

The Most Significant Accomplishments at/for Holy Cross

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1992: Transforming Asian Studies

Brought Asian Studies senior scholar Bardwell Smith, Carleton College, to campus for a consultation with Asian Studies faculty and Dean/President of the College. His recommendation led to institutional change allowing the program to be independent from "International Studies" and flourish.

1995: Daruma-San Exhibition

Marking the first course in Zen Buddhism at Holy Cross, I curated an exhibition, "Many Forms of Daruma" at the Cantor Gallery, focused on the vast array of popular objects depicting this Zen figure in modern Japanese culture. Centered on in the extraordinary collection of Professor Conrad and Lore Schirokauer. I was awarded funding to collect additional objects and film rituals of renewing these amulets in central Japan. This documentary was shown along with lectures given by the donors; I also wrote a modest catalog documenting the folk traditions. *[Reviewed in Worcester Telegram and Boston Globe]*

1996-1997:

Chair, "Language Requirement Review Committee:" Changed Language Requirement

Sentiment on campus shared by both Modern Language faculty and students had reached a critical point of dissatisfaction with the language courses required for graduation: passing a second semester intermediate level course in a focal language. Having been voted on to the Curriculum Committee in fall 1996, I volunteered to chair a committee that Dean Ainlay requested to review the study of languages at the college, and make recommendations to, if necessary, change the requirement. My committee held 18 meetings: with members of the Modern Languages Department, with students who were majors and non-majors, the Registrar; we collected information on language requirements at comparison colleges. Committee members reached consensus and formulated the 2 semester language course requirement, explained the need for change and the logic for the new graduation rule at the Faculty Assembly. We took one year, not the expected two years, to get the proposal to the faculty and make this important change. Almost thirty years later, it is still in place and works well.

1997-2000:

Led College in Joining the ISLE Study Abroad Consortium, sending 37 students.

Led process that enabled Holy Cross to join the ISLE Consortium for Study Abroad in Sri Lanka (Bowdoin, Bates, Colby, Swarthmore, Carleton, Grinnell). Recruited a trial student attendee and went to inspect the program in Fall, 1997; mobilized Asian Studies faculty to support college membership application (1999); convinced SA director Maurice Geracht to make first exception to two-semester requirement for Study Abroad programs. Secured official consortium acceptance (2000). As ISLE Faculty Board representative, I attended annual board meeting, hosting it at HC 4 times. Accompanied

SA director Geracht (and successors Lincicome and Smith) to visit program while in session. Recruited three faculty members to direct the program. Most significantly, successfully recruited thirty-seven students to attend the program, prepped them on logistical elements, took them to dinner before leaving, and directed their academic preparation. At least a dozen program attendees were successful in post-graduate fellowship applications. One of my great pleasures in academia has been to see our students come to be regarded as fine “citizens of the program” and return transformed by the study abroad experience.

1999-2010:

Campus Japanese Garden Initiative

On the model of Wesleyan, Smith, and Carleton College, I began a campaign to have built a Holy Cross Japanese Garden (1999). With administrative support to pursue a preliminary exploration of this, I recruited a faculty/staff steering committee from seven departments (Biology, Visual Arts, Philosophy, History, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Modern Languages, and the head librarian) that began meeting regularly to research other campus gardens and discuss how a campus garden would contribute to the Holy Cross mission. We applied for and received an institutional NEH Focus Grant (\$28,000) that funded a year-long lecture series that brought scholars from the United States and abroad to give talks attended by HC faculty and students: “Cultural Backgrounds of the Japanese Garden.” The Holy Cross administration approved having a Japanese garden architect, the internationally-known Marc Keane, submit a design and location proposal. The Steering Committee sought support for the campus garden from the college’s class Deans, Director of Counseling, Physical Plant. Working with the Development Office, the college architect set the cost of this garden, its maintenance, and replacement budget as 3.4 million dollars. In 2003, I joined Keane to present a detailed proposal to the college trustees, who approved of the garden initiative, although only if funded by one or more donors. After briefing the Development staff on the project, I worked with the Development director Paul Scheff, and his successors, to identify and approach potential donors, especially Japanese graduates and organizations. With students from my “Japanese Gardens Seminar”, we researched the Jesuit connection with Japan, tea ceremony, and gardens, and I published an article on the subject. In 2010, I established close personal ties (and invited for seminar talks) Mr. Shin Abe, founder of Zen Associates, in Woburn, MA, one of the largest global builders of Japanese gardens. He indicated a readiness to build the campus garden at cost, should we find a donor. To date, no donor has been found, nor has a college leader shown the imagination to make the campus Japanese garden, a symbol of early Jesuit engagement with Asia and the college’s commitment to global liberal arts education, a reality.

2002:

Chair, “Intellectual Maturity Committee”

As one part of Dean Stephen Ainlay’s major initiative to evaluate the Holy Cross education and review/reform its curriculum, I was appointed as Chair to lead an effort to examine a broadly-defined consideration of “Holy Cross culture.” We explored a

broad variety of issues that bear on defining what makes students succeed in their academic undergraduate experience, and future life. Our research identified recent research and a long slate of innovative liberal arts college programs that were considered for adoption or serious improvement at the college. In our final report, we recommended a menu of new possibilities as well as changes to existing programs: most prominent were calls for [i] a second-year student orientation; [ii] a universal first-year student seminar (we recommended a one-semester course, predicting that a 2-semester program would adversely affect department course offerings); [iii] reforming student advising and standardizing faculty training in advising; [iv] expanding student participation in study abroad (the most transformative of all college experiences); [v] expanding student research in humanities. Appointed to serve the following year on an implementation committee, I oversaw the work necessary to follow through on our recommendations. I look back on this work as the most extraordinarily successful service to Holy Cross, when the administration listened more than ever to faculty: the college added Montserrat, advising training/reforms, student research opportunities, increased study away in the college's culture.

1997-1998; 2012:

Fulbright Senior Research Fellow

1997-1998 Successful research fellowship application undertaken for 18 months of research in Nepal and the South Asian region for the translation of a book-length poem on the Buddha's life, *Sugata Saurabha*; supplemented by grant from the Council of Overseas Research Centers to survey Buddhist merchant cultures in ancient India. 2012: Research as a South Asian Region Senior Scholar in Nepal to follow up studies on change among the Buddhist merchants of Kathmandu that was begun as my Ph.D. research in 1978-1982, as well as investigate the most popular Buddhist narratives domesticated in local culture. The same theme of popular narratives in local cultures was also studied in Sri Lanka for the other half of the research period.

2011:

Guggenheim Fellow

Proposal for a pan-Asian study of the media of children's enculturation in Buddhist teachings. Focus on traditional and modern cultural expressions, especially narratives and art, as found in formal and informal media. This competition is successful for only 8% of applicants. One of three Guggenheim recipients in the history of Holy Cross, with special recognition from Fr. John Brooks and the Faculty Assembly.

2002, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2015, 2022:

Director of Summer NEH Summer Institutes on Campus

With Professor Leonard van der Kuip of Harvard, I directed seven of these summer programs at Holy Cross, in grants to the college totaling \$1.3 million. The first three and 2015 were offered to K-12 Teachers as "Cultures, Arts, and Religions of the Himalayan Region"; the others were for College and University Faculty and focused more narrowly on Himalayan religious traditions and ritual arts. For the former, we pioneered

instruction focused on adding the region's case studies to their courses, and required teachers designing "Curriculum Implementation Plans" that they could use immediately in their classrooms. We posted these on every Institute web site and trained those attending in web page design; they still remain K-12 Teaching resources. Our Institute design was so successful that NEH adopted our program standards in later programs. Our institutes for higher education faculty also created an online resource center that has helped define and develop Himalayan studies as an academic field.

Graduation, 2017:

Nomination of Roshi Robert Kennedy, S.J. for an Honorary Degree

Having had this extraordinary Jesuit come to campus to lead twelve Zen meditation programs at Holy Cross since 1996, and due to his profoundly influential witness to the value of inter-religious dialog and experience in contemporary life, the college leadership agreed to grant him an honorary degree during graduation. A campus evening program dedicated to celebrating Kennedy's life and work was a wonderful gathering, as was his place at graduation; this was also an affirmation of my own work as a faculty member whose role has been to demonstrate how "understanding others and other religions" is central to the Holy Cross mission.

1992-Present

Major Speaker Programs Organized

- Bardwell Smith, Carleton College: "The Global Liberal Arts Education"
Conrad Schirokauer, Columbia University, "The Neo-Confucian Tradition and Zen"
Jennifer Anderson, Stanford University, "Tea Ritual and Tea Gardens"
Thomas Kelly, "Peace Corps and Beyond: Finding a Career in Development"
Peter Burleigh, State Department: "America's Role in the World: Anxieties of a Career Diplomat"
Prof. Roger Gottlieb, WPI, "A Spirit in Love with the Earth"
A. Gunaratne, Fulbright Commission, Colombo, "Terrorism and Religious Culture: Conflicting Emotions"
John Nelson, Univ. of San Francisco, "Shinto's Vision of Nature: A Source for Japanese Gardens"
Liu Binyan, Princeton China Initiative, "A Conversation with China's Noted Journalist Dissident"
Alison Hardie, Cardiff University, "Chinese Gardens and the Confucian Tradition"
Qingping Liu, Yale University, "How can Universal Love be Possible? A Comparative Study between Christian and Confucian Ethics"
Marc Keane, Cornell University, "The Elements of Japanese Garden Design"
Robert Kennedy, St. Peter's College: "Zen's Gifts to Christianity"
Anna Brown, St. Peter's College: "Contemplative Practice and Social Action"
Sudharshan Seneviratne, Peradeniya University (Sri Lanka); "Ordering the Past and Legitimizing the Present: The Politics Of Archaeology in A Global Context"
Kent Bicknell, Sant Bani School, "Books of the American Transcendentalists"
Mary Evelyn Tucker, Yale University: "The Alliance of Ecology and Religion"
Narayan Kaji Shrestha, "The Struggle for Community Forestry: Alleviating Poverty, Addressing Global Warming, Promoting Participatory Democracy in Nepal"
Trent Pomplun, University of Virginia: "Inter-Religious Dialogue in Tibet: Ippolito Desideri, S.J."
Sienna Craig, Dartmouth College, "Tibetan Medicine: The Anthropology of Buddhist Healing."
Elliot Sperling, Indiana University, "The Golden Urn: Selection of the Dalai Lamas in Tibet"
Henry Bowden, Rutgers University: "Native American Spirituality and Christian Missions"

David Rynick, Worcester Zen Center: "Zazen beyond Striving"

David Smith, University of Minnesota: "Tiger Conservation: Why It Matters"

Jan Willis, Wesleyan University, "Dreaming Me: Black, Baptist, and Buddhist: A Conversation"

Venerable Yifa, Woodenfish Program (Taiwan): "Humanistic Buddhism Today"

Kamryn Warren, University of Connecticut: "Bhutanese Refugees: Navigating Exile, Encampment, Resettlement"

James Giambrone, Indigo Gallery, "A Life Spent Nurturing Indigenous Painters in Nepal"

John Guy, Metropolitan Museum of Art, "Tree and Serpent: Buddhist Origins"

Naresh Bajracarya, Tribhuvan University (Nepal): "The Newar Buddhist Tradition of Sand *Maṇḍala* Making"

Holland Cotter, N.Y. Times, "A Life Spent Looking at Art"

James Robson, Harvard University, "A European History of the *Dao de Ching*"

Gloria Chien, Gonzaga University, "Contemplation in the Classroom: Adaptations of Ignatian Spirituality and Buddhist Meditation"

Alexander von Rospatt, University of California-Berkeley, "Interpreting Buddhist Narrative Paintings"

Fall 2019:

Exhibition Curator:

"Dharma and Puṇya: Buddhist Ritual Art from Nepal"

Planned for three years with Harvard Art History Professor Jinah Kim and Cantor director Roger Hankins, and supported by a major program grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, this exhibition was an extraordinary success on many levels. It brought objects from seven major museums and three private collections; involved Holy Cross undergrads working with Harvard grad students as preparators/docents; five co-curricular weekend events for which the region's Nepali Buddhists joined students to be participant-observers of the rituals depicted in the art; a lecture series brought seven speakers to Holy Cross; workshops for local K-12 teachers on bringing their students to campus; and a 2-day Conference held at both Harvard and Holy Cross. Professor Kim and I co-authored a major catalog, *Dharma and Puṇya: Buddhist Ritual Art from Nepal* (Brill: Hotei, 2019), that has been influential in both Asian art history and Buddhist studies. And I shot and directed thirty short films related to the art works and content displayed, that showed in the gallery.

The exhibition was recognized by the *New York Times* as one of the eleven best in the country in 2019. (This successful exhibition and programs have led to my consultancies at the MET, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Asian Art Museum.)

Application and Hosting Two Visiting Fulbright Lecturers

Carmen Wikramamagade, Professor of Modern Literature and Women's Studies,
Peradeniya University, Kandy, Sri Lanka (2012-2013)

Naresh Bajracharya, Professor of Buddhism, Tribhuvan University,
Kathmandu-Nepal (2019-2020)

East Asian Religions Position Created in Religious Studies Department (2024-2026)

Persuaded new provost in first meeting of the need for this expertise on faculty, secured a year's funding for year of programs teaching the Department about the field, guided search committee in definition of the search, and hired a scholar to join the Department.