

The Graduate Religious Studies Association at Indiana University
Announces its Annual Graduate Student Conference:

PRESENCE AND ABSENCE

April 7 – 8, 2017

Indiana University Bloomington

Keynote Address: TBA

How do humans conceive and perceive of presence? Absence?

The Graduate Religious Studies Association at Indiana University invites abstracts for its interdisciplinary spring conference investigating the meaning of presence and absence in the human experience. We welcome submissions from all disciplines and fields, encouraging biological, psychological, linguistic, philosophical, historical, political, and literary responses to and understandings of presence and absence.

Abstracts will be due December 31, 2016.

We embark on this conference in light of recent scholarship addressing presence in the study of religion. How do we as scholars respond to these questions of experience across disciplines? We seek to facilitate conversations about the role that the transcendent has both as present and as absent in the human experience across all traditions and cultures.

The committee is pleased to offer modest travel awards for graduate students. These funds will be determined following abstract selections and distributed via reimbursement.

Below are a few themes we find intriguing which are by no means exhaustive.

Presence and absence manifest in:

- *Materiality* [idols, relics, objects]
- *Spaces* [shrines, pilgrimages, natural worlds, alternate worlds, boundaries]
- *Texts* [recitation of, reading practices]
- *Experiences* [epiphanies, trances, visions, ecstasies, possessions, transcendental states, and paranormality]
- *Persons* [authorities, prophets, practitioners, scholars]
- *Technologies* [machines, virtual worlds, robots, cyborgs, artificial intelligence]

As well as:

- Spaces between absence and presence
- Conceptions of the divine as present and/or absent
- Influence of conceptions of modernity and secularism on religious/spiritual presence
- The universality of presence and absence

Please send a 250-word abstract, an academic CV, and any questions to:

iugradconf@gmail.com by December 31.

Please provide all submissions in **PDF format.**

We will notify applicants of acceptance status via email by: January 18, 2017



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