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Program Highlights

Annual Meeting Plenary Speakers

The AAR is proud to present a strong program of speakers and performances during this year’s Annual Meeting.

Meeting in Toronto, November 23-26, 2002. Derrida originated the school of deconstruction, a strategy of analysis that has been applied to literature, linguistics, philosophy, law, architecture, and religion.

The plenary address, Other Testaments: An Interview with Jacques Derrida “On Religion” will be conducted with Yvonne Sherwood, University of Glasgow, Kevin Hart, Monash University, and John D. Caputo, Villanova University on Sunday, November 24, 7:15 PM-8:15 PM. A special focus on Derrida’s work titled Other Testaments: Derrida and Religion has been developed between program units of the AAR and the SBL. The AAR sessions include the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group’s Towards the Outside: Perspectives on Derrida’s Religious Thought (A191), and a session cosponsored by the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group and the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group titled La Puerta/Teaching Her: Touch in the Gospels (A240).

Francis Barboza

FRANCIS BARBOZA, a talented exponent of the classical dance form of Bharata Natyam, is world renowned for his innovative efforts to expand the scope of this art form beyond the boundaries of religions. Barboza has the distinction of being the only dancer worldwide who gives full recitals on both Hindu and Christian themes. Trained under some of the most eminent gurus of his time, Barboza has earned bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees in performing arts, as well as degrees in philosophy and theology. Barboza has numerous research articles and papers to his credit, as well as the book Christianity in Indian Dance Forms. He has won many prestigious awards for Indian classical dance and has been invited to perform around the world. Barboza’s dance performance will be Saturday, November 23, at 11:30 AM-12:30 PM. A response to his performance will be offered by Arti Dhand, University of Toronto and dancer Meera Vignarajah, Toronto, ON.

Hans Küng to deliver special lecture at Annual Meeting

IN THE AFTERMATH of September 11, 2001, a new paradigm for international relations is required. Hans Küng, president of the Global Ethic Foundation, was a member of the “Group of Eminent Persons” convened by Kofi Annan, president of the United Nations. The UN manifesto, Crossing the Divide: Dialogue among Civilizations is against all unilateralism and calls for an attitude of reciprocal co-operation, compromise, and integration instead of the former attitude of confrontation, aggression, and revenge, which provoked so many wars in the era of European nationalism and imperialism. Küng postulates that where the old paradigm always presupposed an enemy, the new paradigm knows partners, rivals and opponents: economic competition instead of military confrontation. This new paradigm should be based on some fundamental common ethical standards — a Global Ethic.

Küng will deliver the special lecture, The New Paradigm in International Relations? Reflections after September 11, 2001 on Monday, November 25, at 4:00 PM. A question and answer period will follow the lecture.

Arun Gandhi

ARUN GANDHI is the fifth grandson of India’s late spiritual leader, Mohandas Karamchand Mahatma Gandhi. Arun Gandhi lived with his grandfather through the final years of India’s struggle to free itself from British rule. His grandfather showed Gandhi firsthand the effects of a national campaign for liberation carried out through both violent and nonviolent means. In 1991 Gandhi, with his wife Sunanda, founded the M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, located at Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee where Gandhi is also a scholar-in-residence. The institute’s mission is to examine, promote, and apply the principles of nonviolent thought and action through research, workshops, seminars, and community service. Gandhi is an accomplished author and journalist who has written eight books and hundreds of articles. In addition to lecturing worldwide at colleges and institutes and addressing community and professional organizations, Gandhi is active in community, educational, corporate, and prison programs, workshops, and conferences. Gandhi will be delivering a plenary address, on the topic “Have We Distorted the Essence of Religion?” on Monday, November 25, at 7:15 PM-8:15 PM.

Jacques Derrida

OWNED FRENCH philosopher Jacques Derrida will be a plenary speaker at the Annual Meeting in Toronto, November 23-26, 2002. Derrida originated the school of deconstruction, a strategy of analysis that has been applied to literature, linguistics, philosophy, law, architecture, and religion.

For writing and advertising guidelines, please see www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.asp
sessions with a canadian
focus

the 2002 aar annual meeting will mark the first time the event is held outside of the united states. in honor of the aar’s canadian scholars, several program units have chosen to develop sessions with a canadian focus. this year’s annual meeting includes a number of opportunities to discover more about canadian scholarship.

religious ethics and public discourse: canadian and american considerations of stem cells and reproductive technologies (a20)

saturday, 1:00 pm–3:30 pm

new religious movements in canada and east asia (a32)

saturday, 1:00 pm–3:30 pm

migration and interreligious faith communities of african descent in canada: historical and contemporary voices (a91)

sunday, 9:00 am–11:30 am

the multi-faceted judaism of toronto (a111)

sunday, 1:00 pm–3:30 pm

religion and the legal status of first nations peoples in canada (a116)

sunday, 1:00 pm–3:30 pm

employment information services center staff readies for 2002 activities

emily noonan, american academy of religion

held this year at the sheraton toronto centre, the employment information services center at the 2002 annual meetings of the american academy of religion and the society of biblical literature provides employers and candidates registered for the annual meeting with interview facilities, a message service, job listings, and candidate credentials for review.

in his first year as aar’s academic relations director, carey j. gifford is excited about joining the eis center staff. gifford has coordinated this year’s ef!

if i knew then what i know now: lessons from the first year on the job (a17=s23-70)

saturday, november 23 1:00 pm–3:30 pm

sponsored by the employment information service (eis) advisory committee

edward r. gray, atlanta, ga, presiding

junior faculty members will reflect on and offer advice about the first year on the job during this special topics forum. panels will speak to their wisdom and missteps as they contended with developing new courses, teaching new students, completing a dissertation, balancing career and family life, and learning the local cultures of their new department, institution, and locality. panelists include: jane f. crosthwaite, mount holyoke college; michael prnn, mount holyoke college; glenn holland, allgheny college; eric boynton, allgheny college; christopher d. stanski, st. bonaventure university; and peter trudinger, st. bonaventure university.

new program units

everal new units join the annual meeting program this year.

tillich: issues in theology, religion, and culture group (tillich in dialogue)

monday, november 25 9:00 am–11:30 am

paul tillich, postmodernism, and process thought

monday, november 25 4:00 pm–6:30 pm

zen buddhism seminar

monday, november 25, 1:00 pm–3:30 pm

religious, social conflict, and peace: religious responses to a post-september 11 world

sunday, november 24, 4:00 pm–6:30 pm

employment information services center

staff readies for 2002 activities

if i knew then what i know now: lessons from the first year on the job (a17=s23-70)

saturday, november 23 1:00 pm–3:30 pm

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edward r. gray, atlanta, ga, presiding

knew then what i know now: lessons from the first year on the job, an eis special topics forum featuring department chair and the professors they hired through the 2001 eis center. the eis staff is also planning the annual orientation session, held friday, november 22, 7:00 pm–9:00 pm. though not mandatory, candidates and employer representatives are encouraged to attend.

pre-registration is open for both candidates and employers. please see www.aarweb.org/eis for complete information. eis staff can be of assistance at 1-404-727-4707 or eis@aarweb.org. eis center hours of operation are listed below.

hours of service:

friday: orientation 7:00 pm–9:00 pm

saturday and sunday: 8:00 am–6:30 pm

(interview hall opens at 9:00 am on saturday)

monday: 8:00 am–5:00 pm

tuesday: 8:00 am–10:00 am

2002 member calendar

dates are subject to change. check www.aarweb.org for the latest information.

november

november 1. research grant awards announced.

november 22. chairs workshop at the annual meeting, toronto. free for department enrolled in the academic relations program. for more information, see www.aarweb.org/department/acrel.asp

november 23-26. annual meeting, toronto. held concurrently with the society of biblical literature, november 16-19, comprising some 8,000 registrants, 200 publishers, and 100 hiring departments.

november 24. annual business meeting and breakfast. see the annual meeting program book for exact time and place.

december

journal of the american academy of religion, december 2002 issue.

december 5. new program unit proposals due.

december 13–14. program committee meeting, atlanta.

december 15. submissions for the march 2003 issue of religious studies news due. for more information, see www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn/submit.asp

december 31. membership renewal for 2002 due. renew online at www.aarweb.org/renewal/page01.asp
Faculty Recruitment Workshop Registration

Running a Successful Faculty Search in the Religious Studies Department

An Annual Meeting Faculty Recruitment Workshop

Friday, November 22, 2002, Toronto, Ontario, 8AM-4PM

Part of the AAR’s Strengthening College and University Religion & Theology Programs initiative supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Check-in</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:15 AM</td>
<td>Opening remarks and introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 AM</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Refreshment Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 AM</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Lunch (included with registration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>Refreshment Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>Wrap-up and evaluation</td>
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TO REGISTER

Complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax or surface mail.

Name

Department

Institution

Serving as Chair since

Number of faculty in department

Fax E-mail

Surface Mailing Address

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants. Send your registration form and payment of $74.00 *** before October 15, 2002. ($99.00 on site).

PAYMENT INFORMATION

☐ Check: (payable to “AAR Annual Meeting Faculty Recruitment Workshop”)

☐ Credit Card (Choose one):

☐ Visa

☐ Mastercard

☐ American Express

☐ Discover

Credit Card Number Expiration Date

Cardholder Signature

Name on Card (Please Print)

For more information, contact Carey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations, at cgifford@aarweb.org, or by phone at 1-404-727-2270.

*** Chairs from departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program receive a complimentary registration. For information on enrolling your department, see www.aarweb.org/department.

Subscribe to chairs@aarweb.org, the listserv for leaders in the field, for updates to the workshop program and other news for chairs. For the most up-to-date information on the Workshop, see www.aarweb.org/department/workshops.
**Getting Around in Toronto: PATH**

Walking on the streets of Toronto can be a chilly prospect in late November. It is a great time to take advantage of the Public Access Terminal System or the PATH. Toronto’s “underground city,” the PATH is 6 miles of pathways linking 5 major downtown hotels and lined with more than 1,200 retail stores and services. The Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Fairmont Royal York Hotel, and Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel are all accessible by the PATH, so you don’t have to brave the elements when attending the sessions of the Annual Meeting.

Entrances to the subterranean walkway are indicated with PATH signage. PATH Marker Signs range from free standing outdoor pylons to door decals identifying the entrances to the walkway. In many elevators, there is a small PATH logo mounted by the button for the floor leading to the walkway. PATH directional signs tell you which building you’re in and the next building you will be entering. Street names are identified as you walk beneath them. Look for the disability access symbol indicating an alternate route for people with disabilities. Be forewarned that certain areas of the PATH run directly through department stores and will be inaccessible outside of store hours. Also, there are many flights of stairs and inaccessible doorways without obvious alternative routes that might make travel difficult for people with disabilities.

A free shuttle service will be running for people who don’t want to brave the labyrinth of the PATH. The shuttle will service the Convention Centre and all Annual Meetings hotels in a continuous loop. This includes area hotels such as the Toronto Coloney Hotel and the Delta Chelsea that are not connected to the PATH system. Shuttles will run every 15 minutes between 6:00 AM and 10:00 AM, and between 6:00 PM and 12:00 AM. Between 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM shuttles will run every 20-25 minutes.

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**Annual Meeting Faculty Recruitment Workshop**

**Running a Successful Faculty Search**

The American Academy of Religion, the Academic Relations Task Force, and the Academic Relations Program will be conducting a workshop, Running a Successful Faculty Search during AAR’s Annual Meeting in Toronto (Friday, November 22, 2002 from 8 AM to 4 PM at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel). Chairs or members of search committees, faculty being developed to assume leadership responsibilities, and Deans will be interested in attending this Workshop. Chairs might consider bringing a team of faculty or a designated faculty person to the workshop.

The day will be spent with colleagues in religion and theology working with two nationally recognized scholars who have published and spoken widely on hiring faculty, teaching, and faculty development. Baron Perlman and Lee McCann, both of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, have presented workshops on faculty recruiting and teaching portfolio development at various campuses nationally, as well as at national and regional conferences.

Hiring good colleagues has never been more important. Recruitment requires the diligence of a coal miner, however, and the patience of a saint. This workshop focuses on the recruiting faculty who are a good fit with a department and institution, and who have the potential to be good teachers. Emphasis will be placed on practical information, with exercises for participants.

The workshop will begin by looking inward to assess each department’s needs. After an introduction to planning, techniques will be provided for gathering the information necessary to hire and retain good colleagues and teachers.

At lunch, workshop participants will break into groups by institutional type and discuss issues unique to religion departments.

After lunch, the workshop focus will turn outward, to the search process and issues specific to successful recruitment. Participants will leave the workshop with both a draft job advertisement and a complete job description.

The workshop will address:

- The educational context for recruiting: recruiting in higher education
- Ethical guidelines in recruiting
- Planning: taking stock and looking ahead
- Good teaching and scholarship: the unique nature of your position
- Recognizing good teaching
- The teaching portfolio

**Annual Meeting Special Topics Forum**

**Religious Scholars Play Role in Bioethics Debates**

Dena S. Davis, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law

Cloning! Embryo research! Stem cells! How does the public make sense out of the myriad scientific, ethical, and political questions these topics arouse? And how do governments make policy around such potentially divisive issues? Part of the answer is: we make working groups, we write policy papers, we create commissions, we hold congressional hearings. President Clinton reacted to the announcement of the birth of Dolly by creating the National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC). NBAC was replaced by President Bush with the President’s Bioethics Commission (PBC), headed by University of Chicago philosopher Leon Kass. In July 2002, the PBC published its first report, urging a moratorium on therapeutic and reproductive cloning. Outside the government, religious groups, patient advocacy groups, and others have struggled to figure out how our society should respond to the challenges raised by those exciting but troubling scientific advances. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) formed a working group to look at stem cell research. AAAS also funds a group of scholars focusing on “Jewish discourse” on genetic ethics.

In all of these endeavors, scholars of religion have played an important role. That is not surprising, when one considers that the big questions in the stem cell debate include, e.g., the moral status of the human embryo, the moral obligation to relieve human suffering; the proper role of religious beliefs in a democratic, pluralist society; issues of moral complicity; what it means to say that human beings are made in God’s image.

At the 2002 Annual Meeting, in a Special Topics Forum organized by the Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion (CPUR), AAR members who have participated in various aspects of the stem cell debate will reflect on their experiences. Panelists include Jim Childress, a member of NBAC; Ronald M. Green, a member of both AAAS working groups and chair of the ethics committee of Advanced Cell Technology, who also served on the Human Embryo Research Panel; Moira McQueen, a member of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute; Laurie Zoloth, chair of the Geron ethics committee and leader of the “Jewish discourse” group. Dena Davis, chair of the CPUR, and a member of both AAAS working groups, will moderate.

October 2002 AAR RSV • 5
toronto offers something for everyone, from world-famous attractions and world-renowned theatre, to world-class shopping. Toronto is home to a vast diversity of cultures and ethnicities: a true "melting pot." Toronto also has the status of third largest theatre center in the English-speaking world. After London and New York. You will find there is plenty to see and do outside of the Annual Meeting.

Price Guide in Canadian Dollars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>($)</td>
<td>(under $10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($)</td>
<td>($10-20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>($)</td>
<td>($21-35)</td>
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</tbody>
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Eating

Bb33 33 Gerrard Street West
Located in the heart of downtown Toronto, Bb33 serves Canadian cuisine created with fresh seasonal ingredients from across Canada. With two distinct concepts -- a Bistro and a Brasserie -- Bb33 offers both an elegant dining room and a relaxed but upscale café. $$$-

The Elephant & Castle
212 King Street
Heart-warming comfort foods from Britain are featured at The Elephant & Castle, as well as imported beers, ales, and a variety of single malt scotches. The menu features traditional English items such as Bangers and Mash, Fish 'n' Chips, Shepherd's Pie, and Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding, as well as favorite American fare such as grilled fish, chicken, pasta, and a wide variety of sandwiches.

Ginger Wasabe
1392 Yonge Street
Built on a reputation for delicious food and low prices, Ginger Wasabe offers tempting and artfully prepared dishes of sushi, sashimi and teriyaki, in a comfortable dining atmosphere. $$

Mosquito Moe’s North Country Grill
130 Edginton Avenue East
If you’re looking for some good ol’ Canadian home cooking, Mosquito Moe’s North Country Grill is the place to be! A great selection of your favourite grub, including Campfire Stix-Fry, Maple Mill Chicken, Baby Backwoods Ribs, as well as great appetizers like Coconut Shrimp and North Country Chicken Wings. $$

Penelope Restaurant
225 King Street
From the flaming Kefalogrill to the succulent roast lamb, lightly seasoned and spiced, Penelope Restaurant recaptures the culinary style of authentic Greek cooking. The result is a wonderful myriad of tastes and textures. $-$-$

Panorama
55 Bloor Street
Winner of the Toronto Sun award for "Best Cocktails & Best View" and NOW Magazine’s selection for "Best Spot for a Romantic Date," Panorama combines exceptional cuisine with a breathtaking view to create an evening to remember. Panorama is open daily from 5 PM-2 AM.

Documents Needed to Cross Border

Remember travel documents for easy passage to Canada.

- Passports are the most convenient documents for clearing customs, but they are not required for US citizens (see below).
- Airlines will not usually board persons without proper documentation.
- Returning from Toronto by air is especially easy since one clears US customs before departing.
- A Canadian visitor visa. Check with an office of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service before leaving the US to make sure you have all the necessary papers to return to the US.
- Citizens from some countries require a visitor visa to enter Canada. There are many countries to which this restriction does not apply, however. Visa information is available online. The Canadian government’s official web site is www.bootstrap.com, and the page for visa requirements is www.canadainternational.gc.ca/view- e.asp?Op=0010000000001&Rec=0110001. Please check with the Canadian government embassy or consulate in your area regarding specific questions.

Traveling with children

Canada has laws and regulations to protect children and to reduce abduction by parents or others. If you are traveling with a child, you should carry identification for them similar to that mentioned above. If you are not the parent or legal guardian of the child accompanying you, please see the Canadian government’s web site to learn more.

Speakers and exhibitors

It is not necessary to flag yourself as a visiting speaker if you are attending the meeting as a speaker or exhibitor. Neither guest speakers nor exhibitors require work permits to attend the meeting. Claiming “conference attendance” as the reason for visiting Canada is acceptable.

If for some reason you need to verify conference attendance, the pre-registration materials state that if you have already registered for the conference and have not received an additional registration verification from the AAR, please contact our office in Atlanta, tel. 404-727-3049.

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- Airlines will not usually board persons without proper documentation.
- Returning from Toronto by air is especially easy since one clears US customs before departing.
- Canada has an open border with the United States. This means that citizens and legal permanent residents of the US do not require passports or visas to visit Canada. They can usually cross the Canada border without difficulty or delay; but the process is easier if using a passport. If not using a US passport, native-born US citizens require a birth certificate and photo ID; naturalized citizens require a certificate of naturalization and photo ID; permanent residents (who are not citizens) require a Resident Alien Card.

Non-US Citizens

Temporary residents of the US who carry a Temporary Resident Card or Employment Authorization Card require a passport for travel to Canada. They may also need a visitor visa. Visas are not available at the border; they must be obtained at a Canadian embassy, consulate, or mission outside of Canada.

If you are a foreign student, temporary worker in the US, or a visitor in the US who wants to return to the US after visiting Canada, you may encounter difficulties if you do not have a passport or Canadian visitor visa. Check with an office of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service before leaving the US to make sure you have all the necessary papers to return to the US.

Citizens from some countries require a visitor visa to enter Canada. There are many countries to which this restriction does not apply; however. Visa information is available online. The Canadian government’s official web site is www.bootstrap.com, and the page for visa requirements is www.canadainternational.gc.ca/view-e.asp?Op=0010000000001&Rec=0110001. Please check with the Canadian government embassy or consulate in your area regarding specific questions.
AAR Election

The Nominations Committee is pleased to be able to place such excellent candidates on the ballot, and we are grateful to them for their willingness to serve the Academy. This year, members will elect a vice president.

Once again, AAR members will be able to vote by electronic ballot. A paper ballot will be mailed to members without e-mail addresses on file. We hope that this convenience will again result in a larger percentage of members participating in the election.

Online voting will be conducted via the “Members Only” page of the AAR’s Web site. Go to the site at www.aarweb.org, click on the prominent link for “AAR Election.” From there, you will be asked for your member ID number and your last name. After you are logged in, simply follow the prompts to cast your ballot. Your vote is completely confidential.

Sincerely yours,
Raymond B. Williams, Chair
Nominations Committee

Call for Nominations

The Nominations Committee will continue its practice of consultations during the Annual Meeting in Toronto to begin the process of selecting nominees for Vice President to take office in November 2003. The committee takes seriously all recommendations by AAR members.

The following characteristics regularly surface in discussions of candidates for Vice President:

(a) Scholarship “represents the mind of the Academy,” the “international reputation,” “breadth of knowledge of the field,” “widely known.”

(b) Service to the Academy: “serves the Academy broadly conceived,” “gives service regularly,” “leads sections, sits on committees,” “supports regional work.”

(c) General: “electable,” “one the average member of the Academy will look upon with respect,” “one whose scholarship and manner is inclusive rather than narrow, sectarian, and/or exclusive.”

Please send your recommendations of persons the committee should consider to the AAR Election Office marked “Recommendations for Nominations Committee.”

Hans Hillerbrand

Hans has been Professor of Religion at Duke University since 1988, where he served as department chair from 1998-2006. His Ph.D. is from the University of Erlangen, Germany. He taught at City University of New York, where he was Dean of Graduate Studies andProvost and at Southern Methodist University, where he was Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. He has served the profession in a variety of capacities, such as president of the Society for Reformation Research and the American Society of Church History. Hillerbrand’s field is the history of Christianity. He has been on the editorial board of such journals as the Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies and the Journal of the History of Ideas. He is currently co-editor of the Journal Church History. He has published several books on early modern church history, many of which are in English, and a four-volume Oxford Encyclopedia of Reformation. (1996). He currently serves the AAR has included Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee and Chair of the Association of Department Chairs, as well as membership on the Finance and the Teaching and Learning Committees. He presently serves on the AAR Executive Committee and is the AAR delegate to the American Council of Learned Societies, where he is also a member of the Executive Committee.

Statement on the AAR

My first annual AAR meeting was in Atlanta, back in the early 1970s, and my guess is that at most 500 of us were in attendance—all staying in one hotel! Compare that with our meeting last fall in Denver. What a dramatic change in the role of the AAR, in size, complexity, and diversity! It reflects the changes that have occurred in the academic study of religion during the past three decades. What has not changed, however, is the role of the AAR in the professional lives of its members and the need for a vigorous, professional society whose voice is heard in the academy and the public sphere.

The members of the AAR are a diverse lot as are the institutional forms of the study of religion—we are traditionalists and innovators, “Westerners” and “Easterners,” believers and nonbelievers, graduate students and senior professors. Some of us teach in public universities others at church related colleges. In that diverse setting, here is what I see as a chairwoman that demands attention and for which I solicit your support.

Conversation about new ways of strengthening our AAR community and how we can make sure that all the voices in the academic study of religion are heard. Many of our colleagues are presently not members of the AAR. We must engage in an energetic effort to convince them that the AAR gives a sense of community by connecting us with others in our field. A specific case in point is the fact that student members now compose roughly one-third of the AAR membership. We must engage in focused conversation about how we can meet the needs and participation of our undergraduate student members better than we do at present.

Conversation about how to enhance the public understanding of the academic study of religion, while remaining true to our core mission of teaching and research. Our field often continues to be misunderstood the so-called “experts” who inform public opinion are not experts at all but spin-docs.

Conversation, finally, about the long-term role of the AAR. For ten years, I’ve been saying that we must find ways to make sure the AAR renews its vision, regionally and nationally, of helping us to sustain the commitment and enthusiasm that prompted us to make the academic study of religion our vocation.

A big agenda! Our common commitment to our profession will make the AAR an even stronger voice of those of us who are in the days to come.

October 2002 AAR RSV • 7
Religious Studies News, AAR Edition

Journalists Honored for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion

THE AAR has selected three journalists to receive its 2002 Awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion. Beth McMurtrie (Chronicle of Higher Education) won the contest for journalists at news outlets under 100,000 circulation; Peter Smith (Louisville Courier) won the contest for journalists at news outlets over 100,000 circulation, and Deborah Caldwell (ReliefWeb) won the contest for opinion writing. Each participant submitted five articles published in North America during 2001.

McMurtrie submitted articles on intelligentsia, a progressive movement within Islam in the September 11 attacks, and academics making apologies for historical wrongs, the bicentennial of the Cane Ridge revival, and the opening of a Christian center on the opinion writing contest, the jurors decided to identify only a first-place finisher. This year’s award will be presented immediately before the AAR presidential address on Saturday, November 23, 2002, at the AAR Annual Meeting in Toronto. Each first-place prize is $500.

The award for reporting on religion is overseen by the AAR’s Public Understanding of Religion Committee. The AAR thanks Deena S. Davis, chair of the committee, the other members of the committee, and especially the jurors for their contributions to the awards program. This year’s jurors were David Crumrin, a University of Michigan journalism fellow on subnational from his position as religion reporter for the Detroit Free Press; Ed Lambeth, a professor of journalism at the University of Missouri at Columbia; and Laura R. Olson, AAR Public Understanding of Religion Committee member and a professor of political science at Clemson University.

WILLIAM PLACHER will be awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Placher, a professor of religion at Wabash College in Indiana, is widely recognized as an exceptional teacher who engages his students provocatively and interactively. Colleagues report that his classes allow students to explore their own questions and ideas in a serious, but non-threatening atmosphere. One colleague wrote: “He asks open-ended questions, engages students in dialogue, responds to their queries, and leads them to address their own questions, always aware of the learning of each student, even in a large class.” He personally engages students in his scholarship and has encouraged his colleagues to do likewise.

Placher is not only an exceptional teacher but has promoted excellence in teaching among colleagues at his college and elsewhere. As chair of his department, he has successfully encouraged excellent teaching among his colleagues. Although Wabash College has no religious affiliation and no general education requirement in religion and philosophy, it has the largest enrollment of any department there. Even more impressive, nearly twelve percent of Wabash undergraduates major in religion or philosophy and an equal number minor in those disciplines. These figures have doubled during Placher’s time as department chair.

As a theologian, he has written critical essays about the role of teaching theology in the context of a non-denominational, liberal arts college. He has written and spoken about the scholarship of teaching in his area of theology. Raymond Williams, the founding director of the Wabash Center for Teaching, and Learning in Theology and Religion, stated that he could not have established this center without the support of Prof. Placher, who led the first consultation, sponsored, chaired the committee looking for Prof. Williams successor, and currently serves on its advisory board. Placher has written articles in Teaching Theology and Religion.

Professor Placher is an excellent example of the exceptional teaching that is occurring in the field of religious studies and theology. He not only is an exceptional teacher but has done significant reflection about the teaching and learning. The candidates for the AAR Excellence in Teaching Award in the last three years have been truly exceptional. This year the Committee on Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion had a particularly difficult time in making the final selection because of the many truly fine candidates.

Thomas V Peterson, Chair of the Committee on Teaching and Learning, encourages chairs and colleagues to send letters of nomination for this prestigious award to Carey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations at the American Academy of Religion. The guidelines for this award are listed on the AAR Webpage.

DIANE ECK has won the 2002 Martin E. Marty Award for the Public Understanding of Religion. Eck is Director of the Pluralism Project and Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies at Harvard University. The Pluralism Project documents the growing presence of the Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, and Zoroastrian communities in the United States. Its CD-ROM, Our Common Ground: World Religions in America, provides a multimedia introduction to the world’s religions in the American context. Eck’s book A New Religious America addresses the challenges of this new religious diversity for the United States.

Previous recipients of the annual award are David M. Kripke, Eileen Barker, Cornell West, Walter Capps, Harvey Cox, and Martin E. Marty.

The award will be presented immediately before the presidential address on Saturday, November 23, at the AAR Annual Meeting in Toronto. The prize for the award is $500.

The AAR Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion, chaired by Deena S. Davis, selects the award recipients. Nominations for next year’s award to Marty Award Nominations, AAR, 825 Houston Mill Road, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30329.

Eck Wins 2002 Marty Award

Excellence in Teaching Award

Awards for Excellence

T HE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion offers Awards for Excellence in order to recognize new scholarly publications that make significant contributions to the study of religion. These awards honor works of distinctive originality, intelligence, creativity, and importance; books that have a decisive effect on how religion is examined, understood, and interpreted.

Awards for Excellence are given in three categories (Analytical-Descriptive, Constructive-Reflective Studies, and Historical Studies). Not all awards are given every year. In addition, there is a separate competition and prize for the Best First Book in the History of Religions. For eligibility requirements, awards processes, and a list of current jurors, please visit the Book Awards - Rules page www.aarweb.org/awards/bookawards.asp.

The AAR is pleased to announce this year’s recipients of the Awards for Excellence in Religion and the Best First Book in the History of Religions:

Awards will be presented prior to the Presidential Address at the Annual Meeting in Toronto on Saturday, November 23, 2002. Please see your Annual Meeting Program Book for location.
A Rumor

October 29, 2001

WITHIN HOURS of the terrorist attacks last month, the word was out: Israel was responsible for crashing airplanes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The reason? Its intelligence agency, Mossad, wanted to discredit Arab Muslims. The "evidence": 4,000 Israeli employees in the World Trade Center were said to be absent the day of the attacks because they had been tipped off.

This notion at first seemed to be the province of a small number of bin Laden allies. For instance, Muhammad Atta’s father blamed the Israelis for the attacks during a press conference last month and called the United States the “root of terrorism.” But in the month since the attacks, the rumor has spread, starting in Pakistan and the Middle East, moving throughout the World Wide Web and ending up in educated Muslim commu-
nities in the United States. Last week it was revealed that Salam Al-Marayati, a respected American Muslim leader prominent in national efforts to promote interfaith dia-
louge, said in an interview on a Los Angeles radio talk show that Israel should be on the “suspect list” of those who carried out the attacks. A few days later, another scandal emerged: Imam Mohammed Gemeaha of New York’s prominent Islamic Cultural Center had fled to Cairo, where he gave an interview in Arabic stating that “Israelis planned those terrorist attacks.”

These comments by reputable religious lead-
ers were milder versions of what is appearing by the thousands on web message boards. Thousands of message board posts have appeared on all sorts of sites, from the most moderate to the most strictly Muslim. Some writers seem angry, but most explain their views in calm terms, as if they are simply stating a fact that others have somehow, unfortunately, missed.

On Iran, an American Islamic news site, a member named AB writes: “I now strongly believe that the Jews knew about this attack and its plans, and most probably helped a great deal in the ‘perpetration’ of the US intel-
ligence, and caused for the suicide attack to occur successfully.”

A post on the Islamic Circle of North America’s web site is also typical: “Zionists want to see that Muslims and Arabs are attacked and their properties burned down so that the environment of the Spanish Inquisition days are recreated in the 21st century United States, so that Muslims either leave Islam for their own security or are mur-
dered or exiled.”

Believer member Jihahad wrote something similar, though he toned down the rhetoric: “I believe . . . that Israel is indirectly connect-
ed to our recent tragic events. Sure, Jews will attack me for this, but I believe that Israel’s Mossad possibly had evidence that this attack would happen.”

They don’t expect as big or wild an event as in 1801. But they fully expect that what they present will resonate.

“We were not interested [in] a re-enactment where everybody wears old clothes and I pretend to be the preacher and you pretend to fall down and be saved, because we thought it would be hokey,” said the Rev. Robert Steffer, co-curator of the Cane Ridge Preservation Project, which is run by trustees of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). “We thought it would be better to have something that resonates to the Christians of today that looked back while also looking forward.”

Several denominations and movements trace their roots to Cane Ridge and related revivals. Leavell’s massive Southeast Christian Church is a direct descendant. Revivalist Baptist and Methodists, who were fringe sects in the 1700s, rode the revival wave to rapid growth in the 1800s. And later generations of camp meetings, eucharist Pentecostal revivals, and Billy Graham-style mass evangelism bear the marks of Cane Ridge.

Winner of the contest for journalists at news outlets under 100,000 circulation

Three Theologians Face a Dilemma for Themselves, Their Colleges, and The Church

Beth McMurtie

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July 20, 2001

GAILE POHLHAUS is small and round, with a cap of fluffy gray hair. Sunk into a couch in the vast lobby of a Milwaukee hotel during the annual conference of the Catholic Theological Society of America, this for-
mer nun is the picture of grandmotherly romantic. It is easy to imagine her in the classroom at Villanova University, tackling personal topics as the sacrament of marriage with the thoughtfulness of some-
one who loves to teach.

"Every so often I think about retiring," she says. "But what else could I do that I would enjoy so much?"

But it is her role as a professor that lies at the center of a dilemma faced by more than a thousand other Roman Catholic theologians teaching at Catholic colleges in the United States. Ms. Pohlhaus has been ordered to seek approval of her teachings from her bishop. She is thinking of refusing to seek this approval — called a mandatum — as a matter of principle.

When she was her students’ age, she says, the idea of a theologian’s defining the church would have seemed incredibly romantic. “I would have thought they were Lancelot or Guinevere: isn’t that exciting? Aren’t they strong for saying that?” Now that I’m older — and I don’t know how much wiser — I know it’s not a matter of strength. It’s a matter of hav-

ing your heart torn out, that’s what it is.”

If Ms. Pohlhaus does not feel like an Arthurian heroine, it’s because she is not quite sure where her obligations lie. Should she listen to her conscience, which says the church is wrong to demand that she seek her bishop’s approval for what goes on inside her classroom? Or should she be thinking of the ramifications this might have for her students and other Catholics, who may interpret her defiance as proof that the church is just one more monolithic insti-
tution to be treated with mistrust?

“I worry that students will think that it’s not important to listen to the church if I decide not to do it. I mean, they already think it’s not important to listen to the church, at least on sexual matters,” she says, then stops. She is quiet for a long time. “I just think the whole thing is a mess, and there doesn’t seem to be a solution for it.”

In 1990, when Pope John Paul II called for theologians to obtain a mandate, many scholars saw it as an intolerable limitation on their academic freedom. When they protested that the credibility of their discipline would be irreparably damaged, momentum seemed to move in the direction of mass resistance. But today, with the deadline for seeking a mandate just 10 months away, the three theologians have found that it’s not so simple to just say no. The price of signing up may be the loss of academic credibility and a binding obligation to the church. But the cost of refusing could be high as well, especially for those in the church, public retribution from angry alumni who consider them disloyal Catholics, and classroom challenges from perplexed students.

Winner of the contest for journalists at news outlets over 100,000 circulation

Cane Ridge Meeting House

1801 Revival Reverberates Today: Seminal Events Bicentennial Celebrated

Peter Smith

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July 30, 2001

PARIS, Ky. — Hundreds lay on the ground in religious ecstasy; some motionless as corpses, others shouting in joy or anguish.

Hundreds more laughed uncontrollably, sang, or twirled and jerked.

Rich and poor, slaves and free people, skeptics and believers, some 20,000 people gathered around the log Cane Ridge Meeting House in rural Bourbon County 200 years ago this August for what would become the seminal religious event of its day: an epochal happening whose influence is still playing out today.

The Cane Ridge revival planted religious idealism and was the first great social gathering in a new state emerging from the fearful isolation of its violent frontier days.

It also was the biggest, wildest, and most widely publicized event in a broader move-
mament known as the Western Revival, which transformed American religious culture.

Starting Saturday, caretakers of the log Cane Ridge Meeting House will cele-
brate the bicentennial of the revival with nine days of worship services and lec-
tures, culminating in a large communion service August 12, 2001.

Three Theologians p.23

Winner of the opinion writing contest

The Rumor

Deborah Caldwell

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October 29, 2001

A Surprising Number of Muslims Are Asking Whether Israel Was behind the Attacks

One of five articles submitted. Amir Hussain and Michael Sell, mentioned below, are current or recent AAR members.

NEWS

Awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion

One of five articles submitted. Gaile Pohlhaus, John R. Connolly, and Dennis M. Doyle, mentioned below, are current or recent AAR members.

One of five articles submitted. Richard Harrison, Bill Leonard, and the late Anthony Dowd, mentioned below, are current or recent AAR members.
Vasudha Narayanan
University of Florida

RSN: Describe the period of your doctoral study. What was it like and how did you feel to leave India and study at Harvard?

Narayanan: The study of religion as an academic discipline was not known in India and therefore not a focus of my interest when I was at school between my work there and at Harvard was to learn from some of the Vaishnava traditions of India. I was given the opportunity to study various facets of religious cultures in India and that is still missing to a large extent in Indian academia.

RSN: You have been called a "rebel" in the study of religion. What exactly is meant by this? What propelled you to research and teach in the study of religion?

Narayanan: I have been called a "rebel" in the study of religion. What exactly is meant by this? What propelled you to research and teach in the study of religion?

RSN: Can you tell us a bit about your academic life and career?

Narayanan: My first job in Chicago where I moved after I got married—was alladjunct positions. I did get a "real" job at DePaul University where I had the privilege of being a language of John Collins (initially the president of SB1) and Dominic Crossan.

Teaching a religion which is the majority tradition in the United States is also a challenge. The multi-layered way of one experiences the tradition in one's lived experience can be quite intriguing. The other way is seeing how the traditions present in these courses and the methods opened up a new world of understanding for me—literature at the time was literature. To know that one could scrutinize and analyze the texts with a wide array of tools and not think of them as living, breathing, or even being in a state of identity or faith was a very liberating feeling.

Other courses helped me become aware of inter-disciplinary methods of studying religion. I had studied texts, but when I went back to the texts, I noticed that I understood them to "hear" them and see them in a ritual context. I am still excited by how the other disciplines intersect and I continue to learn from those who study inscriptions, architecture, rituals, and the performing arts.

RSN: Reflect on your time in Cambridge.

Narayanan: My time in Cambridge was filled with learning: from the ruins and buildings of the University of Tartus, my family, and loving Bach, to learning that one does not pronounce the first "f" in "Wednesday." Charles Kimball, who now chairs the British Center, taught me how to pronounce "H" when we were studying for a course. Nancy, his wife, introduced me to the first suburban shopping mall I had ever seen. The resources in the university were tremendous. I still remember how my jaw dropped when I saw Widener library. In fact, I still think that libraries and the whole structure of inter-library loans in this country is just wonderful. It is a great service of the university that we scholars have here in this country.

But perhaps one of the most important aspects of my time there was meeting so many students from various cultures, or who were studying various cultures. It was a real pleasure in my life. I was working on a doctoral degree and taking courses in the study of religion. In this case, the issue continues with a conversation about Narayanan's doctoral work and the early stages of her scholarly career.

RSN: Can you tell us a bit about your academic life and career?

Narayanan: I have been called a "rebel" in the study of religion. What exactly is meant by this? What propelled you to research and teach in the study of religion?

RSN: Describe your arrival in Gainesville and what academic interests you pursued?

Narayanan: I had a job in Chicago and my husband was at the University of Florida. We moved to Gainesville, school desegregated, hearing music, the ethos of various church denominations — and I guess my friends were trying to understand where I was coming from. I particularly remember the time I got engaged. It was a very wonderful time. My parents had married me off to my husband with the expectation that I would be a young woman studying in Chicago. Our families lived in India, and then told us about each other and began to correspond. We got engaged. It was a conventional "arranged" marriage. Obviously if we did not wish to continue, we could have opted out. Other family members have met and married people of European descent or from other parts of the world. We chose to meet the traditional way, although it was in Cambridge. This was something we felt comfortable with, but it was a cultural experience for my friends and they seemed to be quite intrigued with the process.

I was genuinely confused by what the "study of religion" meant. Like many of my colleagues here in this country, I had never encountered the critical study of texts that one is supposed to mean still pervades introductory courses in various fields. It is, obviously, a challenge to teach religion like Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam in this country. There are multiple traditions within each one of these, and I think my friends were trying to convey those complexities. It is important not just to portray several non-linear interpretations of religions, but to also engage with the ways in which the traditions are experienced in various spheres, and be aware of the limited use of the academic category of "religion." I have been teaching for several years, as well as in the academic category of "religion." We end up writing about practices of integrity in various spheres. Finding the right books for our courses is sometimes very difficult. And then, there are issues common to all of us: there is a real strain of information that students find on the web. These are not only about information, but also about the ways in which one experiences faith and identity in America, and what academic interests you pursued?

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HAD THE GREAT PRIVILEGE of knowing Charles Winquist for 25 years. I first met at an Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. In the years since then, our careers overlapped and intertwined in many ways. He became the fourth Executive Director of the AAR in 1979 and led it through some of its most precarious years until 1982. Few people knew how near the AAR came to bankruptcy in 1980, but I became aware of it later, because I was selected to follow Charlie as Executive Director of the AAR beginning in 1983. Necessarily, he and I became much better acquainted during the time of the transition between his term and the beginning of mine. We could not have guessed that we would work much more closely in the Department of Religion at Syracuse University beginning only two years later.

Chico, California remained Charlie’s home after the transition between his AAR service and mine. Numerous trips there were required of me between 1982 and 1985. Scholars Press had moved from the University of Montana to Chico in 1980 only a year after Charlie became the Executive Director of the AAR. Shortly thereafter, he also became chair of the Board of Directors of SP. Little did he know how seriously troubled were the affairs of the press. But, Charlie had the necessary skills to save it by working with many people involved in and committed to the vision of that publishing venture. At one time, he was concurrently the acting Director of Scholars Press, while continuing as Executive Director of the AAR. He often told me of some of the struggles he handled in those trying years. Although Scholars Press no longer exists, to the regret of many of us who devoted much energy and time to developing it, it would not have had the last 20 years of its existence nor have made the impact on the scholarly development of the field and the larger arena of the humanities that it did without the energy, commitment, and hard work that Charlie expended in assuring its survival in the period between 1980 and 1982. And the field of the academic study of religion would have been much the poorer if it had not survived. Kudos to Charlie for that.

The American Academy of Religion not only survived its challenges, but flourished in the 20 years since Charlie’s term as its Executive Director concluded. For the period that I served as Executive Director from 1983 through 1992, I had the great good fortune of virtually constant access to Charlie to confer with and reflect on AAR matters. He was a valuable sounding board and an unfailing supporter of my work during those years. While I was in office I tried never to miss an opportunity publicly to acknowledge how crucial a role he played in the history of the AAR. And I certainly shall not miss this opportunity on the occasion of this memorial moment.

Professor Gabriel Vahanian accepted a position at the University of Strassbourg in 1983. He had firmly established an understanding within our department that, contrary to the prevailing wisdom in many other graduate programs in religion, it is essential to include the study of theology as one of the major dimensions of the academic study of religion. Vahanian’s departure, therefore, necessitated a search for someone to assume a position as “theologian” on our faculty. That quest brought Professor Winquist to Syracuse, first as a Visiting Professor in Spring 1985, and then permanently in Fall 1986. He was appointed the Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion, the chaired position in which he remained until his death on April 4, 2002.

Charlie’s accomplishments as a professor were so numerous as to demand that I choose but a very few to mention. First, he was a vigorous, demanding, incredibly successful teacher, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He was devoted to the students and they reciprocated. Beyond the classroom he was also a dedicated mentor to his students, particularly those entering academic careers, as he tirelessly worked in assisting them in finding teaching positions. Further, he promoted Syracuse students with publishers, assisting many of them in finding publication outlets for articles and books. He was actively involved with a number of publishing firms as an evaluator of manuscripts and with a number of journals as a member of editorial boards. Second, Charlie was an invaluable colleague. He fully and actively participated in the life of the department. He served as Director of Graduate Students from 1988 until 1992 and he also served on the Graduate Committee for much of the time he was on this faculty. At a personal level, since I was Department Chair when he joined the faculty and remained so through 2000, I experienced Charlie as an invaluable resource and ally. I remain grateful to him for that.

Charlie was a thinker. He lived the life of the mind in a wondrous way. He was an accomplished philosopher and theologian, prolific in his publications. He authored eight books and co-edited two very important reference works. He published significant articles in major journals and chapters in many books. He served on the editorial boards of both journals and presses and evaluated manuscripts for many publishers. He co-founded an electronic journal in 1999. He was no less diligent in his preparation for teaching and lecturing, which he did nationally and internationally. Further, he was one of the most voracious readers with whom I have ever been acquainted, and he was one of the most informed citizens. He kept abreast of national and international affairs more assiduously than most people I have known. I deeply admired those behaviors and I learned much from him.

Finally, Charlie was a cherished friend. Many of us here today knew that of him. Through many life struggles that we respectively experienced, he was there for me and I tried to be there for him. There was a gentleness to him and a caring that I profoundly admired. I never spent time with him but that the connection between us was not mutually reaffirmed, even as it was in the acute care unit of Crouse Hospital, a few days before he left Syracuse for the last time and was moved to Pittsburgh. I never was able to speak to him again. His loss saddens me deeply; I cherish all that he did for and gave to me. I miss him.

Farewell professor, teacher, colleague and friend. •

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Religious Studies News, AAR Edition

Graduate Survey of Religion and Theology Programs

Carey J. Gifford, American Academy of Religion

Throughout the fall of 2000, over 1000 department chairs and other program heads received a survey of undergraduate departments and programs in religious studies, theology, Bible, and sacred texts. This Survey of Religion and Theology Programs sought to map comprehensively the academic study of religion (religious studies, theology, Bible, and sacred texts) in the US and Canada. It was designed as part of the Lilly Endowment Funded Strengthening College and University Programs in Religion and Theology (SCURIT) initiative.

This fall, in the next phase of the AAR’s initiative, we will conduct a Graduate Survey of all fully accredited colleges, universities, and seminaries in the United States and Canada that offer academic doctoral degrees in religion or theology, such as the Ph.D., Th. D., and S.T.D. The intent of this survey is to assist those institutions preparing candidates for the terminal degree necessary for their professional careers in religious studies. For this reason, we will only survey the academic doctoral programs, rather than professional doctoral programs such as the D.Min. We may survey Masters level programs in the future.

Taken together, the undergraduate and graduate surveys will provide data for all those interested in the future development of the field. With the support of the Lilly Endowment and the endorsement of major societies in the study of religion, we can address effectively the need for accurate, reliable, and useful information. We intend to collect data from every identified academic unit in which the study of religion is a central focus. Once this data is gathered, we will share it with you and your colleagues for your strategic decisions.

As we have long known and as reviews of the websites of the major graduate programs in religion make even clearer, there is little consensus about how the graduate study of religion is understood or taxonomized, its boundaries and foci, or anything approaching a standard or typical conceptual framework. As a result, we have prepared the survey instrument in such a way that the results will be understandable and comparable across institutions.

To assist us in the creation of the survey instrument, a Council on Graduate Studies in Religion advisory group, chaired by Steve Tipton of Emory University and composed of Elizabeth A. Clark (Auburn University), Richard A. Rosengarten (University of Chicago), John S. Simon (Boston University), and Alan Segal (Barnard College), and five consultants, Mark Greidanus (University of Arizona), Sheila Mann (American Political Science Association), Randi Warne (University of Alabama), Mark W. Wilkins (Auburn Theological Seminary), and Charles Willard (Association of Theological Schools in the US and Canada) have worked during the winter and spring on the instrument itself in order to garner as much helpful information as possible. They have compared surveys from the American Historical Association, the American Philosophical Association, and the Modern Language Association that they have seen in order to describe what we have found on over 100 institutional web sites.

The Survey has as many forced responses as possible, minimizing the need for writing in comments and thereby maximizing the ability to compare responses statistically. We have grouped the questions into categories:

• General information about the program and the department

Student recruitment and admission:
• Selective criteria for admission, including examinations, dissertation, and teaching.

Faculty:

In the fall of 2002, approximately 100 departments in the United States and Canada will receive a packet containing the survey form. We have a current enrollment response rate on the undergraduate survey and are expecting the same level of participation for the graduate survey. We urge all recipients of this survey packet to take the time to fill out the information and return it. By participating, you will be helping your program as well as the field. Your responses, of course, will be strictly confidential. The more information that can be gathered about the graduate study of religion in the US and Canada, the better able we will be to provide discipline-wide information that will help promote and advance the academic study of religion.

From the Student Desk

Mere Mime

Todd Farley, Fuller Theological Seminary

Todd Farley is a doctoral candidate at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California and can be reached at tfarley@fuller.edu.

My SKIN had traces of a mime’s “white face,” my lips were stained with red, and my black costume was moist from the exertion of a dance. I was a simple mime surrounded by a table full of pastors, scholars, and authors talking about their achievements—one could say even boasting. Amongst their boasts was a profession that I had stumbled into, and one that I have now abandoned to the realm of theory. I wanted to remain a mere mime, even an excel- lent one; however, I was still a mere mime, voiceless. A mime getting a Ph.D. seemed out of place. Their minds leaned through their gestures and I easily read their ques-
tion: “Is a mime with a brain an oxymoron?” They saw art as being for expres-
sive, emotional, and radically creative minds, minds that reject academic pursuits and ministerial office.

As a mime, I have encountered these looks and comments time and time again, on various levels. Pastors send mimes to the children’s church, and theologians find microscopy in Hollywood’s films. Broadway is sought out for leadership in performance, while the Church’s artists are often driven away.

I fear performing arts, theology, and academic arts. Art has become a thing of “entertainment,” an escape, rather than a source for deliberate reflection and theology. The performing arts today are enmeshed in the greater cul-
ture of our society, yet they are alienated from the sacred. What has happened to the artist-philosopher and teacher who, like Plato, teaches in story? What has happened to the artist-prophet and minister like Ezekiel, John, and Jesus, whose symbols and gestures still speak to the nations? What will happen to the performing arts in the academy? Will they be mar-
ginalized, only existing as part of the entertainment, or limited to classifications of low and high culture? This was my question at my first AAR Annual Meeting. It is a question I am still asking.

Many people reflect on movies, many admire the dancer’s skill, but do they expect the dancer to be an academic, theologian, or the actor-prophet? No, not normally, because most dancers are not theologians or academics. The reason seems to be understandable enough; dancers must spend too much time in training to have time for theology and academics. However, this is a cultural stereotype, a marginalizing standard many have projected onto the perform-
ing artist. Neither theologian nor scholar can deny the artistic skill of Plato, nor can any pastor deny the ministry of Ezekiel or the artistic talents displayed by David. However, many Christians have failed the Christian performing artists of our own generation: have failed to call them to a higher expectation. Intellectual excellence—to ministry and even to the highest standards of skill—is absent in the arts of religion in our age.

Now universities and seminaries are awakening to these questions and beginning to the arts in their curriculum. Places like St. Andrews, Princeton, and Fuller Theological Seminary have begun new programs for aspects of arts in the Christian faith. The challenge they face is how to reintegrate arts into the academy. This is the chal-
lenge I propose to the fellowship of the AAR. To what sphere do we relegate the performing arts? Are they isolated to only one world, requiring a choice between entertainment, academia, and ministry? Is God hidden in the art, only speaking from the shadow? Will the voice of the greatest minds boggle the greatest minds?

As I started my journey into the Ph.D. program at Fuller Theological Seminary, I pondered these questions, as perhaps did my professors. I held my breath wait-
ing for my first grades, and let out a sigh when they affirmed that I belonged in the program. I have been encouraged to attend AAR-sponsored activities by many people in the Ph.D. program at Fuller. I was encouraged to find that my love for film and fine arts addressed at AAR conferences, yet the dramatic and performing arts seem only to speak from the shadows.

Now, I am asked to come to the tables of the AAR to set with your group of scholars, and I hold my breath. Will they marginalize artists and look at us as mere entertainers, or will we become just as much mere mimics?
Tim Renick Awarded University System of Georgia Board of Regents’ Teaching Excellence Award

Tim Renick is a summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Princeton University (1982), where he double majored in Religion and Government. He received his M.A. (1984) and Ph.D. (1986) from Princeton University, Department of Religion, with a concentration in comparative religious studies. Georgia State University hired him as Assistant Professor of Philosophy, with the specific assignment of developing a religion and philosophy major program. Students greeted the religious studies curriculum with great enthusiasm, and by 1991 there were twenty courses on the books, a B.A. degree approved by the Georgia Board of Regents, and graduates going off to study religion at some of the top graduate programs in the country. By the previous year our majors had gone on to study religion at some of the top graduate programs in the country—Boston, Harvard, Yale, Vanderbilt, Virginia, Chicago, and Emory. We’ve even had students study at Oxford and Cambridge. When a program is under ten years old and can cite successes like this, I guess it is bound to get the attention of others.

Of course, the personal demands in starting any program can be overwhelming. In the early years, when I was

#### Beyond the Annual Meeting

**American Lectures in the History of Religions**

The American Lectures in the History of Religion was founded in 1991 in order to encourage path-breaking scholarship through a lecture and book series. It flourished for some 60 years under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies. At the request of the ACLS, the American Academy of Religion assumed administrative responsibility for the series in 1994, and the 2001 calendar year. Prof. William G. Oxtoby, University of Toronto (emeritus) will deliver a lecture series entitled *Scribes in Historical Interaction.* He will address:

- Lecture 1: Papyri and Manuscripts: Seventh-Century, Alexandria
- Lecture 2: Permanence and Change: Ninth-Century Iraq
- Lecture 3: Sufi and Hindu: Sixteenth-Century India
- Lecture 4: Religion and Marriages: Twentieth-Century China
- Lecture 5: Heritage and Diaspora: Twenty-first-Century North America
- For the 2020-2021 series, each of the individual lectures, or information on how to bring Dr. Oxtoby to your campus, please see our web site (www.burkholder.ac.uk).

William G. Oxtoby (b. 1933) is professor emeritus of comparative religion at the University of Toronto, where he has taught since 1973. He is known for his work in the history of religions, and especially in the study of the Bible. He has been teaching at the University of Toronto since 1973, and has published extensively on the history of religions, including his most recent book, *The Ancient Egyptian Concept of the Soul,* published by the University of Chicago Press in 2001. Oxtoby has also published several books on the history of religions, including *The Ancient Egyptian Concept of the Soul,* published by the University of Chicago Press in 2001. Oxtoby has also published several books on the history of religions, including *The Ancient Egyptian Concept of the Soul,* published by the University of Chicago Press in 2001. Oxtoby has also published several books on the history of religions, including *The Ancient Egyptian Concept of the Soul,* published by the University of Chicago Press in 2001.

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Religious Studies News, AAR Edition

In the Public Interest

The Voucher Decision
Dena S. Davis
Cleveland-Marshall College of Law

The recent Supreme Court term brought a crucial decision about church-state relations. In Zobrest v. Simmons-Harris, the Court, by a 5-4 vote, upheld a Cleveland, Ohio plan that uses taxpayer money to help send children to religious schools. The vouchers, otherwise known as the Ohio Pilot Project Scholarship Program, are part of an experimental project whereby low-income students in failing school districts receive tuition aid to enable them to move to schools of their parents choosing. School vouchers are controversial for many reasons, including ambiguous data on whether or not they improve student performance. It is certain, however, that with the threat of unconstitutionality removed, voucher proponents will be pushing to expand programs that up to now have been minimal in scope.

Court observers have long noted that church-state decisions can be among the most difficult and complex. The majority argued that the dearth of available secular private schools willing to take voucher students, and the decision of neighboring districts not to open their public schools to voucher students, was not an artifact of the voucher program and thus should not be held against it.

The majority, the voucher program aids children “otherwise condemned to failing public schools” by giving their parents a range of choices, including the choice of religious schools. To the dissent, this is a program that “authorizes the use of public funds to pay for the tuition and transportation of thousands of Ohio school children in particular religious faiths.”

State entanglement with religion is another problem. In the Cleveland program, schools eligible for vouchers must accept students regardless of race or religion, and must not “advocate or foster unlawful behavior or teach hatred of any person or group on the basis of race...ethnic origin, national origin, or religion.” The State of Ohio must, presumably, appoint referees to ensure that the rules are followed.

President Bush, a proponent of vouchers, gave a rousing speech in Cleveland in which he compared this decision to 1954’s historic Brown v. Board of Education, couching it entirely in terms of poor parents’ right to choose schools just as rich parents can. Linda Greenhouse pointed out in the New York Times that this assistance of the church-state state, and deriding the Court’s decision in the robes of Brown, was carefully orchestrated by pro-voucher groups such as the Libertarian Institute for Justice. But, says Greenhouse, not all African-Americans support vouchers, and the NAACP has denounced the pairing of these options unacceptable. How could I deny the right of Muslim schools to migrate to this continent...?... Whatever we remove a brick from the wall that was designed to separate religion and government, we increase the risk of religious strife and weaken the foundation of our democracy,” Justice Souter said, “As appropriations for religious subsidy rise, competition for the money will top sectarian religions’ capacity for discord... Religious teaching at taxpayer expense simply cannot be cordoned from taxpayer politics, and every major religion currently exposes social positions that provoke intense opposition.” Justice Breyer “wrote separately to emphasize the risk that publicly financed voucher programs pose in terms of religious based social conflict,” and reminded readers of the Court’s words in 1971 that “political division along religious lines was one of the principal evils against which the [First Amendment religious clauses] were intended to protect.”

Of course, the fact that the Court has found vouchers to be constitutional does not mean any municipality must adopt them. The action now moves to the political process, and the immediate response to the Court’s decision is that the Justices’ concerns about civil strife are not misplaced. In a July 1 fundrasing letter, Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State wrote:

The voucher system will move quickly to take advantage of the Supreme Court ruling by trying to force Congress and state legislatures to pass laws that generate a wider wave. New voucher schemes from coast to coast... Catholic bishops and long-time Religious Right voucher crusaders saw dollar signs when they read the court’s ruling. Now they’re gearing up to pass laws that would have all of us subsidizing their religious academies... If they want taxpayer money, let them be answerable to the taxpayer. For private schools that accept vouchers, this means no more mandatory religious classes. No more discriminatory entrance standards. No more hiring and firing of staff on the basis of religion.

Perhaps this conflict can be avoided. I will end on an optimistic note, quoting Justice Souter yet again:

If the divisiveness permitted by today’s majority is to be avoided in the short term, it will be avoided by action at the political branches at the state and national levels. Legislatures not driven to desperation by fear of public opinion may be able to see the threat in vouchers in sectarian schools. Perhaps even cities with problems like Cleveland’s will perceive the danger, now that they know a federal court will not save them from it.
H ave you published a new book or article? Been promoted or received tenure? Appointed to a new position or school? Received an award? Finished your degree? Religious Studies News (RSN) would love to hear about your accomplishments! In response to an increased interest in Islamic studies, UC Berkeley Extension Online has launched a new online course on "The History of Islam." The course covers the geography, diversity, religious heritage, and politics of Islam. For further information, visit their website at www.acec.berkeley.edu.


Oxford University Press has recently published Wendy Doniger and Sudhir Kakar's new translation of the "Kamasutra." The new translation offers a new version of the sex manual.

The Centre for Reformation Studies within Emmanuel University of Oradea in Romania has recently received a $2.4 million grant from the Pew Charitable Trust to establish an interdisciplinary research program on religion and civic culture.

The University of Southern California Center for Religion and Civic Culture recently received a $2.4 million grant from the Pew Charitable Trust to establish an interdisciplinary research program on religion and civic culture.

The Association of Thielological Schools and Lily Endowment Inc. recently announced the 25 recipients of the Lilly Theological Research Grants for 2002-2003. The recipients can be viewed at www.atrs.edu.

Finished your degree? Appointed to a new position or school? Received an award? Finished your degree? Appointed to a new position or school? Received an award? From the Latest JAAR

From the Latest JAAR

September 2002, Volume 70 Number 3

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Louisville Institute First Book Grant Program For Minority Scholars

The Louisville Institute is pleased to announce a grant program to assist junior religion scholars of color to complete a major research and book project. All too often such scholars are asked to assume a heavy set of institutional responsibilities that can make it difficult to complete the scholarly work necessary to secure tenure. As a response, this grant program seeks to enable scholars to spend an entire academic year devoted to research and free of other professional responsibilities. Up to two grants of $45,000 each will be awarded for the 2003-2004 academic year.

Found in 1990 as a center for research and leadership education on American religion, the Louisville Institute seeks to nurture inquiry and conversation regarding the character, problems, contributions, and prospects of the historic institutions and commitments of Christianity in North America. The Louisville Institute especially seeks to enrich the religious life of American Christians and to encourage the revitalization of their churches, by bringing together those who lead religious institutions with those who study them, so that the work of each might inform and strengthen the work of the other.

Applicants must:

a. Be members of a racial/ethnic minority group. (The term “racial/ethnic minority group” includes African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders).

b. Have earned doctoral degree (normal for the Ph.D. or Th.D.).

c. Be employed in a full-time, tenure-track faculty position at an accredited institution of higher education (seminary, college, or university) in North America.

L. Be able to negotiate a full academic year free form teaching and committee responsibilities.

b. Be engaged in a scholarly research project leading to the publication of their first (or second) book, focusing on some aspect of religion pertinent to the role of Christianity in North America.

Application material may be requested from the Louisville Institute at the address below or may be downloaded from the Institute website. Completed applications must be postmarked by February 1, 2003. Application materials should demonstrate both the applicant’s productivity in the academy and commitment to his or her faith community. The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications:

a. the intellectual quality of the research project and its potential to contribute to academic study and scholarship in religion;

b. the potential contribution of the applicant’s research to the vitality of North American Christianity.

For further information and application materials, contact:

Dr. James W. Lewis
Executive Director
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1044 Alta Vista Road
Louisville, KY 40205-1798
TELEPHONE: (502) 895-3411, ext: 487
TELEPHONE: (502) 894-2286
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E-MAIL: info@louisville-institute.org
WEB SITE: www.louisville-institute.org

Call For AAR Series Editor

The AAR seeks an editor for its Cultural Criticism series. The Cultural Criticism series addresses the relation between religious studies and cultural studies/theory. It brings new voices into the debates on the interdependence of cultural and religious phenomena. By emphasizing the religious dimensions of culture and the cultural dimensions of religion, the series promotes a widening and deepening of the study of popular culture and cultural theory. The Cultural Criticism series aims to (1) read cultural texts or lived experience closely; (2) critique mainstream representa- tions of cultural phenomena and practices; and (3) construct alternative and oppositional cultural practices. Series volumes include Brent Plate and David Jasper, Imaging Religion: Film, Television, and the Bible, and Robert Magliola, On Deconstructing Life: Worlds: Buddhism, Christianity, Culture.

AAR series editors help set editorial policy, acquire manuscripts, and work with Oxford University Press in seeing projects through to publication. The Cultural Criticism editorialship will begin in the November 2002 Annual Meeting. Please send applications and nominations, including a letter describing interest, qualifications, and a current CV, to Professor Terry Godlove, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549. Application deadline: November 1, 2002.

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To register for this workshop, fill out and return the registration form on page 4 or go to www.aarweb.org/department/workshops/chairs.asp.

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What subjects do you teach?
I am retired from full-time teaching. Who have been your role models?

Renick: From the beginning, we made the decision to emphasize comparative religion as the heart of our program. While some might think that, since we’re a program at a state school in the South, classes in Christianity would be our bread and butter. That’s not the case. Our second-tenure-track appointment was in Chinese religions, our third in Judaism and Hinduism, and our most recent appointment was in Islam. Our best-enrolled classes are not Bible and Christian Thought, but comparative courses like World Religions, Religion and Ethics, and Women and Religion. Non-western courses like Buddhism, and Zen and Shinto fill up. The fact of the matter is, especially in the aftermath of the Olympics, Atlanta has become an increasingly international city. Georgia State is among the most diverse state schools in the entire South. While I was too naive to realize it at the time, we’re trying to select our program was a fortuitous one. Our enrollments have at least doubled every couple of years for the past decade. In part, this is because our courses are seen as timely and relevant by the students. We helped teach a special September 11 course this past spring, and are adding the courses Religion, War, and Peace, and Islamic Fundamentalism for the coming year.

Of course, it always helps to be lucky. A year ago, our brand new tenure-track Buddhist, Isle Schindler, arrived on campus thirty weeks before September 11. He was making appearances on CNN, just down the street from campus, before making his way into the university community. He’s been very active in contributing to other university projects — the university’s new Middle East Center, a proposal for Asian Studies, the African-American Studies Department, the September 11 speakers series, study abroad initiatives. We’ve worked hard to show the administration and our colleagues in other departments that religious studies is not ancient and esoteric. It’s crucial to the day-to-day projects of the university.

RENICK, form p.13
fresh out of grad school, I was often the only faculty member teaching religion. As student interest grew, I had to supplement the curriculum with heavy doses of directed reading and independent study courses. In fact, over the years, I’ve offered something like 200 reading courses and directed over 50 Honors and Masters theses. I’m proud to say that many of the students who took these courses went on to top graduate schools like Brown, Harvard, Yale, and Chicago. So, I think the award recognizes some of these personal efforts, as well.

I also believe that I am an effective teacher. In the year leading up to the award, I taught six classes with over 180 students in total. On the numerical student evaluations for the year, one student rated my overall teaching effectiveness a “4” (on a 5-point scale), while every other student rated me a “5.”

RENICK: What subjects do you teach?

Renick: In the beginning, the easier question would be “What courses didn’t I teach?” For three of my first five years, I was the only Religious Studies faculty member at Georgia State, and I tried my best to teach the range of courses a good program should offer to its students. Many were “stretches” for me. I still teach ten to twelve different courses on a rotating basis. Religion and Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Introduction to Religion, Church and State, Contemporary Religious Thought, History of Christian Thought, and the new course Religion, War, and Peace are among them. As an indication that Georgia State attracts unconventional students, my most popular course may be Augustine and Aquinas, which fills up with 40-plus students every time it’s offered.

RENICK: Who has been your role models as a teacher?

Renick: As a junior at Dartmouth, I was pre-law and a Government major. Then I took some courses from Ronald Green and Robert Oden in the Department of Religion. I still remember that Dartmouth recently had initialed an annual campus-wide teaching award. In the first two years, Ron and Bob were the recipients. (You had to be under the age of 30 to be eligible; no one over in the Biology Department!) I soon learned why they were selected. Both are exemplars of what a teacher-scholar can be, and illustrate the impact that a teacher can have on students. They changed my career course. I decided to go in religion, and with Ron Green’s encouragement, applied for graduate school in religious ethics. At Princeton, Jeff Stout and the late Paul Ramsey and Victor Peller were enormously influential.

RENICK: What makes for excellent teaching — especially in the field of religious studies?

Renick: The answer to this question may be different for one who teaches at a private school, though I suspect not. I think the most important thing we can strive to be as teachers of religion is facilitators. Students are always curious about my personal beliefs, but my classes are successful, I think, because I make it clear that my views are not the point of the class.

I use “readers” for all of my courses — compilations of primary sources that I have put together. With the authors defending their own views for themselves, my role can be that of facilitator: someone who steps in to help students understand...
Summer 2003 Chairs Workshop at Georgetown University

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the various positions, their strengths and weaknesses. While I'm enough of a student of post-modernism to know (and to tell students) that I cannot be truly "objective" in some ultimate sense, appearances do matter in the classroom. By focusing my efforts on explaining Mary Daly or Stanley Hauerwas rather than siding with or opposing them, I think I'm able to speak to a much wider range of students.

In our program, we've had some students go on to Baptist seminary and others go on to Ph.D. work at Chicago and Berkeley. How can a single class, say, Augustine and Aquinas, be useful to both? My answer has been consistent over the years: keep the focus on the material and trust the students to determine for themselves who's right and wrong.

**RSN:** What is a teaching technique or learning experience that you have found especially effective?

**Renick:** One of the largest challenges in teaching religious studies at a large state school like Georgia State is the incredible range of student abilities. Some students would hold their own at Princeton, others struggle with basic reading and writing tasks. How do you address both groups simultaneously? Some people think that you need to "dumb down" the reading, using textbooks written to the level of the "average" college student (whatever that means). But I've never had much luck with such texts. They bore the better students. They bore me. And ironically, the "middle of the road" students for whom they are supposedly written rarely find them very exciting, either. In fact, I don't use a textbook in any class I teach. I put together readers: selections of primary texts. They bore the better students. They bore me. And ironically, the "middle of the road" students for whom they are supposedly written rarely find them very exciting, either. In fact, I don't use a textbook in any class I teach. I put together readers: selections of primary texts. This way the students are actually reading the views of the authors, not about the views.

This has several benefits. It challenges the better students, by the end of the semester, their critical skills often have improved markedly. Second, it holds my attention. I get to teach material I find challenging, and am more exited about going into the classroom as a result. I try to keep the less talented students from getting left behind by keeping the readings short, and by making sure we actually talk about the readings in class.

This approach does put some additional pressure on me as a teacher. In class, I have to present the material in such a way that it is outlined for the students who did not get the major points of the readings and yet not redundant for the students who did. I have to stick to essay exams and come up with questions that allow the talented students to show the depth of their knowledge and less talented students to show their grasp of the basics. Finally, I have to write extensive comments on students' work to speak to their particular abilities and needs. Come to think of it, I'm working way too hard…

I think the costs are worth it, though. The approach has allowed our better students to excel to a level where top graduate schools are interested in them. And, when things are really working well, their example rubs off: the struggling students start to improve as well.

**RSN:** In what ways is the vocation of teaching especially rewarding for you?

**Renick:** Teachers are always thrilled when their students succeed in traditional ways. I'm no different. I was excited when one of our students got into Harvard. It seemed to validate the work we had been doing. Just last year, one of our grads now at Chicago published an article in the _AAAR_. But I'm always telling my students that the point of Religious Studies is not primarily vocational. The pursuit should be its own reward. A couple of months ago, I entered a local Atlanta bar (on a purely research visit, needless to say) and ran in to a former student who worked there. He sent over a round of drinks and came by to say that my courses "had changed [his] life." The cynic in me was thinking, "Yeah, without that valuable B.A. in Religious Studies, you'd be fussing rather than waiting tables." But ultimately, I felt really good about the encounter. We're very lucky to be teaching material that is genuinely important, even life changing, to our students. Unlike our colleagues teaching business, we have the luxury of being able to measure our successes in more nuanced ways than the income level of our students. Still, I did feel compelled to leave a generous tip.

**RSN:** What has it been like being a religion scholar within a philosophy department?

**Renick:** There have been some challenges over the years. Philosophy does not have as much in common methodologically with modern religious studies as it did with the theology that once typified Religious departments. But the fact of the matter is that healthy enrollments are crucial to the survival and growth of academic programs at places like Georgia State. And "growing" our program amid a large, established philosophy department – with required, core courses – has been hugely beneficial to us. We've picked up many majors who first sampled a lower-level philosophy course or took a cross-listed offering like _Philosophy of Religion or Buddhism_. Given that few universities are in the financial position to establish "Department of Religious Studies" all at once, the model we've used at Georgia State to develop our program strikes me as a sensible one.

**RSN:** What do you think has accounted for the success you have enjoyed as a teacher? What word of advice would you give to other teachers?

**Renick:** It's an exciting time to be teaching religious studies. What we do is relevant. I genuinely believe this. The task, then, is to somehow convey this fact to others —to our students, to colleagues in other departments, to deans and administrators. If I've been successful as a teacher, I think it starts with the belief that what I'm doing is not just important to me. It's valuable in a larger sense.
Sexual Harassment Policy

The American Academy of Religion is committed to fostering and maintaining an environment of rigorous learning, research, and teaching in the field of religion. This environment must be free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a discriminatory practice which is unethical, unprofessional, and threatening to intellectual freedom. It usually involves persons of unequal power, authority, or influence but can occur between person of the same status.

Sexual harassment is illegal under Title VII of the 1980 Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments. Sexual harassment is a gross violation of professional ethics comparable to plagiarism or falsification of research. It should be regarded and treated as such by members of the Academy. The policy of the American Academy of Religion is to condemn sexual harassment. Members of the Academy are encouraged to file complaints about sexual harassment with the appropriate administrative office of the institution where the harasser is employed or where he or she is enrolled, or with appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Background

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) of the United States Government defines sexual harassment in the workplace or in the academic setting as:

“The use of one’s authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations or to punish another for his or her refusal, or the creation of an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment through verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.”

Having friendships with students is common for teachers. It is also possible that teachers will experience attraction to students and experience students’ sexual attraction to them. This cuts across gender and sexual orientation. Because of the inherent power differential between teacher and student, it is imperative that members of the Academy maintain the integrity of an environment which is not coercive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

The work of the Academy is best carried out in an atmosphere that fosters collegiality and mentoring. Sexual harassment can destroy or undermine this relationship. The impact of this on the life and future of the Academy cannot be belittled or ignored. When our actions are in violation of the dignity and integrity of another person, these actions are a profound violation of professional and human relationships. These are violations because they are exploitative and abusive.

Descriptions

Sexual harassment includes all behavior that prevents or impairs an individual’s full enjoyment of educational or workplace rights, benefits, environments, or opportunities. These behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. sexist remarks, jokes, or behavior
2. unwelcome sexual advances, including unwanted touching
3. request for sexual favors
4. sexual assault, including attempted or completed physical sexual assault
5. the use of professional authority to inappropriately draw attention to the gender, sexuality, or sexual orientation of an employee, colleague, or student
6. insults, including level remarks or conduct
7. visual displays of degrading sexual images or pornography
8. pressure to accept unwelcome social invitations

Sexual harassment occurs from these behaviors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any or all of the following conditions apply:

1. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used, implicitly or explicitly, as a basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting such individuals; or
2. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Such an atmosphere cannot and does not foster intellectual rigor or valuable, trusting human relationships. Both are necessary ingredients for good scholarship and professional excellence. The impact on the victim of sexual harassment can be profound. Studies on the effect of sexual harassment reveal disturbing consequences, such as loss of self-confidence, decline in academic performance, and inhibited forms of professional interaction. Sexual harassment has no place in the American Academy of Religion at any organizational level — formal or informal. It is behavior that we must seek to identify and eradicate.

For information on AAR’s Grievance and Complaint Procedure, please go to www.aarweb.org/about/board/resolutions/shg.asp

Profession Committee

The AAR’s Status of Women in the Profession Committee drafted the statement which also draws from statements by a number of other learned societies that have established similar policies. When asked why it was important for the AAR to put forward such a statement, Emilie Townes, a former chair of the AAR’s Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, said "...it is important to match the high standards the American Academy of Religion has for scholarship and research with a policy that calls forth the best of each of us professionally and interpersonally. It is important for AAR to make a clear and unambiguous statement against sexual harassment and provide all of the membership of the Academy resources for understanding and combating such dehumanizing behavior."

Sexual Harassment Policy for the American Academy of Religion

Introduction

The American Academy of Religion is committed to fostering and maintaining an environment where the harassment of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive behavior is not tolerated. The Academy's commitment to ensuring that its own activities and opportunities are free from the pernicious effects of such behavior.

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It can be dangerous to extrapolate from web message board posts to broad generalizations. But experts believe a significant number of American Muslims do harbor anti-Israel views because of the Middle East conflict and that those views sometimes slip into anti-Semitic feeling.

Michael Sells, an expert on Islam at Haverford College, says anti-Jewish rhetoric in the “classic European sense with the myth of Jews as Christ-killers,” was imported into the Middle East and is now moving into American Muslim circles. “People in the Middle East know that the Israeli lobby in the US is one of the most powerful,” Sells says. “So it’s not hard to understand why they would slip into the conspiracy view that Jews control the world. But it’s unacceptable in a religious leader, or anyone who’s educated, and certainly anyone in the United States.”

On the Islamic Circle of North America web site, a vigorous discussion about the subject is going on under the heading: “Israel: the devil.” At one place on the site, a user named Mujahid Suleiman Solano writes:

“If the USA can keep the Zionists down, I am sure we ‘peaceful Muslims’ will be able to keep the dog back.”

Where did this rumor come from? Apparently, shortly after the attacks, a prominent Taliban cleric named Iftikhar Ahmed started flooding mosques and Islamic centers in the United States with faxes that read: “The secret Israeli service Masud [sic] orchestrated these terrorist attacks . . . which are a vital link in the chain of events that the Jews are undertaking to fulfill their dream of world domination.” The rumor then spread to Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Tlass, who blamed the attacks on the Mossad. It became commonly accepted in Pakistan and the Middle East, and from there the rumor spread to the United States, often with the help of e-mail and the web.

Some American Jews have reacted angrily, including Abraham Foxman, executive director of the Anti-Defamation League. “It’s a big lie, set out there maliciously to divert attention from what’s happening in the Palestinian territories so that they can go on with their aggression and occupation and apartheid policies.” He quickly apologized, saying the remark “gave regrettable and unintended offense to Jewish Americans.”

On Monday, Al-Marayati said the comment espoused in a heated moment during an angry debate. “It was an unfortunate use of language,” he said. At this point, “I prefer to just let go of it.”

Al-Marayati is worried the controversy will spin out of control, particularly because “the American public does not have the patience for a Muslim-Jewish shouting match. I think the complications have arisen since the beginning of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The distinction needs to be made between the notion of anti-Israel sentiment versus anti-Jewish sentiment. Obviously, there are going to be a handful of extremists among Muslims who will not make that distinction, and that’s wrong.”

The scenario was different for Imam Gemeaha, a normally mild-mannered speaker who delivered a sermon in English in mid-September calling for peace among people of all religions, and then in early October proceeded to blame Jews for the terrorist attacks on an Arabic-language web site.

“Jews dominate the political decision-making and they own the economic and media institutions,” Gemeaha reportedly said in the later statement.

Sells said both remarks set off warning bells — Gemeaha’s more blatantly so, although because he isn’t an American it may ultimately be easier to overlook. Al-Marayati’s statement, however, is troublesome, Sells says, because it occupies a “middle ground” — not quite anti-Semitic, but still unacceptable.

“Once people start making that leap from being anti-Israel to assuming that anything that distracts from the Palestinian cause is some kind of Israeli plot — and he’s getting pretty close there — I think he’s in the middle ground,” Sells says. “He’s moving toward the conspiratorial view.”

RUMOR, from p 9

What’s more, he said, “there are a lot of Jews around America who say a lot of weird things that just don’t get made public.”

Ironically, some Muslim leaders argue a mirror-image of Kula’s position: that Muslims need to behave better.

“Whenever you talk about Israel, it’s not a neutral issue for Jews or Muslims,” says Amir Hussain, a scholar of American Islam who teaches at California State University at Northridge. “Muslim Americans have to be very careful when they criticize the policies of the United States with regard to Israel that they know what they’re talking about, and they do it in an appropriate manner. They may say things in an emotional way that may not hold up on an intellectual level.”

That is what appears to have happened to Salam Al-Marayati. In the hours after the attacks on Sept. 11, Al-Marayati, executive director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council in Los Angeles, was asked who he thought was responsible. “If we’re going to look at suspects, we should look at the groups that benefit the most from these kinds of incidents, and I think we should put the state of Israel on the suspect list because I think this diverts attention from what’s happening in the Palestinian territories so that they can get away with their aggression and occupation and apartheid policies.”

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Sells, RUMOR, p 25
OXTOBY: Context again, or you might say looking to the next horizon. In Toronto thirty years ago, I had a number of Zoroastrian students in class, because of migration of Parsees from India. I decided to investigate how Zoroastrians in Iran and India today understand their faith, and while in India kept an eye on other groups too. Then twenty years ago the graduate program I was directing in Toronto had an exchange with the world-religions institute of the Chinese Social Science Academy. We brought their director to teach in Toronto, and I was sent for a season to Beijing. I went to many places in China.

RSN: It sounds like you’re taught or studied abroad a great deal.

OXTOBY: Quite. When you add it all up, I’ve had two years’ residence in West Asia, one year in South Asia, and one year in East Asia. That’s a rare opportunity; I don’t know of anyone else in the world-religions business who’s had the same range.

RSN: What past experiences led you to accept the lectureship?

OXTOBY: I’d been familiar with the series from way back. Forty years ago, when I taught at McGill, I heard Morton Smith give a set. Then fifteen years ago, I was on the ACLS history of religions committee, which used to manage the series. During that time, we sent A. L. Basham, who was retired from Australia, and New McLord, who was visiting from New Zealand, on the road. So I was familiar with the logistics. There are easier ways to earn a buck, but virtually no better chance to try out your ideas and get feedback from such interesting audiences.

RSN: Your lectures are about the historical development of Islam, which is a very timely subject. Is there anything we could understand about Islam that would be helpful in the current political climate?

OXTOBY: Definitely. I often say that if I could live my life over again and do absolutely anything for a living, I’d want to be right back in the comparative study of religions. Not just for my enjoyment, but because I think that a more informed and more sympathetic attitude toward various traditions is a key to peace, which the world needs desperately. In the specific case of Islam, we need to be aware of its diversity. Lumping people of any group together, as though they’re all alike, is one basic strategy of prejudice. You blame an entire group for the undesirable behavior of only some of its members.

RSN: Which of the five lectures are you most excited about giving?

OXTOBY: Probably the last, about the diaspora in the West today. I directed a dissertation on that recently, and am mindful of how rich a topic it is. But it’s also one where I can’t be proved wrong—at least just yet—because I’ll be extrapolating some current trends into the future. In the next century Islam, which has of course seen plenty of development in the past, will be signifi-

RSN: Aside from the AHHR Series, how are you spending your days now that you are retired from full-time teaching?

OXTOBY: Well, there are at least six books in my head waiting to get out; and I’ve signed contracts for four of them. That means cutting down on distractions, so I’ve gone off e-mail, unplugged the television, and de-subscribed the cell phone. I figure I’m saving three hours a day without being a total hermit. People can still phone, write, or send a fax.

RSN: Would you describe one of your current projects?

OXTOBY: One of the projects is a one-volume condensation of the two-volume World Religions text I edited, which is now in a second edition. I didn’t seek to do a textbook, by the way, but was recruited by the publisher. It’s a whole different experience from what I’d written before.

RSN: How so?

OXTOBY: When you bring out a research monograph, it sits on the shelf and you go on to something else. Write a textbook, and if it does at all well you have to keep revising it, like chewing your cud. The satisfaction, though, is how many impressionable people are actually supposed to read what you’ve written. Normally, a Ph.D. thesis is the last thing we ever write that absolutely has to be read by somebody. For most anything else, there’s no guarantee it won’t just be ignored.

RSN: What, for you, would be the ideal assignment?

OXTOBY: In many ways, this lectureship is, because of the travel, which I enjoy, and because of the social interaction, which means I can learn from others. Most writing requires a discipline of self-imposed loneliness. Now I’ve begun another assignment: I’ve always yearned to do, too, and that’s putting together an anthology for Columbia University Press to go along with their classic sourcebooks on Indian, Chinese, and Japanese tradition. Sources of Middle Eastern Tradition, will be half pre-Islamic sources, and half sources since Muhammad but not restricted Islam. I’ll be including crosscurrents between the dominant Islam and the Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian minorities, as well as responses to the modern West. Being on the lecture circuit while putting the anthology together will provide a chance to pick people’s brains for suggestions. It’s a real privilege, and I’m grateful for the opportunity.

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22 • October 2002 AAR RSN
THREE THEOLOGIANS

The mandate has put Catholic theologians at odds with their colleagues at Catholic colleges in an unusual and, for many, stressful quandary. Although professors in general frequently struggle with the question of whether their personal beliefs have on their professional decisions, those decisions rarely become so conscious and so public. Ms. Pohlhaus is one of those standing at the center of a debate in which strong feelings and sound reasons pull from both sides.

Paradoxically, many theologians who have reached decisions — whichever way they go — believe that they are being true both to their responsibilities as academics and to their obligations as Catholics.

Ms. Pohlhaus has come to Milwaukee in hopes of finding a new perspective. She attends panels devoted to divin- ing the meaning of the mandate, in which professors offer competing defini- tions of ecclesiastical communion and debate the wisdom of invoking "nonrecep- tion" of a canon law. Among theologians, much of the debate takes place once members of the faculty and others well out- side the boundaries of most academics’ areas of knowledge. The professors are keenly aware of the political dynamics of this church. At stake is the dimension of the mandate which has often been underestimated outside of the discipline. Ms. Pohlhaus listens carefully but is not particularly optimistic about finding the answer here. She prays for guidance.

Unlike professors in religious studies pro- grams, who examine religion from a cul- tural and historical perspective, theolo- gians focus on interpreting practices and beliefs of a particular religion — usually their own. "Faith seeking understanding" is the quick definition of the field. Such a blending of subjective belief and objective analysis has led academics in other disci- plines to view theologians somewhat skep- tically, as if they were not true scholars.

"It is important for me to live my theolo- gy," says Ms. Pohlhaus. "That means praying about it, reflecting about it. You don't do that in history. You don't do that in English. That's why theology is a suspect academic discipline, I'm afraid." More than 30 years ago, Ms. Pohlhaus was a student at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, harbors doubts that any of her students or convincing them of view- points that oppose the church, she says. Although she does not expect the bishops to use it as a weapon, she believes that those out- side the religious community will see it as a muzzle on free thinking.

John R. Connolly, a professor of theologi- cal studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, harbors doubts about his own resolve. He has been suspicious of the mandate since it first appeared in church law, back in 1983.

His father, a seminary professor, inspired Mr. Connolly to become a theologian. His goal, he says, is to help his students develop an "a more critical faith, a more intellec- tual faith, and, in the long run, a more realistic and true type of faith." The mandate, he says, runs counter to that ideal. It is Rome's attempt to ensure adherence to a narrow orthodoxy. "What they want is to have control down the line, to get rid of people who are teaching what they don't want them to teach." As proof, Mr. Connolly points to the Rev. Roger Haight, of the Weston Jesuit School of Theology, who was removed from his teaching post last fall and asked to "clari- fy" views that the Vatican felt ran contrary to church teachings. Father Haight has yet to return to the classroom.

Mr. Connolly does not buy the church's argument that the mandate is necessary to express an obligation that has always existed between bishops and theologians. His authority to teach theology doesn't come from the church hierarchy, he says. It comes from his baptism and his acade- mic training. For him, the price of his decision not to seek a mandate may come in the form of unpleasant public attention. Some Catholics consider the mandate a litmus test that measures one's faithfulness; they hope universities will force out those who fail that test. Mr. Connolly's name has already appeared on one web site run by Catholic conservatives.

Because of such attention, many Catholic theologians refuse to say where they stand on the issue. But Mr. Connolly says he feels a moral obligation to speak out. "Sometimes one has to stand up if they believe the authority of the Catholic church is wrong, particularly when this is not a matter of faith and morals." Mr. Connolly's position has not wavered, but some theologians have found their resis- tance to the mandate softening after meeting with church officials. The dispute as a whole have pledged to be as benign and unobtrusive as possible, and many acade- mics believe that the American bishops will be reluctant to enforce a nailing that was essen- tially forced upon them by the Vatican.

For Mr. Connolly, those promises are not worth much. For one, he says, no matter how pastoral the bishops claim to be, the mandate is, in fact, a church law that could be used against those who commit to it. Second, whatever bond of trust that existed was broken long ago.

"If the bishops had stood up to Rome like that, then I think we would have had a lot more problems, or whatever church law that would be over," he says.

"I cannot accept when a bishop nowadays says, 'Trust me and trust the church,' because they haven't trusted us. . . . They didn't respect us. They didn't even ask us what we thought of it. They just did it."

Ms. Pohlhaus would like the clarity of conscience that Mr. Connolly displays. But just when she's feeling confident in rejecting the mandate, some new song pops up. Like last month, when a col- league told her that she had to consider the effect her decision would have on oth- ers.

Would Villanovas president, himself a the- ologian, be cornered by people who want to know if her refusal means that the the- ology department is leading students astray? Would parishioners at her church wonder why she is taking such a stand? Would her students understand.

Ms. Pohlhaus is already troubled by the supermarket approach to so many Catholics have toward their religion: pick- ing and choosing the beliefs most conve- nient to them. Birth control: No. Premarital sex: Yes. Capital punishment: Why not?

While she respects anyone who rejects a church edict as a matter of conscience, she doesn't see much reflection among her stu- dents. She fears that they will consider a decision against the mandate as further proof that one can do whatever one wants and still be Catholic.

Dennis M. Doyle is a professor of reli- gious studies at the University of Dayton, where he has taught since 1984. His con- science is as clear as Mr. Connolly's, although he sits on the opposite side of the fence. He intends to seek a mandate, he says, because it is part of his responsi- bility as a theologian.

"To me, theology is a form of ministry, and it is something I do within the context of the church," he says. Yes, it is an acade- mical discipline, and no, it's not Sunday school, he notes. But part of his job is re- laying the church's point of view, and he is speaking as a part of that church.

Therefore, he believes, his bishop has a right to say whether he is doing so accu- rately.

"The mandate only says that Doyle, you're not free to present something as Catholic teaching that is not Catholic teaching. That is all it says. And I'm happy to be restricted on that point."

But Mr. Doyle is also a realist, and he knew early on that the cost of requiring the mandate may well be high. Two years ago, he co-wrote an article in Commonweal, a Catholic magazine, that virtually urged the bishops to spend more time on the matter. "If I were voting on it, I would not have voted to pass it," he says.

He worried the mandate was going to place a wedge between American bishops and, bishops, which it did. He anticipated that it would raise fears about a lack of free- dom, which is it. He expected that it would make Catholic colleges the object of ridicule by some people at secular uni- versities, which it may.

Despite the turmoil, however, he believes that the mandate is a moment of precautionary activity before it hits, but no real damage afterward.

The mandate has put friends on oppos- site sides of the debate. Mr. Doyle notes that many of his friends plan to refuse to seek it. He's had a few heated arguments with others in his department, but says they're agreed to not let the issue divide them. He acknowledges, however, that no one — including his colleagues at Dayton — knows how pastoral the bishops will play out on college campuses.

He respects conscientious objectors and takes seriously their concerns, he says, but he believes that Catholic colleges are losing their identity.

Mr. Doyle says he also worries that Catholic colleges are becoming overly secu- lar. But he is more optimistic than peo- ple like the Rev. James T. Burtchaell, who recently published 1999 book The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities From Their Christian Charayer (William B. Eerdmans) painted a bleak picture of the secularization of reli- gious institutions.

If theologians treat the mandate "as though it were an evil in principle," Mr. Doyle says, it would reinforce the idea that Catholic colleges are anti-church, and that the Burchaells of the world were right.

Weighing heavily on the minds of many theologians is the moment of reckoning, with the local church official who has the power to grant a mandate. In Philadelphia, that person is Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua, a forceful and respected church leader.

Along with 120 other theologians from the region, Ms. Pohlhaus met with the cardinal two weeks ago. Afterward, she says, she felt more torn than ever. "He wanted us to feel comfortable and reas- sured about the mandate," she says. "It was not going to be used as a whip or any- thing like that. But it didn't seem to me as if he understood that there were conscien- tious objections to accepting or rejecting the mandate."

Could she make the cardinal understand if she chose not to seek the mandate? Ms. Pohlhaus grunted wrestle with that uncom- fortable scenario, in addition to her own conscience.

She continues to look for answers. She wants to study the final document on the mandate, passed by the bishops in June. She wants to talk to more colleagues. She wants to think and pray.

"I wouldn't expect someone who has no religious commitment to necessarily be comfortable with the whole thing," she says. "I would simply ask them to respect that it is a real struggle. It's not something I can just leave at the office."

It's close to 11 pm, and Ms. Pohlhaus's husband waits quietly in the background.

See THREE THEOLOGIANS p.24
Religious Studies News, AAR Edition

THREE THEOLOGIANS, from p.23

Just before departing, she considers her dilemma some more. "There are good, logical arguments on both sides," she says, "but it doesn't get to that deep place where the true answers comes from."

Understanding the Mandatum

Evolution of the requirement

1983

The Vatican issues a church law, Canon 812, requiring Roman Catholic theologians to have a mandate from the church. The requirement is largely ignored in the United States.

1990

Pope John Paul II releases Ex corde Ecclesiae, outlining his vision for Catholic higher education. He reiterates the need for theology professors to seek a mandate.

1996

Bishops in the United States send to Rome their plans for applying Ex corde to Catholic colleges in the country. The mandate is relegated to a footnote, which states that it will be subject to further study.

1997

The Vatican rejects the American bishops' interpretation and asks for a more binding document.

1999

Bishops in the United States approve a new plan for carrying out Ex corde. In this version of the mandate, as the mandate is now called, is required. Theologians and others in Catholic higher education protest.

The document is approved by the Vatican.

2001

Bishops in the United States release guidelines for how the mandate should be requested and granted. Theologians are given until June 1, 2002, to obtain one. Bishops say there is no penalty if they do not.

Changing Definitions

Canon 812: "It is necessary that those who teach theological disciplines in any institute of higher studies have a mandate from the competent ecclesiastical authority." (1983)

Ex corde Ecclesiae: "Catholic theologians, aware that they fulfill a mandate received from the Church, are to be faithful to the Magisterium of the Church as the authentic interpreter of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition." (1990)

Ex corde Ecclesiae: An Application to the United States: "The mandate is fundamentally an acknowledgment by Church authority that a Catholic professor of a theological discipline teaches within the full communion of the Catholic Church. The mandate should not be construed as an appointment, authorization, delegation, or approbation of one's teaching by Church authorities. Those who have received a mandate teach in their own name in virtue of their baptism and their academic and professional competence, not in the name of the Bishop or of the Church's magisterium. The mandate recognizes the professor's competence and responsibility to teach in the authentic Catholic doctrine and to refrain from putting forth as Catholic teaching anything contrary to the Church's magisterium." (1999)

CANE RIDGE, from p.24

"It arguably remains the most important religious gathering in all of American history, both for what it symbolized and the effects that flowed from it," wrote Paul Conkin, author of Canisius: America's Pentecost. "Never before had such a diversity of scenarios or 'physical exercises' affected, or affected, so many people," wrote Conkin, a retired Vanderbilt University historian. "The Can Ridge sacrament has become a legendary event, the clearest approximation to an American Pentecost, prelude to a Christian century."

The 1801 gathering, built around a Presbyterian communion service, lasted from a rainy Aug. 6 until Aug. 12, ending only when both humans and horses had used up all available food.

With walls and sidewalks, thousands fantasied their sins.

"The noise was like the roar of Niagara," wrote eyewitness James Finley in his biography. "At one time I saw at least five hundred swept down in a moment as if a battery of a thousand guns had been opened upon them, and then immediately followed shrieks and shouts that rent the very heavens."

To be sure, many at Can Ridge had their minds on more than just heavenly things.

The temporary city that grew up around Can Ridge gave lonely Kentucky farmers a chance to meet — and mate. A bumper crop of babies resulted nine months later.

That, along with the whiskey peddlers, horse traders and gawkers at the finges of such gatherings, gave ammunition to critics who said the revival was out of control.

But others were happy with the growing religious and declining lawlessness that resulted.

"It was a major step in turning the frontier into a more settled society," said church historian Richard Harrison, former president of Lexington Theological Seminary. "People were getting more accustomed to being together as a group rather than being isolated."

Clerk Robert Rush of the Memphis-based Cumberland Presbyterian, which is still prominent in the Kentucky-Tennessee region, said his revivals "gave ammunition to critics who said the revival was out of control."

Stone, meanwhile, was becoming increasingly unhappy with Presbyterian government and Calvinist theology, which he later likened to a "dark mountain between heaven and earth."

He and his supporters started the Christian Church movement — trying to replace denominationalism with independent churches. The movement became a de facto denomination itself and in the 20th century split into three movements.

But many people today consider Stone virtually a patron saint of Christian unity, Harrison said.

And the anti-denominationalism of Stone and the revival he played host to also fed a new American trend, Conkin said: the revival he played host to also fed a new American trend, Conkin said: the

Meeting house shows its age — in a good way

Cane Ridge is the largest one-room log building in North America, measuring 40 by 60 feet.

Presbyterian pioneers built the church in 1793 shortly after they arrived in the area, explored by Daniel Boone's description of a fortland full of flowing canoe, co-curator Robert Steffel said.

A second-story "dome gallery" was used in the church's early years, but it was taken down in 1829 after the church decided to integrate and to oppose slavery, Steffel said.

Church members also covered the logs with white clapboard on the outside and plaster on the inside.

In 1804, the church left the Presbyterian denomination and other small churches of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) denomination and related Christian Church and Churches of Christ movements.

After the dwindling Cane Ridge congregation closed in the 1920s, Disciples officials formed an independent board to maintain it as a shrine.

Preservationists worked to restore its original rugged appearance, returning the left (which had been stored in a barn) and removing the clapboard and plaster. But weather and woodpeckers began taking their toll on the exterior, so the Disciples surrounded the building with a large stone structure in 1957, making it a church within a church.

Steffel says experts on historic architecture have marveled at the log building's craftsmanship.

"These are antithetic things that were done by people with rather crude tools," Steffel said, pointing to the hexagonal chimney purlins and subtle, ornamental grooves. "At the beginning, this was quite a stretch to build a building like this."

The Cane Ridge Preservation Project operates on a $50,000 annual budget and is host to more than 100 group meetings each year from worship services to family reunions.

On August 12, descendants of a former slave and Cane Ridge member, Samuel Bonaparte "Bone" January, dedicated a memorial to his former owner, who still live in the area, also attended.

"Bone" January, dedicated a memorial to his former owner, who still live in the area, also attended.

In February, caretakers found room in the nearby full cemetery to bury Disciples church historian Anthony Dinnamar, the dean of Lexington Theological Seminary, who died of cancer at 46.

"He loved Cane Ridge so much and had done so much important research on Cane Ridge," said former seminary President Richard Harrison, now pastor of Seven Sisters Christian Church in Richmond, Va. "It was seen as something particularly appropriate for this young, brilliant scholar who was cut down in his prime."
The revival also tapped into the popular spirit of the new American Republic, with user-friendly hymns, plain-language sermons and a theology that emphasized human free will more than traditional Calvinism, which said only God decides who will be saved or damned.

“If you can choose which party to vote for, you have the free will to choose whether to go into the kingdom of God,” said Baptist historian Bill Leonard, summarizing the prevailing mood.

“There is nothing truly American [took] place” at Cane Ridge, church historian Anthony Dunnavant said in an interview last year.

In the New World, people believed they could sign God “in a return to pure sources, free will,” he said. “The world, the Devil, and Tom Paine have tried their worst but all in vain.”

But Catholics and Protestants shared a vision of America, as well. “The world, the Devil, and Tom Paine have tried their worst but all in vain,” Leonard said.

The revival also fed social consciousness. Harrison said. With black worshippers and at least one black preacher participating, it fed antislavery sentiments, and the Cane Ridge congregation itself later became abolitionist.

Roman Catholics, settling to the west around Barbourville, denounced Cane Ridge’s “dying fellows” as “one more sad commentary on the Protestant rule of faith,” according to Bellarmine University professor Clyde Cowley's local Catholic history, An American Holy Land.

But Catholics and Protestants shared a vision of Kentucky as a Promised Land. Leonard said.

“Catholics could find a home on the frontier and be free to be Catholic, and Protestant (sectarian) groups could find a place to not just do their thing but thrive,” Leonard said.

“By the 1830s, Baptists and Methodists, who are tiny sects in the Revolutionary War, are the largest Protestant denominations.”

Christian Churches, Churches of Christ — Cane Ridge pastor Barton Stone and other Pennsylvania minister Alexander Campbell and in the 1830s, these churches splintered in the 20th century into:

1. The Disciples of Christ (Christian Church), Indianapolis-based mainline group, the only fragment that recognizes itself as a denomination, 834,000 members.

2. Churches of Christ, conservative, decentralized, new network including Louisville Southeast Christian Church, 1.1 million members.

3. Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, conservative, decentralized network include Louisville Southeast Christian Church, 1.1 million members.

Churches of Christ, conservative, group distinguisished partly by a cappella worship music: (since the New Testament doesn’t use musical instruments): 1.5 million members.

Presbyterians — Amid debates over whether the revival was healthy, they suffered two splits with the Christian Church (1804) and Cumberland Presbyterian (1810) movements, and lost ground to more revivalistic denominations, but they stabilized and became an influential mainline church. Their descendants:

Louisville-based Presbyterian Church (USA) mainline denomination with 2.5 million members.

Cumberland Presbyterian Church, formed in 1810 by leaders of a revival in Logan County, Kentucky, that inspired the Cane Ridge gathering. It rejected Presbyterian Calvinist beliefs and requirements that pastors have a classical education (impractical on the frontier). Though most churches associated with the mainline Presbyterians in 1807, Cumberland Presbyterians still number 102,000 members, mostly in the Kentucky-Tennessee region.

Methodists — This small denomination quickly institutionalized the camp-meeting revival concept that arose spontaneously at Cane Ridge and Logan County. Their nimble system of circuit riders and lay preachers led to explosive growth on the frontier, reaching 2.6 million members in 1830 and nearly 1.5 million in their four main denominations today.

Baptists — As with the Methodists, this group grew by embracing revival tactics, preaching to black slaves as well as whites, and using a decentralized structure and lay preachers to particularly effective on the frontier. They counted 2.7 million members in 1830. The Southern Baptist Convention, at 16 million members, is the largest American Protestant mainline body today, in addition to millions in other Baptist denominations.

Shakers — This celibate, apocalyptic sect sent missionaries west on news of Cane Ridge, converting many revivalists, including two ministers. They also became a lightning rod for conservative critics of the revival’s widest excesses, giving the controversial Christian Church movement the status of respectable moderates. The Shakers, except for a tiny community in Maine, are now admired for their minimalist architecture, worldview, and music. Their two Kentucky communities are preserved as historic sites: Pleasant Hill in Mercer County, and South Union in Logan County.

Denominations After Cane Ridge

These denominations and movements formed, spread, or splattered after the Cane Ridge revival in 1801.

Christian Churches, Churches of Christ — Cane Ridge pastor Barton Stone and other Pennsylvania minister Alexander Campbell and in the 1830s, these churches splintered in the 20th century into:

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Sells sees some good coming from the stow of anger, confusion, and prejudice welling up in American Muslims, however.

“A lot of Muslim leaders are saying, ‘Wait, this is inaccurate and it’s radicalizing elements of the community and hurting everyone,’ ” Sells says. “There’s really a strong rise against this in the last week.”

And that, he says, means a more diverse, more intellectual — and more tolerant — American Islam may finally be born.
Religious Studies News, AAR Edition

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Archaeology and Ecumenicity
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Debra Smith Thompson
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Interreligious Dialogue with the Natural Sciences
In the increasingly global study of religion, it is impossible to ignore the fact that many cultures and religions face the ubiquitous presence of the natural sciences as “Esoterica” that directly or indirectly help to shape the worldviews everywhere. Following on a highly successful session at the 2002 PWN AAR/SBL, we invite proposals for papers on dialogues with the natural sciences. Papers may focus on the interrelation between one religion and particular issues in the natural sciences, compare religious and scientific understandings with regard to that issue(s), or some other question or problem posed in relation to natural sciences in interreligious context. Successful topics have included the anthropic principle, quantum theory and design, cosmic universes, Big Bang cosmology and religious cosmologies, the religious implications of relativistic theory, neuroscientific studies of meditation and contemplative practice, and the implications of religious practice for physical and emotional health.

This section is co-chaired:
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Christianity in the Pacific Northwest
University of Idaho, Moscow, ID
Submit a 150 word abstract for each proposed paper by January 17, 2003 to the appropriate Chair listed below. Participants in the Pacific Northwest AAR Regional Meeting may present one paper, and must be registered for the meeting in order to participate. Papers not fitting into any of these categories should be sent directly to Mark Lloyd, School of Religion and Philosophy, Seattle University, 900 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98112-1990.
E-MAIL: mlloyd@seattleu.edu

Theology and Philosophy of Religion
Norman E. Geschwender
Concordia University
283 NE St. Paul
Portland, OR, 97211
E-MAIL: ngeschwe@concordia.edu

History of Christianity and North American Religions
Although paper proposals are invited in any area of History of Christianity, proposals related to American Religions, proposals are especially solicited on the following themes: 1) religious history, 2) archival and other methods of research, 3) Christianity and other religions in the Pacific Northwest, 4) religion and public culture in the American West, 4) Pacific Rim religion.
Robert Haack
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Women and Religion
This section is co-chaired:
Andy Bass
Religious Studies Department
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E-MAIL: abass@gonzaga.edu

Please note that unless other-
wise indicated, papers must be of such length as can be pre-
sented and discussed within 45 minutes. Visual or other type of
visual equipment must be noted on the program.
Because of the very cost of renting digital video projection equipment, presenters who wish to use such equipment must be so indicated on the program.
The call of papers is also open to presenters who wish to submit proposals for joint sessions.
Suggestions for new program units or special speakers should be sent to: SECSOR’s Executive Director or to the Vice President/Program Chair of the appropriate regional offices below.

(AAR) Academic Study of Religion and Religion (3 Sessions)

(AAR) African American Religious Studies (2 Sessions)
Themes: Papers on all topics related to African American Religious will be considered. Chair: Susan H. Hill, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602
E-MAIL: susan.hill@uni.edu

(AAR/SBL) Archaeology and the Ancient World (2 sessions)
(2 sessions)
Themes: 1) “Notes from the Field.” Papers are selected from participants in excavations at various levels of responsibility, i.e., volunteers, supervised vol-
unteer, field director, excavation director, etc. Aside from report-
ing on the results of recent excavation, papers for this ses-
ton will cover any aspect of the excavations, including use of technology, advances in data retrieval and processing, etc. (2) “Women in the Bible and Archaeology.” A joint session with the Society of Biblical Literacy, with Carol L. Meyers Women In Scripture, Carol will make a presentation and will be joined in a panel discussion with text scholars and archaeologists. Participation will be by invita-
tion. (Open topic) In addition, the archaeology in the Biblical world. Please send abstracts and/or short papers by October 1, 2002 to Elizabeth Burr, University of St. John, 6001 Snelling Ave North, Saint Paul, MN 55105. E-MAIL: elizabeth.burr@stjohns.edu

(AAR) Arts, Literature, and Religion (4 Sessions)
Open call, with special interest in literature. Proposals for papers that relate to African American religion, poetics of space/place, national identity and spirituality in the work of women artists. (2) Joint session with Hannah Arendt and/or “Buddhist and non-Buddhist readings of The Spire.” (3) Joint session with American Bibliographies: “American Bibliographies- The Bible in Children’s Literature and Entertainment.” Please submit proposals for both the sessions above. Chair: CarolynParturen, Department of Religion, University of Georgia, Religion, 286 Peabody Hall, Athens, GA 30602-2635.
E-MAIL: meadow@arts.uga.edu

(SBL) Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament (3 sessions)
Themes: 1) Jointed panel dis-
cussion (2) Open topics
Proposals addressing the theme, “The Hebrew Scriptures and Violence: The View After 9 of 11” are especially encouraged. Please submit proposals for both the sessions above. Chair: Mark E. Levine, Department of Religion, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94721-2640 and Nathaniel G. Davidson, University of Michigan, Sociology and Religious Studies, MS. (2030) 3500 Fountain Highway, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2910.
E-MAIL: gds@umich.edu

(SBL) History of Christianity (2 Sessions)
Themes: Papers on all topics will be considered, but the following themes are especially invited: Christianity in the Global Context. Chair: D. Johnnie Johnson, Department of Religion, Furman University, Department of Religion, Furman University, 3800 Poinsett Highway, Greenville, SC 29615.
E-MAIL: jtjohnson@furman.edu

(SBL) History of Judaism (2 Sessions)
Themes: Papers on all topics will be considered, but the fol-
thowing themes are especially invited: History of Judaism, joint sessions with American Bibliographies: “American Bibliographies: The Bible in Children’s Literature and Entertainment.” Please submit proposals for both the sessions above. Chair: Carolyn Parturen, Department of Religion, University of Georgia, Religion, 286 Peabody Hall, Athens, GA 30602-2635.
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Southwestern Commission for the Study of Religion
AAR/SBL/ASOR/ASEBS
30 Regional Meeting March 14–16, 2003
Chattanooga Clarion Hotel
Chattanooga, TN 37406
E-MAIL: swc@swc.org

The 2003 Regional Meeting will be held at the Chattanooga Clarion Hotel, March 14-16. For more information, please visit the website (www.ucf.edu/amr) or contact the Secretary, Mark Unno, E-MAIL: munno@uidaho.edu

Theology and Philosophy of Religion
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283 NE St. Paul
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Gonzaga University

Please note that unless other-
CALL FOR PAPERS

Southwest Commission on Religious Studies

Official Call for Papers 2003 Meeting

The Harvey Hotel-DFW Airport
Highway 114 at Exits Buttonwood
4545 John Carpenter Freeway Irving, Texas 75063
Tel: 972-929-4500
Fax: 972-929-0733
Saturday, Sunday, March 15-16, 2003

The following is a listing of the chairs of the various sections, societ-
estes and a description of any program specific.

Submit proposals to the person desig-
nated by the section chair for the proposal to be submitted to

Proposal Deadline: Chairpersons or section leaders must receive proposals no later than October 7, 2002. Please note this earlier deadline.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

Proposals must be sent directly to section chairpersons. Anyone submitting proposals subsequent to one of the AAR or

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

Proposal deadlines must be met by the deadline as announced by the official section chair. Proposals not meeting the deadline will not be considered.

Art, Literature, and Religion

Proposals are invited for presenta-
tions on the following themes: representations of biog-
raphy, autobiography, and/or, pilgrimages. World-views rela-
tions in literature and the arts, open session on topics related to the arts, literature, and reli-
gion. We are also seeking pro-
sals for two joint sessions.

The first is with the Philosophy of Religion and Theology Section on "How films enact theological reflection." The second is with the Music and Arts and Asian Studies in Religion Section, and we are seeking proposals on "The Arts in Asian Religions." Send proposals for joint sessions to the appropriate section chair. All presentations shall be 25 minutes.

Please send multimedia requests in your proposal.

Send proposals to:

Berne Plate, Department of Religion
Texas Christian University
Fort Worth, Texas 76129
Tel: 817-788-2740 (Office)
Fax: 817-755-7749
E-mail: bplate@tcu.edu

Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion

Proposals and papers are ident-
ified for a panel on Islam after
September 11. Individual papers are also invited in rela-
tion to all aspects of Islam in gen-
ergous thought and practice, both historical and contempo-
ary. Papers are also invited in rela-
tion to religious art or which employ audiovisual ele-
ments. These papers will be placed in one of the sessions on Asian Reli-
gion, Literature and the Arts, or a joint program with the Section on Art, Literature and the Arts. (Overhead projectors and slide
projectors may be available if requested before March 1, 2003. If using a PowerPoint
Spotlight on Teaching

October 2002

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THE FRONT LINES

Teaching Religious Studies and Theology in Community Colleges

Kerry Edwards, Red Rocks Community College

Guest Editor

This Spotlight continues the journey through the American education system that began in the last issue with an account of the teaching of religion in the public schools. The next step for many public school students is into a community college. This segment of American higher education is often neglected by the Academy. If my own experience is a reliable indicator, there are very few graduate students in religion who enter the profession with the goal of becoming a community college professor. I have not asked the other contributors to this Spotlight about their pathway into community college instruction but I am willing to bet that most of them did not think about it as a career option until well into their graduate work. There are probably a lot of reasons that explain this including the fact that many graduate students may have never attended a community college themselves. There is a fair amount of irony in this fact because the father of the community college movement in the US was one of our own: William Rainey Harper, Professor of Biblical Literature at Yale. When he became president of the new University of Chicago and began thinking about how students would matriculate there, he concluded that one inexpensive way for students to begin their college education would be to create a number of two year colleges, spread throughout the state of Illinois. These rural students could begin their college education while living at home and transfer to Chicago to complete their degrees.

The movement that he began is generally considered to be the most successful unique American contribution to higher education. In 1900 there were 7 junior colleges in the US. By 1937 that number had climbed to 528. This growth took place largely in the Midwest and West when the burgeoning population of new states had to deal with the lack of educational institutions. This was complicated by greater distances between large urban areas and the need for educating more of the population as the U.S. industrial economy expanded. As higher education made inroads into lower socio-economic classes, the expenses associated with higher education became more of a factor in the design of new educational institutions. Today there are over 1100 community colleges. 45% of all US undergraduates attend community colleges. In California there are over a million students attending community colleges. In Colorado, where I teach, 73% of all lower division college students attend community college.

The study of Religion at these unique American institutions has an uneven history. In 1930 a study of the curriculum of community colleges revealed that 45% of the courses offered were in Bible and Religious Education. Similar studies in the 1970s and 80’s showed this number hovering in the mid 20% but in 1998, the percentage leaped upwards to 42 percent. While these classes comprise a limited proportion of all the courses at community colleges, the number of students...

See: Edwards, p.ui
Teaching Weekend Religion Classes Part-time at Red Rocks Community College

Joy Lapp
Red Rocks Community College

My experience at a community college has been as a part-time faculty member, teaching weekend-intensive classes. Each component of the job—community college, part-time, and weekend-intensive format—involves an interesting set of dynamics. The 100-level course I teach, Early Christian Literature, has never failed to bring together a dynamic mix of students who have made the weekends lively and stimulating.

Community College. A community college attracts a unique body of students. Nearly all the students in my classes are employed full-time and most are older than traditional college age. The reasons students offer for taking the class vary widely. Although a number of them are fulfilling a religion requirement for a program into which they hope to transfer, other reasons range from “an answer to prayer” to “I won three free credit hours in a drawing.” My advisor realized that I needed three more hours to graduate with a major!” from a student planning to graduate from a nearby university. Some are taking advantage of an employee benefit, so their employer pays the tuition if they do well enough. Others enroll in the class purely for personal enrichment.

Almost invariably, the students I have encountered at the community college are interested and curious and motivated. Adult learners bring a vast array of past experiences to the classroom and a level of engagement that tends to transcend the academic setting. The weekend format appeals to me for the same reason that many students like it: it is compact and can fit into an already busy schedule. I only have to drive to campus once a week to create my own community for a full semester. The pay is far from glamorous, but has been sufficient to make the experience worthwhile. The challenge of being part-time, however, has been combating a feeling of dislocation and isolation. I have no office, nowhere to ground myself in a house church in Rome based on the book Acts with Paul.

Part-time. Teaching part-time has been a gift because it has allowed me to gain classroom experience while working on my dissertation. The weekend format appeals to me for the same reason that many students like it: it is compact and can fit into an already busy schedule. I only have to drive to campus once a week to create my own community for a full semester. The pay is far from glamorous, but has been sufficient to make the experience worthwhile. The challenge of being part-time, however, has been combating a feeling of dislocation and isolation. I have no office, nowhere to ground myself in a house church in Rome based on the book Acts with Paul.

EDWARDS, John P.

and percentage of enrollment is roughly equal to the students in Sociology. My own recent investigations indicate that there are at least 150 community colleges that offer distinct Religious Studies majors (This number does not include departments that may offer a joint emphasis in religion and philosophy). While this number is substantial, it strikes me that the community college is fertile ground for the expansion of the study of religion. Such an expansion would serve the interests of the Academy by providing employment for our members but it would also serve as one of the most effective ways of spreading the influence of the scholarly study of religion throughout the community. For those of you interested in pursuing this career option, see the article entitled “The Community College Job Search” in the Chronicle of Higher Education at: http://chronicle.com/.../09/02/02/02/09/02/30/01/3.htm

My own journey into community colleges began as an undergraduate when I took two summer courses at the local community college. I thoroughly enjoyed those courses, at least partly because of the diversity of the student population. The liberal arts college I attended during the school year was populated almost exclusively by 18-22 year olds. The community college class had people of all ages with very diverse outlooks on life which made the classes much more interesting. This appreciation for the value of institutional context was soon lost as I focused my attention on graduate work. I forgot about community colleges until I was working on my doctoral dissertation and looking for places to house my teaching skills. There were a number of community colleges in the Denver area and I was able to secure part-time employment teaching philosophy and religion. Since my degree was in philosophy of religion and theology, I was able to obtain full-time employment as a philosophy instructor at Red Rocks Community College and took the opportunity to begin developing and expanding our offerings in religion. When I arrived at Red Rocks in 1992, we had one Philosophy of Religion course and a Comparative Religion course in the works. We have since added courses in Religion and American Culture, Psychology of Religion, Religion and Film at Red Rocks, Community College, Literature of Ancient Israel. Because of the peculiar nature of course prefixes in the Colorado community college system, these courses are all taught under the Psychology or Humanities departments.

Community colleges have a number of distinct characteristics that influence the teaching of religion. One is what Peter Jacobson, in his essay calls the ‘pragmatic dimension.’ They draw no sharp line between academic and vocational education. This results in an unusual mix of students and faculty. Your colleague down the hall is as likely to be able to give advice on plumbing the Denver area as to your house as she is on interpreting the economics of Taiwan. Another characteristic is the emphasis on the lifelong learner and the local community. Community colleges aim to provide educational opportunities for the lifetime of an individual. To us, the years between 18 and 24 are not the sole or prime years for learning. Doug Nelson’s essay on how he developed the study of religion at Northwest College explains the results of this. He tells a delightful story of educating an elderly gentleman in Greek and how the interests of the adult learners in his community shaped the direction of his course. These distinctive characteristics lead to a kind of maverick or experimental attitude amongst community college educators.

They are willing to try just about everything. Paula Drenzw provides an interesting example of this. Community colleges were some of the first schools to experiment in online education. In fact, Colorado, has a completely online community college. Paula provides a detailed account of how this attitude of experiment can translate a traditional religion class into a successful online experience. Joy’s account of her teaching will be foreign to most since few of her classes last for less than 4 hours and an 8 hour class is just a normal pace for her. Her description of life as a community college adjunct instructor is far from pretty but it is the reality for 75% of the teachers at my college. I have contributed to it by offering courses for which I know my college will only accept an adjunct to teach. For example, Mary Karen Solomon, like Doug Nelson, writes from a rural college. A typical teaching day for her would not only include a course in religion but also courses in Philosophy, Literature, English or Humanities. This requires a breadth of knowledge and courage unknown to most of us. These unusual characteristics of community colleges provide both challenges and opportunities for the scholar of religion who chooses this career path. For me it has been deeply rewarding.
Developing the Religious Studies Program at Tulsa Community College

Cherie Hughes
Tulsa Community College

IT HAS TAKEN more than ten years to develop the Religious Studies program at Tulsa Community College. Some of the original difficulties were the result of the inertia of the new, unfamil iar nomenclature, and the need to actively market the program to prospective students. At all the steps along the way the administration was unfailingly supportive and flexible.

Tulsa Community College is an urban, multi-campus, two-year institution serving 20,000 students. The Religious Studies program is located on the Metro Campus, which serves approximately 6500 students in downtown Tulsa. The program has one full-time faculty member and two crossover faculty members, one from History and one from Philosophy. It also employs a cadre of adjuncts.

In 1989-90, the college developed a pattern of courses for students who wished to major in Religious Studies and print ed in the college catalogue. Semester after semester, we would put a course or two on the schedule, and semester after semester, no students would enroll. It took until the spring semester of 1991 for my first Religious Studies course to "make." Introduction to Religious Studies finally made with four students. I called them "The Fab Four." Because the course was designed to be experiential and discussion based, we suffered mightily when a student or two was absent. The students were well aware of the dynamics and tried very hard not to miss class. Despite of the small number of students, or even perhaps because of it, the class was a very successful learning experience for both faculty and students.

The department began an active marketing campaign. It sent letters to all stu dents who had declared a Religious Studies major to inform them of the program offerings. Oddly, the program had majors before long before any one enrolled in my first course. There were four majors in fall of 1990, three semesters before the first class of the dis cipline was taught. Faculty held open meetings during the fall semester where students could meet the faculty and dis cuss the Tulsa Community College Religious Studies program. The faculty was on hand to counsel students and to provide information about transfer to senior institutions in and around Oklahoma. The department provided refreshments, luring students with cookies and punch. The department held other meetings by invitation to targeted populations of students.

On the level of individual effort, faculty members designed fliers for specific course content or campus events. The course student newsletter was cooperative in printing articles about the courses and the program.

The following year saw a jump to 29 students in two courses. By the next year, 69 students were enrolled in one of four courses and ten students had declared Religious Studies as their major.

Encouraged by the success of the first class group, Religious Studies was added two additional courses to the schedule for the spring semester, one at night and one during the day. We began to alternate day and night offerings of Hebrew Scriptures and Christian Scriptures during the fall and spring semesters. We offered Introduction to Religious Studies, the one absolutely required course for the major, during the day in the fall and during the night in the spring semester.

After several semesters of low enrollments in the scripture classes, we discovered that many students did not know what the titles referred. Many expected that Hebrew Scriptures would be taught in Hebrew, not in English. They did not realize the title as referring to the Hebrew Bible, or that the Hebrew Bible was the same as the Old Testament for Christians. Many students did not rec ognize Christian Scriptures as referring to the New Testament. Obviously the nomenclature, though academically cor rect, was getting in the way of student enrollment.

The courses were entitled with their more vernacular names: Old Testament and New Testament. Only one of these courses has had to be cancelled for low enrollment since the change of titles went into effect. Students know at a glance what course is being offered. Faculty members are still free to include non-canonical texts for study in these classes. By changing the names of two courses, both faculty and students bene fited. The faculty has two additional courses to teach regularly and students are com fortable signing up for courses where the title describes to them at least the major ity of the content.

The largest number of majors in the program has yet to exceed sixteen. Usually there are between ten and fifteen majors in any academic year. We hope that these students will complete the Associate of Arts degree in Religious Studies at Tulsa Community College and then continue their studies in a senior institution. Many more have ministerial aspirations than academic ones, but there has been a noticeable shift towards academic goals in the last five years.

As the one full-time member of the Religious Studies faculty, I have done community outreach through letters and personal visits with local clergy. I regu larly send notification of course offerings to the Christian and Jewish congregations that are proximate to our downtown Tulsa location. A few pastors have asked Tulsa Community College to provide high credit courses off-campus. The course student newspaper was cooperative in printing articles about the courses and the program.

To market the program to prospective students, the Religious Studies faculty, I have done community outreach through letters and personal visits with local clergy. I regularly send notification of course offerings to the Christian and Jewish congregations that are proximate to our downtown Tulsa location. A few pastors have asked Tulsa Community College to provide high credit courses off-campus. The course student newspaper was cooperative in printing articles about the courses and the program.

The Tulsa Community College Religious Studies program has hit a growth plateau over the last few years. Its present challenge is to reinvigorate the program and to stimulate its growth. The major difficulty the program faces is that Tulsa Community College is the only public institution of higher education in the state of Oklahoma that offers a Religious Studies degree. There is no public senior institution to which its majors can transfer and continue their Religious Studies interests through to a Bachelor of Arts degree. The state’s major research institu tions no longer have Religious Studies programs. There are some excellent denominational universities in the state, but they tend to be out of the price range of most community college graduates.

It has been a pleasure and a challenge to develop the Religious Studies program at Tulsa Community College over the last ten years. The initial inertia has been overcome and there are interesting coun selors and a sufficient number of students to modify program going. It is tempting to simply relax and enjoy the status quo. However, professional integrity demands that we push, prod, and pull an already good program to even higher levels of development. Perhaps that will be the story of the next ten years.
Teaching Biblical Languages and Biblical Archaeology in the Community College

M. Douglas Nelson  
Northwest College

Biblical Greek Courses

In 1984-1985, first and second year Greek were added to the language department curriculum and housed in the Humanities Division. Classical Greek was the period of choice since it was not clear how Biblical Greek would be accepted by the college and community. Part of the mission of the college is, of course, to serve the needs and interests of the community. As it turned out, the interest was very strong in Biblical languages, and as a consequence, Classical Greek was replaced by a two-year sequence in Biblical Greek:

Greek 1015, 1025 Elementary Biblical Greek, I and II (4 credits each)

I’ve used various textbooks and have had about the same success rate with each:

Greek 2305 Intermediate Biblical Greek (4 credits) for those who need four more credits to complete a college language requirement, or Greek 2510 (1 credit) for those who want to keep building reading skills.


Biblical Hebrew Courses

The Hebrew and Greek classes meet once a week on Tuesday evenings for three hours and fifteen minutes (!). Thus, I must use textbooks that are very user-friendly and that have workbooks and cassettes. I make my own worksheets and cassettes if they are not available with the textbooks. I have found Masoor’s books quite useful so long as there are other available texts for consultation by students, such as C. Leong Soon’s grammar.

Hebrew 1010, 1020 First Year Hebrew I, First Year Hebrew II (4 credits each)

Hebrew 2030 (4 credits)

This is a four-credit course for those who are using Hebrew for their twelve-credit biblical language requirement for the B.A. degree when they transfer. We read Biblical texts from the Masoor volume which has helpful notes and also from the BHS so students can get some experience with the critical apparatus and masora.


Hebrew 2150 Selected Readings in Hebrew (1 credit)

This is a similar course to Hebrew 2030 but for one credit only. It is designed for those students who wish to continue reading Hebrew as it fits their needs.

- Biblical Hebrew Stuttgartensis
- Greenbaum, Frederick, An Introduction to Aramaic. Scholars Press, 1999. Occasionally I have the students read Ezra or Daniel for experience in both Hebrew and Aramaic.

Biblical Archaeology Courses

Anthropology 2350, Biblical Archaeology

This is a general survey of the archaeology of Palestine from the stone ages to Islamic periods. I call the course “Biblical Archaeology” for advertising purposes. This seems to work well, though I sometimes get complaints when I spend too much time on the stone ages and not enough on Biblical periods (“false advertising”). Walter Rast’s book is perfect for this course. In the spring of 2002, I am going to experiment with teaching the textbook backwards, starting with the Islamic phases and backing up into the stone ages, as if one were digging a site. This approach may also avert the criticism of not enough time on the Biblical periods.


Additional reading from:

Anthropology 2310, Archaeology Field Methods: Israel


In the summer of 1999, while taking a course at the Roebeth School of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mount Scopus campus, I met Jodi Magness who had just completed a season of excavating at Caneas. She encouraged me to bring students for excavation experience in Israel. I had worked on a few digs myself, in Israel and in the United States, but had not yet taken students to Israel. With help from Professor Magness I brought five students for the 1995 excavations at Masada in the Roman camps and on the siege ramp (see my forthcoming report on the ramp excavation in the on-line journal from Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne, Wyoming: http://www.bibleinterp.com).

At Masada I met Haim Goldfisch of the Ben Gurion University of the Negev Desert, and Benny Arubas of the Israel Antiquities Authority. With their help and kindness to my students, we have excavated at Halutza (1997 and 1998) and at Beth She’an (1999). We are now planning a 2002 field season.

Theological Studies News, AAR Edition
Comparative Religion from on Ground to Online: Design to Implementation

Paula A. Drewek
Macomb Community College

THIS PAPER will describe the various stages in the process of converting a traditional Comparative Religion course to an online offering. The preparation of the instructor for the concepts and format of online instruction, together with the institutional decisions which shape distance education programs will constitute the first, preparatory phase. The next stage will focus on the course organization, specific course objectives and the learning activities designed to accomplish these. The implementation of the course with its attendant challenges, successes and failures will constitute the last stage. The reader presently teaching online or contemplating the development of an online course may choose to benefit from the experiences of this author.

Two primary incentives encouraged the refitting of a successful Comparative Religion course to an online offering by this veteran classroom teacher. Macomb Community College was eager to launch a series of online courses in diverse disciplines, and, to that end, offered free training in the necessary for teaching online. Additionally, my 36+ years in the classroom had me begging for new challenges in course delivery. I wanted to tighten up and condense the essentials for teaching the 7 religions I currently teach in Macomb Community College’s 16-week semester. I also wanted to develop assignments and techniques to more thoroughly engage students in the material to be learned. These challenges, and the availability of training, began my journey. It has been sustained for the past four years by several benefits unanticipated during the initial phases of course development. I will share these in my evaluation of the course.

College Support

A six-week training course (online, naturally) was offered to interested faculty. There were about 12 of us at this stage. The course, offered through the Convexe learning platform in California, used a textbook written by the Bedores (Gerry, Marlene, and Gerry, Jr.) called Online Education: The Future is Now. The training accomplished two things. First, it familiarized the learner with the mechanico/technical operations of online instruction and interaction; secondly, it promoted a rethinking of one’s discipline to coincide with a modular format using several kinds of instructional models. Hence, both practical skills and theoretical frameworks were integrated into the weekly assignaments. The course culminated with each teacher developing a rudimentary syllabus for an online course in his or her discipline and conducting one week of the course with associates as “the class.” I felt ill-prepared at the close of the training for the actual management of an online course. The old adage, “experience is the best teacher” emerged gradually as the stages from conception to implementation unfolded. My colleagues and I had many reservations and questions which were addressed in a series of seminars with the Convexe staff. The next stage was a stipend of $1200 to support development of an online course which I tackled during the summer without teaching responsibilities. It was ready by the beginning of Fall term 1999.

The college continued to offer support in myriad ways by appointing a full-time director of online learning to manage the details of starting and developing new online courses. A team of twenty more seasoned online teachers was available for whatever needs and questions we had in the initial stages of development or teaching an online. An online “faculty lounge” was and is available to share course- and solution. Support was further buttressed by a full time technical person to serve both faculty and students. As online offerings have grown additional technical support person have been added.

Particularities of Community College Teaching

The fact that two-year community colleges offer only the beginnings of study in any discipline restricts possible course offerings to introductory-level courses which offer a broad exposure to a wealth of material in one or two semesters. In religious studies we are teaching courses which are the students’ first exposure to the content areas of our discipline. One challenge this situation poses ensuring the instructor’s enthusiasm, engagement and flexibility throughout a career of teaching basically the same course. Professors do not have the opportunities available to our university counterparts to pursue interests in the areas of our graduate work. Yet another challenge is to continual re-instruction and student engagement in the learning process so that objectives can be met more effectively. The first challenge relates to personal/professional growth, while the

The Pragmatic Dimension of the Community College and its Impact on Religious Studies

Peter D. Jauhiainen
Kirkwood Community College

In this brief article I would like to explore several issues concerning the teaching of religion in community colleges. They all focus on some aspect of what I would call the “pragmatic dimension” of the community college itself and its impact on religious studies. By this I mean that the mission of the community college is oriented toward the “useful” or the “practical” in a manner that is somewhat different than four-year colleges and universities.

First, the community college is designed to be a comprehensive institution that responds to the needs of the local community. This has been part of its mission since the 1930s when the federal government allocated funds to establish emergency junior colleges in order to retain people who had lost their jobs during the Great Depression. The community college movement was further fueled by returning World War II veterans who took advantage of the GI Bill to gain access to higher education. In 1947, the Truman Commission advised that junior colleges think of themselves as “community colleges” and offer not simply the “first half of a four-year degree” but a wide variety of programs to meet the needs of local citizens of diverse ages and social backgrounds. Today the community college provides not only two-year transfer degrees but vocational and technical training, programs for retraining of workers, developmental education, high school completion, and various community services.

Because of this broad mission, religion offerings are typically limited to survey courses that are easily transferable to four-year schools and that appeal to a wide range of students. Transferability and marketability are essential factors of whether or not a course will succeed. Thus there is little opportunity to teach specialized courses in the area of one’s expertise. At Kirkwood Community College, which has an enrollment of over 11,000 students, I teach three introductory religion courses semester after semester—Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Introduction to Religions of the East, and Religion in the United States. In past summers I have also taught Introduction to Religions of the World. Furthermore, there are typically no religion majors and professors are fortunate if they have some of the same students only one or two courses. This makes it difficult to develop the kind of rapport with students that one might have in the “candy store” classrooms, especially liberal arts colleges.

At the community college, pragmatic considerations serve another and perhaps more foundational one—money. Since at my institution, at least, tuition dollars account for around fifty per cent of the general operating budget due to current state budget constraints and a twenty-year pattern of neglect of the community colleges by the state legislature, an overriding concern of the administration is to ensure that certain arts and sciences courses maintain high student enrollments. In effect, they have become the “cash cows” of the college.

Since students pay the same tuition rates no matter what courses they take, and since many courses like religion, philosophy, and history can be taught through the medium of large lectures, they help to finance smaller, more expensive courses in the vocational and technical programs where high-tech classrooms and laboratories give students meaningful on-the-job training. Of course, implied in this understanding is the

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Religious Studies News, AAR Edition

Teaching Religion in Community Colleges

Mary Karen Solomon
Northwestern Community College

The course covers all and equal presentation of all religions in communities (such as mine), the community college plays an important cultural role. From guest speakers and multi-cultural enrichment to its residents.

Because the community college is a state institution, it is required to respect the various educational goals, and encourage students to keep their minds open and endeavor to understand sympathetically that which may seem very alien to their way of life.

Mary's most basic objective in her Comparative Religion course is to help the students gain understanding of the role religion plays in thought and civilization; in this course we study world religions, or as Huston Smith expresses it, the great wisdom traditions, which sum up a culture's unique insights, values and development.

Secondly, students must gain and express knowledge of the various religions and their influences upon mankind; third, they need to better understand the forms and development of religions in both primitive and sophisticated civilizations. Of course, they do these mainly through reading, research, and writing, though both lecture and class discussion play an important part in understanding the various religions.

There are various approaches to teaching religion, but they seem to coalesce into two main camps: the historical approach and the phenomenological approach. The historical approach places each religion in its context, temporal and spatial, and traces its development throughout cultural history. The phenomenological approach treats religion as a system of values, cultural phenomena, in a sense: traditions of wisdom arise from the depths of culture, and attempts to explain religion from within, to clarify for the student the particular wisdom, insights, and spiritual developments of these traditions. The first choice for the community college religion teacher is to select which approach will work best in his or her situation.

Various texts have various approaches: Niels C. Nielsen, Jr. in Bedouin's Religions of the World describes his approach:

The study of the religions of the world is a subject of enormous scope and depth, covering the most mundane aspects of people's lives to their most sublime thoughts and aspirations. Many of the world's traditions are, in clear terms the principal doctrines, issues, and myths of each religion and shows how the traditions have responded to various cultural, social, and political contexts...

We believe that even though the stories and concerns of the few-emperors and other rulers—have played an important role, far more important for the value history of religions have been the broad cultural changes affecting adherents' lives—events such as foreign conquests, large-scale emi-

This is not a book about religious history. This explains the dearth of names, dates, and social influences in its pages. Historical facts are kept to the minimum that are needed to situate in time and space the ideas the book deals with...

This book is not a balanced account of its subject. The full story of religion is not very colorful—often it is crude and bar-

Mary Karen Solomon is Humanities/Social Science Division Chair at Northwestern Community College in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Her courses include teaching humanities, philosophy, literature, and English composition. Her particular interests include philosophy and literature of both Russia and China, he is a student of Gestalt psychology, Safo, Confucianism, and Daoism, and is working on an anthology of essays and poetry concerning religion.

Having targeted my subject as the enduring religions at their best, let me say what I take that to be. Their theological and metaphysical truths are, I am prepared to argue, inspired. Institutions—religious institutions included—are another un-even people (partly good, partly bad), institutions are built of vices as well as virtues. I would be the first to admit that sometime the religions emerges. They begin to look like the world's wisdom traditions. ('Where is the knowledge that is lost in information? Where is the vision that is lost in knowledge?'—T. S. Eliot...)

Religion alive confronts the individual with the most momentous option life can present. It calls the soul to the highest adventure: is it possible to project a journey across the jumles, peaks and deserts of the human spirit. The call is to confront reality, to master the self. Those who dare to hear and follow that secret call soon learn the dangers and difficulties of its lonely journey.... ('Prologue, The Illustrated World's Religions, Huston Smith')

I like this understanding of religion as inner truth and cultural accumulations of wisdom, as opposed to institutionalized systems answerable for much evil. As Joseph Campbell pointed out in The Power of Myth, paraphrasing Carl Jung, 'We are in a great defense against truly religious ideas.'

Structure of the Course: The course covers the great religions of the world, still in existence. This means we study Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in that order. I begin the course with a unit on primitive religion, examining characteristics of early religions such as the mnemonic experience, prayer, divination, use of magic, the role of shamans and fetishes, animism, totems, and totemism. We also study the several functions of ritual—stud for fulfillment of expectation, ritual as expression of anxiety, and ritual's association with mythology. We discuss the evidence for the great characteristics in native religions in Africa and the Americas. On the second day, after our initial discussion and our "Teaching Religion in Community Colleges"

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Religion alive confronts the individual with the most momentous option life can present. It calls the soul to the highest adventure: is it possible to project a journey across the jungles, peaks and deserts of the human spirit. The call is to confront reality, to master the self. Those who dare to hear and follow that secret call soon learn the dangers and difficulties of its lonely journey.... ('Prologue, The Illustrated World's Religions, Huston Smith')

I like this understanding of religion as inner truth and cultural accumulations of wisdom, as opposed to institutionalized systems answerable for much evil. As Joseph Campbell pointed out in The Power of Myth, paraphrasing Carl Jung, 'We are in a great defense against truly religious ideas.'

Structure of the Course: The course covers the great religions of the world, still in existence. This means we study Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in that order. I begin the course with a unit on primitive religion, examining characteristics of early religions such as the mnemonic experience, prayer, divination, use of magic, the role of shamans and fetishes, animism, totems, and totemism. We also study the several functions of ritual—stud for fulfillment of expectation, ritual as expression of anxiety, and ritual's association with mythology. We discuss the evidence for the great characteristics in native religions in Africa and the Americas. On the second day, after our initial discussion and our "Teaching Religion in Community Colleges"
SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING

Weekend Warrior: Adventures in the Teaching Trade

Jan Briel
Red Rocks Community College

The male students tend to cluster in two age groups: most are early to mid-30’s, intending to complete their Bachelor’s at a University; some are late teens to early 20’s, more recent high school graduates, a very few are older and changing careers.

The majority of the students are juggling the pressures of family, career and continuing education, leaving work on Friday afternoon to spend the week-end in class. These students are hard-working, high-achieving, and intellectually curious, with backgrounds as diverse as would be expected in a large city.

Because of the differences in age and education, there will be little commonality in class experience. The teacher needs to accept each student for where they are in their life, and strive to move them forward. How far forward is their personal issue. They are about to be hit by an explosion of information and sensory input. And if the aim is true, some insight will result. Remember the Golden Rule: teach as you would wish to be taught. A good class will be as stimulating, challenging and painless as possible for everyone involved. And a good teacher will set up the class for the students’ maximum success.

Text
To design a week-end format class, the realities of the demographic and the time factor will determine most of the instructor’s choices. In choosing a text, it is advisable to look for the most approachable and concise presentation of the material available. Textual material that can be supplemented with illuminating lecture will allow the most effective use of the students out-of-class study time. A text that the students don’t even need to refer to is a waste of their time. If all of the pertinent lectures may be given without corroborating text, why ask them to buy the book? Luckily, Religious Studies is “readily” in the publishing world at the moment and there has been a great deal of research and writing recently, making the options in texts abundant. The real choice is between most effective text and cost. College textbooks are given based on the lecture, supplemented by the outside reading.

It is also helpful if the assignments can be made personally relevant to the student. One of the benefits of teaching Religious Study is the possible opportunity for self-reflection and personal growth on the part of the student. It is an implied responsibility on the part of the teacher to create access to this opportunity, should the student be interested. In Psychology of Religion, a very successful assignment has been to ask the students to write a religious autobiography as a final, instructing them to apply some of the research that they had studied to their own background.

Another technique that has been found to be useful is to assign the students to make presentations of research to the class. For Religion and Film, the students each choose a single director, and prepare a 30 minute presentation on that director’s work, using at least three film clips, with emphasis on the religious and mythic symbolism found in the films. This enables the class to cover a wider scope of material than any of them would accomplish alone, and gives the students excellent discussion possibilities, as each of the presentations is open to the students.

Above all, show reasonable compassion. Don’t make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make the work too easy; that will make. The key is to keep track of the time, and to brake it down into workable increments: 60 to 90 minutes are the outer edges of complete concentration. When the average attention span is fifteen minutes, don’t expect adults to sit still for four hours at a time. The occasion-al half hour is critical; half the class will need to leave during the film, half won’t. One rule of thumb is to keep the students moving.

One of the most enriching activities is a field experience. Luckily, teaching in a large metropolitan area offers a genuine diversity of religious denominations. Classes have attended a Roman Catholic high Mass, services at the Synagogue, chanting sessions at the Buddhist Temple, vegetarian lunch at the Hare Krishna temple, and a tour of a Ladder Day Saints Temple before consecration. Recently, a connection was made to attend a discussion group at a Bei Ha meeting, and the option has presented itself of contacting a practitioner of Santeria. Response to these field experiences has been overwhelmingly positive; it seems that students have an empathetic breakthrough by physically taking part in these practices, reacting spontaneously and immediately to an increased understanding of a different perspective.

The second activity that works well is the presentation. It is best that these be assigned either to individuals or, at most, pairs. Generally, the students don’t have similar schedules, and to assemble a group of them would be very difficult. These presentations may cover portions of the text that need emphasis or religious expression, reacting spontaneously and immediately to an increased understanding of a different perspective.

Thirdly, there are several well-done film series, with topics about the expedi- tions of the Book of Genesis to travels of Buddhist temples, that have become available to a widespread audience. In addition, the great number of mainstream (read: Hollywood) films that are concerned with religious themes or issues are now readily available on video/DVD. Drama evolved from ancient, ritualized, expressions of mythology. The creative journey of mind and image may reveal the profound, even today.

Students tell me that, without instructor contact, Religion and Philosophy classes are very difficult to get a handle on. In addi-tion to this, there is a lack of background in these studies, and choose not to take the self-paced or online classes specifi-cally in order to someone to explain the material. Consequently, some investigation of their understanding of the text is necessary. That can take many forms; instructor lecture with open question and answer, discussion questions based on previous read-ing, group work in-class. The format of the instruction should attempt to accommo-date as many learning styles as possible. To rely exclusively on lecture is to overlook

LOVE MY TEACHING JOB. Because of it, I am able to attend appearances by the Dalai Lama, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Elie Weisel, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. I have seen priestly ordinations, demonstrations of Navajo sand painting, and Sufis in ecstatic trance. I have toured temples dedicated to Hindu gods, Jewish synagogues, and Roman Catholic cathedrals.

I am an adjunct instructor at a local community college, in the Philosophy department, my area of expertise is Religious Studies. My particular classes are scheduled in what is called the “weekend-college” format. In a practical sense, this means that the classes take place during the time in which people usually “recreate” (or in some cases, worship), i.e. Friday evening, all day Saturday and all day Sunday. Forty hours of instruction: a complete semester telescoped into 6 class sessions over three weekends.

Demographic
The weekend format has characteristics and needs that differ markedly from a “tradi-tional” class. Class sizes range from 10 to 20 students. 60-70% of these students are women, in ages from mid-20’s to mid-40’s. Many of these women already have a Bachelor’s degree, and are returning to school to enter a new field or to revalidate an existing career. Some of them are entering college for the first time, having delayed their education to marry and raise children. Their reasons for pursuing an education vary; a few are fulfilling a personal dream, more are looking for financial indepen-dence or security.

The pacing of a weekend class is the real art. The key is to keep track of the time, and to break it down into workable increments: 60 to 90 minutes are the outer edges of complete concentration. When the average attention span is fifteen minutes, don’t expect adults to sit still for four hours at a time. The occasion-al half hour is critical; half the class will need to leave during the film, half won’t. One rule of thumb is to keep the students moving.

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Lecture and activities
The second activity that works well is the presentation. It is best that these be assigned either to individuals or, at most, pairs. Generally, the students don’t have similar schedules, and to assemble a group of them would be very difficult. These presentations may cover portions of the text that need emphasis or religious expression, reacting spontaneously and immediately to an increased understanding of a different perspective.

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yet another opportunity for effective teaching and learning at the community college is the establishment of a more personalized "community of learners." The online environment can serve to aggregate various class members through the discussion boards developed to share and process ideas. Each student has access to the submissions of the others on the week's assignments and projects. Students naturally share their experiences, difficulties, solutions, options, personal, which touches upon the assignments and offer suggestions and strategies to one another. Clearly, the volume of student-student and student-teacher interaction is much greater online than in a traditional classroom. Each student has the potential for synergy which plays a vital role in online learning.4

Course Design

Pitfalls and possibilities

As White notes, one of the first pitfalls of online instruction is that teachers are using digital technologies to supplement or imitate "talking heads" in the classroom. When teachers use new technological tools to fit old pedagogical habits, it doesn't work. To be effective, teaching and learning strategy is necessary to refit an existing course into an online format. The instructor need not replicate lecture by lecture, and students need not read books cover to cover; they can have some "givens" in the instructional model based upon institutional decisions: the length of the course, the credits offered, the learning platform; and what kinds of interactions will be possible with institutional technology requirements for student performance; and whether the learning platform is synchronous or asynchronous. The instructor also needs to consider capacities of the students/computer equipment. The Parameters

The author began with the following parameters for his 3-credit hour 8-week course, which is the equivalent of 16 weeks of classroom instruction with the exception of enrollment. We were partnered to the Converse Learning Platform in California, which used an audioconferencing system with two possible hook-up modes: logging into the WWW or a modem dial-up with a voiceband connection. Listen mode recordings were available to students through access to their own included) could not support the hard drive memory required for those operations. So, this was to be a print-based virtual classroom without multi-media enhancements unless students individually wanted to access them on the web. Gone were several of my stock-in-trade classroom tools for enriching the virtual learning environment — slides, flip charts, recordings. I would have to come up with other ways to provide variety and tap the imaginative mode.5

Another challenge was to maintain and accomplish the same objectives as in the 16-week on-ground classes since they were equivalent in course credits. The objectives and the level of dialogue varied. Our online classes were restricted to 20 students initially (recent union contract raised that to 23). The "bounded interactive model" is suggested for 5-25 students per class and is designed to keep the classroom dialogue at a manageable level and not overload students or instructor. The highly interactive model is intended for only 10-15 students. Bounded interactive anticipates 5-8 messages per student each week.6

"When the message rate exceeds 200 messages per workday (weekly), we are reaching the limit at which students and facilitators can be expected to function comfortably."7

The instructor manages the dialogue levels of the various assignments and students set up an interactive model for student interchange in the virtual classroom — the public forum of the discussion. Shifting assignments away from the virtual classroom through group or independent study reduces the discussion that takes place without sacrificing course content. However, effective classroom dialogue is not simply a matter of quantity, but also of quality. The quality will be addressed under implementation.

Among the tools available for course design, I relied most on study questions; seminars on common texts; group work; and creative story applications/situations involving course concepts. These will be illustrated in the following sections. My experience in various modes of classroom instruction served me well by providing a variety of verbal activities to engage students in the learning process.

Defining course objectives and structure

My first task was to adapt course objectives to weekly objectives. This process was currently cursory and lackadaisical. Weekly objectives need to be "outcomes" stated in terms of specific behaviors. The first week’s outcomes may serve to illustrate this adaptation.

1. Describe how studying religions differs from the practice of religion.
2. Use concepts for the study of religion pre-existent in a paragraph you write about your study of religion.
3. Distinguish between different approaches to studying religions: theological, historical, sociological, philosophical, psychological and humanistic.
4. Describe and illustrate 6 dimensions as a framework for comparing religions.
5. Describe interactions between religion and science, religion and selected social issues.

From Objectives to Learning Activities

Choice of models

Based upon the 5 models described in Bedir: 7 chose the "bounded interactive model" that doesn't model and the level of dialogue varied. Our online classes were restricted to 20 students initially (recent union contract raised that to 23). The "bounded interactive model" is suggested for 5-25 students per class and is designed to keep the classroom dialogue at a manageable level and not overload students or instructor. The highly interactive model is intended for only 10-15 students. Bounded interactive anticipates 5-8 messages per student each week.6

"When the message rate exceeds 200 messages per workday (weekly), we are reaching the limit at which students and facilitators can be expected to function comfortably."7

Another potential for the joy of teaching. The potential for one second relates to student success. I have experienced that computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore many computers (my own included) could not support the hard drive memory required in our virtual classroom; furthermore

Assignment 1: Compare three of the various yogas as means to moksha. Find features for comparison. Which would you choose and why?

Assignment 2: Compare worship practices of Hindus with those of another faith (your choice). What impact does this have on future students in Hindism? Briefly explain two of her forms and attributes. Does she have a parallel in the worship practices of the contrast faith you have chosen?

Both assignments were responded to in discussion forums for the entire term. A second new assignment focused on the student's ability to connect learning about religions with their own experiences and personality. I developed these for the unit on Hinduism since it is often the most difficult religion for students to grasp. Students were to choose one of the following. 1. Create a Jewish character (male, female, Orthodox, Conservative or Reform) in the contemporary world or choose one from film (several films were suggested). Describe daily events in the life of this character. How would he be influenced by the mitzvot. End with the celebration of Sabbath; describe pious customs, for experiences of and meaningfulness for Jews. 2. OR Create your character and follow

New Assignments developed for the online format

Three assignments which were innovations of the online formatting of the course involved Hinduism. One assignment was an analysis of the Hopi Emergence Myth to develop student reading ability in connotative meanings as well as to introduce the importance of cosmogonic myths in developing worldviews. Questions were posed related to the cosmogonic myths that provoked religious issues implicit in cosmogonic myths: What is the nature of sacred powers — of humans — What is the relationship established between humans and sacred powers? Are there intermediaries? If so, what are they like? How are good and evil understood? What are human relationships with other creatures and groups? Are there unique features of tribal identity implied? This assignment proved to be important for developing reading ability and skill to define and support issues adequately with reference to the text of the reading. Several students had difficulty with the assignment which I attempted to counteract them individually through responses to their work. I then repeated a similar assignment using Hindu myths of creation and asked for a comparison of the two myths in terms of the basic questions posed. This exercise established continuity in course format, and the continuing development of skills and concepts addressed in religious studies.

A second new assignment focused on the student's ability to connect learning about religions with their own experiences and personality. I developed these for the unit on Hinduism since it is often the most difficult religion for students to grasp. Students were to choose one of the following. 1. Create a Jewish character (male, female, Orthodox, Conservative or Reform) in the contemporary world or choose one from film (several films were suggested). Describe daily events in the life of this character. How would he be influenced by the mitzvot. End with the celebration of Sabbath; describe pious customs, for experiences of and meaningfulness for Jews. 2. OR Create your character and follow
this character through the stages of life rituals: birth, bat/bar mitzvah, marriage, funeral and shiva.

Formatting Course delivery for Consistency and Continuity
Based upon what we had learned in the training course, student needs a detailed overview of each unit or week outlining the following: See Appendix B for a sample unit.

1. Week’s objectives, including key vocabulary terms
2. Reading assignments
3. Written assignments: when due and in what approximate time needed for completion, and points offered
4. Tests or quizzes

The sample unit should illustrate how objective #3 is accomplished through assignment #2. To regulate the quantity of dialogue in the virtual classroom, some assignments are sent to my personal mailbox for grading, especially if they involve a high level of skill development (the Hindi manual assignment). Most finished assignments are posted to the discussion forums for all to read and respond to (Chief Searlet’s speech dialogue). This feature creates an open classroom where students learn from each other. It is a major asset of the practice in active learning offered by the online classroom.

Lectures
Online learning does not emphasize the lecture as an important part of the process of student learning. As White notes in his review of key learning principles, “People learn by doing... Even if the lectures are inspiring, inspiring words alone will not help learners to internalize knowledge and skills. Learning needs to be actively engaged.” Nevertheless, my course incorporated two lectures each week in addition to the weekly readings and online assignments. Lectures provided focus and application of concepts stated in the week’s objectives. Lectures also served to enhance synthesis, integrate, and apply key vocabulary terms. The first lecture each week was devoted to major beliefs, figures and worldview of each religion, while the second focused on practice or application of basic beliefs and concepts. The lecture-writing process draws on one of the major skills of community college teachers — the ability to synthesize and condense material so as to be accessible to students with little or no background in the subject area and, often, poor learning skills. Given the main emphasis on doing, not merely reading, two lectures per week seemed optimum.

Small Group Projects
One tool for regulating the quantity of dialogue in the virtual classroom is the creation of small groups focused on specific projects or topics. I derived the groups from the main forums of the classroom to individual forums created for the group members. I have used the small group format in two ways. Within the weekly religious units, small focus groups were used to respond to a variety of questions on Christianity (one could use any faith group). Each group focused on a specific arena of questions/issues: scriptures, history, biography, theology, groups and denominations, etc. I created small groups to manage the creation of small group forums; it is easier as it establishes several forms of communication among participants: small group forum, email and chat room.

Each group of 3-4 persons is named to correspond to any of the centers of early Christianity: Rome, Antioch, Constantinople, etc. Each group is responsible for initiating a forum discussion during the first part of the week. Then, in a forum for the entire class I submit a quiz, focusing on select questions per group to which the posts pass their answers through a group facilitator. The small student-edited that students would have access to entire class for the test that follows the week. It also generates a good deal of dialogue on the unit concepts and objectives.

The second small group assignment involves a course project. Each student has the choice of an individual project on a religious issue or theme of their choice (several are suggested) or a group “ritual project.” Students make their selection of projects the 2nd week of class. The ritual pilgrimage project is included in Appendix C.

Completed projects are posted in the discussion forum the last week of class and offer all students access to either the pilgimages of the various groups or the topic research of those choosing the individual project. This feature of course development has proved very effective for broadening the scope of religions and issues studied and for increasing the synergy of classroom dialogue.

Testing
The kinds of tests, where administered and how, the value given to them in the final grade, and whether to use all at an are issues which the online teacher addresses in course design. To maintain consonance with my on ground classes, I decided to administer tests and do so online. To keep your grading and feedback on test results at a manageable level, I decided to test every two weeks. Each test incorpo-rate objectives from two religions and first would include the introductory week and the Native Americans; then Hinduism and Buddhism, and finally, a test on Islam alone at the end of week 7. The format of each test involves more written work in description and application of key terms and concepts than those for on ground students. I acknowledged that without extensive written materials of the class for their tests, but the tests were geared to the integration and understanding of unit concepts more than simple recall of information. Students were allowed 24 hours to read and respond to the test and send them to me through my personal e-mail. During the 24 hours of testing, I offered my home phone number to students for any questions they may have during a designated two hours the evening the test was due. After two weeks or more read-ing individual responses to the assignments, I already had a good knowledge of each student’s abilities, mastery of material, writing and communication skills. I was not overly concerned about the authenticity of test responses submitted.

The unit tests were followed by a final exam the last week in which I assigned each student a number of the 3 unit tests. The exam questions were similar to those of the on ground finals—easy questions involving the comparison of religions. For example: “Compare the five pillars of faith in Islam to the Mitzvot of Judaism.” “Most religions we study have these common beliefs. Describe 5 beliefs of one of the following: Buddhism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Judaism, and Christianity.”

Assessment
The balance of assessment components shifted the emphasis from the on ground to the online class. Normally, my student’s final grade reflects 60% test responses, 30% class discussion, 15% final project and 10% field trips. In the online class, assignments and participation in the discussion forum for 10-12 weeks, as well as the bulk of evaluative material. More weight was therefore given to assignments (35%) and final tests (50%) with the remainder for final projects (15%).

My first two online classes used both a qualitative and quantitative numerical grade for each week’s general discussion — responses to others’ work or clari-fications and additions to one’s own. Assigning point values to discussion rein-forced the due date, I chose to encourage of being online 5 out of 7 days per week. This standard was suggested for all of my synchronous online classes. “Being present” was an important component of the course. Nevertheless, it involved a lot of innocuous chat simply to hike up one’s grade. It also made extraodinary demands on the teacher to monitor the qualitative and quantitative contributions of each student in addition to grading 3 assignments per student each week. I dropped the separate assessment in favor of a simple 5 points per week for discussion. The present weighing of assessment com-ponents has worked well.

At the close of the design phase, the teacher should have on disk all the above course components “ready to roll.” It is not feasible to restructure objectives, assignments, supplementary readings, tests, lectures and projects once a course has started. The pace is too fast, the demands of students too pressing, and the grading too time con-suming to seriously devote any time to the curriculum itself once the course has begun. Modifications must be made follow-ing the course before its next offering.

Implementation

Developing synergy in the 1st week

The amount of dialogue generated in the pilot class was quite impressive. High synergy formats lean towards the socratic end of learning models while lower energy exists with more independent study. “Higher levels of dialogue are associ-ated with individual discussion questions and open discussion assignments. Lower dialogue levels result from assignments that focus on individual efforts such as reading and submitting papers.” Since the Comparative Religion course was most likely students’ first exposure to the content of this discipline, I chose to encourage a high level of dialogue to increase synergy. The outcomes of such dialogue benefit all as a community of learners, but are espe-cially important in exposing the less able or less experienced students to the thoughts and responses of others. To this end, a lively inter-change the first week is begun by having each student submit a spiritual or religious autobiography as a way to introduce one another within the content concerns of comparative religions. The autobiographies help establish a community of learning by identifying individual experiences. Instructor interaction is not high this point. Remaining for the remainder of the course to maintain the dialogue with one another generated in assignment 1 (see Appendix D). While dialogue is a major source of learning in a virtual classroom, course design must consider realistically the ability of students and instructor to maintain the expected level of activity.

Managing the course

Both new and experienced online students will have many questions about assign-ments, grades, technical difficulties and the like. The Blackboard platform has allowed the creation of a forum specifically to handle these concerns. Discussion forums are used for clarifications about assignments and other issues needing an immediate response. Once I was two times per day handling a forum, sending a test. By the time I got online to do so, there were twelve messages asking where the test was. So this forum is also a place for blowing off some steam which is a good outlet for student frustrations. Better they should be public and addressed as hidden and perhaps ignored. The course related forum keeps an instructor constantly in touch with students, and there are always some who require more attention than others. I am regularly reminded that commu-nity college teaching is a “service oriented” profession, and that characterization is magnified in an online class.

Regulating the quality and quantity of dialogue

As with any on ground class, some students will participate in the online course both class forums and others will submit only their assignments with the odd comment here and there. It is the instructor’s task to try to balance the dialogue so that diverse points of view are shared and responded to. Frequent logins to the online program (usually daily) is necessary to do this. It involves probing and directing the dialogue through questions, encouraging responses or corrections. Often the instructor’s expe-rience of religions is appropriate to give a context to the issues under discussion and send the dialogue to a more realistic level. When a student has been “absent” for several days it is necessary to personally e-mail the student to find out what is going on.

Another challenge to the instructor is noted by Jon Spaye in his article “College at Home” — the “spirit of chat.” This disease refers to a level of dialogue which does not move beyond the surface of issues, opinions and feelings. It is deadly to the synergy of learning; it is a major barrier to understanding. Teacher objectives and attendant processes of critical thinking in favor of “feel good” responses. It can become a “hit” and leave a lasting interest in course content. Every online class I have taught has had students predisposed to the “spirit of chat.” It is the instructor’s responsibility to guide the level of dialogue by personally contacting students about the quality of their work with specific sugges-tions to improve. It has been my experience in online instruction that students really desire to do well. They usually just need enough guidance to point out how.

Evaluation

Since evaluation is necessary to determine whether the instructor meeting student and instructor expectations, I offer two forms of evaluation here: student evaluation and teacher evaluation. The student evaluation I developed for student evaluation was simple and short, using a 4-point scale (4 being high) to rate all aspects of the course: assignments, readings/seminars, tests, text, lec-tures, administration, projects, student and instructor interactions, and your favorite aspects of the course. Here are some things I learned in each of two classes.

See DREWET p.8

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Assignments:

- Course administration (grading, forums, amount of material covered in assignments), 2.8
- Several students faulted me for not clarifying expectations of participation in the VC and optional assignments. This was soon remedied in group 2.
- Favorite aspects: all, interaction with students; Judaism, religious dimensions; Buddhism, Projects; Judaism, Christianity
- Least favorites: too much material; team project; fewer test questions; website; need test each week.

Group 2

- Strong points (3.5 and higher) were syllabus, readings/seminars, textbook, lectures, projects, student interaction
- Close seconds were assignments
- Weakest area was course administration (grading, forums, amount of material covered in assignments)

The second group had no ratings below 3.0 (good) but both classes felt the amount of material covered was too much. Students found the 3 rather challenging assignments per week to be too time-consuming and difficult. Some students indicated they would like verbal feedback on each of their assignments.

Instructor evaluation

- Assignments: The demand of grading 60+ assignments per week is excessive. In future, I would change this to 2 graded assignments with other topics posed for general discussion.

Other learning tools such as pair sharing or small groups would simplify the required work but not sacrifice learning objectives.

Another tool to simplify the grading of assignments would be a list of frequent weaknesses or comments (similar to banks of FAQ) which could be cut, pasted and mailed in response to each student’s weekly work.

A third tool already used was the ability to grade student work from the computer screen instead of printing it first. In earlier classes, I felt uncomfortable grading work on screen since I was accustomed to comment on portions of the assignment as I reviewed it.

- Classroom dialogue: The 3-4 forums each week have encouraged very high levels of dialogue and good synergy, resulting in an exciting class according to many of the respondents as well as the instructor. The insight gained is invaluable to my clearer understanding of the processes of student learning. Additionally, the joys and progress of student learning also become more visible, thus encouraging both to students and teacher.

- Insight into the learning process: Much of what remains hidden in a classroom of 35 students becomes exposed in the virtual classroom. The initial world views of students, how they process and assimilate new ideas, their ability to relate those to the experiences of their daily life are a few of the areas exposed in an online class. I am convinced that it keeps me in touch with the learning processes of my students, enabling me to be a more effective teacher.

- Course administration (management): This feature continues to be the most challenging aspect of online teaching for this instructor. It requires frequent logging into the course platform, clear and helpful feedback to students and steering the dialogue in the direction of course objectives while meeting individual student needs and concerns. All of this must be accomplished in a timely manner which places many demands on the instructor. For this reason, I have chosen not to offer the online course each semester even though demand has been high. Course registration usually closes after 2 or 3 days of offering the class.

- Carry over: Developing and teaching the online class has transformed the way I teach in my traditional classroom in many ways. Adapting course objectives to weekly outcomes has helped me make my expectations of students expressed in the objectives much clearer. Online teaching has also provided the incremental steps necessary to achieve course objectives through learning exercises and activities which engage students in the process of their own learning. With time and use the instructor becomes able to gauge which assignments are accomplishing their desired purpose and which are not. It has made the class fun — bilingual, multicultural and the students — due to the activity-based assignments.

Gateway and Retention

Retention policies and practices are a major focus of community colleges today. The “revolving door” of 10-20 years ago is no longer acceptable in the face of increased competition for students from many post-secondary institutions. Retention is closely connected to student preparation for the course, and the requirements for entry are established by institutional policies. Those requirements at Macomb include a self-test of attributes needed for online student success before student enrollment. If the student deems him/herself qualified, they are allowed to enroll. Prior to the start of classes new students are given Blackboard orientation and password and complete a pre-survey in the use the platform technology. The orientation is mandatory and completion or testing out with at least 80% is necessary to be added to the course roster.

Most students who complete the first 2 weeks of a course will finish successfully with a “C” or better. Students who fall behind and cannot manage the course requirements for this initial period will usually drop or disappear. Retention rates have been higher in my online courses than on ground courses with higher grades. Of 22 enrolled students in last Fall’s class, there were 2 withdrawals after week 2 and 2 who disappeared before week 4. Of the remaining students, there were 6 As, 11 Bs and 1 C. The engaged learning environment, the fast pace of the units, and shorter time span of the course leave little room for drifting away or inattention more common in the traditional classroom. The higher retention and grades may be due to the more mature, self-motivating student enrollment in online classes.

Future directions

Since this paper has described the specific processes and decisions of refining an existing Comparative Religion class to an online environment, I have not focused on the theoretical learning principles and their incorporation. I would like to include these as check points for those who may wish to enter the online teaching arena and as guides to my future intentions and goals and those of my readers.

The learning environment is:
- fun
- engaging
- experiential
- interactive
- set in a meaningful context
- activity-based. 11

 Arenas targeted for future implementation are the incorporation of quick time movies, pictures and audio recordings to the online class. In particular, the Detroit area Harvard Pluralism Project with which I am engaged has developed a photo exhibit of area religious communities and is in the process of recording audio visual and pictures for communities in action. I would like to make these materials available to online students as well to supplement their experience in the religious communities in our Metro Detroit area.

2 The 5 models offered by the Board are relative to levels of interactivity in the online classroom. This interactive model is designed for four students, while the less interactive for up to 60 students.
3 Macomb Community College currently has online registration, an articulation arrangement for course transfer with the Michigan Virtual Learning Collaborative, Franklin University, Walsh College and U. of Michigan, Dearborn to absorb all student online credits into their baccalaureate programs. The online student body has grown from 80 to 1600 in the two years from 1998 to Fall, 2001 in 81 sections.
4 Before, 51.
6 Macomb switched its learning platform from Convene to Blackboard in beginning in 2000, as did the Michigan Virtual Learning Cooperative. This move to a web-based platform required only a brief introductory orientation for both students and faculty to become proficient in its use. The Blackboard program has avoided many of the server problems we faced with Convene.
7 To add audio and visual enrichment to my Comparative Religion class, I had purchased several copies of Diane Elks’ On Common Ground CD Rom as a library resource. However, online students prefer accessing library materials from their computers.
8 The models, named briefly in footnote 2 are Interactive, bounded interactive, consultative/interactive, independent/consultative, special configuration. These program from highly interactive to low interactivity consonant with number of students per class and design dialogue levels per student.
9 Before, 100.
10 Before, 109-110. He often offers over 40 such tools.
11 Dialogue tests done for the online students change periodically, but this year have included: Chief Seattle’s Speech to Governor Stevens in 1854; A Zen story; two newspaper articles on Judaism in contemporary life; an excerpt from Anne Tyler’s Saint Maybe on astonishment in the Christianity unit; and a newspaper article on Islam entitled “Muslims Try to Correct Wrong Beliefs”. Reference text:
12 Synchronous forums must be timed so that students are “present” during agreed-upon hours. Asynchronous forums are available whenever individuals choose to access them. The Blackboard platform adopted in 2000 allows both.
13 Ibid. 5.
14 The Blackboard platform has a Digital Drop Box for student work which can be accessed only by the instructor but which permits comments on the material submitted.
15 Before, 115.
JAHUAIENEN from p.vi

idea that we in the liberal arts, for example, can adequately improve and measure students' skills and learning when we are assigned 150-190 students per semester. The large student volume restricts one's choice of assignments and limits the amount of constructive feedback one provides on papers and exam essays, and indeed tempts one to resort to marking essays more quickly so as to order the time spent grading.

In responding to community needs, community colleges have been concerned to provide quality programs at low cost. One way of reducing costs is not only to have some faculty teach large classes, but to have them teach more classes than they would in a liberal arts college or university setting. At Kirkwood, the standard load is five classes per semester. Needless to say, there is little time for research. At the community college, faculty are primarily teachers.

If I could have my way with the state sys-
tem, I would blend Plu 115, Comparative Religions, with Lit 201, Masterpieces of World Literature I, for one 4-credit combined course: World Religion and Literature. In Lit 201, we read Abhinavagupta's Hymn to the Sun, large portions of Genesis and the stories of Joseph and his brothers, Jonah, Cain and Abel, and Noah and the Ark from the old Testament. These stories are followed by a matching compassion with which the Noah stories. There are selections from those most exciting Hindu scriptural sto-
tories, the Ramayana, Bhagavad Gita, and Mahabharata. We read selections from the Chinese Dao, Song and Taoism, from Analeen. Then we read Socrates Apology and Plato's Plato; we read Luke's book of history by Joseph of the Sermon on the Mount of Matthew's. Passion of Jesus, followed by the Confessions of St. Augustine. We then turn to Islam, and read suras from the Qur'an, selections from The Biography of the Prophet by Ibn Iqah, two stories from The Conference of Birds, by Farid al-din Attar, the mystic and суlf, followed by the ecstatic sufi poetry of Rumi and Sufi. And for a

It is amazing that such diverse traditions come together so

One of the best definitions of the stages of the mystical experience, common both to the

One of the best definitions of the stages of the mystical experience, common both to the experience of St. John of the Cross and to the path of Raja Yoga in Hinduism, is given by Farid al-din Attar in "Conference of the Birds."

7. Faqir We Faqra: Annihilation: a raptur-
ous, ecstatic state; a permanent absorp-
tion into the divine.

The suffixes describe a twofold approach to God: Hüwairi (d. ca. 1071) claims, "There is a difference between one who is burning with a love and one who is illuminated by His Beauty in the light of contemplation."

Jami distinguishes between two types of advanced Sufis, one type "to whom the Primalmoral Grace and Lovingkindness has granted salvation after their being sub-

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The reasons students are enrolled in Biblical Languages and Biblical Archaeology

1. Students completing language requirements for the University of Wyoming or the BA and BS transfer requirements. Students must complete twelve credits in one language for the BA or eight credits in one language for the BS.

2. Students taking language courses to meet humanities and/or multicultural general education requirements.


4. Non-traditional students taking language courses for personal reasons apart from degree seeking. These students have been the largest and most stable component in enrollments.

5. Students planning to attend seminary or transfer to a Bible-related college.

Types of students enrolled in Biblical Languages and Biblical Archaeology

We have had a range of students take Greek and/or Hebrew over the years, including, welders, ministers, ranchers (cattle and sheep), outfitters (hunting and fishing guides), military personnel, senior citizens and retirees, business people, housewives and househusbands, engineers, geologists, a few high school students, artists, and traditional degree-seeking students.

A personal and illustrative story

Some years ago I was often seen in a classroom with one student. Little did I know this was stirring up some controversy in another department over the Dean of Instruction, a humanities-oriented scholar, approving an exotic course, Biblical Greek, with only one student in it. That particular semester I was teaching five classes which is our usual load and had 154 students. Clearly I was doing my duty for the college. That semester one of my courses was Biblical Greek with an enrollment of six-teen. Who, then, was that one student seen on a daily basis with me in a classroom? He was an older retired man crippled with arthritis and able to see the Greek text only while holding a large lens. He was not able to attend the Greek course under normal arrangements so I repeated the course one-on-one for him. It was a blessing for both of us. He was a wonderful person with a sharp mind and great passion for learning Greek. We had a great semester.

I suppose there will always be some criticism in the community college of the so-called “exotic humanities curriculum,” but the answer, of course, lies in the enrollments. So far, in the sixteen years we have had a course in biblical languages, the courses have never failed to fill. As I said earlier, I am working in an area of this country where there is a great desire for this kind of learning and hopefully the enrollments in Biblical languages and Biblical archaeology, will continue to be strong.

A Student Testimonial

“What’s a forty-six year-old homemaker, mother of seven children, resident of rural Wyoming, doing in an Hebrew and Greek class? Having the time of her life! I have waited many years for my children to be old enough to enable me to take these classes. My friends gasp when they hear of it and ask why on earth I would want to do such a thing. I just know that it has been a burning desire for as long as I can remem-ber. I love the Scriptures and have always wanted to be able to read them in the origi-nal languages. I find there are many bene-fits to taking these classes. I believe my overall memory has improved in every way. I have taught religion classes in my church for twenty years and know that others will also be able to benefit in a small second-hand way from my new-found knowledge. Excitement over learning is contagious, and my children are showing a lot of interest in learning another language. We have a lot of fun sharing the little we know with each other. But, most of all, the best reason of all, is that it tastes so delicious to me! I love learning it and I will go to my grave thank-ful that it was taught, of all places, in a small community college in Wyoming.”

Although we have forty hours of class time, we simply cannot deal with as much mate-rial in a full semester. That’s the reality. However, that said, students often express amazement at the end of the course about how much they learned in such a short time.

One of the films we sometimes watch is Babette’s Feast. In the film, a pietistic and ascetic Danish congregation is transformed when a French cook, Babette, offers to pre-pare a banquet to honor the group’s founder. Having renounced all pleasures of the flesh, the church members, as Babette prepares a sumptuous spread of truffles, caviar, quail, sea turtles, wine and other dangerous pleasures, are deter-mined not to enjoy the feast, but the delici-ous foods and wine work to soften their hearts and heal unspoken quarrels which have divided people for decades. Jewett places the film in conversation with Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. The trou-ble the Corinthians is to allow the sharing of the love feast to build com-munity. Babette, in contrast, in her faith and academic community we have created dur-ing the three weekends of class.