ANNUAL REPORT 2013

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Cyclical Review Office

By:

Professor Ian H. Henderson
Interim Dean
Faculty of Religious Studies
FACULTY OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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Research and Publications

Research

New Partnership Grants:

Professor W. J. Torrance Kirby applied for a SSHRC Partnership grant with Professor Paul Yachnin (Department of English) entitled “Forms of Conversion: Religion, Culture, and Cognitive Ecologies in Early Modern Europe and its Worlds”. He was awarded a grant totaling $50,000 at $10,000/year from March 1, 2013 – February 28, 2019.

Professor V. Hori applied for a SSHRC Partnership grant entitled “The Modernization of Buddhism in Global Perspective” with University of Lethbridge. He was awarded a grant totalling $36,503 ($19,503 for FY13-14; $17,000 (FY14-15) for the period of April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2018

New Grants:

Professor Daniel Cere received a Paper Presentation Grant in February 2013 of $1,500 for his talk entitled “Human Rights and Religious Minorities” at the International Conference on Religion and Secularism in a Global Age held at Gregorian University in Rome on March 1, 2013. The conference was sponsored by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, Gregorian University (Rome) and Pontifical council of Culture.

Professor Gaelle Fiasse received a Faculty of Arts research Incentive Grant of $2,500 for a SSHRC ranking’s insight grant.

Professor Garth Green received a FQRSC grant of $33,748 ($11,418 FY13/14; $11,660 FY14/15; $10,670 FY15/16) for the period of April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2017

Professor Victor Hori received a Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (aka Numata Foundation) $8000 grant to support the publication of Flowers on the Rock: Global and Local Buddhism in Canada (McGill-Queens University Press).

Professor Gerbern Oegema received a SSHRC Connection Grant with a monetary value of $46,000 (received $ 23,000 with matching funds from McGill and Concordia University).

Professor Katherine K. Young received a SSHRC Research Grant of $32,151 “The Non-Brahmin” Srivaisnava: Ritual, proselytism, and politics in contemporary Tamil Nadu.

Publications:

http://www.mcgill.ca/religiousstudies/about/publication

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Teaching and Learning

During the period of January to December, 2013, the Faculty awarded four Doctors of Philosophy, three Masters of Arts, three Bachelor of Theology (including 1 Great Distinction/Dean’s Honour List), and thirty-seven Bachelor of Arts degrees of which there were 3 Distinctions, 6 First Class Honours, and 2 Dean’s Honour List.

Innovations

Professor Dan Cere developed an intensive 2-week summer course, RELG 550 Religion and Foreign Policy, for international students and public policy professionals in June 2013. This course was funded by a gift received from the Birks Family Foundation to support an international plenary and training program in an ongoing effort to understand better the complex interplay of religion and globalization.

Professor Gaeille Fiasse redesigned RELG 373 Topics in Christian Ethics, and the changes have been approved by the University. It will become RELG 373 Christian Ethics of Love. In addition she has redesigned the contents of the bioethics seminar RELG 571 Religion and Medicine (the changes have been approved by the University) and she has added a new course RELG 571 Religion in Medicine.

Professor Garth Green developed a new, 300-level course, entitled “Religion, Philosophy, Modernity,” and has reconceived RELG 351 as the Faculty’s first advanced course in Philosophy of Religion; furthermore, he taught new courses: Western Intellectual Tradition (300-level) and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion (600-level seminar)

Professor Andrea Pinkney initiated a field trip for RELG 278 (Intro to Sikhism) in conjunction with Mr. Manjit Singh. She lead a trip to Gurdwara Sahib Quebec – first time such a trip has been conducted in more than a decade of the course being offered at McGill.

Professor Davesh Soneji taught two new courses in 2013: RELG 554: Religion and Cinema in India and RELG 554: Visual Cultures of Modern Hinduism

Student Success Stories

Christopher Durante appointed to a Visiting Assistant Professorship at NYU (supervised by Prof Cere)

Lauren Steinman accepted into the Faculty of Law, Université de Montréal (supervised by Prof Cere)

Roland DeVries, published his dissertation: Becoming Two in Love: Kierkegaard, Irigaray, and the Ethics of Sexual Difference (Wipf & Stock 2013) (former Ph.D. student of Professor Farrow)

Richard Cumming won PBEEE fellowship (current Ph.D. student supervised by Professor Farrow)

Paolo Livieri, Ph.D. Candidate, won PBEEE Award (supervisor: Professor Garth Green)

Matthew Nini, M.A. Candidate, SSHRC MA Award (supervisor: Professor Garth Green)

Nathan Strunk, St. Michael’s College Teaching Fellow (supervisor: Professor Garth Green)

James Bryson, SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellow and Connections Grant holder (supervisor: Professor Garth Green)
Elvira Vitouchanskaia, FQRSC MA holder (supervisor: Professor Garth Green)
She published a paper with Professor Garth Green’s colleague from Louvain la neuve and collaborated with Professor Garth Green on a jointly authored paper in a forthcoming volume.

V. Hori’s students, Rongdao (LAI Lei Kuan) hired as assistant professor in the School of Religion, University of Southern California; Melanie Coughlin is hired by the College of the Humanities at Carleton University in Ottawa to teach Reli 1716A East Asian Religions.

**Involvement in the Community**

The members of the professoriate continue to be active within the university community serving on an average of five internal committees and several committees within the University.

Here are a few examples of our professoriate’s involvement and participation:

Professor Dan Cere is the Chair of the Advisory Council on the Charter of Student Rights and has authored the Report to Senate of the Advisor Council on Student Rights and gave an interview to Vatican Radio in Rome on March 4, 2013.

Professor Douglas Farrow is on the board of the Newman Institute of Catholic Studies.

Professor Garth Green is the Faculty representative to University Senate (2013-2016) and is the Director of the Strategic Partnership in Philosophy of Religion (McGill-Louvain and McGill-Rome)

Professor Ian Henderson serves as a member of several Faculty committees including the Classical Studies Advisory Committee, the Canadian Ethnic and Racial Studies Minor Concentration Committee and the Religious Studies Program Committee in the Faculty of Arts and is a member of the Academic Policy Committee and the APC Subcommittee on Teaching and Learning and is Chair of the APC Subcommittee on Academic Unit Review. He is also the Disciplinary Officer within the Faculty of Religious Studies.

Professor Patricia G. Kirkpatrick is the President Board of the Foundation of Auberge Madeleine, a shelter for homeless women over 18 years of age. In addition, she is a member of the Leonard Foundation, a Financial Assistance Program for students enrolled in an undergraduate degree program in a Canadian university or affiliated college and the Co-chair of the CSBS Historiography section. She was also an interviewer for the Rhodes Scholarship.

Professor Gerbern Oegema served on the SSHRC Postdoctoral Application Review Committee for the last couple of year.

Professor Davesh Soneji was appointed as Associate Director of CREOR (Centre for Research on Religion) and is a member of the Women’s Studies Advisory Committee (IGSF)

The Faculty of Religious Studies hosts a number of special events throughout the year. This year we the Faculty hosted five public lectures one of which was the Annual Birks Lecture; two major conferences; one symposium and the annual CREOR Lecture Series from September 11 – November 27, 2013.
Partnerships

CREOR (Centre for Research on Religion) is part of a six-year project “The Evolution of Religion and Morality” by a group of directors from UBC-SFU’s Centre for the Study of Human Evolution, Cognition and Culture (HECC). This grant centers on a project of unprecedented scope and ambition aimed at exploring the cultural evolutionary roots of religion. This six-year project brings together the expertise of over fifty scientists, social scientist and humanities scholars from universities across North America, Europe and East Asia — along with postdocs and graduate students — into a research network that will be called the Cultural Evolution of Religion Research Consortium, (CERC). This project has been made possible with a $3M grant from SSHRC as part of their new Partnership Grant Initiative with matching funds from partner institutions and other contributors. The grant will also contribute to the establishment of a new, interdisciplinary Program for the Study of Religion at UBC.

Professor Dan Ceré travelled to Rome on Feb 27 – Mar 8, 2013 to attend the International Conference on Religion and Secularism in a Global Age held at a Gregorian University on March 1, 2013. The conference was sponsored by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, Gregorian University (Rome) and Pontifical council of Culture.

Professor Garth Green was approved for a position as Professeur Invité at the Université Catholique de Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium), Institut Supérieur de Philosophie in March 2013. He accepted this position for the Summer Term 2014. In 2013, he gave two invited lectures; (1) “(In-)Visibility in Cusa: Its Epistemological Structures and Historiographical Significance,” to the ‘International Symposium on The Symbolic Dimension of Nicholas of Cusa’s Thought: Its Genealogy and Projection,’ Universidad de Buenos Aires (Cusanus-Institut, Universitat Trier – Circulo de Estudios Cusanos de Buenos Aires, in October 2013). (2) Quod supra nos, nihil ad nos: The Contemporary Significance of Kant’s Critique(s) of Rational Theology, Invited Lecture, McGill University (Fortnightly Seminar, January 2013).

Professor Garth Green participated in the Strategic Partnership initiative in Philosophy of Religion (between McGill, Louvain, Paris, and Rome); he pursued this possibility throughout the review period – particularly at the Société francophone de philosophie de la religion (Strasbourg, le 15 mai 2013)

J. Kanaris continues to collaborate with the American College of Greece working towards the establishment of an interdisciplinary component of religious studies in Deree’s Humanities program.

Professor Victor Hori was Visiting Researcher in Residence, Faculty of Theology, Vrije University, Amsterdam, Netherlands from Aug-Sept 2013

Professor Victor Hori was Visiting Research Fellow, Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, Nagoya Japan from May-July 2013

Milestones New Hires, promotions, and retirements

1) New Hires, promotions, and retirements

Professor Andrea Pinkney arrived in the Faculty in July 2013 to assume her assistant professor tenure-track position beginning in the Fall 2013.
Job Search Committee advertised the position of the Patrick and Barbara Keenan Chair of Interfaith Studies in December 2013 to recruit for the Fall 2014.

Professor Garth Green was re-appointed full-time tenure-track Associate Professor in the Faculty of Religious Studies for a term beginning 1 August 2014 and ending 30 June 2017.

2) Other departmental activities

The Faculty of Religious Studies underwent the Cyclical Unit Review and the site visit was held in early February 2013.

Honours, Awards, and Prizes

Professor Arvind Sharma is the 2013 recipient of the Hindu American Foundation’s Mahatma Gandhi Award for the Advancement of Religious Pluralism

Professor Jim. Kanaris was the Associate Editor of Philosophy and Religion (PAR) sub-series in the Value Inquiry Book Series (VIBS); Advisor and/or Assistant to the sub-series Editor, Ken Bryson.

Professor Torrance Kirby was elected a Fellow of the Centre for Research in Arts, Social Sciences, and the Humanities, University of Cambridge

Professors Douglas Farrow and Victor Hori and Professor Emeritus Douglas Hall were awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, Governor General of Canada in 2013.

Fundraising

In 2013, the Faculty of Religious Studies received a commitment from the Birks Family Foundation to establish the new Birks Forum in the World’s Religions and Public Policy. The gift establishes a nucleus fund to support an international plenary and training program that will bring together leading scholars and practitioners in an ongoing effort to understand better the complex interplay of religion and globalization. This support will allow the Faculty to build upon major developments in religious studies as a discipline and to bolster its work in the broad area of its Globalization and the World’s Religious Initiative.

The Faculty, together with DAR, held an event in the Faculty of Religious Studies to inaugurate the transformative gift of $5 million from the Patrick and Barbara Keenan Foundation to the Faculty for the creation of a new endowed chair in Interfaith Studies, to which a senior scholar will be recruited in 2013. In addition, the gift creates sizeable endowments in honor of Wilfred Cantwell Smith for multi-year doctoral fellowships and dissertation finishing fellowships, as well as undergraduate international internships and a fund for conferences in the World’s Religions and Globalization.

The Faculty also received a commitment from the national office of the Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem to endow the Military and Hospitalier Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem Ecumenical Prize in Religious Studies. This prize is awarded to an outstanding graduate student doing work of an ecumenical nature, with reference to Christianity. The support builds upon the direct-funding of this prize, which began with a generous commitment from the local Commandery in 2011.