
THE SCHOOL OF RELIGION
AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:
THE FIRST SEVENTY YEARS



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In 1974, the Director of the School of Religion, James C. Spalding, with the assistance of Robert E. Page and Mary Lou Doyle, published a ten-page pamphlet titled *A Brief History of the School of Religion, The University of Iowa*. Since ten years had passed since M. Willard Lampe's last revision of *The Story of an Idea*, it was Spalding's intention to extend Lampe's story into the past and to the present (1974). This year (1997), The University of Iowa celebrates its sesquicentennial while the School of Religion celebrates its seventieth year. It seems appropriate to update *A Brief History* by bringing the School's history to the present, assessing its strength after seventy years, and offering a litany of the School's present needs.

The founding of the School of Religion was characterized by innovation and its history by change. The academic, social and legal landscape which surrounds the School of Religion is different in 1997 than it was in 1927. It was inevitable that the contours of the School would change as well. As the School of Religion is poised to enter the twenty-first century, it appreciates the vision of its founders and is aware that only an equal vision coupled with openness to change will make it worthy of its history.

Robert D. Baird
Director and Professor

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THE SCHOOL OF RELIGION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:

The First Seventy Years

Beginnings

Seventy years ago a group of citizens in the state of Iowa engaged in a bold new educational venture: they proposed the foundation of an interfaith School of Religion that would include Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, and which would make provision for teaching about other major world religions. They further proposed that this school should be placed in a tax-supported state university, firmly believing that this could be done within the traditional understanding of the separation of church and state. This bold experiment has resulted in a religion program that has grown over its seventy years into a nationally recognized academic program of high quality.

It is impossible to say when the idea for a School of Religion at Iowa first emerged. From the founding of the University, its leaders accepted religion as an integral part of a student's life. In 1875, the trustees of what was then called the State University of Iowa made a ruling in favor of mandatory attendance at daily chapel services.

Not too surprisingly, the legality of that activity came into question. In 1898 the faculty voted to abolish morning chapel, creating instead the Religious Education Committee, which established a monthly vespers program, presenting well-known religious leaders who lectured in a worship setting. This activity continued on a formal basis until the 1950s.

Another activity of the Religious Education Committee was to coordinate all religious education activities on campus. At the turn of the century it was highly unusual for there to be any church- or synagogue-supported student-oriented religious programs on state university campuses. In response to a felt need during the first quarter of the century, denominational campus ministries, often including teaching programs in religion, were developed at state universities across the country. People

associated with the State University of Iowa played a pioneering role in this national movement.

1908 marked the first attempt by the Religious Education Committee to provide a program of coordinated academic classes in religion. At the invitation of President George E. MacLean and Professor Edwin Starbuck, religious leaders of Iowa City were invited to meet with a group of faculty on May 8, 1908, to discuss means of providing religious education on campus. At this meeting a committee was formed to develop a workable proposal. The proposal suggested that local pastors teach courses for credit. The faculty committee, composed of Professors Thomas H. Macbride, Forest Ensign, and Carl Seashore, administered this program. It was called a School of Religion for the two years of its existence. In the academic years 1909-1910 and 1910-1911, School of Religion News Bulletins note that four courses were taught each semester, with fifty students receiving University credit each year.

Five years later, minutes of the Committee on Religious Education record another attempt to found a School of Religion. In 1916 the committee presented a plan to President Macbride for the establishment of a Department of Religion at the University, but it was subsequently abandoned for the duration of World War I. In 1921, five years after the second abortive attempt, the Committee on Religious Education again initiated a process that this time culminated in the establishment of the School of Religion at The University of Iowa.

On January 18, 1921, Chairman Clarence W. Case of the Committee on Religious Education called to order an informal meeting which included religious leaders of Iowa City. The topic for discussion was how religion could take its place alongside science and be taught in a scholarly manner at the state university. After a lengthy discussion those attending indicated a consensus on two points: there was a need for religion to be taught at the State University of Iowa; and the treatment of religion should be broad enough to include at least the thought of Catholics, Protestants, and Jews. This meeting concluded in the appointment of a special committee. Rufus H. Fitzgerald, YMCA Secretary, as chairman, Professor Edwin D. Starbuck, noted pioneer scholar in the psychology of religion, and Father William P. Shannahan of St. Patrick's Church in Iowa City were designated to investigate the possibilities for a School of Religion and to develop a feasible proposal for such a School.

These three men devised a plan, presented to President Walter A. Jessup in April of 1921, for a School of Religion to be established on

"separate foundations affiliated with the University," to teach courses that would "enable students to cooperate more effectively with the ministers of their respective communions." In addition, the University would establish a Department of Religious Education which would offer "non-sectarian courses in Religion." This proposal is close to what Thomas Jefferson had originally envisioned for the University of Virginia.

In an academic review of the plan, The Dean of Liberal Arts approved the concept of a School of Religion, but rejected the concept of a Department of Religious Education. He recommended that the School of Religion be integrated more fully within the University and that the seminary character of the School be eliminated. President Jessup appointed a University committee composed of Deans George Kay, Carl Seashore, Chester Phillips, Professors Forest Ensign, M. A. Shaw, and Edwin Starbuck to work with the original committee in an attempt to arrive at a workable revision of the proposal.

The committee started immediately on its task. It began by setting down what it considered basic requirements. First, it decided that the School must be financed independently in order to avoid possible constitutional difficulties. Second, the 1909 experience had shown that the interfaith School must be fully integrated in the University curriculum and its courses conducted by specialists of equal rank with other University instructors. Having established these requirements, the committee met with Charles Foster Kent, a professor on leave from Yale University, who had fashioned a proposal for the establishment of a chain of Schools of Religion affiliated with state universities. Recognized scholars supported by philanthropists would teach courses in religion at major universities, and university professors would teach related courses. After lengthy discussion, the Kent proposal was rejected. The committee could not accept what was perceived as a Protestant bias to the Kent plan. At this time the committee established the principle that the School have representative professors from Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish backgrounds.

An address at the Conference of Church Workers in Universities, held in Chicago, provided the committee with the key to such cooperation. On January 11, 1922, Rufus Fitzgerald and two other members of the committee heard O. D. Foster, University Secretary of the Council of Church Boards of Education, deliver a paper on "Schools of Religion at State Universities." This speech later led the committee to enlist O. D. Foster as a consultant.

Based on personal experience with the military chaplaincy in World War I, Mr. Foster showed the committee how a cooperative interfaith effort could succeed. He demonstrated how the integrity of each religious tradition in cooperative effort might be ensured through the slogan he had coined: "Cooperation without compromise." After three days he left, pledging his active support for the new program.

On April 12, 1924, Dean Kay submitted the revised "Iowa Plan" to President Jessup, who in turn presented the plan to the State Board of Education. The Plan was "constituted in such a way as to secure the cooperative efforts of the religious bodies of the State and of the University in the support and control of the school." On May 22, 1924, the "Iowa Plan" was approved by the Board.

During the next year the "Iowa Plan" was discussed with religious leaders throughout the state, while O. D. Foster simultaneously developed national interest among representatives of the major faiths. This combined effort culminated in the selection of electors chosen by each of the representative religious traditions. On May 12, 1925, the electors met at the Old Capitol and with only minor modifications adopted the Iowa Plan as their constitution. From among their number they elected Dean George Kay to be President, and Father Shannahan, Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, and Judge H. C. Ring as the first executive committee for the School of Religion at the State University of Iowa. Only two obstacles remained to be overcome for full implementation of the plan: financing and selection of the proper personnel.

In the summer of 1925, Rufus Fitzgerald developed a request for a grant of \$500,000 from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. It was proposed that Rockefeller finance half the construction of the Union where students could meet, endow the School of Religion so that students would receive high quality religious instruction, and fund the YMCA to act as an experimental lab in spiritual health. The request was rejected.

After the rejection O. D. Foster was again asked to help. Having worked with Rockefeller interests before, Mr. Foster realized that the proposal was far too comprehensive. Mr. Rockefeller would not support a proposal until he was assured that there was local support for the program among the institutionalized religious groups. At this point Mr. Foster wrote to Rockefeller requesting that the School of Religion be considered separately. He then solicited and received letters of support from national religious leaders of all three faiths. On July 9, 1926, President Jessup received a letter from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., stating that the School of

Religion had been granted \$35,000 to cover administrative expenses for the first three years.

Early Years

On November 29, 1926, the executive committee met and appointed President Jessup and Deans Kay and Seashore to search for a Director of the School. Because of his academic, organizational, and ecumenical background, everyone's immediate choice was O. D. Foster. He declined, but recommended to the committee his friend Dr. Matthew Willard Lampe, University Secretary, Presbyterian Board of Education. Lampe came with a Ph.D. in Semitics from the University of Pennsylvania. At the second meeting of the Board of Trustees on March 14, 1927, M. Willard Lampe was appointed the first Director of the School of Religion, a position he held until his retirement in 1953.

The work of the trustees in raising money that first year was crucial. Father Shannahan, along with O. D. Foster who communicated his enthusiasm for the School with Bishop Henry P. Rohlman, who subsequently released Professor Henry G. Takkenberg from his appointment at St. Ambrose College, Davenport, to become the Catholic professor as well as chaplain to Catholic students at the State University of Iowa. Mr. Foster, Dean Kay, Judge Ring, and Dr. Lampe wove together a combination of denominational, congregational, and individual contributions known as the Protestant fund, and Professor Charles A. Hawley was hired.

With the assistance of E. P. Adler of Davenport, Rabbi Mannheimer raised money for the Jewish fund which continued for the first twenty years of the School. These two men spent countless hours giving speeches and soliciting contributions from their audiences. Maurice H. Farbridge was appointed the first Jewish professor and adviser to Jewish students on campus.

On August 27, 1927, the University announced the new School of Religion to the state in a University Bulletin:

The School of Religion represents a venture into new territory, sponsored by many University and Religious leaders who have high hopes of its success. It is an unusual recognition of the important place which the study and practice of religion must hold in the adequate system of Education.

The School of Religion's first offering of courses included Old Testament, Prophets, Hebrew, the Life and Teaching of Jesus, Christian Ethics, Growth of Christian Religion, and Comparative Religions. That year the School initiated the practice of listing courses in religion offered by other departments, thereby acknowledging the interdisciplinary nature of the study of religion.

During the early years of the School, M. Willard Lampe and the faculty actualized many of the dreams of the founders. Together they provided a curriculum of high academic quality that was elected by nearly 200 students each of the first three years. Also, recognizing the limited number of students reached academically, the School began to take a more active interest in extracurricular activities.

In 1929 the trustees heard a report from President Jessup's special committee "for study of the moral, religious, and spiritual needs of the University." This committee had proposed that there be some permanent organization, representing all the communities' religious interests, to coordinate the various religious activities on campus. It was felt by the committee that the School of Religion was best suited to provide the coordinating service. When the trustees voted to accept this proposal, they reaffirmed their belief that the School of Religion was not only to provide courses on religion but that it must also be involved in "laying a foundation for religious education," thereby reaching a large number of students who did not avail themselves of the courses.

With another Rockefeller grant, Harry H. Morgan was appointed in 1930 to work with campus religious workers as Administrative Director of the Commission on Religious Activities, "to provide the largest measure of fellowship, unity, and understanding between workers without compromising in any way the special work for which each is responsible."

The first three experimental years were a moderate success for the fledgling School of Religion. Students became more interested in the School, and the three major faiths had worked together not only in the academic area but also in the area of extracurricular activities.

In the fall of 1933 M. Willard Lampe and Herbert Martin, chairman of the Department of Philosophy, developed and jointly taught a freshman course in Religion and Ethics. In 1934, at the urging of the University faculty, Professor Morgan instituted a popular class in marriage that drew upon the faculty of several departments.

In June, 1935, Miss Ortha Lane became possibly the first person in the United States to receive a Ph.D. in religion from a tax supported university. This also constituted a large step in the direction of equal opportunity.

World War II brought about significant changes that would have long-lasting effects on the School. In 1941 Dr. Marcus Bach, a religious dramatist, was hired to replace Harry H. Morgan as Administrative Director of the Commission on Religious Activities. His major innovation was the use of the University broadcasting facilities. By broadcasting first a morning chapel service and then various lectures, Bach creatively presented the belief and culture of many religious groups to a large audience.

By 1941 the School registered 814 students, a fourfold growth from the first year's enrollment. During the postwar years the School experienced even further growth with student enrollments reaching 2,407. To meet the need for expansion, the Board of Trustees appointed a special committee to develop a policy on faculty appointments. After a year of study, the committee proposed a plan aimed at ensuring balance in the School's curriculum and avoiding special interests. They began by welcoming the idea that any group could finance an additional professorship for the School, within the categories of Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish, as long as the individual held the appropriate academic credentials and his or her areas of competence contributed to a balanced curriculum. Besides addressing the issue of chaired professors, the committee established procedures for guest lecturers and visiting faculty.

In 1944 the College of Liberal Arts began a program of "core courses," whereby a student met basic requirements by taking courses covering four different areas. "Introduction to Religion," later renamed "Religion in Human Culture," was accepted by the College of Liberal Arts as one of the core options in the area of "historical-cultural studies."

Thanks to additional contributions the School supplemented its program with visiting professors, choosing those who went beyond the traditions of white America. The black scholar, Howard Thurman, taught in 1947-48 before going on to become one of Martin Luther King's mentors at Boston. In the fall of 1948 the School welcomed as a visiting professor the Chinese scholar T. Z. Koo. The success of Koo and his special contributions prompted Director Lampe to work toward the establishment of what is now the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature in the University.

On May 19, 1952, the School of Religion celebrated its 25th anniversary. The occasion was marked by the publication of a booklet of prayers by M. Willard Lampe and a history of the School, *Of Faith and Learning*, by Marcus Bach. This celebration was tempered by the coming retirement of M. Willard Lampe and the need to find a qualified replacement. On January 1, 1954, Robert S. Michaelsen of Yale University, who had earlier served as a professor at the School from 1947-51, assumed the Directorship.

Faculty Expansion

Under the guidance of Michaelsen, the School experienced significant expansion. In the spring of 1953, representatives of a Lutheran Synod approached Dr. Lampe "about the possibility of supporting a teacher on the staff." The discussions culminated in a formal offer to support a professor of Protestant theology. At the 1954 meeting of the trustees, Dr. George W. Forell, a Luther scholar, was appointed Assistant Professor. That same trustees' meeting noted that the Director of the School had been made *ex officio* a voting member of the University Committee on Lectures. That year the School received its first grant from the Danforth Foundation to provide conferences and lectures in religion.

During his first year as Director, Michaelsen entered into discussions with both the Catholic and Jewish sponsoring bodies aimed at releasing the respective professors from their direct responsibilities for campus religious programs. He wanted the School to be seen as first and foremost an academic division of the University.

The growing enrollment in the School placed increased pressure on the limited faculty to provide adequate instruction in the undergraduate core course, a situation somewhat alleviated in 1956 when the College of Liberal Arts granted a graduate teaching assistantship to the School of Religion, thus providing assistance to faculty in teaching the core course which was attracting increasingly more students.

In 1958 University President Virgil Hancher requested an evaluation of the School's graduate program from Director Michaelsen. Although the Articles of Incorporation had placed equal emphasis on graduate and undergraduate programs, Michaelsen informed President Hancher that the necessary expansion of the graduate program required additional faculty. In

the spring of 1958, Michaelsen, in a follow-up report, advised the addition of a qualified scholar in either Biblical studies or history of theology.

Within a year of Michaelsen's report, progress had been made toward implementing these recommendations. In the spring of 1960, the School received a \$40,000 seed grant from the Danforth Foundation to support a professor in Biblical studies for three years, and for visiting lecturers who would be on campus for one semester each year. In 1961, David Stanley, S.J., was appointed the Danforth Professor in New Testament Studies; lecturers for the three years were Abraham Heschel, William Foxwell Albright, Nicholas Zernov, and Sidney Mead.

As the termination of the Danforth Foundation grant approached, forces again converged to bring about another increase in the faculty of the School. The Board of Trustees established a special committee to study the legal implications of the Supreme Court's ruling in the Schempp case pertaining to prayer and Bible study in public schools. They noted that Justice Clarke wrote in the majority opinion: "It might be said that one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of civilization."

Professor Russell Weintraub of the College of Law informed the special committee that as a result of the Schempp case, "the School of Religion might be on sounder ground legally if its basic teaching program were supported from regular University funds." Simultaneously, discussions were initiated with the Lutheran Welfare Society on the feasibility of founding a clinical pastoral education program at University Hospitals, and with the History Department on the possibility of a joint appointment in religion in American history.

As a result, Visiting Professor Sidney Mead was appointed as professor of religion in American history with a joint appointment in the School of Religion and the Department of History. In the fall of 1964, David Belgum was appointed Associate Professor in the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Medicine to set up a program in clinical pastoral education. Also in 1964, Charles Carlston was appointed in the area of New Testament.

In 1965 the School helped to establish the Association of Theological Faculties in Iowa, an ecumenical effort to improve all the graduate programs in the state. The School of Religion, the Theological Seminary at the University of Dubuque, Aquinas Institute, and Wartburg Theological Seminary agreed to make the resources of each institution more

available to the students and faculty of the other schools. In that same year Dr. James F. McCue was appointed in the area of Catholic theology.

Also in 1965, Robert Michaelsen resigned as Director to head the developing Department of Religion at the Santa Barbara campus of the University of California. As Director of the School of Religion, Dr. Michaelsen had built a nationally recognized graduate program, reduced the extracurricular demands upon the faculty, and revised the basic financial structure of the School.

During this period when the School of Religion was shedding its mission of religious education in order to emerge as an academic unit within the College of Liberal Arts, parallel developments were taking place in the professional organization in which most college and university professors of religion held membership. The majority of college professors of religion taught in private church-related colleges within departments whose curriculum had traditionally centered on the Bible. That national organization, founded in 1909, was called "The Association of Biblical Instructors in American Colleges" a name that was changed in 1922 to "The National Association of Biblical Instructors"(NABI). That organization sponsored the publication of a journal titled *The Journal of Bible and Religion* which began in 1933. The April, 1964 issue of this journal published a two-page report of the self-study committee of NABI. It observed that the membership of NABI and the spread of interest indicated by both regional and national conferences was much more diverse than what was envisaged by the original organization. It suggested a change in name, function, and form to accommodate what had already taken place over the previous 25 years. The new name of the professional organization would be "The American Academy of Religion." The intention was to include all of North America. Although the membership was international and membership from outside North America would continue to be encouraged, the term "international" seemed presumptuous at the time.

One of the original four goals of NABI had been "to increase the spirit of fellowship among themselves [instructors] and a practical development of the religious life of their students." The newly named organization chose the name "academy" because it intended to convey "a society of learned men [sic] united to advance art or science." This change in emphasis mirrored the change that was taking place in The University of Iowa School of Religion. Faculty were no longer defined as "religious educators" or "molders of character" but as "scholars and teachers." In March, 1967, when the first number of volume XXXV of the Academy's

journal was published, its title became *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.

George W. Forell was appointed the third Director of the School in 1965. Under his Directorship faculty additions continued and the proportion of direct University funding continued to increase. During his first year as Director, the faculty was expanded in the area of Asian religions. Although courses in the religions of the East had always been a part of the curriculum, the appointment of Robert D. Baird brought to the School the first specialist in this discipline. His specialty was modern Indian religions and he was given responsibility for structuring the program in the History of Asian Religions that is presently in place.

During the following years, new appointments were made almost annually. Robert P. Scharleman, a specialist in 19th and 20th century religious thought was added in 1966. J. Kenneth Kuntz was appointed assistant professor of Hebrew Bible in 1967; Wang Pachow, an internationally recognized Buddhist scholar, was appointed in the area of East Asian religions in 1968. That same year witnessed the addition of Helen T. Goldstein in Judaic Studies, the School's first female faculty member, and Robert Stenger in Catholic theology and ethics. When Charles Carlston left to accept a professorship in New Testament at Andover Newton Theological School in 1969, George W.E. Nickelsburg was appointed as assistant professor of New Testament and early Judaism. In 1970, Frederick Bargebuhr, who had been professor of Jewish studies since 1952 retired and was replaced by the appointment of Jay Holstein as assistant professor of Jewish studies. In the same year George Paterson was appointed as assistant professor in the areas of psychology of religion and religion and personality. He held a joint appointment in the College of Medicine and Department of Pastoral Services at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. Professor Robert Welch, who had taught Catholic thought since 1949 retired in 1971. The following year John P. Boyle was appointed as assistant professor of contemporary Catholic theology and biomedical ethics.

The history of the School of Religion and *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion* were to converge in yet another way. Starting with the December 1977 issue, Robert P. Scharleman of the School of Religion became Book Review Editor of that journal. He continued in that capacity until March, 1980 when he was named Editor of the Journal. At that time the editorial offices were moved to The University of Iowa and Robert D. Baird was named Book Review Editor. That arrangement continued through the December, 1984 issue when new editors were appointed and the editorial office moved to the University of Rochester.

In 1971 James C. Spalding, faculty member since 1956, was appointed Director of the School. The shape of the faculty continued to change. With the retirement of Sidney Mead in 1973, T. Dwight Bozeman was appointed as an assistant professor of religion in American history. And in 1975 the first appointment in Sanskrit and early Indian religious literature was made when Sheldon Pollock was named assistant professor with a joint appointment in the School of Religion and the Department of Asian Languages and Literature.

As the University increased its financial commitments to the School, the need for major revisions in the legal structure of the School became apparent. The Board of Trustees had been set up to provide the legal base for all financial and policy decisions. There was a duplication of duties between the trustees of the School and the regents of the University, since both approved all appointments and salary adjustments. To eliminate this problem the trustees proposed that a Board of Fellows be set up to replace the trustees, in order "to encourage, support, and interpret the work of the School of Religion at the State University of Iowa, and to maintain liaison between the School of Religion and the religious community of Iowa and the commonwealth generally." The new corporation officially began on November 2, 1971, the day after the old corporation was dissolved. Today the Board of Fellows continues to advise the School and to maintain a liaison between the University and the larger community.

Diminishing Resources

In the summer of 1979 Dr. James C. Spalding completed two terms as Director of the School of Religion and Dean Howard Laster of the College of Liberal Arts announced the appointment of Associate Professor John P. Boyle as the new Director.

Boyle was appointed at a time when inflation had diminished the resources of the School of Religion. Inflation was followed by a recession that caused serious problems not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The University and other agencies of the state were required by order of the governor several times to revert funds appropriated by the legislature. To meet pressing needs, the University undertook reallocation of funds in its budget. Faculty salaries were also frozen.

The School had problems of its own with the traditional external sources of its funding for faculty salaries. To meet the need for dependable support, the School sought the help of the Jewish community in Iowa to establish an endowment for the support of the professorship in Jewish studies. Through the generosity of many people, the new president of the University, James O. Freedman, was able to announce in 1983 that more than a half-million dollars had been raised and a named chair, The J. J. Mallon Chair of Jewish Studies, had been created. Jay Holstein was appointed to the new professorship. The gifts also provided for a stipend to fund a lectureship honoring Mrs. Sonia Sands, longtime housemother for the Jewish fraternity on campus as well as the Chanen Fund to purchase library books in Judaism.

When Robert P. Scharlemann submitted his resignation to accept a position as Commonwealth Professor of Religion at the University of Virginia, David E. Klemm, a graduate of the School's doctoral program and a former student of Scharlemann, was appointed to succeed him at the rank of assistant professor.

A collegiate review of the School and its programs was undertaken during the 1981-1982 academic year. The review committee was chaired by John Nothnagle of the Department of French and Italian. The self-study prepared for the committee by the School noted an enrollment in the previous year of some 2300 students in general education courses for undergraduates staffed by the School.

As the decade progressed, the School was informed of the retirement plans of several of its senior professors. George W. Forell entered on a "phased retirement" program. He taught half-time for five years before retiring completely. David Belgum retired in 1987 and Wang Pachow in 1988. The retirements of course meant that discussions with the College of Liberal Arts and other departments within the College had to take place to formulate requests for replacement positions. Some appointments were made that did not prove lasting as the School lost two recent appointees to the University of Chicago. Forell was succeeded in the field of ethics by William Schweiker, a recent graduate of The University of Chicago. A search was also conducted for an instructor in Reformation Christianity and Ralph Keen was appointed assistant professor.

Pachow was not replaced immediately, leaving a several-year gap in the teaching of Chinese religions. The School made a more successful effort to fill another gap in its offerings, religion in Japan. An application for a faculty expansion grant was made to the Japan Foundation, and the

application was approved. The Foundation paid the cost of the appointment for three years, after which the University assumed financial responsibility. Searches were conducted, and outstanding appointments were made, though two were of short duration.

With the encouragement of the Islamic community in Cedar Rapids, a number of approaches were made in the 1980s to possible funding sources for support for an instructor in Islamics. Though the School was able to invite several visitors as lecturers and others as visitors for a semester, the funds for a full-time appointment were not found.

In 1989 Sheldon Pollock resigned his joint appointment in the School of Religion and the Department of Asian Languages and Literature to accept an appointment in Sanskrit Literature at the University of Chicago. After serving for two years as a visiting professor, Frederick M. Smith was appointed assistant professor of Sanskrit.

When George W.E. Nickelsburg, the School's professor of New Testament and early Judaism assumed the directorship on January 1, 1990, he had in hand a five-year strategic plan adopted by the faculty a month earlier. It promised to be a guide for carefully considered change. But the period of financial constriction continued. Between 1990 and 1992, faculty in the area of Asian Religions appeared and disappeared like figures on a revolving stage. The Asian religions faculty would not be stabilized until 1996. By that time seven regular faculty in Asian religions would occupy four positions in eight years. Severe economic restraints in the State and University retrenchment and reallocation of resources resulted in five- and three-year vacancies in the positions in Chinese and Japanese religions. The program in Asian religions was decimated, as graduate students left for other institutions, and a moratorium was placed on admissions. The balance of the School's graduate program and its newly diversified undergraduate curriculum was also affected. As these positions were finally filled, however, the School took important steps toward gender balance within the School's faculty. Janine Anderson Sawada joined the faculty as assistant professor of Japanese religions in 1994.

The study of Ethics was significantly enhanced in the faculty changes of the early 1990s. Diana Cates, appointed in 1990, was the School's first faculty member whose academic training was specifically in this field. Robert Weir, an expert in biomedical ethics, who was appointed in 1991 to head a new ethics program in the College of Medicine, was given a joint appointment in Religion.

An important function of strategic planning was a restructuring of the undergraduate major in 1991. The faculty had long configured and reconfigured the Ph.D. program but had paid less attention to the conceptualization of the undergraduate program. With this restructured program for undergraduate majors in religion and renewed attention to undergraduate teaching, the number of majors rose from 37 in 1990-91 to almost one hundred in 1996-97. The School's commitment to undergraduate education had been evident in the extraordinarily high enrollments in its General Education Courses and the fact that all of the School's faculty were engaged in undergraduate teaching. A new "Teaching Colloquium" was required of all graduate students who planned on serving as teaching assistants in the large general education courses.

The graduate program has also been under review. The program for the M.A. degree had been overshadowed by the Ph.D. program, but was revised in 1995. The Ph.D. program is presently (1997) under review. A new feature in the graduate program was the institution of a set of translation courses in Latin and German, pioneered by Gertrud G. Champe, Director of the University's Translation Laboratory and funded by a three-year \$187,000 grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Secondary Education of the U.S. Department of Education.

The place of endowed chairs as a means of maintaining and increasing faculty strength came to the fore in the 1980's and 1990s. The J.J. Mallon Chair of Jewish Studies was established in 1983. That was an effort to replace funding that was about to disappear. Two other campaigns to endow a Chair in Catholic Studies and a Chair in Reformation Studies were initiated in 1990 and 1993 respectively. At the insistence of Dean Gerhard Loewenberg, these endowments were conceived not to replace disappearing external funds, but as additional faculty lines. In another area, the School received a bequest of \$130,000 by Alice Marguerite Blough. This secured funding for the School's publication, *Perspectives on Religion*, student awards, and faculty development.

Since its founding, the School has enjoyed a special relationship with the public, marked by generous funding and personified in the Board of Fellows. Programs directed to the public were given a new emphasis in the 1990s, both at the annual Adler Luncheon and in other venues. Some of the topics of recent public programs have been: Verdi's *Requiem*; Religion in the Public Arena; Assisted Suicide; Capital Punishment; and Religion and Healing.

In August 1995, Dean Judith P. Aikin appointed Robert D. Baird as the School's seventh director. He was the first director to be a graduate of the School and the first to be a scholar of Asian Religions. In 1995 the faculty was authorized to search for a faculty member in Chinese religions. When Wendi Adamek, a Stanford graduate, joined the faculty in the academic year 1996-1997, the faculty in Asian religions was finally at full strength.

The physical environment in which the School's teaching and research takes place had long been neglected. Gilmore Hall was substantially renovated in 1995-96 and some of its features as the original Law School were restored. In addition to improving the handicapped accessibility of the building, Gilmore Hall was rewired to enable faculty access to the Internet. Through the efforts of George Nickelsburg and Alan Widiss, a Professor of Law and President of the Board of Fellows, President Hunter Rawlings allocated the \$65,000 balance in a nineteenth century fund, gathered for the construction of a campus chapel, to support capital improvements on the third and fourth floors. These floors were repainted, carpeted, and fitted with track-lighting, so that the School could exhibit art about the religious traditions covered by its teaching and research. The main lecture room in the building was named in honor of M. Willard Lampe, the School's founding director.

The Internet was only an outlet away. But most of the faculty had outmoded computers that made such access impossible. After the University's office of Information Technology Services conducted a survey of the School's computer needs, the College supplied ten new IBM computers. At the start of the 1996-1997 academic year all faculty had access to Internet and e-mail which improved communication both within the School and University and beyond our walls.

From "Unique Experiment" to "Complete Membership"

As the School of Religion reaches its seventieth year, it is appropriate to assess its roots, its growth, and its present status. In 1989 the University of Iowa Strategic Planning Committee submitted a strategic plan for the University titled *Achieving Distinction*. To what extent has the School of Religion achieved distinction? Indeed, what might it mean to have achieved distinction?

The history of the School of Religion has moved from an original faculty of four to twelve full-time equivalents in the fall of 1997. This movement and the nature of faculty appointments have been propelled sometimes by such outside forces as world affairs, the strength and weakness of the economy, the changing shape of the academic study of religion within the academy and by the shape of the society in which the faculty teaches and conducts its research. The School has also been moved by incentives within the University, by external review procedures as well as by the School's self-understanding of its mission. While this faculty growth is significant, any enthusiasm must be tempered by the realization that this "growth" took place over a seventy-year history as well as by the fact that in recent years the faculty and administration of the School have expended an increasing amount of time and energy just to maintain the status quo. The School has experienced no measurable growth since 1989. Among the School's six peer institutions, it is second to last in faculty mass. In 1927 The School of Religion at The University of Iowa was the only religion program within a state university to offer a Ph.D. in religion. Today the number is six and growing.

Whereas the School's faculty has not grown numerically, it has made increasingly important contributions to the College of Liberal Arts and the University as a whole. It presently contributes significantly to the general education of thousands of undergraduate students. Not only has the number of majors grown, but there is reason to assume this growth is not finished. With 100 present majors in religion, it has become necessary to offer the Senior Seminar twice each academic year. This, along with other teaching innovations, has placed some strain on a small faculty. This was particularly true when faculty lines went unfilled. The School contributes several large lecture courses that fulfill general education requirements. Although general education requirements have been reduced, religion enrollments continue to hold firm. Jay Holstein's courses Judeo-Christian Tradition, Quest for Human Destiny, and Literature and Philosophic Thought: The Holocaust, along with David Klemm's Religion and Society and Robert Baird's Living Religions of the East combine to enroll thousands of students each year.

The School has a history of cooperation with other departments within the University. Many of the School's courses are jointly listed in the departments of English, History, Anthropology and Asian Languages and Literature. And courses originating in those departments are cross-listed with the School. The faculty has a reputation for being accessible to students outside of formal classroom teaching. This availability is perhaps another reason for the growth in the number of religion majors.

In other ways faculty have contributed to the University's general mission. David Klemm is serving his second term as Director of the University's Honors Program. James McCue has served for twelve years as Chair of the Global Studies Program and Frederick Smith has chaired the South Asian Studies Program. Before their retirements, David Belgum and George Paterson provided leadership for clinical programs in the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

Many of the School's faculty have achieved a national and even international reputation for their scholarship. Faculty have recently been invited to present lectures in England, Scotland, Germany, Israel, Canada, South Africa, India, and Japan. The faculty routinely travel to these countries for their research. When this recognition is achieved, it is shared by The University of Iowa as well. The faculty has an enviable record in its publication of scholarly articles in juried journals, and the publication of books and monographs by academic presses of repute. They are also frequent recipients of fellowships achieved through national competition.

The School's students, both undergraduate and graduate, have consistently received prestigious awards. These range from internal awards granted by the faculty to university-wide awards to awards gained through national competition. The School has a substantial number of honors students and Undergraduate Scholar Assistants (reserved for the top 1% of the student body). Graduate students have competed successfully for University granted dissertation year fellowships and for Fulbright fellowships and American Association of Indian Studies fellowships. The School's many graduates are working in a variety of environments in thirty-nine states and several foreign countries. The faculty hold their students in high regard and take pride in the collegial way faculty and students work together. Students have representation on all faculty committees and their perspectives are truly valued.

The School also values the strong support and advice given by its Board of Fellows. This Board meets each May at the time of the annual Adler Luncheon to conduct its business and receive the Director's annual report. It is a source of counsel and support without which the School could not have come so far.

A Glance into the Future

Excellence is not so much a goal or an achievement as it is a frame of mind. Whatever goals one has, at the point at which they are achieved

they cease to be the measure of excellence. Teaching and research in religion are constantly changing. This change is imposed from without as well as impelled from within. Excellence is the mentality that is never at rest, never complacent, that always struggles for greater achievement. It is always looking for a better way to do what one is presently doing. What, then, does the School of Religion need at the present moment in order to conduct its teaching and research at an even higher level?

The mentality of excellence demands that the School of Religion increase its faculty mass. If this can be achieved through University-funded lines, that is fine. Failing that, the School must work to increase its number of endowed chairs. The J.J. Mallon Chair of Jewish Studies is fully functional. The Chair of Catholic Studies presently stands at \$471,000 in gifts and pledges and awaits a major naming gift to bring it to the level at which it can fulfill its promise of an addition line in Catholic thought. At the 1996 annual Adler Luncheon a major naming gift of \$500,000 was announced for the Reformation Studies Chair. That gift was made by Ann Krumm in honor of her husband. The chair is designated as the Daniel J. Krumm Family Chair in Reformation Studies. Its endowment now stands at over \$900,000 and with a slight nudge, the School will be in a position to add a faculty member in the area of Reformation Christianity, its sources and influence.

These internally-funded appointments or endowed chairs must, however, move beyond our commitment to study the Western religious traditions which encompassed the original vision of the School's founders. The faculty has long been aware of a major gap in its inability to provide a reasonable coverage of Islamic religion. Unable to add a full line in Islam, the School has offered a series of courses by visiting faculty whenever it has had the funds to do so. This patchwork continues into the present. However, to be a leading player among major universities in the 21st century, the School must find some way of funding an Islamic position. In 1994 efforts were made to initiate an endowment for a visiting professorship in Islamics. Several unsuccessful attempts were made to find support for this endowment. These must be resurrected and new ideas tried. The School cannot claim to embody a mentality of excellence without a strong effort in this direction.

There are other areas in which endowments might be attempted. The Asian religions component of our program would be significantly strengthened with the addition of a faculty member in Buddhist studies. The School has never attempted to cover all religions. In Asia, our present competence covers India, China, and Japan. Since the Buddhist tradition is

the one world religion that is either historically or presently in these countries, a faculty line in that area would serve as a bridge connecting our present faculty.

The University's Opportunity at Iowa program has the potential to benefit the School. The School has interests in adding someone in African-American religions and in Native American religions as well. Since there is no faculty line that could be sacrificed for this purpose without significantly weakening existing programs, this will have to be filled either through the Opportunity at Iowa program or through an endowment in support of these areas of study.

With the retirements of David Belgum and George Paterson the role of the School in pastoral clinical education came to an end. But with the appointment of Robert Weir in the College of Medicine as a joint appointment in bio-medical ethics, a new area of cooperation has been brought to the fore. Biomedical ethics is a rapidly growing area of academic study. The College of Medicine has taken steps to address such issues and the School of Religion would miss an important opportunity if it did not forge some strong ties with the College of Medicine in this area.

In recent years there has developed a pattern of allowing a number of years to lapse between a faculty member's resignation or retirement and securing permission from the College of Liberal Arts to search for a replacement. It should be obvious that a major barrier to the implementation of a mentality of excellence is the less than timely filling of such faculty lines. In the next couple of years the School will experience further retirements. For the sake of the vitality of the School, such faculty positions must be filled in a timely manner.

As the School strives to build faculty strength, it must also be able to support that faculty in its efforts to distinguish itself in both teaching and research. This entails continued updating of equipment, funds for travel to professional conferences, and support for teaching and research. Faculty members must strive not only to impress administrators within The University of Iowa, but also to play a role in research and leadership on the national and international levels that is expected of a group of scholars who have a mentality of excellence.

The School of Religion resides in the College of Liberal Arts, the largest college at The University of Iowa. This means that its strength in scholarship can not excuse it from teaching its students with the same mentality of excellence. Many of the attitudes presently exhibited must

continue. The faculty and administration of the School must remain user-friendly to students, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The faculty is engaged in a perpetual cycle of changing and revising the School's undergraduate and graduate programs. That is part of the mentality of excellence. However good something is, it can be made better! If members of the School of Religion faculty remain strong and their students surpass them, they will indeed know that they are on the right path.

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