

# ATS welcomes new Associate members and Affiliates and elects new officers, boards, and committees

The ATS membership admitted five new Associate members and granted Affiliate status to four organizations during the last week of June at its Biennial Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. These actions bring the number of member schools in the Association to 275 and the number of Affiliates to 35.



L to R: Peter Spitaler, Villanova University Department of Theology and Religion; Alan Ehler, Southeastern University College of Christian Ministries and Religion; Therese Lysaught, Loyola Institute of Pastoral Studies; Jason Hiles, Anna Faith Smith, and Dan Diffey, Grand Canyon Theological Seminary; and Jonathan Grenz, Palm Beach Atlantic University School of Ministry.

## ***Associate members***

Schools initially join the Association as Associate members upon a vote by the membership at its Biennial Meeting in even-numbered years. Within five years, Associate members are expected to pursue Candidate for Accredited Membership through the Commission on Accrediting. Once a school has completed the requirements of the Commission on Accrediting, it is recognized with Accredited Membership.

The ATS Board of Directors presented five candidates for Associate membership, all of whom were admitted:

**Grand Canyon Theological Seminary** at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Arizona, is the graduate division of the College of Theology, one of eight colleges within Grand Canyon University. Grand Canyon is an interdenominational university that was founded in 1949 and

has held for-profit status since 2004. The seminary, which graduated its first students in 2010, has an enrollment of 585 and offers a 38-credit, fully online Master of Arts in Christian Studies as well as a 90-credit, mostly online Master of Divinity with 12 credits of residential intensives. Its eight core faculty are augmented by an additional seven faculty from the College of Theology who teach part-time in the graduate seminary.

**Loyola University Chicago—Institute of Pastoral Studies** in Chicago, Illinois, is an embedded Roman Catholic graduate program that was founded in 1964. IPS offers six graduate degrees: a 72-credit Master of Divinity, a 60-credit Master of Counseling, a 36-credit Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies, a 36-credit Master of Arts in Spirituality, a 36-credit Master of Arts in Social Justice, and a 36-credit Master of Arts in Health Care Mission Leadership, as well as several certificate programs.

Current head count enrollment is 212, served by a faculty of nine. IPS previously joined ATS as an Associate Member in 1998, received initial accreditation in 2000, and withdrew in 2006 because the Commission standards were not a good fit at the time. Subsequent to the revision of the standards, IPS chose to apply again for Associate Membership.

**Palm Beach Atlantic University School of Ministry Graduate Department** in West Palm Beach, Florida, was founded by Baptist pastors and lay persons in 1968. The university launched its fully residential, 72-credit MDiv program in 2013 and, more recently, added a Master of Arts in Christian Studies. The current enrollment of 33 students is served by a core faculty of six.

**Southeastern University College of Christian Ministries and Religion—Department of Graduate Studies** in Lakeland, Florida, is one of six colleges within the university. The institution's earliest history dates to 1935, and it became a Christian liberal arts university in 2005—the same year it began offering its first graduate degree within the College of Christian Ministries and Religion. Affiliated with the Assemblies of God, Southeastern's Department of Graduate Studies currently offers a 36-hour MA in Ministerial Leadership, a 48-hour MA in Theological Studies, and a 72-hour Master of Divinity. All three degrees may be completed either completely online, completely in residential format, or using some combination of the two. The current graduate-level enrollment of 118 is served by a core faculty of six.

**Villanova University Department of Theology and Religious Studies** in Villanova, Pennsylvania, maintains a graduate program in the Augustinian tradition. The Department offers two graduate degrees: a 36-hour Master of Arts degree and a 48-hour Master of Theological Studies degree. The MA can be combined with a departmental or extra-departmental certificate or with a second master's degree in a related or different discipline. The Department has also received approval to offer an 87-hour joint Master of Theological Studies/Doctor of Philosophy degree program that will launch

in the fall. The current enrollment of 45 is served by six core faculty.

## ***Affiliates***

The membership also granted Affiliate status to four organizations. Affiliate status is granted to organizations with a substantial interest in theological education in the Christian or Jewish traditions but not involved in educational programs leading to a degree, as well as to institutions offering graduate theological degrees related to identifiable communities of faith other than the Christian and Jewish faiths. Current Affiliate organizations include schools associated with the Buddhist, Muslim, Unitarian, and Unification faiths.

**The Hispanic Theological Initiative/Hispanic Theological Initiative Consortium** in Princeton, New Jersey, is a coalition of 23 PhD-granting institutions designed to cultivate Latino/a PhDs for leadership in the academy, the church, and the world by increasing recruitment and retention, increasing the presence of Latino/a faculty, and providing a forum for exchange of information, ideas, and best practices. The Initiative is 20 years old, and the Consortium was formed in 2007.

**The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development** in Verona, New Jersey, works to catalyze a transition to sustainable human society through the active leadership of faith communities, with focus on the Interfaith Eco Seminary Engagement Project that promotes courses for seminarians on faith and the environment. It does this work by convening virtual and live meetings, sharing syllabi, and distributing reports on faith and ecology.

**Mentored Apprenticeship Program of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (MAP.EPC)** in Ottawa, Kansas, seeks to augment ATS-accredited seminary academic preparation with supplemental character development and practical experience. The MAP.EPC uses qualified mentors in approved EPC churches and desires to network with other denominations and with a wider range of theological seminaries in the development of its program.

**University of the West** in Rosemead, California, is a private, nonprofit, non-sectarian, coeducational university offering undergraduate, graduate, certificate, and continuing education programs with a mission to provide a Whole Person Education in a context informed by Buddhist wisdom and values and to facilitate cultural understanding and appreciation between East and West. It offers an MA and a PhD in religious studies as well as a Master of Divinity and Doctor of Buddhist Ministry.

For more information about Associate membership, contact [Lori Neff LaRue](#). For more information about Affiliate status, contact [Eliza Smith Brown](#).

### **Officers, boards, and committees**

The membership also elected new officers and board members for the Association and the Commission on Accrediting as well as dozens of individuals to serve on various committees.

Newly elected public board members include **Nancy Bunce**, a Pittsburgh consultant, and **Gary Simpson**, pastor of Concord Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York. Other new board members include **Doris Garcia** of Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, **Vergel Lattimore** of Hood Theological Seminary, and **Mark Young** of Denver Seminary.

**Deborah F. Mullen** of Columbia Theological Seminary and **Barbara E. Reid** of Catholic Theological Union were both elected for second terms on the board.

Nine additional board members will continue in unexpired terms. The [full roster](#) is listed on the ATS website.

On the Commission side, **Harry Gardner** of Acadia Divinity College was elected chair, **Leanne Van Dyk** of Columbia Theological Seminary was elected vice chair and treasurer, and **Gregory Heille** of Aquinas Institute of Theology was elected Commission representative to the ATS Board of Directors.

Newly elected institutional commissioners include: **Rene Espinosa** of Oblate School of Theology; **Todd Lajiness** of Sacred Heart Major Seminary; **Oliver McMahan** of

## **Janet Clark is the newly elected president of ATS**



Janet Clark of Tyndale University College & Seminary will serve as the president of ATS during the 2016–2018 biennium, with Brian Blount of Union Presbyterian Seminary as vice president, Sharon Tan of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities as secretary, and Kurt Gabbard of Princeton Theological Seminary as treasurer. Immediate past president James Hudnut-Beumler of Vanderbilt University will chair the Coordinating Committee.

Pentecostal Theological Seminary; **Shawn Oliver** of Princeton Theological Seminary; and **Arch Wong** of Ambrose Seminary of Ambrose University.

Four public members of the Board of Commissioners were also elected: **Edward Delgado** of Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos in Compton, California; **Charla Long**, principal and senior consultant of Go Long Consulting in Franklin, Tennessee; **Marianne Mount**, president of Catholic Distance University in Charles Town, West Virginia; and **Frederick J. (Jerry) Streets**, senior pastor of Dixwell Avenue Congregational United Church of Christ in New Haven, Connecticut, who will serve a second term.

Eight additional Commissioners will continue in unexpired terms. The [full roster](#) is listed on the ATS website.

Individuals were also elected to the following committees: Audit Committee, Committee on Race and Ethnicity (CORE), Women in Leadership (WIL) Advisory Committee, *Theological Education* Editorial Board, Student Data and Resources Advisory Committee, Faculty Development Advisory Committee, and Research and Data Advisory Committee.

A full list of [individuals elected to ATS committees](#) is available on the ATS website.