

The Many Faces of GMU – A Diverse, Inclusive Student Body



GMU has students from all over the world, from all walks of life, from all faiths. In addition to our U.S. students, we also have had students from Scotland, Ireland, Poland, Australia, England, Kenya, Canada, Norway, to name a few.

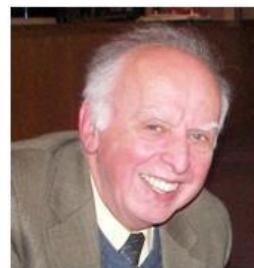
- Applicants are ministers, educators, counselors, chaplains, executives, nurses, financial planners, engineers, and so on.
- A great number of them come into their program with one or more master degrees or a doctoral degree.
- Most of our students are preparing for some kind of ministry or wish to enhance their ministerial background. There are others who simply want the personal enrichment.
- Popular areas of study are Scripture, contemporary Christianity, Peace, and world religions.
- Most students are Christian but, because we are an interfaith university, we also attract students of other faiths and those individuals who are not connected with any religious group.

GMU offers something for everyone; and is particularly sought after by those individuals who would like the freedom to create and adhere to their own belief system. We are unique in this respect. Our Vision/Mission Statement summarizes the basis for our diversity very succinctly:

Global Ministries University affirms a vision of inclusiveness, which honors the sacred in all religions and spiritual traditions. We offer courses to equip people from a variety of faith traditions to minister with integrity, competence and professionalism. We affirm the equality of persons, policies, and language. We are open to diverse theological and cultural perspectives.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the world grapples with the Ebola crisis and the growing threat of religious extremism in the Middle East and Africa, we are realizing more each day that our geographical separation in the USA is no longer sufficient to cordon us off from the rest of humanity. We live in an increasingly complicated and interdependent universe which calls us out of our past parochial and insular perspectives. We are thrust into the dynamic and daunting cosmopolitan marketplace of conflicts and confusion which characterize much of our contemporary maelstrom. Global Ministries University provides a different perspective than that we have just recounted. Within our interfaith and spiritual frame of reference we believe that the future of humanity and of our fragile planet rests securely in the embrace of our Creator who draws us forward into the future enlightened by the flame of love and heartfelt compassion.



One of the major centers for our compassion lies now in Africa where the Ebola crisis first arose and where religious extremism has become a growing problem. Global Ministries University now has established its presence in the African continent within the country of Kenya where we have established partnerships with several organizations there. We have recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the largest interfaith organization in the Central Coast area of Kenya, The Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics. We are working closely with CICC as their academic partner in a series of interfaith seminars and yearlong interfaith community development projects. We also now have two students from the coastal area who are pursuing degrees with Global Ministries University. We are in the process of adding several courses to our curriculum dealing with African spirituality.

Global Ministries University will also expand its work in Kenya to the Nairobi area in collaboration with the African Regional Center of Columbia University and the financial support of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers. We will be offering a week long interfaith seminar at the Columbia University Nairobi Regional Center in May of 2015 with the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers providing hospitality and lodging for the participants at their Nairobi Center House. This expansion of our work into Africa is a sign of GMU's mission to expand its outreach beyond the borders of the USA but also encourage our USA students to understand and participate in the African context for theological and spiritual reflection. In addition to our partnership with CICC we have also established an affiliation with the Bishop Haddington Theological Institute in Mombasa, Kenya. This Institute is connected with St. Paul's University in Nairobi and offers diploma level courses to students in the Mombasa region. GMU will provide an online capability to this Institute that it does not presently have within its offerings. We are also providing technological infrastructure for the Institute to collaborate with us on theological seminars that can be made available to all of our students via Skype. We are also planning to live stream and record our Nairobi interfaith seminar in August of 2015. More information on these programs will appear in future newsletters.

Gerald Grudzen, Ph.D., President

MEET OUR FACULTY



Mary Ann Schoettly

1942 - 2014

Mary Ann, a GMU instructor, who taught Creation Spirituality for the University, died on July 22. She was a life-long teacher in high school classrooms, colleges, religious education programs, Stephen Ministry and retreat work. Mary Ann was ordained to the Roman Catholic Women Priests in April, 2009 and co-presided over the Sophia Inclusive Catholic Community, in Sussex County, NJ. She was the first Roman Catholic Women Priest to be ordained in New Jersey. She was also a Spiritual Caregiver with the Chaplain's Office at Newton Memorial Hospital and led a spirituality group for Bridgeway Rehabilitation Services.

Mary Ann was featured in the Global Notebook in April of last year but we are featuring her again to celebrate her noteworthy and significant life. She was an outstanding instructor, a fine human being and will be a great loss to our faculty.

STUDENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Barbara Billey is enrolled in our Doctor of Ministry degree program. She holds an M.A. in counseling and art therapy and a M.Ed. in curriculum studies and is currently a counselor and art therapist in private practice. She is earning this degree to expand her understanding of new and post-testament gospels, to develop skills in preaching and homiletics, to increase her awareness of women in the bible, and to engage a project for ministry on compassion. Barbara is a Roman Catholic woman deacon in the Heart of Compassion Inclusive Faith Community in Ontario, Canada. She plans to be ordained a Roman Catholic woman priest and will use this degree in ministry.



When asked how she feels about completing her degree program, she replied:

"I will miss the fabulous learning and the excellent mentorship of professors at GMU. I'm not sure what I'll do with the first few hours in the morning, which I've devoted to study for several years now. Mostly, I feel a deep satisfaction for the entire process and, as a women priest, glad to share what I have learned with others.

The entire experience has been a blessing that will flow in and through me for years to come. Thank you GMU for this profound experience."

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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](#)