

Professor Emeritus Mark Kulstad, ARRUF's New Director

Dr. Mark Kulstad has been elected to a one-year term as Director. He was born in Minnesota, went to Macalester College and earned his Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Michigan. In 1975 he accepted a position as an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Rice University.

From 1988 to 1992 he was Chair of that Department. His research specialization has been the history of early modern philosophy, and he specifically focused on G. W. Leibniz, the German philosopher and mathematician. Building on his publications of books and articles in this field – notably, *Leibniz on Apperception, Consciousness, and Reflection* (1991) – he twice served as President of the Leibniz Society of North America and organized major conferences in this subspecialization at Rice University.

In 2015 he retired from the Philosophy Department, but by 2016 he had become Academic Director of the Master of Liberal Studies Program in Rice's Glasscock School of Continuing Studies. He served there until 2019.

In ARRUF he has served on the Activities Committee and initiated an annual birdwatching event and ARRUF ties to the Ion. This Houston innovation hub is part of a Midtown project of the Rice Management Company, being built as a major renovation of the former Sears building at the site.

As an ARRUF Director he hopes to encourage heightened member engagement through the creation of additional shared interest groups (on the model of the newly-created Virtual Travel for the Corona Virus Era group). Such groups have been viewed as one of the keys of the success of the retired faculty group at Columbia University, for instance. He hopes these shared interest groups will often be founded on members' ideas and led by members themselves, encouraging member ownership of the activity of the groups.