Proudly Present a Brown Bag Talk by

FULERA ISSAKA-TOURE
(Ph.D. Candidate, University of Bayreuth, Germany)
entitled,

Islamic Reformism, Marital Conflict and The Secular State

Monday, November 30, 2015, 1:40pm to 3pm
Lucy Stone Hall B105 (Livingston Campus)

ABSTRACT: “This presentation analyses an Islamic reform movement in Ghana with respect to mediating marital conflicts and the ways their mediations construct gender among Muslims in Accra, Ghana, West Africa. It is done through analyzing field research of several months in which I took part in mediation sessions, interviewed the Islamic religious authority sitting as the judge as well as in-depth conversation with the conflicting couples. I do the analysis of the reform movement within the understanding of Islamic modernity in West Africa espoused by Kobo. Through his perspective on Islamic modernity the paper would ultimately show that the reform movement as part of modernizing Islam produces gender in their own Islamic understanding and where there is any difficulty they do not hesitate to collaborate with the secular state though they are an autonomous Islamic organization.”

BIO: Fulera Issaka-Toure was born in Accra, the capital of Ghana, West Africa. She was educated in Ghana and in South Africa for her postgraduate studies. In the University of Ghana where she received an M.Phil. degree in 2009, she worked on gender based violence among Muslims in a small Muslim community in Accra. She ultimately realized that there was a lot to be answered concerning the study of gender. For this reason when she was awarded a National Research Foundation of South Africa grant to do additional postgraduate studies in the University of Cape Town for an M.A., she worked on the ways that Muslim women negotiate marriage and divorce in Accra, and again another research question emerged with regard to the role of Islamic religious authorities. It was then that she formulated her current research project on the role of Islamic religious authorities in the construction of gender in their mediation of marital conflicts. This research started two years ago with a scholarship from the Deutsche Akademische Austausch Dienst (DAAD; German Academic Exchange Service). Issaka-Toure is currently at the writing stage of her dissertation, “Islamic Constructions of Gender in Accra: The Role of Islamic Religious Authorities in Mediating Marital Conflicts.”