

Educating for Lives of Thoughtful Inquiry, Service, Leadership, and Care

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Prism, the magazine of the Humanities Division at Pacific Lutheran University, expresses the scholarly viewpoints or deliberations of Humanities faculty, and occasionally others by invitation, while also announcing publications and achievements within the Division.

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Dean's Notes

Douglas E. Oakman

The Division of Humanities is indeed a vital place. Students and faculty together – through a rich array of study-away opportunities, student-faculty research, and the constant examination of life prompted by the humanities disciplines – continue to pursue with vigor the PLU mission of education for thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership, and care.

Last summer nearly two-thirds of the Humanities faculty were compelled to relocate their offices. After Business faculty moved into the new Morken Center, two suites in Hauge Administration were remodeled, Knorr House was razed, and division colleagues moved either to Blomquist House or Administration. It now seems worth the pain of dislocation, since many comments of appreciation have been heard about the new environs for divisional work.

The division stimulates the life of the university through vigorous, on-going programming and leadership. Just a few examples: In the fall, English faculty recalled Jack Cady's legacy through special readings and receptions, and the university library received his personal archive. Distinguished theologian Martin Marty and eminent philosopher Martha Nussbaum gave lectures sponsored by division departments. Patricia O'Connell Killen (Religion) assumed the role of Provost. Erin McKenna (Philosophy) began a two-



Dean Doug Oakman in Rome

year term as Faculty Chair.

Two new faculty, Antonios Finitis and Kevin O'Brien, joined the Religion Department. Division leaders were occupied with the composing of accreditation materials in preparation for the decennial re-accreditation site visit in April 2008. Division faculty are playing critical roles in discussions about general education reform. Our faculty are university leaders in study-abroad programs as well, as the fascinating accounts of this issue show.

I personally experienced the value of study away during January with Professor Samuel Torvend's course, *Medieval Christianity in Rome*. The course introduces students to the

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Where Will You Go? Study Abroad in

Religion, Privilege, and a Way of Life in Trinidad and Tobago and Rome

Tasha Holmes, '07

The Trinidad and Tobago study abroad program has been running at Pacific Lutheran University for eleven years. Students earn eighteen credits during spring semester and J-term. Last spring, 2006, the site director was Professor Kathlyn Breazeale, a Religion professor who specializes in contemporary theologies, with emphases in feminist and womanist theologies.

The main goal of the course, according to Professor Breazeale, is "to give students the chance to live in a very diverse, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, multi-religious culture and society." Students also learn tolerance in a diverse society and respect for a variety of peoples and cultures and then bring those skills back to the United States with them. Within the last three years, the program has been altered slightly to allow Trinidadian students to participate in study abroad as well, coming to PLU for a semester. Professor Breazeale calls this a "very positive enhancement" for the program.

Students participating in the Trinidad and Tobago study abroad program

take one class with the PLU site director, one course taught by three local leaders, and two courses at the University of the West Indies toward their PLU major. Students have, on average, one guest speaker and one field trip per week. They stay in a lodge near the university. All classes are taught in English, the public language of Trinidad and Tobago. The students also participate in Carnival and have a forty-hour service requirement. Breazeale comments: "Most of the students they interacted with at the university were upper- and middle-class students. [The service requirement] gave them a chance to meet and interact with those who were not so well off."

Professor Breazeale appreciated having the opportunity to live in another culture for four and a half months. She says: "As a middle-class, white woman, it was a very good opportunity to experience what it means to be in the minority." In Trinidad and Tobago, about 1% of the population is white. And, as a professor of religion, she felt "it was interesting to be in a society where a number of religious groups and practices are prominent."

J-Term in Rome

Professor Samuel Torvend, a PLU Religion professor with a specialty in European religions and cultural history, has spent years living in Rome and Milan, and describes Rome as "a big archeological dig." The J-term courses he leads in Rome are not only about the religious and

cultural history of one of the longest-inhabited cities on earth, they are also about allowing PLU students to interact with a culture that has vastly different social emphases. Professor Torvend describes it as "a strong group orientation, very different from the strong individual orientation in the United States."

Students attend class for one week at PLU, doing required reading and learning some basic Italian. Professor Torvend says, "Expecting everyone [in Italy] to speak English is an insult." Italians appreciate visitors attempting to speak their language. After the one-week preparation, the course continues in Rome. School is held at various sites, with Professor Torvend teaching from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. At each site, he explores the history of the site and its importance to the history of the West, to Christianity, or to Rome. Two days a week students also attend evening classes. Throughout the course, students read and collect evidence for a paper they will write upon their return to PLU.

Professor Torvend currently leads two J-term courses, "Early Christian History in Rome" and "Medieval Christian History in Rome," the latter of which he taught in January 2007. The early Christian history course addresses issues like group survival, gender, and interactions between Romans, Jews, and Christians. The medieval course is very different. Christians of that time period faced issues such as the relationship between religion and the state, monastic movements, interactions with the Jewish population, and challenges posed by Islam. Professor Torvend is also interested in designing a Renaissance study abroad course to cover yet another piece of the history of this remarkable city.

Literature, Truth, and Depth: English Abroad

Tiffany Clark, '07

Each year the opportunities for students to study English Literature



Professor Samuel Torvend (back row, fourth from right) with students during J-term in Rome.

the Humanities

abroad are increasing, but the waitlists to get into these classes are not getting any shorter. English professors Charles Bergman and Barbara Temple-Thurston are two of the faculty who have been largely involved in both semester-long and J-term programs.

"I remember sharing a three-hour sunset in Antarctica with our entire class," Bergman said of the 2006 J-term class. "Arguably the most transcendent moment all of us ever encountered: Going to the bottom and edge of the world, to feel the universe spinning around us, over our heads, and feeling ourselves somehow at the center of it all."

Bergman has also travelled with students to Patagonia, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, and the Amazon River basin.

"A central and crucial part of the mission of PLU is to care for people, their communities, and the earth. This is a focus of both of my J-term study abroad classes, with a primary focus on care for the earth," says Bergman.

Bergman's courses teach students to appreciate the power of reading and literature in interpreting and making sense of experience. Bergman also says that students gain an appreciation for the beauty and wonder of nature, animals, and the role that each of us, singly and together, play in being responsible for the health of the planet.

English professor Barbara Temple-Thurston is also giving students a chance to learn about the world firsthand. Her main involvements have been in the J-term South Africa class, "Communities Promoting Peace," and the semester-long Trinidad and Tobago program of which she is the director. Like Bergman, Temple-Thurston urges students to see things in a new light and reevaluate the way they look at the world.

Temple-Thurston says it is rewarding when students understand the important role literature plays in exploring truth and depth in society.

After experiencing programs like these, students often engage in self-reflection, scrutinizing their own society and themselves as individuals. Both Bergman and Temple-Thurston say that many students return from their study abroad with a new appreciation of different cultures, nature, and education.

Language and Literatures Abroad

Social Change in Oaxaca, Mexico

Chelsea Moore, '07

This fall marks the second year of the Languages and Literatures semester program in Oaxaca, Mexico. The program was designed to better integrate on-campus curriculum with study abroad, while allowing students to observe social change and culture in a developing Mexican city. Students are placed in an environment where they use Spanish consistently and have the opportunity to participate in an optional internship that provides direct experience working with the Mexican community.

Program Director and Associate Professor of Spanish Tamara Williams says Oaxaca was chosen as the program site "not only because it is a delightful, provincial city capital in Mexico, but also because it represents some of the most chronic challenges faced by Mexico and many Latin American countries." Situated in southwestern Mexico, the state of Oaxaca is the third poorest in the nation. With seventeen linguistically and culturally distinct indigenous communities, Oaxaca is home to a large population that is uneducated, poor, and unskilled.

This past fall, students had the opportunity to observe the challenges faced by the state. Local societal tensions emerged in May 2006 during a government-initiated raid on an annual public teachers' strike in Oaxaca. The action galvanized the city against the local government.

Civil unrest in Oaxaca peaked in October when federal police arrived in the city, triggering a confrontation that led to several deaths, including that of an American filmmaker. PLU students were about to leave on a study tour to Mexico City when the conflict occurred.

A second public announcement warned travellers to avoid Oaxaca altogether, and PLU students finished out their semester at the *Universidad de las Americas* in the more northern state of Puebla. Williams says that the students were disappointed at not being able to return to Oaxaca. "There is a saying," she says: "Oaxaca, *vives en mi*," or "Oaxaca, you live in me." This became a reality for many students as their time in the southwestern state was cut short.

Williams remarks, though, that "[their time in Puebla] was an incredibly wonderful opportunity for students to see another part of Mexico." Puebla is a large, wealthy city, demonstrating a thriving upper and middle class that students were not exposed to in Oaxaca.



Assistant Professor of Spanish Paloma Martinez-Carbajo (third from right) with students in Oaxaca.

Continuity in Chengdu, China

According to Gregory Youtz, Chinese Studies Program Director and Professor of Music, Chengdu is a charming city. It is vibrant and friendly, a place where people like to slow down and take their time. Chengdu is the capital of the Sichuan province in southwestern China and the location of a semester-long program that currently provides students the opportunity to observe diversity and change in developing western China.

Youtz says “the program is particularly attractive to people who are interested in being part of emerging China.” Beginning with a tour of China’s capital city, Beijing, students then visit several other historically significant cities before spending four months in Chengdu. Courses are held at Sichuan University, and students live in an international student residence hall, though they spend a weekend with a local family in order to experience a Chinese home.

PLU’s Chengdu program is unique in that it blends China and Tibet. The Sichuan province borders Tibet on its western side, creating a complicated and sometimes tense relationship between the two nations. PLU students have the opportunity to spend one week in Lhasa, the capital of the Tibetan autonomous region, where they visit Buddhist temples and attend lectures discussing current cultural tensions and relationships with China.

Whether students are interested in Business, teaching English, Anthropology, or Global Studies, among other things, Youtz believes that Chengdu is a “terrific place to be right now.” He also cautions that “in a developing country, not everything always works quite the way one expects it to.” Common frustrations for students include unpredictable internet access and unfamiliar teaching styles. “Once you get past those kinds of frustrations,” says Youtz, “you recognize that one of the reasons you’re here is to be in a developing country and experience that life.”

Youtz has travelled to Chengdu nearly three times a year in the last four years, developing relationships and exploring future opportunities for students. He hopes to attract Religion students to the program, as “China is a fascinating place to watch religion develop.” He also hopes to open the program further to students from a variety of fields of study through local internships.

For Youtz, the program’s success is evident in that “students almost always come home just thrilled with their experience.”

Norway: Going Global

Hamar is a small town just 90 minutes north of Oslo, Norway. It is a student-friendly town, home to Hedmark University. In Hamar, students find comfortable apartment-style accommodations, meet people from all over the world, and study at a university similar in size to PLU. But something else is significant about this small Norwegian town: it is in Hamar that students learn to see globally.

The theme of the Norway program is democracy, development, and peace. However, this notion extends beyond the borders of the northern European country. Beginning in 2003, several PLU students have traveled to Hamar each fall where

they are not only introduced to a new culture away from home, but also to that culture’s role in current global issues.

The study of Norway’s role in global conflict mediation and peace building is greatly enhanced by the presence of students from Namibia and Norway, as well as other parts of Europe. Program Director Claudia Berguson feels that bringing the different cultures together in and out of the classroom provides a good challenge for the students. She says that they do not automatically understand each other, so relationships and discussions develop over time.

While students take time in class to learn about issues of development and democracy, they also participate in a required field study. Each student is connected with a local organization where they are given an opportunity to apply their knowledge. Organizations range from local newspapers, peace organizations and multicultural centers in Hedmark and Oslo to a local NGO responsible for development work in Africa. For Berguson, the field study provides more than just hands-on work experience in another culture; rather, it gives students something tangible that will enrich their studies upon returning to the United States.



PLU students listen to an interpreter during a visit to an orphanage school run by Tibetan monks in the town of Tagong, in a remote area of Sichuan province. Students were inspired by the devotion and compassion of the monks, who teach orphans at the school to read and write and to chant Tibetan texts.

Department of English

Putting the Book Together

For the English Department's contribution to *Prism*, we asked several faculty members with current book-length projects to discuss some aspect of putting their manuscript together. In so doing, readers not only get an idea of the work going on in the department but also the experience of writing a book from start to finish. Here faculty discuss inspiration, research, arranging the manuscript, writing the introduction, finding a title, and finally, selecting the cover before going to press.

Uncovering the Project

Solveig Robinson's project *Critical Women: Publishing, Professionalism, and the Production of Taste in Victorian Britain* extends her doctoral dissertation and has been supported by a Wang Center grant and a Regency Advancement Award. Below, she describes the original inspiration for her scholarship and the project.



Until I got to graduate school, I seldom had trouble finding a writing topic or carving out a workable thesis. But in graduate school, the stakes were different: a major scholarly undertaking had a potential audience that was much larger and much more knowledgeable than I was accustomed to, and the fear of not having something sufficiently important to say to such an audience

paralyzed me. In particular, I was terrified by the prospect of having to choose a dissertation topic.

But as I prepared for my oral qualifying exams in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature and in the history and theory of criticism, I suddenly realized there was a gap. Feminist scholars in the 1960s and 1970s had brought to light many women writers who wrote fiction, poetry, drama, and personal essays, and those "recovered" writers were well represented on my British literature reading lists. But the criticism reading list included very few women writers, and the earliest one was Virginia Woolf. "Surely Woolf wasn't the first woman to write literary criticism," I mused. So where *were* those earlier women critics? Why weren't their names and works represented?

Answering these two simple questions about the missing women critics not only resolved my dissertation topic crisis, but it has generated many years of subsequent scholarly work. I edited an anthology of Victorian women's literary criticism (published by Broadview Press in 2003), and my current book project, tentatively entitled *Critical Women*, examines the lives and work of a number of women who were active as social and aesthetic critics during the nineteenth century.

Uncovering these lost women critics has taken me on a fascinating search below the surface of literary history, through dusty manuscript collections, teeming publishers' archives, and libraries great and small. And since I've discovered the wisdom of minding the gap, I've never again been at a loss for writing topics.

Getting into the Field: Research

Charles Bergman is working on his fourth book, this one on illegal wildlife trafficking in Latin America. Currently on sabbatical, he has been

conducting research for this piece of creative nonfiction as a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Ecuador. He describes looking for the story to convey the people and issues of the illegal trade—the story of the story.



Professor Charles Bergman in Ecuador with a scarlet macaw.

In what he calls his "theory of the macaw," the Ecuadorian poet Jorge Carrera Andrade believes the scarlet macaw is the quintessential creature of Latin America. It is a living symbol of Latin America, a living flame of the jungle, the embodiment of a passion for life itself.

So it is no surprise that scarlet macaws are among the most prized animals in wildlife trafficking—spectacularly red, highly intelligent, endearingly social. New World macaws and parrots are the most trafficked—and highest-priced—birds in the world.

And a scarlet macaw answered one of my most nagging questions.

Last fall I was a Fulbright Scholar in Ecuador. I was researching wildlife trafficking, on assignment for *Smithsonian* magazine and working on a book on the subject. Trafficking is a plague for wildlife in Latin America. It is officially lamented, then largely ignored and unstudied. In the Amazon Basin, illegal trafficking has quietly, insidiously become the second-greatest threat to wildlife in the region.

But how to tell a compelling story of trafficking? Facts can be powerful,

but it is through stories we come most fully alive to ourselves and our potential in the world.

My travels as a Fulbright Scholar in Ecuador took me to some very remote places. At one point, I was living with a small indigenous community of Haorani along a wild river, deep in the jungle. One family had a pet scarlet macaw.

"Would you sell it?" I asked its owner.

"Sure."

This macaw had just given me an idea for the story I was looking for.

"Where did it come from?"

"Por abajo," the Haorani told me. Down river. "Where they nest."

"Will you catch another?" My mind was moving now.

"And if so, can I come along?" It is legal for indigenous peoples to capture live animals, since it is part of their traditional culture. But it is not legal for them to sell them.

A month later, during breeding season, I was again in a small dugout canoe, much farther down this same small river. In the front of the boat was a Haorani hunter, looking to catch a live scarlet macaw.

We found a pair of macaws, nesting in a dead palm. My time with the Haorani would give me several lessons in human-animal relations. And I had found the story I had been looking for, a first-hand experience of the source of wildlife trafficking—on a jungle river, among Haorani hunters, in search of this pair of scarlet macaws.

Writing and Arranging

Andrea Mason's project, *Continental Divide*, is a series of autobiographical essays that details her migration west from Philadelphia and her search – through her twenties – for love, identity, and adulthood. Here she discusses the process of writing and arranging the manuscript.

One morning I made a list of the essays I had finished (I hadn't done this in a long time), and I realized I had eight, enough for a book. At



first, I had thought I would arrange them thematically but realized it would make more sense to arrange them chronologically. It was exciting – and spooky – to read the essays one after another and in this sequence. The themes, images, and characters gathered weight with each piece and resonated in a way they hadn't when they were solitary. It read more like a memoir than a collection of pieces.

I showed the manuscript to my graduate school mentor, and she suggested I write two more essays to bookend the collection. The need for the first essay comes from the fact that I think the manuscript gains momentum with each piece. The original first essay assumed that place because the character of me is at her youngest, but as a beginning, it is missing vital information. Additionally, that essay doesn't showcase the depth and texture the manuscript acquires later on. As a result, I chose to draft an essay that contrasts what I thought the West was while I was growing up in Pennsylvania with what I think the West is now. The last section will be about my time in Taos, New Mexico this past summer, looking back on myself a decade earlier, the last time I was in New Mexico, and the age I am when the book begins. In addition, I have resurrected two essays I had excluded from the manuscript. Now, the essays I originally thought would make the heart of the book are not included, and none of the essays are the heart of the book because they're all essential.

Writing the Introduction

Tom Campbell's writing project is *Memory AIDS: An Anthology of AIDS Memoirs 1988-2005*, a manuscript completed during his 2005-06 sabbatical. Below he describes the final step of writing the general introduction to the anthology.



I figured the hard part was over with: the hair-pulling business of selecting excerpts from sixteen different AIDS memoirs, going over the passages again and again to convince myself that I'd done justice to the full texts by coming up with representative fragments that could also meaningfully stand alone and exemplify features of this newly emergent genre. It was tough, but I was done with it. Unfortunately, I was also done with the fun part: writing up the sixteen individual introductions that would characterize and contextualize each selection and provide a clear rationale for its inclusion in the anthology. Snappy, quick-hitting, meant to seduce readers into a handful of diverse memoirs, these were a treat to write. So what was left? The boring part. I had yet to produce the general introduction to the whole project, something that would give a genealogy of the AIDS memoir, situate it in the larger history of HIV/AIDS, account for its formal variety, and trace its relations to other works of witness and remembrance: trauma testimonies, illness narratives, records of grief and transcendence. I could see this was an important piece to write, but it all felt perfunctory: crank out the obligatory overview, layer in the facts, identify the players, point to the shifts (in writers, audiences, purposes) that made

the AIDS memoir a protean genre for expressing the anger, suffering, hope of its various authors. And do this without recapitulating material from the selection head notes or hobbling it with a cumbersome scholarly apparatus. The problem was making it something folks would actually want to read and I'd want to write; the solution, I finally saw, was making it a story. Once I could view the introduction as *that* kind of narrative—one with a riveting cast of characters, a richly complex plot that knitted personal drama and political realities into an innovative cultural text—I was on my way.

Finding a Title

Rick Barot's second collection of poems, *WANT*, will be published in January 2008 by Sarabande Books. Below, he describes the process of arriving at the volume's title.

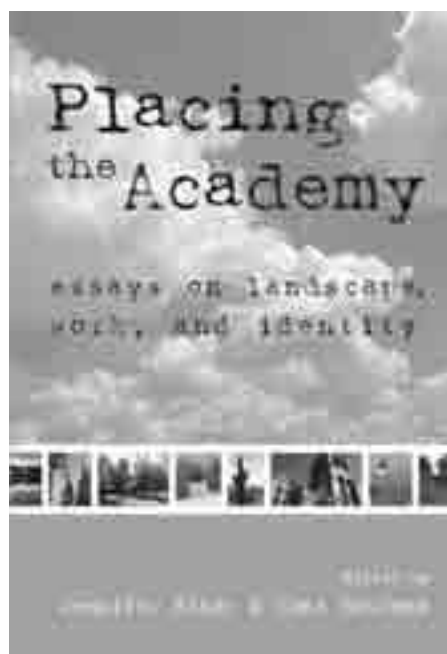


In the same way that a new baby's name crystallizes for its parents after months of other possible names, the title for my second collection of poems, *WANT*, came as a last-moment finality in a long process. The book is ostensibly a collection of love poems, but one that investigates love in all its mercurial and deranged forms. It was not a book with a happy subject, and the formal demands of the poems did not make for happy writing. From the first poems to the last, the manuscript took about four years to complete. For much of those four years, the title of the manuscript was *ECHO*. Because of her grieving, annihilating love for Narcissus, Echo had been my muse. She seemed a perfect emblem of what it often means to be in love: you lose

whole parts of your identity to an other, and the reciprocity of the other can both complete and devastate you. Titling the book *ECHO* seemed right, given Echo's haunting presence during my writing. But with the book finally written—the baby, as it were, face to face with its mother—I realized immediately that the name I had given it was not right. To my mind, it was too soft-sounding, too literary-sounding. It was, well, too poetic. What I knew was that I wanted a single-word title, one with a simple and brutal clarity. After weeks of desultory but nonetheless anxious thinking, I arrived at *want*. The word's multiple connotations of lack, desire, and need seemed to make the book's multiplicities cohere. Like love itself, perhaps, the word felt ordinary and immediate at the same time, making an inevitability of what was at hand.

Choosing a Cover

Rona Kaufman has co-edited *Placing the Academy: Essays on Landscape, Work, and Identity* with Jennifer Sinor. A collection that examines the influence of place on academic identity and work, it was published by Utah State University Press in March 2007. Below is her experience selecting a cover once the manuscript was completed.



Choosing a cover was a simultaneously freeing and fraught process. For one thing, the project was now out of our hands, and the moment of turning



over the collection to a graphic artist ushered in a kind of relief. Our part in this long process—two-and-a-half years of imagining, soliciting,

pitching, selecting, revising, shaping, revising again, ordering, and editing twenty essays about the relationships among place, work, and identity—was almost over. But for another thing, the project was now *out of our hands!* The work of caring for these essays was passed on to others, and the conversation that ensued took place mostly between people who did not, could not, know the book as intimately as Jennifer and I did.

We likely had more input than many authors and editors do. We took advantage of the press's practice of contracting out book designs and suggested a graphic designer whose work we admire. That Kimberly Torda is a friend of mine and the sister of one of our essayists is significant to me—another personal layer in a collection of personal essays. Kim kept us involved, showing us all of the drafts along the way and soliciting our feedback. I am not a visual artist in the least, and watching the changes in the design unfold, initially quite dramatically and then tapering to tweaking and refining, was often breathtaking. I simply don't *see* like that. Kim worked with more material constraints than I ever have—pantone colors, *dpis*, flap 11 rearranging, the work of *crafting*—that's what revision is, in word or in image.

If we think about the cover as a kind of summary of the pages that are contained, then the cover has surely failed. No single cover can capture the range and complexity of ideas, experiences, and landscapes represented in twenty essays; indeed, our collection argues against the singularity of place and identity. But the work of the cover isn't to summarize the conversation: it's to extend it. In some important ways, then, the cover serves as a kind of twenty-first essay, offering its own take on place and work.

Department of Languages & Literatures

Faculty-Student Teams Investigate Enduring Human Questions

Troy Storffell

Assistant Professor of Norwegian and Scandinavian Studies

From fieldwork in Oaxaca, Mexico and Chengdu, China, to analysis of classical Greek and Latin texts, students and faculty in the Department of Languages and Literatures have been taking advantage of a funding source for joint faculty and student research to explore transformations in art, language, and medical understanding.

The Kelmer Roe Research Fellowship program has as its goal "bringing the wisdom of the humanities disciplines to bear on enduring human questions and on the contemporary problems of our time."

Contemporary Art in China

Assistant Professor Paul Manfredi (Chinese) and student Amanda Anuraga are currently working on a project that examines changes in the contemporary Chinese art market, which has seen prices for paintings by contemporary artists spike sharply

in the last few years. Recently, for instance, a Chinese painting in Hong Kong sold for \$2.7 million, setting an East Asian record.

This trend is drastically altering the Chinese artistic milieu as former political prisoners suddenly find themselves among the country's nouveau riche. These changes mean that scholars have to adapt quickly as well, Professor Manfredi explained. "Poverty and other fundamentals of the [life of the] artist in China...have been blown out of the water by this," he said.

Anuraga, a double major in Chinese Studies and Business, spent fall semester 2006 doing a second study away in China. While there, she visited artists, galleries and auction houses, interviewing a number of informants. She is currently writing a paper on her findings, and Manfredi hopes to develop a paper on the topic as well.

"We wanted to see to what extent galleries and auction houses are targeting newly affluent Chinese," said Manfredi, who added that much of the contemporary art sold in China leaves the country after being purchased by foreigners and Chinese emigrants.

Bilingualism in Oaxaca

While Manfredi and Anuraga investigate Chinese art sales, assistant Professor Bridget Yaden

(Spanish) and student Carly West have been focusing their attention on bilingualism in Oaxaca, a state in southern Mexico with a large indigenous population. Like Anuraga, West also spent last fall on a study-away program, doing on-site fieldwork where she interviewed native speakers of several indigenous languages from the area. West investigated the many issues surrounding bilingualism, including education rights and the languages' perceived prestige in a state with more than seventeen native languages.

Despite political turmoil that shook Oaxaca throughout the fall, Professor Yaden said West was able to gather quite a lot of useful data, though her work was not without its moments of excitement. At one point, after PLU students and others on the program had been evacuated to neighboring Puebla, West had to make her way back into Oaxaca to retrieve her computer files. Fortunately, she was able to recover them safely.

Yaden and West hope to draw useful comparisons between bilingualism and education in Mexico and the experience of immigrants in the United States. "We want to find a model for bilingual literacy," Yaden said, adding that this is an area in which many American schools have a lot to learn.

Currently, West is transcribing her interviews, and she and Professor Yaden hope to present a joint paper on their findings at a conference in San Diego this summer. West is also extending her work on this topic into her senior capstone project.

Changing Understandings of Epilepsy

Contemporary issues of language and art market growth are not the only topics of faculty-student cooperative research. From the summer of 2005 through spring semester, 2006, Assistant Professor Eric Nelson (Classics) and student Steven Erbey probed transformations



Assistant Professor of Spanish and Language Resource Center Director Bridget Yaden and student Carly West research Mexico's indigenous languages as part of their joint study of bilingualism in Oaxaca.

in understandings of epilepsy from the ancient Greek world to the present.

Focusing on the relationship between literature, medical knowledge, and societal views, the two examined a large number of texts, often relying on computer-aided searches for key phrases in large literary databases. When they discovered a gap in their sources for the medieval period, Erbey visited McGill University in Toronto, where he made use of the rich holdings of the Osler Library of Medical History.

"Our research also led us to investigate the link between epilepsy and divinity, or 'the sacred,'" Erbey explained. He said the experience was invaluable because of the opportunity to work closely with Professor Nelson, and it enabled him to focus the topic of his Classics capstone. Most importantly, Erbey added, it helped to combine his studies in Biology with Classics and his focus towards medical school. This collaboration produced a co-authored paper entitled "On the Sacred and Disease," which the two PLU scholars hope to see published soon.

Courses with a Cause: Third-Year Language Study at PLU

Claudia Berguson

Assistant Professor of Norwegian and Scandinavian Studies

The Department of Languages and Literatures has as its objective to prepare students for "successful leadership and full participation in the integrated yet culturally diverse world of the twenty-first century." Language courses are the foundation of this endeavor. While third-year courses in German, French, Norwegian and Spanish, collectively titled "Conversation and Composition," are individually designed by each professor, several common themes unite them.

In fall semester 2006, for example,

students in German 301 grappled with the overarching question *Was ist deutsch?* (What is German?) by exploring topics of ethnic diversity, racism, and varieties of religious expression in contemporary German-speaking societies. In French 301 students addressed similar complexities of gender inequity, immigration and globalization. Spanish 301 students explored issues of social justice, human rights, immigration and development, the Spanish and Guatemalan Civil Wars, and the Argentine Dirty War. Students in Norwegian 301 focused on diversity, identity and cultural definition as told through literature written by immigrants and "ethnic Norwegians" in contemporary Norway.

While all the courses emphasized oral and written language skills, honing these skills while exploring contemporary culture took a variety of forms. Third-year Spanish focused on the dynamics of power and social change through content-based intensive writing. Professor Tamara Williams, Associate Professor of Spanish and Chair of Languages and Literatures, explains that Spanish 301 students "engage news stories from all over the Spanish-speaking world to produce thoughtful essays about some of the region's most pressing issues, including the future of Cuba, the nature of the new left in Latin America, and the impact of economic integration on our neighbors to the south." French students were introduced to the Hegelian model of argumentation often used in French schools as the basis for their critical inquiry and analysis. Plunging into the heart of French contemporary politics, students investigated, for example, both right-wing assumptions that racism and uncontrolled immigration are threatening national identity, and the more left-wing counterarguments. Seeking a conceptual synthesis of these arguments helped them more deeply appreciate the cultural complexities and dynamism of a world in which over 150 million people presently live in a country other than their country of origin. Norwegian students combined written analysis and reflection on topics of diversity with their own fieldwork, recording Norwegian

international students' responses to the question *Hva er en nordmann?* (What is a Norwegian?). German students focused on the complexity of contemporary German identity by creating multi-media final projects in which they reviewed recent German films that highlight Germany's ongoing struggles with racism, xenophobia, religious identity, and Unification.

The challenge presented to students in all of these third-year courses is to use their language skills toward deep cultural inquiry. French professor Scott Taylor utilized a philosophical approach to encourage students to synthesize an understanding of opposing views of equality and identity. Professor Tamara Williams set the study of the Spanish Civil War within the theoretical framework of debates on "The Law of Historical Memory." German professor Kirsten Christensen linked study of Jewish identity in Germany with up-to-the-minute Internet news on the deportation from the U.S. of a former concentration camp guard. Norwegian professor Claudia Berguson encouraged a critical examination of the static definition of Norwegian culture by including multiple perspectives from literature, TV, and newspaper articles.

Beginning in spring 2007, third-year students in all languages have an exciting new opportunity to unify their study of cultural identities. In a project spearheaded by Visiting Assistant Professor of German Annkathrin Lange, the Department of Languages and Literatures will host its first foreign language film festival. In groups of five or six, students will produce 10-minute films, with subtitles, in their language of study, to be judged by a jury of advanced students in each language. Lange says that she conceived of the festival as a way both "to challenge the creativity of language students and to showcase the relevance of language study for the broader campus community."

Language professors share a deep intellectual and personal investment in the focus of these third-year courses on cultural identity, viewing them as one way to overcome the experience of being "lost in

translation" in the global community. The department's shared focus in these courses is also a direct outcome of participation in the International Core program's grant-supported initiative to further its international focus. As part of this grant, Roberta Brown, professor of French and chair of the International Core program, advocated in particular for the granting of International Core credit for 301 language courses. This simple but important curricular initiative puts real weight behind the university's commitment to global learning by recognizing language study not just as a requirement, but also as a vital part of a PLU education.

Hong International Hall: Engaging Immersion

Paul Manfredi

Assistant Professor of Chinese and Chinese Studies

Hong International Hall (HIH) continues to thrive in its third year on the PLU campus. Established to support students of foreign languages and international cultures, HIH strives to provide a culturally authentic language immersion environment. Students wanting to live in Hong International Hall submit a supplemental housing application detailing their language study experience, their study abroad experience or aspirations, and their vision for international education. Those accepted join classmates in *Zhongwen zhijia*, *La Maison Française*, *Deutsches Haus*, *Norskhuset*, *Albergue Español*, or International Core House.

This academic year the Chinese Wing has experienced cultural immersion on an uncommonly deep level. By welcoming over twenty new students from China (a record-breaking number) and adding a resident Chinese Language Specialist, PLU students of Chinese found themselves in an environment as close to total cultural immersion as can be hoped for in Parkland, Washington. Resident Assistant Jake Paikai has

had the challenging assignment of developing wing programming for this diverse group. Programs have included dinners, film viewings, a "Chinese Language for Dummies" session and a vibrant New Year's celebration.

In the "Albergue Español," Resident Assistant Dianna Manjarrez and residents reaffirmed their commitment to Spanish-language immersion at the outset of the semester.

The occasion was a traditional Mexican dinner to celebrate Mexican Independence day (September 15th). The ensuing three months have brought numerous activities to the Spanish wing, including some focusing on unfolding events in Oaxaca, Mexico, where Assistant Professor of Spanish Paloma Martinez-Carbajo was leading a group of students in an impromptu study of local politics in action. In early November, Hong residents, along with Spanish professors Bridget Yaden, Carmaña Palerm, and Emily Davidson, installed a Day of the Dead altar in Hong Hall's Main Lounge. The series featured a slide and panel presentation on Day of the Dead celebrations in Oaxaca provided by alums from the 2005 Fall PLU Program and Religion Professor Samuel Torvend.

The German House has continued its strong presence in Hong Hall, hosting dinners, undertaking service projects, attending Mozart's "Magic Flute" at the Portland Opera, and bringing their immersion experience on the road with a "Speak German in the UC" evening under the leadership of resident assistant Kari Williams. Fall semester's major program, though, was a cooperative endeavor with the University of Puget Sound (UPS), consisting of a roundtable discussion entitled "Nazi Skeletons in the Closet: The Case of Günter Grass and the Perils of a Hidden Past." The event explored controversy surrounding the recent publication of Nobel Prize winner Grass' autobiography, *Peeling the Onion (Beim Häuten der Zwiebel)*, in which he revealed that he had served briefly in Hitler's



Professor of Music Greg Youtz teaches first-year student Julia Neal-Bakewell how to perform the Lion Dance at the Spring Festival hosted by Hong Hall's Chinese Language House, while student Marisa Bateman looks on.

SS as a youth. Grass' confession erupted into a scandal as Germans struggled to accept that their Nobel laureate, a long-time powerful voice calling Germany to come to terms with its Nazi past, has his own Nazi skeletons.

The discussion featured PLU German Professors Annkathrin Lange and Kirsten Christensen, as well as History, Political Science and German Studies faculty from the University of Puget Sound. Students from both PLU and UPS packed the Hong Lounge for the event, which enjoyed a repeat performance at UPS several weeks later. In the lively question-and-answer sessions, students and faculty probed not only the Grass case, but also broader issues of collective responsibility for national atrocities and the levels of disclosure about the past that we expect of our public figures.

A panel discussion in Norway House focused on the 2006 Swedish elections. Enlivened by students' enthusiasm, and drawing on the expertise of Scandinavian Studies Committee members Peter Grovesnor (Political Science), Mark Reiman (Economics), Troy Storfjell and Claudia Berguson (Languages and Literatures), the event explored the success of Sweden's Social Democrat Party from numerous disciplinary angles. Norway House, led by Resident Assistant Matt Palmquist, also saw its share of cultural events, including Norwegian-style dinners. Palmquist, it should be noted, is personally setting a new standard for Hong-style global citizenry — a

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Department of Philosophy

Why Philosophy as a General Undergraduate Requirement?

Faculty of the Department of Philosophy

This year the Philosophy Department spent considerable time addressing the question “Why should philosophy be a General Undergraduate Requirement (GUR)?” Our interest in articulating the important role that philosophy plays in the mission of PLU emerged from two important areas. First, PLU is currently addressing the question of Core I and the all-important GURs that constitute its make-up. We believe that it is imperative that the Philosophy Department indicates clearly its place and role in any revision of Core I. We think our statement below makes this case convincingly.

Second, we were motivated to take up the relationship of philosophy to general undergraduate education by comments from our senior philosophy majors. We administered a survey in their Senior Capstone class and were elated to hear that in their eyes philosophy was essential for their ability to approach both fundamental and personal questions. In addition, we were excited to see that philosophy was essential in helping to make larger connections across various disciplines (a mark of its commitment to a liberal arts education), and that it was effective in enabling students to make practical connections to their lives. What follows, then, is our collective articulation of the indispensable importance that the Philosophy Department plays in PLU’s mission “to empower students for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care—for other people, for their communities, and for the earth.”

Philosophy and the University

Philosophy prepares students to engage in life-long questions that reveal reasons for beliefs, that provide insight into connections among all fields of knowledge, and that are intensely, personally meaningful. Living philosophically creates a better understanding of oneself, of others, and of the astonishing world we inhabit. To study philosophy is to expose oneself to important, “large” questions about values, truth, God(s) and self. In its meticulous approach to such meaning-pursuing questions, philosophy aims to wed the conceptual and the imaginative with the ultimately practical—how one should live.

A Life of (Deeper) Questions

Philosophy is first of all ubiquitous questions. A life of questions is perpetually interesting, puzzling, and fascinating. A world amenable to such questioning is not frustrating, but engaging. Questions propel us into life-long learning and unmask the superficial reasons people give for why things are the way they are and how people should live.

Everyone, of course, asks questions and gives reasons for their beliefs. Questions about reasons, though, get one to reasons for reasons. In living philosophically, one pushes the questions and reasons down to the most basic matters of truth and value. Such questioning uncovers guiding assumptions about such perennial issues as the nature of the world around us, the good life in a world full of all kinds of conflict about the good life, God(s), the self, and a range of other pressing concerns. It enables us first to *see* our assumptions, and then in turn to assess whether they make sense in light of the alternatives. Instead of just making truth claims, philosophy asks “*What is truth?*” and “*What do we mean*

when we say ‘truth?’” Or, instead of just asserting that something is right or wrong, philosophy asks “*What is a moral reason?*” and “*What do you mean when you say ‘right’ or ‘wrong?’*”

This depth of questioning sets philosophy apart from the general need for critical thinking. Philosophy is a kind of conceptual archeology that doggedly digs beneath surface understandings to discern our most basic assumptions, arguments, and conceptual commitments. In doing this, philosophy takes on many forms—from offering clearer access to the historical development of ideas, to the systematic attempt to bring widely varying ideas into closer proximity to each other, to the role of annoying gadfly (following the model of Socrates himself) that interrupts certain dominant discourses about lifelong issues.

Philosophy Connects (Everything)

A closely related facet of philosophy is what might be called its *radical interdisciplinarity*. As part of their disciplinary commitments, philosophers are dedicated to making crucial connections across disciplines and methods of inquiry. Philosophy at its best is almost always dealing with something else. Philosophy allows one to see connections, almost without limits.

Because the questions involved in the philosophical life dig deep, they finally reveal views that are relevant to—no, more: part of—multiple other disciplines. Highlighting the web of relations among the various disciplines not only clarifies their differences, but often shows coherence among them. Philosophy embraces the fact that the contemporary cognitive division of labor has grown tremendously sophisticated and because of that is often highly productive. But it attempts always to see what is coherent in what otherwise tend to become the atomistically segregated enterprises of the academy.



"The Death of Socrates" (1787), Jacques-Louis David, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Advances in the arts, sciences, and professional schools are dizzying in scope. In our 'information age' a college student is burdened with a wide variety of facts, methods and disciplinary emphases that, while valuable in their own right, threaten to become a Babel of tongues competing for attention. Philosophy is the only discipline concerned explicitly with the coherence and cohesion of the entire spectrum of truth, meaning, and reality that these different disciplines articulate. The generality of the questions of philosophical questioning allows students to see the value of each of the disparate voices in a coherent whole. It does this by reframing particular truths, values, and meanings in light of more fundamental questions about knowledge, the good life, and duties as a citizen.

While philosophy thus promotes the ability of students to synthesize far-reaching and diverse perspectives, such synthesis does not have as its goal the reduction of the many to one overarching perspective. Rather, the goal, even when synthetic, is less the revealing of answers and more the revelation of common questions and problems raised by ever more multiple approaches. Philosophy's interdisciplinarity is always raising disciplinary awareness at the same time. There is no push to leave other disciplines, only to expand the horizons of understanding within them. More importantly, with this revelation of interconnections

students are encouraged to move from asking questions for the sake of asking questions and ask, instead, "How are my own understandings shaped by the interplay of these voices?" Such a project attempts to move students from simply wanting to know more about their own position and that of others to asking how such views can create a wealth of knowledge that contributes to enduring wisdom.

Philosophy is (Insistently) Practical

Philosophy is more than just asking questions and making necessary connections, even if in unique ways. Philosophy, at its best, is a combination of the conceptual venture with the *practical* imperative to "live philosophically." It is not abstract navel gazing; it matters. It looks for meaning and wisdom beyond mere passion. It thus initiates students into the PLU ethos of educated lives of service.

The practical dimension of the study of philosophy is no less important than the conceptual. When, for example, Socrates declared that for human beings "the unexamined life is not worth living," the emphasis was on *living* philosophically. Philosophy's commitment is never to suggest one best way of doing this, but to offer to students the resources to take up the Socratic challenge and pursue responsibly for themselves what it means to be educated for a

life of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership, and care. To engage the beliefs and assumptions that shape our worldviews and to make the necessary connections that reveal the interrelatedness of our lives with others is simply not enough. In those beliefs and connections are consequences for our lives. The life of philosophical questioning is as much about living as it is about questioning. It returns us to our lives with a perspective that can allow us to flourish in ways that carry meaning and purpose.

What Can You Do (Well and Thoughtfully) Without Philosophy?

Students approached with the question "What in the world can you do with philosophy?" can respond by turning the question around: "What can you do without it?" Can students live without philosophy? Certainly. Can they ask questions without making any deeper connection with how to live their lives? Certainly. But can they engage in lifelong learning that constantly seeks a deeper awareness of themselves, others, and the world that will incessantly demand their response? Without the unique gift of philosophy in their liberal education, it is much less likely that they will. This, ultimately, is why the Philosophy Department at PLU is essential to both Lutheran higher education and to PLU's unique mission.

Department of Religion

Students Form New Theological Society at PLU

Kara Freeman, '07



Founding members of PLUTS, Benjamin Monte-Calvo and Samantha Porter at the fall Involvement Fair.

There are moments in life when, as the Lutheran theologian Paul Tillich would say, something grasps a person. Last spring, Tillich's theology grasped students in the course, "Paul Tillich: Theologian of Doubt," taught by Daniel Peterson, Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion. Following the first few weeks of studying Tillich's theology, many of us in the class started going to the Northern Pacific Coffee Company on Garfield Street after class to continue the discussion. Dr. Peterson mentioned to us the existence of the North American Paul Tillich Society, and shortly thereafter, with his encouragement, the group unofficially became the Junior Tillich Society.

By the end of the semester, we had a steady group established. Eventually, we realized that other PLU students were asking the same questions we were asking: What is the meaning of faith? How do we apply theology to our lives? What implications might different views of God have for the world? When our future president, Samantha Porter, suggested we

turn our group into an official PLU club, we seized the opportunity. Our mission was simply to provide a forum for critical discussion of religion that was not a Bible study, but a place where students could examine *why* people believe what they believe. During the Involvement Fair in the fall, we filled three sheets of paper with the names of students who were interested.

Since then, we have involved many of the Religion faculty in our discussions. We had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Martin Marty, University of Chicago Emeritus Professor of American Religion, before the lecture he gave this fall, and we discussed the topic of his speech (Christianity in the Southern Hemisphere) at one of our meetings. In one of our most attended meetings, Dr. Samuel Torvend, Chair of the Religion Department, joined us to answer questions and discuss an article he wrote about social justice and Lutheran education. We also had an extremely interesting conversation about Eastern theology with Visiting Assistant Professor of Asian Religions Dr. Louis Komjathy, where Dr. Douglas Oakman participated as well.

In addition to meetings directly involving professors, we have discussed many other topics related to religion and theology and sponsored several joint events with other clubs on campus. Topics for our meetings included the meaning and function of theology, whether God is "green" (environmentalism in evangelical Christianity), and "The Commodification of Jesus." On November 5, 2006, we joined with the PLU Philosophy Club to show the movie "V for Vendetta," following it with a discussion about the theological and philosophical themes in the movie. Our last event of the semester was a trip to the Pacific Science Center in Seattle with the History Club to see the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit.

The enthusiasm surrounding what is now called PLUTS, or Pacific Lutheran University Theological Society still amazes us. What started as a small group of students discussing Tillich's theology has exploded into a club with almost eighty people on its email

list. We are fortunate to have such strong support from the PLU Religion faculty, especially Dr. Peterson, our club's advisor and liaison to the Religion Department. Many of the faculty have suggested topics and volunteered to lead discussions, and we plan to continue to involve them in our meetings next semester. Overall, we hope that PLUTS can achieve its goal of reaching students who want to discuss religion, religious issues, theology and life's ultimate questions in an open yet critical way, continuing to sustain the meaningful dialogue we have now begun.

Living Among Chinese Daoist Monastics: Research in Mainland China

Louis Komjathy

Visiting Assistant Professor of East Asian Religion



Louis Komjathy (third from right), with senior Taoist monks from Mt. Lao.

During the 2005-2006 academic year, I lived and conducted research on Daoism in mainland China. This was made possible through a Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation research grant and a visiting associate professorship at the Institute of Religion, Science and Social Studies (IRSSS) at Shandong University. Part of my time involved conducting archaeological fieldwork at Daoist sacred sites in Shandong province, while the other portion was dedicated to the ethnographic study of contemporary Daoist monasticism from a participant-observation perspective.

During spring of 2006, I lived and studied with various Daoists of the Quanzhen (Complete Perfection) monastic order, which is the officially recognized form of Daoist monasticism in mainland China. Most of the major Daoist temples and monasteries are under the supervision of this monastic order, specifically its Longmen (Dragon Gate) lineage. My experience included living as a Daoist monk at *Taiqing gong* (Palace of Great Clarity) of *Laoshan* (Mount Lao; near Qingdao, Shandong) and at *Yuquan yuan* (Temple of the Jade Spring) of *Huashan* (Mount Hua; Huayin, Shaanxi). During this time, I participated in daily ritual activities, specifically the Complete Perfection liturgical services, discussed Daoist cosmology, literature, philosophy and practice with senior Complete Perfection monks, visited and documented the layout and iconography of these sacred sites, and learned about the daily life of Complete Perfection monastics.

Some reflections on my experience in contemporary Daoist monasteries will be presented at an upcoming international conference in Hong Kong. The archaeological materials (texts, stele inscriptions, cliff inscriptions, wall murals, statuary, etc.) continue to be collected and catalogued by the Daoist Studies Research Group of the IRSSS, of which I remain a member, and will eventually be published in China under the tentative title *Shandong dao jiao zhi* (Record of Shandong Daoism).

New Faculty Join Religion Department

Suzanne J. Crawford
Assistant Professor of Religion
and Culture

The Religion Department is pleased to have welcomed two new faculty during the 2006-2007 school year, Antonios Finitis and Kevin O'Brien.

Antonios (Tony) Finitis was born and raised in Greece. He is, in his own words, "a scion of Aegean islandic civilization as poetically depicted in Homer's *Odyssey*, in other words,



my honor/shame complex and to my forefathers the Greek philosophers my desire for order and specificity in scientific thinking."

Dr. Finitis finished his BA at the National University of Athens with a major in Religion. While an undergraduate, he began participating in the Baniyas/Caecarea Philippi archaeological dig, which sparked his interest in Biblical Studies, and as a result, he spent a year at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem before going on to the University of Chicago Divinity School to pursue a Masters degree in Biblical Studies. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in March of 2007, with a specialization in the Hebrew Bible.

Dr. Finitis was a self-proclaimed reclusive scholar, who enjoyed the long hours in the library and had not seriously considered becoming a teacher. That is, he explains, "up until my advisor shoved me into a classroom in Yale Divinity School and locked the door behind me." In addition to quickly gaining a reputation for "locking the classroom door once all my students were in," Dr. Finitis also gained a love for teaching. As he explains: "Teaching energizes me, and the interaction with inquisitive minds is the reason why I look forward to class periods."

Dr. Finitis' professional interests and approach are deeply socio-historical, and he is fascinated by the intersection between religion and politics. "Since Judeo-Christian religion was shaped under powerful empires, part of my research revolves around the impact of colonial interests and power structures in the development of religious ideas." Human relationships are another favorite topic of Dr. Finitis, particularly, he explains, "when these

relationships are seen through the lenses of the human-divine contact and in the context of spirituality."

relationships are seen through the lenses of the human-divine contact and in the context of spirituality."



Dr. Kevin O'Brien also joined the Religion Department this year. Dr. O'Brien's research and teaching stress the connections between social justice, religious

traditions, and the nonhuman contexts of human cultures. His current research is focused on biodiversity as an ecological concept, an environmentalist rallying cry, and a guide for human societies. A Christian social ethicist, he researches the ways religious and faith commitments shape and are shaped by morality. He wrote the essay "Toward an Ethics of Biodiversity: Science and Theology in Environmentalist Dialogue" in *Eco-Spirit: Religions and Philosophies for the Earth*, edited by Laurel Kearns and Catherine Keller (Fordham, 2007).

O'Brien was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, though he left the South to attend what he describes as "the hottest Quaker-affiliated spot in Eastern Indiana," Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. From Earlham, Dr. O'Brien went on to receive his Master's Degree at Union Theological Seminary in New York, before returning to Atlanta to receive his Ph.D. in Christian Ethics from Emory University in the spring of 2007.

O'Brien's research interests include Christian environmental ethics, environmental justice, moral and ethical implications of scientific research, and exploring the ways in which faith commitments and morality shape one another. At PLU his courses include Introduction to Christian Ethics, Environmental Ethics, Personal Commitments, Global Issues, Christian Economic Lives, Religion and Sexual Ethics, and Global and Local Ethics.

When O'Brien is not in the classroom or working on scholarship, he and his wife Mary Hamberge O'Brien enjoy travel, hiking, cooking, bluegrass music, and engagement in local politics (as spectators and once-and-future campaign volunteers).

Dean's Notes *continued*

living archaeology of a Mediterranean city that has played a leading role in human affairs for some 2300 years. The members of this program grew in their use of Italian, mastered the rail systems (with side-trips to Florence, Sorrento, Orvieto, and Assisi), and visited Christian sites illustrating important developments in the history of Western art, spirituality, and social organization.

For a dean who has done substantial archaeology in Israel, the streets and houses of the ancient cities of Ostia (Rome's ancient seaport), Herculaneum, and Pompeii left vivid impressions, but it was the descent into the vaults of San Clemente that encapsulated the entire experience. This is a place especially beloved by Professor Torvend—where he studied as a doctoral student among the Irish Dominicans who excavated the subterranean areas. One descends several stories below the city streets to view the paving stones and gigantic blocks of an ancient Roman building, perhaps the Roman mint, and nearby an ancient Mithraeum (devoted to the Mithras cult). Here Christian memory also located the house of Titus Flavius Clement, a Roman noble and first-century leader of the subversive Christian movement. In the Byzantine period, a basilica commemorated the place, with numerous burials within the nave. And then, in the twelfth century, another magnificent basilica rose above the present level of the streets.

At San Clemente, in the Eternal City, one can meditate upon the vicissitudes of history and the quirkiest of human memory. The archaeology does not validate the faith of Christians, but it does remind us that Christianity transformed Roman power in constructive ways and helped to preserve much of what we know about the ancient Western world through the building of royal public buildings over the memories of the saints and the copying of ancient manuscripts in the later monasteries. In the twilight of the Roman evening, over fine Italian wine, one may contemplate how much we owe of our humanity and our hopes to the generations before us.

Hong International Hall: Engaging Immersion *continued*

polyglot Resident Assistant who speaks with his own residents in Norwegian and then shifts to either Spanish or German simply by walking across the hall.

On the French wing, students engaged current political and social issues most directly, with monthly meetings addressing recent political crises in France. As Mark Jensen, designated faculty adviser to the French wing, observes, these discussions provide students with an informal and out-of-class opportunity to explore current happenings in France. For students who have recently spent time in France and who keep close tabs on current events in particular, the opportunity to explore with classmates and faculty the nuances of political and cultural language that would otherwise be lost in translation is important. The wing also sponsored its share of English-language events that reached beyond *La Maison Française*, including a slide show on the upcoming presidential election and requisite sampling of French cuisine, facilitated by Resident Assistant Kolby Harvey, as well as Languages and Literature faculty Scott Taylor and Roberta Brown.

The International Core Wing is the one space that replaces specific cultural immersion with committed global vision and as such enables the goals of Hong Hall to come clearly to the fore. Beyond the fact that residents in I-Core Wing often include international students (this semester from Spain, Sweden and South Korea), as well as students majoring in the languages represented elsewhere in Hong Hall, I-Core Wing students are natural leaders in all-hall activities. Most prominent among these are the highly popular annual Hong Discothèque and now bi-annual International Poetry Reading. Such events are emblematic of the goals of Hong Hall to create a supportive home and a hopeful environment that challenges residents and the campus to become fluent in languages and conversant with international issues.

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