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# Professional Development

*Patsy Yang, Gateway Seminary, Chair*

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- Patsy Yang, Gateway Seminary, Chair
- Kellie Barbato, Roberts Wesleyan College/Northeastern Seminary
- Becky Givens, Covenant Theological Seminary
- Timothy Lincoln, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- Andy Lofthus, Western Seminary
- Jamie Lin, Atla Staff Liaison

## **YEAR IN REVIEW**

The Professional Development Committee (PDC) fosters the development of librarians and related information professionals who serve theological and religious studies scholarship and study. We provide professional development opportunities to members throughout the year using a variety of methods and delivery mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of ideas and support members at every point in their careers, by determining member needs and identifying expert resources.

At our October 2021 annual virtual Fall meeting, we discussed programming ideas and how we could provide programming related to Atla's organizational ends and the Board of Directors' 2020-21/2021-22 Mega Issues. We decided to provide monthly REMO Social Hours to provide an informal atmosphere for Atla members throughout the academic year, since the REMO Socials at the end of each day of the 2021 Conference were so successful and these have a small, but enthusiastic attendance, so they will continue through next year as well. We also created an initial set of topics to cover in conversation groups, panel discussions and other webinars during the year.

We started off our PDC events with a panel discussion with five Atla members and staff on "What is a Theological Librarian" during TLM month. This had a very high attendance by both Atla

members and people from other organizations and is now available in Atla's online webinar archive. We continued the informal Conversation Groups series started in 2020-2021 to help our members connect more easily with each other. We created privacy and a safe place by not recording these conversations. The topics included an open discussion on OCLC's WMS/WC Discovery platform and the Long-Term Effect of the Pandemic on Our Workplaces.

In February, we surveyed the Atla membership regarding preferred subject topics and venues for professional development opportunities. We analyzed the results in March and again learned that most members prefer webinars for their professional development from Atla. You may read our full survey report including analysis on the Atla blog sometime this fall.

The PDC oversees the regional grant program for regional groups and member institutions. We did not receive any grant applications this year as institutions continued to deal with COVID and most groups met virtually instead of in person.

Some of our members and Jamie Lin are working to reimagine the mentoring program for new library directors. This is a need that our professional development surveys regularly receive requests for. We hope to have something ready to share by the end of the next fiscal year, if not earlier.

Unfortunately, COVID is not over. Most of our institutions and members are learning to live with it at work and at home. As we continue to use new ways to work with students in our current climate, the Professional Development Committee will continue to focus on providing programming to meet your professional development needs.