



THE RELIGION AND DIVERSITY PROJECT/RELIGION ET DIVERSITÉ



Alyshea Cummins
PhD in Religious Studies
University of Ottawa
alyshea.cummins@gmail.com

Biography and Research Statement

Alyshea Cummins is a PhD Candidate at the University of Ottawa (uOttawa) in the Classics and Religious Studies department. Cummins' doctoral research examines the fields of Contemporary Islam and Social Change, focusing specifically on how the Ismaili Muslim community is attempting to change the narrative of Islam in Canada. She was recently awarded the Religion and Diversity Project Graduate Student Research Grant, valuing \$1,000, for her work on the Canadian-Ismaili Muslim community.

Cummins completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology with a minor in Sociology at the University of Windsor. She then went on to complete her Master's degree in Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU), where her research focus was on the Ismaili community and their contribution to pluralism in Canada. While at WLU she examined the refugee resettlement characteristics of two non-Christian minority groups in Canada: the Cambodian Theravada Buddhists and the Ugandan Ismaili Muslims. For her work on this topic she received the Gunn Award (\$1,000), which was presented by the Honourable Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Jason Kenney.

Cummins has a passion for teaching and has facilitated seminars at WLU for the first year undergraduate class entitled, World Religions II: Eastern Traditions. She has also guest lectured on the following topics in both high school and university settings: Ismaili Thought and Practice, Women in Islam, Muslim Minorities, Islamophobia, Religious Literacy, and Muslim/Islamic Diversity. Cummins currently works as a research assistant for the project, "New Muslim Public Spheres in the Digital Age: Identity, Community, Diversity and Authority in Canada" chaired at

the University of Quebec in Montreal. She is also as a research assistant for the Religion and Diversity Project, chaired at uOttawa, examining religious and cultural identity in Canadian society.