

**Nebraska Wesleyan University
Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Fund Committee**

**Application for Scholarship Grants – Research or Creative Endeavor-
Faculty Directed Application**

**Deadlines for 2018-2019 – 5:00 pm of the following dates:
September 14, 2018; November 16, 2018; January 25, 2019; March 29, 2019**

The application for the Student-Faculty Collaborative Scholarship Fund (SFCRF) consists of four parts:

- I. Abstract
- II. Project Proposal
- III. Project Budget and Budget Justification
- IV. Faculty Recommendation

Note: This application form is for Scholarship Projects – Research or Creative Endeavor. If your proposal is only for a project's presentation expenses, please complete the **Application for Presentation Award**.

The proposal should be a fully-conceived project that includes background support, all documentation, relevant research instruments (e.g. questionnaires or surveys), and additional letters of support, as needed. Awards may range from under \$150 to over \$2000.

If traveling internationally, students must comply with all policies for international student travel as set forth by the Global Engagement office. Applicants requesting funding for international travel must meet with Sarah Barr **prior to submitting this application** for approval from the Global Engagement office. All travel must conform to the Nebraska Wesleyan University travel policy – visit this link for information: <http://www.nebrwesleyan.edu/business-office/travel>.

Applicants should familiarize themselves with the Guidelines (available from the same source as this application) and inform their Division Representative or Student Representative on the Committee of their intent to apply. Applicants are highly encouraged to submit a draft of the proposal to their representative for comments prior to the deadline. No feedback can be provided once a final application is submitted.

Please send an electronic copy of the completed application by 5 p.m. of the respective due date Fund Committee in care of:

Stephanie Plummer
Academic Affairs – Smith-Curtis 311
5000 Saint Paul Avenue
Nebraska Wesleyan University
Lincoln, NE 68504-2794
(splummer@nebrwesleyan.edu)

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The Council on Undergraduate Research (www.cur.org)



I. Abstract - The information that you provide in this section may be used in general publications as promotional material. This summary should be original and not an excerpt taken directly from the Project Proposal.

Who wrote and directed this proposal (faculty or student)? Faculty
Name(s) of student collaborator: Jacob Barrett and Ciara Eichhorst
Name(s) of Faculty Collaborator/Mentor: Rita Lester
Department and Division: Philosophy & Religion Department,
Arts & Humanities Division

Title of Project: Religions of the World Without the
World Religions Paradigm

Date: March 15, 2019

Abstract (290/300 words)

The World Religions Paradigm (WRP) has dominated undergraduate introductory courses since US research universities instituted Religious Studies (RS) in the 1960s but is increasingly subject to sustained scholarly, pedagogical critique for its theological, colonial, orientalist, and neo-liberal assumptions. Collaboration of religion majors Jacob Barrett ('20), Ciara Eichhorst ('21) and I on the scholarship of teaching and learning interrogates alternatives to WRP, contributing to two senior research projects, student professionalization in the field, and significant revision to two courses at NWU, World Religions (REL 1150) and IDS 1010 (New Religions). Our synergistic research trajectory, initiated in Fall 2018 in adjacent independent projects with intersecting critiques of the WRP, produced our proposal (accepted 3/10/19) to the American Academy of Religion research affiliate the [North American Association for the Study of Religion's \(NAASR\) Teaching in the Field Conference, November 22-24 \(San Diego, CA\)](#). Using peer feedback from four sessions, 15 respondents, and pedagogical consultations, we will maximize our productivity at NAASR to produce specific, direct changes to REL 1150 and IDS 1010 to jettison the WRP sui generis phenomenology of my own education for a methodology consistent with naturalistic, post-WRP best practices, as well as contributing to Jacob's senior project on alternatives to WRP and Ciara's senior research proposal on uses of New Religions in RS and training for her AWS student co-instructing in that subject (Fall 2019). Our redesign (using [Elon University Dir. of Engaged Learning Peter Felton's](#) model for consulting students as teachers and learners) will result in immediate, significant revision of two NWU courses (Fall 2019), student research submitted to [The Truman State University Undergraduate Conference](#) (Fall 2019), Jacob's senior research presented at NWU Research Symposium in May 2020 and Ciara's in 2021, and our publication with [Equinox Press](#).

II. Project Proposal

Name of student collaborator: Jacob Barrett
E-mail address: jbarret3@nebrwesleyan.edu
Student Mailbox: 1125
Majors: Philosophy and Religion & Biology
Year: graduating spring 2020 (current junior)

Name of student collaborator: Ciara Eichhorst
E-mail address: ceichhor@nebrwesleyan.edu
Student Mailbox: 2149
Majors: Philosophy and Religion & Psychology
Year: graduating spring 2021 (current sophomore)

Name of faculty collaborator/mentor: Rita Lester
Department and Division: Philosophy and Religion Dept, Arts & Humanities Division
E-mail address: rlester@nebrwesleyan.edu

Who wrote and directed this proposal (faculty or student)? Faculty

Title of Project: Religions of the World Without the World Religions Paradigm

Amount Requested: \$4338.00 (faculty and 2 students)

Date: March 19, 2019

Period of performance: Spring 2019 (Start date)-Spring 2021 (End date)

Have you previously received a grant from the Student-Faculty Collaborative Research Fund? I supervised a student's project awarded funds in 2007-2008 (religion major Nicole Francavilla whose project was the basis for her senior research, her Fulbright to the University of Toronto, and her acceptance to Harvard for graduate school).

If yes, what was the project number? I have no record of the project number of her proposal.

What other funding sources may be available to you? My regular faculty development funding is tapped out for up to date publications in my field and although this project involves a conference, its scope includes significant long-term collaboration with students with intersecting research interests, project learning, and the redesigning of at two regularly offered courses.

Does the research involve the use of human subjects? No, the materials we use are all regularly administered summative and formative feedback and the consultations on teaching are mentoring, workshops, and peer reviews, that is, typical components of course and faculty development.

1. Describe the purpose of your scholarship (research or creative endeavor).

The purpose of our research project is to engage and contribute to the pedagogically significant critiques of the WRP by NAASSR, revising the content of two religious diversity courses at NWU. My educational training (30 years ago) never questioned WRP, but NAASSR's challenging of this paradigm starting two decades ago culminates in the [Fall 2019 Teaching in the Field](#) conference. Our research involves discovery of post-WRP models for teaching, integration of methods and case studies from other fields (social sciences), application of naturalistic theory into classroom practice, responding to a NAASSR white paper in a presentation for publication, and teaching as a form of project learning (Ciara will co-instruct IDS AWS 1010 and Jacob's senior project is on state of the field regarding WRP).

Because I regularly teach religious diversity and these two religion majors are conducting research on WRP (origins, deconstruction and alternatives), we are requesting funding to collaboratively use our current, ongoing independent studies' agenda and directed senior research as the basis of our national conference engagement so that we, using [Peter Felton's \(Elon University\) model for students as learners and teachers](#), can redesign REL 1150 and IDS 1010 to integrate the post-WRP content and pedagogy of NAASSR into religious studies at NWU for Fall 2019.

Rejecting the three typical WRP strategies (big five, lived and material), **Jacob Barrett** examines scholarly meta-critique (crypto-theological liberal Christian normativity, sui generis phenomenology and essentialism, religious/secular as binary, orientalism, see [What's Wrong with the World Religions Paradigm](#)) and pedagogical alternatives, that is, how to teach religions of the world without WRP while integrating and incentivizing self-critical cultural analysis of bias that is the legacy of European colonialism (consistent with REL 1150's role in the Power Thread and Global Studies).

More commonly investigated in the social sciences than religious studies, **Ciara Eichhorst** pursues New Religions as destabilizing alternatives to WRP preconceptions. Her work informs both REL 1150 and the IDS 1010 (New Religions). We are currently designing IDS 1010 for Fall 2019 and I anticipate it will be a long-term, repeatable AWS (Fall 2020 with religion major Viveca Powers as student co-instructor).

4 goals of this project's completion:

- Our collaboratively written NAASSR presentation at *Teaching in the Field* (Nov. 22-23, 2019) is considered for publication by [Equinox Press](#) (generates peer review)
- Conference feedback and pedagogical consultations with AAR/NAASSR scholars about syllabi and assignments adds a meta-critique of WRP to REL 1150 and a new religion case study to IDS 1010 for fall 2019 (Bromley, Wessinger, McCutcheon confirmed)
- The student product includes direct contribution to updates in two courses, REL 1150 (meta-critique of WRP) and IDS 1010 (new religions--Ciara will co-instruct fall 2019)
- Two majors' post-WRP proposals (REL 3990) and research projects (REL 4990) will mature in ways consistent with the scholarly insights of the current field represented in

NAASR and will be submitted (jointing or separately) to the [Truman State Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy and Religion for Fall 2019](#)

2. Describe your team's preparation for pursuing this project. Include both formal and informal training and relevant experiences. For each student collaborator, include expected graduation rate and remaining credit hours.

Fall of 2018, Jacob and I initiated a redesign of World Religions for his REL 3990 project. We are piloting this redesign now (Spring 2019). Learning outcomes are compared to feedback (collected every two weeks in the form of critical, self-reflective writings about power and bias) inform our NAASR presentation/publication, revisions to REL 1150 for Fall of 2019, and are the basis of Jacob's senior project and Fulbright ETA application (Fall 2019). Jacob graduates Spring 2020 (16 credit hours remaining) and will use this project as the basis of his applications to graduate school.

Ciara and I are redesigning IDS 1010 this spring and New Religions as alternative to WRP in religious studies will be her senior proposal (Fall 2020) and project (Spring 2021). Ciara plans to graduate Spring 2021 (57 credit hours remaining, Spr 2020 abroad).

Although I don't regularly attend my national organizations due to time and expense, I am up to date on AAR/NAASR publications, have engaged in consultative relationships with Presidents of NAASR (Russell McCutcheon, Craig Martin), and my peer mentoring includes scholars (Steven Ramey, Rebbeka King) who utilize current insights of NAASR in undergraduate curriculum. Committing not only to a presentation at NAASR, but the peer reviews, teaching/mentoring consultations, and publication are the next level for our professional opportunities.

3. Describe how you intend to accomplish your project, the project steps and timeline, the method(s) or processes chosen and how they are appropriate for the discipline. Explain the feasibility of your activity. (Consider time and funding restraints as well as other factors.) If more than one student is involved, please describe exactly what each student will do.

Already completed: Fall of 2018-Spring 2019, redesign (Jacob) and pilot world religions course that deconstructs WRP tropes and replaces with interrogation of bias and cultural self-awareness. Initiate redesign of Archway Seminar (IDS 1010) as critical introduction to the study of religion using [Peter Felton's model of Students as Teachers and Learners \(Elon University\)](#).

Summer 2019: Use the Spring 2019 REL 1150 summative feedback (IDEA), formative materials (student writings every two weeks on deconstructing cliches and critical reflection on bias), our experience (teaching journals) and our collaborative annotated bibliography to prepare for NAASR, revise REL 1150 for Fall 2019, and redesign IDS 1010 to be consistent with naturalistic post-WRP methodology (using Jacob's research).

Fall 2019- Fall 2020/Spring 2021: Present at NAASR, along with respondent feedback schedule consultations with scholars regarding case studies and undergraduate assignments (Bromley, Ramey, Wessinger, Martin, McCutcheon, Stoddard). Submit our presentation for publication with Equinox. Lester supervise senior project on alternatives to WRP (REL 4990, Jacob) including educating for meta-critique of WRP in REL 1150. Ciara student co-instructs for AWS IDS 1010 New Religions including a role-playing group activity using historical, legal

documents on New Religious (modeled on [Reenacting the Past Symposium at Barnard](#)) which becomes the basis for her REL 3990 (Fall 2019) and her integrative reflective and proposal for REL 4990 (Fall 2020/Spring 2021). We use the feedback and peer review of our publication on teaching in the field for revision on REL 1150 and IDS 1010.

Both students submit separately or jointly to [Truman State Undergraduate Conference](#). *If not accepted for publication by Equinox Press, we will be free to present at the [2020 Regional American Academy of Religion \(Plains/Rocky Mountain\)](#).*

4. Describe the role of each faculty and student collaborator. How will each person be involved in the project?

The overarching research project: redesign 2 courses (REL and IDS) consistent with the post-WRP scholarly practices of NAASR. The student projects supporting this effort from two different approaches (meta-critique of WRP and new religions case) are productive for their own REL 3990-4990 research projects, conference submissions and graduate school applications. Reading, research and consultations with scholars in the field will be delegated, summarized, shared and critiqued weekly during the fall of 2019, as will teaching journals, class debriefings and feedback gathered from regular course assignments (reflective writings, Critical Incident Questions). Jacob will compare our findings to published research on the 3 methods of teaching post-WRP religion as part of his senior project and make recommendations for future revisions of this yearly course.

Both students (Jacob on WRP/post-WRP and Ciara on New Religions) will:

- Review the resources at [Wabash Center for Teaching in Theology & Religion](#), identify relevant, content specific syllabi, published materials and assessments for teaching and learning, and contact scholars for consultation
 - Based on our experience and feedback for spring 2019, respond to the NAASR presentation regarding teaching in the field (Fall 2019)
 - Collaboratively produce annotated bibliography for our publication with [Equinox](#) (Fall 2019)
 - Contact scholars, teachers, authors and consultants (Bromley, Stoddard, Wessinger, Ramey, Martin, McCutcheon, Bromley) for teaching consultations at AAR/NAASR regarding case studies, assignments, learning goals and pedagogical strategies (Fall 2019)--*Bromley, Wessinger and McCutcheon already confirmed at this writing*
 - Compare consultation material and assignments to course feedback from Spring 2019 (Fall 2019), revise accordingly. If more than 20% change, implement in stages
 - Identify case studies, publications and assignments to use in class for meta-critique of WRP (REL 1150) and use of New Religions (REL 1150 and IDS 1010, Fall 2019)
5. Describe your plan for a discipline appropriate dissemination of your scholarship beyond the Nebraska Wesleyan Student Symposium at the end of the Spring semester (e.g., peer-reviewed journal publication, oral presentation, poster presentation, performance, juried competition and/or exhibition).

- Present, respond, pursue feedback and consultation on “[Religions of World Without the WRP](#)” at the [Fall 2019 NAASR in San Diego, Teaching in the Field](#)
- Submit written presentation for publication with [Equinox Press \(NAASR Working Papers series, edited by Martie Smith Roberts\)](#)
- REL 1150 and IDS 1010 (both yearly courses) are offered in revised form, Fall 2019
- Jacob and Ciara apply to present (separately or jointly) at [Truman State Undergraduate Conference](#) for Fall of 2019
- We jointly present to Philosophy & Religion in conjunction with Jacob’s senior research Spring 2020 which forms basis of his Fullbright ETA and graduate school applications
- If not published by Equinox, we propose to present our finding to the [2020 regional AAR \(Plains/Rocky Mountain\)](#)

III. Project Budget

Name(s) of Student Collaborator(s): Jacob Barrett and Ciara Eichhorst

Name(s) of Faculty Collaborator/Mentor: Rita Lester

Title of Project: Religions of the world without the World Religions Paradigm

A. Itemized Budget

Your itemized budget proposal must be submitted on the provided Excel spreadsheet. All expenses should have documentation supporting the cost (supply a copy of a price list or website order form, etc).

You must identify priority needs and total minimum amount needed in case the full project cannot be funded.

B. BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Explain your budget, describing each line item (justification and the basis of the cost). Identify any costs allocated directly to faculty (e.g., travel). For both the narrative and the itemized budget, be sure to consider the following

a. **Equipment (Please indicate the department's contribution toward the purchase of permanent equipment or software).** *We have already purchased the written material for this project.*

b. **Supplies**

c. **Travel**

*Travel from Omaha to San Diego for 3: \$400 X 3=	\$1500
*3 hotel rooms for 3 nights @ \$200/night	\$1800
3 Omahalink rides or mileage and overnight parking 3 nights)	\$275

d. **Other**

Memberships, registration (AAR is less expensive with NAASR than without)

*Lester AAR membership (sliding scale based on salary)	\$165
*Barrett and Eichhorst AAR membership \$45x2	\$90
*Lester AAR registration (super saver until 5/23/19)	\$175
*Barrett and Eichhorst AAR registration (super saver, \$90x2)	\$180
Lester NAASR membership	\$75
Barrett and Eichhorst NAASR membership \$39x2 (student)	\$78
	\$4338.00

*priorities, that is, cannot be completed without this funding (total \$4060)

Excel spreadsheet also part of this application
