



The Global Notebook

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HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ONE AND ALL!

We invite you to scroll down this page and read the following articles contained in our first GMU newsletter of 2017:

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New Year - New Beginnings



A New Year seems to be the ideal time for new beginnings, whether the goal is to lose weight, purchase a new home or car, find a better job, or to earn a degree or certificate but it just wasn't the right time. If you are involved in ministry or would like to begin a ministry or become a minister, this might be the season for you to enroll in a degree or certificate program. We have applicants who inquired about one of our programs in the past but were not ready to move forward and then applied years later.

If this is the right time for you, simply submit your application and application fee and we will get you started asap. Even if you are not quite ready, we welcome your questions without pressure to apply. If you have questions, complete an inquiry or, if you prefer, send an email and our Enrollment Specialist will contact you promptly.

'To everything there is a season...' is this the season for you to launch a new and exciting spiritual adventure?

Message from the President



As we enter the New Year with some apprehension about the political situation in the U.S., we are grateful for the opportunity to realize our mission as a global organization with links to the world community. In the past six years we have expanded the reach of GMU into Africa with our education project in Kenya. We have provided interfaith training for approximately 100 clergy, community activists and teachers from diverse regions of Kenya.

In April of 2017 we will return to Mombasa, Kenya for our sixth year of involvement in interfaith education. We are working closely with our interfaith team in Kenya who represent Christian, Muslim and Indigenous faith traditions. Our work in Kenya has helped us to develop interfaith curriculum that can also be useful in the U.S environment where Muslims have often been viewed with suspicion. We have a close working relationship now with the Maryknoll Fathers, Brothers and Sisters in Kenya and with the Muslim Respect Foundation which oversees a variety of interfaith activities in that country through its network of schools that it sponsors.

I am completing a book that surveys the present world situation regarding relations between Christians and Muslims which will be published later this year. The tentative title is: *Burying the Sword: Confronting Extremism with Interfaith Education*. Two of my co-authors for this book are involved with us as faculty in our Kenya education project: Dr. Martin Olando, Director of the Bishop Hannington Theological Institute in Mombasa and Mr. Fatih Akdogan, Director of the Muslim Respect Foundation and Director of the Muslim Quba Academy in Mombasa, the largest Muslim affiliated school in Mombasa with over 1000 students.

In addition to our work in Kenya, we have made some progress in simplifying application for students to the Joint Doctoral program with Mahidol University in Thailand. Mahidol's College of Religious Studies will now allow GMU doctoral students to apply for the PhD program through the internet. Doctor Ron Nakasone, a member of the GMU faculty and a noted Buddhist scholar, will act as our liaison with Mahidol as we work to expand our student population in this program. Students seeking the joint ThD and PhD will work with a team of GMU faculty also approved as adjunct faculty for the College of Religious Studies at Mahidol University. We have also established a good working relationship with the Indian Journal of Religion and Science known as Omega. I am a member of the editorial board of this publication and have been able to recommend articles that were published there by our doctoral students and affiliated faculty. As a global organization GMU now has faculty located in the US, Africa, Europe and Asia.

Please spread the word about the global vision of Global Ministries University and recommend students to us. Our approach to education is geared to the needs of each student and individualized through carefully designed courses in which students can progress at their own pace with support from GMU faculty and mentors.

Gerald Grudzen, PhD

Introducing Our New Enrollment Specialist

We are very pleased to have Mary Aktay join our staff as Enrollment Specialist. She has a degree in communications and her career has consistently been in religious communications. In addition to her position at GMU, Mary is a member of Voice of the Faithful's Coordinating Committee-New Jersey and sets up and maintains their Facebook page and



helps with communications efforts. She is also the organizer of a MeetUp group which brings humanists, atheists and religious believers together to discuss shared values and common concerns. She has experience in print, electronic and video production as well as public and media relations and development, promoting the goals and values of the religious congregations for which she has worked.

Mary sees this field of work as an opportunity to meet people where they are, help them see where they want to go, and assist them in getting there. Consequently, she approaches the role of Enrollment Specialist as a ministry in itself to all those seeking spiritual growth and understanding and asserts she is 'honored to be a part of it.'

We welcome Mary and, based on her great enthusiasm for GMU, are confident that she will do an excellent job promoting the University.

GMU Offers User-Friendly Application Process

Global Ministries University has created a user-friendly admissions process by lowering the application fee. This enables applicants to select courses and have their program approved before deciding if they wish to move forward for just \$25.

Furthermore, it is only after applicants are completely satisfied with their program that they select their payment plan and there are no binding contracts to sign. We have a pay-as-you-go *interest-free* payment plan, which means students are able to take a leave of absence and delay studies and payments if necessary. And if for any reason they are unable to continue, there is a generous refund policy.

As you can see, Global Ministries University has made it possible for anyone attracted to our contemporary, thought-provoking curriculum to enroll without risk.

Registrar Earns Two GMU Degrees



Gail Schultz has worked for Global Ministries University for almost 10 years, during which time she has continued on her spiritual path and earned two GMU degrees to make her ministerial path a reality. Following is testimony of her amazing journey:

"For many years I was involved with religious education and other ministries at the parish level. After obtaining a business degree and working in related fields, I knew my passion laid elsewhere. Then, at a Call to Action Conference in 2004, where GMU hosted an exhibit there was a drawing for a free GMU course and I was the winner! I chose Jungian Psychology and Spirituality, which I deeply enjoyed and that experience prompted me to enroll in the GMU Bachelor of Religious Studies degree program. This was the beginning of my newfound ministry. I graduated in 2007 and then completed a 3-year program in Spiritual Direction at the Franciscan Spirituality Center in La Crosse WI. In 2012 I enrolled in a second GMU program -- a Master of Theology degree -- which I completed in December of 2015. During this time period, I also went through an 18-month formation program and became an Affiliate of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, an order well-versed in the new story, a Christic universe and cosmic theology.

I love the GMU method of study and working one-on-one with the instructors. The

self-paced courses do require a lot of self-discipline to keep at it, but the ability to learn and integrate the material according to my own spirituality, needs and goals is invaluable to me. Best of all, GMU's courses are based on a contemporary theology platform, so I had the opportunity to express my post-denominational progressive views in my coursework, knowing that I would be understood and affirmed. This is education that prepares me for an evolutionary future, one in which the human species and all creation realize their oneness in a Divine universe."

I now have a spiritual direction practice, direct small group retreats, facilitate a dream work group, and conduct personalized rituals for various needs. Upon completion of my master's degree, I was asked to teach Spirituality courses for GMU and, as a result, I am the facilitator of Journaling as Spiritual Practice and An Overview of Spiritual Direction. I am so honored to be able to teach for GMU. Teaching these courses is so much like spiritual direction, in that there is a sense of being present to a person sharing the working of the Spirit as they read and assimilate the course material, and reflect on where new insights might lead them.

After completing my Master of Theology degree, I was asked if I would consider a third degree, a Doctorate from GMU and I said 'absolutely not.' However, last week I found myself making a list of the courses I would take if I were to do so. My love for learning often takes me in directions I didn't plan to go!"

We are so proud to have Gail as a student, an administrator, and an instructor.

GMU Change of Address

Although there is a minimal use of USPS mail with an online university, this notification is for your information. It is also posted on the Contact page of our web site. The new address is:

Global Ministries University
29910 Murrieta Hot Springs Rd. Ste. G 526
Murrieta, CA 92563

Contact Us

Global Ministries University
29910 Murrieta Hot Springs Rd.
Ste. G 526.
Murrieta, California | 92563

Tel. 866 419-8020
Fax. 858 810-1954

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