

Friday Bulletin, August 29, 2014

Department of Religion, University of Florida

Welcome back everyone! I hope you had a good summer break and wishing you the best for a wonderful and new academic year.

Manuel Vásquez

Upcoming Events

The Islam in Africa Working Group is having its first meeting this semester on Tuesday September 2, 11:45, in 471 Grinter Hall. The speaker will be **Ibrahim Yahaya Ibrahim**, with the topic: "Islam and Islamic Insurgency in the Sahel: The Current Debates." Ibrahim is a doctoral student in the department of Political Science at UF. He has a BA in Sociology, a BA in Islamic Jurisprudence, and a MBA in management of Projects. His current research project focuses on the impacts of the Malian crisis on Niger and Mauritania.

The Launching Conference for the **UF Center for Global Islamic Studies**: "Global Islam and the Quest for Public Space," will take place on September 18 and 19, 2014. Professor **John Esposito**, Georgetown University, will give the keynote speech on September 18, at 5:30pm in The Ocora (Pugh Hall) to be followed by a reception. On September 19, from 8:30am–12:30pm in the Matthew Suite of the Reitz Union, there will be a discussion panel, which will include Professors **Mirjam Künkler**, Princeton University, **Ousman M Kobo**, Ohio State University, and **Badredine Arfi**, University of Florida. Please mark your calendars!

The **American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program** is pleased to announce the Forum *Indigenous Knowledge, Spirituality and the Future of Humans in Nature: Experiences from North and South America* which will take place on October 13, 2014, from 3:00-6:40pm in Keene-Flint Hall, Room 105. Speakers are: **Marcus Briggs-Cloud** (Maskoke Nation, UFL) on "Indigenous Ceremonialism;" **James Treat** (Illinois) on "Peyote women;" **William Lyon** (Missouri) on "The Interface of Quantum Mechanics and Magic;" **Ana Mariella Bacigalupo** (SUNY Buffalo) on "Shamanic Rebirth Through Mapuche Indigenous 'Bibles,'" and **R. M. Wright** (UFL, on "'The Falling Sky' and 'The Warnings of Mandu:' Prophetic Visions of Amazonian Shamans." The event is co-sponsored the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture; the American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program; the Department of Religion; and UF Cultural Engagement. The public is welcome; refreshments will be served. For further information, contact Prof. Robin M. Wright at baniwa05@ufl.edu or 352-392-1625.

As part of the **Program for Religion, Immigration, and Social Change (PIRSC)**, co-directed by Professors **Manuel Vasquez** and **Philip Williams**, the Religion Department will co-host with the Center for Latin American Studies a major international conference entitled "Immigration Reform and Beyond?" on October 23-25, 2014, in Emerson (Alumni) Hall. Keynote speakers

will include **Thomas Wenski** (Archbishop of Miami) and **Mae Ngai** (Professor of Asian American Studies and History at Columbia University). To register and see the conference's full program, please visit: <http://www.latam.ufl.edu/2014-immigration-conference>

Presentations

Professor **Bron Taylor** gave the keynote address, "Religion, Nature and Environmental Action from Africa to Avatar and Back," at the *6th African Association for the Study of Religion Conference*, entitled "Religion, Ecology, and the Environment in Africa and the African Diaspora." The conference was held at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, July 30 - August 3, 2014. Event information: <http://www.a-asr.org/meetings/>

Alex Savory-Levine (PhD student, Nature) gave a presentation entitled "The Absolute Concept: Schelling's Influence on Hegel" at the *Schelling in the Anthropocene: Thinking Beyond the Annihilation of Nature, North American Schelling Society Conference* at a graduate institute affiliated with Bard College, in New York City,

Publications

Professor **Bron Taylor's** article, "Religion and Surfing's Spiritual Core," was published this summer in *Surfing Florida: A Photographic History*, ed. Paul Aho (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2014), pp. 186-192.

Richard Hiers' (Professor Emeritus) 2012 book, *Women's Rights and the Bible* (Wipf & Stock / Pickwick publications), was given a detailed and thoughtful review recently in 28 *Journal of Law and Religion* 573-8 (2012-13) published by Cambridge Univ. Press. The reviewer was Professor **Susan J. Stabile** at the University of St. Thomas School of Law in Minneapolis. Professor Stabile begins by noting that "Conventional wisdom is that the Bible portrays women as inferior and as being subordinate to men." In her conclusions, she comments: "By Chapter Twelve, Summary of Findings, I was left scratching my head about the source of the popular wisdom about women in Biblical times. The combinations of stories in which women are presented as strong and independent persons and are credited with bold actions in critical times is compelling, and the evidence that women in Biblical times 'were considered to be persons with a number of legal rights' is strong."

Ken Chitwood (PhD student, Americas) published a piece entitled "The Christian Cross, Texan Identity, and "Tex-ianity" with Emory University's *Sacred Matters* scholar blog. The essay addresses the seemingly strange ways (a cow skull cross with barbed-wire anyone?) Texans co-opt the symbology of the Christian cross to recapitulate their unique brand of freedom, ingenuity, and rough-and-tumble independence and strength. LINK: <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/sacredmatters/2014/08/28/the-christian-cross-texan-identity-and-tex-ianity/>

News

Professor **Bron Taylor's** interview on "Surfing, Nature, and, Spirituality," produced by the Rachel Carson Center in Munich, has been posted on You Tube: <http://youtu.be/48-rkcQsREg>

Deadlines

Here is our Fall 2014 schedule: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/soc/201408/all/religion.htm>

The applications for Fall 2014 Travel Support for Graduate Students, for the period August 31 – December 31, 2014, are due in the Dean's office by 4:00 pm on Wednesday, September 10, 2014. The application is available on the web at [H:\graduate travel application.htm](http://H:\graduate%20travel%20application.htm). Since the graduate studies committee will have to evaluate and rank the applications before forwarding them to CLAS, please submit a copy of your application to Professor David Hackett by 5:00PM, Thursday, September 5, 2014. The department also offers matching support. In order to apply for these funds, you will need to have applied for support from CLAS, International Studies, GSA, or any other external source. The application for departmental travel funds can be found at [http://sites.clas.ufl.edu/religion/files/Religion Travel Support Application.pdf](http://sites.clas.ufl.edu/religion/files/Religion_Travel_Support_Application.pdf).

Please submit this application to David Hackett by 4:00pm, Friday, September 12, 2014.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences invites students pursuing the Ph.D. to apply for **dissertation fellowships** for the spring or summer terms of 2015. They expect up to **twelve** fellowships to be available, and they will provide students with a stipend of **\$7,000** per term and a waiver of tuition fees. Departments may supplement the dissertation fellowship if they wish, but the intent of the awards is to free students from the demands of a teaching assistantship so that they can complete their dissertations. This year there will be a separate category of small awards. These will be selected from among those who apply but do not receive the full awards whose dissertation project can be completed with a small award. The small awards will not include a waiver of tuition fees. In order to be eligible to hold a fellowship, students must have already been admitted to candidacy before January 1, 2015. U.S. citizens and Permanent Residents must be Florida residents (for tuition waiver purposes) by October 12, 2014 to be eligible. (No such eligibility restrictions apply to international students.) Applicants should submit proposals to their department. Please submit proposals to Professor David Hackett by October 3, 2014.

The proposals should include:

1. Cover sheet (attached and also available on the web: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/forms/index.html>)
2. a 1- to 2-page description (single spaced) of the dissertation project and the work to be conducted with the dissertation fellowship. (These fellowships can be used to fund travel to archives.)
3. two letters of endorsement from the faculty, with one being from the chair of the dissertation committee