News and Upcoming Events

Our department’s first Graduate Student Conference, entitled “Religion and Culture in the Digital Age,” will be held on January 24, 2015. We will have several grad student presenters from our department as well as a few from out of state. Following the students’ panels, we will have a roundtable discussion with Dr. David Morgan from Duke University, Dr. Stewart Hoover from the University of Colorado, Dr. Sid Dobrin from UF’s English department, and Dr. Dragan Kujundzic from UF’s Center for Jewish Studies. The Office of Research has awarded the graduate students $1000 in support of this graduate conference!

The International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture will hold its 10th anniversary conference with the theme, “Religion, Nature and the Future,” right here at UF, January 14-17, 2016. The society and its affiliated journal were founded by Professor Bron Taylor in 2006, and he is hoping for strong participation and leadership from faculty and graduate students in the Department of Religion. Please contact Dr. Taylor with expressions of interest, and mark your calendars! More details will be forthcoming soon.

AAR Presentations and Activities

At the American Academy of Religion annual meeting in San Diego two weeks ago, Professor Bron Taylor was a respondent in a session, “To Green or Not to Green, and Everything in Between: Assessing Trends, Patterns and Gaps in Scholarship on Religion and the Environment” (Sociology of Religion Group). He also presented “Ideology and Spirituality in Disney’s Worlds,” in a session on “The Worlds of Disney: Imagineering Ideologies,” for The Arts and Popular Culture Group.

Publications

Professor Bron Taylor’s 2007 article, “Surfing into Spirituality,” was the 5th most downloaded article in the Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture, during the first 10 months of 2014, and an editorial board member told him it has remained in the top 5 since its publication. This was part of a small forum on “Aquatic Nature Religion” that included contributions from Professor Whitney Sanford, writing on Kayaking, and Samuel Snyder, Ph.D., a graduate from our religion and nature program now teaching at the University of Alaska and working for environmental NGOs there, writing on Fly Fishing.

Deadlines

Here is our Spring 2015 schedule: http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/soc/201501/all/religion.htm
UF’s Center for Latin American Studies announces . . .

FLAS 2015-2016 Academic Year Fellowships
Through support from the U.S. Department of Education, the Center for Latin American Studies offers Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Academic Year Fellowships to support training in Brazilian Portuguese and Haitian Creole. For graduate students, the fellowship covers tuition and fees for 12 graduate credit hours per semester, provides a stipend of $17,000 total for the 2015-16 academic year (fall 2015 and spring 2016 semesters), and includes GatorGradCare coverage. For undergraduate students, the fellowship covers tuition and fees not already covered by other financial aid or scholarships (up to a maximum of $10,000 for the academic year) and provides a scholarship of $5000 total for the 2015-16 academic year ($2500 each for the fall 2015 and spring 2016 semesters).

Eligibility Requirements
Applicants must be (or applying to become) full-time UF graduate or undergraduate students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Undergraduate applicants must have at least intermediate proficiency in Portuguese or Haitian Creole. There is no proficiency requirement for graduate applicants. Priority will be given to applicants pursuing a Master’s degree, graduate certificate, or undergraduate minor/certificate in Latin American Studies. Professional school students are also encouraged to apply. Applications are reviewed by the Center’s Financial Aid Committee.

Fellowship Requirements
Each semester, recipients must enroll in a minimum of 3 credit hours of Portuguese or Haitian Creole and at least 3 credits of Latin American area studies. Recipients are also required to take language proficiency exams and to complete online reports about their fellowship on a semester basis. After the fellowship period is completed, recipients will complete a short survey about their job placement every two years.

Application Deadline
February 6, 2015

Application Materials
To apply for a FLAS Academic Year Fellowship, please submit the following:

· FLAS Academic Year Fellowship Application
· Two page statement of purpose describing how the study of Brazilian Portuguese or Haitian Creole and Latin American area studies will benefit your program of study and career plans
· Two letters of recommendation* accompanied by a Release Form. For graduate students, one of the letters should be from your adviser, unless you are a new UF applicant.
· UF academic transcript; new UF applicants may submit photocopies from previous universities or colleges

Submission
Wanda Carter, Academic Programs Assistant
UF Center for Latin American Studies
319 Grinter Hall
PO Box 115530

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The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhist Studies offers fellowships and grants through the following competition: Distinguished Visiting Professorships in Buddhist Studies—deadline: January 14, 2015. More information is available on the ACLS website at http://www.acls.org/programs/buddhist-studies/. (Submitted by Professor Vasudha Narayanan.)