

## Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

Annual departmental report for the year 2005

### Faculty:

The department began the 2005 calendar year with five full professors, six associate professors, five assistant professors, two full time instructors, seven adjunct faculty, and three faculty members who have joint (and primary) appointments with other departments. Changes to be noted include:

- John Baker, professor of philosophy, retired after many years of distinguished service at LSU and was accorded emeritus status by the University.
- Reem Meshal joined the department in fall 2005 as a specialist in Islamic Studies at the rank of assistant professor. She replaces Arthur Buehler who left the University in 2004.
- James Taylor, our specialist in theoretical and applied ethics, was entering his mandatory review year for promotion to associate professor with tenure, but resigned unexpectedly to take a position at the College of New Jersey. A search for his replacement began in the fall of 2005.
- Kevin Elliott, having served the past few years as a full time instructor in the department, was promoted to the rank of assistant professor (tenure track) in fall 2005. His appointment was split with the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, with 75% of his responsibilities to the Center.
- Jeff Roland successfully defended his dissertation and was awarded the Ph.D. in January 2005 by Cornell University.
- Delbert Burkett was unanimously approved by a vote of the full professors in the department for promotion to full professor. The resolution of this is still pending.
- Ina Fandrich completed her one year contract and left the University at the end of the spring 2005 semester. A search was conducted for her replacement, but the position was not funded and thus no hire was made.
- John Whittaker received an ATLAS grant and spent the fall semester on sabbatical at the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria in British Columbia.
- John Whittaker resigned his position as department chair and was succeeded by Rodger Payne, who began his term at the beginning of the fall semester 2005.
- William Robert (Ph.D. 2005, University of California at Santa Barbara) was appointed as a full-time instructor for one year to fill the place of John Whittaker.

- Emily Cogburn was appointed as an adjunct instructor during the fall 2005 semester to cover the courses left vacant by Dr. Taylor's resignation.

### **Courses, curricula and teaching:**

The Department, particularly the Religious Studies program, continues to offer a large number of courses crosslisted with departments and programs such as History, Anthropology, International Studies, and Foreign Languages and Literatures. This exemplifies the interdisciplinary nature inherent to the academic study of religion, but it also costs the department in the calculation of Student Credit Hours.

- Members of the Philosophy faculty offered the following sections which were crosslisted as PHIL courses: LING 4914, LING 7910, and GERM 3090. This represents 39 SCHs credited to other departments.
- Members of the Religious Studies faculty offered the following sections which were crosslisted as REL courses: HEBR 1001, HEBR 1002, HEBR 2003, HEBR 2004, ANTH 3004, HIST 4005, HIST 4012, HIST 4161, and INTL 3786. This represents 396 SCHs credited to other departments. One course, REL 4236, crosslisted as ENGL 4236, was offered by Rodger Kamenetz who has a cross-appointment in Religious Studies.
- New courses added to the departmental offerings include: PHIL 4942: Ethics; PHIL 2053: HONORS: History of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy; PHIL 3950: Introduction to Epistemology; PHIL 4950: Advanced Epistemology; and REL 4301: Theories of Religion.
- Three faculty members offered or participated in HNRS courses in 2005. One of these, Ed Henderson, has also designed new HNRS courses.
- Jeff Roland continues to offer each semester a section of PHIL 1021: Elementary Logic for approximately 165 students per section.
- Numerous members of the faculty offered a variety of independent studies to students.
- Frank Worall (philosophy major) received the award for the best Honors Thesis in the Humanities and Social Sciences by the Honors College; Husain Sarkar served as the advisor.
- Two M.A. students successfully completed their programs.

### **Faculty research, publications and participation in academic conferences**

- Seventeen peer-reviewed articles or contributions to anthologies appeared in 2005. One article was jointly authored by Stuart Irvine and Charles Isbell.

- Delbert Burkett's book, *An Introduction to the New Testament and the Origins of Christianity* (Cambridge University Press) went into a second printing, and has been adopted as the basic textbook at a number of universities.
- Francois Raffoul and Rodger Payne published some dictionary and encyclopedia articles
- Faculty presented a total of nine papers at scholarly conferences.
- Charles Isbell was invited to give the Keynote address at the Klutznick Symposium held at Creighton University. He also delivered six invited lectures on Jewish Literature at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- Francois Raffoul was invited to give a lecture at the Organization of Phenomenological Organizations, held in Lima, Peru. He also served as a panel respondent at the meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division.
- Rodger Payne chaired a session on religion and the South at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Historical Association.

#### **Funding:**

- John Whittaker received an ATLAS grant to work toward completion of his book manuscript "God in Contemplative Perspective."
- Charles Isbell received a \$1000 Klutznick travel grant.
- Reem Meshal serves as co-principal investigator for a grant to enhance the teaching of Middle Eastern Studies at LSU (grant applied for but not yet received).
- Kevin Elliott was the principal investigator or co-P.I. for a number of grants in ethics and bioethics, but these were in relation to his appointment at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center.
- The department continues to await the state match for the second Seynaeve enhanced professorship, for which fund-raising was completed in 2004.

#### **Service to the University, the profession, and the community:**

- John Whittaker was named an Associate on the board of the International Journal for Philosophy of Religion; he also serves as an associate editor for the journal.
- Reem Meshal serves as a co-editor for the *Journal for the Study of Islam in North America, Europe, and Indonesia*.

- Rodger Payne continues to serve as an editor for the *Journal of Southern Religion*. He also provided editorial assistance for *Saints and Their Cults in the Atlantic World* (forthcoming).
- Ian Crystal serves as an editor for the series "Ancient Commentators on Aristotle."
- The faculty refereed or reviewed a total of nine articles and five book manuscripts, and published a large number of book reviews and review articles.
- Various members of the faculty serve on the Council on Research, the Honors College Board, the Jewish Studies committee (Charles Isbell serves as the Director of this program), the Steering Committee for the Collegium for Science and Religion, and the Coordinating Committee of International Studies.
- Francois Raffoul serves as a referee for the Chateaubriand Fellowship, which is awarded by the French Embassy to graduate students. He also serves as the external reviewer for a Ph.D. student at the University of South Wales, Australia.
- Various members of the faculty served on M.A. and Ph.D. committees as outside reviewers or as the Dean's representative for students in Curriculum and Instruction, Communication Studies, English, Music, Liberal Arts, and Nursing.
- Faculty presented a number of programs in the LSU residence halls, and Ed Henderson served as a "faculty friend" for a residence hall.
- Jeff Roland served as a consultant for the Baton Rouge Christian Classical School.
- Numerous faculty gave public lectures in the local community. Shirley Sands participated as an instructor in the Lagniappe Studies program.

**Miscellaneous:**

- The Letter of Intent to restore the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies passed review at all levels of the University and was sent to the Board of Regents for final approval.
- Margaret Toups joined the office staff in a part-time position beginning in the fall of 2005. The extra clerical help has been invaluable in easing the strain on our one full-time staff person (Jen O'Connor).