The division’s executive committee recently had a discussion about a public comment APA made on a proposed governmental rule. The issue raised by one of the division officers was that the proposed rule centrally addressed religious considerations but yet our division had not been consulted in considering APA’s position or response to the proposed rule. I consulted with the APA leadership and found out that APA staff had issued the response with the help of a number of interest groups within APA and they acknowledged that they had not thought to consult us in the process. They expressed regret over this omission and a desire to keep us in the loop in the future.

The situation led me to reflect a bit on the role our division has historically played in APA and what role it should play in the future. Some have argued that contemporary psychology has a secular bias that leads to covert or overt discrimination against religion. This is the theme of a new edited book by Cummings, Donahue, and Cummings (2009) titled Psychology’s war on religion. The book contains chapters written by some of our division members. While I believe I have witnessed anti-religious bias in the field, my focus in this article is another direction. Whatever the truth may be about the bias against our division’s subject matter within psychology, there are promising developments that suggest a new level of acceptance and openness within contemporary psychology to the psychology of religion. These include the APA publication of our division journal, Psychology of Religion & Spirituality, the publication of numerous area texts and training videos by APA, and increasing engagement of our members within APA organizational affairs.

I would like to suggest that a major factor in the frequent inclusion of psychologists of religion only, at best, as an afterthought in the formation of task forces, working groups, preparing amicus curiae briefs, or organizational public comments on governmental policies, is that psychologists of religion have often not been proactive in engaging APA on these matters. Other interest groups within APA frequently monitor relevant advocacy concerns and offer to help APA staff become aware of relevant studies and considerations in drafting a response. In many cases, they even offer suggested language for these responses. My perception is that psychologists of religion have not frequently taken such a proactive
stance. I suspect that if we were to do this in the same helpful way that such input and influence is often provided by other interest groups, APA would welcome our new role within the organization.

A commitment to advocacy is vital to our professional and disciplinary identity as psychologists. APA offers training workshops in advocacy. Each year, our delegates to the APA Educational Leadership Conference are given the opportunity to participate in advocacy visits to the congress regarding various issues of concern to psychology. I have had the opportunity to do that several times now and was gratified to see a senator agree to co-sponsor a bill after a group of us visited his office requesting his assistance. One body of professional psychology training programs, the National Council of Schools and Programs in Professional Psychology, has considered making advocacy a core competency in the psychology training. We do our science and practice our profession in social contexts that are dramatically shaped by governmental and institutional politics. Effective advocacy skills are not only vital to advancing our own self-interest but also to helping meet the needs of our service recipients.

So I believe advocacy is a relevant and important competency to be inculcated among psychologists of religion. What stand should our division take on particular governmental policies or issues facing psychology? That is where things get more complicated. Division 36 is a non-sectarian organization of psychologists interested in the scientific study of religion and spirituality. Our organizational mission is not to function as an ‘interest group’ for religion per se although we are a voice for many psychologists that have religious interests. Even if we were to attempt to represent religion, it would not be clear what position we should take on any particular issue since so many divergent faith traditions and worldviews are represented among our members. Yet there are some things that we can appropriately do as a division. We can help to ensure that a more sophisticated and self-aware engagement of the relevant religious-spiritual domain is present when APA engages topics that intersect that domain. We can also invite our members to be active participants in the advocacy process by keeping up with relevant issues. Most state psychological associations have advocacy coordinators and many have advocacy listserves. APA’s government relations office has a link to various advocacy webpages within the organization including those related science, practice and public interest (http://www.apa.org/ppo). APA often has advocacy training workshops at its convention.

Psychology of religion is an important and vitally relevant facet of the contemporary science and profession of psychology. If we want to ensure that our discipline does not undervalue our particular expertise, both clinical and scientific, let’s assume now our rightful place within the profession as advocates for our domain. We have already been invited to this role by virtue of our presence within the organization as members and as an APA division. It’s time for us to just show up at the party.

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**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**The Individual And Religion**

The APA Council of Representatives met in Washington, D.C. on February 19–22, 2009. APA President James Bray opened council by introducing his presidential theme: The Future of Psychology. The president’s intent is to address current issues in the practice of psychology and identify models and policies for the future of psychology practice. The 2009 Presidential Summit on the Future of Psychology Practice will be held to engage the broad practice community, addressing health services practice, practice in organizations, and psychology economics. Specifically, Dr. Bray suggested four principles for the future of psychology practice: (1) From mental health to healthcare providers: Integrated healthcare; (2) Integrating technology into practice; (3) Meeting the needs of our diverse society; and (4) Apply basic and applied scientific evidence to inform our practice.

Norman Anderson, CEO of APA also gave introductory comments. He noted that this council meeting was one of the most important council meetings in the history of APA, because of a focus on advancing the organization in the midst of budgetary challenges, and also because of APA’s ongoing strategic planning process. Last year’s budget closed with an estimated $3.4 million dollar deficit, and the proposed budget for the current year included a number of drastic cuts to maintain a small projected surplus. CFO Archie Turner reassured council that APA has solid financial footing in the form of our real estate assets, which have held their value even in the current real estate market and have long-term leases that contribute a substantial amount to APA’s income. Council voted to approve a 2009 budget that reflected many cuts, including a hiring freeze at headquarters, cancellation of the fall Consolidated Meetings, and suspension for one year of CEMR-RAT-2 and Interdivisional Grants programs and the Board of Director and Council discretionary funds. An effort was made to make cuts that would not directly impact the membership of APA.

The format of the APA Convention was also a topic of animated discussion this year. President Bray has spearheaded a “convention within the convention” at the upcoming meeting in Toronto. It will run from Friday afternoon through Sunday morning, and will include themed tracks of programming. Another change at the upcoming convention is a Community Day in which APA will be giving back to the hosting community. This year, the focus of the Community Day will be on the role of families in preventing and adapting to HIV/AIDS. In collaboration with NIMH, workshops will be held for community leaders in local community organizations. Of particular relevance to our members is that spirituality will be represented among the keynote speakers of the conference. Francis Collins, former director of the Human Genome Project, will be speaking on a topic related to his interest in genetics, behavior, and spirituality. A number of specific suggestions were also offered by council representatives regarding ways of meeting the needs of members who attend the annual convention, and how to attract members who do not. Please let your council representatives know what your convention experience is like, so you can be well represented at council.

An ongoing business item has to do with fee reductions for dual memberships. Historically, members with memberships in other science organizations have received a discount on their APA dues. Invoking fairness, it has been proposed that APA members who are also members of state, provincial, and territorial organizations also receive a dues discount. However, another proposal is that the perception of fairness be dealt with by
doing away with the discounts for membership in science organizations. Given the current financial situation and the implications for APA’s budget, the decision has not yet been made. Once again, if you have opinions on this matter, please contact your representatives.

To end on a positive note, as part of the ongoing strategic planning process, and after much animated discussion on council floor about wording, council voted to approve APA’s new vision statement:

The American Psychological Association aspires to excel as a valuable, effective and influential organization advancing psychology as a science, serving as:

A uniting force for the discipline;
The major catalyst for the stimulation, growth and dissemination of psychological science and practice;
The primary resource for all psychologists;
The premier innovator in the education, development, and training of psychological scientists, practitioners and educators;
The leading advocate for psychological knowledge and practice informing policy makers and the public to improve public policy and daily living;
A principal leader and global partner promoting psychological knowledge and methods to facilitate the resolution of personal, societal and global challenges in diverse, multicultural and international contexts; and
An effective champion of the application of psychology to promote human rights, health, well being and dignity.

This report emphasized the highlights of the meeting; if you are interested in viewing a more detailed draft of the minutes, please e-mail Liz Hall (liz.hall@biola.edu). Thank you for the opportunity of serving you as Council representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Journal Offers

In addition to receiving Psychology of Religion and Spirituality as part of your membership (beginning in the Spring of 2009), the following offers are available to Division 36 members.

• The Division has signed a contract with Taylor & Francis to offer subscriptions to their journal Mental Health, Religion, & Culture at a discount. The subscription rate is £38/US$65 for the 6 issues of the 2007 volume and £48/US$80 for the 8 issues of the 2008 volume. The standard rate for 2008 will be $276, so this is a substantial discount.

• Lawrence Erlbaum Associates is pleased to offer members of Division 36 and members of the International Association for the Psychology of Religion a special discounted subscription to The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion. The discount is 20% off the regular price and includes online access as well as print. For more information about the journal, log on to: https://www.erlbaum.com/shop/tek9.asp?pg=products&specific=1050-8619. This page does not mention the discount — in order to make sure you receive it, contact the publisher at either journals@erlbaum.com or by phone at (800) 926-6579.

• Brill Academic Publishers is pleased to similarly offer a discount of 25% to members of Division 36 off the regular price of the Archive for the Psychology of Religion (Archiv fur Religionspsychologie): Yearbook of the International Association for the Psychology of Religion. Mention code 43620 when ordering; contact orders@brill.nl; or orders@brillusa.com for orders from North America.
APA DIVISION 36 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 16, 2008

In attendance:
Lisa Miller (president); Ralph Piedmont (past president journal editor); William Hathaway (president); Michael Donahue (secretary); Marsha Cutting (treasurer); Jim Casebolt (website manager); Gabriel Di-Liacco (member-at-large); Innocent Okozi (student representative); Brian McCorkle (member at large); Liz Hall (council representative); Mary Reuder (council rep)

I. Membership report: a report by Glen Moriarty was presented
   A. New membership brochures have been printed to reflect the change in dues.
   B. An online payment form for dues has strong backing by the divisions, and is being developed by APA.
   C. Glen is developing an online environment for our membership through is company, NIXTY.
   D. Div 36 was one of only 8 APA divisions to grow this past year.
   E. Grand total membership through June 2008 was 1036.
   F. Ray Paloutzian has negotiated a deal with the new publisher of The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion, Routledge, such that division members will receive a thirty percent discount for individual subscriptions for IJPR, Mental Health, Religion & Culture, and Archiv für Religionspsychologie.

II. APA Boston National Convention Report
   A. 110 submissions
   B. 14 program hours for our division, as with others of similar size

III. New Initiatives within APA & Division 36/APA interface
   A. There has been a request that each division donate program time to enable cross-divisional “convention-within-convention” program.
      1. It was noted that such procedures in the past have not benefitted smaller divisions.
      2. Division 36 has in the past been tossed into a “miscellaneous” category that has made it difficult to present topics of interest to us.
      3. It was moved and passed that our division would not participate.
   B. From the council reps:
      1. APA has issued and Council has “received” a report on the psychological effects of abortion. The text is rigorous in its examination of the research, examining 70 and rejecting 69 for flawed methodology, but then concludes that “The best scientific evidence published [a single study] indicates that among adult women who have an unplanned pregnancy the [sic; emphasis in original] relative risk of mental health problems is no greater if they have a single elective first-time abortion than if they deliver that pregnancy” (Major et al., executive summary, lines 162–165).
      2. APA has been involved in a strategic planning process to develop a mission statement. After struggling with each individual division wanting to get in their say, they settled on “The mission of the APA is to advance..."
the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives."

3. Psychologists will be included, for the first time, in the development of the International Classification of Diseases. (DSM is a for-profit venture; this is not)

IV. New and Ongoing Initiatives with Division 36

A. Drs. Hathaway, McMinn, Pargament, and Shafranske are working on a set of practice guidelines to be recommended by APA for working with religious and spiritual issues in therapy
   1. They are working to distill the results of 25 semi-structured half hour interviews with relevant clinicians down to 4 or 5 guidelines, based on recommendations agreed to by at least a third of the practitioners.
   2. Fuller report of the interviews will be made available for teaching and other purposes.

B. Liz Hall has been approached by representatives of Division 44 (LGB) about the possibility of presenting joint educational sessions on issues of common concern.

C. There is continuing work to get Division 36 involved in the general decision-making processes of the APA; we are generally consulted, if at all, as an afterthought.
   1. This might include inclusion of Division 36 members on standing APA committees.
   2. Alan Kasdin, APA president, e-mailed Bill Hathaway about a divisional initiative on religion and global climate change, e.g., within the context of Pargament’s sanctification/desecration framework.

D. Innocent Okozi reported on a social networking meeting between students from divisions 36 and 17 (counseling).
   1. It was noted that APAGS now has a voting member of the APA executive council.
   2. Innocent suggested that Division 36 students would like to see a similar arrangement for Division 36; Bill Hathaway suggested that he should submit a formal proposal to that effect which could be considered by the division executive committee.

V. Website, ListServe, and Newsletter

A. Separate student mailing lists and social networking site now exist.
B. Mailing list now exist for the executive committee.
C. There is work toward a “announcement only” listerv so that all members can be informed of the posting of the newsletter, reminded of the elections and by-law ballots, etc.
D. The previous issues of the Div 36 newsletters have been added to the website. There was some problem with server space; Patrick Bennett will be in contact with APA [As of this writing, the archive has all but the first three volumes of the newsletter.]
E. Need to make sure the process of updating.
F. New news for the newsletter
   1. Jamie Aten is the new newsletter editor.
   2. Ed Shafranske is now the Fellows chair.
3. Crystal Parks is the awards chair.
4. Certificates of appreciation will be distributed to Patrick Bennett, David Wulf, and Ralph Hood, the former officers in these positions for their hard work; Bill Hathaway will take the lead on that.

VI. Midwinter Conference
   A. Successful conference which turned a profit ($3100).
   B. 214 attendees
   C. Half of the profit can go into speaker fees; the rest was turned over in the Division in the form of a check.
   D. Next year will be the 7th annual midyear conference.
   E. Proposal was presented and passed that the Division will sponsor the conference for the next five years.
   F. Proposal was presented and passed that a line item will be added to the budget of the conference, $3,000, half from Loyola, half from the Division, to defray the costs of service personnel and similar support by Loyola of the conference. (Loyola’s half would thus basically be bookkeeping for them).
   G. Suggestions were elicited on how to get more people from further away (e.g., in the land where radio station call letters begin with “K”) to attend the meetings.
   H. Students who volunteer 8 or more hours at the convention (already) have their registration fees waved.
   I. Conference surveys indicate that registration fees for the conference are (comparatively) low.

VII. Division Journal
   A. Psychology of Religion and Spirituality now exists [it was listed on the most recent APA journal subscription mailing].
   B. APA produced a “sample” issue, including old APA articles, to show format and typical content.
   C. A wine and cheese “launching” of the journal was hosted by APA at the convention.
   D. 23 submissions.
   E. March 2009 release date of the first issue.
   F. Reviewers needed.
   G. Proposal submitted and passed that the Division’s publications board should consist of the past president, president-elect, journal editor, newsletter editor, and an elected member, with two-year terms, and the elected member being a nonvoting member of the exec committee. The President and journal editor will develop wording for a by-laws change to be submitted to membership.

VIII. Treasurer’s Report
   A. We’re in the black.
   B. Money market funds increased notably [as of the time of the meeting].
   C. Due to hosting by Danielsen Institute of Boston University, there were no costs associated with the social hour.
The APA Council of Representatives met in Boston on August 13 and 17, 2008. Dr. Norman Anderson, CEO, gave his report to Council. The strategic planning process, begun at the last council meeting, has continued under the direction of McKinley Marketing, a consulting firm specializing in large nonprofit organizations. They have been using multiple methods of data collection, from cross-groups of stakeholders in APA. The goal is to develop updated mission and vision statements for the organization that would represent consensus on overarching goals for APA. This is a challenging task, given the diversity of APA members. Some progress toward this goal was met during this council session, and a revised mission statement was approved by a majority of council.

An update on the Web Rebuild was also given. It is almost finished. Previews were given to Council members. A new feature area allows for review of top stories related to psychology. There is also a new section for careers, with job search and salary information. New search features include results from both the website and APA’s databases, and the inclusion of many sophisticated features to narrow the search.

A number of task force reports were received by Council this meeting which may be of interest to our division membership, and will be made available on the APA website. These include:

- “Resilience in African American Children and Adolescents: A Vision for Optimal Development”
- “Teaching, Learning, and Assessing in a Developmentally Coherent Curriculum”
- “Disseminating Evidence-Based Practice for Children and Adolescents: A Systems Approach to Enhancing Care”
- “Final Report of the Task Force on Recommending Changes to the APA Convention That Would Appeal to Scientists”
- “Report of the Task Force on Gender Identity and Gender Variance.”

The most controversial of the received reports was the “Report of the Task Force on Mental Health and Abortion.” While members of the task force argued for the political neutrality of the document, council also heard from a reviewer who stated that the conclusions drawn were, in fact, politicized in favor of a pro-choice position. Specifically, while the document argues strongly that the research done to date does not support clear conclusions regarding the psychological effects of abortion, the report then goes on to actually give conclusions. The document was received by Council based on a majority vote in favor. However, both representatives of Division 36 voted against it, on the basis that the interpretive framework of the Task Force did not take into account research results supporting alternative conclusions.

With respect to the budget, the current economic downturn has resulted in some loss in member dues revenue and sales of the Publication Manual. APA will be tightening expenditures in order to adjust to the loss in income. However, our assets remain strong, with a net increase in one million dollars over the past year. In addition, a refinance of...
our real estate investments has resulted in an estimated savings of 3.3 million over the
next few years. Overall, APA continues to be in an excellent position financially. Council
approved an annual inflationary dues increase of $8 to the member dues ($279 to $287)
and $1 to the graduate student affiliate fee ($51 to $52).

Council voted to provide budgetary monies to support a psychologist to contribute to
the revision of the Mental Health chapter of the International Classification of Diseases
and Related Disorders (ICD). This individual will work full time in Geneva as part of
the core revision team in the World Health Organization, through the anticipated comple-
tion of the ICD revision in 2012. This is the first time that a psychologist will be involved
in working on this chapter of the ICD; in the past the development of this diagnostic sys-
tem has been dominated by psychiatry. It should also be noted that the ICD is the most
widely-used diagnostic system in the world. The invitation to participate on this team
demonstrates the increased visibility of and respect for psychology (and for APA) at the
international level.

This report emphasized the highlights of the meeting; if you are interested in viewing
a more detailed draft of the minutes, please e-mail Liz Hall (liz.hall@biola.edu). Thank
you for the opportunity of serving you as Council representatives.

CALL FOR 2010 AWARD NOMINATIONS

Please submit nominations for the following awards for the year 2010 (selected in 2009)
to: Crystal L. Park, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, University of Connecticut, Storrs,
CT 06269; email: crystal.park@uconn.edu or crysdrara@aol.com

Please note that the deadline for many of the award nominations is April 15th, 2009.
This reflects an extension of the traditional March 31st deadline to accommodate publication
delays.

1. William C. Bier Award

This award is offered annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contri-
bution through publication and professional activity to the dissemination of findings
on religious and allied issues or who has made a notable contribution to the integra-
tion of these findings with those of other disciplines, notably philosophy, sociology,
and anthropology.

The recipient is presented with a plaque at the Division’s annual meeting.
Deadline for nominations: April 15th.

2. William James Award

This award is offered every three years to an individual who has made an outstanding
contribution through publication and professional activity to basic research and the-
ory in the psychology of religion and related areas.

The recipient is presented with a plaque at the Division’s annual meeting.
Deadline for nominations: April 15th.

3. Distinguished Service Award

This award is offered to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to
Division 36 through service and leadership.
Recipients are presented with a plaque at the Division’s annual meeting. Deadline for nominations: April 15th.

4. Margaret Gorman Early Career Award

The award is offered to an individual whose innovative research in the psychology of religion is marked by scholarly excellence and has implications for theory, practice, or further research. The recipient of the award must have completed the doctoral degree within ten years of the submission deadline.

The recipient will be presented with a plaque at the Division’s annual meeting. Deadline for nominations: April 15th.

5. Virginia Sexton Mentoring Award

This award is offered to individuals who have contributed to the psychology of religion by mentoring individuals who themselves have become active in the field.

Recipients are presented with a plaque at the Division’s annual meeting. Deadline for nominations: April 15th.

6. Research Seed Grant

This grant is awarded to provide recognition and assistance to scholars in the psychology of religion who are in the early stages of their careers. Applicants should be engaged in graduate study or have completed the doctoral degree or terminal master’s degree within the past five years. The proposed research should address a significant issue in the psychology of religion, show sophistication in research methods and design, and promise to make a contribution to theory, further research, or practice. Proposals must be no longer than 10 double-spaced typed pages and should indicate the purpose of the proposed study and its significance for the psychology of religion. They should also describe the research design and indicate how the grant, if awarded, will be used.

Awards up to $1000 will be granted and winning proposals will be described in the Division 36 Newsletter. Deadlines for application: June 30th.

Apply directly to the President of the Division, Bill Hathaway.
## DIVISION 36 WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS AND STUDENT AFFILIATES

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MYC 7th Annual

Mid-Year Conference
On Religion & Spirituality
April 3 & 4
Pre-Conference April 2
2009

Loyola College in Maryland Department of Pastoral Counseling
& Division 36 (Psychology of Religion) of the
American Psychological Association
Application for Membership — APA Division 36

Name: ______________________________________________________________________
  Last     First                 Middle Initial
Street Address: _________________________________________________________________
City, State, & ZIP Code: _________________________________________________________
E-mail: _______________________________________________________________________
Home Phone: _________________________ Office Phone: ____________________________
Are you an APA member: □ Yes □ No
If yes, APA Member Number: ___________________________________________________

Status sought in Division 36 (check one)
□ Member □ Associate
□ Professional Affiliate □ Student Affiliate

Payment of $40 membership fee ($30 for Student Affiliates)
□ I have enclosed my check for my membership fee (Make checks payable to APA Divisions)
□ Please charge my credit card for the fee:
  □ Visa □ MasterCard □ American Express

Card Number _________________________________________________________________
Expiration Date: __________________________ Security Code: ________________
Cardholder Name: _____________________________________________________________
Billing Address: ______________________________________________________________
Authorized Signature: __________________________________________________________
Date: _________________________________________________________________________

Fax application to 202-218-3599 or mail to APA Division Services Office
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
Our Mission...

Division 36 – Psychology of Religion,

- promotes the application of psychological research methods and interpretive frameworks to diverse forms of religion and spirituality;

- encourages the incorporation of the results of such work into clinical and other applied settings;

- and fosters constructive dialogue and interchange between psychological study and practice, on the one hand, and religious perspectives and institutions on the other.

The division is strictly nonsectarian and welcomes the participation of all persons, without regard to personal faith, who view religion as a significant factor in human functioning.

The division’s quarterly Newsletter contains original articles, book reviews, announcements, and news of interest to division members.

PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: Jamie D. Aten, Ph.D., The University of Southern Mississippi

The Newsletter is the official publication of the American Psychological Association Division 36, Psychology of Religion. The Newsletter invites articles, interviews, book reviews and announcements relevant to the interdisciplinary focus of psychology and religion.

Editorial inquiries should be addressed to:
Jamie D. Aten, Ph.D., Editor
Email: Jamie.Aten@usm.edu
Phone: (601) 266-6246