

ANDREW M. SHARP, PhD

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Specialist in religious studies, international studies, global ethics, leadership, and public & community engagement; published author; speaker; higher education administrator; program manager; and promoter of unusual coalitions across divisions of race, culture, religion, and politics.

CURRENT EXPERIENCE

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Institute for Policy and Governance (IPG) Sept 2023-present

Lecturer and Senior Public & Community Engagement Manager (IPG, July 2024-present) *and*

Affiliate Faculty, Virginia Tech School of Public and International Affairs (2021-present)

Manage learning programs, research, policy analysis, curriculum development, seminars, and new community engagement projects.

- Program oversight and other contributions to sponsored research efforts of the IPG Richmond team
- Pursuit of new academic, project and community-based, and research opportunities for the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, including an experiential, community-engaged, project-based, intensive summer course titled, “Religion and Democracy from the Virginia Statue of Religious Freedom to the Present”
- Member of Advisory Council for Virginia Tech Richmond Center, Outreach and International Affairs
- *Courses (undergraduate [postponed]):* The Richmond Experience: Religion and Democracy from *the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom* to the Present; *(certificate)* – instructor on leadership, management, and emotional intelligence for the Virginia Public Sector Leader training certificate program

Lecturer and Program Manager, Virginia Tech School of Public and International Affairs (2021-August 2023)

Oversight and facilitation of learning programs, research, policy analysis, curriculum development, & seminars.

- Responsible for operations of Virginia Management Fellows Program – recruitment, candidate screening, management, evaluation, etc.
- Engaged with faculty, staff, graduate students, and state agency partners.
- Developed programming to assist fellows and their public sector mentors in their research, demonstration projects, and policy briefs.
- *Courses (graduate):* Concepts and Approaches to Public Administration, Government Administration II: System Skills for Managers

EDUCATION

Ph.D. (2010), University of Birmingham (U.K.), Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations

Concentration: Theology and Religion; Dissertation: “Eastern Orthodox Theological and Ecclesiological Thought on Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations in the Contemporary World (1975-2008)”

M.A. (2003), University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia – Religious Studies

Concentrations: Islamic Studies, Medieval Christianity and Christian-Muslim Relations

M.A. (1997), St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, New York

Concentrations: Theology, Byzantine History, cum laude

B.A. (1991), Pacific University, Forest Grove, Oregon Major: French, Minor: Sociology

Certificate (1991), University of Paris, Sorbonne, Paris, France French Language and Civilization

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Virginia Commonwealth University, School of World Studies, Richmond, Virginia

2006-2023

Affiliate Assistant Professor of Religious Studies (Adjunct instructor 2006-2014)

Educate students in open classroom settings at a large and diverse public university. Design new courses on religion and foreign cultures and advance innovative teaching and learning strategies.

- Regularly received 100% ratings of “outstanding” or “very good” on teaching evaluations.
- Utilized face-to-face, hybrid, and online teaching modalities (via Blackboard, Canvas, VoiceThread, and Zoom), service learning, and discussion and project-based instruction.
- Supervised and mentored a Service-Learning Teaching Assistant each semester.
- Advanced public knowledge of Islam, Eastern Christianity, and interreligious relations by responding to requests for information from journalists, faith communities, and associations.
- Received multiple invitations to speak at conferences and universities (Scotland, Ireland, San Diego, and Atlanta) and conduct local seminars at churches, public schools, and community associations.
- Served for two years as faculty advisor and campus minister for Orthodox Christian Fellowship.
- Nominated for Humanities and Sciences Distinguished Adjunct Award (2015).
- *Courses (undergraduate):* Global Ethics and World Religions; Islam; Islamic Mysticism: The Sufis; Muslim-Christian Relations Past and Present; Religions of the World; Bible as Literature; Religions in America (spring, 2013 at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College)

South University, Doctor of Ministry Program, Savannah, Georgia

Associate Professor of Theology and Program Director

(March 2019 - May 2021)

Offered online/hybrid courses in theology, diversity in ministry, and world religions. Provided program operations, curriculum development, recruiting, supervision of instructors, and community relations at the Richmond campus and in the online program.

- Taught courses on theology, world religions, ministry, and research design to graduate students through on-line instruction and independent study methods.
- Oversaw student interaction and instruction conducted by adjunct faculty for graduate level courses.
- Utilized Brightspace learning management system, Kaltura, and GoToMeeting to create dynamic online learning experiences for students.
- Advised graduate students in their dissertations and serve on final project committee.
- Served on Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee.
- Worked on curriculum development, recruitment, student support, and dissertation supervision
- *Courses (graduate):* Theology and Research in Ministry, World Religions, Theology Survey, Diversity in Ministry, Community & Discipleship

Director, Doctor of Ministry Program for Richmond Campus (August 2016 - February 2019)

- Taught courses on scripture, theology, ministry and world religions to graduate students through hybrid instruction method (combined on-line & blended approaches and traditional classroom teaching).
- Hired, trained, and supervised adjunct faculty for graduate level courses.
- Managed all aspects of daily operations of program, including curriculum development, supervision of doctoral theses, student advising and registration, community relations, and campus relations.
- Oversaw program budget and participated in recruitment efforts for program.
- Work with the College Dean, Assistant Dean, & Program Director colleagues on scheduling of courses, sharing faculty, curriculum development, student support, & dissertation supervision.
- *Courses (graduate):* Theology and Research in Ministry, World Religions, Theology Survey, Ministry Practicum I, Ministry Practicum II, Learning Skills for Ministry, Old Testament Context and Theology, New Testament Context and Theology, Community & Discipleship

Chesterfield County, Learning and Performance Center, Chesterfield, Virginia**Performance Consultant, Learning and Performance Center (September 2018 - April 2019)**

Created and delivered learning experiences for local government employees performing a variety of tasks for the citizens of Chesterfield County, Virginia.

- Developed, edited, and taught instructor-led and online courses (policy, skill and professional devl., etc.)
- Provided consultation services to departments and leadership teams, developed and led staff retreats, and assisted in hosting countywide in-service trainings on ethics, leadership, and management.
- Used Articulate, Captivate, and video editing software to create and maintain courses and training materials for county employees.

University of Richmond, Office of the Chaplaincy, Richmond, Virginia**Program Specialist for Multifaith Initiatives & Adjunct Assistant Professor (October 2016 - June 2018)**

Implemented multifaith initiatives & campus ministries at a nationally ranked liberal arts university.

- Executed and oversaw chaplaincy and university wide initiatives including: the campus ministry program; an outreach effort to foundation year students; the Multifaith Student Council; Study Break for the Soul; and the University's Baccalaureate Service. Managed budgets for these initiatives and also assist with Weinstein-Rosenthal Forum, orientation events, and Welcome Week activities.
- Facilitated weekly Multifaith Dinner and Discussion, open to faculty, students, staff, alumni, & friends.
- Served as primary liaison with internal and external constituencies on multi-faith matters.
- Represented the Office of the Chaplaincy on University-wide committees.
- *Courses (undergraduate):* Islam, Nationalism, & the West; Bridging Religious Difference; Pilgrimage: Spain

Network for Interfaith Concerns, London, England**Associate Editor for the *Christian-Muslim News Digest*****(July 2014 - October 2016)**

Provided information and analysis on interactions between Christians and Muslims around the globe, particularly in areas where they regularly encounter one another, and discussed how the stories are handled by the media.

- Introduced a streamlined format for Digest to engage members of the Network for Interfaith Concerns (NIFCON) within the worldwide Anglican Communion and beyond on a quarterly basis.

- Covered developing stories in over 15 countries on 4 continents, effectively handling research, content, layout, liaising with guest contributors, and copy-editing for each issue.
- Presented fresh content revealing hopeful areas for positive interaction between Christians and Muslims without misrepresenting or oversimplifying historical or present challenges.

Institute of Advanced Studies in Culture, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

Thriving Cities Project Manager and Research Scholar

(July 2013 - June 2015)

Launched and managed public research and community engagement project involving academics and specialists from over a dozen institutions, five pilot cities, and six sectors.

- Spearheaded research effort that led to the publication of a 6-part research report, two conferences, and a catalog of over 2,000 individual variables tracked by about 100 community indicator projects.
- Streamlined finance and accounting functions (budgeting, cost accounting, financial reporting, and purchasing), resulting in 5-digit budget surplus annually.
- Executed successful renewal grant funding campaigns, with yearly increases of 38% and 123% (awards totally nearly \$600,000).
- Negotiated and monitored contracts for peer review, copyediting, fact checking, proofreading, design, and typesetting for a series of studies of around 140,000 words.

Virginia Department of Social Services, Richmond, Virginia

Policy and Procedure Specialist, Division of Licensing Programs

(2004 - 2013)

Researched and developed staff policy and procedures for 165 employees across the state.

- Authored and implemented over 100 policy and procedures (including a continuous quality improvement program) leading to significant increases in staff morale in each of eight field offices and reductions in consumer complaints.
- Developed customized training curriculum that included in-person, video, and online components.
- Volunteered to do work of two positions until new staff was hired and introduced system for improving enforcement actions to address safety violations endangering adults and children in care facilities.

Richmond Department of Social Services, Richmond, Virginia

Social Worker for Child Protective Services

(2003 - 2004)

Child protective services worker going into inner-city neighborhoods, schools, and community centers to provide services to individuals and families.

- Investigated cases of child abuse/neglect & provided counseling & other services to children and families.
- Carried double normal sized caseload during a prolonged period when department was understaffed.
- Extensive involvement with legal system and community resources, foster parents, and therapeutic services. Participated in inter-agency committee.

College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia

Visiting Instructor of Islam in the Department of Religious Studies

(2002 - 2003)

Provided sabbatical cover and taught courses to university students from diverse backgrounds.

- Regularly receive 100% ratings of "outstanding" or "very good" on teaching evaluations on various courses to college students and adult learners.
- Participated in faculty meetings and student-faculty seminars, receiving special recognition from a sorority chapter for my efforts in teaching and service on campus.

- Counseled students on graduate programs and internship.
- *Undergraduate Courses:* Intro to Islam (as part of a foundation year program); Islam in the Modern World; Muslim-Christian Relations: History and Dialogue; and Freshman Seminar on Islam

Virginia Department of Social Services, Richmond, Virginia

Policy Specialist, Refugee Resettlement Program

(2000 - 2002)

Developed Virginia's first Refugee Resettlement Program Manual and executed training strategy for implementation.

- Streamlined program regulations and wrote the primary source of guidance for local departments, contract service providers, and volunteers working with refugee populations.
- Hosted statewide conference and produced training modules (online and classroom), leading to a significant rise in successful refugee placements.
- Recognized for creating successful grant monitoring instruments by invitation to serve on grant solicitation/selection committee for the allocation of \$ 2.5 million federal funds to service providers.

Virginia Commonwealth University, Philosophy & Religions Studies, Richmond, Virginia

Adjunct Instructor of Religious Studies

(2000 - 2002)

Taught courses on scripture and World Religions to university students and adult learners.

- Initiated a community engagement program that involved taking students to churches, mosques, temples, and sanghas and bringing religious leaders to campus for presentations and discussions.
- Received 100% ratings of "outstanding" or "very good" on teaching evaluations and was told by several students that my course had inspired them take more courses and declare a religious studies major/minor.
- *Courses:* The Bible as Literature, Intro to Religious Studies, World Religions.

Virginia Commonwealth University, English Language Program, Richmond, Virginia

Lecturer and Tutor in English as a Second Language

(2000)

Teaching international students with limited English proficiency in a foundation year program.

- Consistently received high teaching marks and praised for ability to connect cross-culturally with students.
- Invited to conduct private tutoring sessions with well-educated, visiting medical student from China.
- *Courses:* Pre-Intermediate Listening; Intermediate Writing and Grammar; and Advanced Speaking

Clark County Department of Human Services, Springfield, Ohio

Social Worker for Child Protective Services

(1991 - 1993 & 1995 - 1996)

Child protective services worker going into inner-city neighborhoods, schools, and community centers to provide services to individuals and families.

- Investigated cases of child abuse/neglect and provided counseling and other services to children and families. Intermittently served as part-time supervisor.
- Extensive involvement with legal system and community resources, foster parents, and therapeutic services.
- Conducted community-based research project to increase service delivery and reduce caseload fatigue.

SPONSORED PROGRAMS/RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

- Virginia Management Fellows Program (Virginia Tech and Commonwealth of Virginia), 2021-present
- CivilianLEAD and Virginia Public Sector Leader Program (Virginia Tech and VSP/DBHDS), 2023-present
- Thriving Cities Project (an initiative of IASC, University of Virginia), 2013-2015

INVITED PROFESSIONAL LECTURES

Virginia Tech Public Lecture, sponsored by the Department of Religion and Culture (scheduled, 4/23/25 – Blacksburg, Virginia)

- *Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and the Environment: Ecology as Fertile Ground for Dialogue in the Middle East?*

Christopher Newport University, Exploring the Middle East: Dynamics, Challenges, and Perspectives (2/2025 – Newport News, Virginia)

- *Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and the Environment: Ecology as Fertile Ground for Dialogue in the Middle East?*

University of Athens, School of Theology (11/2022 [virtual] – Athens, Greece)

- *Can Interreligious Engagement of the Orthodox Benefit the Formation of a Global Ethic?*

University for Peace, Peace & Conflict Studies (11/2021 [virtual] – San José, Costa Rica)

- *Islam, Ecology, and Religion*

Fordham University, Orthodox Christian Studies Center (11/2021 [virtual] – Bronx, New York)

- *Orthodox Christianity and Islam: Historic Relations, Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities*

International Orthodox Theological Association (1/2019 – Iasi, Romania)

- *Shared history, shared response: ecology as fertile ground for dialogue and interreligious engagement between Orthodox Christians and Muslims*

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Middle Eastern Christianity (11/2015 - Atlanta)

- *Muslims, Orthodox Christians, and the Environment: Ecology as Fertile Ground for Dialogue in the Middle East*

American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Eastern Orthodox Studies Group (11/2014 – San Diego)

- *Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and the Environment: The Case for a New Sacred Science*

Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland (11/2013)

- *Eastern Christian Encounters with Islam (Research Presentation)*

St. Andrews University, St. Andrews, Scotland (3/2012)

- *Modern Encounters with Islam and the Impact on Orthodox Thought, Identity, and Action*

Alexandrian Society, Richmond, Virginia (10/2010)

- *Muslim-Christian Relations and the Quest for Identity in the Postmodern Age*

College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia (9/2002)

- *Islam in its Formative and Modern Expressions*

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia (1999-2002)

- *Christianity Under the Turks: Surviving the Fall Islam & Christianity: From the Rise of Islam to the Beginning of the Crusades*
- *Emperors, Councils & Schism in the Christian East*
- *Christians in the Dar al-Islam Following the Fall of Constantinople*

INVITED COMMUNITY LECTURES

AGA Richmond

- *The Virginia Management Fellows Program – Past, Present, Future*

International Rescue Committee

- *The Role of Interfaith Communities in Serving Refugees and Immigrants Locally and Globally* (9/2020)

Manakin Episcopal Church

- *Bridging Religious Difference: An Introduction to Islam* (4/2018)
- *Muslim-Christian Relations Past and Present* (11/2017)

Bon Air Presbyterian Church

- *Orthodox Christianity in the World and in America* (11/2017)

Ss. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral (2/2016-3/2016)

- *Orthodoxy and Islam in the Former Byzantine Empire*
- *A Journey of Faith: Finding and Living the Orthodox Faith*
- *Orthodox Theological Perspectives on Islam*

St. John's United Church of Christ, World Religions discussion series (11/2015-3/2016)

- *Muhammad and Prophethood*
- *A Short History of Christian-Muslim Relations*
- *Intro to Islam*

Virginia Commonwealth University, Resettlement Provider agencies & School of World Studies (2/2016)

- Moderator, speaker, and co-organizer for panel on *Refugee Resettlement in Virginia*

Bon Air Presbyterian Church, Muslim-Christian discussion series (1/2015-2/2015)

- *Muhammad and Prophethood*
- *A Short History of Christian-Muslim Relations*

Saints Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral (1/2012)

- *Orthodox Identity*

Chesterfield County Schools (10/2008)

- *Teaching Islam in Public Schools*

Orthodox Christian Fellowship, Virginia Commonwealth University (3/2007)

- *Integrating Great Lent into Our Busy Lives*

Orange Presbyterian Church (3/2003)

- *Historic Christian Perspectives of Islam*

Saint Cyprian Orthodox Church (4/2002)

- *St. Basil's Liturgy and Great Lent*

Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church (11/1999)

- *The Nativity Fast and How to Become an Expert FASTER*

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church (1998-1999)

- *Feasts of Holy Week*
- *On Being Born, Being Empowered & Having an Incredible Meal*

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs:

- *Muslims, Orthodox Christians, and the Environment* (current book-length project; in conversation about publication in 2025)
- *Postmodern Çağda Ortodoks Hristiyanlar ve İslamiyet* (Tekin Publishing, 2016)
<http://tekinyayinevi.com.tr/kitap/postmodern-cagda-ortodoks-hristiyanlar-ve-islamiyet> (Turkish language edition of *Orthodox Christians and Islam in the Postmodern Age*)
- *Orthodox Christians and Islam in the Postmodern Age* (Brill, 2012) <http://www.brill.nl/orthodox-christians-and-islam-postmodern-age>

Articles and Chapters:

- 'Building a New Paradigm to Save the Planet: Lessons from Scientific Inquiry and Technological Innovation in Byzantine and Islamicate Civilizations,' in *Eastern Orthodoxy and World Religions*, T. Cattoi, B. Gallaher, and P. Ladouceur eds. (forthcoming Brill, 2024)
- 'Toward a Global Ethic in Orthodoxy: Interreligious Engagement Beyond Dialogue,' *Salt: Crossroads of Religion and Culture*, n. 1 (2022): 75-97.
- 'Redemption in the Orthodox Christian Tradition,' *Coastal Christian Magazine* (October 2020)
- 'Orthodox-Muslim Relations in Lebanon,' in *Eastern Christian Encounters with Islam*, A. DeVille, ed. (Routledge, submitted for publication in 2018)
- 'The Eastern Churches and Islam,' in *The Routledge Handbook of Christian-Muslim Relations*, D. Thomas, ed. (Routledge, 2017): 384-392.
- 'Orthodox Christians, Muslims, and the Environment: The Case for a New Sacred Science,' in *The Character of Christian-Muslim Encounter*, D. Pratt, et al., eds. (Brill, 2015): 470-491.
- 'Modern Encounters with Islam and the Impact on Orthodox Thought, Identity, and Action,' *International Journal of Orthodox Theology*, v. 5.1 (May 2014): 119-150.

Book Reviews:

- Review of Nahid Afrose Kabir, *Young American Muslims: Dynamics of Identity in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, D. Thomas, ed. (Taylor and Francis, January 2014)
- Review of Aram I, *For a Church Beyond Its Walls in Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, D. Thomas & J. Esposito, eds. (Taylor and Francis, July 2008)

Reference Entries:

- 'Hallelujah - Islam' in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, D. Allison, et al., eds. (De Gruyter, 2015)

- 'Heaven - Islam' in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, D. Allison, et al., eds. (De Gruyter, 2015)
- Seven entries in *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, John Esposito, ed. (2002)

Blog posts:

- 'Will the New Urban Evangelical Change Cities?', one of four written and edited for a series on Faith in the City, *Common Place* (a blog of the Thriving Cities Project, 2014-15)
- 'Was there ever a truly natural city? The Byzantines thought so', *Pemptousia* (Nov 2014)
- 'Andrew Sharp on Orthodox Dialogue with Islam', *Eastern Christian Books* (Nov 2012)

For public service / non-profits:

- 'Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program Manual', first edition, Office of Newcomer Services (Virginia Department of Social Services, rev. 2011)

MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS

- American Academy of Religion
- International Orthodox Theological Association
- Associate Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture (previous)
- Society for the Study of Eastern Orthodoxy and Evangelicalism (previous)

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Nominated for the *Humanities and Sciences Distinguished Adjunct Award* (2015), Virginia Commonwealth University
- Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Representative to *Institute for Pastors and Pastoral Workers on Islam & Christian-Muslim Relations*, Georgetown University
- S. Gregory Taylor Scholarship
- Scudder Education Trust Grant
- Spero Samer Scholarship, Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh
- St. Francis of Assisi Scholarship, Society of St. John Chrysostom, *Oriente Lumen Conference*
- Graduate Assistantship, University of Virginia
- DuPont Fellowship, University of Virginia
- GSAS Fellowship, University of Virginia (Yarmouk University – Irbid, Jordan and School of Oriental & African Studies – London, England)

LEADERSHIP

- **Advisory Board Member, contributor, and peer reviewer for academic journal *SALT*** – *SALT* is a new Orthodox, scholarly journal of cross-cultural theology, dialogue, and mission.
- **Member of Virginia Tech Richmond Center Advisory Council** – Provide guidance, leadership, and expertise to help the university's division of Outreach and International Affairs grow opportunities for research, learning, and community impact.
- **Affiliate Member, Whole Health Consortium at Virginia Tech** – Contributing and supporting research to advance knowledge about the intersections of race, culture, religion, and science in our understanding of mental health conditions and their treatment across diverse communities.

- **Tutor and ESL Specialist** – Provided daytime intervention to struggling students and those with limited English proficiency in inner city schools in Richmond, Virginia.
- **Advisor for Student Organization** – Served as advisor for Orthodox Christian Fellowship at Virginia Commonwealth University (assisted with establishing student organization status, facilitated discussions, planned activities, and mentored students)
- **Committee Member** (International Orthodox Christian Charities Regional Committee), Participated in funding projects & raising awareness in local parishes of a non-profit organization's mission & programs
- **Missionary** (Tanzania, East Africa, Short-term, Orthodox Christian Mission Center), Gave short talks to large groups of adults & teens (100+ people) in church communities on issues of faith and solidarity.

OTHER FACTS

Good knowledge of French, some knowledge of Arabic, Greek, and German. Cross-cultural experiences include tutoring Latino and French children (U.S.A. /France) and travel in 20 foreign countries, on four continents, and over 40 U.S. states. Lived, studied, and/or worked abroad in France, Jordan, England, and Tanzania. Enjoy carpentry, architecture and design, writing, hiking, and jazz.