



# Teaching Dante

**The Third Biennial Conference on Teaching the  
Christian Intellectual Tradition**

*Samford University  
October 25-27, 2018*

# Schedule

## Thursday, October 25

5:15 p.m. & 5:30 p.m.

5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Conference shuttles depart Aloft Birmingham for Cooney Hall

Registration, Cooney Hall, Room 400

Dinner and Plenary Address: Cooney Hall, Room 400

Albert Ascoli, University of California, Berkeley: “Starring Dante”

## Friday, October 26

8:00 a.m. & 8:30 a.m.

8:15 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

2:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Conference shuttles depart Aloft Birmingham for Cooney Hall

Coffee and Light Breakfast, Cooney Hall, Second Floor Lobby

Concurrent Session I [Panels 1, 2, 3]

Break

Concurrent Session II [Panels 4, 5, 6, 7]

Lunch, Cooney Hall, Room 400

Concurrent Session III [Panels 8, 9, 10, 11]

Campus-Wide Address: Reid Chapel

Theodore J. Cachey, University of Notre Dame: “Mapping Dante”

## Saturday, October 27

7:30 a.m. & 8:00 a.m.

7:45 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Conference shuttles depart Aloft Birmingham for Cooney Hall

Coffee and Light Breakfast, Cooney Hall, Second Floor Lobby

Concurrent Session IV [Panels 12, 13]

Break

Concurrent Session V [Panels 14, 15]

Lunch, Cooney Hall, Room 400

# Sessions and Panels

## Thursday, October 25

Plenary Address: 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Albert Ascoli, University of California, Berkeley: “Starring Dante” (Cooney 400)

## Friday, October 26

Concurrent Session I: 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Panel 1: Teaching Dante, Teaching Ethics (Cooney 229)

Moderator: Chris Metress, Samford University

“Deadly Sins and Life-Saving Virtue: Teaching Dante in a First-Year Ethics Class”

Marc A. Jolley, Mercer University

“Learning with Dante: The Seventh Circle of *Inferno* as Redirecting Ethics”

Steven T. Lane, Florida State University

“Teaching Dante’s Comedy as Virtuous Friendship”

Matthew A. Moser, Loyola University Maryland

Panel 2: Dante, Master of Those Who Know (Cooney 239)

Moderator: Bryan Johnson, Samford University

“Teaching Philosophical Skills and Intellectual Virtues via Dante’s *Inferno*”

Karl Aho, Tarleton State University

“Learning to Read Big Books: Dante, Milton, Spenser”

Chris Hill, University of Tennessee at Martin

“‘Master, the Sense Is Hard for Me’: Developing Interpretive Skills Through Allegory and Intertextuality in Dante’s *Inferno*”

Rick Incurvati, Wittenberg University

Panel 3: When Dante is Your Virgil: Using Dante as a Model in the Classroom (Cooney 279)

Moderator: Brad Boswell, Duke University

“Dante and Vocation: Writing the Self”

Brad Boswell, Duke University

“Reading as Writers, Writing as Readers: Incorporating Dante’s *Commedia* in a Creative Nonfiction Workshop”

Joanna Murdoch, Duke University

“Dante’s *Commedia* in the Irenic Protestant Classroom”

Patrick Timmis, Duke University

## Concurrent Session II: 10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Panel 4: Three on *Purgatorio* (Cooney 229)

Moderator: David Chapman, Samford University

“The Pedagogy of Desire: Teaching Dante’s *Purgatorio* in the Undergraduate Seminar”

Paul A. Camacho, Villanova University

“‘And lo, As Luke Sets Down For Us’: Dante’s Re-imagining of the Emmaus story in *Purgatorio* XXIX-XXXI”

Jane Kelley Rodeheffer, Pepperdine University

“Liturgical Practice in *Purgatorio* as a Gate into the Divine Comedy”

John E. Skillen, Gordon College

Panel 5: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Teaching and Studying Dante’s “Divine” *Commedia* (Cooney 239)

Moderator: June-Ann Greeley, Sacred Heart University

“The ‘Better Waters’ of the ‘Second Kingdom’: Teaching Dante’s *Purgatorio* in the Contemporary College Classroom”

June-Ann Greeley, Sacred Heart University

“Visions and Versions of Dante: Discovering the *Divine Comedy* through Art”

Nathan Lewis, Sacred Heart University

“Teaching Dante’s Beatrice: The Transformative Power of Love”

Joseph Nagy, Sacred Heart University

“The Tender Turn: Ambivalence toward Brunetto Latini and Homosexuality in *Inferno* XV”

Tyler Lascola, Sacred Heart University

Panel 6: Teaching Dante Through the Arts and Imagery (Cooney 279)

Moderator: Shannon Flynt, Samford University

“Contemporary Visualizations of the Divine *Commedia*”

Haelim Allen, Union University

“The Reel Dante: Film and Dante’s Vision for Human Community in the *Divine Comedy*”

Walker Reid Cosgrove, Dordt College

Panel 7: Mercer University Great Books Program Student Panel (Cooney 181)

Moderator: Bryan Whitfield, Mercer University

"Spirit, Lead Me Where My Trust is Without Borders: The Guides in Dante's *Divine Comedy*"

Ashley Melugin, Senior English Major

"Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy: Paradiso*"

Kaylor Mondaizie, Junior Neuroscience Major

"The Light Before We Land"

Kedric Ross, Junior English and Philosophy Major

"The People You Meet Along the Way"

Julia Scher, Senior Neuroscience Major

### Concurrent Session III: 2:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Panel 8: Intertextual Dante: Literary Connections from the Classical to the Contemporary (Cooney 229)

Moderator: Keith Putt, Samford University

"Not the Same Old Story: Dante's Re-telling of *The Odyssey*"

David Chapman, Samford University

"'Florentino Ariza sat bedazzled until the child of his vision had crossed the plaza': Initiating an Exploration of Literary Texts with Dante in the Undergraduate Seminar"

Sarah Faggioli, Villanova University

"Categorizing Sin: Dante and Cormac McCarthy in a Composition Course"

Rachel Griffis, Sterling College

Panel 9: Medieval Dante, and Beyond (Cooney 239)

Moderator: Anthony Minnema, Samford University

"Dante's *Inferno*: A Tool for Teaching Medieval and Modern Structures and Anxieties"

Laura Hohman, Trevecca Nazarene University

"Heretically Entombed: Exploring a Theological Debate in Dante's *Commedia*"

Bernadette McNary-Zak, Rhodes College

"Teaching Dante in the History of Christian Theology"

Bryan Whitfield, Mercer University

Panel 10: "Dante as Muse: A Discussion of Dante's Influence on the Arts" (Bolding Studio)

Members of the School of the Arts faculty will explore two examples of Dante's influence on 20<sup>th</sup> century visual arts and popular music. The discussion will include Dante's reach into popular culture through the arts and examine the use of literary references as a means to create metaphor. Led by Joseph Cory (Art) and Beth McGinnis (Music) and part of the Division of Music's weekly seminar.

Panel 11: Samford University/University of Tennessee at Martin Student Panel (Cooney 279)

Moderator: Bryan Johnson, Samford University

This roundtable will discuss, from a student perspective, effective strategies for learning about Dante.

Campus-Wide Address: 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Theodore J. Cachey, University of Notre Dame: "Mapping Dante" (Reid Chapel)

## Saturday, October 27

Concurrent Session IV: 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Panel 12: Dante: Cautions, Connections, and Possibilities (Cooney 229)

Moderator: Chris Metress, Samford University

"Teaching Dante: A Cautionary Word"

John Edelman, Nazareth College of Rochester

"Mathematics, Mystery, and Memento Mori: Teaching Humanist Theology in Dante's *Commedia*"

Sean Gordon Lewis, Mount St. Mary's University

"Integrating Dante across the Curriculum at a Mission-Oriented University"

Anthony Nussmeier, University of Dallas

Panel 13: Dante as a Catalyst to Self-Knowledge (Cooney 181)

Moderator: Scott McGinnis, Samford University

"Where Are We Going?: Lessons for a Professor from Dante's *Divine Comedy*"

Dennis Sansom, Samford University

"Three Things My Students Have Taught Me about Reading Dante"

Julie Ooms, Missouri Baptist University

Concurrent Session V: 10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Panel 14: Patterns and Structures Across the *Commedia* (Cooney 229)

Moderator: Bryan Johnson, Samford University

"Distilling the Indissoluble: Teaching the Fundamental Structures of the Comedy in Canto V of *Inferno*"

John T. Glass, University of Tennessee at Martin

"Necessary Suffering: Dante's *Purgatorio* and the Final Rectification"

Bliss Green, Alabama A&M

Panel 15: Samford University Howard College of Arts and Sciences Panel (Cooney 181)

A discussion of how Dante is taught across the curriculum in the Howard College of Arts and Sciences. Led by Doug Clapp (Classics), Mike Ledgerwood (World Languages and Culture), Dennis Sansom (Philosophy), and Jason Wallace (History).

# Speakers

**Albert Russell Ascoli** is Gladyce Arata Terrill Distinguished Professor of Italian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, and currently serves as President of the Dante Society of America. He is the author of three books—*Ariosto's Bitter Harmony* (1987); *Dante and the Making of a Modern Author* (2008) and *A Local Habitation and a Name: Imagining Histories in the Italian Renaissance* (2011)—as well as numerous essays and several co-edited books and journal issues, including, most recently, *The Cambridge Companion to Petrarch* (with Unn Falkeid, 2015). He has held a number of fellowships, including the NEH-Mellon Rome Prize at the American Academy in Rome (2004-2005), and he was recently elected “membro straniero” of the Academy of the Istituto Lombardo. His current research project is a study of the problem of *fede* (faith) as promise and belief in the early modern period.

**Theodore J. Cachey Jr.** is a Professor of Italian and the Albert J. and Helen M. Ravarino Family Director of Dante and Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He earned his B.A. from Northwestern University and his Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles. Professor Cachey specializes in Italian Medieval and Renaissance literature, in particular Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, the history of the Italian language, and the literature and history of travel. He has authored or edited several books, including *Le isole fortunate; appunti di storia letteraria italiana* (1994); *Pigafetta's First Voyage Around the World* (1995; 2nd revised edition, 2007); *Dante Now: Current Trends in Dante Studies* (1995); *Petrarch's Guide to the Holy Land* (2002), *Le culture di Dante* (2004), and *Dante and Petrarch: Anti-dantism*.

# Presenters

**Karl Aho** serves as assistant professor of philosophy at Tarleton State University, a proud member of the Texas A&M University system in the greater Fort Worth area. He was a member of the third cohort of Lilly Graduate Fellows, and he recently taught Dante's *Inferno* to Tarleton Honors students during a month-long study abroad in Urbino, Italy.

**Haelim Allen** is associate professor of Art at Union University, where she teaches courses in Studio Art, Art History, and in addition, she teaches in the Honors program. In Honors, she team teaches a course on Beauty in which the last unit covers Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, and with a special emphasis on Purgatory. Her main studio area of expertise is in Installation Art, but she has graduate degrees in Painting/Sculpture, Religious Education, and Art History. She has exhibited her works in art shows nationally in such places as Washington D.C., Baltimore, New York City, Milwaukee, and Memphis.

**Brad Boswell** is a PhD student in the Graduate Program in Religion (Early Christianity) at Duke University, where his dissertation research explores early Christian-Hellenistic intellectual conflict through the focal text of *Against Julian*, Cyril of Alexandria's untranslated refutation of the Roman Emperor Julian ('the Apostate'). He has taught for church history and Greek language courses at Duke Divinity School and has participated in several extracurricular reading and working groups on Dante's *Commedia*. Brad has prior degrees from Boston College (MTS) and Union University (BA, Christian Ethics, Economics), and he looks forward to teaching and researching as a faculty member at a Christian liberal arts university.

**Paul Camacho** is an Arthur J. Ennis Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Augustine and Culture Seminar Program (ACS) at Villanova University. In addition to teaching ACS (a two-semester humanities sequence which educates students in Augustinian inquiry through a great-books curriculum), Paul also teaches courses in Philosophy and Humanities, including *The Problem of Love: A Philosophical Investigation*, *Augustine and Antiquity*, and—for the first time in Spring 2018—*Philosophy and the Divine Comedy*. Paul is especially interested in our cultural imagination surrounding love, and the role that it plays in our discussions of morality and religion.

**David Chapman** is professor of English at Samford University, where he teaches courses in British literature and nonfiction prose. He regularly teaches *Cultural Perspectives*, a core curriculum requirement for all entering students, and the *Western Intellectual Tradition*, a series of courses for University Fellows. For fifteen years, Chapman was dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Samford.

**Doug Clapp** serves as associate professor of Classics at Samford University and teaches every year in the Core Texts Program. In an effort to connect the ideas that matter in the Christian Intellectual Tradition to living well today, his students engage in service-learning by tutoring at a faith-based, urban elementary school.

**Joe Cory** is associate professor of Art and Design at Samford University, where he teaches a variety of visual art courses. He also directs the School of the Arts' new Catalyst Program and oversees its General Education courses, *Arts in Society* and *Arts Perspectives*. Beyond his work in the classroom, he is an accomplished artist whose scholarly interests engage with the liberal arts and the Christian Intellectual Tradition. He is currently on the Board of Directors for CIVA (Christians in the Visual Arts), a national arts organization that examines the intersection between art and faith and seeks to cultivate an incarnational presence in contemporary culture.

**Walker Reid Cosgrove** is associate professor of history at Dordt College, where he teaches course in ancient, medieval, and Renaissance history, as well as courses dealing with Islam and the Middle East. He helped to start and co-directs the annual Great Text Seminar at Dordt College, in which interested faculty come together after the spring semester to read and discuss great texts, like the *Republic*, *Augustine's Confessions*, and *Moby Dick*. He co-teaches a class on Dante and the Italian Renaissance, which includes a ten-day trip component to Florence.

**John Edelman** is professor of Philosophy at Nazareth College of Rochester. He is the author of *An Audience for Moral Philosophy?* (Macmillan, 1990) and the editor of, as well as a contributor to, *Sense and Reality: Essays out of Swansea* (Ontos Verlag, 2009). He has published articles and reviews on ethics, the philosophy of religion, Aquinas and Wittgenstein in a variety of journals. In his 37 years of undergraduate teaching he has taught courses on a wider variety of topics and individuals than anyone should, in good conscience, teach or be allowed to teach.

**Sarah Faggioli** is assistant professor in the Augustine and Culture Seminar Program at Villanova University, where she teaches in the two-semester humanities sequence for freshmen (ancient and medieval literature in the fall, modern literature in the spring). She studied medieval Italian literature in Florence through Middlebury College for her MA and she received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 2014. Her research focuses on Renaissance Italian poetry, commentaries, and the printing industry.

**John Glass** is associate professor of English at the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he directs the Honors Program.

**Matthew Rothaus Moser** (PhD, Baylor University) is Lecturer in Theology at Loyola University Maryland, where he teaches courses on theology and literature, Augustine, Dante, and the Christian



**June-Ann Greeley** is trained in Classical languages and literature and Medieval Studies, specifically late antique and medieval theology and religious and intellectual history. As a scholar, she has presented at conferences and published along two tracks: she translates and interprets late antique, Celtic and medieval Latin theological works and explores medieval theology, specifically the writings of medieval women, medieval mystics (Christian and Sufism), sacred art and architecture, Celtic theologies, the works of Dante and other late medieval poets, and the emergence of Islam in medieval Europe. Her other scholarly fields of research concern religion and genocide/ Holocaust and Genocide Studies/ theodicy and post-Shoah theology, as well as feminist theology. Her courses range from topics on medieval and Celtic themes to courses on spirituality and death, pilgrimages and sacred journeys, women in Christianity, and religion and art.

**Bliss Green** is assistant professor of English at Alabama A&M University in Huntsville.

**Rachel B. Griffis** is assistant professor of English at Sterling College, where she teaches writing and literature courses at all levels of the curriculum. She also serves as Director for the Integration of Faith and Learning. She has previously attended TCIT conferences at Samford University, including the 2015 summer seminar on Teaching Dante. A version of her paper, "Categorizing Sin: Dante and Cormac McCarthy in a Composition Course," is forthcoming in the journal *Christianity and Literature*.

**Chris Hill** (proud Samford '96 graduate) is associate professor of English at the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he teaches courses in Renaissance literature and Shakespeare, as well as core courses in the UTM Honors Program. His scholarship has focused largely on 17th Century English devotional poetry and on religious polemic in the English Reformation. He is a repeat participant in Samford TCIT events, including the 2016 conference on the Reformation and the 2017 summer institute on Virgil.

**Laura Hohman** earned her PhD from the Catholic University of America in 2016 and is currently an assistant professor of History at Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, TN. Her research interests focus on the religious and cultural history of late antique and early medieval Europe. More specifically, her dissertation investigated Carolingian pastoral care, popular culture, and educational systems through a detailed analysis of 9th century manuscript compilations. She teaches a variety of world history courses at Trevecca and tries to work in Dante references to as many of them as she can.

**Marc Jolley** is the director of Mercer University Press and Senior Lecturer in the Philosophy Department at Mercer University. He regularly teaches Introduction to Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Philosophy and Literature, and Hellenistic Philosophy as well as teaching in the Great Books program. He has been in publishing for 26 years and has been teaching college level courses for 32 years.

**Steven Lane** is a PhD candidate in Religious Ethics at Florida State University. His dissertation research concerns the development of the modern state and Christian political reflection.

**Tyler Lascola** is an undergraduate student at Sacred Heart University, majoring in English with a minor in Theology & Religious Studies, whose first introduction to Dante was in an Honors seminar on the *Divine Comedy* that was co-taught by fellow presenters June-Ann Greeley and Joseph Nagy. Inspired, and having since encountered the *Comedy* again in the context of courses in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, Tyler has been independently continuing to study the *Comedy* and Dante-related topics in preparation for future academic projects.

**Mike Ledgerwood** is professor of Romance Languages and Linguistics at Samford University. He speaks decent Italian, as a recent visit to Italy proved, although his French, Spanish, Portuguese, and German are better. He was part of the Department of French and Italian at (SUNY) Stony Brook for 14 years and learned about early Dante web sites via a colleague there to help students understand Dante. He is still trying to figure out how to teach Dante and the *Divina Commedia* in a short time to first-year college students, who have to be exposed to so much else.

**Nathan Lewis** is associate professor of Art at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT. His paintings have been exhibited both nationally and internationally in museums, galleries, and universities. His work has been reviewed and published widely, including by the *Huffington Post*, *International Artist*, *The Boston Globe*, and the *New York Times*. He served on the founding committee for the Great Books in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition program at Sacred Heart University and continues to collaborate with the faculty currently teaching in the program.

**Sean Lewis** is an assistant professor of English at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Maryland. He has published on medieval poetic theory and the reception history of a variety of medieval texts, including an article on Wendell Berry's use of Dante's *Commedia*. Dr. Lewis serves as the coordinator for Origins of the West, a Humanities course required of all freshmen, in which Dante's *Purgatorio* is studied, and he teaches the entire *Commedia* in one of his regular electives on the Epic tradition.

**Beth McGinnis** is assistant professor of Musicology at Samford University and Organist at Vestavia Hills Baptist Church. She has published articles on music and the extra-musical, and biographical articles for the *New Grove Dictionary of American Music*. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano from Samford University, a Master of Music in Musicology from Texas Christian University, and a PhD in Musicology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Bernadette McNary-Zak** is associate professor of Religious Studies and NEH Professor at Rhodes College (Memphis, TN), where she teaches courses in her home department and in the college's interdisciplinary humanities program.

**Ashley Nicole Melugin** is a senior English major in the Great Books Program at Mercer University. Her academic interests broadly include Shakespeare and pop culture in dialogue with classic works, and she plans to go to graduate school in English after graduation, focusing on Shakespeare.

**Kaylor Mondaizie** is a junior neuroscience student in the Great Books Program at Mercer University. Kaylor's academic interests include Aquinas and Augustine. Upon graduation, Kaylor plans to attend medical school. She hopes to become a practicing neurologist and to conduct research in neurodegenerative disease.

**Matthew Rothaus Moser** (PhD, Baylor University) is Lecturer in Theology at Loyola University Maryland, where he teaches courses on theology and literature, Augustine, Dante, and the Christian Imagination. He is the author of *Love Itself is Understanding: Hans Urs von Balthasar's Theology of the Saints* and the forthcoming *Dante and the Poetic Practice of Theology*.

**Joanna Murdoch** is a PhD candidate in medieval English literature at Duke University. Her dissertation draws together questions about poetic value with manuscript witnesses of a 15th-century penitential poem juxtaposing Christ's Passion wounds with the seven deadly sins. She has designed and taught two undergraduate seminars combining sustained attention to student writing with grounding in the historical development of literary forms like epistle and memoir. Murdoch's interest in Dante comes from formative encounters with the *Commedia* in her undergraduate study at Gordon College, her master's work at Yale Divinity School and the Institute for Sacred Music, and the coursework and extracurricular working groups at Duke University. She is managing editor of the *Yale Journal of Music & Religion*.

**Joe Nagy** is a retired instructor of English, and currently instructor of Catholic Studies at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT. In Spring 2018, he co-taught an interdisciplinary honors course on Dante's *Divine Comedy* with Prof. June-Ann Greeley from the Dept. of Theology and Religious Studies. He currently teaches a two-semester Great Books course in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, which is the university's signature course in the core curriculum.

**Anthony Nussmeier** is assistant professor of Italian and Director of Italian at the University of Dallas, a Catholic liberal arts college where every undergraduate student—at least in theory—reads Dante's *Commedia*. He is Contributing Editor (Dante Studies) for *The Year's Work in Modern Language Studies* and his book, *Dante and the Politics of Literary Script*, is under contract with University of Toronto Press. He is the author of a trio of forthcoming articles on Dante and satire, on the seventeenth-century French Dantista Gilles Ménage, and on the 1577 Latin *editio princeps* of the *De vulgari eloquentia*, and has published on related topics such as Boccaccio's *Vita di Dante* and Dante and his poetic predecessors. He has recently delivered talks on Dante and philosophy, numerology in the *Commedia*, and Dante and medieval embryonic theory. His promotion of Dante in the community has included events such as a day-long, marathon reading of the entire *Commedia*.

**Julie Ooms** (PhD, Baylor University) is assistant professor of English at Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis, MO. There, she teaches a variety of courses and texts, among them Dante's *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* in the context of a general education world literature course. She has also written about Dante's influence on the graphic novel *V for Vendetta*.

**Jane Kelley Rodeheffer** holds the Fletcher Jones Chair in Great Books at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. A philosopher, she received degrees from Boston College, Harvard, and Vanderbilt. She teaches *The Divine Comedy* frequently in Pepperdine's Great Books Colloquium and has published widely in philosophy, literature, and great books, including Dante. A potter and calligrapher in the Asian tradition, Professor Rodeheffer was recently an artist in residence at the St. John's University pottery in Collegeville, MN. Her work is currently being prepared for exhibition.

**Kedric Ahmad Ross** is a junior English and Philosophy double major in the Great Books Program at Mercer University. His academic interests in philosophy are in Descartes and Plato. In English, his interests are in Shakespeare and Hawthorne. He plans to attend law school after graduation.

**Dennis Sansom** is professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department at Samford University. He joined the faculty in 1988 and has taught courses in the Department of Philosophy and the general education curriculum. Most of his research has been in the interface between the history of philosophy with ethics, literature, and education.

**Julia Scher** is a junior neuroscience and Spanish double major in the Great Books Program at Mercer University. Her academic interests include health disparities faced by minority populations and the investigation of history through the literature of the time. After graduation, she plans to attend medical school to become a psychiatrist.

**John Skillen** is professor of English at Gordon College, where he taught courses in medieval and Renaissance literature for 15 years before serving as the inaugural director of the College's semester program in Orvieto (Italy), where he taught courses in Renaissance cultural history and in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. His book *Putting Art (back) in its Place* (2016) is a study of the architectural, liturgical, and narrative settings in which works of art served the mission and identity of the communities who commissioned the art.

**Patrick Timmis** is a doctoral student in early modern literature at Duke University. He earned an MA in medieval literature from the University of Virginia, and a BA in English from Hillsdale College. Patrick has written articles on the freedom of the will in Robert Henryson's *The Testament of Cresseid* (*The Chaucer Review*), and on the importance of ritual for sanctification in John Milton's *Comus* (forthcoming, *Christianity and Literature*). He has taught Latin and literature in classical Christian schools for the last five years.

**William Jason Wallace** specializes in Western Religious History and holds the Stockham Chair of Western Intellectual History at Samford University. After graduating from the University of Virginia he joined Samford University's History Department in 2002. Dr. Wallace also directs Samford's freshmen Core Texts Program, a two-semester required course sequence that introduces students to great works of literature, philosophy, history, and theology. In addition to teaching great books to the freshmen, he also teaches courses on the Enlightenment, medieval and modern intellectual history and methods of historical research and writing. Dr. Wallace has published one book, numerous articles and chapters in larger volumes and critical reviews. He, and his wife Meg, and their three boys live in Homewood, Alabama.

**Bryan Whitfield** is director of the Great Books program and associate professor in the Columbus Roberts Department of Religion at Mercer University. In addition to teaching courses in the seven-course Great Books sequence, he contributes to general education through teaching courses in Bible, Greek, and the history of theology.

## Conference Sponsors

"Teaching Dante" is sponsored by Samford's University Fellows and Micah Fellows Honors Programs, the Howard College of Arts and Sciences, the School of the Arts, and the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship.