



e-Bulletin

American Academy of Religion

In This Issue

September is "Teaching and Learning Month" in the AAR! The 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 AAR 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. This fall our Teaching and Learning Committee is surveying our membership on several important questions about the teaching enterprise. I encourage each of you to complete the [survey](#). The Committee will publish the results later in the fall, and will also be discussing them at our Annual Meeting in Chicago. Please participate!

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

Sincerely Yours,

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Jack Fitzmier
Executive Director

A MESSAGE FROM THE AAR PRESIDENT



Like research and publication, teaching and learning are also crucial to the study of religion. For this reason, the American Academy of Religion is a proactive institution in the promotion of creativity in teaching, cooperation in learning, and the keen attention to the public understanding of religion in both areas. The AAR Excellence in Teaching Award is given this year to Martha Reineke, a colleague who distinctly exemplifies such qualities.

Warmly yours,
Otto A. Maduro
President

AAR TEACHING SURVEY

The AAR Teaching and Learning Committee invites your insights into the role of teaching in our academy! Please take just a few minutes to help us assess the needs and desires around teaching methods, theories, and practices. We appreciate your ideas!

[Take me to the survey!](#)

FOCUS ON TEACHING

Be sure to look for *Spotlight on Teaching* in the [Religious Studies News](#)! The upcoming October 2012 issue will focus on "Teaching Religious Studies in Stand-Alone MA Programs." One of the coeditors of *Spotlight*, Reid Locklin, explains: "The October 2012 issue on stand-alone MA religion programs offers a unique vantage on the distinctive character and needs of these programs, as well as innovative teaching and learning strategies that will travel well to other contexts! Articles take up the problems with treating MA students as 'little doctoral students'; suggestions for making the most effective use of 'split-level' graduate/undergraduate courses, the capstone course and MA thesis project, fostering mentoring relationships, maximizing limited resources for language acquisition, and integrating community engagement into graduate education."



Witnessing: Prophecy, Politics & Wisdom

A CONFERENCE
IN HONOR OF
THE 23RD
ANNIVERSARY OF
THE SALVADORAN
MARTYRS

KEYNOTE BY
JON SOBRINO, SJ

NOVEMBER 15-16, 2012

DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois



Planning a Sabbatical?

Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research

is accepting applications for
the 2013/14
Resident Scholars Program.

Applications due:

Thursday, Nov. 1, 2012

The program provides opportunities for postdoctoral research and brings together well-trained, creative, articulate men and women for careful thought in a place of inquiry and prayer.

People whose intellectual pursuits fit within the broad category of "ecumenical and cultural research" are encouraged to apply.

For more information about this and other programs, visit or call:

**www.CollegevilleInstitute.org
320-363-3366**



Look for this issue in mid-October in [Religious Studies News](#).

2012 EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD WINNER: MARTHA J. REINEKE



The Teaching and Learning Committee is pleased to announce **Martha J. Reineke** is the recipient of the 2012 Excellence in Teaching Award. Reineke, professor of religion in the Department of Philosophy and World Religions at the University of Northern Iowa, will make remarks and engage questions and answers from the audience during the Special Topics

Forum at this year's Annual Meeting in Chicago.

At a time when liberal education in public universities is being challenged as governing boards, state legislatures, parents, and students press for majors with narrow vocational application, questions that keep Reineke awake at night include:

1. How can we most effectively champion the value of the study of religion in public higher education and promote religious literacy as a vital outcome of higher education in a public context?
2. When others increasingly ascribe to public higher education as a narrow economic value, how can we demonstrate that knowledge of world religions builds intercultural competence that undergirds successful economic development and supports strong communities?

3. Believing that higher education furthers the development of persons by enhancing understanding of human intellectual and cultural accomplishments and by developing skills in the areas of critical thinking and writing, how can we clarify for others the profound difference, even an ethical difference, between viewing persons as recipients of education and as the subjects of training?

Resources for Reflecting on These Questions:

Arum, Richard, and Josipa Roksa. *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Association of American Colleges and Universities. [College Learning for a New Global Century](#). Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2007.

Nussbaum, Martha. *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012.

Prothero, Stephen. *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know — and Doesn't*. New York, NY: HarperOne, 2008.

Resources for Students to Make the Case for Liberal Arts with Future Employers:

Brooks, Katharine. *You Majored in What?: Mapping Your Path from Chaos to Career*. New York, NY: Viking Press, 2009.

Curran, Sheila, and Suzanne Greenwald. *Smart Moves for Liberal Arts Grads*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 2006.

Nadler, Burton Jay. *Liberal Arts Power*. Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson's Publishing, 1989.

We welcome nominations for the 2013 Excellence in Teaching Award. [Please nominate a deserving teacher!](#)

SYLLABUS COLLECTION

This collaboration between the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion and the American Academy of Religion (AAR) 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

For more information, please [click here](#).

AAR members are encouraged to submit syllabi. To view some sample syllabi from members of the Teaching and Learning Committee, please [click here](#).

EVENTS AT THE AAR ANNUAL MEETING IN CHICAGO

Please join us for the following special events at this year's Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois.

Out of Many: Teaching Religion in Entry-Level Courses Across the Humanities (A17-100)

Saturday, November 17, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

McCormick Place South - 401D

Imagined Solidarities: Common Cause or Conflicting Interests among Undergraduate Students and Their Faculties? (A18-200)

Sunday, November 18, 1:00 PM–2:30 PM

McCormick Place East - 263

Conversation with Martha Reineke, 2012 Excellence in Teaching Award Winner (A18-250)

Sunday, November 18, 3:00 PM–4:30 PM

McCormick Place West - 183A

"GO-TO" TEACHING RESOURCES

We asked Teaching and Learning Committee members (and one former teaching award recipient, Barbara Patterson) what their "go-to" pedagogy books are when they are preparing syllabi or gearing up to start a new semester. The following are a few of the sources on their shelves:

Bain, Ken. *What the Best College Students Do*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012.

Boal, Augusto. *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. Florence, KY: Routledge, 2002.

Barlett, Peggy F., and Geoffrey W. Chase, eds. *Reimagining Higher Education: Stories and Strategies for Sustainability*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012 (forthcoming).

Brookfield, Stephen D. *Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2009. (See also the [author's website](#).)

Cooper, Nic, and Betty K. Garner. *Developing a Learning Classroom: Moving Beyond Management through Relationships, Relevance, and Rigor*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2012.

Davidson, Cathy N. *Now You See It: How the Brain Science of Attention Will Transform the Way We Live, Work, and Learn*. New York, NY: Viking Press, 2011.

Davis, Barbara Gross. *Tools for Teaching*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

Fink, L. Dee. *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

Finkel, Donald L. *Teaching with Your Mouth Shut*. Portsmouth, NJ: Heinemann, 2005.

Grace, Fran, and Judith Simmer-Brown, eds. *Meditation and the Classroom: Contemplative Pedagogy for Religious Studies*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012.

hooks, bell. *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*. Florence, KY: Routledge, 2009.

Kahn, Richard. *Critical Pedagogy, Ecopedagogy, and Planetary Crisis: The Ecopedagogy Movement*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Press, 2010.

Kaye, Cathryn Berger. *The Complete Guide to Service Learning*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 2010.

Kress, Christine M., Peter J. Collier, and Vicki L. Reitenauer. *Learning through Serving: A Student Guidebook for Service-Learning Across the Disciplines*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2005.

Mullens, Jo Beth, and Pru Cuper, eds. *Fostering Global Citizenship: Through Faculty-led International Programs*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2012.

Pollack, Stanley, and Mary Fusoni. *Moving Beyond Icebreakers: An Innovative Approach to Group Facilitation, Learning, and Action*. Roxbury, MA: Center for Teen Empowerment, 2005.

Rohd, Michael. *Theatre for Community Conflict and Dialogue: The Hope Is Vital Manual*. Portsmouth, NJ: Heinemann, 1998.

Shor, Ira. *When Students Have Power: Negotiating Authority in a Critical Pedagogy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Shor, Ira, and Paulo Freire. *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education*. Bel Air, CA: Bergin and Garvey, 1987.

Wiggins, Grant, and Jay McTighe. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2005.

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. Send suggestions to the Committee Chair, Tina Pippin, at tpippin@agnesscott.edu.
