

UF RELIGION

NEWSLETTER



NEWS

- **Dr. Bron Taylor** recently wrote an article to celebrate the upcoming **20th anniversary of the ISSRNC**. See *Page 4* for more details.
- Religion major **Jordan Evans** has been accepted into **WashU** graduate school! See *Page 4* for more details.
- **Dr. Bron Taylor** will give his keynote “The Sea and the Sublime” at the **Coastal Imaginaries Symposium** in Nantes, France on April 2nd. See *Page 5* for more details.

EVENTS

- March 27th and 28th: The Religion Graduate Student Association (RGSA) is hosting the **6th Annual Religion Graduate Symposium**. See *Page 2* for more details.
- The tabling events to promote the Fall 2026 Religion courses successfully concluded this week. Faculty members **Dr. Jeyoul Choi** and **Dr. Yaniv Feller** enjoyed meeting students and discussing courses and opportunities available in the Religion Department.



EVENTS

On March 27th-28th, the **Religion Graduate Student Association (RGSA)** will host the **6th Annual Graduate Symposium** with the topic theme: “Religion: Conflict and Continuity”.

The symposium will begin on Friday afternoon, March 27th, with a keynote address by visiting speaker **Dr. Amy Allocco of Elon University** followed by an interactive seminar with Dr. Allocco. Saturday, March 28th, will be a full-day symposium featuring interdisciplinary presentations from various university students and CLAS religion graduate students **Rachell Diaz, Yuan Zhang, Prathik Murali, Laura James, and Rajani Maharjan** and undergraduate religion students **John Vondruska, Reed Liebman, Jordan Evans, and Caden Kendzior**. Non-presenters are welcome to attend and enjoy the presentations.

RELIGION: CONFLICT AND CONTINUITY
6th ANNUAL RGSA GRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DR. ALLOCCO
"A GOD-FEELING IN EVERY HEART": STRATEGIC INNOVATION AMONG SOUTH INDIA'S HINDU DRUMMER-PRIESTS
📍 Ocora at Pugh Hall
🕒 4:30 - 5:30 PM
MARCH 27

SEMINAR WITH DR. ALLOCCO
📍 Pugh Hall - 210
🕒 5:30 - 6:30 PM
MARCH 27

RSVP!
<https://scan.me/page/6LJ4fo>

SYMPOSIUM PRESENTATIONS
📍 Ocora at Pugh Hall
🕒 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
MARCH 28
Join us for student presentations, a welcome address by Dr. Allocco, and refreshments. Coffee and pastries will be available in the morning, with lunch served later in the program.

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UF Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere
UF RELIGION Liberal Arts and Sciences

Official event flyer for the 6th annual RGSA Symposium, “Religion: Conflict and Continuity”.

EVENTS

On March 23rd, **Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Secretary Michelle Branham** came to the University of Florida to speak to two Religion Department classes, “Religion in Latin America” and “Religions of India,” about her personal experience working in the state government and with the community. Specifically, she drew on her experience both within government and as an observer of public policy to examine how government and faith communities can work together responsibly to advance the common good—particularly in a state like Florida, where many residents identify as religious. Secretary Branham held a round-table setting that consisted of a Q&A where students could share their ideas and express their opinions.



Left to right: Distinguished Professor Dr. Vasudha Narayanan, DOEA Secretary Michelle Branham, and Dr. Jeyoul Choi.

Top and bottom-right: Michelle Branham speaking to UF undergraduate students studying religion.

Secretary Michelle Branham, appointed by Governor Ron DeSantis in December 2021, leads the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, serving the state’s nearly 6.5 million residents over age 60 through programs that help seniors live and age well. Before her appointment, she spent nine years as Vice President of Public Policy for the Alzheimer’s Association and held multiple statewide leadership roles, including Chair of Florida’s Alzheimer’s Disease Advisory Committee and co-chair of the State Health Improvement Plan Alzheimer’s priority area.

NEWS

- Recently, **Dr. Bron Taylor** was invited to write an article on the **Counterpoint** blog which was titled “*The Origins of the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture and its Journal*”. The article provides a deep dive into the **International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture (ISSRNC)** and explains how, nearly twenty years ago, from April 1st to 8th, 2006, the organization held its first inaugural conference at the University of Florida, with its first journal published the following year. Dr. Bron Taylor led both of these initiatives, and in light of the upcoming **20th anniversary of the ISSRNC**, his article provides a meaningful reflection on the creation, maintenance, and evolution of the organization alongside colleagues and UF Religion and Nature graduate students.



**International Society for the Study
of Religion, Nature, and Culture**

Logo for the ISSRNC



Dr. Bron Taylor

- Religion major **Jordan Evans** has been accepted into the **Brown School for Social Work** at **Washington University** in St. Louis, Missouri to pursue her Master's of Social Work with a concentration in Clinical Mental Health. From the Brown School, she was offered a **Dean's Scholarship** toward tuition, a practicum stipend, and living stipend. She also received the **Jack Kent Cooke Graduate Scholarship**, which is a maximum of \$150,000 toward four years of graduate studies. Jordan plans to pursue an M.Div. joint degree after the first year of the program. **Congratulations Jordan!**



Jordan Evans



WashU Brown School

*Logo for the Washington University
Brown School for Social Work*

PRESENTATIONS

On April 2nd, 2026, Professor **Dr. Bron Taylor** will deliver the keynote address, “The Sea and the Sublime,” at a symposium on Coastal Imaginaries organized by the Sea More Blue Research Program—a collaboration among the **Université d’Angers**, the **Institut d’Études Avancées (IEA)**, and **Nantes Université** in France. During his week-long residency in Nantes, Professor Taylor will also participate in a podcast interview, a roundtable discussion and conduct research in the region.



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Event flyer for the symposium, “Les Imaginaires Littoraux”
(English translation- “Coastal Imaginaries”)

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Want To Contribute to the Newsletter?

If you have any information that you would like featured in the newsletter, please email **Ashley Tisher** (a.tisher@ufl.edu).

We look forward to hearing from you!