

Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies Department

**Faculty Research Area
2020-2021**

Dr. Krista Benson

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Krista Benson's research focuses on the experiences in and impacts of systems such as juvenile justice, policing, and foster care and adoption on youth of color and Indigenous youth. They are currently working on a book proposal about the interconnections between Reproductive Justice and Adoption/Foster Care, looking at legal frameworks, activist movements, and youth self-advocacy.

Dr. Wendy Burns-Ardolino

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Dr. Wendy Burns-Ardolino is a feminist cultural studies practitioner engaged in critical social inquiry and focused on issues of social change. Her past and present research projects explore and examine cultural phenomena as they are connected to human agency such as: women's empowerment through sport, media, and digital fan-cultures, intersectional coalition building at the U.S. Women's March in 2017, and inclusive excellence in higher education classrooms and programs.

Dr. Denise Goerisch

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Dr. Goerisch currently conducts research on college affordability, student debt, faculty labor, and student life. She engages in qualitative methods and feminist methodologies.

Dr. Azfar Hussain

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My broad research areas encompass poetry and philosophy and politics, and my work seeks interdisciplinary connections among them, as I'm also interested in music and mathematics and Marx in the interest of social change. Further, as an activist researcher, my work critically interrogates such interconnected systems of oppression as capitalism, colonialism, racism, and patriarchy, as they affect the practice of everyday life.

Dr. Sarah King

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Dr. King is interested, broadly, in the role that religion and culture play in shaping human relationships to the natural world. Her areas of specialization include: environmental philosophy; place; ethnography and community-based research; indigenous-settler relations in North America; environmental values and conflict; food justice and sustainable agriculture; North American environmentalism; anthropology of religion.

Dr. Haixia Liu

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My research interests mainly focus on innovative technology (e.g., robots, games) for student-centered teaching and learning, online foreign language instruction design, teacher education on technology adoption, mobile language learning etc..

Dr. Daniela Marini

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My research explores human-environment relations, environmental politics and meanings attached to nature from a political ecology perspective. In particular, I'm interested in farming labor, unequal exposure to pesticides and organized efforts to effect food system change.

Dr. Kimberly McKee

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Dr. Kimberly McKee's research focuses on transnational adoptions from Asia and examines representations of Asian Americans in popular culture. Her current research and the basis of her second book explores the legacy of racialized and sexualized depictions of Asian/Asian American women in the lives of adoptee women and girls from Asia.

Dr. Anthony Meyer

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Dr. Anthony Meyer has wide-ranging expertise in religion and history of the Middle East. His research covers topics from the ancient Mediterranean to the modern Arab-Israeli conflict.

Dr. Rachel Peterson

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I focus on how writers associated with Marxist, anti-racist movements in the twentieth century portray the experiences of disabled people decades before more recent efforts to include the disabled in considerations of marginalized groups. In particular, I explore the ways that these writers show how capitalism, slavery, colonialism, gendered oppression and racism converge in the lives of neurodivergent individuals from history such as Harriet Tubman. This research involves understanding how disability was understood in the writers' timeframe, in that of the figures they depict, and how these insights can inform limited understandings of the neurodiversity today.

Dr. Marilyn Preston

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Marilyn Preston is a narrative theorist and pedagogical scholar who studies the ways in which individuals make meaning of their identities and how pedagogy shapes that meaning. Her focus has included sexuality education pedagogies, Jewish identity in the United States, and queer pedagogies.

Dr. Andrea Riley-Mukavetz

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Dr. Darien Ripple

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Environment Sustainability and Transformative Learning, Experiential Learning and Design Thinking, and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Dawn Rutecki

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Dr. Melanie Shell-Weiss

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Melanie Shell-Weiss is an oral historian and community-based research practitioner, specializing in racial and ethnic relations. Her current research focuses on ethical research practices with Native American and Latinx communities.

Dr. Brent Smith

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Dr. Smith's research areas include the concepts and methodologies used in Religious Studies, religion and popular culture, and the way in which to compare activity in various religious traditions of the world.

Dr. Joel Wendland-Liu

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My research uses interdisciplinary and intersectional applications of critical race theory, Marxism, and decolonial frameworks to study problems in U.S. history, literature, politics, and culture. My research agenda is increasingly addressing theoretical and historical questions within Marxist studies generally, as well.