

Mark Waters, PhD, is professor of religion in McMurry's Department of Religion and Philosophy and Chair of the Division of Humanities, Religion, and Social Sciences.

Dr. Waters joined McMurry in 2007 after serving for eight years at Just People, Inc., a non-profit support service organization in Abilene, where he was executive director. The first half of his career was dedicated to service as a pastor for churches in Kentucky and Texas.

Waters teaches introductory and advanced courses that help students understand world religions and prepare for Christian ministry. He loves "seeing the lightbulb come on" as students gain new insights and broaden their perspectives about the human family. He values the freedom McMurry affords to share ideas in an open-minded, caring community. He is active in interfaith initiatives at McMurry and through his participation in the Abilene Interfaith Council.

In addition to teaching, Waters is a researcher and writer, exploring topics that include religious pluralism, theologies of religion, practical theology, and the intersection of faith and science. He's the author of numerous publications, papers, and presentations. His paper "Antitheodicy and Pastoral Formation: A Metacognitive Approach" is currently under peer review at *Theology Today*.

Waters has served as faculty sponsor for many student organizations and as a member of multiple university committees. He's the recipient of numerous awards, including Outstanding Sponsor for a Student Organization in 2019 and 2012, Heartbeat of the Campus Award in 2017, the Gordon R. and Lola J. Bennett Award for outstanding teaching, service and leadership in 2015, and Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year in 2014 and 2024.

Waters earned Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Divinity degrees from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary prior to the fundamentalist degradation of that formerly fine institution. His PhD dissertation dealt with the hermeneutic of University of Chicago theologian David Tracy. Waters also studied church history and comparative religion on the graduate level at Baylor University and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and psychology from Texas Tech University.

Known as Papa Mark to his four granddaughters, he enjoys spending time with his daughters, Krista and Becca, and their families. He's a world traveler

who has helped McMurry students spread their wings on trips to Australia, Canada, England, Haiti, India, Israel/Palestine, Italy, South Korea and Zimbabwe.