



**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR FACULTY FELLOWS
RECOVERING TRUTH: RELIGION, JOURNALISM, AND DEMOCRACY IN A POST-TRUTH ERA**

DEADLINE: JANUARY 15, 2020

Program Description: The Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict (CSRC) seeks scholars, journalists, artists, and practitioners from across ASU faculties to serve as faculty fellows for a three-year collaborative project on the pursuit, meaning, discovery, and recovery of truth.

Society grapples today with a striking indifference to truth. This is so in parts of our government, in some of our classrooms, in swaths of media, and among the general public. Authoritarian, undemocratic, and anti-expertise movements are surging in the United States and around the world. Credibility falters when trust in our institutions falls away. In response to this civic challenge, the “Recovering Truth” project brings faculty from across the university together with journalists to collaborate as truth-seekers and truth-tellers in order to safeguard public trust, enrich one another’s work, invigorate public discussion of the importance of truth, and help repair the fabric of democratic life. We are especially interested in exploring the role that different beliefs about reality, transcendence, moral principles, and other truth claims have played in animating democratic life.

Guiding questions that animate the project include:

- What is truth? How do we know it? How do scholars and practitioners in different fields go about seeking it? Is truth reducible to facts, and what dangers do we court when we insist that it is, or that it is not? How do ideas found in religious or theological traditions enrich or complicate the pursuit of truth?
- Are we living in a post-truth era? If so, how did we get here? What responsibility does the academy bear in having moved us to this point, and in moving us to something better?
- What are the prospects for recovering a shared commitment to truth? What do we mean when we invoke universal or self-evident truths? Are the truths the American founders declared self-evident still so? Were they ever?
- How do power, authority, discipline, and law give force to truth claims? Does truth have standing apart from these?
- What relation does truth bear to objectivity, neutrality, transparency, reason, trustworthiness, beauty, virtue, or authenticity?
- Is truth singular or multiple? What does it mean to speak or own one’s truth? Can truth be personalized, curated, tailored to fit? What unites capital-T truth (if such a concept is useful) with the truths of individual experience?
- Are there different orders of truth—such as those found in art, narrative, journalism, science, or philosophy? What about the truths of different forms of witnessing—legal depositions, spiritual testimony, on-the-record statements, memoir, participant-observation, first-order description? What paths and impassés appear when we seek to bring different orders of truth to bear on one another?

Expectations: Fellows selected for the program have the opportunity to engage in extended discussion about the sources, meanings, and role of truth in democratic life, and to generate new scholarship and forms of public engagement. Fellows are expected to participate in various activities of the project. Specifically, project fellows will:

- Attend the project launch event (1 ½-day conference in late March or early April 2020), and subsequent annual conferences.
- Participate actively in the faculty seminar at the heart of the project. We anticipate 6-7 meetings per academic year, including meetings with visiting scholars and journalists. The seminar will be devoted to in-depth discussion of project themes, and fellows will contribute to the seminar syllabus.
- Produce scholarship—public and/or more traditional—related to project themes. Fellows also will have the opportunity to contribute to podcasts, videos, and other media on the “Recovering Truth” website. Journalist participants will be asked to bring project themes to their own reporting, writing, producing, or other professional work.

Participants will receive a stipend of \$3,000 annually (paid as summer salary) upon successful completion of each year of the seminar. Faculty who are only available for certain periods of the project should indicate this in their applications.

Application Process: Full time faculty, research professionals on continuing appointment, or those on regular appointment from any unit are invited to apply. To do so, please submit: a) a 1-2 page statement explaining your interest in the project, its relation to your scholarship or work, the kinds of topics on which you seek to present or publish, and the outlets and audiences you hope to reach; and b) a two-page CV.

Selection Criteria: Participant selection will be based upon: a) the significance of the applicant’s work and interests in relation to the project themes and goals; and b) the scholarly record or promise of the applicant.

Application Timeline: Applications should be submitted via email. Please direct inquiries and send applications by **January 15, 11:59PM** to:

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Applications are due January 15, 2020 by 11:59PM. Applicants will be notified in February.

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