



GMU President's Review of 2021 and Plans for 2022

As Christians prepare to celebrate the feast of Christmas and a New Year, it is time to reflect on the past year and the accomplishments of Global Ministries University in 2021. Much of our effort for the first part of the year was focused on the international, interfaith conference on the encyclical of Pope Francis, **Fratelli Tutti**. GMU cosponsored this conference from August 19 to August 21 with the Tangaza University Institute for Interreligious Dialogue and Islamic Studies in Nairobi, Kenya, and the Muslim affiliated Yogyakarta State University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. GMU will be publishing a book on this conference early in 2022 in collaboration with Tangaza University. Over 3,000 participants from 19 different countries took part in the conference. A second such international, interfaith conference is scheduled for February of 2023.

Indicative of GMU's growing international presence, we initiated a new Master's in Science and Religion degree with the Institute for Science and Religion located in Kerala, India. This two-year degree program has 13 registered students. An expanded and even more international version of this program will be introduced in 2022. We are also planning to offer a doctoral degree program for international students in interfaith studies in collaboration with our academic partners in India and Africa.

In support of GMU's new graduate programs, we have added the position of GMU Librarian and hired an experienced theological librarian, Judy Clarence, as a member of our GMU administration. Judy will be advising our GMU faculty and students both in the US and those outside the US on how to navigate the GMU Philosophy and Religion database that we added this past year.

Another successful GMU initiative in 2021 was the Community Chaplaincy Certificate Program with a cohort of 12 students. This program took place over six months under the guidance of its dean, GMU alumnus Doctor John Jeffery, in collaboration with the Upper Room community

in Albany, New York. In 2022 GMU will be submitting a grant proposal to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation for a chaplaincy training program focused on the needs of homeless people in the San Jose area.

In 2022 GMU will also launch a Master's in Pastoral Ministry degree led by Doctors Bridget Mary Meehan and (GMU alumna) Mary Theresa Streck. This program offers the option of a cohort model of study using innovative educational materials and featuring interactive seminars with practitioners in the field of pastoral ministry.

Throughout 2021 GMU presented interactive graduate seminars for our GMU doctoral students. The final seminar in this series, also attended by faculty and graduates, was held on December 6 with Professor Sudarshan Kapoor of Fresno State University. Doctor Kapoor is a noted scholar on the life and legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and founder of the Peace Studies program at Fresno State University.

GMU plans to offer low-cost seminars on key religious and spiritual topics in 2022. The first seminar will take place on Zoom for five successive weeks beginning Monday, January 17, on the topic of "The History of God" within the monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Information on this seminar is available on the [GMU website](#).

Gerald Grudzen