

University Honors Newsletter, Spring 2013

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Recently Honors Prof. David Boness (chair, Physics) gave me a fascinating book, *Justinian's Flea: The First Great Plague and the End of the Roman Empire* by William Rosen (Penguin 2007). In a wide-ranging account of the rise and reign of the Roman emperor Justinian (482-565 C. E.), Rosen describes how, in 542 C.E., the bubonic plague created the first pandemic in the history of the world, and how this devastating phenomenon led to the ultimate downfall of the Roman empire in its Byzantine phase. The book is fascinating, not just because of its elucidation of the science behind the spread of the plague but because its reading of history requires the skillful interconnecting of a variety of disciplines, including history, architecture, jurisprudence, theology, ecology, microbiology, epidemiology, and cultural anthropology. When I finished it, I thought, "This is the kind of thinking an Honors student is trained to do." It stems from a mindset determined to reveal how the world has come to be what it is. Rosen might as well have been an Honors student who merely continued the intellectual journey into more advanced research.

For more than half a century, the University Honors Program has been dedicated to the premise that a strong liberal arts education, built from a rigorous study of interconnected humanities disciplines, is the best way to ensure a rich, examined life. As the Honors faculty congratulates another cohort of bright, energetic students on graduating from the program (and in the case of Dylan Glenn, graduating from SU as well), I am mindful of the importance of reaffirming our dedication to the academic values that have brought us this far.

In recent months, the media have criticized the humanities for being a waste of time in an economically challenged age. Instead of studying the "great books," some pundits have argued, colleges and universities should commit more exclusively to job training. What they fail to understand is that a liberal arts education is training not just for work but for life in general, a life full of meaning and significance. They also fail to understand that such an education makes people more effective thinkers, communicators, and leaders in a variety of fields.



Sean McDowell, Ph.D.
Honors Director

Next Fall, the Honors program will launch its revised curriculum, a description of which appears later in this newsletter. While the revised curriculum makes some changes, including the introduction of a pair of new 300-level seminars on 21st century topics, it nonetheless continues the march-through-history approach that integrates disciplinary knowledge both within and across historical periods. It thus continues the proud tradition that has made the University Honors Program such a success since the late 1950s.

The Office of the Provost has asked us to convene a committee to lead a university wide conversation about Honors on campus. That committee, co-chaired by me, Prof. Boness, and Prof. Dean Peterson (Economics), will keep the Honors tradition of excellence foremost in our minds as we address the challenges facing students in credit-intensive majors. We will keep the Honors community of professors, current students, and alumni informed of our progress. In the meantime, please take the time to enjoy catching up on what our students, present and former, have been doing in their frequently busy lives. And for those of you who are alumni of the program, please keep us informed of your doings. We always enjoy hearing from you.

I wish you all the best for a happy, healthy, productive summer.



Sean McDowell, Director
University Honors Program

FORMER DIRECTOR DELIVERS 2013 TOUCHSTONE LECTURE



“What if, in the beginning, before God announced light—a beginning that would have to be a beginning before the Word—there was only the void?”

That is the question which greeted Honors students, faculty and guests as they settled in Bannan Auditorium for the 2013 Touchstone lecture. This year’s lecture was delivered by James Risser, Ph.D., the former Director of the University Honors Program. Dr. Risser held the audience spellbound as he probed the meanings of silence in the work of philosophers interested in both the scientific realities of silence and how we perceive it.

In the fall of 2012, Dr. Risser, returned to full-time teaching and research in Seattle University’s Philosophy Department. But even though he no longer occupies the director’s office on the second floor of Casey 2 East, he still is heartily involved in the program he so skillfully directed for six years. Last Winter, he taught the 19th-century Philosophy seminar, and in the Fall, he will teach a special section of that same seminar that will include Early Modern philosophers as well, thus ranging from the 16th to the early 20th century.

James Risser, Ph.D.
Seattle University

Dr. Risser is the author of *Hermeneutics and the Voice of the Other: Re-reading Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics* and most recently, of *The Life of Understanding: A Contemporary Hermeneutics*. He also is editor of *Heidegger Toward the Turn: Essays on the Work of the 1930s* and (with Walter Brogan) of *American Continental Philosophy: A Reader*.

FORMER HONORS STUDENT JOINS THE SU FACULTY



Jerome Veith, Ph.D.
Seattle University

A once familiar face in the University Honors Program classrooms returned to the SU campus at the start of fall quarter 2012. That face belongs to Jerome Veith, a former University Honors student who received his BA in philosophy and psychology from Seattle University in 2005.

He has since earned his doctorate in philosophy in 2012 from Boston College, where for the past four years he taught undergraduate philosophy courses.

Although he was raised in Germany, Dr. Veith is the son of an American Air Force pilot. He was the recipient of a 2011-2012 Fulbright grant to conduct research in Freiburg, Germany, on historical interpretation and its significance for the humanities.

Thematically, his research is focused on freedom, judgment, and education; historically, it draws on 19th and 20th-century German philosophy, especially the branches of hermeneutics and phenomenology. Dr. Veith has published on the work of Martin Heidegger, serves on the editorial board of the *International Yearbook for Hermeneutic*

In addition, to his editorial duties he is a professional translator focusing on the translation of German philosophy into English.

CELEBRATION OF THE 2012-2013 HONORS CLASS



On June 10, University Honors faculty and students attended a celebratory dinner to mark the completion of the program for the following students:

Dakota Barnes, Emma DeFontes, Natalie DeMuro, Dylan Glenn, Peter Grieser, Christina Harrington, Arica Jeffery, Christopher June, Meghan Kennedy, Peter King, Michael Kozjol, Calvin Nemeth, Michael Notestine, Kaitlin Sager, Ivvie Shellhorn, Kathryn Smith, Laura Stowell, David Strand, Joshua Sturman, and Madeline Williams.

Congratulations to these students for their hard work!

Fall 2013 - The Start of the Revised Honors Curriculum

In response to our program review last year and in anticipation of the implementation of the new Core curriculum, the Honors faculty over the course of a ten-month period developed a curriculum revision that significantly reduces the number of general education courses students must take outside of Honors, improves the integration of courses within the program, and repurposes several courses so that students will exceed the learning outcomes of the university core while they simultaneously fulfill the learning outcomes of Honors.

For many years, the key strengths of the Honors program have been obvious to all: the diachronic progression of courses through the last 2,000+ years of history; the synchronic juxtaposition of courses in the humanities disciplines; the resulting emphasis on interdisciplinary thinking; the deep immersion of students in the methods and knowledge of several significant humanities disciplines; the cohort model of student interactions; the strong and systematic training in research methods and writing; the seminar style of classroom instruction; and the reliance on oral exams as a mechanism for training students in verbal communication. These elements have resulted in the program's exemplary success in promoting student success in earning fellowships, scholarships, and grants. The Honors faculty sought to preserve all of these strengths while at the same time streamline the size of the curriculum, address problems of synchronization within certain quarters, and add a two-course, 300-level capstone experience that allows students more overtly to apply their training and knowledge to specific global problems.

Honors Learning Outcomes

By the end of their course of study, Seattle University Honors students should be able to:

- ☞ Demonstrate knowledge of the historical, philosophical, theological, literary, and cultural developments of Western and world civilization and apply that knowledge insightfully to the study of global issues;
- ☞ Demonstrate in critical essays, oral presentations, and seminar discussions an ability to integrate, analyze, and respond to primary texts and critical issues by using the vocabulary, interpretive methodologies, and theoretical perspectives of different disciplines;
- ☞ Demonstrate the skills of attentive listening, effective communicating, and reflective thinking so that they can be critical when evaluating their own work and the work of others;
- ☞ Apply their synthesized study of the perennial questions about meaning and value to the discussions of specific disciplines as well as to their own lives and to the contemporary world;
- ☞ And demonstrate a commitment to intellectual inquiry, ethical engagement, and just action so that they are capable of acting as leaders in their fields of study and beyond.

The Revised Curriculum

Seattle University Honors Curriculum

First-Year Honors: Foundations of Western Civilization

Fall: The Ancient World

HONR 101 Ancient Greek Philosophy (4 cr.)

HONR 111 Greek and Roman Literature (4 cr.)

HONR 121 Mediterranean Civilization (4 cr.)

4th Class Outside of Honors (5 cr.)

Winter: The Middle Ages

HONR 103 Medieval Philosophy and Theology (4 cr.)

HONR 113 Medieval English & Continental Literature (4 cr.)

HONR 122 History of the Middle Ages (4 cr.)

4th Class Outside of Honors (5 cr.)

Spring: Toward New Worlds

HONR 201 Early Modern Philosophy (4 cr.)

HONR 211 Renaissance to Neoclassical Lit. (4 cr.)

HONR 221 Early Modern History (4 cr.)

4th Class Outside of Honors (5 cr.)

University Honors Curriculum

Second-Year Honors: Toward the 21st Century

Fall: The Rise of Modernity

HONR 202 18th- and 19th-Century Philosophy (4 cr.)

HONR 212 18th- and 19th-Century Lit. (4 cr.)

HONR 222 18th- and 19th-Century History (4 cr.)

4th Class Outside of Honors (5 cr.)

Winter: The Contemporary World

HONR 203 20th- to 21st-Century Philosophy (4 cr.)

HONR 213 20th- to 21st-Century Literatures (4 cr.)

HONR 251 Social Science Seminar (4 cr.)

4th Class Outside of Honors (5 cr.)

Spring: Engaging the World

HONR 300 Global Engagement Seminar (4 cr.)

HONR 301 Spirituality in the Modern World (4 cr.)

3rd Class Outside of Honors (5 cr.)

4th Class Outside of Honors (5 cr.)

Classmate News

This year, as every year, there is news to share about University Honors alumni. We want to include your updates! If you have news you'd like to share, please email **Thorne Clayton-Falls** in the University Honors Program office at claytont@seattleu.edu.

Phuong Luu: I'll be completing my internal medicine residency at George Washington University this June and will be starting a General Internal Medicine Fellowship at Johns Hopkins in July.

Annie Pfhal: I am a third year medical student at the University of Washington, planning on applying for residency programs in family medicine.

Alex Lara: I am currently a Deputy District Attorney for the L.A. County DA's office. It took a while to snag my dream job after law school, but things finally fell into place over the last year.

George Bayuga: I'm completing my MA in Food Systems through NYU's Food Studies Program and am writing my thesis on the underground economy for imported / smuggled milk powder in China. During my time at NYU, I also served as a Correspondence Officer for the US Mission to the United Nations under Ambassador Susan Rice and a consultant for NYU's US-Asia Law Institute. This coming Fall, I'll begin PhD study at Yale Anthropology where I will be working closely with Agrarian Studies program on the culture of East Asian food systems.

Meghan Doughty (2006-2008): I am currently getting my MSc in Human Rights at the London School of Economics and am a volunteer Youth Advocate with Just For Kids Law. I was an AmeriCorps Volunteer in Sitka, Alaska for the two years prior to that.

Michael Alston: I'm currently finishing up my second year at the UW School of Medicine, preparing to enter clinical clerkships. I received a Tylenol Future Care scholarship when I started school last year, but haven't had any major financial awards since then. I must say that we just had our only class in all of medical school that is based on the socratic method, and I was far better prepared than most classmates!

Kerry (McLaughlin) McQuillin: In 2008 I completed my masters in Exercise and Sport Science, Sport and Exercise Psychology. I worked in wellness education for awhile, and have circuitously (finally, as you know) landed where I think I'm supposed to be. In October I started working with Oregon State University's Office of Equity and Inclusion as their Compliance and Assessment Associate. I'm working with Equal Opportunity Employment and Affirmative Action.

Beth Harrington: I'm now doing a PhD in Anthropology (full fellowship) at Northwestern University in Chicago. I received two NU grants this summer to pursue Arabic language training and research in the Arab Gulf, so I'm heading to Oman here in a few weeks!

Katherine Rodela: I am entering the final year of my Anthropology of Education Ph.D. program at Stanford University's Graduate School of Education. I plan to graduate in June 2014. I am finishing up the 2nd year of an ethnography with Latina immigrant mothers in a preschool parent education program in Oregon, alongside my two-year-old son a.k.a. research assistant Rudy. I just received an American Association of University Women Dissertation Fellowship for 2013-2014, which will allow me to complete my dissertation.

James Liner: I am graduating with a PhD in English from the University of Florida this semester, and I currently teach American literature at the University of Washington Tacoma. As for fellowships, I had one at UF and another before that at the University of Oklahoma, where I earned my MA in English (2006).

Aaron Van Dyke: I'm wrapping up a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Michigan and will be starting this fall as an Assistant Professor (tenure-track) of Chemistry at Fairfield University in CT. Thrilled to be going back to a Jesuit school!

Caroline Leithner (2005-2007): I am a second year student in dual MSN/MDiv program at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. Registered nurse MSN focus: Family Nurse Practitioner (primary care) MDiv focus: gender, sexuality, and religion. Discerning ordination in the Episcopal Church through the Diocese of Olympia

Madeline (Malan) Ashby: I have earned two Master's degrees: one in Interdisciplinary Studies (York University, '09) and the other in Strategic Foresight and Innovation ('11, Ontario College of Art and Design). I have also written two science fiction novels published by Angry Robot Books, a division of Random House. My books are represented by Anne McDermid & Associates, and my media projects are represented I AM Sports & Entertainment. As a futurist, I have worked with Intel Labs, The Institute for the Future, Strategic Innovation Lab, and others. I can be found online at <http://madelineashby.com> and on Twitter @madelineashby.

Athena Kennedy: I am an associate attorney at Van Ness Feldman, LLP in Seattle. My work is primarily real estate and transactional, with a focus in the recent past on energy projects. Because renewable energy project development is in a bit of a lull, I have been doing a lot of Seattle-area commercial real estate leasing and purchasing. In other news, my husband and I had our first child last summer. Ansel William Philipps was born on August 8, 2012.

Tony Ramsey: I am graduating from the University of Washington School of Law with my J.D. this Spring. I will be pursuing a Tax LL.M. this coming year. Co-President and 3L Case Manager Immigrant Families Advocacy Project.

Emily Holt: I will begin an MFA in Creative Writing in Poetry & Fiction at Pacific Lutheran University in August 2013. I teach creative writing to youth in psychiatric hospitals, King Co. Juvenile Detention, Seattle Public Schools and foster care.

Emily Flemming: I've been working for the same non-profit for almost six years. I'm part of the Student Assistance Foundation, a Montana based educational company that assists students in funding and pursuing postsecondary education. I was recently promoted to the position of Grant Writer.

Alison Staudinger: In Fall of 2012, I joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay as an Assistant Professor. As a member of the department of Democracy & Justice Studies, I teach courses in political theory, gender and the law. I will earn my PhD in Government & Politics from the University of Maryland-College Park in May of 2013. And I'm trying to learn to love football.

Rachel (Udelhoven) Hutcheson: I finished my PhD in Biochemistry here at Montana State and have been teaching organic chemistry and doing a post-doc. I will be going to Minnesota to teach at the

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University in the fall.

Becca (Thalberg) Khalil: I have been working at the National Crime Victim Law Institute (NCVLI) based in Portland, Oregon, as a Staff Attorney and the Director of the Safeguarding Child-Victims' Rights Initiative for the past three years, and I'm really enjoying the work we do to advance and protect victims' rights in connection with criminal justice proceedings. The work we do is national in scope, so it is always an interesting challenge to see how different jurisdictions address victims' rights and work with practitioners to help ensure that victims are treated with respect and dignity and permitted a voice within the criminal justice system. Just last week, I accompanied our Executive Director to Washington D.C. to receive a national award for our victims' rights work from Attorney General Eric Holder on behalf of our entire office! Aside from work, my husband, Peter, and I are living in Vancouver, Washington, with our son, Adrian, and we've definitely been taking advantage of the sunny days we've seen lately to play in the yard, take walks to the park, and ride our bikes around the neighborhood. I am also one of the co-leaders of the Portland/Vancouver area guide dog puppy raising group for Guide Dogs of America, so our dog-adventures continue, as well (which Adrian loves, because he's allowed to "boss" the dogs around!).

Megan Tobias Neely: I am currently in my third year of a doctoral program in sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. I finished my MA thesis in the fall on women presidents and prime ministers, and I am preparing to take comprehensive exams and defend my dissertation proposal.

Erin (Foran) Duncan: you can let folks know that I am graduating this May from Lewis & Clark Law School and that I currently live in Portland with my husband Phil Duncan.

Michelle Martinez: Since Fall 2008, I've been working as the clinic & study coordinator for Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction at the VA Puget Sound. I have five publications to my name, found in the Journal of Clinical Psychology (2011, 2012), Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics (2011), Nutrition Research (2012), and the Journal of Traumatic Stress (publication pending, 2013). We spent four years researching the efficacy of the MBSR program and a Loving Kindness Meditation program for veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Gulf War Syndrome, eating habits, and gastrointestinal disorders, and that research was then used to obtain funding from VA to offer the clinics hospital-wide during 2013. I am planning on applying to doctoral programs this fall to study Clinical Psychology and continue researching the applications of mindfulness and acceptance-based models of therapy, particularly for people with histories of trauma, anxiety, and emotion dysregulation.

Jill Sarmo: I am working for a District Attorney in Colorado as the Public Information Officer and as a Victim Advocate. It's a district that covers most of the High Rocky Mountain area in Colorado, and is somewhat unfortunately known for holding the Kobe Bryant trial back in 2004. Prior to this I spent time working on political campaigns, from the Colorado gubernatorial election in 2010, to a mayoral race in 2011, and two ballot initiatives to give additional funding to Denver Public Schools in 2012.

Christin Faber: I have been employed as a landman at Aera Energy LLC, a California oil and gas production company since graduation in 2010. I manage six oil fields, including the sixth most productive field in the United States. This involves third-party negotiation, agreement drafting, legal research, and more. (It is basically one of the coolest jobs ever.) Anything that happens out on the field has to start with some kind of agreement; the landman is the one to "get the deal done," draft the agreement, and then guarantee that we uphold the terms. I got married in early 2011 and have been thoroughly enjoying life's adventures here in sunny CA with my husband who is a pastor at a local church.

Shasti Conrad: After working at the White House as the executive assistant to the Senior Advisor to the President, I worked for the Obama Presidential campaign at headquarters in Chicago. After we won, I worked as the Associate Director of Vice Presidential Planning for the 2013 Presidential Inauguration. I am now working as a consultant for a campaign for the NYC Public Advocate before I head to grad school for a Master in Public Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs (same program as Jean Marie Callan and Nazir Harb!).

Claire Tarlson: in December 2012 I was promoted to Vice President at BlackRock Investment Management where I work in the Client Core Data group. This role involves information management and oversight of data regarding BlackRock's client base. In March, Alison Staudinger and I celebrated our 30th birthdays with a vacation to Mexico!

Julie (Del Gianni) Hankins: I am a current appointed holder of Position #5 on the Olympia City Council and am running for re-election to this office. I am married to David Hankins, who was SU Student Body President in 1985 and now works as an attorney for the state of Washington in Olympia. We have three children, the oldest of which, Andrew Hankins, is graduating from SU this June in Physics and has been accepted to a PhD Program in Physics at Georgetown University (with a full ride). My political address is 120 State Ave NE, #116, Olympia, WA 98501-8212.



Honors - Class of 2011 - 2013
(Not pictured - Dylan Glenn)