

Introduction Video Developed for GMU

We have recently developed a clip that features GMU President, Gerald Grudzen, Ph.D. explaining the global reach of Global Ministries University and our unique approach to online theological and interfaith education.

[We invite you to view this excellent GMU Introduction Video.](#)

GMU is unique in many ways, for example, its user-friendly method of study, contemporary theology, as well as the flexibility given to complete coursework:

Method of Study

Our method of study is self-directive, allowing students to complete assignments at their own pace. Assignments are typically essay-type, which allows each individual to express and channel the learning process in a direction that will best nurture their personal spiritual growth and ministry training. Furthermore, course performance is not measured by memorization and tests but, rather, on how well the concepts of the assignments are grasped.

Contemporary Theology

Unlike universities of a particular denomination, GMU does not require students to believe certain tenets in order to pass courses or earn a degree or certificate. In fact, we offer many thought-provoking courses that are based on the latest research pertaining to church history and Scripture, such as Exploring the Identity and Role of Jesus, Jewish Midrash and the Gospels, and Progressive Christianity, which is based on a DVD rather than a textbook.

Flexible Schedule

Many students selected our university because we allow them to work at their own pace. There are virtually no deadlines, no waiting for registration dates, which means they are able to complete and submit assignments at a slow pace if coursework needs to be worked into a busy schedule or they can also progress as fast as they are capable of completing the assignments.

GMU is indeed unique and we continue to look for new ways to serve our students and provide them with relevant, interesting, up-to-date curriculum.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On April 26, 2014 I will be speaking at the Pacifica Institute in Sunnyvale, CA about a new book that three faculty members of the Global Ministries University have coauthored entitled *Spiritual Paths to an Ethical and Ecological Global Civilization* (Pacem in Terris Press: 2013). The principal



authors are Doctor John Raymaker and myself along with Doctor Joseph Holland of St. Thomas University in Miami, Florida. Pacifica Institute is an interfaith organization located in several parts of California and affiliated internationally with the Gulen Movement founded by the Turkish Muslim Imam, Fethulah Gulen. In our book mentioned above we discuss the role of interfaith movements which contribute to a greater understanding between Christians and Muslims as well as with those who practice eastern religious traditions such as Buddhism. The Gulen Movement has been a leading voice for interfaith understanding throughout the 100 countries in which it has a presence and its founder, Fethullah Gulen, is featured in our book.

Over the past five years Global Ministries University has sponsored or cosponsored interfaith conferences and seminars in California, Bangladesh, Turkey, and recently in Kenya. Several members of our Global Ministries faculty will return to Mombasa, Kenya this coming August to participate in interfaith workshops cosponsored with the Coast Council of Interfaith Clerics, the Muslim Respect Foundation and in consultation with the Bishop Hanington Institute of Theology and Development in Mombasa. Students who attend our seminars in Mombasa and take part in yearlong educational interfaith projects will be eligible for a new interfaith Master's degree program that we have developed for Kenya and East Africa but also available for our students in the United States and other parts of the world. As a global university, Global Ministries University now has students and faculty located in many parts of the world including Europe and Africa in addition to the US and Canada.

Just prior to my talk at the Pacifica Institute, I will be interviewed for an upcoming series of programs scheduled for Turkish television on our work with the Gulen Movement in California and Kenya. Kenya has experienced a series of violent incidents in the past year and tensions have risen over an attack on a major commercial center in Nairobi and violent incidents in Mombasa targeting churches and Muslim leaders. We are continuing to work with several possible sponsors for our work in Kenya including the American College Alumni of Louvain University and private donors who have agreed to work with us on this project. We are seeking other donors to assist us in the interfaith education we are doing in Kenya and other parts of the world. We want to establish a scholarship fund for students from Africa and others parts of the developing world. We will be happy to contact you if you are interested in supporting our interfaith education projects.

Gerald Grudzen, Ph.D., President

MEET OUR FACULTY

Sibyl “Dana” Reynolds, M.Th., holds a Master of Theology in Pastoral Ministry, teaches several courses related to sacred arts for Global Ministries University, and is the Mentor of the Master of Theology in Sacred Arts degree program. She is also a Spiritual Director, award-winning Author, Visual Artist and the Founder of [Sacred Life Arts](#).



Dana is passionate about making the sacred visible through the weaving of spiritual practices, prayer, and creatively inspired forms of communication and nurtures connections between soul work and creative self-expression. For the past twenty years, she has been a facilitator for the feminine spiritual/creative process. Her work is informed by the importance of themes drawn from her study and research of the lives of medieval women including; pilgrimage, monasticism, art, craft, and mysticism.

Dana encourages creative expression through journal-keeping and writing. She is the author of the historical novel, [Ink and Honey](#), named the 2013 Independent Publishers Illuminations (exemplary Christian writing) Book Award, Gold Medal Winner for General Fiction.

Ordained in the Catholic tradition, Dana offers methods to enrich spirituality and daily life through prayer, journaling, contemplative devotion, and sacred ritual. She is featured in director Jules Hart’s recent documentary, *Pink Smoke Over the Vatican*, a film about the ordination of women in the Catholic Church.

Her Masters Degree of Theology in Pastoral Ministry, training as a Spiritual Director, and background in Religious Studies and Visual Arts are foundational for her Sacred Life-Artisan online classes. The importance of pilgrimage as a theme for the spiritual journey has inspired her to lead journeys to Chartres Cathedral and sacred places in the natural world.

A sensuist, Dana, incorporates an appreciation for the six senses into her teaching and spiritual direction practice. She believes taste, touch, smell, hearing, sight, and intuition are conduits to the Divine and portals to the sacred imagination. The three varying facets of her passion and experience: the value of ancient mystical wisdom, the merging of spirituality with everyday life, and the importance of creative expression, yield inspiration for the human spirit throughout her work.

Dana enjoys weaving, icon writing, and contemplative photography. She is a mother and grandmother and lives with husband in North Central Texas.

STUDENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Ryan Wilski is a student in the Global Ministries University Master of Theology in Sacred Music Degree Program. He initially enrolled in the mini-certificate program, then changed to the Graduate Certificate in Sacred Music and recently decided to earn a master’s degree. He currently holds an Associate and Bachelor of Science in Library and Information Services from the University of Maine.

Ryan is a high baritone and loves singing classical music along with sacred music. He uses the Italian Bel Canto technique of singing and would like to be a voice teacher teaching this technique. He would also like to be a professional cantor, a church soloist, or a choir director.

Currently, he is a professional soloist and choir member at First Presbyterian Church of Pontiac, Michigan and will be doing an Easter celebration with a mini orchestra singing well known anthems of the Presbyterian Church. He also sings with the Oakland Choral Society of Michigan, which will be performing Haydn’s Creation this spring, as well as the Orchard Lake Community Church, singing Requiem for the Living by Dan Forrest with the choir.

Ryan asserts that he is looking forward to finishing his degree and acquiring an abundance of knowledge of musical history, past, present, and future, and how it relates to the sacred music in the church. He comments, *“Thank you for this wonderful opportunity in receiving a music degree that is flexible and teaching the important facets of the secular realm and its relation to music. I would very much so recommend this college to pursue a church ministry degree to spread peace and Christian faith and values so that we all feel the Holy Spirit and live as God teaches and preaches to treat our fellow man.”*

Ryan is single, lives in West Bloomfield, Michigan, and, though he sings in churches of various denominations, is a Roman Catholic.

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Global Ministries University invites you to show your support for our unique and inclusive online learning institution that offers courses to equip people from a variety of faith traditions to minister with integrity, competence, and professionalism. **Become a Friend of GMU Now!**

Send feedback, comments, and/or questions to Jean Conley, editor and Vice-President for Operations and Development, [Global Ministries University](#)