

## Humanities Faculty Report, 2007-08

### Faculty

#### Book Publications:

- Michael Fitzgerald, History, Splendid Failure: Postwar Reconstruction in the American South (Ivan R. Dee).
- Charles Taliaferro, Philosophy, and Stewart Goetz, Naturalism (Eerdmans).
- Nancy Aarsvold and Kari Lie, Norwegian, Sett I gang II: An Introductory Norwegian Language Curriculum (NorWords).
- Robert Entenmann, et al, Collected Translated Essays on the History of Chinese Catholicism (Jidujiao Yuzhouguang).
- Anant Rambachan, Religion, A. Rashied Omar, and M. Thomas Thagaraj, eds., Hermeneutical Explorations in Dialogue (ISPCK).
- Diane LeBlanc, Writing/Interdisciplinary Studies, Dancer with Good Sow (New Women's Voices).
- Timothy Howe, Pastoral Politics: Animals, Agriculture and Society in Ancient Greece (Association of Ancient Historians).

Articles, Chapters, Presentations, Papers, Conferences, Professional Offices, Committee Assignments, Editorial Positions, Reviews: too numerous to mention.

#### Tenure/Promotions:

- Tenured: Ariel Strichartz, Romance Languages.
- To Professor: Steve Reece, Classics.

#### Tenure-Track Searches:

- English, for creative writing (poetry).
- Religion, for scholar of Judaism.
- Romance Languages, for a Spanish Peninsularist.

#### Tenure-Track Hires:

- Mara Benjamin, Religion, in Judaism.
- Jennifer Kwon Dobbs, English, in creative writing (poetry).
- Albert Villatte-Isaza, Romance Languages, a Latin Americanist.

#### Tenure-Track Resignations:

- Geoffrey Gorham, Philosophy

#### Tenure-Track Searches for Approval:

- Philosophy, for philosophy of science

#### Sabbaticals:

- Karen Cherewatuk, English.
- Richard DuRocher, English.
- Jolene Barjasteh, Romance Languages.
- Joan Hepburn, English.
- Karen Achberger, German.
- Leon Narvaez, Romance Languages.
- Douglas Schuurman, Religion.

#### Appointments:

- Professor Ted Peters of the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, was appointed the Martin E. Marty Professor of Religion and the Academy for the calendar year 2009. Professor Peters is a scholar of religion and science.
- Edmund Santurri, Religion and Philosophy, completed his term as the Director of the Great Conversation program.
- Karen Cherewatuk, English, was appointed Director of the Great Conversation program.
- James Farrell, History, and Gwendolyn Barnes-Karol, Romance Languages, completed their times as chairs of their departments: Todd Nichol, History, was appointed History chair, while Leon Narvaez and Wendy Allen will take over the romance Languages position.
- Solveig Zempel, Norwegian, completed her years as the Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary and General Studies.
- Irina Walter, Russian Language and Area Studies, completed her term as the Director of the foreign Languages Across the Curriculum program, its 19<sup>th</sup> year; Christopher Chiappari, Sociology/Anthropology, was appointed the Director for 2008-09.

#### Retirements:

- J. Eric Nelson, English.
- Herve Pensec, French.

#### Grants/Fellowships/Honors:

- Mark Allister, English, had a Fulbright Fellowship to Romania during the spring of 2008.
- Richard DuRocher, English, completed his year of a NEH Fellowship.
- Solveig Zempel, Norwegian, was awarded the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit by the King of Norway in April 2008.
- Carol Holly, English, was named a Lilly Vocational Scholar at the college for the 2008-09 academic year.

- Mary Titus, English, was elected as an honorary member of Delta of Minnesota, Phi Beta Kappa.
- Karen Achberger, German, received a DAAD grant to participate in a seminar on “Technology of Memories” at Cornell University during the summer of 2008.
- Anant Rambachan, Religion, was invited to an interfaith gathering with Pope Benedict on his visit to Washington, D.C.

#### Curricular Developments:

- English completed redrafting of a new structure for the English major after two years of study; the proposal will go to the faculty in the fall of 2008.
- New offerings and developing courses this year include courses in Canadian Literature, Short Fiction in 19<sup>th</sup> Century America, Chaucer and Medieval Drama, American Film History, Film and Children’s Literature, Heroic Journeys, Space and Time, Kantian Ethics in Film and Literature, Norwegian Crime Fiction, Jesus in Cross-cultural Perspective; the Ethics of Travel: Pilgrims and Tourists.
- The German department instituted a new international program at Humboldt University, Berlin.
- Boldt Professor Diana Postlethwaite led a seminar for faculty on film theory and pedagogy during January 2008; the group included the following Humanities faculty: Jenny Dunning and Jan Hill, English, Karen Achberger, German, Anna Sabo, Norwegian, Jason Ripley and James Hanson, Religion.
- Several members of the Romance Languages department have begun to work on preparation for recertification of licensure for world Languages at the college.
- Colin Wells, English, conducted a teaching workshop for American Conversation teachers.
- The German department designed a new placement exam.
- Boldt Professor Diana Postlethwaite, English, and others interested in film studies helped to establish the first Annual St. Olaf Student Filmmaking Festival during interim 2008.
- Most of the Humanities departments completed Intended Learning Outcomes (ILCs) for their General education courses; most of the Humanities departments have now completed the recertifying of their GE-counting courses.
- The Film Task force, which included several Humanities faculty, completed its study of film at St. Olaf and will submit its report to the Provost in the fall of 2008; the group is recommending the establishment of a Film Studies concentration at the college.
- A group of former Boldt professors and others from the Humanities studied the future of the Boldt Chair in anticipation of the selection of the next incumbent during the 2008-09 school year.
- Romance Languages completed new guidelines for Distinction in the department.
- Five languages offered FLAC components in six departments during 2008-09; new to the offerings is Music 252 paired with German.

Notes:

- The under-20 enrollment initiative of the college affected the Humanities Faculty heavily, especially in FYW courses, Religion 121 and all FOL courses.
- Filmmaker and scriptwriter Ali Selim was hired as Artist in Residence for fall 2008; he will teach a screenwriting course in the English department.
- Julia Annas of the University of Arizona gave the 2007-08 Belgum Lectures on “Virtue and Happiness.”
- Richard DuRocher gave the opening plenary address at the conference on John Milton in October.
- Stanton Lindon, '57, established the Stanton J. and Lucille Linden Endowed Fund for research and teaching in the English department.
- Campus visitors and speakers: Ed Bok Lee, Mary Rose O'Reilley, Patrician and Tracy Lambrecht, and Siri Hustvedt (English); Carsten Albers and Hans-Juergen Ahrens (German); Hon. Wegger Christian Strommen, Aud Kolberg, Per Petterson, and Magne Supphellen (Norwegian); Francisco Aragon (English, Spanish); Carol Thomas (classics and History).
- The Literatures in English Conference (7-9 June 2007, organized by Jonathan Hill, English) brought a large group of scholars to the campus to study global literatures in English.
- Boldt Professor Diana Postlethwaite, English, established a “St. Olaf Film” website.
- Several Humanities faculty, notably Douglas Schuurman, Religion, and Geoffrey Gorham and Karen Gervais, philosophy, have been instrumental in the launching of the new Science Conversation program.
- In a spring workshop Romance Languages completed a plan for distributing departmental tasks in light of the transition to the era of a new chair.
- L. DeAne Lagerquist, Religion, led the 2007-08 Global Semester.

### **Humanities Faculty:**

- The task force on the future of film studies at St. Olaf, chaired by Boldt Professor Diana Postlethwaite, English, completed its work and will recommend a new film and will recommend a new film studies concentration to the faculty in the fall 2008.
- Humanities Faculty members continue to serve important roles in the college's international and off-campus teaching and advising.
- A small task force on the future of the Boldt Professorship completed its study.
- A “Language and Literature Group” from the Humanities faculty and others met once a month on Friday afternoons for papers and updates in the many areas of faculty research; Anne Groton, Classics, organized this revival of a tradition from years ago.

### **Students:**

- Four English majors were elected to PBK and two received departmental distinction.
- The Classics department produced its 16<sup>th</sup> Latin play this year, the Roman comedy by Plautus, “Mosterllaria,” and brought the 23-member production to Liberty Classical Academy, St. Catherine, the U of M, Gustavus, and Mayo and Edina high schools.

- Five Philosophy majors received distinction from the department; two were elected to PBK.
- Katie Murchison, an English major, was a finalist in the ACM's Nick Adams short story contest; she received the Spohn Award from the department.
- Brent DeFries, Valerie Deal, David Mood, Gil Thompson and Michael Smeltzer won Ringstad Prizes for best essays in philosophy.
- The Class of 2008 selected Charles Taliaferro, Philosophy, for the "Last Lecture" of graduation week.
- St. Olaf Classics students again did well in the Eta Sigma Phi Classics prizes: Thomas Halvorsen received a first in Advanced Latin and in Latin Prose Composition, Lisa York, a second in Latin Prose Composition, Martin Shedd, a second in Intermediate Latin and Kevin Moor, and honorable mention in Intermediate Classical Greek.
- The German Department hosted four exchange students: Katharina Lappe, Stephanie Spitzer, Markus Wierschem and Susanne Benkisser.
- Rand Scholar to Norway, Ishaana Rambachan, '08, lectured on "Global Development Strategies."
- Kyla Rasmussen received an Award for Outstanding Accomplishment in classical Studies from the Classical Association of the Middle West and south. She presented her paper, "Restoring the Wall," to senior Classics majors at Carleton and at the sixth Annual Sunoikisis Undergraduate Research Symposium at Davidson College in April.

### **Overview:**

#### **Concerns:**

- After a couple of years of progress in dealing with grade inflation/compression in the Humanities area, there are now signs that grades are on the rise again.
- Space concerns: sadly, the college provided no leadership for discussion of and the decision-making for the facilities issues confronting the college generally and the Humanities Faculty. Conversations that began two or three years ago were stopped for months and then rushed to a rapid-fire and confusing conclusion.
- The current procedures for hiring have become so confused and Byzantine that some departments have delayed needed long-term hiring.
- The impact of the conversion to the IPAT system for professional activity, particularly in the Humanities areas, has not been studied. What are the consequences for faculty travel and for faculty productivity? On a related matter: the sharp rise in the costs associated with faculty travel has become a serious concern.

### **Not reporting: History, Great Conversation, World Languages Center**

Charles A. Wilson  
 Associate Dean for the Humanities  
 22 June 2008