



## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

December 8, 2001

Dear Friend of Philosophy,

At this time of great national sadness and reflection, I wanted to write to our alumni and friends to let you know of the accomplishments and plans of our Department and to ask for your help in supporting the continued strength of our programs.

As philosophers and educators, we are firmly committed to the power of reason and dialogue as we all work for a better world for our students and our global community. Our faculty compiled a list of **recommended books for study and reflection** on the many issues ahead as we all struggle to understand our forever-changed world. The list has been posted on our Department web site and we distribute it in the department for students and visitors.

On March 8, 2002, the Department is sponsoring a **conference on "Challenging Democracy: Religious Diversity and Political Institutions on a Global Scale."** Organized by Dr. Thomas Schmidt and Dr. Sara Goering, the conference will be an opportunity for us to consider the insights of philosophy of religion and political philosophy in understanding today's urgent headlines. The detailed program will be available on our Department Web site, and we hope many of you will join us for this timely gathering.

As a Department, we are faring well and are determined to meet the challenges of the uncertain world ahead. This fall we have a **record number of undergraduate majors (84)** and a **record number of graduate students (47)**. In a report on our Department to the Provost, our Dean, Dorothy Abrahamse, wrote that "Philosophy has become one of the most dynamic and intellectually vibrant departments in the college." We are determined to measure up to her confidence in us and are grateful to the legions of students, faculty, and Friends who have helped us reach this level of accomplishment.

Among the many developments in our Department, these might be of special interest to you:

\*We have hired **four outstanding junior faculty** in the past five years, bringing new energy and ideas for important programs in the Department. **Dr. Thomas Schmidt**, who joined us in fall 2001, received his Ph.D. from the University of Frankfurt, where his dissertation director was Jürgen Habermas. His specialization in philosophy of religion and expertise in contemporary continental philosophy and Hegel is revitalizing our course offerings in these areas. I have heard nothing but rave reviews from our students about his energetic and engaged teaching, and his scholarship on religious pluralism and democracy could not be more timely.

**Dr. Charles Wallis** (Ph.D., University of Minnesota) joined us in the fall of 2000 and is developing courses and a major conference in cognitive science. **Dr. Sara Goering** (Ph.D., University of Colorado-Boulder), now in her third year with us, has established a Center for Applied Ethics to provide a locus for speakers, conferences, new courses, and research in medical ethics,

environmental ethics, business ethics, and other important applications of philosophical insight. **Dr. Lawrence Nolan** (Ph.D., University of California, Irvine) developed a new graduate seminar on Teaching Philosophy and a new Interdisciplinary course on Medieval philosophy, and he also serves as our Graduate Advisor.

\*This year we are recruiting **two new tenure-track faculty members**, one in Ancient Greek philosophy and another in Business Ethics, who will join us in fall 2002. These new faculty members are helping us revitalize and expand the department, especially after several retirements (Dr. Steven Davis, Ms. Cheryl Clark, and Dr. Ed Quest in recent years).

\*Our **Center for the Advancement of Philosophy in the Schools (CAPS)**, established last year by Dr. Goering, has conducted training and in-school pairings of advanced philosophy students and teachers in several public schools in Long Beach. We are grateful to the Mattell Foundation and the Ralph's Food-for-Less Foundation for generous gifts to support this program. Last summer, Dr. Goering also won a substantial contract from the City of Long Beach to provide summer CAPS programs in 2001 to troubled and disadvantaged youths from the City.

\*Our new undergraduate program for **Honors in Philosophy** began operation this fall with ten outstanding majors. They are pursuing honors research projects and a spring honors seminar, working individually with faculty advisors, and will graduate with honors in 2002.

\*Our **Philosophy Pre-Law Program**, established in 1994, continues to thrive, with special courses for pre-law students, a philosophy pre-law internship, and invited speakers from the local community of practicing attorneys with philosophy backgrounds. Our pre-law graduates are attending outstanding law schools around the country, including the University of Southern California, Cardozo School of Law, Boston University, and Harvard University. This fall, three of our pre-law majors are completing internships in the Public Defender's office of Orange County.

\*Our **Master of Arts program** is also thriving, with 47 students actively enrolled in courses this fall. Our placement record continues to be outstanding, with recent graduates receiving admission to doctoral programs, with full assistantships, at Boston College; the University of California, Riverside; University of Minnesota; University of Ottawa; University of Southern California; and Washington University. In recent years, our MA students have had papers accepted after double-blind review for the programs of the American Philosophical Association-Pacific meetings, and our students have had papers accepted for many other professional meetings as well. This year, six outstanding graduate students are working as Graduate Assistants in the Department, and we seek to continue to expand opportunities for our MA students, both as discussion leaders in some of our introductory courses and as graders and writing tutors in other campus departments. We hope to further expand the financial support available to our MA students. With assistance from lottery funds, we are preparing a professionally designed and printed poster to be distributed to philosophy departments around the country to assist in our recruitment of outstanding students. We are also exploring the establishment on our campus of a Southern California Graduate Student Conference, which we would conduct in late 2002 or early 2003.

\*Last spring, we held an important conference on our campus on the **Ethics of the Human Genome Project**, organized by Dr. Goering. The conference addresses are available on streaming video on our Department web site. Thanks to a grant from University College and Extension Services, we have been able to purchase a professional quality digital video camera which we are using to tape talks by visiting speakers, to be posted in streaming video on our web site in the future. Dr. Goering has also begun planning a conference on the **Ethics of Stem Cell Research** for spring 2003.

\*Dr. Wallis is organizing a conference to be held on our campus April 11-14, 2002, on **Cognitive Science in the New Millennium: Foundations, Directions, Applications, and Problems**. Many distinguished scholars will be speaking and we hope many of you will be able to join

us for the events. Complete information and schedule are available on the Department's web page.

If you have access to the World Wide Web, please visit our department site regularly. It is the best source of information about upcoming events you might wish to attend, and it will give you more information about the many projects and activities we have underway: <http://www.csulb.edu/~philos/> We have a new magnet for your office or refrigerator with our URL ("web address") to help you remember how to contact us – drop by the office and we'll be happy to give you one.

Although our College deans and other administrators are very supportive of our activities, the costs of speakers, conferences, and other activities that benefit our students and our community can never be covered completely through state funding. It is only with the help of loyal supporters, such as yourself, that we are able to carry out so many activities far beyond the traditional classroom.

Our Friends are very important to us, and you will remain a valued friend, whether or not you are able to assist us financially in the work of the Department. But we hope you will seriously consider a contribution to the Friends of Philosophy. Your generosity is enormously helpful to us as we expand our faculty, our student body, and the activities of the Department. Among our many priorities which will benefit from your contributions are the following:

**\*Scholarships for students:** The extraordinarily generous support of our Friends in the past year made possible the awarding of **seven** scholarships of \$500 each this fall to our philosophy majors, an unprecedented level of support for our students. This achievement is due entirely to our Friends, and we are enormously grateful to the many Friends who sent contributions for scholarships. Whether dealing with a newly frightening world or coping with a difficult economy, our students appreciate your support in pursuing their education, now more than ever. We do understand that many of our alumni and friends are facing economic uncertainties and difficulties, but our students face even greater burdens as they strive to finish their educations and pursue their own careers.

In the past, we were never able to award more than three scholarships a year, often just one. With your help, we would like to continue to expand these opportunities to better meet the needs of our students. The annual Whittington Scholarship is funded by a generous Endowment fund from the Whittington family. For the others, we pool your contributions to award Friends of Philosophy Scholarships. We understand that many of our Friends have limited incomes and are paying off student loans. Even a very small contribution from you will be enormously helpful to today's generation of students when we combine your gift with other contributions to award additional scholarships. This fall, we reserved three of the Friends scholarships for undergraduates and another three for graduate students, to ensure fair access to all, a practice we plan to continue.

**\*Conferences and speakers:** Although we receive some campus funding for conferences and speakers, major events, such as the Human Genome Conference, require substantial additional funding for nationally recognized speakers. Your contributions help us conduct events of benefit to our students and the community, and which highlight our department and campus.

**\*Centers and Institutes:** I have already told you about the **Center for Applied Ethics** and the **CAPS** program, both already playing a vital role in the Department in the organization of conferences, speaker series, and other educational activities. Dr. Wallis is exploring the establishment of a **Cognitive Science Center**. We also are planning for an **Institute for the Philosophy of Religion**, directed by Dr. Schmidt, who is a member of the Board of a comparable institute in Frankfurt. He is organizing conferences and other events to demonstrate the vital role such an Institute would play in our community, one of the most religiously diverse in the nation. For 2002-2003, Dr. Schmidt is planning a conference on Science and Religion; we hope to bring at least one international scholar to our campus, both for the conference and for a one-week residency in our Department in spring 2003. The residency would give our students and faculty the special opportunity of working at length with a distinguished scholar in this area, in classroom visits, colloquia, informal gatherings, and public

lectures. We have also begun consultation to arrange an annual faculty-student exchange which would give our students opportunities to complete a residency in Frankfurt and would bring distinguished international scholars to our campus each year. We are taking advantage of on-campus support for all of these activities, including the lottery funds received by CSU, but your support of the Department will help us develop these activities more quickly and effectively.

**\*Philosophy in the Schools:** Continuation and expansion of our program to place outstanding philosophy students in area schools will depend on substantial funding to provide the high-quality training and placement essential to a successful program. Support from our Friends helps us show foundations and other funding sources the importance of the program in our community.

These are just a few of the important Department activities that your support for the Friends of Philosophy helps us provide. We have several naming opportunities in the Department, for those of you able to make a major gift. For a suitable Endowment gift, the Center for Applied Ethics or the future Institute for the Philosophy of Religion can be named in your honor. A \$10,000 gift can endow a \$500 annual scholarship for students in perpetuity. Substantial gifts can also be used to endow a distinguished speaker series in your name. Please let me know if you would like to pursue these additional ways of supporting the department.

On-line on this web site is a form for you to provide your contribution to the Department. All donors are listed on posters in the Department, in Department Newsletters, and on our Department Web site. All gifts postmarked by December 31, 2001, are deductible charitable contributions on your 2001 taxes, to the fullest extent permitted by law. Contributions received by us no later than January 4, 2002, will be acknowledged on a permanent plaque we are having engraved listing all donors in 2000-2001 for prominent display in the department. (If you have already contributed, we'll also list you on the 2002 plaque when that is engraved.)

Our "Friend of Philosophy" mugs last year were a big hit, and we have a limited supply left of these cobalt blue mugs with gold lettering, if you do not yet have one. This is our gift to you for a contribution to the Friends of at least \$50. If you prefer, we have just received a shipment of our new "Friend of Philosophy" mug – a 24 oz. car mug with lid, in heavy white plastic with royal blue lettering ("Friend of Philosophy" and "Philosophy at the Beach").

My thanks to you on behalf of my colleagues and our students. I look forward to seeing you at department events and hearing from you about your own activities and accomplishments.

Sincerely,

Julie Van Camp

Julie Van Camp  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Philosophy