

# Relationality and Religion: Thinking *with* Critical Indigenous Studies



Speaker:

**Dr. Paul L. Gareau**

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12:30pm-2:00pm

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Lockhart Hall

1L13

Religion, as a concept, poses significant challenges for understanding Indigenous experiences, particularly within settler societies where it often functions to reify identity and enforce possessive logics. For example, practices like multi-faith engagement and religious nationalism, though seemingly disparate, share this impulse to claim and categorize belonging. The core issue is not simply moral justification, but the settler tendency to possess and define. How do Indigenous peoples maintain relational socio-political and moral orientations within spaces structured by possessive logics?

This presentation advocates for studying religion through the lens of Indigenous studies, shifting focus from institutional belief to relational ways of being. We will explore how critical relationality constitutes Indigenous experiences of situated knowledges and nationhood/peoplehood—the practice of making kin. Reframing religion through relationality moves beyond tolerance toward a more ethically capacious understanding: *becoming related*.

ABSTRACT:

Snacks and refreshments will be provided!

BIO:

Dr. Paul L. Gareau is Michif-French/Métis, an Associate Professor and Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) in the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta. His research focuses on Indigenous studies and religious studies, co-constitutive identity-ies, nationhood/peoplehood relations, and relationality and religion.



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