



CITY OF COLUMBIA
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
2015 ANNUAL REPORT

<u>Members</u>		<u>Term Expiration</u>
Scott Dean	Chair	March 2016
Dalton Calcote	Vice-Chair	March 2017
Elizabeth Miller		March 2017
Amanda Andrade	Secretary	March 2016
Jenna Liu		March 2017
Stacye Smith		March 2018
Persephone Dakopolos		March 2018

Liaison to the Citizens Police Review Board—Scott Dean

<u>Past Members</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>
Gina Long	March 2015
Meghanne Zimmerman	Resigned March 2015

Staff Liaison

Adam Kruse	Assistant City Counselor, Law Department
Rose Wibbenmeyer	Assistant City Counselor, Law Department

History of the Formation of the Columbia Human Rights Commission:

The City of Columbia first established the Human Rights Commission in 1974. The HRC was originally given powers to conduct administrative hearings and redress violations by ordering appropriate relief (including cease and desist orders, reinstating employment or granting back pay). In 1990, the Missouri Supreme Court issued an opinion which made it clear the City's HRC was operating beyond its constitutional limits. The City Council established a task force to make recommendations on the future of the HRC. In 1991, City Council restructured the HRC based on the recommendations of the task force. The duties of the Human Rights Commission are set forth in Section 12-18 of the City Code. It provides:

The commission shall have the following functions, powers and duties:

- (1) To formulate and carry out educational programs designed to minimize or eliminate those discriminatory practices made unlawful by Article III of this chapter.
- (2) To receive complaints alleging any discriminatory practices made unlawful by Article III of this chapter.
- (3) To endeavor to eliminate discriminatory practices made unlawful by Article III of this chapter by conference, conciliation and persuasion.
- (4) To provide mediation services to resolve incidences of alleged discriminatory practices made unlawful by Article III of this chapter.
- (5) To cooperate with other organizations, private and public, to discourage discrimination.
- (6) To encourage fair treatment for all persons regardless of age as it relates to employment, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or familial status as it relates to housing.
- (7) To advise the city council on human rights issues.
- (8) To hold public hearings on the state of human rights and relations in the city and on specific human rights issues.
- (9) To sponsor or initiate specifically targeted workshops and on-going programs to improve human relations and to decrease tensions in the city.
- (10) To present informational programs on human rights to school, business, service and other organizations.
- (11) To adopt rules, regulations and guidelines pertaining to the investigation and disposition of complaints consistent with the provisions of this chapter.

(12) To make recommendations to the city manager for funding human rights enhancement activities.

Section 12-19, City Code of Ordinances.

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) is dedicated to minimizing or eliminating discriminatory practices made unlawful by Chapter 12. It is comprised of seven (7) volunteer members, each appointed by Council to three (3) year terms. The HRC receives discrimination complaints from the public for investigation, mediation or referral to a state or federal agency. It also participates in outreach activities and makes recommendations on funding of human rights enhancement programs to raise awareness and improve human relations in the community.

COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES:

Complaints of Discrimination and Retaliation:

E-01/15-HM

A complaint alleging Employment discrimination based upon disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and age was filed on January 5, 2015. At the request of the complainant, the complaint was forwarded to the Missouri Commission on Human Rights on March 2, 2015.

PA-02/15-CG

Complainant filed a complaint on January 12, 2015 in which she alleged public accommodation discrimination based upon color and race. On April 7, 2015, the Human Rights Commission made a finding of “No Probable Cause.”

PA-03/15-MJ

On February 13, 2015, Complainants filed a complaint alleging public accommodation discrimination based upon color and race and also alleging retaliation. On February 20, 2015, staff notified the complainants that the complaint was administratively closed due to a possible conflict of interest and referred the complainants to state and federal agencies.

H-04/15-CR

On March 11, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging housing discrimination based on familial status. Staff notified the complainant that neither the complainant nor his uncle was under the age of 18 years old and therefore could not qualify for protection under the familial status category. The complaint was administratively closed on April 15, 2015.

R-05/15-TG

On March 16, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging retaliation and discrimination based upon ancestry, race and national origin. On March 16, 2015, staff notified the complainant that there was insufficient information in the complaint to show a violation of the retaliation ordinance.

E-06/15-WS

On April 7, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging employment discrimination based upon race. On April 20, 2015, staff advised complainant that there were insufficient facts to show a violation of the ordinance.

PA-07/15-AK

On April 7, 2015, complainant alleged a federal agency committed public accommodation discrimination based upon sexual orientation. Staff referred the complainant to file the complaint at the federal level.

PA-08/15-LD

On May 25, 2015, complainant alleged public accommodation discrimination based upon disability. The respondent took action to remedy the situation to the complainant's satisfaction. The complainant withdrew her complaint.

E-09/15-LB

On June 18, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging employment discrimination based upon sex. Staff closed the complaint administratively due to complainant's lack of contact.

H-10/15-DG

On September 3, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging employment discrimination based upon religion. The alleged discriminatory act occurred outside the city limits of Columbia, Missouri. Staff closed the complaint administratively due to a lack of jurisdiction.

E-11/15-CZ

On August 20, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging housing and public accommodation discrimination and retaliation based upon disability. After staff determined that the complaint was not an appropriate case for the Human Rights Commission, complainant was referred to the Missouri Commission on Human Rights.

PAR12/15-HM

On October 19, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging public accommodation discrimination and retaliation based upon disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. On November 3, 2015, the City of Columbia Human Rights Commission reviewed the complaint and determined that the complaint did not fall within the requirements set forth in Chapter 12.

PAR13/15-HM

On October 19, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging public accommodation discrimination and retaliation based upon disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Staff determined that this case was not appropriate for review by the City's Human Rights Commission and forwarded the complaint to the State of Missouri Commission on Human Rights for their review and consideration.

PAR14/15-HM

On October 19, 2015, complainant filed a complaint alleging public accommodation discrimination and retaliation based upon disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Staff determined that this case was not appropriate for review by the City's Human Rights Commission and forwarded the complaint to the State of Missouri Commission on Human Rights for their review and consideration.

Ban the Box Complaints:

In December of 2014, the City of Columbia adopted ordinance number 22286, which prohibits with limited exceptions an employer from inquiring, questioning or otherwise seeking information on an employment application as to whether an individual has ever been arrested for, charged with or convicted of any crime until after the applicant has received a conditional offer of employment. The Human Rights Commission is charged with receiving and investigating the complaints. In 2015, the Human Rights Commission received three complaints.

On March 27, 2015 complainant filed a complaint. After contact with respondent, respondent removed the criminal background section from their application and provided training to its managers on the requirements of the ordinance.

On March 27, 2015, complainant filed a complaint. Respondent claimed exception under Section 12-90(b)(1). Due to the nature of respondent's business, Missouri law requires respondent to exclude applicants with certain criminal convictions from employment. Therefore, there was no violation of Section 12-90.

On March 27, 2015, complainant filed a complaint. Complainant had applied for and accepted employment with respondent. Respondent promptly updated its application forms and provided education to its human resources managers throughout the country on ban the box laws. On June 2, 2015, the Commission voted to administratively close the complaint.

Inquiries:

An inquiry is when a member of the public has an allegation or question about discrimination but the person has not yet filed a formal written complaint. Staff handles each inquiry. Citizens are provided with personal responses specific to their questions, informed of their options for filing a complaint, and provided with contact information for any future questions. During 2015, the Law Department received twenty-six (26) inquiries.

Human Rights Enhancement Program :

The HRC's goal is to eliminate discriminatory practices, to carry out educational programs and to cooperate with other organizations to further this purpose. Pursuant to Section 12-19 of the City Code, the HRC recommends funding for Human Rights Enhancement activities in our community to be sponsored by the City and assists in coordinating these events. In 2015, the HRC recommended funding for the following Human Rights Enhancement activities. Each grant is limited to no more than \$500.00.

During FY 2015, the Human Rights Commission's Human Rights Enhancement Program provided funding to the ADA 25 Legacy Tour, hosted Tibetan Monk Champa Lhunpo's return to

Columbia, a screening of “Homestretch”, the Diversity Awareness Partnership’s “Listen, Talk and Learn” program, and the World Religion Series.

During FY 2016, the Human Rights Commission’s Human Rights Enhancement Program will provide funding to the World Religion Series and the Columbia Values Diversity Celebration. The Human Rights Commission has recommended a transfer of funds from the HREP funding to the Office of Cultural Affairs to pay for the expenses associated with the keynote speaker, president and CEO of Deaconess Foundation and co-chair of the Ferguson Commission Rev. Starsky Wilson, and to pay for the Diversity Awards.

FY 2015 Programs:

Applicant: Services for Independent Living

Activity: ADA25 Legacy Bus Tour, March 30, 2015

Overview: The 25th Anniversary of the ADA was celebrated in 2015. A coalition of local organizations took the opportunity to conduct activities every month to improve accessibility in the community by addressing key issues and raising awareness. In March, SIL brought the Legacy Bus Tour to Columbia. The Legacy Bus traveled the country showing the history of the disabilities rights movement and raising awareness of accessibility issues and laws. The bus stopped at the ARC in the morning and then the University of Missouri Campus for the afternoon. The event was free and open to the public.

Applicant: Amnesty International (Columbia Public School, Hickman High School)

Activity: The Human Rights Crisis in Tibet: The Venerable Champa Lhunpo

Overview: Champa Lhunpo, a Tibetan monk and currently a professor at the University of Kansas, traveled to Hickman High School to speak about human rights issues in Tibet and the dangers in ignoring or forgetting about human rights issues. He talked to Columbia high school students all day during classes and had a presentation open to the public at the end of the school day.

Applicant: MU Master of Public Health Graduate Student Association

Activity: “The Homestretch” screening, April 8, 2015

Overview: The MPHGSA provided a free community event by showing a documentary film called “The Homestretch”. This is a film about youth homelessness and access to education in Chicago. It hits upon the hardships of LGBTQ identity, immigration status, and the disparities faced by racial minorities and other marginalized groups. The film was screened during Public Health Week. The event was free and open to the public.

Applicant: Diversity Awareness Partnership

Activity: Listen.Talk.Learn.: Dialogue Across Difference

Overview: DAP is a new non-profit organization to promote diversity around issues of race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity. They provide these services through youth programs, diversity training, community forums, and diversity publications. They hosted a free community forum, open to the first 40 registered, to discuss issues around race and unconscious bias. In particular, attendees were able to

learn about the differences between debate and dialogue, facilitation tips and strategies for answering difficult and polarizing questions on race.

Applicant: George Frissell (teacher at Columbia Public Schools, Hickman High School)

Activity: Columbia World Religion Series 2015

Overview: The World Religion Series provides a free educational opportunity for the community to learn about religion as a part of culture, in nine two hour sessions. Attendees learned about concern for the holy, community, ritual, scripture and ethical code of eight (8) prominent world religions being practiced in Columbia. In addition to these eight (8) religions, there was a final session to cover other religions and beliefs that do not fall within these eight (8) major world religions. Mr. Frissell presented and moderated each session along with a practitioner or scholar from each of the religions to present and answer questions.

Upcoming Program

Applicant: Columbia Public Schools

Activity: World Religion Series 2016

Overview: The World Religion Series provides a free educational opportunity for the community to learn about religion as a part of culture, in nine two hour sessions. Attendees learn about concern for the holy, community, ritual, scripture and ethical code of eight (8) prominent world religions being practiced in Columbia. In addition to these eight (8) religions, there will a final session to cover other religions and beliefs that do not fall within these eight (8) major world religions. Mr. Frissell presented and moderated each session along with a practitioner or scholar from each of the religions to present and answer questions.

Other Outreach and Events Attended by Commissioners and/or Staff:

- 1/15/15 Columbia Values Diversity Celebration
- World Religion Series [HRC & George Frissell]
 - 1/15/15 Hinduism
 - 1/29/15 Buddhism
 - 2/12/15 Sikhism
 - 2/26/15 Confucianism
 - 4/2/15 Judaism
 - 4/16/15 Christianity
 - 4/30/15 Islam
 - 5/7/15 Baha'i Faith
 - 5/21/15 Open Forum
- 1/22/2015 #HumanRights365 Panel Discussion at Stephens College (Mr. Dean, panel participant)
- ADA25 Lunch & Learn - ADA25 Coalition
 - 1/27/15 Universal Design Housing
 - 2/24/15 Federal Contractors & 503
 - 3/30/15 & 3/31/15 ADA Legacy Tour Bus
 - 4/28/15 Transition: Youth Focused

- 5/26/15 Website Accessibility
- 6/23/15 Assistive Technology
- 7/26/15 ADA25 Celebration
- 8/25/15 Etiquette, Sensitivity & People First Language
- 9/22/15 Service Animals
- 10/27/15 Disability Awareness & Employment
- 11/17/15 Volunteerism
- 1/28/15 2015 MLK, JR Celebration & Lecture at MU
- 2/11/15 Off Campus Housing Fair at MU
- 2/13/15 Quarterly Stakeholder's Meeting - Refugee & Immigration Services
- 2/28/15 Charity Gala - Refugee and Immigration Services
- 3/5/15 Red Sweater Project Open House
- 3/5/15 MU Democrats Presentation
- 3/10/15 MU Women's Health Fair
- 3/10/15 Presentation to the Youth Advisory Council
- 4/2/15 Open House & Reception - Services for Independent Living
- 4/2/15 Presentation to the Quincy, Illinois Human Rights Commission
- 4/8/15 The Homestretch screening - MU – MPHGSA
- 4/10/15 Fair Housing Seminar - Equal Housing Opportunity Commission
- 4/16/15 Meeting with Grace Gabel, an MU Journalism student to discuss gender neutral environment development in Columbia
- 4/19/15 Columbia Area Earth Day Festival
- 4/24/15 Armenian Genocide Discussion
- 4/28/15 Columbia Fair Housing Seminar - HRC
- 5/7/15 Columbia Branch Opening Celebration - Diversity Awareness Partnership
- 5/7/15 Presentation on City's homebuyer assistance programs
- 5/19/15 Cultural Awareness Training - SIL
- 5/19/15 Historic Sharp End Marker & Dedication - Sharp End Heritage Committee
- 6/5/15 Steinberg Playground Dedication - City of Columbia
- 6/11/15 APBP webinar on "Law Enforcement Strategies to Improve Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety"
- 6/19/15 Quarterly Stakeholder's Meeting - Refugee & Immigration Services
- 6/29/15 Ride2Freedom Rally
- 6/29/15 Fair Housing Outreach - City of Columbia
- 7/13/15 Fair Housing Outreach - City of Columbia
- 7/14/15 Listen. Talk. Learn.: Dialogue Across Difference - DAP
- 7/16/15 Positive Youth Development Legislator Summit
- 7/23/15 Summer Breakfast Mixer - DAP
- 7/24/15 35th Anniversary - SIL
- 8/8/15 40th Anniversary Years and Still Rolling - ACT/Como Derby Dames
- 8/10/15 Diversity 101 - DAP
- 9/2/15 City Manager's Press Conference announcing the City's Strategic Plan
- 9/17/15 Annual Picnic & Fun Run – BCFR

- 9/21/15 Meeting with Sharp End Committee and City, African American Heritage Trail
- 9/26/15 Merit Badge University - Boy Scouts, presentation by HRC
- 10/9/15 Attended Mature Living Festival
- 10/14/15 Presentation at Dr. Clark Peters class on law and social work
- 10/16/15 Met with Scout Merry, Services for Independent Living, and learned about accessibility audits
- 10/21/15 Sharp End Heritage Committee Meeting
- 10/28/15 Community Dialogue on Violence
- 11/3/15 Meeting with George Frissell
- 11/3/15 Meeting with Phil Steinhaus
- 11/12/15 Meeting with Cultural Affairs regarding Diversity Celebration
- 11/18/15 Community Dialogue on Violence
- 11/19/15 Public Communication Meeting
- 11/19/15 Meeting with Dionne George, University of Missouri Off Campus Housing
- 11/19/15 Sharp End Heritage Committee Meeting
- 11/19/15 Mr. Dean gave a presentation on Ban the Box Community Forum in Springfield, Missouri
- 11/20/15 Meeting with Eric Krekel, Missouri Commission on Human Rights
- 11/20/15 Missouri Bar Fall Committee Meetings
- 12/2/15 University of Missouri Off Campus Housing Fair
- 12/11/15 Community Dialogue on Violence

In the News:

- A photo from the Confucianism presentation of the World Religion Series was featured in the Pulse section of the Columbia Tribune on 3/8/15: http://m.columbiatribune.com/arts_life/pulse/pulse-shots-understanding-confucianism/article_23f32d4f-6d32-5a9a-a219-755c54a4387a.html
- Stephens College Magazine, <http://www.sc-scene.com/2015/01/panelists-raise-awareness-about-human.html>
- Diversity Summit Considered: <http://www.komu.com/news/commission-on-human-rights-to-discuss-possible-diversity-summit/>
- Coverage on Columbia's Human Rights Campaign Score: http://www.columbiatribune.com/news/local/columbia-bests-state-national-averages-on-lgbt-acceptance/article_c237a7e3-10dd-5a42-b88e-4eabf60734c4.html
- In addition, members of the Commission were interviewed and quoted in various print and video media outlets

YEAR IN REVIEW:

Goals for 2015:

During 2015, the Commission successfully completed the following goals it established in 2014. The Commission:

- Hosted an annual Columbia Fair Housing Seminar in April of 2015.
- Maintains close ties to the Disabilities Commission and includes regular reports from the Disabilities Commission during the HRC's monthly meetings.
- Continues to provide a liaison member to the Citizens Police Review Board. Mr. Dean serves as the liaison and has become a Certified Practitioner of Oversight.
- Provides a liaison to the Columbia Values Diversity Celebration Planning Committee.
- Works with any boards or commission seeking our assistance including the Mayor's Task Force on Community Violence, and the Mayor's Task Force on Pedestrian Safety.
- Through communication with the Human Rights Campaign, improved the City's Score on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Index Score Test.
- Provided proactive reports to Council on human rights issues.
- Works with the Youth Advisory Coalition to identify human rights issues of our younger citizens and includes a report from the Youth Advisory Coalition during the Commission's monthly meetings (Jenna Liu serves on the Human Rights Commission and Youth Advisory Council).
- Increased networking with the community through regular outreach at local events.
- Established a calendar filter on the City's website for human rights events.

Future Goals:

- **Continue to reduce paper-waste in-line with the City of Columbia's sustainability practices.**
- **Work with the City and members of the Mayor's Task Force on Community Violence to start an annual Diversity Forum.**
- **Research and advise on opportunities to join human rights focused groups such as the Racial Equity Alliance and the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies.**
- **Advise Council on potential ordinance changes to increase social equity.**
- **Increase our outreach and educational opportunities.**

COLUMBIA WORLD RELIGION SERIES – FINAL REPORT (2015)

- January 15, 2015 – Hinduism (54)
- January 29, 2015 – Buddhism (53-70)
- February 12, 2015 – Sikhism (34-35)
- February 26, 2015 – Confucianism (30-35)
- April 2, 2015 – Judaism (30+)
- April 16, 2015 – Christianity (27)
- April 30, 2015 – Islam (30)
- May 7, 2015 – Baha'i Faith (25-30)
- May 21, 2015 – Other Religions/Beliefs (14)

Total individuals served (with duplication; some attended all sessions): ~297-326

Feedback forms completed (at various, but not all, sessions): 20

How much did you learn and/or enjoy the religious traditions in today's session?
(1 – Not at all; 5 – Very Much) Avg Rating: 4.66

Would you be interested in a bus tour that visited some of the places of worship discussed in this series?

YES – 14
NO – 3
MAYBE OR NO ANSWER – 3

Recommendations for Final Session: (*all from 1 person)

- Native American – other “earth” based religions
 - Native American culture/beliefs
 - Native American/Animist
 - Native American Religious Practices
 - Native American Religion(s)
- Another religion(s)
- Summary of all things covered
 - Comparative overview
- Atheism
- School of Metaphysics*
- Paganism*
 - Wicca
- Unitarian & Unity*
- Yoruba/Orisha – African
- Zoroaster
- Greek Scientist [not sure, that's what it looks like on form]
- Other
 - “It would be interesting to have a program that incorporated many religious traditions, as expressed through the arts, perhaps. MU Professor Michael Budds is offering a lecture about faith expressed in music at MU's Taste of Arts & Sciences. Could we visit the MU Art Museum?”*
 - “Having studied all religions – has it affected your early beliefs of Christianity?”

Should we continue session next year? Suggestions or feedback on program to change next year?

- Find a way to bring in more young adults. Everyone here is much older
- Have city advertise it in newsletter that comes with utility bill
- Absolutely continue next year
- Yes – it is a wonderful program
- Yes. Have to think about suggestions
- Yes, I think this is a very valuable program that should be continued. However, I don't think that I would attend the same program 2 years in a row.
- Make series available online, accessible at anytime for participants
- Yes
- Suggest that (1) the presenter read the writing on the slides since the lighting makes them difficult to read, (2) use a microphone since some people are hard of hearing
- Yes [continue next year]. No [suggestions].
- Yes! Thank you
- Other than religion?
- Absolutely! Perhaps a different day of week – or alternate days. Would prefer presenter read content of slides shown as they couldn't be easily seen
- Please no advertisement for Confucius Institute – not related to religion
- Yes – Please use the microphone!
- Great job

Notes from Final Session Feedback (George Frissell not present):

- Advertise better - Elk's club, any organizations with bulletin boards, public service announcements.
- Diversity issue*, educational opportunity
- Venue - Library? Arc?
- Time - 7-9 pm works well
- Moderator - George Frissell was great
- Content - Indigenous, Paganism, Quaker, Church of Latter-Day Saints, Mennonites, panel of religions that are not common, fringe religions in our area, Taoism, Shinto, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses
- *It is believed the 'diversity issue, educational opportunity' were notes of people commending the commission and City for hosting the event because they think the WRS addressed a diversity issue and provided an important educational opportunity.

Possible ideas for next year:

- Bus tour of various locations of worship (pending Law Department review / approval)
- Offer a simple certificate in diversity for attending all sessions
- Partner with CPS to provide a form of continuing educational training to their faculty, staff, etc. (George is in conversations with CPS to accomplish this)
- Better advertising
- Recording sessions to be made available online

Of note: Several attendees showed up during the wrong week once, but proceeded to have an hour and a half long discussion about what they had learned thus far.

World Religion Series Feedback Form

World Religion Series Feedback Form Session (Circle One): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How much did you learn from and/or enjoy the religious tradition(s) described in today's session? (1-Not at all; 5-Very Much) 1 2 3 4 5

Would you be interested in a bus tour that visited some of the places of worship discussed in this series? Circle one: Yes No

Do you have recommendations for what should be covered in the final session?

Should we continue the sessions next year, do you have suggestions or feedback on the program or changes to be made in the future?

World Religion Series Feedback Form Session (Circle One): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

How much did you learn from and/or enjoy the religious tradition(s) described in today's session? (1-Not at all; 5-Very Much) 1 2 3 4 5

Would you be interested in a bus tour that visited some of the places of worship discussed in this series? Circle one: Yes No

Do you have recommendations for what should be covered in the final session?

Should we continue the sessions next year, do you have suggestions or feedback on the program or changes to be made in the future?

COLUMBIA WORLD RELIGION SERIES

An exceptional opportunity to learn about the basic tenets of the world religions and further your understanding of them as a part of culture!

A series of 9 sessions to learn and ask questions from experts and practitioners or scholars of the various world religions!

Sessions will be presented and moderated by George Frissell, a world religions expert and teacher in the community for over 25 years, and it will also feature a practitioner or scholar from each of the religions to present and answer questions.

Each session will look at the following:

- Concern for the Holy
- Community
- Ritual
- Scripture
- Ethical Code

All Sessions will be Thursday evenings, at 7:00 PM, in City Council Chambers at City Hall, 701 E. Broadway (except for May sessions, which will be at City Hall in Rooms 1A & 1B):

- Thursday, January 15, 2015 - Hinduism
- Thursday, January 29, 2015 – Buddhism
- Thursday, February 12, 2015 – Sikhism
- Thursday, February 26, 2015 – Confucianism
- Thursday, April 2, 2015 – Judaism
- Thursday, April 16, 2015 – Christianity
- Thursday, April 30, 2015 – Islam
- Thursday, May 7, 2015 – Baha’i Faith
- Thursday, May 21, 2015 – Other Religions/Beliefs

This educational opportunity is sponsored by the City of Columbia Human Rights Commission to encourage fair treatment for all persons. For more information, please contact:

Columbia Human Rights Commission
(573) 817-5024
HumanRights@GoColumbiaMo.com

COLUMBIA WORLD RELIGION SERIES

An educational opportunity sponsored by the Human Rights Commission of the City of Columbia to encourage fair treatment for all persons.

This series of nine sessions provides an educational opportunity for the citizens of Columbia to learn about the basic tenets of eight world religions and to further their understanding of them as a part of human culture!

The series will consist of eight sessions on major world religions – four on Eastern Religions and four on Western Religions plus one on other Religious Traditions.

George Frissell, a world religions expert and teacher in our community for over 25 years, will present on each tradition and a practitioner or scholar representing each tradition will also present and answer questions. Each presentation will put the religious tradition in historical context and address how the tradition is manifest in the Columbia community.

The following characteristics will be discussed concerning each tradition:

- Concern for the Holy
- Community
- Ritual
- Scripture
- Ethical Code

All sessions will be Thursday evenings, 7:00 to 9:00 PM, in Room 1B at City Hall, 701 E. Broadway.

Thursday, January 15, 2015 -	Hinduism
Thursday, January 29, 2015 –	Buddhism
Thursday, February 12, 2015 –	Sikhism
Thursday, February 26, 2015 –	Confucianism
Thursday, April 2, 2015 –	Judaism
Thursday, April 16, 2015 –	Christianity
Thursday, April 30, 2015 –	Islam
Thursday, May 7, 2015 –	Baha’i Faith
Thursday, May 21, 2015 –	Other Religions/Beliefs

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BILL CLARK

Frissell to host world religions classes

By **BILL CLARK**

Monday, January 12, 2015 at 2:00 pm

Correction appended

George Frissell is a former recipient of the Columbia Values Diversity Award (2004) for more than 30 years a teacher of English, social studies and world religions at Hickman High School and for more than a quarter-century the director of the student-oriented “Speak Your Mind” forum at Hickman.

He has challenged both students and Columbians in general to take a better look at themselves, at different cultures and different religions, and to find the common ground in man’s relationship with his fellow man.

During the past decade, George has discussed the world’s religions, often at the Unitarian-Universalist Church’s issues and answers forum, in language that is easily understood. He offers no judgments, just the facts. His discussions have been thoughtful and enlightening.

In a world at odds over most issues, particularly religion, George Frissell is a voice of reason and understanding. Now Columbians in general will get a chance to share George’s wisdom and insight.

On Thursday evening, George will begin conducting classes concerning eight of the world’s most popular religions, thanks to the Columbia Human Rights Commission, which first proposed the idea and brought him on board as the moderator.

“The World Religion Project” will open at 7 p.m. in Room 1B at City Hall. The eight-week session is free and open to the public. There is no registration necessary. Just show up for as many or as few of the sessions as you desire. Each session will last two hours.

The program is divided into Eastern and Western religions. The lineup for the eight weeks opens with four Eastern religions: Hinduism, Jan. 15; Buddhism, Jan. 29; Sikhism, Feb. 12; and Confucianism, Feb. 26. Four Western religions follow: Judaism, April 2; Christianity, April 16; Islam, April 30; and the Baha’i faith, May 7.

World Religion Series Press – PDF

7/7/2015

Frissell to host world religions classes - Columbia Daily Tribune | Columbia Missouri: Community

The Human Rights Commission lists two primary objectives of “World Religion Project.” First is to offer an educational opportunity to the people of Columbia to learn about the basic tenets of these eight religions and understand them as a part of world culture.

The second objective, by far the more important of the two to this columnist, is to promote tolerance in the Columbia community.

You will need the first part to succeed with Part Two.

George will both present and moderate each religion and will be joined each week by practitioners and/or scholars from each religion.

“Each presentation will involve putting the religion in historical context and how the tradition is manifest in the Columbia community,” George said.

Each session will show each religion’s concern for the holy, the community, and its rituals, scriptures and ethical code.

George Frissell is the perfect moderator. He’s a member of the Unitarian-Universalist Church, which has as one of its major tenets: “I respect the right of every individual to their personal beliefs.”

It has been said that religious intolerance has caused more wars and suffering than any other aspect of the human condition. Even without militant groups masquerading as religious fundamentalists, there’s truth to the above statement.

So a bit of information and understanding can go a long way toward breaking down the intolerance that still exists in our reasonably diversified community.

All it takes is for the community to bring an open mind and bagful of questions to these eight Thursday dates.

Both you and our town will be better for the effort.

SECOND THOUGHTS:

This page has been revised to make the following correction:

Friday, January 23, 2015

Bill Clark’s Jan. 12 column provided the wrong date for George Frissell’s “World Religion Project” class on Judaism, which will be at 7 p.m. April 2, not April 12, in Room 1B at City Hall.

PULSE SHOTS: Understanding Confucianism



Lena Ajans, Hank Landry, George Frissell, Wen Ouyang and Bridget Caddell

Sunday, March 8, 2015 at 12:00 am

http://www.columbiatribune.com/arts_life/pulse/pulse-shots-understanding-confucianism/article_23f32d4f-6d32-5a9a-a219-755c54a4387a.html

7/7/2015

PULSE SHOTS: Understanding Confucianism - Columbia Daily Tribune | Columbia Missouri: Pulse

George Frissell, a classical-studies teacher at Hickman High School, and Wen Ouyang, co-director at the University of Missouri Confucius Institute, gave a talk on Confucianism on Feb. 26 in the Council Chamber of City Hall. This was the fourth session in the city's World Religion Project.

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