

**STRATEGIC PLANNING ANNUAL REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
CALENDAR YEAR 2015
SUBMITTED BY DELBERT BURKETT, CHAIR
APRIL 2016**

CHAIR'S REVIEW OF 2015

Administration

Only a few changes in department administration took place in fall 2015, as the following table indicates.

	2015 spring	2015 fall
Department Chair	Burkett	Burkett
Section head, Philosophy	Rocha	Rocha
Section head, Religious Studies	Finley	Pasquier
Undergraduate advisor, Philosophy	Sirridge	Sirridge
Recruitment director, Philosophy	Pence	Pence
Undergraduate advisor, Religious Studies	Storin	Storin
Director of Graduate Studies	Schufreider	Schufreider
HSS Senator	Isbell	Isbell
CAPPE representative	Parsons	Parsons
Assessment director, Philosophy	Goldgaber	Goldgaber
Assessment director, Religious Studies	Finley	Pasquier
Administrative coordinator 4	Toups	Toups
Administrative coordinator 3	Rabalais	Edwards

Faculty

In the spring of 2015, Stephen Finley received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, effective August 2015.

In fall of 2015, Paula Arai returned from a one-year sabbatical, Mike Pasquier returned from a one-year military leave, and Stephen Finley began a one-year sabbatical.

Gail Sutherland took a medical leave of absence in 2015-16 and submitted her intent to retire at the end of spring 2016.

In fall 2015, the Department elected Greg Schufreider to serve as Department Chair for a three-year term beginning in fall 2016. Delbert Burkett, after serving two terms as Chair, will take a sabbatical in 2016-17.

In January 2016, Rachel Parsons successfully defended her dissertation at Princeton University. Her tenure clock as an assistant professor will begin in August 2016.

Scholarship

The Department publication rate in 2015 was 1.3 "articles" per faculty member, the lowest since 2009.

François Raffoul with co-editor Gary Pettigrew, published a translation of *Heidegger in France* by Dominique Janicaud (Indiana University Press, 2015). Other publications included 13 articles in refereed journals, 3 chapters in edited volumes, 3 book reviews, and 10 articles in dictionaries or encyclopedias.

Faculty members made 13 conference presentations. Keynote addresses were delivered by Arai (2) and Pasquier (1). Several faculty members were also invited to deliver lectures or serve on panels: Arai (11), Rethelyi (1), Pence (2), Parsons (1).

Grants and awards

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

Teaching

In 2014-15, the Department taught 12,000 annual student credit hours: 10,305 lower division, 1,578 upper division, and 117 graduate.

Greg Schufreider received a Tiger Athletic Fund Undergraduate Teaching Award for teaching in the Honors College.

Recruitment of majors

For several years, one of the Department's strategic goals has been to increase the number of its undergraduate majors. Recruitment efforts in 2015 included the following.

- Faculty made five-minute presentations in every lower-level class of the Department to promote the major in Philosophy and the concentration in Religious Studies.
- We printed and distributed descriptions of courses currently offered.
- We acquired a television set and hung it in the corridor of Coates Hall to advertise Philosophy and Religious Studies.
- We participated in LSU Kickoff.
- Philosophy distributed a brochure describing the benefits of a major in Philosophy.
- Religious Studies revised requirements for the concentration to correct an issue that may have had an adverse effect on recruiting majors. The new requirements go into effect in fall 2016.
- Brad Storin maintained a Facebook page for Religious Studies.
- Kenny Smith organized a Religious Studies Undergraduate Student Symposium for students concentrating in Religious studies to present papers on topics in the academic study of religion.
- Religious Studies faculty identified potential majors in their classes and met with them individually

Student awards and activities

In April 2015, Stephen Finley served as the selection committee chair 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. Dylan Schexnaydre and Hannah Roberts were chosen to receive the award.

Throughout 2015, the Philosophy Salon, a student organization including graduates and undergraduates, sponsored a series of lectures, primarily by LSU professors.

In spring 2015, students established the Undergraduate Society for the Study of Religion (USSR). Brad Storin served as the faculty advisor. The organization met several times in 2015 with good attendance.

Lectures and conferences

On January 26, 2016, Ellen Muehlberger, Associate Professor of History and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Michigan, a specialist in Christianity in late antiquity, led a seminar on the early Christian text called the Apocalypse of Paul (*Visio Pauli*). Invited faculty and students attended. A reception followed at the home of Stuart Irvine. Brad Storin arranged the seminar with funds from the Seynaeve Professorship in Christian Studies.

The annual LSU Philosophy Graduate Conference was held on April 17-18, 2015. Keynote addresses were delivered by Dr. Otavio Bueno from the University of Miami and by Dr. Robert Bernasconi from Pennsylvania State University.

Facilities

The new seminar room in Coates 211 was used for the first time in fall 2015.

Program review

The Department underwent a program review in 2015-16. In fall 2015, the Department submitted a self-study, which was sent to an external reviewer: Courtney S. Campbell; Hundere Professor of Religion and Culture; School of History, Philosophy, and Religion; Oregon State University. Professor Campbell submitted a report to Academic Affairs in February 2016. An internal panel of LSU professors then visited the Department in March. The panel members were Maud Walsh (Agriculture), Chair; David Kirshner (Education); and Michelle Zerba (English). As of this writing, the panel has not yet submitted its final report to Academic Affairs.

In conjunction with the program review, the Department seriously considered a plan to separate the Philosophy faculty and the Religious Studies faculty into two separate departments. However, after further consideration, the plan was dropped.

PRIORITY PLANNING FOR 2016-17

The top priority for 2016-17 will once again be to fill two faculty positions. The Philosophy faculty will request a position in Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Language. The Religious Studies faculty will request to fill a vacant position in the religion of Islam.

Efforts will continue to increase the number of majors.

In order to better present themselves as two separate units, the Philosophy faculty and the Religious Studies faculty will seek to have separate websites.

The Department will draw up an action plan to respond to the recommendations that will emerge from the program review conducted in 2015-16.

Religious Studies will drop the B.A. in Philosophy with a concentration in Religious Studies and add a B.A. in Liberal Arts with a concentration in Religious Studies.

Religious Studies will use the Master of Arts in Liberal Arts in order to offer a master's degree in Religious Studies.

Religious Studies will continue to examine the possibility of establishing an internship program.

APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT GOALS 2011-2015: UPDATE (APRIL 2016)

The Department's 5-year strategic plan for 2011-2015 concluded in fall 2015. For this 5-year period, the Department met three of its four goals: to increase research productivity, national grants, and women faculty. One goal remained unmet: to increase the number of majors.

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	1.30

The average rate for the five-year period 2011-15 was 1.82, higher than the goal of 1.5.

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

Michael Pasquier received three national grants during this period: an NEH Summer Institute fellowship for 2012; an NEA Art Works Design Grant with collaborators for 2012-13; and an NEH Summer Stipend for 2013. Charles Pence was Co-PI for an NSF grant of \$188,043, which was recommended for funding in spring 2015. The total of 4 national grants exceeded the goal of 2.

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	20	31	36	30

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."

The average number of undergraduate majors graduating per year during the five-year period 2011-2015 was 30, ten short of the goal of 40.

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

The number of women faculty, not including instructors, increased over the five-year period from 4 to 6, one more than the goal of 5. However, the retirement of Gail Sutherland at the end of spring 2016 will drop the number back to 5.

DEPARTMENT GOALS 2016-2020

The Department met in the fall of 2015 and formulated a new strategic plan for the next five years (2016-20). We set four goals.

- **Discovery:** To maintain a publication rate of 2.0 articles² per faculty member per year over a five-year period (2016-2020), consistent with the average publication rate of the PhD-granting departments of philosophy and PhD-granting departments of religious studies that were surveyed in the 2010 National Research Council report.
- **Learning:** To increase by 10% the number of students majoring in philosophy or religious studies, from an average of 106 per year over a five-year period (2010-2015) to an average of 117 per year over the next five-year period (2016-2020)
- **Diversity:** To increase by two the number of women professorial faculty, from five at the end of spring 2016 to seven by the end of 2020
- **Engagement:** To increase the number of service-learning courses offered by the Department, from one in a five-year period (2011-2015) to two in the next five-year period (2016-2020)

² Here the term “article” refers to either a 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.”