DR. POWER CELEBRATES OVER 40 YEARS AT UGA!

Dr. William L. Power has become a fixture in the Department of Religion at UGA for more than 40 years and the Department of Religion congratulates him on his service to the University and the Department. He came to UGA in 1967 when the religion and philosophy programs were one department, the Department of Philosophy and Religion. The department began in that year to expand the offerings in religious studies and Dr. Power was added as a new faculty member to teach both philosophy and religion, along with Dr. Robert Ayers, who was already a member of the department.

Dr. Robert Ayers, Dr. William Power, Dr. George Howard, Dr. Shanta Ratnayaka, and Dr. Anthony Nemetz were the founding members of the Department of Religion at UGA in 1984 when the department split from Philosophy.

Prior to coming to UGA, Dr. Power taught for two years at Lambuth College in Jackson, Tennessee. There he was hired as assistant professor of philosophy. From 1952-1956 Dr. Power went to college at Ole Miss for his B.A.E. and majored in, he says, “having a good time.” Then he went to Emory for the M. Div. degree (Master of Divinity), which at that time was called the B. D. degree (Bachelor of Divinity). While at Ole Miss Dr. Power went through the R.O.T.C. program and had to interrupt his studies at Emory for a military obligation at Fort Benning Georgia as an infantry officer.

For three years after finishing his M. Div. in 1959 he worked in an ecumenical student program at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. Dr. Power returned to Emory in 1962 to begin work on the Ph. D. degree.

Counting his two years at Lambuth College, Fall 2008 was the beginning of his 44th year as a college or university professor. Dr. Power says his work has been very rewarding and he still loves teaching. He says that living in Athens has been quite an experience with all the changes that have occurred. He loved the days of the flower children and hippies, teaching famous people like Hugh Ruppersburg (the new Senior Associate Dean of Franklin College), Zinetta McDonald (the Religion Dept. Business Manger) and the sons and daughters of some of the sons and daughters he had taught earlier. Dr. Power is a former Sandy Beaver Teaching Associate Professor. This honor is one of the highest in the Franklin college recognizing outstanding teaching. Dr. Power was also recently recognized by the Student Government Association for his outstanding commitment to the students at UGA.

Dr. Power says, “As a whole I basically feel like I did when I was 20, although some of the parts don’t quite function like they once did! That’s life, and I am glad that I have lived it with all of its good times and bad times. And I ain’t dead yet. “

NEW FACULTY MEMBER IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS

The Department of Religion welcomes the addition of Dr. Aderibigbe as a joint appointment with the Africana Studies Department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Currently, Aderibigbe areas of research interest are African Religion in Africa and African Diaspora and he is involved with other colleagues in a book project: Contemporary Study in Religions of Africa and African Diaspora. Dr. Aderibigbe has introduced a number of new courses in Religions of Africa and African Diaspora and he is involved with other colleagues in a book project: Contemporary Study in Religions of Africa and African Diaspora. Dr. Aderibigbe has also earned a Diploma in Religious studies at the SS. Peter and Paul Catholic Major Seminary, Bodiya, Ibadan, Nigeria. Dr. Aderibigbe taught for many years at the Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos, Nigeria. His main fields of instruction and research were Philosophy of Religion, African Religion, Phenomenology of Religion, Comparative Study of Religion and Sociology of Religion. His research efforts have yielded significant contribution to scholarship through many publications, some of which are: Fundamentals of Philosophy of Religion; Thomas Aquinas’ Demonstration of God’s Existence; A Contemporary Perspective; Topical Issues In African Religion.; edited books, Religion: Study and Practice; Religion and the Environment; Religion, Medicine and Healing.; chapters in books- Traditional Healing System among the Yoruba; Religion and Human Ethics; and articles in journals such as “African Religion and Christianity in Dialogue: An Appraisal of the African Perspective.” During the 2008 spring and summer. Dr. Aderibigbe taught Religions of Africa and African Diaspora at the Africana Studies Department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Currently, Aderibigbe areas of research interest are African Religion in Africa and African Diaspora and he is involved with other colleagues in a book project: Contemporary Study in Religions of Africa and African Diaspora. Dr. Aderibigbe has introduced a number of new courses to be offered at UGA, including Introduction to Study of African Religion, the African Concept of God and Humanity, and Eschatology in African Religion.
Dr. Ibigbolade Aderibigbe was invited to present a paper, “Religion and Politics in the United States 2008 Presidential Election: Global Implications and the Nigerian Experience,” at the Second Global Conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates in May 2009.

Mr. Haider Bhuiyan, Lecturer in Arabic, is writing a chapter on “Muslims in America” in INCORPORATING THE MIDDLE EAST INTO THE CLASSROOM, by the Council for the Middle East, a Consortium of USG Professors, to be published in 2009. He was also invited to deliver a lecture on “The Significance of Learning Arabic” by the Islamic Society of Augusta, Georgia at the Community’s “14th Annual Graduates’ Award” ceremony on August 10, 2008.

Dr. Wayne Coppins was named a Lilly Teaching Fellow for 2009-2011. The Lilly Teaching Fellows Program was originally established at the University of Georgia in 1984 as a result of a grant from Lilly Endowment of Indianapolis. The Award recognizes the significant and positive impact made by individual Fellows on the scholarship of teaching at UGA.

Dr. Rouslan Elistratov, Lecturer in the Department of Religion, recently received the Honors Program J. Hatten Howard III Award. This award is in recognition for Dr. Elistratov’s superior teaching of Honors courses. Dr. Elistratov was also recognized by the Student Government Association for teaching excellence and particularly for the influence he has had on the lives of his students.

Dr. Wayne Coppins was named a Lilly Teaching Fellow for 2009-2011. The Lilly Teaching Fellows Program was originally established at the University of Georgia in 1984 as a result of a grant from Lilly Endowment of Indianapolis. The Award recognizes the significant and positive impact made by individual Fellows on the scholarship of teaching at UGA.

Dr. Richard Friedman published an electronic version of his “Who Wrote the Flood Story” and one journal article. A Festschrift was published in his honor: Sacred History, Sacred Literature: Essays on Ancient Israel, the Bible, and Religion in Honor of R. E. Friedman on His 60th Birthday, Edited by Shawna Dolansky (Eisenbrauns, 2008).


Dr. Kenneth Honerkamp was honored with a First-Year Seminar Outstanding Instructor Award and was designated as an Outstanding Teacher by the Franklin College of Arts & Sciences recognizing his superior teaching. He was recognized at the Honors Day ceremony in April 2008.


Dr. Sandy Martin was one of two external reviewers of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, during Spring 2009.

Dr. Carolyn Medine along with Melanie Harris (Union Theological Seminary), and Helen Rhee (Westmont College) received a Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion grant, funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. The grant, “Difficult Questions in the Classroom,” will allow Dr. Medine and her associates to explore what happens when a woman of color enters the religious studies classroom. They were one of 4 out of 30 for a $20,000 grant.

Dr. Jace Weaver will be appointed a Franklin Professor of Religion and Native American Studies effective July 1, 2009. This appointment honors faculty in the Franklin College for their outstanding contributions to research in their discipline and to the College. Dr. Weaver’s book, American Indian Literary Nationalism (co-authored with Craig Womack and Robert Warrior) won the first annual Bea Medicine Award for best book from the Native American Literary Symposium.
In the Fall of 1988 Dr. Sandy D. Martin joined the Department of Religion at UGA as an Associate Professor. Dr. Martin previously taught at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, Spelman College, and the Interdenominational Theological Seminary. Over the past 20 years he has witnessed a number of changes in Athens, the University, and the Department of Religion. He has found his stay in the department to be a very happy one. Among his greatest delights have been watching the growth of the department -- increasing numbers of majors, minors and other students interested in Religion; the creation of the Arabic major and minor; Collegiality of faculty and staff; a greater variety of courses and expertise; and alumni who have made their mark and supported the department. He continues to be excited being part of the grand vision of Drs. Ayers, Howard, Power, Ratnayaka and Nemetz. The Department is grateful to Dr. Martin for his service to the University and the Department of Religion.
**MCDONALD EARNED STAFF AWARD**

The Religion Department Business Manager of 23 years, Zinetta McDonald was selected as a recipient of the Franklin College 2008 Staff Excellence Award. The award is a means of recognizing the accomplishments of staff members in the Franklin College or Arts And Sciences. She was also recognized for 20 years of service to the Franklin College. Ms. McDonald began her career at UGA in 1976 working for the University’s Honors Program. She also has worked for the Science Library, the USGA Applicant Clearinghouse and was the work-study student for the Department of Religion while she was completing her AB degree in Philosophy at UGA.

**Graduate Awards**

The Department of Religion has been very fortunate to have numerous graduate students win the Graduate School Dean’s Award. This award is intended to help defray the costs of doing research for their dissertation or thesis. For 2008 we had two students, Crystal Aycock (M.A. ‘09) and Karen Schwerin (M.A. ‘09) receive awards. For 2009, Jane-Anne Pearce (M.A. ‘09) and Kristen Cox (M.A. exp. 2010) won awards.

**Teaching Awards**

Each year graduate students across the UGA campus compete for the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award. From the Department of Religion in 2008 Michael Ward received this honor and in 2009 Hugo Mendez was the recipient. They were both honored at Honors Day.

**ALUMNI NEWS**

**Dr. Colt Anderson’s** (M.A. 91) new book, *The Great Catholic Reformers: From Gregory the Great to Dorothy Day*, won third place in the “History” section of the Catholic Press Association Awards for 2008. The Catholic Press Association wrote: “This book is firmly anchored in the orthodox tradition of the Church. Anderson understands his formidable subjects well, and through a style of writing that invites the reader to respectfully consider each of these great Catholic reformers. He blends a real understanding of the human condition, social mores, and an appreciation for the role of spirituality, critique, and Church discipline. He never [loses] sight of the use of the method that he proposes for his presentation, a four-step method proposed and championed by the Dominican theologian Yves Congar. The method serves the topic well and the book makes a useful and necessary contribution to furthering the necessary dialogue for reform.

Carl Willis (B.A. ’82) has been working in the Child Welfare field for over 23 years and 30 years in the ministry. He is currently the East TN Regional VP for the Tennessee Baptist Children’s Homes. TBCH (www.tbch4kids.org) is a 117 year old ministry which cares for abused and neglected children throughout the state of TN.

Jason Eaglen (M.A. ’06) began a position in the Fall 2008 at St. Pius X Catholic High School in Atlanta, GA. He works in the Theology department and teaches Church History and Basics of Catholicism.

**Alumni News (continued)**

In November 08, Dr. Kathleen (Katie) Wood Peters (M.A., ’94), along with two co-authors, signed a textbook contract with Oxford University Press for an introductory humanities text entitled Humanities and the Spirit of the Times. It will be published in Spring 2013, along with a primary source reader and other ancillaries.


Dr. Anthony Granberry (MA, ’91) has joined the staff of the Care and Counseling Center of Georgia (www.cccgeorgia.org) in Decatur, Georgia after serving as Clinical Program Director at St. Jude’s Recovery Center, metro Atlanta’s largest recovery community for persons struggling with substance abuse and addiction. He received a MTS degree (Master in Theological Studies) and his ThD from the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. He is a licensed professional counselor and provides pastoral counseling and psychotherapy to teenagers, adults, couples, families, and groups. He also holds a certificate in Organizational Development from the National Training Laboratory (NTL) of Bethel, Maine and provides consultative services to churches and religious organizations.

Sarah Churchman (BA ’00) is currently the Web/Marketing Coordinator for Richard Bowers & Company, the largest independent commercial real estate firm in Atlanta. Despite not being employed in the religion field, she feels she could not excel in her current job without the writing skills she attained while in the Religion Dept. She has had ads published in Atlanta Magazine and the Atlanta Business Chronicle and broadcast on WSB during their coverage of the Atlanta Christmas Parade. She is also available for any freelance web and graphic work. Please feel free to contact her via her website www.gr870sfunk.com.

Michelle Schingler (M.A. ’08) was awarded full financial support to Harvard Divinity School.

This Fall 2008, one of our former graduates and instructors, Kai Riedl (M.A. 06), offered a special topics course RELI 4000, “Music in Religious Culture.” This course was the product of a ICE grant awarded to Mr. Riedl to create an interdisciplinary project in collaboration with Dr. Jean Kidule from the School of Music. Their project, called “Our New Silence,” included a collective and performance of various local and UGA musicians from Athens Georgia that are remixing/reinterpreting/abstracting traditional music recordings from Java, Indonesia. The event was held in April at the Ramsey Hall at UGA and featured live performances, pre-recorded music pieces and ambient sound recordings by a variety of musicians.

In other music news, Brad Downs (M.A. 01), who had been teaching with the department of Religion as a part-time instructor, recently debuted his album of “self-penned tunes showcase[ing] his songwriting chops” at the 40 Watt Club in April 2009. The Album, Winter Breathing, was recorded by Downs, along with bass player, Paul “Crumpy” Edwards. Special guests on the album include William Tonks on guitar and former R.E.M. drxummer Bill Berry.

Bryan Gallant (M.A. 07) is working for “The Quiet Hour” (http://www.thequiethour.org/). The organization’s mission in cooperation with the Seventh-day Adventist Church is carried out through ministries: mission projects; a variety of evangelism programs designed to provide people of all ages and experience levels an opportunity to participate; unique outreach programs; and the Windows of Hope TV broadcast.

We are always looking for information concerning our alumni and their activities. Please send any news and updates to religion@uga.edu. We love hearing from you.
NEW ARABIC MAJOR

The University of Georgia has become one of only a handful of universities in the South to offer a major in Arabic - and the only university in Georgia. Within a few years, about 20 students a year will complete Arabic majors within the Department of Religion. The University System Board of Regents approved the new major in August 2008. Arabic is the native language for about 200 million people in the Middle East and North Africa, and 200 million more people use the language as the liturgical language of Islam. UGA students have been able to take Arabic courses for more than a decade, but interest in the language skyrocketed after terrorists brought down the World Trade Center towers and flew a plane into the Pentagon in 2001. Students study Arabic for a variety of reasons, some are ex-military personnel who became interested in the language while stationed in an Arabic-speaking country such as Iraq, some are looking to government work after graduation. Some study Arabic because it’s their heritage. It’s a widely spoken language that will help students understand a large portion of people on the planet, and it’s a language that’s relevant to some of the more important issues going on in the world today. The Department of Religion is very excited about the addition of this major.

MOOROCCO STUDIES ABROAD PROGRAM

Dr. Honerkamp and Dr. Godlas conducted the UGA-Morocco Maymester Studies Abroad, “Islam, Islamic Culture, Arabic, and Intercultural Dialogue” from May 9-June 4, 2008 in Marrakech, Morocco. This year, nineteen students participated, 16 from UGA and 3 from other universities. Among the highlights of the program were two extended field trips: the first --to the western edge of the Sahara desert-- included a visit to a medieval Arabic manuscript library, a journey by camel into the dunes for a night in Bedouin tents, and a visit to Ait Ben Haddou (a UNESCO World Heritage site); and the second was via the stunning Hasan II mosque in Casablanca (which other than the great mosque of Mecca is the largest religious monument in the world) and the centuries-old madrasas and mosques of Rabat and Salee to the medieval city of Fes, filled with numerous Islamic architectural monuments and artistic treasures. This year’s UGA-Morocco program abroad is currently taking place from May 9-June 4, 2009. For more information and slide shows, consult the program’s website: www.uga.edu/islam/morocco/programinfo.html

Foreign Language Teaching Assistants

For 2008-2009 the Fulbright-International Institute of Education granted The Religion Department six Foreign Language Teaching Assistants. As their supervisor, Dr. Godlas is working with Dr. Honerkamp and Prof. Bhuiyan to supervise theFLTAs in their teaching of their native languages at UGA. The FLTA program is a part of the multi-million dollar critical languages initiative funded by congress after September 11 in response to the need for greater American expertise in languages important for the nation’s security. The FLTAs, who were here for one year, were Ms. Summayya Zahra from Pakistan (Urdu), Ms. Selima ben Chagra from Tunisia (Arabic), Ms. Tri “Anti” Kristianti from Indonesia (Indonesian), Mr. Ziaaddin Khamoosh from Afghanistan (Persian/Dari), Mr. Sayyed Salahuddin Ahmed from Bangladesh (Bengali), and Mr. Ali Nuwaiseh from Jordan (Arabic). The program will have possible seven FLTAs for 2009-2010 and we may be offering Pashto and Turkish as well as the other languages mentioned.
Visitors to the Ancient Village at the Cherokee Heritage Center in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, have for more than 40 years been treated to life as it might have existed in a southeastern Cherokee village in the 16th century. Now, a team from the University of Georgia is taking the lead in designing and constructing an entirely new model Cherokee village in Tahlequah, which is the capital of the Cherokee Nation. The new village, which will depict life as it might have been lived among the Cherokees around 1710 in the U.S. Southeast, will likely open in the summer of 2010.

Jace Weaver, Director of the UGA Institute of Native American Studies, part of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, and Professor of Religion, and a member of the UGA team, said that the timing is good for a new historic village to demonstrate to students and tourists the richness and heritage of how the Cherokee lived in the early period of contact. Others on the team from UGA are Ervan Garrison, professor and head of the department of anthropology, and Alfie Vick, an assistant professor in the UGA College of Environment and Design.

Vick, an expert on preserving and enhancing the function of natural systems that integrate human use, began drawing plans for the new village, based on historical documents and while working closely with officials from the Cherokee National Historical Society. While Vick and his students, some of whom were from North Park University in Chicago, were in the Cherokee Capital they met with Principal Chief Chad Smith, a UGA graduate. Smith and Vick began talking about needs that the Cherokee Heritage Center might have involving plants, and, as it turned out, the Cherokee had for some time been thinking about starting over with a new model village.

One major decision regarding the plans for a new village was to change the focus from the current imagined date of 1540 to 1710, just before the world of the Cherokee changed forever by substantial contact with whites. There are many other reasons for a new village, not the least of which is that scholarship on the Cherokee has dramatically increased in the past 40 years, and vastly more is known about them now than in 1967 when the model village was first built.

Just as important as historical accuracy in structures, however, is accuracy in the kinds of plants used in the new village, and the UGA team is working to ensure that plants native to the Southeast that will grow in that area of Oklahoma are used in the reconstruction. According to Vick, two-thirds of plants from the Southeast will grow there. This May, Vick and Weaver will again take students to Tahlequah to work on designs for plantings at the new village site.

Dr. Jace Weaver, Director INAS and Professor of Religion, was a consultant on a recently released PBS American Experience series. “We Shall Remain: America Through Native Eyes” was aired on local PBS stations in April and May 2009. The five documentaries span almost 400 years and tell the story of pivotal moments in US history from the Native American perspective. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/weshallremain/