

The Religious Studies Curriculum and the Study of Local Religion
 Proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities
 Grants for Teaching and Learning Resources and Curriculum development
 Curriculum development
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2. Summary

The question addressed in this project is: can the religious studies curriculum engage our students in the complexity of the world's faith traditions whose increasing interactions with one another and diverse cultures is represented daily in electronic the media, *and* also nurture the skills and sensitivities their faculty believe students require to appreciate and understand religions as global realities? The answer proposed in this project is yes. The basis for that answer is the conviction that students can engage and understand the world's faith traditions in their increasingly global context if the curriculum is i) structured around issues whose importance for the world's communities religious studies scholars analyze from multiple perspectives, and ii) designed so that students experience and study directly and personally in the religious communities just beyond their classroom doors. To illustrate how this can be done, faculty at Santa Clara will develop curriculum resources that exemplify this structure and design by introducing students to Silicon Valley's diverse religious landscape as a "lab" in which they gain hands-on experience of what is read and discussed in the lecture hall.

The project is relevant to religious studies faculty in regions across the nation on three counts. First, the Valley has long been regarded as a "bellwether" for studying the forces that will eventually characterize other regions across the nation: the de-centered (or multi-centered) metropolis whose identity must constantly be constructed; the all-pervasive influence of information technology in all sectors of the community; a culture of innovation and fast-paced change; and ethnic and cultural diversity that can just as easily fragment as create community. Second, the three "religion and..." issues we use for this project—globalization, civic engagement and religious diversity—play out in the identity and methodological debates areas at the heart of the discipline of religious studies. Third, this project will yield models and resources for faculty at other institutions to develop curriculum in which they use community-based learning in their local religious landscape to engage students in the study of religion.

Under the auspices of a new initiative in Santa Clara's Religious Studies Department, the Local Religion Project, the project will run from December 2007 through May 2009, and will consist of four key components: i) four Santa Clara faculty ("project core faculty") will participate in a series of seminars with four scholars nationally recognized for their expertise on one or more of the project's three issues. The seminar provides the project's intellectual and collaborative home in which the core project faculty draft, discuss and complete four curriculum resource projects. The campus visits for the final three consulting scholars includes a public lecture. ii) Ten additional religious studies faculty ("project pilot faculty") will pilot these resources in the revision of courses already in their teaching portfolio for fall, 2008. iii) Undergraduate religious studies students will serve as research assistants to the project faculty, and as peer educators for the pilot faculty's fall 2008 courses. iv) A mini conference to disseminate the initial results of this grant project that features one of our four consultants, Martin Marty, as a keynote. The principal investigator for this project will participate in all four components, and oversee related activities—particularly supporting student community based learning in the Fall 2008 pilot courses, and assessment—with the help of a project assistant in the 2nd year of the project. Dissemination beyond the project will consist of scholarly conference presentations, a website that makes the project's curriculum resources accessible to faculty in the region and across the country, and an edited collection drawn from the project's talks, the principal investigator's research on Silicon Valley, and the curriculum resources developed, piloted and revised during the grant period.

3. Narrative

3.1 Narrative: Intellectual Rationale

3.1.1 The problem to be addressed by this project in broad terms

Most undergraduate religious studies faculty would agree the goal of their curriculum is to introduce and engage students in the questions they bring to our classrooms through the academic study of religion. At the same time, faculty teaching in that curriculum, particularly at the introductory level, do not find that goal easily attained. Among the factors accounting for the latter conclusion is a common thread—diversity. Students themselves enter our introductory religious studies courses with very different assumptions about and/or experiences with institutional religion. The introductory courses they take can appear to be more a collection approaches to diverse but discrete religious traditions; and the advanced courses add to this collection unresolved methodological debates about the methods taught by faculty from their different specialties. By a process Islamic scholar Bruce Lawrence calls “hypervisualization” (*Old Faiths, New Fears* [2004]) popular and internet media present to all of us diverse religious experiences and histories that are more often than not in conflict with one another, to which students and the general republic respond by adopting a rather uncritical tolerance or relativism rather than the challenge that practitioners and scholars of religion take it to be. These and other factors work against students experiencing the religious studies curriculum as a coherent community of inquiry into a religious tradition’s multifaceted and complex development over time.

This centrality of diversity to these curricular and cultural challenges suggests they are to some extent the legacy of the “culture wars” in which Humanities departments participated in the 1980’s. The response many Humanities faculty adopted toward the end of that decade in their courses and pedagogy was based on the advice of Gerald Graff—“teach the problems,” an approach he later developed in *Beyond the Culture Wars: How Teaching the Problems Can Revitalize American Education* (1992). In religious studies, Jonathan Smith articulated similar advice in 1988 in what many regard now as a classic, *“Narratives into Problems: the College Introductory Course and the Study of Religion,”* in which he argued that “...[t]hinking about introducing should play the same role in our profession as meditating on first principles plays for the metaphysician....” One of

those first principles concerns the relationship between the religious communities and the scholar who draws on methods, categories, questions, schemes, etc. to explain them. Debates about this relationship characterize religious studies, and, for those following Stephen Toulmin's definition of a discipline ("a communal tradition of procedures and techniques for dealing with theoretical and practical problems."), the coherent community of inquiry that are students often miss. Since the proposed project works within this broad context, we will develop it further.

Disciplinary identity disputes, of course, are not new; since the founding of programs to study religion in the 1960's scholars and teachers have disagreed how to represent to those outside the field and resolve with those inside the field both fundamental and practical --and often urgent questions-- about their professional identity and work. Consider the following questions:

- how to secure an intellectual rationale for establishing religious studies as a separate discipline with a distinct mode of inquiry instead of dispersing its work across the multiple disciplines from which its scholars so readily (indiscriminately?) borrow;
- how to design an integrated curriculum when the specialization that increasingly defines our field erodes any semblance of sense of common language and frame of reference among faculty;
- how to move beyond the unsatisfactory binaries like "outside/inside," "teaching of/teaching about," "confessional/neutral," "parochial/universal" that framed earlier attempts to articulate the role of the study of religion in public and religiously-affiliated schools;
- how to respond to scholars who regard the quest to establish the disciplinary identity of religious studies an unconscious return to the theology practiced in divinity schools and seminaries from which its founders were trained but eventually left for secular universities, or a close to a fruitful discussion that works by excluding others from the table;
- how to address the objection that our categories of analysis reflect (consciously and unconsciously) the "Enlightenment Project," and so lead us to devalue or miss altogether the self-representations of the religious communities we seek to render intelligible;

- how to conduct the assessment student learning that are an important dimension of any curriculum when the learning outcomes with which we begin seem embedded in premises or assumptions about the field that are neither shared nor self-evident.

As Jonathan Smith suggested, these questions play out most clearly in our introductory courses.

3.1.2 religious studies as a contentious community of inquiry.

According to the AAR's 2000 survey of theology and religious studies programs in North America, after courses on Christianity (primarily in scriptures), the next most common type of course taught at the undergraduate level is approach to the introductory courses is "comparative religions" While this course has served faculty and students well since the 1960's, it does have its critics. At a practical level, students and faculty alike are frustrated by the inevitable survey format (some call it the "10 week world religions tour," other more derisively, a "zoo" approach in which students spend a few moments observing each tradition on display), worrying that an unintended consequence of this format is that students end up with the inverse of Max Mueller's famous dictum: *s/he who knows all religions, knows no religion*. Because no one faculty member has expertise in multiple traditions, meaningful or nuanced comparisons across them is sacrificed in order to "cover" the material. Despite their common name, these courses—and when used, the textbooks—are inevitably idiosyncratic, with authors and faculty varying in the degree to which they advert to the choices they have made about coverage, themes, etc. As a result, variations on the trap "essentialism" (McCutcheon) haunt these courses and texts. For example, the categories of analysis and classification schemes can eclipse the object that is studied; and the assumption that religions are static and completed entities instead of the lived and varied reality Wilfred Cantwell Smith captured in his claim that "...[a]ll religions are new religions, every morning. For religions do not exist in the sky somewhere elaborated, finished, and static; they exist in men's hearts." In this vein, Bruce Lawrence in his study of religious diversity in America, *Old Faiths, New Fears* referenced above, argues that contrary to their authors' intention to use representations of religious difference in a comparative context to promote understanding and openness across traditions, they often have the opposite effect. He takes Diana Eck's 2002 edition of *On Common Ground: World Religions in America* to illustrate his point, arguing that the seemingly innocuous act of using a single icon as a link to materials on

each of sixteen world religions subliminally reinforces the misconception of religions as monolithic and hermetically sealed, distorting both the internal complexity and varied history of faith traditions, as well as their many and significant interactions with one another.

To emphasize the point that these disagreements about the fundamentals of how to study religion does not undermine its status as a discipline, we turn to two recent statements by “institutional authorities” in the American Academy of Religion.

The organizing committee for the 2007 American Academy of Religion AAR western regional meeting has chosen for the 2007 meeting’s theme, “Re-Examining the Received Tradition in Religious Studies.” Their call for papers encourage submissions that “...reflect upon, assess, and critique the theoretical assumptions long held within our respective areas in the field of Religious Studies.” While they recognize the “Received Tradition” of 19th and 20th century scholars like Durkheim, James, Eliade, et al will continue to inform discipline of religious studies, they ask to what extent are those theories and methods useful to scholars in the 21st century post-modern world? “Religious Studies is founded upon assumptions about the world and the world’s religions that no longer hold true, yet Religious Studies scholars continue to rely upon these same foundational theories when studying religion.... [we seek papers] that re-examine or challenge the very theoretical and methodological foundations of the discipline.”

The Western Region AAR’s statement echoes the position Robert Orsi articulated in his 2003 national AAR Presidential Address, “A New Beginning, Again.” In part to justify the AAR’s decision to drop the long-standing practice of convening its annual meeting at the same time as the Society for Biblical Literature (SBL), he underscored the necessarily evolving and contentious nature of religious studies. He draws attention to significant changes over the past 40+ years in the discipline as well as in the religious worlds it seeks to study and is increasingly called upon to explain; and he acknowledges the “restiveness” many experience about our discipline’s identity and mission—some even to the point where they have renewed the claim that studies of religion do not constitute a discipline. Instead of being daunted by the unharmonious nature of the field, Orsi actually champions it. “Arguments within the discipline over key terms and methods are a sign of its confidence and vitality, not of its insecurity.” The key to managing such

“a capacious and inclusive field” is an “intensified self-reflectivity” that has been a distinctive feature of this discipline since its beginning.

How we propose to use the study of local religion to design curriculum that engages students in this contentious community of inquiry is discussed in the remaining sections of this proposal.

3.1.3 Developing religious studies curriculum through a local religion project

This project proposes that studying local religion as if it were a lab for our classroom lectures and discussion is an effective way to engage students in the discipline of religious studies as described above. The lab provides an opportunity to experience the realities discussed in our classrooms, and to apply, test, and even argue among themselves about the categories scholars have used to describe that reality. The lab we will use to develop models, resources, materials and best practices on which faculty at institutions across the nation can draw is Santa Clara’s local community, Silicon Valley, which we are developing in a project called the Local Religion Project (LRP)

LRP, a new initiative of Santa Clara’s religious studies department, works with the assumption that those same outcomes and objectives can be realized by engaging students in the same trajectory, *but locally, in the communities in which they live and study*. LRP draws on pedagogical strategies that go by names like community-based learning, experiential learning, service learning, etc. but does so in the context of an ongoing community of students and faculty whose goal is to use religious studies to document and research the complex religious landscape of our region. The Silicon Valley thus functions as a lab component to the curriculum of the department. Ideally students will use it to deepen their knowledge of the “cumulative traditions” so richly and diversely present in the Valley; but more importantly, their experiences with religion as it is lived by daily by their neighbors should provide opportunities to practice Orsi’s “self-reflectivity” as the individuals and practices they encounter “in the field” challenges their assumptions and biases (both personal and disciplinary). The proposed project pursues this ideal by designing curriculum that focuses on three “religion and...” issues that are debated by scholars of religion today and are keys to understanding the ways in which faith traditions in the Valley represent themselves and are represented by others.

- religion and globalization

- religion and civic life
- religion and religious diversity

The remaining pages in the rationale for our proposal lays out our approach to the debates and differences within religious studies about each issue, and identify why the Valley is a good lab in which to engages students in those debates—and thereby in religious studies as a discipline.

3.1.3.1 Religion and globalization

The term “globalization” seems to have dominated public attention and discourse about our world for the past ten years. While the disciplines of economics and political science have been the primary homes for this discourse, scholars of religion have increasingly been asked for analysis and context for the intersection of globalization and religious communities here and around the world. For example, the 2003 AAR/Emory University conference funded by the Ford Foundation, “Contesting Religion and Religions Contested: The Study of Religion in a Global Context,” defines its objective, and the future agenda for religious studies, as follows:

As the global stakes increase, it becomes ever more imperative that we gain a more adequate understanding of how religions are functioning in our current global context and how they interact with other social, political, and economic realities... Now more than ever, people are raising questions that challenge and contest the conventional language used to describe and analyze the role of religions in the twenty-first century.

Much like their counterparts in the Western Region AAR noted above, the conference organizers go on to claim that this agenda requires scholars to re-think their discipline—informed too much by 19th and 20th colonial worldviews—by re-examining the role, purpose and effects of their scholarship in today’s post-colonial world. Clearly an important focus in this re-examination is the religious studies curriculum-- to what extent are our courses, pedagogies, co-curriculum responding to this imperative? Although Mark Juergensmeyer, the project lead for Oxford’s forthcoming publication of *A Handbook of Global Religions*, is aware of and has contributed to projects which this very goal (e.g. several conferences at what has become for Georgetown University’s *Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace, and Global Affairs*) his answer seems to be, *not enough*.

Read in the context of the problematic addressed by the 2003 AAR conference, his observation that "... [m]ost studies of religion focus on single traditions, and even these studies often present the tradition as if they were discrete, immutable entities that seldom change or interact with the cultures around them.", serves to underscore the fact that scholars of religion have only begun to debate about the ways in which to frame this issue, much less to embark on curriculum revision. Is, for example, globalization's influence on religion actuality relatively benign, and simply a new name for what has defined the history of the world's religions, viz., interactions between different traditions, the mediation of conflicts, and the eventual inculturation of faith traditions in new locations? Is religion an ideology that is used practically and rhetorically to drive the clashes in 21st and 21st century globalization, as suggested by scholars who argue—some in defense of, others critical of—that Huntington's clash of civilizations argument puts religion at the center of the discussion? Or do religions and their institutions provide the catalyst and means for the resistance by local communities to combat the homogenizing forces of globalization in their local communities? Will the machinery and ideologies of globalization ultimately be subsumed and transformed by what W. C. Smith long ago called a "global religious consciousness," or the "global ethic" grounded in interreligious dialogue that Hans Kung has promoted since the 1993 World Parliaments of Religion?

Our proposal is to design a curriculum that engages students in "contending and contesting" among religious studies scholars about questions like these. Given the nature of our local "lab," the Silicon Valley, this project will examine our faith communities and organizations through the lens of a term sociologist Roland Robertson used in 1992 to focus attention on the intersection--instead of the opposition—of globalization with localization, "glocalization." We will use this lens to analyze in particular religion's intersection with immigration, which, along with technology, makes Silicon Valley a "bellwether" for understanding the effects of globalization in other localities in the States, and around the world. What does this bellwether's immigration story look like?

The Valley is part of and reflects the portrait of California as an immigration center—which the 2002 Public Policy Institute of California captured by comparing the state to the nation. Where population of the United States as a whole includes 11% immigrants, California's over 36 million population includes 26%

immigrants, one result of which is that California is home to 28 % of the nation's immigrants, but only 10% of the nation's U.S.-born population. Along with Los Angeles and San Diego, the region is a major immigration "gateway" in the state that since 1990 has experienced a 60% increase in immigration—a key factor in understanding why Santa Clara County ceased to have a majority ethnic population sometime around 1998. The most recent census estimates indicate that out of every three people among the Valley's 1.5 million residents, one was born in another country, and the second regards him- or herself as "first generation." A 2000 Santa Clara County study found that 177 different languages are spoken in the region's homes; and that over one-half of the residents of the Valley's urban core and the 10th largest city in America, San Jose, speak a language other than English at home.

The Valley's religious diversity reflects this ethnic and cultural profile. Where nationally 3% of the population ascribes to a tradition other than Judaism and Christianity, some 11% of the Valley's residents do. Roman Catholic churches, many of which are multi-ethnic, represent the largest single denomination in the region, and they and their Protestant and Jewish counterparts share the Valley's floor with more than thirty Buddhist centers, more than a dozen mosques, and active communities of the Sikhs, Hindus and Jains who have in the last five years built some of the largest and most expensive temples in their traditions in the United States. The diversity within this diversity—the different languages we find in multi-ethnic Catholic parishes are mirrored in their different ritual and spiritual practices; and Buddhist centers tied to different immigrant (e.g., Vietnamese, Thai and Sri Lankan) communities have more interaction with non-Buddhists than with the Buddhist centers down the road—all serve to provide another layer of complexity to our religious diversity. As a result, diversity is an essential but not always acknowledged element of most any congregation's self-understanding. Whether studied as isolated ethno-racial enclaves, or as institutions that are a source of moral renewal and interfaith harmony, these faith communities' members encounter one another in the Silicon Valley on a daily basis—in the post office, the grocery store, schools, neighborhoods, city council meetings, 9/11 commemorations—providing a local (micro) version of the global (macro) encounter of religions. In the curriculum project we will approach this dynamic by focusing in particular on two Diaspora communities in the area that are being researched by faculty in our department, the large and

long-standing Hispanic population, and the new community of refugees from Africa that are appearing in our landscape.

3.1.3.2 Religion and Civic Engagement

There is no shortage of ink spent on the relationship of religion to public life. Media use it to frame coverage of international events, from events involving Muslim immigrants assimilation in European countries (for which the Mohammad cartoon became a galvanizing focal point and symbol) to the sparring between religious factions in Lebanon; the phrase similarly frames coverage in America of legal battles over the constitutionality of the “Under God” clause in the pledge of allegiance, or to approach campaigns strategies and voting patterns in presidential elections. Scholars of religion likewise invoke this framework to analyze the role of global and local politics in the rise of fundamentalisms (in some cases grounding religious nationalisms) around the globe in recent years. Along with counterparts in other disciplines, some draw on classic formulations of the issue like Robert Bellah’s “civil religion.” Diana Eck makes “Religion in the Public Square” a key issue in part three of her *On Common Ground*, where she documents both the history of the issue in America, and the ways in which the new immigrants negotiate it in schools, workplaces, planning commissions, etc. as they seek to practice and establish institutions of their religion in different localities across the country. Historian of American religions Martin Marty describes the issue of religion in the public square in a way that is particularly germane to Silicon Valley:

Is America to be nothing but a collection of self-contained, bounded enclaves of people who have only their separate stories, positions, conclusions, and causes? Or can some of the resources of the very faiths that divide also serve to help people if not unite, then converge?

This background and questions like Marty’s provide orientation to our students in their studies of local congregations and organizations. The particular focus we will use in our curriculum project is one relatively new to religious studies, Harvard political scientist Robert Putnam’s “social capital” thesis. Putnam finds the thesis implicit in DeTocqueville’s interest in America’s associational life, but the term itself was introduced in the 1950’s by economist Jane Jacobs; Putnam re-introduced it to the scholarly world in the early 1990’s, and to the wider population with his best-selling *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American*

Community. For Putnam, social capital—his shortest definition appears to be “generalized reciprocity”—is a social good generated by the various associations that bring people together, and the trust, fellowship, good will, cooperation, neighborliness, sociability, etc. that is derived from them and is nourished through them. Religion is intertwined with social capital: through congregational life and faith-based organizations, religion accounts for 50% of the social capital generated in America; and at the same time the erosion of social capital in America documented by Putnam has a significant effect on the way in which people are religious.

In 2000 Silicon Valley was one of the forty locales nationwide where a representative sample of residents were surveyed to measure the region’s social capital. Although on one of the nine indicators, “trust” (social and interracial), the Valley was higher than comparable communities, its scores on the other eight indicators left Silicon Valley ranked overall as 5th from the bottom. The 2001 report on the Silicon Valley survey speculates that a key to understanding this ranking is the way in which religion is practiced here, which they describe along the lines of insular enclaves tied to distinctive features of the Valley:

- Immigration. our post 1965 immigration has resulted in a large number of immigrant congregations whose focus on reproduction of values and traditions from their different and diverse countries of origin eclipses engagement in the civic life of the region; and
- Secular Culture. the largely secular culture and ethos of the Valley has led fundamentalist congregations to 1) distance themselves from civic life and 2) impose demands on individual members that both practically and symbolically precludes associations outside the faith community.

This speculation illustrates the way social capital provides a window on the region’s religious communities that would be new to our students.

3.1.3.3 Religion and religious diversity

Religious diversity has been an abiding interest of students and scholars of religion since religious studies courses showed up in public universities in the 1960’s. And, as with the other two issues, the post 9-11 environment in America includes new challenges and new opportunities for reflecting on what this phenomenon tells us about religion, and the ways in which we study it. While debates within or about particular frameworks for approaching religious diversity—including the contention that the very term

“religious diversity” already prejudices the issue—for this section of the project we plan to develop curriculum focused on helping students, first, appreciate why and how practitioners as well as scholars work with religious diversity through very different frameworks, and second, how to read those frameworks critically. While all three project issues are interdependent, this one draws from the other two the most.

We have tentatively identified three foci we find relevant to the region and are tied to our department’s overall curriculum:

- evolving theories and theologies of religious diversity;
- religious diversity as a pressing civic issue (Robert Wuthnow places this “...among the most serious questions we currently face as a nation.”); and
- Religious Diversity in Congregationally Grounded Outreach Programs and Interfaith Organizations.

By encountering and researching how a community’s self-understanding is expressed, students will be able to exercise the critical skill they are learning in class—e.g. how to read a congregation’s self-representation in services, website, outreach programs, sermons, etc. can reflect explicit and implicit positions on religious diversity.

3.1.4 LRP in relationship to other programs

When they first investigated the viability of a Local Religion Project in the late 90’s, religious studies faculty were surprised that very little had been done by way of documenting and studying the Valley’s diverse and complex religious landscape. Among scholars of American religion, Diana Eck seems to be one who has paid the most attention to the area, albeit in a limited fashion: she draws on her visits to some of the centers for Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Sikh worship in the area for illustrations as she tells her story of “...how a ‘Christian Country’ Has Become the World’s Most Religiously Diverse Nation” in *A New Religious America*. The helpful resource she founded, the Pluralism Project, lists nearly one hundred “profiles” of religious congregations, but only three congregations—two Buddhist, one Hindu—are located in this region. Some faculty therefore worried that beyond these few items from Eck’s project, we would have little by way of documentation, models and scholarship to help us start our study of the Valley. We soon learned, however, that there are in fact similar “locality studies” of religion, but under different rubrics. A good example are the

seven research projects PEW funded through a \$5 million *Religion and New Immigration* initiative in 2000. Among the studies they are starting to produce, two have been particularly helpful in designing LRP's research methodology: the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California led by Don Miller, and the University of Houston where two sociologists of religion grounded their project in extensive field research in different faith communities in their region. Similarly, our preliminary search for curriculum models did not yield centers or full initiatives like LRP, but it did surface a variety of courses across the country, e.g. "Religious Worlds of New York" at Columbia that focus on the religious communities of their local area. And studies of the Valley have been completed from various social science perspectives, the most recent being J.A. English-Leuck's *Cultures@SiliconValley* referred to earlier. LRP thus is not starting from scratch, although it will fill the void of studies of the Silicon Valley's religious landscape as well as of curriculum projects beyond single courses. Finally, it should be noted that experience with local communities so far—in hosting class visits, assisting students with research, co-sponsoring and participating in SCU campus programs, and encouraging us to document their events—suggests that our interest in engaging students in studies of local organizations and congregations will have support from leaders in the region's religious communities.

3.2 Narrative: Content and Design

The proposed program will run 18 months, from December 1, 2007 to May 31, 2009. Our objective is to research, develop and pilot curriculum resources on which university faculty from this region and from across the country can draw to revise and/or create new courses that study local religion to engage students with key issues—along the lines of our focus on "religion and"...globalization, civic engagement, religious diversity—in religious studies. We will realize that objective through the four project components outlined below. The tentative design of the presentation of our results on Santa Clara's LRP website provides an overview of the curriculum resources and related materials that will be developed over the course of this project.

- *Local Religion Studies: Community-Based Learning Resources*: comprised primarily of materials related to student community-based learning and research (e.g. field research guidelines and resources, procedures and

templates for human subject protocols or site documentation, bibliography on community-based learning in religious studies), these will have been drafted, piloted and evaluated, and revised during the course of the project.

- *Local Religion Studies: Curriculum Resources and Models*: the primary focus of our project, this section is organized around the three issues in religious studies identified above, each subsection of which will include an overview of how the issue is framed by scholars in religious studies; learning outcomes, grading rubrics and other templates, and samples for case studies, assignments, site visitation, and student evaluation; a bibliography of scholarship related to how issue plays out in select specific localities; and explanations of the roles research assistants can play in courses involving local religion.
- *Local Religion Studies: Samples from the 2007-08*: A collection of the syllabi from courses in which the curriculum materials were piloted, the case studies, site visits, assignments and grading rubrics the faculty developed from the project curriculum resources, and sample student work

These curriculum resource materials will be developed through the following main components of this project, whose schedule, structure, participant roles, and outcomes are discussed in this section of the proposal.

- Project Core Faculty Seminars
- Undergraduate Research and Peer Mentoring
- Project Pilot Courses
- “Religious Studies and the Study of Local Religion” Conference

These components are integrated in such a way that by the completion of the project in May 2009, we will have developed curriculum materials for the study of local religion, incorporated student perspectives through summer undergraduate research projects, piloted and assessed impact on student learning of implementation of those resources in religious studies courses in different areas and levels, and have received feedback from colleagues at other Bay Area universities through the project conference.

3.2.1 Project Consulting Scholars and Core Faculty Seminars. This project involves faculty from Santa Clara University’s religious studies department at two levels:

- four faculty will serve as “core project faculty” for the entire period of the grant, charged with the development, revision, and dissemination of local religion curriculum resources related to one of the issues in religious studies identified above.
- ten faculty will serve as “project pilot faculty,” charged with piloting the adoption of the core faculty’s emerging local religion curriculum resources in religious studies courses they regularly offer at different levels and areas in the Fall of 2008;

The latter group’s role in the project will be explained in the next section on pilot courses; in this section the project core faculty’s role is explained in terms of the seminars which ground their participation in this project.

The areas of expertise of the project core faculty are included in the Participants section below (and in their resumes in the Appendix); the issue on which each will focus is provided here. But first the reason why two faculty will focus on the globalization issue should be noted. Our intention is to focus on and compare the role of religion in two different immigrant communities in the Valley, those from Central and Latin America those from Africa. The difference between their *histories* in this Valley (both groups are well represented in the post-1965 immigration but the Latino/Hispanic has roots in this region going back to the 18th century), between their *sizes* (where over 30% of San Jose is Hispanic/Latino, people of African descent constitute less than 3%), and between their *reasons for emigration* to the United States (predominantly economic opportunity for Hispanic/Latinos, and refugee/displacement for many Africans)—allow us to include two different Diaspora experiences here in the Valley in the globalization curriculum resources we will develop.

Religion & Globalization:

Teresia Hinga, Associate Professor (focus on African Diaspora); and Ana Maria Pineda, Associate Professor (focus on Latino communities)

Religious Diversity:

David Gray, Assistant Professor

Civic Engagement:

David Pinault, Associate Professor

The principal investigator, Associate Professor Philip Boo Riley and—after the opening seminar she will conduct--Santa Clara's consulting scholar Catherine Bell will join the core project faculty in the project seminars explained below.

The project core faculty seminar series serve four purposes:

1. to provide the core faculty an opportunity to engage with four nationally-recognized scholars in religious studies on how to frame the relationship between the study of local religion to the critical issues in our discipline presented above;
2. to receive and discuss feedback from the four consulting scholars--and one another throughout--on her/his ongoing development of curriculum resources;
3. to allow faculty to discuss a case study of a local congregation that illustrates the interrelationship between the project's three issues as explained in the intellectual rationale above;
4. to sustain the collegial and collaborative exchange among faculty that James Ratcliff, former director of the Center for the Study of Higher Education, argued is necessary "...to design or change a curriculum to be cogent, coherent, and meaningful to students."

The seminar series thus functions as the backbone to the project, around which the other components are built, and therefore requires the most explanation.

The following seminar structure and schedule was developed to minimize the negative impact participation could have on undergraduate faculty whose time is constrained by commitments both to the six course teaching load per year and to the University's growing expectations and support for faculty to develop publications record on par with those of faculty at research universities who work in a very different set of circumstances. For each seminar the consulting scholar and lead core project faculty are identified, a tentative selection from the consulting scholar's work that will be the reading for the seminar is listed, and the local site which will be used for a case study related to the issue under review. Involving both site visits and a review of the site "portrait" by LRP research assistants, these case studies are designed to stimulate thought on ways faculty can use local sites to make the issues studied in texts come alive for their students. The core faculty's responsibilities in each seminar are: 1) prior to the seminar: complete reading, review case study and visit the

local site it describes, and draft both an “issue overview” for the Local Religion Project website, and list curricular elements that could be developed for that issues; 2) on the seminar day: meet one-on-one with the visiting scholar, and participate in the afternoon seminar; and 3) 1-2 weeks afterward: meet with P.I. and other core faculty 1-2 weeks afterward to debrief on the seminar, review and discuss the materials each had drafted for the seminar (and provide the lead core faculty for that issue with an electronic version of them), and brainstorm about the web presentation of that issue.

Project Core Faculty Seminar 1: *Project Introduction: Religion and Teaching Local Religion*

(9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Friday, December 16, 2007 [one week after last Fall Quarter final exams])

Consulting scholar: Catherine Bell, Bernard J. Hanley Endowed Chair and Professor of Religious Studies at Santa Clara University

Project Core Faculty Lead: n/a

Seminar Reading: Catherine Bell, “Ritual,” in *Critical Terms*; and selections from C. Bell, ed., *Teaching Ritual* (forthcoming from Oxford University Press)

Local Congregation Case Study: Duc Vien (Pure Land/Zen traditions of Viet Nam). This temple has been serving the region’s Vietnamese Buddhists since 1980. Founded and operated by nuns (Bhikkhuni), Duc Vien serves nearly 2,000 families of 1st and 2nd generation immigrants, 90% of whom identify their status as “refugee.” Duc Vien in San Jose has provided dharma instruction and the monastic experience for novice nuns from Viet Nam. The case will be designed to challenge participants to overcome obstacles (e.g. language, political situation in country of origin) to accessing a local community, to learn how the leadership of women in this community provides opportunity for undergraduate and faculty research, and to preview the three issues on which the subsequent seminars focus.

Project Core Faculty Seminar 2: *Religion and Globalization*

(3:00-5:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 16, 2008 [4th week of Winter Quarter])

Consulting Scholar: Mark Juergensmyer, University of California at Santa Barbara; invited; awaiting response)

Project Core Faculty Lead: Profs. Teresia Hinga and Ana Maria Pineda

Reading: selections from *Religion in Global Civil Society*, Mark Juergensmeyer, ed. (Oxford 2006), a collection of papers from a series of seminars and conferences on that topic at Emory that he directed; selections from the *Handbook of Global Religions* (forthcoming from Oxford University), a multi-volume study of the world's religious traditions from a global perspective.

Case Study Sites: an Ethiopian Orthodox Community Church that purchased a permanent home for its worship and gatherings in 2004, and Sacred Heart Catholic church, a primarily Hispanic/Latino congregation. The case will be designed along the lines introduced above, to compare

Hispanic/Latino and African Diaspora communities.

Project Core Faculty Seminar 3: *Religion and Religious Diversity*
(3:00-5:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct 14, 2008, [4th week of Winter Quarter])

Consulting Scholar: Robert Orsi, Harvard Divinity School

Project Core Faculty Lead: Prof. David Gray

Reading: Orsi, select articles, and selections from *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (2005)

Project Case Study Site: Gyuto Vajrayana Center, a small Tibetan Buddhist Center founded in 1990 in a house in a residential neighborhood in east San Jose, and St. Maria Goretti, a multi-ethnic Catholic parish of some 7,000 individuals, founded in the 1970's to serve the increasing numbers of Catholics, particularly new immigrants, settling in the east side neighborhoods. The case study will focus on how the rituals, language, organization structure, and relations to country of origin are used to maintain and signify identity in these very different communities; on how the Euro-American members of those communities experience those dynamics; and how to determine the extent to which relating to other traditions in the Valley's diverse religious landscape is a priority in these communities.

Project Core Faculty Seminar 4: *Religion and Civic Engagement*

(Thursday, March 26, 2009 9:30.a.m.-12:00 p.m. in conjunction with the Project Conference [Spring break for SCU])

Consulting Scholar: Martin Marty, Emeritus Professor, University of Chicago

Project Core Faculty Lead: Prof. David Pinault

Reading: M. Marty, "Introduction: Faith Matters," in *Religion in the American Public Square: Living with our Deepest Differences*, ed. Al-Hibri, A., et al (New York and London, W.W. Norton, 2001); and M. Marty, *When Faiths Collide* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005).

Local Congregation Case Study: Muslim Community Association of the San Francisco Bay Area (MCA), founded in 1980, and Islamic Networks Group (ING), founded in 1994. With over 6,000 Muslims going there for Friday prayers, MCA's mosque is the largest in the Bay Area. The acquisition of a Hewlett Packard office complex in a high tech industrial zone in Santa Clara allowed for the growth in membership and the scope of its program: it now is home to the K-12 Grenada Islamic School; a weekend Islamic school for adults; a community center with classrooms for instruction and recreation rooms for youth programs; a social services referral program for recent immigrants; and an outreach program which on an almost daily basis provides speakers, mosque tours, and education for schools and civic groups in Silicon Valley. The case study will compare the representations of Islam in the public square, and the corresponding cultivation of relationships with civic organizations and leaders, found in MCA's mosque-based outreach programs (many of which are staged in partnership with the local Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) affiliate) with Islamic Network Group's use of trained speakers whose primary venues are primarily schools for curriculum supplements to existing textbooks, and local law enforcement agencies and medical centers for training in multi-cultural understanding through education about the history and practices of Islam.

In the month following their campus visits, the consulting scholars are asked to provide a final version of their public lecture, and a three to five page evaluation of the project based on their seminars and one-on one meetings with project core faculty and their recommendations for improvement and/or additions to the project as conceived at that time.

We are confident these seminars and consulting scholars will provide the collaborative and intellectually stimulating faculty conversations necessary for curriculum revision, as well as the benchmarks for our progress over the course of this project.

3.2.2 Undergraduate Research and Peer Educator Program

This component of the project involves three constituencies: *undergraduate students* (the ten religious studies majors or minors at the end of their junior year who will conduct research on specific local sites under the direction of the core project faculty and the Project P.I.), *faculty* (in addition to the 5 supervising their research, the ten faculty who will pilot project courses and include the ten undergraduates as peer educators), and local *organizations and congregations* (the ten sites for undergraduate research).

The purpose of this component is threefold: 1) to determine the role of undergraduate students in researching, developing and delivering curriculum in courses on a region's local religion; 2) to determine whether developing courses that use community-based learning in local religion sites is an opportunity to integrate two undergraduate student experiences normally separated at Santa Clara and other universities—research with a faculty member, and assisting faculty in teaching courses; and 3) to determine the value of this program to both the faculty research supervisors who will use the student's research in their curriculum development project, and the student's overall college career. The assessment section outlines the questions and steps we will take to make these determinations.

The schedule for this component is tied to its structure. In January 2008 religious studies faculty will help recruit ten junior students for this project. After a two-day workshop on the LRP by the P.I. (June 18-19, 2008), the students will work 20 hours per week for six weeks (June 20-August 1) as faculty research assistants. The following Fall Quarter (September 24-December 6, 2008) the students will enroll in the University's Peer Educator Program and serve as peer educators in one of the ten pilot religious studies courses described in the next section.

3.2.3 Project Pilot Courses

Our schedule calls for ten religious studies faculty to join the project for six months (July 1 through December 31, 2008) as "project pilot" faculty. Their charge is to draw on the project's undergraduate

researchers as peer educators and the curriculum resources the core project faculty will have developed at the midpoint of the project period (August, 2008) in the revision of a course already in their teaching portfolio to include community-based learning in the region's diverse religious landscape. These faculty will pilot the revised courses in Fall Quarter 2008. Throughout their preparation work over the summer and delivery of the course the pilot faculty will consult with the project core faculty

As noted above, this project both develops curriculum resources *and* tests their adoption in pilot courses at Santa Clara. Feedback from the ten pilot faculty on their experience using the core project faculty's curriculum resources will provide an opportunity to make adjustments over the final five months of the project. We anticipate that faculty at other institutions for whom we are designing local religion resources will be teaching courses in a variety of specializations and at different levels. We have therefore drawn courses from the three areas of our department, and for each area have identified courses offered at three levels as follows (a tentative list):

Department Areas	Introductory Level	Intermediate Level	Advanced Level
Religion and Society	<i>Ways of Understanding Religion</i>	<i>Muslims in America</i>	<i>Comparative Contemplative Practices</i>
Theology, Ethics, and Spirituality	<i>Introduction to Christianity</i>	<i>Religion in America and Ethics in the Healthcare Professions</i>	<i>Contemporary Catholicism</i>
Scripture and Traditions	<i>Religions of the Book</i>	<i>Genesis Debates</i>	<i>Post Colonial interpretations of the New Testament</i>

On Monday December 15, 2008 the pilot faculty will meet with the P.I and Santa Clara's vice Provost for Faculty Development and a full professor in religious studies, Diane Jonte Pace, to debrief their experience. A report on their experience, including recommendations for improvement of the curriculum resources with which they worked and the peer educator program that was part of their courses, will be due Monday, January 5, 2009.

3.2.4 Conference on *The Religious Studies Curriculum and the Study of Local Religion: Globalization, Civic Engagement, and Religious Diversity in Silicon Valley*

Conceived as a two day conference on local religion, March 26-27, this component takes place during the campus visit of our final consulting scholar, Martin Marty. On the first day Marty will deliver the evening

keynote address for the conference, preceded by an afternoon open house/poster session (in the same space in the Arts and Sciences' building where Hans Kung's Global Religious Ethic display was staged two years ago) of the web-based presentations of the project's curriculum resources and samples of student multimedia work from the Fall 08 pilot courses. On the second day, the P.I. will open with a review of our overall project, and the considerations that led us to conceive of Silicon Valley as the optimal lab in which to study key issues for religious studies and for the wider society, "religion and..." globalization, civic engagement, and religious diversity. The next part of the day will be divided into two one and one-half hour sessions, offering two concurrent workshops on the use of local religion to develop religious studies curriculum, each led by the core project faculty and the pilot faculty who used his/her curriculum resources in the Fall of 2008 pilot courses, and as appropriate the undergraduate research assistants and the leader of the congregation or organization they studied the prior summer. The conference will conclude with a plenary session in which the project core faculty will join Martin Marty on a panel to wrap up the conference and address attendees' questions and observations. The intended audience for this conference are faculty from universities and community colleges in the San Francisco Bay Area, local civic and religious leaders in the South Bay, and members of the University and local community.

The purpose of the conference is threefold: 1) to provide the faculty, students, community leaders, and consulting scholars a forum in which to review their various contributions to project with one another and the conference attendees; 2) to bring national attention to our Local Religion Project by featuring Martin Marty as a keynote speaker; and 3) to generate the "best practices" accounts of local religion-based curriculum development that will be included in the conference and project publication described below.

3.3 Institutional Context

Santa Clara was founded as a Jesuit University in 1851, making it the oldest institution of higher learning in the state of California. As a "comprehensive" university it enrolls 4,500 undergraduates and 3,500 graduate students in law and a wide spectrum of professional programs, and through a variety of programs and centers Santa Clara has ties to high tech, service organizations, and local governments. Its most recent marketing tagline, "*The Jesuit University in Silicon Valley*," reflects Santa Clara's self-understanding as an

institution with roots in a religious tradition as well as in the local region. The Undergraduate Core Curriculum includes three required courses in religious studies for all students; and the department has 100+ majors and minors. Twenty two full-time tenure stream faculty (with considerable assistance from adjunct lecturers) support a curriculum that offers 140 courses in the three areas referenced above: Scripture and Tradition, Theology, Spirituality and Ethics, and Religion and Society. We have specialists in scripture studies, early Christianity, medical ethics, Jewish Studies, American religion, rabbinic studies, women and religion, religions of Asia, Buddhism, psychology of religion, Islam, catholic theology, and comparative and cross-cultural theology. Faculty at SCU are thought of as “teaching scholars,” and among the full time faculty we have scholars whose work and service to the discipline have earned them a national and in some cases, international reputation. This context and these faculty resources bode well for the successful completion of this project.

The unit in which this project will be administered, the Local Religion Project, enjoys considerable departmental and university support. The religious studies department chair and faculty have endorsed this proposal because LRP is a top priority in the department strategic plan that came out of a 2004 program review. The university has supported this project through several internal grants totaling \$20,000; and during the 2004-05, and 2005-06 academic years, the Dean of Arts and Sciences gave this project’s P.I. courses releases to organize LRP, develop programs, and craft a plan to secure resources for its future. Since 2004 faculty have utilized LRP in their courses—e.g. assignments to document and research local sites, class site visits for conversation with community leaders, required attendance at campus programs like the Winter 2005 “Hajj in Comparative Perspective: Pilgrimage Around the Globe”—and have advised on the program’s development and helped to establish relationships with local congregations. At least one of the issues on which this project focuses is an element in the research agenda of the core project faculty and others in the department, particularly our three most recent tenure-stream hires, such that participation in this project will contribute to both dimensions of the “teaching scholar” vision at Santa Clara.

It should also be noted that the University launched a Core Curriculum revision process last year. The twofold directive governing the process, that it focus on the “the distinctive character of the university

and the global dimensions of our curriculum,” is consonant with both LRP itself and the project outlined in this proposal. More importantly, our curriculum project schedule means that we will begin our work during the same year in which the University will be seeding curriculum development for the new Core courses in which religious studies will continue to play a major part. Our project activities thus tie into energies and resources related to a major University initiative, provide a distinctive feature of the religious studies department’s participation in the revised Core, and are thus certain to be sustained beyond the close of this particular grant.

3.4 Staff and Participants

This section provides the names and brief descriptions of the Santa Clara University faculty involved in this project, followed by the same for the consulting scholars (The resumes for Santa Clara’s core project faculty are provided in the Appendix.) A brief description of the two positions that will not be filled until the project begins, the project assistant and undergraduate research assistants, are included at the end. Position descriptions for faculty and consulting scholar’s roles are included in the Appendix.

Principal Investigator

Philip Boo Riley, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Director of the Local Religion Project since its initiation in 2003. Early in his career, his scholarship focused on methods for religious studies and theology, and the work of Bernard Lonergan, and included co-two edited books and several articles. He then spent ten years in college and university administration; his last position was vice provost for undergraduate learning. This past administrative experience, his current work developing LRP, his recent teaching (four new courses related to LRP) and scholarship (two conference presentations, two short articles) activities, and his contacts and working-relationship with local community leaders demonstrate his qualifications to direct this project.

Project Core Faculty

David Gray joined the department as an assistant professor in 2005 after completing a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies under Robert Thurman at Columbia University, and four years as a post doctoral fellow at Rice University. His teaching portfolio focuses on Asian religions, and Buddhist traditions in particular; his

research on the development of the Buddhist *Yogini Tantras* in India and their dissemination to Tibet and China has led to a book-length study and translation, and several articles.

Teresia Hinga also joined the department in 2005, as an associate professor, after ten years in the religious studies department at De Paul University. Her teaching portfolio includes courses on women and religion, African religions and society, and religion and contemporary moral issues in Africa. Her research interests mirror her courses--religion and women's issues, particularly in Africa, African religions' place in the global religious landscape, religion and public policy, and the ethics of globalization. She has recently published over fifteen articles and book chapters related to this topics in a variety of scholarly venues here and abroad.

David Pinault completed his Ph.D. in 1986 in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and joined the Santa Clara faculty in 1998. His teaching portfolio includes courses in Islam and south Asian religious traditions, most of which draw on his travels around the world. He has published three books related to Islam, the most recent titled *Horse of Karbala: Studies in South Asian Muslim Devotionalism* (2000), and numerous articles and book chapters, including a recent one out of his experience of taking students in his classes to Muslim, Jain, and Hindu communities in the region.

Ana Maria Pineda joined the religious studies faculty as an associate professor in 2002, having served as a lecturer and director of Pastoral Ministries since 1998. Prof. Pineda's teaching and scholarship relate to Hispanic Theology, popular religiosity, and Virgin of Guadalupe re-enactments in Mexican and diaspora communities in the United States.

Project Pilot Faculty (and pilot courses)

Cynthia Baker, associate professor, Jewish studies, gender and women's studies (*Religions of the Book*)

Jim Bennett, assistant professor, American religious history (*Religion in America*)

Ning Chen, Lecturer, East Asian Religions (*Buddhism*)

Paul Crowley, S.J., professor and department chair, Catholic Theology, religion and culture, Karl Rahner (*Contemporary Catholicism*)

Sean Everton, Lecturer (Ph.D. candidate, Stanford), sociology of religion, social capital and religion (*Ways of Understanding Religion*)

Margaret McLean, lecturer/Director of Healthcare Ethics for the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics (*Ethics in the Healthcare Professions*)

Katherine Murphy, associate professor, early Christianity (*Post Colonial interpretations of the New Testament*)

David Pleins, professor, Hebrew Bible, religion and evolution debates (*Genesis Debates*)

James Reites, S.J. associate professor, history of spirituality, history of the Jesuits (*Introduction to Christianity*)

Farid Senzai, Lecturer in Political Science whose course load includes religious studies (*Muslims in America*)

Sarita Tamayo-Moraga, lecturer, *Buddhist and Catholic spirituality, mysticism* (*Comparative Contemplative Practices*)

Consulting Scholars

Catherine Bell, the Bernard J. Hanley Professor and former chair of the Department of Religious Studies at Santa Clara, she has published two books on ritual, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (1992) and *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (1997), and has edited a third, *Teaching Ritual* (forthcoming from Oxford/AAR Series). She has published numerous articles on method in religious studies and Chinese popular religion. Bell was selected because of her expertise in method, and for her knowledge of the Local Religion Project-- she laid the initial conceptual groundwork for it in the late 90's, and has been an advisor to its director since 2003. Prof. Bell has confirmed her participation in the December 2007 opening seminar, and the other three seminars over the length of the project.

Mark Juergensmyer, Professor of Sociology and Religious Studies and Director of the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies, University of California Santa Barbara. His recent books include *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (2002), and two edited volumes with Oxford related to his current project on globalization and religion: *Global Religions* (2003) and *Religion in Global Civil Society* (2006). Juergensmyer was selected because of his own work on globalization and religion and the breadth of his knowledge of others working on that topic around the world. Prof. Juergensmyer has accepted our invitation to participate in the project.

Robert Orsi is the Charles Warren Professor of the History of Religion in America at Harvard University, and past president of the American Academy of Religion (2003). His earlier books--*Thank You,*

St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes (1996) and *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950* (1985)--reflect his interests in religion as experienced and practiced in urban settings; and his most recent book—*Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (2005)—reflects his interest in theory and method in the study of religion. We have selected Prof. Orsi because of his expertise in the nature of religious studies as a discipline, and the way his contextualized approach to religious practices in various communities can inform our approach to religious diversity in the Silicon Valley's communities. Prof. Orsi has not yet responded to our invitation to participate in the project.

Martin Marty is the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago's Divinity School and a well-known commentator and prolific writer (with over 50 books) on religion in America. Recent books relevant to this project include *Politics, Religion, and the Common Good* (w/ Jonathan Moore, 2000) and *When Faiths Collide* (2005). Marty has directed several major collaborative research projects throughout his career, most recently serving as co-director of "The Child in Religion, Law, and Society" at Emory University. We have selected Marty for his scholarship and perspective on "religion and the public square" issues (for the Project Seminar on civic engagement), and for the breadth of his knowledge, which enables him to speak to the intersections of the three issues in religious studies we have chosen for this project. Professor Marty has confirmed his participation in this project in March 2009.

External Reviewer

Norris Palmer, associate professor of religious studies, St. Mary's College (Moraga, CA) and vice president-elect of the Western Region American Academy of Religion (Wescor), teaches and conducts research on Hindu communities around the world and religion in America. He has conducted field research in a Bay Area Hindu temple for a study of religion in the lives of first and second generation immigrants. Prof. Palmer is familiar with LRP through two recent research presentations made by faculty and LRP research assistants to the "Religions in America" section at the past two AAR Western Regional meetings, which he also co-chairs.

Project Assistant

Budgeted as a half-time staff position for the 2nd year of the project, this position will be filled after the project begins. We hope to find a candidate with the academic credentials and experience necessary to undertake this position's four main duties: coordinating student field work in the project pilot courses, assessment of student learning in those courses and the summer research programs, support the development of the project website, and assisting the director with the conference, obtaining and organizing project materials from the SCU faculty participants and the papers from the consulting scholars, and the final grant report.

Undergraduate Research Assistants/Peer Mentors

A pool from which to select ten students for these positions will be developed by religious studies faculty during AY 2007-08; participants will be selected in March 2008 for research work during the Summer 2008 and peer educator work in Fall 2008. These students will be religious studies majors or minors, with experience of community work.

5. Evaluation

We propose to evaluate the project on three fronts: Core Project faculty development, student learning, and dissemination.

1. Core Project Faculty Development. Assessment here will include three elements
 - o Summative: did faculty complete their assigned work over the project? The measures here will be seminar and workshop participation, three curriculum projects, course pilots, conference presentation, website materials, and faculty individual reports.
 - o Formative: did this project contribute to their work at Santa Clara as teaching scholars? We will address this question qualitatively, through focused group discussions led by the vice Provost for Faculty Development at Santa Clara, Dian Jonte Pace, at three points in the project: the December 2007 opening day-long seminar, a second session she will convene in December 2008 after classes, and a final session after the completion of the faculty's work, in early May 2009. For each session Prof. Jonte Pace will draw up a brief report, the first two with recommendations for the remainder of the project, and the last with a conclusion on the impact

of this project on the core faculty's overall development. All three reports will be included in the final grant report.

- Impact on Student learning: results of the student self-report learning assessments in the Fall 2008 pilot courses will provide indirect evidence of the usefulness of these faculty's curriculum resources projects for engaging students in religious studies. These results will inform the completion of the faculty's work in the final five months of the project, and will be part of the final grant report.

2. Student Learning: Assessment here will include two approaches:

- Quantitative: At the end of Fall quarter, 2008, students in our Project pilot and a control group made up of students in the same or similar courses offered that quarter will complete 1) the standard University and department course evaluations (the latter will include 2 questions about the project website), 2) the student self-report student learning assessment the University is currently piloting, and 3) a brief project survey on their experience with the project's objective of engaging them in religious studies through community-based learning.
- Qualitative: in January 2009, the project assistant will conduct focus group interviews with the project's research assistants/peer mentors about their experiences, what they learned, obstacles to learning, and their view of whether or not students in the project pilot courses realized our goal of engaging students in religious studies through community based learning.

The project assistant will complete a report that includes a statistical analysis of the quantitative findings, and a presentation of findings from the qualitative component, that will be shared with both core and pilot faculty, and will be included in the final grant report.

3. Dissemination

Only a preliminary assessment of this part of our project can be completed during the grant period, since a better measure—e.g. the extent to which our resource materials are used by teachers at other universities-- will not be possible at this time. Each component of dissemination will be studied: for use of the project web site, the number of student hits in Fall 2008 will be monitored, student ratings and comments

on the pilot course evaluations, and comments gathered from a voluntary on-line feedback form; for the conference and eventual publication, we will rely on conference attendance numbers, evaluation forms completed by attendees, and reviewers' comments from the publisher to whom we will submit the conference proceedings.

6. Follow Up and Dissemination

Three considerations informed the dissemination strategies outlined below: i) the project's goal that our curriculum resources be available on-line and relevant to faculty and students in religious studies courses across the country as well as in our region; ii) our interest in sustaining the project past the grant period; and iii) the expectation that project core faculty's work, and awareness of that work among scholars in religious studies, will be aided by the involvement of nationally recognized scholars in this project. These considerations led us to devise these three modes of dissemination throughout the project:

- **Public Lectures by Consulting Scholars and the Project Conference.** The intended audience for these sessions consists of scholars or religion and civic and religious leaders in the local area; our expectation is that these groups will learn about and become interested in this project as it unfolds over the grant period. We will use LRP's contacts in the local community, including the religion editor of the San Jose Mercury News, to promote these events locally, and will place notices in the American Academy of Religion's quarterly "*religioustudies* NEWS" to draw the attention of scholars across the country to our project. We have tentative plans to include video recordings of the consulting scholars talks on the project website.
- **Scholarship.** The results of this project will be presented in four venues over the two years following its completion: i) a "work in progress" presentation at the March 2009 Western regional AAR meeting, ii) a piece on the project will be submitted for publication in the American Academy of Religion's quarterly "*religioustudies* NEWS" soon after, iii) a full paper presentation at the November 2009 national AAR meeting which we expect to publish, and iv) an a collection edited by the P.I., tentatively titled, *The Study of Local Religion: Theory and Practice*, comprised of three parts: Theory (papers from our consulting scholars), Studies of Silicon Valley's Religious Landscape (by the project P.I. and three to five scholars

who have conducted research in the area), and Best Curricular Practices (drawn from our project faculty's materials).

- Website. The developing Local Religion Project website will include a section on this grant and project as outlined above. It will include this grant proposal, the curriculum resources and models for the study of religion in local settings we will have developed, piloted and completed by the end of the grant (May 2009), and tentatively video recordings of the consulting scholars' talks.

The final report to NEH on the project will become a basis for a proposal to the Santa Clara's administration to establish and resource LRP as "The Center for the Study of Local Religion." Developed along the lines of this project, the center would support and disseminate curriculum development resources and scholarship on local studies of religion in Silicon Valley and eventually other regions of the country.

