Friday Bulletin, August 2, 2013

Department of Religion, University of Florida

Upcoming Events

Our Department graduate student orientation will be on Monday, August 19, 2013, from 9:00 – 4:00 pm in 210 Pugh Hall. The morning session will provide an introduction to our department for first-year graduate students. Continuing graduate students and faculty are strongly encouraged to join us for lunch at noon to greet the new students. Continuing students are also encouraged to stay for the afternoon part of the orientation.

News

Professor Mario Poceski took part in the Annual Congress of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, held in Berlin on June 5, 2013. In conjunction with this, on June 6, he attended a reception with the President of Germany, Joachim Gauck, at Schloss Bellevue (Presidential Palace).

Bridgette O’Brien McGoldrick (PhD, Nature) successfully defended and submitted her dissertation this summer and will formally graduate with her Ph.D. in August 2013. The title of her dissertation was “Religion, Ethics, Nature in Secondary School Education: Exploring Religion’s Role in Sustainability Trends.” Her committee was Professor Bron Taylor (Chair), Professor Robin Wright, Professor Whitney Sanford, and Professor Martha Monroe (AG-SCHL-FOREST RES / CONSERV). She is teaching I.B. World History and Sustainability and Global Issues at the Annie Wright School in Tacoma, WA. Congratulations, Bridgette!

Bridgette O’Brien McGoldrick was recently one of two recipients in the nation who received a teaching fellowship from the National Coalition of Girls Schools to teach at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy in South Africa. This past year she also continued working with Facing the Future on their new textbook and curriculum about sustainability and global issues as well as with The Center for Spiritual and Ethical Education educating high school teachers about teaching religion and the pedagogical challenges of this discipline. Bridgette is excited to continue working with her own students and applying her skills outside the classroom with curriculum development related to ethics and local water issues in the Puget Sound region, and has a cross country team waiting to begin their training in late August as well.

Melissa Richards (MA, Nature) successfully defended and submitted her thesis and will graduate with her M.A. in August 2013. The title of her thesis was “Healing the Land: A Charismatic Environmental Theology.” Her committee was Professor Anna Peterson (Chair) and Professor Manuel Vasquez. Congratulations, Melissa!

Congratulations to Mallory Bolduc O’Neil (Americas) on receiving a non-thesis M.A. degree! Professor Anna Peterson was the chair of her committee.
Presentations

Professor Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons will participate in a panel on Revolutionary Nonviolence: Strategic Thinking for Strengthening Our Movements at the 90th Anniversary Conference of the War Resister League at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., on Friday, August 2, 2013.

Professor Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons will be a panelist at the Schomberg Center in New York on August 16, 2013. The program is titled FREEDOM '63 REMIXED -- Legacies of the March on Washington - An Evening of Dialogue Inspired from the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, featuring Dick Gregory, Dorothy Zellner, and Gwendolyn Zoharah Simmons, with Boots Riley, Hari Kondabolu, and Jeanne Theoharis.

Professor Mario Poceski received an invitation to give two public lectures in early October in Prague, Czech Republic: “Religion in Modern China: Disruptions and Continuities,” at the Oriental Institute, and “Growth of Chan (Zen) as a Distinctive Tradition of Chinese Buddhism,” at Charles University.

Professor Mario Poceski is convening and organizing an international symposium on Chinese religions, scheduled for November 7-9, 2013 at the University of Hamburg (Germany). The theme of the symposium is “Modes of Interreligious Engagement: Buddhism and other Religious Traditions in Medieval China,” and the confirmed participants include distinguished scholars from Germany, Belgium, America, England, and New Zealand.


On July 1, 2013, Professor Mario Poceski gave a public lecture at the University of Leipzig, Germany, on the topic of “Contemplative Paradigms in the Formative Traditions of Chan Buddhism,” which was preceded with a colloquium on his recent research.

On July 11, 2013, Professor Mario Poceski gave a well-received speech on “Prospects for the Growth of Buddhist Studies in Germany.” The speech was given at the formal opening of the Numata Center for Buddhist Studies, University of Hamburg, Germany.

Bhakti Mamtora (PhD student, Asia) is presenting a paper titled "Crafting a Svaminarayana Ethos of Non-Violence" on Saturday August 3, 2013 at a conference in New Delhi. The conference theme is "Sahajanand Swami & The Swaminarayan Sampraday in Historical, Social and Cultural Perspectives."

Publications

Professor Mario Poceski finished and submitted the manuscript to his latest book, an edited volume titled The Blackwell Companion to East and Inner Asian Buddhism—his fifth book—to the publisher, Blackwell Publishing. The book has 26 chapters, two of which are written by
Professor Poceski, and is part of the prestigious *Blackwell Companions to Religion Series*. The book is scheduled to come out in print early next year.

Professor *Terje Ostebo's* article, “The revenge of the Jinns: Spirits, Salafi Reform, and the Continuity in Change in Contemporary Ethiopia,” has been accepted for publication in the journal *Contemporary Islam*.

Professor *Manuel Vasquez* co-authored with *Silvia Fernandes* (a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for Latin American Studies and our department) two on-line essays for *Religion Dispatches* on Pope Francis’s recent visit to Brazil. See:

http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/atheologies/7203/is_new_pope_s_take_on_thePoor_all_that_new/
http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/atheologies/7217/just_what_kind_of_revolution_is_franscis_calling_for/


On July 5, 2013, *Robin Globus Veldman* (PhD candidate, Nature) published an article based on her dissertation research in the online magazine *Religion Dispatches*. It was titled “Does End Time Belief Really Cause Climate Change Apathy?” (http://www.religiondispatches.org/archive/atheologies/7144/does_end_time_belief_really_cause _climate_change_apathy). It was republished on Salon.com and Alternet.org. Due to the interest it apparently attracted, Robin subsequently did two media interviews about the article. She did a radio interview with Joshua Holland of *The AlterNet Radio Hour* on July 20th, 2013 (http://alternetradio.podbean.com/). She also appeared on the progressive radio talk show--host Thomm Hartman’s show *The Big Picture*--in a segment called “Everything You Know is Wrong” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mF0cfN-TLoQ; She appears at about the 45 minute mark).