From the Chair

Our students, alumni, and faculty are engaged in exciting projects. Our faculty received five teaching awards this year. Collectively the faculty published ten articles or book chapters, gave twenty-five external academic presentations, and garnered ten grants. Further, our faculty continue as national leaders, editing journals and leading faculty development workshops. In April 2013, religious studies major Andrew Defrees presented a paper regarding Muslim responses to weapons of mass destruction at the Cohen Peace Studies Conference. As usual, a number of our graduates are off to graduate school, including philosophy major and past Philosophy Club President Harrison Null. Two of our alumni, Chris Coy and Kristen Ruhl, were featured in the June 2013 alumni magazine. I hope you enjoy learning more about what we have been up to as you read on.

George Barker Retires … Again!

Dr. George Barker “retired” from full-time on-campus teaching in 2008. Since 2008 George has had many a semester where he taught more than 100 students online. In 2008, online enrollments were quickly on the rise and we needed someone to help us keep up. As usual, George was there, and he approached this job with his characteristic attitude: “Department before self.” Summer session 2013 is George’s last semester teaching online.

Dr. Barker began teaching at Ball State before there was a philosophy department. In 1956, Ball State Teachers College, as it was then known, hired its first philosopher, Dr. Robert Robertson. In 1958, the first professor of religious studies, Dr. Carl Audry, joined Dr. Robertson teaching in what was then the Department of Political Science, Economics, and Philosophy. To accommodate increasing student demand for courses, Dr. Barker began teaching at (now) Ball State University in the spring of 1966. In 1970, the Department of Philosophy became a stand-alone department. You read that right: George has been a part of 48 of the 56 years that philosophy has been at Ball State, and all 43 years of the department’s history.

Dr. Barker worked closely with the revolting (in one sense) students of the 1960s. His wide-ranging expertise allowed him to teach just about any subject, which was crucial to the department’s ability to meet the growing number of students interested in Philosophy courses throughout the 1970s. During the 1980s and 1990s George was a steadying force as presidents, provosts, and deans came and went. In the 1990s and 2000s, George provided a wonderful example for the incoming faculty that now compose the department. He gave us gentle and wise counsel wrought of an ability to really listen. He always focused us on what really matters: helping students develop. Students and faculty alike owe him a debt of gratitude for enriching our lives.

More than 10,000 students have enjoyed the privilege of learning from George, including those he taught at Indiana University-East, St. Francis College (Chicago), and Anderson University. During Alumni Association phone drives over the years we have heard wonderful stories about George from past graduates. In retirement, George continues to support the department in many important ways.

George and his wife Pat are in good health, keeping house in their longtime home here in Muncie. They travel frequently – including a recent Caribbean cruise – to visit children, granddogs, and grandcats.

bsu.edu/philosophy or bsu.edu/religiousstudies
The summer of 2013 finds Elizabeth Agnew (eagnew@bsu.edu) in New Delhi, India, where she is developing teaching resources on Islam, religious diversity, and democracy with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The other large project on Elizabeth’s plate involves working with a team of BSU faculty on a $1,000,000 partnership with Quaid-i-Azam University in Pakistan. In spring 2013, Elizabeth directed religious studies major Kalyn Sprague’s senior honors thesis entitled “Principled Pragmatism: Lessons Learned from the First Intifada.” In fall 2013, Elizabeth will be teaching a new course: Religion, Morality, and Public Debate.

In the fall of 2012, Jeff Brackett (jmbrackett@bsu.edu) introduced an immediately very popular new course, Religion and Pop Culture. The course uses social media and other emerging technologies to examine contemporary religious experiences. While on sabbatical during spring 2013, Jeff is working on a project entitled “Re-Casting Sant Tukaram in Modern Literature, Drama, and Film.” He continues his leadership role at the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning, and is writing an essay about teaching ethnography.

Dave Concepción's (dwconcepcion@bsu.edu) one year stint as guest director of Ball State’s Diversity Associates Program has come to fruition in videos regarding inclusive pedagogy:
http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/institutionaldiversity/faculty/inclusive-pedagogy. As president of the American Association of Philosophy teachers, Dave is developing a national cadre of award-winning faculty to lead workshops around the country regarding best teaching practices. He led philosophy major Kevin Mager’s independent study of John Rawls’ Political Liberalism during spring 2013.

Jeff Fry (jfry@bsu.edu) is spending part of summer 2013 at the University of Pennsylvania’s “Neuroscience Boot Camp,” studying key findings on the cognitive and social-emotional functions of the brain. Recent publications include “Citius, Altius, Fortius, Virtuouso” in The Olympics & Philosophy and “The Neuroethics of Coaching” in The Ethics of Coaching. Recent presentations include “Coaching and Philosophies of Sport” and “The Will to Win.” He serves on the Editorial Boards of the Journal of the Philosophy of Sport and Sport, Ethics & Philosophy.

Kevin Harrelson (kjharrelson@bsu.edu) taught a new course on Personal Identity in the spring 2013. Recent publications include: “Idealist Ontological Arguments in Royce, Collingwood, and Others,” Transactions of the Charles S. Pierce Society; “Hegel and the Modern Canon,” Owl of Minerva, Spring 2013; and “The Ethics of History in Royce’s The Spirit of Modern Philosophy, Journal of Speculative Philosophy. He serves as the secretary/treasurer of the Indiana Philosophical Association and remains beloved as the advisor of the Philosophy Club.

Kalumba’s (kkalumba@bsu.edu) recent presentations include: “Four Problems with Current Attempts to Democratize Traditional African Communities,” 29th International Social Philosophy Conference and “Kwasi Wiredu and the Consensus Principle in African Political Philosophy,” Annual Midwest Political Science Association Conference. Kalumba continues as editor-in-Chief of Philosophia Africana, where he employs BSU philosophy major Devon Chapman as an assistant.

**Faculty Highlights**

**Concepción and Thorson Receive Inaugural BSU Immersive Learning Awards**

Immersive learning—the hallmark of a Ball State education—pulls together interdisciplinary student teams guided by expert faculty to create unique, high-impact learning experiences that result in real-world solutions.

In “Making Ideas Visible” Juli (Efín) Thorson led a team of philosophy and art students in a Virginia Ball Center course, where students take just one course for an entire semester to enable intensive study and extensive results. Philosophy students taught art students about philosophy and the artists taught the philosophers how to paint. Together, they produced fine art inspired by and infused with philosophical content. The class sold much of their work during an exhibition of their own design, donating the proceeds to a local arts program. They also produced a beautiful book accompanying reproductions of their work with philosophic commentary. Email Juli (jthorson@bsu.edu) if you would like a copy.

Seniors Kiley Neal and Adam Vaughn accept a 2013 Immersive Learning Award from BSU President Jo Ann Gora for Stance.

**Stance Earns Two National Awards**

The on-going immersive learning course in the philosophy program is Stance: http://stance.iweb.bsu.edu/.

In December 2012 Stance garnered two recognitions from the American Scholastic Press Association:
- Best University Journal of 2012
- First Place with Special Merit, University Magazine
Among the presentations were Adam Vaughn’s “The Role of...

Student Recognition Day

This year’s Student Recognition Day was again enriching. Among the presentations were Adam Vaughn’s “The Role of Philosophy in Education,” Andrew DeFrees’ “Islam, Iran and Nuclear Weapons,” Kalumba Kibujjo’s “Palestinian Stone Throwing and Gandhian Principles,” and Ashli Godfrey’s “Intersections of Marilyn Frye’s Theory with Positive Peace.”

2013 Award Recipients

Outstanding Seniors
Philosophy – Ashli Godfrey
Religious Studies – Kalyn Sprague

Essay Prize Recipients
Philosophy – Kiley Neal
“The Unborn Child: Mother: Nietzsche, Kelly Oliver, & The Nature of Truth”

Religious Studies – Missy Hayes
“The Feminist Possibilities of the Acts of Paul & Thecla”

Phi Sigma Tau Inductees
(Philosophy Honor Society)
Devon Chapman, Trace Graves, Katalyn Lorentzen, Ben Rogers, Arthur Soto, & Esther Wolfe

Kalyn Sprague
Outstanding Senior
Religious Studies, 2013

Teaching Faculty

Adam Bowen comes to us from the University of Illinois. His expertise is in metaphysics and epistemology, especially models of temporal perception. Regarding teaching, Adam says: “Cultivating healthy attitudes of self-critical reflection and cautious judgment are important intellectual virtues of philosophical education.”

Diane Segroves earned her PhD from Vanderbilt University. Her specialty is the history of religion and Judaism. Regarding teaching Diane says: “I believe that a religious studies curriculum is an essential element in a liberal arts education that seeks to prepare students to be global citizens, critical thinkers, and life-long learners.”

Ball State alumnus Daniel Cole earned his master’s degree at Miami University (OH). Daniel became the department’s first full-time online instructor. His expertise is political philosophy, especially Hannah Arendt.

Peg Shaffer continues teaching religious studies and as Assistant Director of Freshman Connections.

Faculty Highlights

Joseph Marchal (jamarchal@bsu.edu) began offering a new course entitled “Sex and the Bible” in the spring. The Ball State chapter of the Phi Sigma Epsilon fraternity named Joe Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year. Joe has presented original research in a number of places, including presentations on imperial sexual exceptionalism at the Universities of Kent and Sheffield (in the UK), before presenting on eunuchs in a first of its kind conference on intersex, religion, and the bible at the University of Manchester. Joe continues on a number of steering committees and editorial boards, including for the journal Bible and Critical Theory. Joe will spend the 2013-2014 academic year on sabbatical in Madison, WI, where his work is supported by a generous grant from the University of Wisconsin Institute for Research in the Humanities.

In addition to receiving an Immersive Learning Award, this year Juli (Elfin) Thorson (jithorson@bsu.edu) revamped every course she teaches. She also led Philosophy majors Derek Barnes and Austin Thomas in an independent study regarding modal logic. Recent work includes: an article on virtuous epistemic communities and “Maverick Perception and Intellectual Virtue,” Educating for Intellectual Virtue Conference. She reviews for the journal Science Education, and is frequently called upon by university administration to assist with special projects.

Check out the Philosophy Alumni Blog: www.res-cogitans.com

Philosophy Club
philclub.iweb.bsu.edu/default.html
President: Ben Rogers
brrogers@bsu.edu

Religious Studies Club
facebook.com/groups/17467320283894/
President: Caleb Moore
bsureligiousstudiesclub@gmail.com

Philosophia Africana

Kibujjo Kalumba serves as the editor-in-chief of Philosophy Africana (PA). Founded in 1998 by the late Emmanuel Eze of DePaul University, PA is a peer-reviewed journal that welcomes manuscripts in any philosophical style that focus on philosophical issues in Africa and African Diaspora.

A recipient of the “Best New Journal” prize from the Council of Editors of Learned Journals, PA is published twice each year. Kalumba is assisted by an international team of associate editors and board members and a student editorial assistant from the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. Recent articles address the thinking of Steve Bantu Biko and Cornel West. 2013 student assistant Devon Chapman notes: “PA not only helped me understand the editorial side of journals, but also piqued my interest in african philosophy.” For more information please visit: philafricana.iweb.bsu.edu/philafricana.htm or email the editorial team at philafricana@bsu.edu.
Make a Gift

Now is a critical time for funding in the humanities. For the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies to continue to offer the very best in undergraduate education, it is essential that we are able to support innovative teaching, research, and special events. In short, we need your help. Please consider a gift to the Ball State Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies.

To contribute, mail checks to: Make a gift online by visiting:
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Enter the fund number on the memo line of the check (see below)
For more information contact Darleen Lugenbuhl, University Development at dmlugenbuhl@bsu.edu, 765-285-8261, or toll-free 1-866-953-2653

6501 - Philosophy and Religious Studies General Fund. Donations to this account allow us the greatest flexibility to meet the diverse needs of the department.
6551 - Philosophy and Religious Studies Student Awards and Activities Fund. Used to support student activities and achievements.
6503 – Stance Fund. Provides funds to support the welfare, operations, advancement, and production of Stance.

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