

Regional Development Grant Application Mid Atlantic Region

Fostering Regional Student and Scholar Formation

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The Mid-Atlantic Region aspires to support collegiality between its senior, junior, and student members, as well as foster excellent practices of formation amongst all its members. To that effect, we propose a series of initiatives and programs for the 2012-2013 year that we will offer at our regional meeting in March 2013.

Our primary aim is to provide resources for undergraduates, graduates, and esteemed faculty to develop their professional life. Related to this, it is our hope to build regional AAR membership and participation through activities that foster the intellectual growth of those within the field of Religious Studies, Theology, Biblical studies, and related fields. We have identified areas of need, outlined below and organized by ascending rank in the academy, which we intend to address through initiatives at our regional meetings.

1. **Focus on Undergraduates** - to prepare undergraduates for Graduate School
There is a need to encourage Religious Studies undergraduates to think about the opportunities of graduate school. Students should be aware of the many options Religious Studies has to offer. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Masters of Theology Programs
 - Masters of Divinity Programs
 - Seminary
 - Ph.D programs
 - Th.D programs
 - Once students are aware of the programs, then they will need guidance in selecting a suitable program and adequately preparing for graduate school.

2. **Focus on Graduates** - to prepare them for a successful job search
Current regional faculty members and students will be invited to collaborate in a discussion covering the student formation in the early stages of PhD education and the transition from the doctoral stage to the professional stage. Particular attention will be given not only to the traditional tenure-track avenue, but also to non-traditional options both within and without the faculty role, such as careers in publication, civil service, library science, and other “support staff” university roles.
We will discuss:
 - CV workshop
 - Discussion on working on publications
 - Discussion on writing conference proposals and working on panels
 - Being on the Job Market

3. **Esteemed Professors and Scholars** – to promote continued scholarship
One of the regular criticisms of the MAR annual meeting is the apparent lack of senior scholarship in contrast to the strong showing of graduate student presentations. We wish to

address this concern by highlighting the accomplishments of the senior scholars in our region. Not only does this aid in advancing the work of our senior scholars, but it also identifies potential resources for mentoring and formation for junior scholars and grad students.

Regional Meetings Programs to address the above areas of need

1. Undergraduate and Graduate Discussion Forums: In addition to being made aware of masters and doctoral programs in religious studies, and related fields, students then need guidance on how to prepare for graduate school. We will offer a *Graduate Prep Session* for these students.

We will discuss:

- Selecting graduate opportunities
- Application deadlines
- Parts of the application
- Getting recommendation letters
- Acceptance/rejection process

2. Student Mentoring Sessions: Graduate students who are nearing the end of their education will meet with senior scholars to discuss CV development, professional associations, placement, and related topics. AAR MAR held a similar session in 2010, which was well attended and received outstanding feedback.

3. Developing the Intro Course workshop by Wabash Consultants: PhD students near graduation, Pre-Tenure Faculty, Tenured Faculty, and Non-traditional Faculty alike can all benefit from a concentrated workshop that explores developing course syllabi in conjunction with thinking about assessment. Not only will this workshop benefit those interested in honing their course development skills, thereby meeting a need for regionally-offered professional development, but it will also foster cross-rank camaraderie.

4. Senior Scholars Works and Works-in-Progress Panel: Invited full rank professors or retired professors in higher education will be spotlighted as they talk about their recent publications or articles. These individuals will engage in a discussion about work that they have published.

Proposed Budget:

1. Promotional Materials, Printing: \$--
 2. Catering:
 - a. Reception for 60: \$--
 - b. Wabash Dinner: \$--
 - c. Senior Scholar Reception: \$--
 3. Lodging for Wabash Consultants: \$--
- Total: \$--