



Member News

American Academy of Religion

In This Issue

AAR's Teaching and Learning Committee welcomes you to explore some exciting new developments in teaching in our fields. Learn about our committee and our work on the [AAR website](#).

A Message from the Executive Director

Colleagues:

We often think of the work of the AAR as primarily about research. Indeed, our motto, "Fostering Excellence in the Study of Religion," might be interpreted to mean that research is all we do. Nothing could be further from the truth, however. The AAR fosters research, but also supports professional development, several publishing efforts, and advocacy for the public understanding of religion. And we also think carefully about pedagogy. Please take a look at the Committee's several projects (described herein) and also take a look at the sessions they will sponsor in San Diego.



With every good wish and with thanks for your participation in the work of our Academy, I remain

Sincerely yours,
Jack Fitzmier
Executive Director

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AAR 2014 EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD RECIPIENT

www.aarweb.org



The AAR's Teaching and Learning Committee is pleased to announce [Shafique N. Virani](#) is the recipient of the 2014 Excellence in Teaching Award.

Virani is Distinguished Professor of Islamic Studies and chair of the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Toronto. He was previously on faculty at Harvard University (from where he also received his Ph.D.) and Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates. He is the author of *The Ismailis in the Middle Ages: A History of Survival, A Search for Salvation* (Oxford University Press, 2007), along with numerous articles and translations and a co-written play in which he also performed. He has taught and volunteered in a variety of global contexts, from universities to impoverished areas in the developing world. His pedagogical innovations include the incorporation of multimedia in the classroom and being the first professor to use the i-Clicker response system to teach religion. He has received several teaching awards and is known as a mentor who provides opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students to join him in cutting-edge research projects.

Interview with Dr. Shafique N. Virani

Virani discusses his teaching influences and pedagogical style in a recent interview conducted by Lerone Martin, chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee. You can view the [informative discussion](#) on the AAR website.

Virani will make remarks and engage questions and answers from the audience during the Special Topics Forum at this year's Annual Meeting in San Diego. Please join the AAR's Teaching and Learning Committee at this special event:

Sunday, November 23
1:00 PM–2:30 PM
Hilton Bayfront-520
A23-203

EVENTS AT THE AAR ANNUAL MEETING IN SAN DIEGO

Please join us for the following special events at this year's Annual Meeting in San Diego, California:

**Teaching World Religions: Challenges and Opportunities Using
*The Norton Anthology of World Religions (2014)***

Publications Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee
Kimberly Rae Connor, University of San Francisco, Presiding
Saturday – 9:00 AM–11:30 AM
Convention Center-9
A22-105

**Conversation with the Excellence in Teaching Award Winner,
Shafique N. Virani**

Lerone Martin, Washington University, Saint Louis, Presiding
Sunday – 1:00 PM–2:30 PM
Hilton Bayfront-520
A23-203

SYLLABUS COLLECTION

The collaboration between the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion and the American Academy of Religion makes available more than 1,500 syllabi in a wide variety of courses in religious and theological studies. The syllabi are also integrated into the [Wabash Center's Internet Guide to Religion](#). The Wabash Center welcomes links and PDFs of current syllabi. They do not accept Word document-formatted syllabi.

All submitted syllabi should have the following items prominently indicated at the top of the syllabus:

- Title of the course
- Professor's name
- Institution
- Semester/year
- Level (undergraduate introductory, undergraduate advanced, or graduate level)

Please submit syllabi to:

Charles Bellinger
C.Bellinger@tcu.edu
Theological Librarian
Associate Professor of Theology and Ethics
Brite Divinity School

AAR members are encouraged to submit syllabi. To view some sample

syllabi from members of the Teaching and Learning Committee, please [click here](#).

For online teaching and learning, check out the [Wabash Center's website](#).

For information about Religion in the Schools, [click here](#).

Also, the [Guidelines for Teaching about Religion in K-12 Public Schools in the United States](#) may be of interest.

The AAR's Teaching and Learning Committee welcomes your ideas and comments about the best way to celebrate this month's focus on teaching and learning. Please send suggestions to the Committee Chair, Lerone Martin, at lerone.martin@wustl.edu.
