

ELON'S

Center for the Study of Religion,
Culture, and Society



Annual Report | 2014-15





MISSION STATEMENT

The **Elon Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society** (CSRCS) highlights and promotes the interdisciplinary study of religion. This faculty-led center draws scholars from disciplines across Elon's campus together with students, staff, community members, and experts from the region and beyond. Center initiatives foster teaching, scholarship, and exchange that cultivate intellectual community and civic action. Pursuing fulfillment of Elon's commitment to multi-faith education and engagement, the CSRCS convenes and facilitates dialogue that advances our understanding of the role of religion in society with intellectual rigor and academic integrity.



2014-15: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

When I arrived at Elon on Aug. 1, 2014 to serve as the first full-time director of the Elon Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society, signs were already abundant that religion would figure prominently on the global stage and on our campus this academic year. A summer of bloody conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza was underway; the so-called Islamic State had declared itself a worldwide caliphate and begun its conquest of large swaths of Iraq and Syria; India had recently concluded national elections that brought a Hindu nationalist party to power; Pope Francis continued to grab headlines for his accommodating style and reformist policies; and campaigns for marriage equality made significant advances in churches, in the courts, and in public opinion, generating substantial backlash from religious conservatives. Elon students and faculty returned to campus amid these monumental shifts and set about contending with the complexities of creating

intellectual community in the midst of global conflict and change.

Thanks to those who had prepared my way, especially founding director and Chair of Religious Studies, Dr. Lynn Huber and the center's Advisory Committee, the Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society (CSRCS) stood ready to engage the campus and community in challenging discussion and to work across departments to understand how religion has informed and influenced the world we know. Through lectures, films, and discussions that addressed a diverse set of topics—from ISIS to Oprah—the CSRCS worked to provide the expertise and resources that the study of religion requires. In every instance, many, many committed and passionate campus partners were at hand to assist and ensure that the level of discourse remained high. Some of them are thanked at the end of this report.



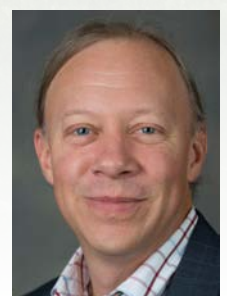
While the CSRCS is dedicated to the academic and interdisciplinary study of religion, culture, and society, 2014-15 saw substantial progress on the broader front of Elon's commitment to developing a program of robust multi-faith engagement. This spring, the Numen Lumen Strategic Planning Committee submitted its report to Provost Steven House and Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Smith Jackson. Described in further detail later in this report, this strategic plan sets the course for the university to achieve its multi-faith objectives through the pursuit of four broad goals: 1) the creation of a more religiously diverse and welcoming campus community; 2) developing the ability of the campus community to engage with colleagues and communities from diverse religious identities and worldviews; 3) providing opportunities for deepened and extended engagement with one another around multi-faith matters of substance; 4) enhancing campus capacity through clarification of University units and the reformulation of advisory

committee structures. Using this template as its starting point, the CSRCS Advisory Committee has produced its own planning document that commits it to exploring new avenues for research and community engagement.

It has been an extraordinarily rewarding year for me as director, and I am confident that Elon will continue to challenge itself to proceed with ever greater precision and rigor as it works to uncover and understand the manifold ways in which religious and spiritual traditions impact and shape our evolving societies.

Brian K. Pennington

Director of the CSRCS and
Professor of Religious Studies





FOSTERING INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY

International news related to religion in 2014-15 was dominated by events unfolding in the Middle East and Muslim world. Thanks to the commitment of many faculty and staff to fostering informed dialogue on the issues, the CSRCS sponsored programs throughout the year that plumbed the background to unfolding events while remaining abreast of shifting and fluid circumstances.

Associate Professor of Religious Studies Michael Pregill launched the academic year by leading a “Religion Trending” discussion of the rise of the Islamic State as it gained greater and greater international attention. His informal talk on Sept. 15 to a group of interested staff and faculty detailed the historical background to the group and the complex nature of its various alliances.

Security consultant and former Israeli security analyst Avi Melamed addressed almost 150 students, faculty, staff and community members on Oct. 28. His lecture, entitled, “Connecting the Dots: Religion and Conflict in the Middle East,” attributed the causes of current unrest in the Middle East to a history of conflict within Islam itself. His was the first of five other events hosted by the CSRCS in 2014-15 devoted to understanding the interconnected crises in the Middle East, including the 2014 conflict in Gaza, the rise of the Islamic State, and the forced migration/refugee crisis unfolding in Syria. The debate sparked by Melamed’s talk led the CSRCS, in partnership with Faculty Fellow for Civic Engagement, Jason Husser and Lori and Eric Sklut Emerging Scholar in Jewish Studies, Geoffrey Claussen, to quickly convene a further panel discussion to continue the dialogue. Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Michael

A Year Of Dialogue On Conflict In The Middle East



Pregill (now Interlocutor for the Institute for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilizations at Boston University), Professor of Philosophy, Yoram Lubling, and Assistant Professor of Management Information Systems, Haya Ajjan, offered distinct analyses of the causes and possible solutions to ongoing religious and political conflict in the region. They engaged a large group of students, faculty, and community members in a civil but spirited discussion.

The plight of those displaced by the wars in Syria and Iraq, as well as conflict in other regions was the focus of “Forced Migration, Violence, and Poverty in a Global Society: A Panel Discussion on World Refugee & Migration Crises.” Organized and moderated by Ameya Benegal (Class of 2016), it featured the personal stories of some faculty who have been directly affected by such crises. Dr. Haya Ajjan spoke of family and friends



in Syria; Assistant Professor of Communications, Ahmed Fadaam, discussed coming to the US when he was forced to leave Iraq in 2012. Assistant Professor of Economics, Tonmoy Islam discussed economic causes of forced migration. Assistant Professor of Anthropology Mussa Idris told his own story of migrating from Eritrea and described its government's repressive policies and its conflict with neighboring Ethiopia. They were joined by Assistant Professor of Human Service Studies, Carmen Mónico and Associate Professor of Business Communication, Brian Nienhaus, who spoke of their experiences of forced migration in El Salvador and Mexico respectively.

Elon was privileged to host two officials working on behalf of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution

and Opposition Forces (known colloquially as the Syrian National Coalition) on Feb. 25. Oubab Khalil works as Chief of Staff for the Syrian National Coalition office in Washington, D.C. and Basel Korkor serves as U.S. Counsel to the Syrian Coalition's Washington and United Nations offices, where he advises the Coalition on various legal and policy issues, including sanctions compliance, economic development, and diplomatic matters. Their visit had to be rescheduled when the two were invited to the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism hosted by President Barack Obama the previous week, and they were able to share their own impression of that event, which was still receiving widespread media coverage a week later.

In an extended Q&A with CSRCs Director Brian Pennington, Korkor and Khalil discussed the origins of ISIS, the state of the Syrian Civil War, their hope for eventual peace, and the coalition's plan for a transition to democracy should the war reach a satisfactory conclusion.

Describing the conflict as a three-way contest between the Asad regime, the extremists that include ISIS, and moderates who seek a democratic government, Korkor explained that the coalition and the Free Syrian Army it supports face well-funded enemies on both fronts, while "the moderate, nationalist opposition is the least supported group on the ground in Syria." When Korkor and Khalil invited audience questions, students quickly formed long lines at the microphones. As time ran out, the speakers prepared to make a quick departure back to Washington DC to stay ahead of latest snow storm to hit the East but not without expressing their gratitude to Elon that its students were so well informed and engaged with the issues and pledging to return for follow-up events.



Photo: AFP/Mahmud Hams



“Religion Trending”

Timely Discussions Of Religion In The News And In Our World

Religious nationalism, the status of religious minorities, religious communities promoting or opposing social change, and electoral politics are just a few of the ways that religion appears in the headlines or quietly behind them.

"Religion Trending" is an occasional series of informal, after-work discussions for Elon staff and faculty featuring local experts on current events. In 2014-15, Religion Trending was graciously hosted by local pub and coffee shop, The Oak House, and its owner, Phil Smith. Religion Trending speakers and topics included the following:

Michael Pregill, Elon Assoc. Prof. of Religious Studies, **“Understanding the Islamic State,” Sept. 15.**

Neil Devotta, Wake Forest Assoc. Prof. of Political Science, **“Democratic Sri Lanka in a**

Post-Civil War Era,” Mar. 5

Elon professors **Ahmed Fadam** (Communications), **Evan Gatti** (Art History), and **James Marchant** (Arts Administration), **“The Looting and Destruction of Antiquities Syria and Iraq,” Apr. 20.**



Documentary Filmmaker

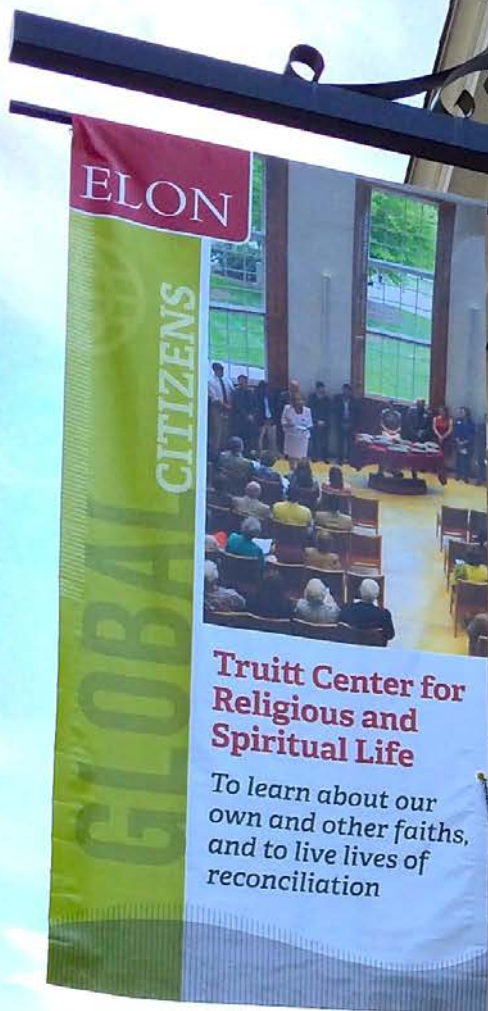


Pankaj Rishi Kumar screened two films at Elon during his 2014-15 tour in the U.S. Based in Mumbai, India, Kumar's films focus on social issues in India. He showed clips of his film **“Punches and Ponytails”** about female boxers and the opposition they face from family members and a religiously conservative society for a brown-bag luncheon. He offered a full screening and discussion of his most recent film, **“In God's Land,”** which depicts the efforts of a major Hindu temple in South India to acquire land traditionally held by a low-caste group, who maintain the land was gifted to them by their own god generations ago.

The CSRCS has purchased all of Kumar's films for the Belk Library, where they are now available for check-out.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TRUITT CENTER

As home to Elon's chaplains and the office dedicated to spiritual growth and discernment, the Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life are natural partners in many of the CSRCS's own initiatives.



In 2014-15, the CSRCS collaborated with the Truitt Center on a number of initiatives and programs, including these:

Good without God: A Mar. 10 panel discussion on secular humanism organized by Multi-faith Intern and 2015 graduate Chris Essman, this event was moderated by Brian Pennington and featured a lively conversation with Prof. of Sociology, Tom Arcaro, Assoc. Professor Nim Batchelor, Dr. Anne Knafl, Bibliographer for Religion and Philosophy and Selector for Hebrew and Yiddish materials at the University of Chicago Library, and Mr. Randy Best, Leader (Humanist Minister) of the Ethical Humanist Society in Chapel Hill.

Changing Our Mind: On Apr. 16, Mercer University Professor of Ethics and leading evangelical theologian, David Gushee, spoke about his journey towards full inclusion of same-sex couples in the Christian church and the theological reasoning that led him there.

Interfaith Youth Core Vanguard Conference: In September, members of the CSRCS and Truitt Center staffs, as well as university administrators and students attended the Interfaith Youth Core Vanguard Campus conference and President's Interfaith Challenge. At the conference Elon was recognized as one of the campuses leading the nation on interfaith education and dialogue.

“The Binding of Isaac in the Three ‘Abrahamic’ Traditions”

One of the highlights of this year was the two-day visit by Dr. Jon Levenson, the Albert A. List Professor of Jewish Studies at Harvard University Divinity School.



In addition to the master class for faculty he led (described on pg. 11), Levenson offered a public lecture on Mar. 17 in which he explored parallel texts from Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions to demonstrate both the strengths and the limitations of the claim that these three religious traditions constitute varieties of one “Abrahamic Religion.”

Dr. Levenson’s visit was made possible by the co-sponsorship of a number of partners, including the Fund for Excellence in the Arts and Sciences, Elon’s Lori and Eric Sklut Emerging Scholar in Jewish Studies, Dr. Geoffrey Claussen, the Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, and the Department of Religious Studies.

Kathryn Lofton: Oprah, Goldman Sachs, And Religion

On April 17, Yale University Historian of American Religion, Kathryn Lofton delighted a large crowd of students, faculty, and community members gathered at the Numen Lumen Pavilion to hear her talk,

“But I’m Not Religious: Goldman Sachs, Oprah’s Favorite Things, and Other Resistant Subjects.”

Lofton confessed at the opening, “I have a problem,” describing her propensity to see religion everywhere, even when it is not obvious to the neutral observer. Borrowing heavily from the French sociologist of religion, Emile Durkheim, Lofton argued

that American religiosity can be detected in such surprising corners of our social lives as Oprah Winfrey’s daytime television show and the financial practices of multinational corporation Goldman Sachs. For Lofton, spirituality consists of what she calls the “matrices of the common,” the unspoken values and ways of conceiving reality that structure our societies. Illustrated with excerpts from the airline magazine she read on her flight to Elon and replete with clips of Oprah giving away cars and pulling tearful confessions from her television guests, Lofton’s lecture provided a spirited closing to the CSRCS’s year of programming and dialogue.



FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP & FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

At the heart of the mission of the CSRCS is faculty scholarship. The production of new forms of knowledge and new ways of looking at human culture advances the possibility of healthy and harmonious societies. In 2014-15, the CSRCS helped support faculty research and faculty development for Elon teachers and scholars across the disciplines.

“Sensitive Topics in the Classroom: Religious and International Conflict” Sept. 12, 2014

Jason Husser, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Assistant Director of the Elon Poll



As faculty and students returned to campus following a summer of difficult news from the Middle East, the CSRCS

and Dr. Jason Husser, Faculty Fellow for Civic Engagement, partnered with the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) to host a luncheon discussion about how to handle classroom conflict over religion. The CSRCS also compiled a list of helpful teaching resources on Israel/Palestine and the summer’s conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

Those resources are posted on the CSRCS website at:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/studyofreligion/teaching.xhtml>

“Religion and the Outsider Candidates”

Charles Irons, Chair, Department of History and Geography



At a working lunch on Nov. 4, Dr. Irons presented a draft of a paper given later that month at the “Religion and Politics in 21st Century America” conference at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. The essay, which will appear in the forthcoming volume, *Faith in the New Millennium: The Future of Religion and American Politics*, Edited by Matthew Avery Sutton and Darren Dochuk (Oxford UP: Feb. 2016), discusses the ways in which past presidential candidates who were not mainstream-Protestants—including John F. Kennedy, John Kerry, Mitt Romney, and Barack Obama—have framed their personal faith while addressing the principle of separation of church and state.

Dr. Irons also delivered the lecture “Citizens of Heaven and of the United States: Black Protestants in the Age of Emancipation” at the Virginia Center for Civil War Studies in March.

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“Mindful America, Mindful Elon”

Julie Lellis, Associate Professor of Communications



With a grant from the CSRCS, Dr. Lellis received training in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction from

Duke Integrative Medicine. The training included instruction on the medical history of mindfulness research as well as practical training in the implementation of mindfulness methods. Dr. Lellis undertook the training to assist the development of a planned Study USA course, “Mindful America, Mindful Elon.”

The CSRCS has pioneered the use of the “master class” for faculty in humanities and social sciences. Borrowing a concept from the arts, the CSRCS invites leading scholars to campus to discuss their latest research and engage in dialogue with faculty from Elon and institutions in the surrounding area. In 2014-15, the CSRCS hosted two master classes marked by lively faculty discussion with leading experts on religion.



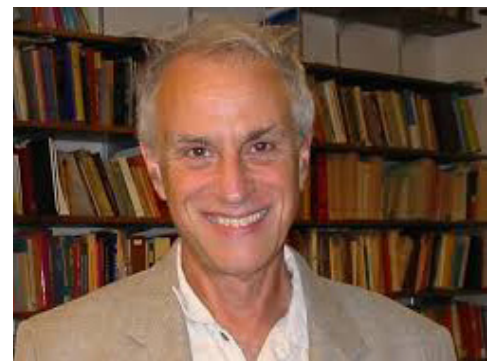
Jon Levenson, Albert A. List Professor of Jewish Studies, Harvard Divinity School

“Is Abraham the Common Father of Jews, Christians, and Muslims? Facing the Differences.”

Mar. 17, 2015

Author of multiple books and one of the world’s most acclaimed scholars in Biblical Studies, Dr. Levenson led a master class entitled, *Is Abraham the Common Father of Jews, Christians, and Muslims? Facing the Differences*. Punctuated by Levenson’s renowned sharp wit, the class built on Levenson’s award-winning book, *Inheriting Abraham: The Legacy of the Patriarch in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Faculty from Duke University’s Department of Religious Studies, the Duke Divinity School, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and UNC Greensboro were in attendance. Dr. Michael Pregill, Interlocutor in the Institute for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilizations at Boston University and formerly of Elon’s own Religious Studies department, offered an animated response.

Prominent Scholars in Dialogue with Regional Faculty



Daniel Gold, Professor of Asian Studies, Cornell University

“Tradition and Change in Urban India”

Mar. 31, 2015

Dr. Gold led a seminar for invited faculty on his 2015 study of urban religion in India, *Provincial Hinduism: Religion and Community in Gwalior City*. This work examines the complex, multi-religious fabric of globalizing city and analyzes the dynamics of personal and communal identity in a rapidly transforming India. During the seminar, Dr. Gold presented several clips from films he has made to support the book’s findings.

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE

IN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Elon University has emerged as a national leader in fostering undergraduate research on religion of the highest quality. By virtue of the commitment of its faculty to one-on-one mentoring of student research projects, the research infrastructure and support mechanisms provided by the Office of Undergraduate Research, curricular opportunities made available through fellows programs, and the various options for credit-bearing research across the curriculum, Elon students are able to develop research skills and pursue individual projects that have led to regional and national presentations as well as graduate school placements and fellowships.

In 2014-15, the CSRCS offered support for student research on religion that received widespread recognition. In partnership with the Office of Undergraduate Research and the Department of Religious Studies,

the CSRCS helped send nine students to the Southeastern Conference for the Study of Religion (SECSOR), the annual regional conference for the Society of Biblical Literature, the American Academy of Religion, and the American Schools of Oriental Research.



Attended by over 300 scholars of religion in the southeastern United States, the conference also hosts two undergraduate sessions of four papers each. Admission to these sessions is competitive, and Elon students were accepted into four of the available eight slots. Elon Senior Pamela Gutermuth received the award for

(cont.)



International Studies major and Elon College Fellow Brianna Birchett received one of the 15 Lumen Prizes awarded annually to Elon sophomores for two-year long undergraduate research projects for her historical and ethnographic research on the Hindu temple dancers and royal courtesans known as devadasis. She is mentored by CSRCS director Brian Pennington.



the Outstanding Undergraduate Paper at that conference. The CSRCS also sent five first- and second-year students to observe their peers and experience the conference in preparation for submitting their own proposals in a future year. Finally, in the inaugural year of the SURF Symposium during Elon's Annual Student Undergraduate Research Fair (SURF), the CSRCS convened a panel of students presenting on the topic, "Religion in the Contemporary United States." Student projects supported by the CSRCS, the venues at which they presented their research, and their faculty mentors include:



Elizabeth Bargamian

"Call And Response, Ambiguous Language, And Sampling: Usage And Function In Spirituals And Rap Music,"

(SURF Symposium and SECSOR, Dr. Lynn Huber, mentor)

Pamela Gutermuth

"Mapping Buddhism in Rural America,"

(SURF Day and SECSOR, Dr. Pamela Winfield, mentor)

Pamela Gutermuth

"Conflicting Priorities: The Moral And Security Implications Of Religious Freedom On United States Foreign Policy In Sudan,"

(SURF Symposium; Dr. Sean Giovanello, mentor)

Daniela Sostaita

"Transcending The Hyphen: The Growth Of Latino Protestantism In The United States,"

(SURF Symposium and SECSOR, Dr. Brian Pennington and Dr. Lynn Huber, mentors)

Max Whelan

"Cross Examination: Belief, Witnessing And Change In The Martyrdom Of Saint Maximilian Kolbe,"

(SURF Day, Dr. Lynn Huber, mentor)

Justin Brown

"Sadhus, Sacrality, and Scams: Reflections on Gender and Hindu Renunciation at the Sri Venkateswara Temple in Cary, N.C.,"

(SURF Symposium and SECSOR, Dr. Amy Allocco, mentor)

Belk Library

The CSRCS has also supported the building of more robust collections at Belk Library related to the study of religion. Offering direct support to particular student research projects, this year it purchased multiple volumes of scholarly research on Sikhism as it is practiced in both South Asia and the diaspora in Europe and North America.



ELON MOURNS NC STUDENTS KILLED IN CHAPEL HILL SHOOTING

On Feb. 10, three Muslim students from the area--Deah Shaddy Barakat, Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha, and Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha (pictured right)—were shot to death in Chapel Hill by a neighbor, allegedly agitated over a parking dispute.



sources that deliberately generate Islamophobia in the US. The CSRCS Advisory Committee issued the following statement that day:

The killings shocked the nation, and they hit students, faculty, and staff at area universities particularly hard. University Chaplain and leader of the campuses interfaith efforts, Jan Fuller, called a vigil that afternoon. Members of Elon's community as well as members of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities in the area attended. President Leo Lambert, Chaplain Fuller, and CSRCS Director Brian Pennington spoke. Videos of their remarks may be found on Elon's website. Through its Facebook page, the CSRCS launched a two-week long education campaign highlighting research about the foundations and funding

“ *It is with shock and profound sadness that we learn this morning of the murder of three young Muslim students in Chapel Hill, NC. The Elon Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society (CSRCS) condemns not only this heinous act but also the vilification of Islam that has become commonplace in public discourse, social and broadcast media, and political debate in the United States.*

Although law enforcement appears to have named a personal dispute as the motive for the crime, this incident cannot be understood apart from an environment of pervasive, ill-informed, and malicious Islamophobia that Muslims in the United States routinely encounter. Such an atmosphere can--and has often in the past--contributed to acts of deplorable violence like this one. Deah Shaddy Barakat, Yusor Abu-Salha, and Razan Abu-Salha possessed bright young minds. They had already done much good and brought much happiness in the course of their short lives. Their embodiment of Islamic faith through peace and service to others in need stands in direct contrast to the heinous crime to which they fell victim. North Carolina is much impoverished by their loss.

The CSRCS calls on the Elon community to take special care at this moment to ensure that the safety and well-being of our Muslim students, faculty, and staff is ensured. With condolences to all who grieve,

-The CSRCS Advisory Committee ””





2014-15: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE —OF MULTI-FAITH EDUCATION AT ELON—

Two significant planning processes with important implications for the future of multi-faith initiatives and the study of religion at Elon took place during 2014-15:

In response to a charge from Provost Steven House and Vice-President and Dean of Students, Smith Jackson, the Numen Lumen Planning Committee developed a blueprint for enhancing global engagement, fostering interfaith dialogue, and promoting multi-faith education. These objectives are central to the university's

2010-2020 strategic plan, "The Elon Commitment." The university's resulting multi-faith initiative will impact the campus as a whole and position Elon as a national leader in this area primarily through the work of three offices: the Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, the Department of Religious Studies, and the Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society. Specific areas of concern and responsibility for each of these units are detailed in the plan.

Under the leadership of its chair, Jeffrey Pugh, the committee submitted the report, "Engaging Religion/Building Community" in March. The full plan with its projected outcomes will be publically available in Fall 2015.

IT PROPOSES FOUR MAJOR OBJECTIVES:



During the Spring 2015 semester, the Advisory Committee for the CSRCS developed its own long-range plan based on the campus-wide objectives articulated in the Numen Lumen Strategic Plan.

Focused on establishing its identity and signature programs for the future, its major objectives propose:

- **BUILDING CAPACITY FOR GROWTH AND SUCCESS**
- **FOSTERING SCHOLARSHIP AMONG FACULTY & STUDENTS**
- **CULTIVATING INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY AT ELON**
- **ENGAGING EXTERNAL PUBLICS**

by cementing relationships across schools and departments at Elon, securing funding for CSRCS programs, and supporting teaching about religion at Elon through faculty development

through the development of a regular interdisciplinary colloquium and ongoing support for undergraduate research

through programming that will include informal discussions around timely matters, lectures and films by leading experts on religion, and engagement with Elon's Residential Campus initiative

via a robust online and social media presence and strong relationships with community organizations

CSRCS

Advisory Committee



Geoffrey Claussen
Assistant Professor of
Religious Studies



Jan Fuller
University Chaplain, Truitt Center
for Religious and Spiritual Life



Evan A. Gatti
Assistant Professor
of Art History



Anthony Hatcher
Associate Professor of
Communications



Lynn Huber
Associate Professor of
Religious Studies



Jason Husser
Assistant Professor of
Political Science, Assistant
Director of the Elon Poll



Buffie Longmire-Avital
Assistant Professor of
Psychology



Kristina Meinking
Assistant Professor of Classical
Languages in the Department of
World Languages and Cultures



Tom Mould
Associate Professor of
Sociology and Anthropology

Appreciation

The lively programming and engaged dialogue that characterize the work of the CSRCS are only possible because so many people at Elon are committed to its mission and principles. A list could never be exhaustive, but special thanks are due to a number of faculty and staff who have served as marvelous partners this year: **Drs. Geoff Claussen** and **Jason Husser** have helped organize and execute several events this year. **Dr. Lynn Huber** was instrumental in establishing the center and has been generous with advice and guidance. Art History faculty **Evan Gatti** and **Kirsten Ringelberg** were important interlocutors throughout the year. Particular thanks are due

to **Assoc. Provost Tim Peeples** for his encouragement and wise counsel and to **Provost Steven House** and **President Leo Lambert** for their strong support and encouragement. University Chaplain **Jan Fuller** and her staff at the Truitt Center—**Joel Harter**, **Diana Abraham**, and **Jan Register**—have been central to the planning of many events. Intern Meghan Leonard did important design and publicity work. **Dr. Haya Ajjan** has been a passionate resource and wonderful partner in Middle East programming. Finally, for her ongoing and uncompensated service in a number of unofficial capacities, the CSRCS is very grateful to **Dr. Amy Allocco**.



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