RELIGIOUS STUDIES 2BB3 IMAGES OF THE DIVINE FEMININE
2019 Spring/Summer

Instructor: Dr. Brooke Kathleen Brassard
Email: brassarb@mcmaster.ca
Lecture: Tuesdays & Thursdays
9:30 AM to 12:20 PM / DSB AB102

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Office: n/a
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays by appointment
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Course Description
An examination of some of the ways the divine has been portrayed as feminine in diverse cultures.

Course Objectives
By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Examine and study female religious figures, goddesses, and women manifesting divine power in various cultures and religions.
- Gain an awareness of the study of religion and culture through consideration of perceptions and manifestations of power in female figures.
- Explore contemporary interest in goddesses and the relationship of goddess spirituality to history and tradition.
- Develop a critical ability to identify and understand the significance of gender in relation to privilege, power, and harm.
- Consider gender in the emergence and development of new religions.
- Consider gendered roles, such as mother and healer, and the implications of these roles.

Required Materials and Texts
- David Kinsley, *The Goddesses’ Mirror: Visions of the Divine from East and West*
- Additional readings will be made available by the instructor

Class Format
In class lecture style and class/group discussions.

Course Evaluation – Overview
1. Participation & Engagement – 20%, due n/a
2. Midterm – 20%, 11 July
   - Research Project (Total 60%):
4. Annotated Bibliography – 20%, due 16 July
5. Research Presentation – 25%, due tbd

Course Evaluation – Details

Participation & Engagement (20%), due n/a
Attendance is mandatory for all classes. Please be considerate of your fellow classmates and instructor and arrive on time. Assigned readings and participation in class discussions are also mandatory. Participation and engagement will be graded by attendance and short, written responses at the end of each class. At the end of every
class we will take ten minutes for you to write a quick one-page personal response to what you have learned that day. What stood out to you? This is an informal writing assignment, and personal pronouns are acceptable. You will hand this to me as you leave class, and this acts as attendance for a total of 20% of your final grade. Excused absences will not affect your grade.

Midterm (20%), 11 July
In class exam

Research Project (60%)
This is a three-part project: research proposal, annotated bibliography, research presentation, and final essay. The first step is self-enrolling on Avenue to Learn to the group of the topic you wish to work on by 1:00 pm on 2 July 2019. Groups have a limit of 2 members and are first come first served.

Research Proposal 4 July 15%
In the form of an abstract, select a topic and pose your question for research, briefly summarize the literature you will address, and propose the thesis you will argue in your paper.

Annotated Bibliography 16 July 20%
In an annotated bibliography, cite at least twelve academic sources you are using to investigate your topic. Below each citation include 5-10 sentences summarizing the source and its relevance to your research.

Research Presentation tbd 25%
To occur during second half of class starting 16 July 2019 (depending on class size)
A ten-minute presentation to the class followed by a five-minute question period. The research presentation can take various forms: poster presentation, PowerPoint presentation, etc.
Hand-in final bibliography (not annotated), presentation and presentation notes.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (25 & 27 June)

Class 1 (25 June) – Introduction
Readings: Kinsley, “Introduction”

Notes: Film screening of Goddess Remembered, Donna Read, National Film Board of Canada, 1989.

Class 2 (27 June) – Paleolithic and Neolithic Eras
Readings: Kinsley, Chapter 6.
Week 2 (2 & 4 July)
Class 3 (2 July) – Goddesses in India: Durga, Lakshmi, and Sita
Readings: Kinsley, Chapters 1, 3, and 5

Week 3 (9 & 11 July)
Class 5 (9 July) – The Hebrew God and Gender, and Christianity and Mary
Readings: Kinsley, Chapter 10

Week 4 (16 & 18 July)
Class 7 (16 July) – African Diasporic Religions
Readings: Elizabeth Pérez, “Gendering the Kitchen,” 111-140.

Week 5 (23 & 25 July)
Class 9 (23 July) – Spiritualism, Mother Ann Lee and the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing
Tisa J. Wenger, “Female Christ and Feminist Foremother,” 5-32.
Class 10 (25 July) – Faith Healing, Christian Science, and Mary Baker Eddy

Class 11 (30 July) – Heavenly Mother and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Part 1)
Linda P. Wilcox, “The Mormon Concept of a Mother in Heaven,” 3-17.

Class 12 (1 August) – Heavenly Mother and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Part 2)
D. Michael Quinn, “Mormon Women Have Had the Priesthood Since 1843,” 365-409.

Week 7 (6 & 8 August)
Class 13 (6 August) – Neopaganism and Wicca

Class 14 (8 August) – North American Indigenous Spiritualities

Course Policies
Submission of Assignments
All assignment will be submitted through Avenue to Learn.
Grades
Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

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Late Assignments
Late assignment will be penalized 3% a day (weekends will count as one day).

Absences, Missed Work, Illness
In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015. The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days. The upper limit for which an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from ‘less than 30%’ to ‘less than 25%’ of the course weight. As per the policy, students must immediately follow up with their instructors to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Failure to do so may negate their relief. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean’s office. MSAF is now available in MOSAIC Student Center (in the drop-down menu under Academics). Privacy Disclaimer: By using this tool you understand that some personal information will be submitted to your Faculty Office. If you find it necessary to submit the MSAF during this course you must arrange for an extension for any work missed. I do not redistribute grades for missed assignments.

Avenue to Learn
In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.
**Turnitin.com**
In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity Statement**
You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

**Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**
Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy
Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification
The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)
Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.