governmental organization working to raise silent and moderate voices and ensure social justice for ethnic and religious minorities in Myanmar, Asia.



Matt Brim

12:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 3 - **Matt Brim**, professor of queer studies, College of Staten Island, Staten Island, New York, will discuss queer pedagogy with students. Students are also encouraged to attend the undergraduate workshop on queer studies from 1:30 - 3 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 2 (Location TBD.)

12:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1 - Take a break from the stress of studying and have pizza on us!

Sept. 20 Luncheon With Historian Shannen Dee Williams

At 12:30 p.m., on Sept. 20, the Department of Religious Studies, with the Department of Political Science, the True Family Committee, Department of Women's and Gender Studies, and the Clara Luper Department of African and African American Studies, will welcome Shannen Dee Williams, associate professor of history at the University of Dayton, Ohio, to speak on her research on the history of Black Catholic nuns in the United States over lunch in the WGS conference room (in Robertson Hall). Williams' *Subversive Habits* (Duke University Press) draws on oral histories and previously sealed church records to demonstrate how master narratives of women's religious life and Catholic commitments to racial and gender justice fundamentally change when the lives and experiences of African American nuns are taken seriously. Williams hails them as the forgotten prophets of Catholicism and democracy. **Lunch slots are limited. Interested students, please contact Associate Professor Moodie (dmoodie@ou.edu) in order to attend.**



Williams will be the featured speaker for the True Family Lecture, to be held that evening at 5:30 at St. Thomas More University Parish and Student Center. The title of the lecture will be "Still Mining the Forgotten: The Hidden History and Legacies of Black Catholic Nuns in the United States." The lecture is sponsored by the True Family Endowment at the University of Oklahoma Foundation on behalf of St. Thomas More University Catholic Parish and the Catholic Students Association. The annual lectureship brings distinguished speakers to campus from the Catholic intellectual tradition to address topics of university and community-wide interest.

Harvard Divinity School Admissions Officer to Visit RELS on Oct. 16



RELS Students: The Department of Religious Studies will host a Harvard Divinity School admissions officer the afternoon of Monday, Oct. 16. Details will be forthcoming; be sure to check your email for updates.

Queer Pedagogy Workshop With Matt Brim, Nov. 2-3

The Department of Religious Studies, under the direction of Assistant Professor Wendy Mallette and her colleagues, professors Mike Sladek (Psychology) and Melinda Chen (Women's and Gender Studies), will welcome Queer Studies scholar Matt Brim to lead a queer pedagogy workshop on Nov. 2-3. Brim is professor of queer studies in the English department at the College of Staten Island, Staten Island, New York and an affiliate faculty in the Women's and Gender Studies M.A. Program at the CUNY Graduate Center. He teaches courses in LGBTQ literature, women's studies, queer/feminist research methods and queer higher education.



Matt Brim

Brim is also the executive director of CLAGS: The Center for LGBTQ Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center. Founded in 1991, CLAGS is the first university-based research center in the United States dedicated to the study of historical, cultural and political issues of vital concern to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals and communities.

The workshop will include the following opportunities for OU faculty and students:

1:30 - 3 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 2: **Undergraduate workshop** open to any undergraduates interested in queer studies. (Location TBD.)

9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 3 : **Queer Pedagogy workshop** open to all kinds of teachers at OU—faculty, staff, graduate TAs and other instructors. (Location TBD.)



Malka Simkovich to Speak in Yedida Kalfon Stillman Memorial Lecture

On Feb. 28, the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies will welcome Malka Simkovich as their guest speaker for the Yedida Kalfon Stillman Memorial Lecture. The Department of Religious Studies will host a faculty dinner with Simkovich and is excited to have the opportunity for the RELS faculty to interact one-on-one with her.



Nicole Karapanagiotis to Visit Department of Religious Studies in Spring 2024

In the spring of 2024, Rutgers University, New Jersey, Department Chair and Associate Professor of Religion Nicole Karapanagiotis will visit the Department of Religious Studies to discuss her research and her book, *Branding Bhakti Krishna Consciousness and the Makover of a Movement*. We look forward to her visit. Watch for more details to come.

RELS Student Spotlight: Ezra Koenig

In May, Ezra Koenig will graduate with degrees in religious studies, women's and gender studies and public and nonprofit administration. (Ezra says, "Yes, hopefully, all three!") After graduation, Koenig will be leaving Oklahoma to pursue a master's degree in adult and higher education in order to continue working with college students.

"During my time in the RELS department, I feel like I have grown as a student and person overall. When I first declared the religious studies major, I thought I would have to go into just religious work. However, through the mentorship of the faculty and staff in the RELS department, I have seen that there are so many ways I can use my degree that my possibilities are endless. I have been able to go to [Harvard's DivEx](#) conference this past September and meet other people interested in going into religious work from all over the United States."



RELS Student Spotlight: Hope King

Hope King will graduate in fall 2023 with degrees in both journalism and religious studies. She plans to work in print journalism with the ultimate goal of becoming a foreign correspondent.

"When I came to the University of Oklahoma, I knew absolutely nothing about the Religious Studies program. While deciding my schedule for my second semester, I was drawn to Judaism and Christianity (taught by Associate Professor Hicks-Keeton) and I have never looked back since. After that class, I added RELS as my minor and later as a second major. I found so much encouragement and opportunities through RELS. I believe that by studying religion, we get a great education of the world that we get to carry with us postgraduation. **With RELS being a smaller program, it leads to real connections with faculty.** I have truly loved some of my professors and know that I am a better person for having learned from them and from having had them in my life. The work that I plan to do as a journalist will be more educated and insightful due to what I have learned from RELS. Religion, how it unites and divides, plays a large role in nearly every aspect of life and I believe that RELS has better prepared me to be the person I want to be and the journalist I want to be."



RELS Alumni Spotlight: Stacy Minnick

Stacy Minnick (RELS, fall 2010) is a transactional attorney who works with nonprofits and private for-profit companies in all aspects of their organizational lifespan. Upon graduation from the University of Oklahoma, Minnick taught English in Turkey for a summer, inspired by a study abroad trip she took studying Islam with the Religious Studies program. Following that trip abroad, Minnick enrolled in seminary and received a master of divinity degree before shifting her academic pursuits to the study of law back at the University of Oklahoma.

As she began law school, the initial anxiety about the transition from the academic study of religion to the study of law slowly dissolved into something that, in hindsight, was quite seamless. She instinctively borrowed her skills developed during her RELS coursework and adapted them for the study of law. The critical analysis of Coelho's *The Pilgrimage* evolved to become a critical analysis of the Supreme Court's landmark *Obergefell* decision. Struggling to parse line-by-line meaning in various sacred texts with Professor Vishanoff evolved to identifying legality and implication in the Internal Revenue Code. Contextualizing Greek and Roman mythologies evolved to become understanding the historical framework and development of legal processes throughout recorded history. Reflection on the use of religious ideologies in psychology, sociology, and ethics very quickly morphed to include politics, judicial interpretation and legal reform (or lack thereof).

Minnick says, **"Fifteen years ago, I couldn't have anticipated how much I would still appreciate my religious studies education. As a RELS student, I learned how to read, think, write, study, listen and, most importantly, to empathize, and while my vocational trajectory changed from religion to law, the lessons learned are invaluable to what it means to be human, and I will be forever grateful for OU RELS."**



Stacy Minnick, Class of 2010
Attorney for Debee Clark and
Weber, PLLC

Congratulations, RELS Students

Congratulations to our amazing students for their accomplishments this academic year!



2022-23 Religious Studies Scholarship Recipients

*The Heather Nicole Stephenson
Scholarship*
Amber Nicholson

*The Timothy Cole Stephenson
Scholarship*
Preston Pratt

*The LeNorman Make A
Difference Scholarship*
Ezra Koenig

*The LeNorman Scholarship for
Religion and Ethics*
Lauren Gastineau

*The Reverend Larry & Gloria
Angus Endowed Scholarship*
Courtney Witte

*Angus Family Scholarship in
Religious Studies*
Eleanor Lambert

*The Bernita L. Thompson
Endowed Scholarship for
Undergraduate Research and
Writing*
Kathryn Koch

*The Tom W. Boyd Scholarship
for Religious Studies and
Education*
Caroline Perkins

2022-23 Religious Studies Graduating Seniors

Fall 2022

Majors:
Andrew Fenwick

Minors:
Katherine Standerfer

Spring 2023

Majors:
Kathryn Koch

Minors:
Coleman Allen
Sierra Joslin
Dalex Potts
Travis Scroggins
Courtney Witte

Where Our Graduates Are Headed Next...

Our graduates make us proud! Here's where a few of them are headed next.

Andrew Fenwick is working at the Department of Corrections in Tulsa. **Kathryn Koch** started the Accelerated Nursing Program at OUHSC in June. **Courtney Witte** will work on her masters degree in accounting in the fall and plans to apply to seminary.

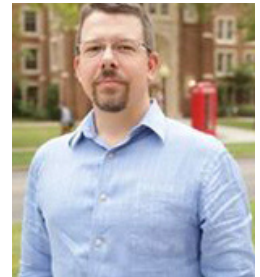
Faculty Updates

RELS Departmental Faculty

Associate Professor Rangar Cline presented his research on Holy Land pilgrimage churches and memory at the annual meeting of the American Society of Overseas Research. Cline assisted in the conservation of the archaeological site of Panakton, Greece, and joined OU faculty and students at the excavations in Ficulle, Italy. He worked with RELS major and research assistant Lauren Gastineau to expand his database of ancient pilgrimage souvenirs and map the souvenirs using [ArcGIS](#). The data and maps will contribute to Cline's current book project about pilgrimage.



Associate Professor Geoffrey Goble is completing a [Reacting to the Past](#) course gamebook in collaboration with Erik J. Hammerstrom, Ph.D., Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington. The game reenacts religious debate in the ninth-century Chinese court, allowing students to imaginatively play the role of a Daoist priest, Buddhist monk, Confucian official or Chinese courtier. Goble is conducting a major research project concerning the botanical species datura in Asia and Asian religious cultures. He also authored an article for [Religion Dispatches](#).



Associate Professor Jill Hicks-Keeton published [Does Scripture Speak for Itself?: The Museum of the Bible and the Politics of Interpretation](#) with Cavan Concannon (Cambridge University Press). She received a Faculty Investment Program award for summer research and has a forthcoming publication titled [Good Book: How White Evangelicals Save the Bible to Save Themselves](#) (Fortress Press). Hicks-Keeton served as Presidential Teaching Fellow in the Honors College in fall 2022. She led the effort to bring Kristin Kobes Du Mez to the OU Norman campus for a [lecture and panel discussion](#) – in which Hicks-Keeton participated. She delivered a named lectureship with the Manchester Classical Association and Manchester Centre for Public History in January 2023 called "Gender, Gentile Inclusion and Jewish Identity in Antiquity." Hicks-Keeton also published articles in [Religion Dispatches](#).



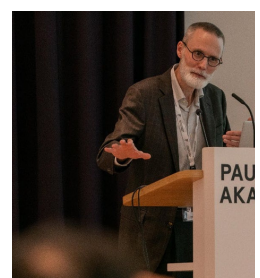
Assistant Professor Wendy Mallette published an article, "[Beverly Smith's 'Notes on This Mess': The Affective Politics of the Lesbian Feminist Killjoy in Queer Progress Narratives](#)," in *Women's Studies Quarterly* and a short piece on Pope Benedict's Islamophobia for [Religion Dispatches](#). She developed new courses for the department, "Queer Religion" and "Animals, Art and Religion," which will be offered in the 2023-24 academic year. Mallette was awarded the Ed Cline Faculty Development Award (with Mike Sladek and Melinda Chen) for a workshop series, "Teaching Queer Studies at Public Universities," and a Junior Faculty Fellowship for the development of her book manuscript, *Lesbian Feminist Killjoys: Sin, Pessimism, and Queer Histories*.



Associate Professor and Academic Chair Deonnie Moodie continued her research on religion and business this year, attending programs on "Unlocking Your Leadership Potential" through MIT Sloan and "Mindful Leadership" through the Booth School of Business at the University of Chicago. She organized an international symposium on the study of religious and economic subject formation in India at the Annual Conference on South Asia. In addition, she joined the editorial board of the journal, [DECISION](#), published by the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. She continues to serve on the steering committee of the American Academy of Religion's "Religion and Economy" unit.



Associate Professor David Vishanoff taught a new and taught a new seminar on "Hermeneutics: Approaches to Interpreting the Bible and the Qur'an" and traveled to Washington, D.C., Germany and the UK to present five papers on topics ranging from the divine attributes to the digital humanities. Mostly, though — thanks to a Senior Faculty Summer Fellowship from the Dodge Family College of Arts & Sciences — he stayed squirreled away in his Oklahoma City apartment and finally finished reconstructing and translating, from more than a dozen Arabic manuscripts, the lost text of the Islamic "Psalms of David" — a Qur'an-like pseudo-scripture composed from scratch in the eighth century by a rather dour and otherworldly Muslim preacher. He also published an article setting forth in detail his philosophy of religious studies: "[An Epistemology for Listening Across Religious, Cultural, and Political Divides](#)."



RELS Core Faculty

Religious Studies core faculty who teach and research in the area of religion from different disciplinary homes continue to be an integral part of the Department of Religious Studies at OU. They include: Professor Thomas Burns (Sociology), Honors Professor of American Religion and Culture Marie Dallam (Honors College), Director and Schusterman/Josey Chair Alan Levenson (Judaic Studies), Associate Professor Roberta Magnusson (History), Associate Professor Bala Saho (History) and Associate Professor Jane Wickersham (History). Here are some highlights of their work over the past year:



Honors Professor of American Religion and Culture Marie Dallam published an anthology with Columbia University Press titled "Religion, Attire, and Adornment in North America," co-edited with Benjamin Zeller. Dallam taught a course ("Death, Dying, and Religion") through the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program in spring 2023. The program allowed her to bring together 15 OU students and 15 incarcerated women for a semester-long college course held at Mabel Basset Correctional Center in McCloud, Oklahoma. She plans to teach this again in spring 2024. In the summer of 2023, Dallam will step down from her administrative role as associate dean of the Honors College in order to focus on teaching and research.



Director of the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies, Schusterman/Josey Chair of Judaic History, and Professor Alan Levenson published his book Maurice Samuel: Life and Letters of a Secular Jewish Contrarian (University of Alabama Press). He delivered papers in Denver, Las Vegas and Nahariya (Israel) and co-taught a Presidential Dream Course, "The Artists' Bible," with Yael Lavender-Smith in spring 2023. Levenson was named to the board of the Western Jewish Studies Association and presented to the team planning a new Bible edition for the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Reform). As always, he expended much effort in directing the Schusterman Center.

Staff Updates

Rebecca Hall-Davis, financial and administrative coordinator for the Department of Religious Studies, helped on-board new faculty, developed a new departmental document drive for faculty, organized and promoted the department's events, created methods for departmental outreach to the RELS community and prospective students, managed the department's finances and conducted the administrative tasks associated with running the department over the past year. She looks forward to the new academic year.



Faculty Recognition

The Department of Religious Studies faculty celebrated a number of achievements this past year.

Associate Professor Jill Hicks-Keeton received a Faculty Investment Program grant from the Office of the Vice President for Research and Partnerships at OU. She also published her book Does Scripture Speak for Itself?: The Museum of the Bible and the Politics of Interpretation with Cavan Concannon.

Assistant Professor Wendy Mallette received a Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences Junior Faculty Fellowship for the development of her book manuscript, *Lesbian Feminist Killjoys: Sin, Pessimism, and Queer Histories*. Mallette was also awarded the Ed Cline Faculty Development Award (with Mike Sladek and Melinda Chen) for a workshop series, "Teaching Queer Studies at Public Universities."

Associate Professor David Vishanoff published his book Islamic Legal Theory: A Critical Introduction: Based on al-Juwayni's Waraqaat fi usul al-fiqh.

Congratulations to our amazing faculty!



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