

**STRATEGIC PLANNING ANNUAL REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2014
SUBMITTED BY DELBERT BURKETT, CHAIR
MAY 2015**

CHAIR'S REVIEW OF 2014

Administration

A few changes in department administration took place in fall 2014, as the following table indicates.

	2014 spring	2014 fall
Department chair	Burkett	Burkett
Section head, Philosophy	Sirridge	Rocha
Section head, Religious Studies	Pasquier	Finley
Undergraduate advisor, Philosophy	Rocha	Sirridge
Recruitment director, Philosophy	Rocha	Pence
Undergraduate advisor, Religious Studies	Irvine	Storin
Recruitment director, Religious Studies	---	Storin
Director of Graduate Studies	Schufreider	Schufreider
HSS Senator	---	Isbell
CAPPE representative	---	Parsons
Assessment director, Philosophy	Cogburn	Goldgaber
Assessment director, Religious Studies	Pasquier	Finley
Administrative coordinator 4	Toups	Toups
Administrative coordinator 3	Rabalais	Rabalais

Faculty

In spring 2014, the Department successfully completed searches to fill three faculty positions. Consequently, in fall 2014 three new assistant professors joined the faculty: Deborah Goldgaber in Feminist Philosophy with a joint appointment in Women's and Gender Studies, Charles Pence in Philosophy of Science, and Brad Storin in the History of Christianity.

In other developments among the faculty, James Rocha was tenured and promoted to associate professor effective August 18, 2014. In the fall of 2014, the Department conducted a tenure and promotion review for Stephen Finley and sent forward a unanimous recommendation in favor.

Also in fall of 2014, François Raffoul returned from a one-year sabbatical, Rachel Parsons returned from a one-semester leave, Paula Arai began a one-year sabbatical, and Mike Pasquier began a one-year military leave.

Scholarship

The Department publication rate in 2014 was 2.45 "articles" per faculty member, the best on record. The average rate for the four-year period 2011-14 was 1.95, which exceeds the department goal of 1.5 for the five-year period 2011-15.

Charles Isbell published his ninth book, *How Jews and Christians Interpret Their Sacred Texts: A Study in Transvaluation* (Resource Publications, 2014). Stephen Finley published his co-edited volume,

Esotericism in African American Religious Experience: "There Is a Mystery". . . (Brill, 2014). Jon Cogburn and his student Mark Ohm published a translation of Tristan Garcia's *Form and Object: A Treatise on Things* (Edinburgh, 2014). François Raffoul published a translation of *Identity* by Jean-Luc Nancy (Fordham, 2014).

Other publications included 9 articles in refereed journals, 10 chapters in edited volumes, and 4 book reviews. Charles Pence's article, co-written with Grant Ramsey, "A New Foundation for the Propensity Interpretation of Fitness," was the most read article for *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* for July 2014.

Faculty members made 23 conference presentations in 2014. Several faculty members also delivered invited lectures. Paula Arai was invited to present an art exhibit and lecture at the International Symposium for Contemplative Studies sponsored by the Mind and Life Institute in Boston, MA (Oct 30 –Nov 2, 2014). She also presented an invited lecture at Brown University (Oct 2014). François Raffoul was invited to speak at an International Conference held at Aarhus University in Denmark on the question of morality (June 4-6, 2014). He was also invited to give the Albert J. Fitzgibbons keynote lecture, entitled "The Question of Ethics," at the Boston College Philosophy Annual Contemporary Philosophy Workshop (Oct 3, 2014). Mike Pasquier served as co-curator of a mobile exhibit sponsored by the NEA. He also delivered the keynote address at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society (Apr 2014).

Grants and Awards

On March 26, 2014, Mike Pasquier was named a 2013 Rainmaker Emerging Scholar in the Area of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Behavioral Sciences. This award is one of six given each year to LSU faculty in recognition of outstanding research/creative productivity and scholarship.

With respect to grant activity, Charles Pence was Co-PI for an NSF grant of \$188,043. This was still pending in fall 2014 but was recommended for funding in spring 2015.

Teaching

In 2013-14, the Department taught 11,154 annual student credit hours: 9,599 lower division, 1,420 upper division, and 135 graduate.

On April 30, 2014, Paula Arai received a Tiger Athletic Foundation award for excellence in undergraduate teaching.

On November 5, 2014 Gail Sutherland was featured in a *Reveille* article that highlighted her course on religion and food, which she offered in spring 2015. [Spring Course Mixes Food and Religious Traditions - lsureveille.com: The Daily Reveille](http://lsureveille.com: The Daily Reveille)

Recruitment of majors

For several years, one of our strategic goals has been to increase the number of our undergraduate majors. The number of majors in Philosophy or Religious Studies who graduated did increase from 31 (2012-13) to 36 (2013-14). At this point, however, it does not appear that the department will meet its goal of graduating an average of 40 majors per year over the five-year period 2011-15. Recruitment efforts in 2014 included the following.

- In fall 2014, we appointed two new faculty members, both young and energetic, to spearhead recruitment efforts: Brad Storin for Religious Studies and Charles Pence for Philosophy.

- Brad made a five-minute presentation to every lower-level class in Religious Studies to promote the major in Religious Studies. Charles—assisted by James Rocha, Rachel Parsons, and Debbie Goldgaber—made a similar presentation to Philosophy classes to promote the major in Philosophy.
- Brad created a Facebook page for Religious Studies.
- Brad put together a catalog of Religious Studies courses to be offered in the coming semester, including paragraph-long descriptions of the courses, and posted this on the website and the Facebook page and had faculty hand them out in their classes.
- Charles and James Rocha updated and distributed the Philosophy recruiting brochure and flyers.
- In previous years, we have felt that having relatively low enrollments (55-60) in our lower-level classes provided students with a better experience that might lead to more majors. Brad felt that having more students in these classes might lead to more majors. So he voluntarily raised the enrollment of his lower-level class to 70.
- The philosophy faculty instituted a new concentration in Law, Ethics, and Social Justice, which is designed to attract, among others, students preparing for law school. This has been in planning for several years and received approval in spring 2015.

Student awards and activities

In April 2014, Gail Sutherland and Stephen Finley served as the selection committee for the Lange-Button-King award, which recognizes a student who shows promise in both Religious Studies and some area of science or social science. From a field of five strong applicants, Melissa (Summer) Keane and Joshua Hamburg were chosen to receive the award.

In May 2014, Mary Sirridge chaired the selection committee for the Edward Shirley Scholarship in philosophy. The award went to Jaideep Shaw, a first-year student in the Philosophy M.A. program.

In fall 2014, the Philosophy Colloquium was renamed as the Philosophy Salon. This student organization, including graduates and undergraduates, sponsored a series of lectures, primarily by LSU professors.

Lectures and Conferences

Arthur Remillard, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at St. Francis University, delivered the lecture “‘Baton Rouge is Football Crazy’: Religion and the Origins of Football Mania in the South, 1892-1926,” on February 10, 2014 in the Lawton Room of LSU Tiger Stadium. Mike Pasquier arranged the lecture with funds from the Seynaeve Professorship in Christian Studies.

The annual LSU Philosophy Graduate Conference was held on March 6-8, 2014. Keynote addresses were delivered by Krisanna Scheiter, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Union College, and Jessica Wilson, Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Toronto.

On October 24, 2014, Michelle Ashton, a former LSU undergraduate, gave a talk entitled “Art and Activism: A History of the Rothko Chapel.” This was arranged by Gail Sutherland.

On November 12, 2014, Ryan Stokes, Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminar (Ph.D., Yale University, 2010) gave a seminar entitled “The Satan Figure in the Hebrew Bible: Accuser or God’s Executioner?” Stu Irvine arranged this presentation with funds from the Seynaeve Professorship in Biblical Studies.

Facilities

At the start of fall 2014, we received notice that the University has allocated a suite of offices on the second floor of Coates for our use. These should become available by the summer of 2016. We also took possession of Coates 211 for a new seminar room. Work on converting that room to a seminar room took longer than expected but neared completion in spring 2015.

PRIORITY PLANNING FOR 2015-16

The top priority for 2015-16 will be to fill two faculty positions. The Philosophy faculty hopes to fill a position in Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Language. The Religious Studies faculty hopes to fill a vacant position in the religion of Islam.

Efforts will continue to increase the number of majors. The Department plans to acquire a television to mount in the hallway of Coates to advertise its programs. Brad Storin will work to build up the Undergraduate Society for the Study of Religion (USSR), a student organization in Religious Studies that students began in spring 2015.

With the addition of a new seminar room in Coates 211, the former seminar room will be converted to a faculty office for a senior professor. That professor's old office will be refurbished for a junior professor.

APPENDIX DEPARTMENT GOALS: UPDATE (May 2015)

Goal 1

To increase the department's publication rate from an average of 1.31 articles¹ per faculty member per year over a five-year period (2006-2010) to an average of 1.5 articles per faculty member per year over a five-year period (2011-2015).

Table 1: Department Publication Rate

	2006-2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average number of articles per faculty	1.31	1.44	1.88	2.03	2.45	

Average rate for the four-year period 2011-14 is 1.95.

Goal 2

To increase the number of national research grants obtained, specifically to increase the number of NEH (or NEA or NSF) research grants from one over a five-year period (2006-2010) to at least two over the next five-year period (2011-15).

Table 2: National Research Grants

	2006-2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of national research grants obtained	1	0	2	1	0	1

¹ Here the term "article" refers to either a refereed journal article or a chapter in an edited volume. As in the 2010 NRC survey, a book (whether single-authored, co-authored, or edited) will count as five "articles."

Michael Pasquier: 1) NEH Summer Institute fellowship for 2012. 2) NEA Art Works Design Grant with collaborators for 2012-13. 3) NEH Summer Stipend for 2013. In 2014, Charles Pence was Co-PI for an NSF grant of \$188,043. This was still pending in 2014 but was recommended for funding in spring 2015.

Goal 3

To increase the number of students graduating with a major in philosophy or religious studies from an average of 33 per year over a five-year period (2006-2010) to an average of 40 per year over the next five-year period (2011-15).

Table 3: Number of undergraduate majors graduating per year

	2006-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Majors graduating per year	33	31	21	31	36	

Goal 4

To increase the number of women faculty from four to five by 2016.

Table 4: Number of women faculty (professors/full-time instructors)

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of women faculty	4	4	4	4/1	5/2	6/2	6/1

2012-13: Molly Reed hired (instructor)

2013-14: Rachel Parsons hired, Madhuri Yadlapati becomes full-time instructor

2014-15: Reem Meshal resigns; Deborah Goldgaber hired; Mari Rethelyi hired

2015-16: Madhuri Yadlapati returns to adjunct status