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letter from the director

We live in tense times. As this issue was going to press, terrible things were being done around the world in the name of religion, while on our own campus a court-ordered dialog has begun as a result of the settlement of the Axson-Flynn case.

The topics for lessons are chosen by student writers and editors a year or more in advance of publication. The timely nature of this issue, given world and local events, tell me that religion is important to us on this campus and simply will not go away. In fact, religion is becoming more and more a force to contend with in our professional lives.

I hope that you will look closely at what students have written about spirituality and religion. Perhaps they have inspired discussion about the complex issues of freedom of religion and academic freedom, and how debate about our values affects teaching and learning.

Stephanie
THE INTERSECTION OF ETHICS AND RELIGION IN THE CLASSROOM

BY KIRA JONES
PHOTOS BY ALY DANIELS

Religion plays a major role in who we are ethically. "We follow laws based on social norms; faith and religion help navigate us through our decisions," said Dr. Abe Bakhsheshy who teaches an ethics course in the school of business.

Yet, centuries ago philosophical minds gathered to study and articulate the moral value of human conduct, rules, and principles in an attempt to move away from faith-based explanations. History illustrates how philosophy has tried to separate ethical issues from church influence, although these moral ideas and ethical guidelines have deep roots in religion.

In an effort to continue this separation and keep religiously loaded comments out of the classroom, we may have created a barrier that prohibits the use of religion in academic settings even when it could be beneficial to students.

Americans are very focused on objectivity in the school system, thus extensive measures are taken to prevent any remarks that would favor one religion or set of beliefs over another. This conflict is one that ethics professors at the University of Utah must deal with when they prepare their lectures. The definition of ethics can be complex and may stray from complete objectivity. Therefore, in many cases to discuss ethical principles for a specific situation one must draw upon moral or religious beliefs.

Courses in the Law School must explicitly deal with the balance of ethics and religion. According to Dr. Linda Smith, the integration of religious beliefs in the teaching of her course is subtle. In the course Legal Professions, students undoubtedly encounter situations where their personal beliefs could conflict with the ethi-

Dr. Linda Smith introduces a panel of guest speakers to her class.
cal procedures of their field. For example, lawyers have a responsibility to their clients when dealing with client confidentiality. As discussed in the course these obligations can, on occasion, be contradictory to what a lawyer believes to be morally or religiously just. Therefore, in order to address this issue of morality Dr. Smith brings in a panel of lawyers to speak about their personal experiences in the field.

"Morality is not a driving factor in law practice, but too absent from it," said Dr. Smith. "The world of Law is complex and the ethical obligations of the field are often abstract. However, in recent years Smith believes the idea of ethics has become more prominent in the field. Watergate is viewed as the turning point for many lawyers in relation to ethics and moral judgments, according to Smith. Since then, the use of ethics and the integration of them into lawyers' personal lives and professional lives have become more prominent.

Smith's goal when teaching the Legal Profession course is to teach students how to combine their moral and religious selves with their future occupations. This combination of beliefs in one's professional life will ultimately facilitate interpersonal professional decision-making. Smith recognized that this course can easily be taught without addressing morality, however, she practices this combination approach in her life and believes it is an important part of the course.

The majority of ethics courses are taught in the philosophy department, though currently there is not one that focuses primarily on religion. This will change in the fall of 2004 when a new course is added to the curriculum. The course titled, "God, Faith, and Reason" will be the first to directly address religion in relation to reason and is expected to broaden the understanding of philosophical issues.

Leslie Francis, the Chair of the department of philosophy, stated that religion can still be found in many philosophy ethics courses and when these religious ideas surface in course material, they are dealt with in an objective manner. "Material dealing with faith-based issues are dealt with just as any other material, these courses are structured to present different perspectives, those religiously-based and those that are not." Francis said.

Students are taught to address problems and apply knowledge using analytical tools even when the subject is religion. This approach gives students an opportunity to look at information from a series of angles, whether that source be religious-based or not, students are taught to address all sources of information objectively and analytically. An objective approach is a powerful tool, and "philosophy emphasizes critical inquiry not without a lack of respect." Francis said.

It is possible to deal with religion in an academic setting where students are encouraged to be objective, analytical, and critical. This is precisely the goal of higher education, to encourage analytical thought processes, even when addressing sensitive issues. The philosophy department has discovered a way to incorporate religious viewpoints in ethical discussions in an objective manner without eliminating religion from course content. Professors who believe that integrating religion into ethics courses is a positive part of the academic experience are in favor of this combination of principles.

Dr. Luke Garrott, administrative director for the Graduate Certificate in Ethics and Public Affairs Program, believes that religion should be integrated into the teaching of ethics because many students bring religious perspectives to the class discussion more than just philosophical point-of-views. All cultures integrate some sort of religious or moral belief system into their way of life. Often this knowledge and understanding is at the center of what people believe to be ethical. By combining religion with ethics courses professors are encouraging their students to address issues with a different set of tools. Dr. Garrott allows students to use a multitude of resources in his Communitarianism course. His one demand is that students use what is taught in class. They can also draw on other sources to back up their ideas, such as LDS scriptures. Students are allowed to use these works with other material from class in order to define principles. This teaching method allows Dr. Garrott's students to apply what they feel or know to be ethical in assignments while adhering to course content.

William Stilling, Associate Professor of Clinical Pharmacy Practice, commented that he believes there are three tools to use in the analysis of defining ethical conundrums: law, ethics, and religion. Dr. Stilling stated, "One cannot address ethics if they are not aware that people will use another set of tools to evaluate things." In short, professors must be aware that students are likely to draw on their personal beliefs when dealing with ethical material.

Thus, while society is continually pulling religion from the academic arena it is somehow finding its way back. While discussions in many of these ethics courses do not favor one religion over the other, religious principles are allowed in the classroom when they offer solid approaches to a subject, especially when the subject of abortion is addressed in law or when a student is asked to write a personal code of ethics in a business class.

This idea of religious integration must be addressed from the students' perspective as well. According to Dr. Stilling, "Many students censor their own comments when discussing religious content."

This censorship is a tool students use in order to address material that they may feel is potentially controversial in class, and while it is a good idea for students to be religiously sensitive, they must continue to allow themselves to address ethical behavior from outside a parameter of defined rules. College experience is intended to help students grow not only in their academic lives, but also in their personal ones. Perhaps if there were more integration of religion on campus students would make more judgments that are moralistic when they enter the professional world.

Ultimately, the integration of religion into the classroom is a complex issue. It is impossible to find the perfect balance between excluding all discussion of religion and including every aspect of religion and ethics. The integration of religious principles into ethics courses must be done in an appropriate manner so that no one is offended,
and students don't feel that it is taboo to bring their beliefs into discussions. If this technique is successful then no specific religion will trump another. Religious beliefs will be viewed as a combined set of works, an untapped source from which students and professors can draw.
MANAGING RELIGIOUS CONFLICT ON CAMPUS

BY SHELLIE SCOTT-WILSON
PHOTOS BY ELLIOTT FRAUGHTON

Dialogue that includes religious issues is inevitable in a university setting. Discussion of abortion, homosexuality, women’s rights, and politics often bring religious discussion into the classroom. Strong topics lead to strong opinions. The university is an excellent setting to analyze and intellectually discuss these and other current topics. Teachers, however, must also face the difficult task of educating and enlightening students while creating an environment where students feel physically and emotionally safe. Ted Wilson, former Director of the Hinckley Institute of Politics, believes, “The world is dipped in controversy. The classroom is a great place to teach students how to deal with and approach controversy.”

Part of learning and creating discussion in the classroom includes the free flow of ideas. Lindsay Calhoun, teaching assistant and third-year Ph.D. student at the University of Utah studying ethnic conflict, said, “I never want to stop someone coming from an honest place.” Discussion and learning are enhanced as instructors encourage students to think freely when discussing issues. She recognizes that a person’s religious background, beliefs and values all play a factor in the interpretation of course material and personal view of an issue.

In a class such as Intercultural Communication, conflict is part of the curriculum. Quoting author Arnold Mindell, Calhoun believes “sitting in the fire,” or discussing difficult issues is often necessary to progress. Knowledge and learning require exploring unfamiliar and sometimes uncomfortable thoughts and beliefs. This exploration expands students’ knowledge and allows them to become more aware of differing perspectives. Calhoun recognizes, however, that sometimes an instructor needs to stop dialogue altogether to maintain control and facilitate a respectful atmosphere. She understands the need to terminate classroom discussion if it rises to a level where too much emotion is involved. Her goal is not to silence opinion, but she will not allow people to terrorize or victimize others in class. She said this often requires “taking a break,” or moving on from controversial topics. She believes the teacher operates as a facilitator or mediator in such discussions.

Balancing a respectful atmosphere with a forum for opinion is a challenge for professors. In the political science classroom, students often discuss the role the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints plays in Utah politics. One strategy to prevent attacks or biases on either side of an issue is to have students “impugn themselves,” as Ted Wilson puts it. Wilson encourages students to form an opinion, but then he continually pushes the students to take that thought process a step further. He believes the worst thing an instructor can do is to reprimand a student for expressing his or her opinion and beliefs. Attacking a student for his or her thoughts may cause the student to defend that position more. To prevent this situation, Wilson likes to play devil’s advocate by asking his students to consider the other side of an issue. He likes to use the phrase “Have you considered this . . .” He then describes the alternative side of an issue. Wilson believes that exploring in depth both sides of a controversial religious topic will foster an environment where students appreciate and understand differing opinions. Wilson believes learning is promoted when students are allowed the freedom to formulate ideas, but he also recognizes the need for the instructor to actively encourage students to search for both perspectives on controversial subjects.

In contrast, Marcie Goodman and Jackie Osherow believe scientific learning is the key to maintaining a safe
environment for discussion. Dr. Goodman, visiting associate professor in the sociology department, believes, "[The classroom] atmosphere is one of the academy." In other words, the classroom is a place for students to report what they have learned; it is not a soapbox for opinion. Students are always encouraged to critically analyze course material and use the text to support their comments. She calls it, "putting on an academic hat." Looking at the facts through the academy." Goodman challenges students to look at what the experts say and then use that text to support ideas or comments.

Jackie Osherow, associate professor in English, also believes students must pull from the text to backup their ideas in order to maintain an academic atmosphere in the classroom. Osherow emphasized, "back it up." If students speak without support or text to back up their statements, they are more likely to offend their peers. Osherow wants students to use the words, not personal beliefs to foster classroom discussion. Goodman and Osherow believe the atmosphere is less threatening when students are encouraged to use literature for support, rather than their own beliefs or values.

Professors’ willingness to work with students' beliefs and opinions reduces anxiety and allows our university to be a place where students feel comfortable. The majority of professors express willingness to work with students with particular religious needs such as allowing excused absences for religious holidays or respecting students desires to not watch or read material that is offensive because of religious beliefs.

Religious holidays are a source of tension for some students. The current school calendar does not include release for many non-Christian holidays. Ted Wilson said, "[You must] honor those kinds of things." It is a University of Utah policy to excuse absences for religious reasons. But, it is also important for students to understand they are still expected to make up missed assignments. Wilson was always willing to have lecture notes available for his students and make himself available for questions and follow-up. Jackie Osherow expressed willingness to tape her class. Calhoun similarly is willing to allow absences for personal reasons. She allows students three absences a semester that need no explanation. She believes this policy respects the private aspect of religious identities.

Religious beliefs can affect a student’s class participation. Some films, literature and even the nature of the class can offend students. Jackie Osherow teaches a class focusing on the Torah as literature. She recognizes that the very nature of the class seems irreverent to some. She believes that clear communication is vital. She advises professors to, "make it clear on the first day your expectations of the class. Then there aren't any surprises." She emphasizes that she is teaching literature, not religion. Lindsay Calhoun also understands that some discussion and material in class isn't consistent with every student's beliefs. She provides forewarning and an outlet for the students to excuse themselves and will not penalize a student if they choose not to participate.

One component in respecting religious needs in the classroom is the emphasis that students must speak out. If faculty is unaware of a need or concern, they cannot respond to it. Dr. Goodman is willing to work with students on an individual case-by-case basis, but they must be willing to communicate their concerns. Most professors are willing to respond and pay attention to these concerns, but they cannot provide this service unless they are aware of that need. Professors should encourage students to come to them if they have religious needs or concerns.

Religion is a difficult issue. Professors try to treat it with sensitivity and care by creating a safe environment, encouraging thoughtful comments, and allowing room for difference of opinion. It is also important to remember that great minds often disagree. Osherow cited the example of two accomplished literary critics, one from Yale, another from Harvard. "They both can interpret the same piece of literature differently. In the end, not everyone is going to agree. Keep this in mind." The world is filled with controversy and differences of religious thought, but the classroom can be the greatest learning ground for negotiation and the management of differences.
Voices

"Philosophy celebrates the question ... Education is to help people understand the pros and cons rather than push certain views against others."

MARIAM THALOS
Professor, Philosophy

"The world is dipped in controversy. The classroom is a great place to teach students how to deal with and approach controversy."

TED WILSON
Former Director, Hinckley Institute of Politics

"The classroom is a place for students to report what they have learned; it is not a soapbox for opinion."

MARCIE GOODMAN
Professor, Sociology

"You can’t take culture away from religion. We are respectable, sensible, and engaging with people from other religions."

BOB NAKAOKA
Director, Campus Ambassadors

"I think we all think about our spiritual commitments often, if not daily. It’s hard for me to imagine who I would be without those commitments. It’s my choice to live with my spiritual commitments. It is also my choice to not teach those commitments in a university classroom."

ANN DARLING
Chair, Communication

"We follow laws based on social norms; faith and religion help navigate us through our decisions."

ABE BAKHSHESY
Professor, Business

"As an academic, you want to have a balance of points of view. That is part of what an academic approach to religion is. You’re trying to look at this in a scholarly, balanced, academic way. You’re not trying to go to either extreme, which is what people fear."

MARGARET TOSCANO
Professor, Languages and Literature

"Both science and religion look for ways to control or manipulate the world."

DAVE TEMME
Professor, Biology

"I often answer a student’s question with a question because students tend to agree with me as they respect and look up to me as their professor. There is never a right or wrong so I resist telling students what I think because often I may not be sure what I believe since I see more than one side to everything."

ROB MAYER
Professor, Family and Consumer Studies

"Knowledge and learning require exploring unfamiliar and sometimes uncomfortable thoughts and beliefs."

LINDSAY CALHOUN
Graduate Student, Communication
The Professor's Role: Teacher not Preacher

By Ruby Wang
Artwork courtesy of Utah Museum of Fine Art

How do professors remain "neutral" when dealing with controversial religious topics in the classroom? What are the internal or psychological conflicts that professors face as they try to negotiate their own religious beliefs, preconceptions, and stereotypes?

Religion is often a sensitive issue in the classroom that can sometimes hinder education. Whether the course is based on religious content or not, everyone brings their own values and beliefs to the class. There is no such thing as absolute objectivity. It is difficult to remain objective because there are so many influential elements such as one's genetics and upbringing, culture, ethnicity, and popular media that determine how free an individual truly is when he or she makes decisions. Hence, professors are here not only to educate but encourage students to keep an open mind and make unbiased judgments to the best of their ability.

As a professor of philosophy, Mariam Thalos feels that religion does not intrude upon the process of education because the discipline of philosophy does not have set doctrines. Instead, "philosophy celebrates the question," said Thalos. "Education is to help people understand the pros and cons rather than push certain views against others." Thalos does not shy away when students bring up topics of faith and religion. In fact, Thalos sometimes plays the role of devil's advocate by bringing up a controversy because she believes that "something objectionable or perceived as an obstacle may not be clear on the compatibility of questions." In other words, her ultimate goal is to facilitate diverse views and help students become aware of the various existing opinions that are available to them.

"Self-censorship has not been one of my strong suits," says Thalos, "I'm not inclined to do so because it really isn't necessary." It is true that one should be sensitive to how one comes across to others. Nonetheless, Thalos includes supplemental materials such as films and texts that deal with controversial issues because it helps students learn and explore concepts. Even if something is rated R or has graphic content she will assign it regardless as it is a piece of their education. Thalos believes that college students are mature enough to be exposed to different ideas and think critically regarding their own beliefs.

When students feel strongly towards or opposed to an idea, Thalos pushes them to support their opinion with more articulation in order to be more self-reflective. Thalos tries to guide students so that they can get over preconceived notions and not to be ignorant to new or different information. "People stuck on preconceived notions are more ignorant. What they need more than anything else is to get over it," Thalos said. "It is about what reasons we believe and the compatibility for and against these reasons."

To Thalos, learning is not about memorizing pieces of information. Education is a struggle to gain more knowledge and better one's self. "As long as students learn on their own, it's OK with me if they still walk away with their own views," said Thalos. According to Thalos, students have different orientations about raising questions of interest and some appreciate the challenge whereas others do not. "Students who are not sure of what they want are often surprised to find their views being challenged," Thalos revealed.

Similar to Thalos' educative approach, Lisa Diamond, assistant professor in psychology and gender studies, tries to
Francesco d'Ubertino Verdi, called il Bachiacca (1494-1557)
St. John in the Wilderness, ca. 1535.
Lisa Diamond is a professor in the department of psychology.

Diamond feels that it is crucial to expose students to reality and deconstruct unsupported beliefs. When dealing with videos of an offensive nature, she will warn students in advance so that they know what to expect. Her philosophy is to be honest and up-front to her students and leave them the responsibility to make decisions.

Rob Mayer, a professor of family and consumer studies, also deals with controversial global issues by presenting students with multiple sides. According to Mayer, students are always eager to know his opinion on certain subjects, so he must be as objective as possible. “There is never a right or wrong so I resist telling students what I think because often I may not be sure what I believe since I see more than one side to everything.” Mayer believes that if he tells students the answer it short-cuts the purpose of getting them to think for themselves. Thus, he often answers a student’s question with a question. When students ask him, “What do you think?” he will answer them by saying, “What do YOU think?” This strategy avoids students finding the easy way out by simply agreeing with him. Mayer added, “This might sound wimpy but it helps students communicate their own beliefs because students tend to agree with me as they respect and look up to me as their professor.”

To Mayer, the challenge in facilitating critical thinking in the classroom is when the subject matter being discussed becomes so explicit that students shut out due to their defense mechanisms. Mayer, however, welcomes challenges of views because it helps create a better learning atmosphere. He trains students to think independently by synthesizing multiple perspectives so as to see the world in a brighter, different light. Strong opinions are based on personal experiences. Therefore, Mayer will immediately jump to the other side of an argument once he feels that there is an imbalance of opinions. His intention is to get students to think “outside the box” by looking at the strengths and weaknesses of an argument.

Ann Darling, associate professor and chair of the Department of Communication, reveals that it is hard not to assert personal opinions. Moreover, stereotyping is not always based on religion. “I think we all thing about our own spiritual commitments often, if not daily. It’s hard for me to imagine who I would be without those commitments.” To Darling, it is not about teaching students from different backgrounds. It makes no difference teaching students of the Catholic, Muslim, Buddhist, LDS, Christian or any other religion. Teaching and learning is a process that goes beyond religious conceptions. Darling believes that “teaching and learning are by nature sacred and spiritual acts” because they not only establish teacher-student relationships in the classroom but they also enhance the intellect by creating alternative viewpoints. Learning about different outlooks enable enlightened thinking and lead to self discovery.

Originally from Albuquerque, Ann Darling was raised
Catholic. "My own faith has never inflicted tensions in the class," said Darling. "Religious conflicts do not play a significant role in my classes because I have also chosen to teach classes that don't push religious public controversies." Her goal is to promote critical thinking. Right now, Darling teaches a Communication and Social Behavior class and graduate seminars. Although she does not try to avoid or censor subjects that deal with morals and ethics such as abortion, capital punishment or sexuality rights, these are usually not topics of interest. Darling feels that most students understand the controversial nature of the issues and are more concerned in learning about the topics related to the class. "As a mentor, I need to encourage students to be independent thinkers because they need more challenge by developing their own internal editing function."

The only challenge that Darling encounters is linguistic barriers. Indeed, language affects the way individuals express and portray themselves. Darling admits that language is the hardest burden because she must adapt her use of vocabulary constantly so that ideas will not come out offensively. Day after day, she must put her "emergency brakes" on and ask herself, "What language should I use that won't offend my students?" Even though she tries hard not to stereotype based on her own preconceptions and beliefs, she must be conscientious and culture-sensitive while maintaining neutrality and accommodating students' needs. Darling believes that "neutrality is developed and achieved from monitoring sense and selves in the classroom."

Indeed, remaining neutral in the classroom depends on how well a professor self-monitors and monitors the student's comfort level. Playing devil's advocate is a challenge that not all professors are comfortable with. For the most part, professors attempt to stimulate students' critical thinking skills in order to help them learn about diverse views and balance radical opinions. Although complete objectivity is difficult to achieve, at least students will remember to self-reflect and make more rational and impartial judgments. In the academic arena, professors should facilitate as well as mediate discussions. Regardless of personal convictions and prejudices, it is up to the educator to provide an educational and respectful forum for opinions and discussion. Education will always exist in differing opinions. Nevertheless, students need not feel obligated to choose one opinion over another because it is possible to accept multiple views. Inevitably, everyone will find their beliefs being infringed upon, yet there is always something to be learned from debates. This is the goal of education. Keeping an open mind to new ideas is, without a doubt, the ultimate key to successful learning and effective communication.
Spirituality and Religiosity in the Classroom

By Stephanie Richardson & Kim Welch

Upon utterance of any term associated with religion, morality, or "right behaviors", one can almost taste the underlying tension at the University of Utah. Recently, this tension erupted into a legal debate about strongly held beliefs, discrimination, academic freedom and curricular integrity. As stated in the Axson-Flynn - University of Utah Settlement Agreement:

"...the plaintiff student in this case has deeply held and sincere religious convictions that prevented her and will in the future prevent her from using the name of her God in vain or using the 'I' word when performing certain classroom exercises in the Actor Training Program." (section 8, July 13, 2004)

Some would applaud Christina Axson-Flynn's bravery in standing up for her beliefs. Others would scorn her for being overly sensitive and extreme in her stance. Whatever we think personally about the case, as faculty we have now been handed an opportunity. We have been charged by the courts with deciding how we shall accommodate deeply held beliefs, teaching in an atmosphere where spirituality can oh-so-quickly segue into religiosity.

In American culture, spirituality is a "sensitivity or attachment to religious values" (Merriam-Webster Unabridged, 1996). Religiosity is "[the state of being] excessively, obtrusively, or sentimentally religious" (Merriam-Webster Unabridged, 1996). Thus, while spirituality is generally a private matter, religiosity is a more public expression of beliefs, to the point of affectation. Both can cause anguish when course content conflicts with values. When students (or instructors) become excessively, obtrusively, or sentimentally religious, opportunities for true debate or reasoned discourse diminish. In short, religiosity will result in a more public display than will spirituality that can quash learning. It can be helpful to consider that for some of us, religiosity comes from a position of fear.

I had some dicey teaching moments in a 3000-level nursing course that covered common human experiences, including spirituality. As a beginning instructor, I began to teach in a very naïve way, assuming the majority would be comfortable with the various ways human beings express spiritual beliefs. I was so wrong! I learned very quickly that several students feared that unless they condemned their clients' spiritual practices, they were condoning them and further, that condemning their clients' spiritual reality might threaten their own core faith beliefs.

For others, religiosity is a learned posture. Insular societies - and Utah is not peculiar to this - are marked by an inability to understand the lived experience of the other because the other has never been experienced.

One of my favorite life moments occurred while living in a country whose population held a 98% majority religion, and I
was not part of the religion. At times, different citizens chose it their duty to articulate my religious inadequacies. Fortunately, two individuals reserved their judgments and made efforts to get to know me. Although I know they held the same beliefs as the rest, I found our conversations to be more enriching than the “thou shalts” that were otherwise being pronounced upon my head. They explained to me their religion and they debated differences that even they had within their own belief system. And, although they strongly opposed some of my beliefs, they listened to me.

I knew that we had won each others’ respect and friendship when, at the end of my year-long stay in their country, one of them said to me, “I spoke to my [religious leader] about you and he said that even if you are not one of us, you can still make it to heaven.” I could have received no better compliment from him.

No matter the cause of religiosity; we still have spiritual content to cover. In the Asson-Flynn settlement, instructors may include content that challenges deeply held spiritual beliefs that is required for “reasonable curricular integrity.” We are responsible for defining “reasonable” and also for letting class participants know in advance when beliefs might be challenged.

A group of students had decided to show a brief clip from the movie Schindler’s List just after it had been banned from the BYU campus because of its ‘R’ rating for nudity. Their purpose was to graphically illustrate both racism and violence in a course unit on violence and public health. Prior to airing the clip, I felt it necessary to let the class know that it would be ok if anyone felt they had to leave the room while it showed, though we were “only” going to see brutality and not nudity in the clip. No one left. Of course, I thought the violence was much more counter-religious than seeing a non-sexualized nude body would have been.

Many of us are careful, as the above vignette illustrates, to accommodate sensibilities. Our concern as faculty is to make sure that university students are not needlessly distracted from learning by anything provocative that is not related to the material at hand. As an example, we protect our small children from exposure to clothing that can provoke violence. Thus, we have dress codes in middle school in the Salt Lake School District, and an entire nation has banned the wearing of head scarves in lower grades by Muslim women. However, we are teaching young adults. In higher education, that which is distracting for children is usually seen as fodder for discussion, until the cry, “Too far!” is heard. With the perception that the University of Utah is biased against the Mormon religion, we may hear “Too far!” too soon. It is our job to lay out our pedagogical reasons for both content and process that teaches and moves the discussion forward, in a context of heightened sensitivity to anti-Mormonism. Note that we use the phrase “heightened sensitivity to anti-Mormonism”. The U is not anti-Mormon. That is a myth that has been repeatedly disproved. What we still struggle with is the perception that we are insensitive to spirituality of all types and that we foster dissent when dissent is tantamount to disloyalty, including disloyalty to religious tenets.

So our concern is that something will always be offensive, no matter how careful we are. We will have sensitivities that are bruised, with resultant classroom bad behaviors. Listening degenerates into merely waiting one’s turn to speak. Some students may not wait their turn at all; voices are raised; conversations become testimonies. Since it is our responsibility as faculty to ensure an environment conducive to learning, we deliberately shift our instructor roles when matters that challenge spiritual tenets are introduced in the classroom. We become referees, rudeness police, rule-makers and rule-enforcers.

At times, the bias exhibited may be extreme and be offensive to the instructor, challenging our abilities to bracket our own emotions and remain, in fact and in deed, the instructor.

I’ll never forget sitting in the back of a room as a peer evaluator while a faculty member introduced content about therapeutic abortion procedures, and hearing some whispers from the students behind me that were quite derogatory. I was completely offended and immediately livid. Because I knew I would be their instructor during the next semester, I had to force myself to not turn around and memorize their faces; I just didn’t want to grab who was saying such terrible things about women who had undergone abortions.

However, one important point of the Asson-Flynn case was that the student could not avoid engaging in the content and was not given alternatives to the content. Ethically and legally, of course, the author’s words were not alterable. How we as teachers shall work with two or more immovable and conflicting value sets remains to be resolved, yet most of us as intellectuals enjoy engaging in a good, challenging debate, and helping students learn this same skill. Beliefs should not be left to ossify and the function of a university education is to learn to continually and intelligently examine beliefs for veracity and fit. At the same time, our intellectual selves coexist with our spiritual selves. As President Young said in one of his addresses to staff this September, “Beliefs should be challenged, not destroyed.”

Artwork: Courtesy of Mary Francy at the Museum of Fine Arts
PROFILES
in Spirituality

DEBATING DEITY AND DARWINISM: PROFESSOR DAVID TEMME

BY BRIAN PRETTYMAN

Life is constantly offering new depths to the dichotomy of science and religion. Depending on whom you talk to, these two subjects may complicate or compliment each other. My first reaction to conversations including words like “evolution” or “Darwinism” is to dodge them... like they say to do with politics and religion. It all seems so complicated and controversial that it seems best to avoid them like the plague.

It’s a whole different story when you’re a biology professor at a University. It seems difficult to teach a topic like evolution in the classroom and still keep a neutral, non-biased stance. Can people find a middle ground for science and religion? Is there an equation for god in science? A majority of Americans may consider themselves “religious,” but continue to wrestle with ideas of creationism and the “Big Bang” theory. Is there a place for both in our education system... and our world?

HISTORY

This conflict between religion and science has a long history, starting in the late 18th century during the time of Galileo, when the scientific dating of the earth didn’t fit with the literal interpretation of creation according to the Bible. Galileo’s new approach at questioning the origins of life challenged the definition of our existence and he was thereby excommunicated from his faith.

Centuries later, Darwin presented his radical theory of natural selection, an evolutionary process where living organisms that adapt to their surroundings tend to survive and reproduce more productively. Many conservative clerics condemned Darwin’s theories as leading to atheism and immoral behavior. Mainstream religious theories were being contended and great discord emerged between science and theology.

The debate resurfaced in a big way with the John Scopes trial in 1925. Scopes was a biology teacher that decided to teach evolution in his classroom. This violated state law which forbade “any theory that denies the story of Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.” Scopes was found guilty, but the trial was considered a breakthrough in the controversy over the place of evolution in the education system.

Evolution increased its popularity in American public schools in the 1960s in reaction to the fear of the Soviet Union gaining an upper hand in science and technology. After many court trials, debates, and much religious resistance, evolution finally found a secure spot in the science books.

And the debate continues to this day. In the 21st century, there is no doubt the classroom holds an integral part in the future of this conflict.

RELATING IT TO "U"

Dave Temme teaches Biology 1000, an introductory biology course that covers evolution. I was hesitant to interview someone on such a sensitive subject, but from the start, Professor Temme was extremely comfortable with what he wanted to say. “My goal when dealing with evolution and religion is for everyone to come to an understanding and common agreement,” he said.

It sounded impossible to me. In a world that thrives on conflict and drama, how or why would he search for common ground? He couldn’t possibly believe that everyone could end up holding hands and agreeing about this complex issue. Science never really sparked my attention, but I found myself intrigued by what he might have to say.

“First you have to understand the notion of science and the notion of religion,” Professor Temme said. “Science is based on regular repeated patterns, and the issue to understand is why people would desire to follow patterns in their
Professor Temme explains that both science and religion look for ways to control or manipulate the world.
lives." Temme explained that patterns are the way we learn to adjust to life for our own progression, happiness, and survival.

Temme picked up a rubber band and lifted it in the air. "What do you think will happen when I let go of this?" He let it go and it fell. He did it a few more times. "What is it going to do this time?" he asked. He was demonstrating that humans learn that odds are in favor of the same actions having the same results. We don't actually know that the rubber band is going to drop, but because it has so many times before, we believe it will again. This notion of science helps us predict the future and allows us to improve our way of life.

The way Temme sees it, religion echoes the same concept. "Now I'm not in religious studies, but I would assume that every example of religion has a form of what we call 'prayer.'" Temme then suggests that people pray when they want to change things they have no control over or don't know how to change themselves. Through prayer, religion is also an attempt to improve life.

"This is the fundamental similarity...that both science and religion look for ways to control or manipulate the world," emphasized Temme. The search for influencing change is the motivation for both science and religion.

Temme then left the parallels of religion and science and switched to their inevitable conflict. He explained that the difference between the two could be based on one simple concept. "The word 'miracle' is usually used in three different ways," Temme said. He explained the first was the, "Isn't it amazing...?" usage, as if someone is glad. The second, when something happens that seems improbable, such as winning the lottery. Although unlikely, it could happen, and when it does, it certainly feels like a miracle. The third definition is what Professor Temme wanted to focus on: When a certain event or manifestation is supernatural, such as how water changes to wine.

In chemistry, scientists know that water's breakdown of hydrogen and oxygen cannot produce wine. One would need carbon and other substances for that to occur. Water in and of itself cannot physically change on its own; elements of one form don't change into another. For such a thing to happen, a supernatural occurrence must take place. Professor Temme concurred that the supernatural aspect of religion breaks all the rules of science, which makes it impossible to study and manipulate. Therefore, religion conflicts with science when beliefs reach beyond the boundaries of proof or patterns.

In interesting contrast, Temme explained that gravity is considered somewhat mysterious and baffling to the scientific world, yet it isn't thought of as a miracle. Why? Because gravity is consistent, like his dropping of the rubber band, allowing it to conform with the laws of science.

Professor Temme says that people don't take the time to understand and respect both sides of an issue and break down the controversy into simple ideas in order to reveal common ground. It's good to have controversy and speculation, but when it comes to science and religion, it's also nice to have a clear distinction of what can be proven and what is yet to be revealed. Obviously, we have come a long way, and obviously we still have a long way to go.

Temme says it's important to teach what we know and what we all can agree on, and leave the rest for people's personal lives. "In all my years here," Temme says, "I have never had any problems. I don't tell people what I believe, because it's irrelevant." Whether we were created from a god in heaven or we're descendants from a lower order of animals is all yet to be fully proven. The important thing at this point, Temme says, is to recognize and understand the similarities and differences to life, and hope the rest is revealed as we live it.
THE GOOD WORD: RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT THE U

BY JOHN COON
PHOTOS BY BRIAN PRETTYMAN

Few topics have proved to be as divisive in the classroom as religion. The first mention of the subject is often sufficient enough to divide students and faculty into separate camps: those who see religion as a God-given instrument for the betterment of mankind and others who view religion as a man-made apparatus of myth and superstition naturally at odds with serious academic study. The divisiveness of religion is readily apparent at a campus like the University of Utah where the student body often divides itself into two separate groups: Mormons and Non-Mormons. Although academic examinations of religion and its role in society appears to be a treacherous topic, the study of religion has grown more popular as an academic field on the campuses of many universities in recent years.

At the University of Utah, religious studies are still in the beginning stages as an academic field. The initial steps toward growth occurred in the 2003 summer semester with the formation of the Religious Studies Student Association. Founded under the direction of Colleen McDannell, the Sterling R. McMurrin Chair of Religious Studies, its primary goal is to generate student interest in religious studies through organizing activities based on some aspect of religion. Since its organization, the RSSA has held lectures given by visiting religious scholars, organized field trips to sites of religious/historical significance, and viewed religiously oriented films. These activities, according to student leaders of the RSSA, are designed to promote a better understanding of the role religion plays in contemporary society. Their activities have drawn participation from a number of students who describe themselves as “religion nerds.”

The RSSA was an outgrowth of a larger national organization, the American Academy of Religion (AAR), that is dedicated to promoting academic examination of religion on campuses nationwide. The AAR began in 1909 as a small group of scholars dedicated to promoting the academic study of religion. Currently the AAR numbers approximately 9,000 members, composed largely of faculty who teach at over 1,500 colleges and universities throughout North America, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

The Religious Studies Student Association is also a manifestation on the part of some students and faculty to spark consideration for religious studies as a serious academic field, according to current president Kirk Watson. He noted that by its nature religious studies is an inter-disciplinary field, drawing elements from diverse academic fields such as anthropology, history, sociology, and political science. This melting pot of studies is due in part because the study of religion requires students to see how it has influenced the past and continues to influence the present. For Watson, the study of religion is all about “looking at religion as a human activity.”

One major challenge to establishing religious studies as an academic field at the University of Utah comes from the perceptions of religion on campus. A number of students and faculty do not see how a faith-based subject can be correlated with an academic approach. “Some people are apprehensive about the study of religion because they don’t think there is a point,” said Devan Hite, vice president of the RSSA. “As people start to get their feet wet, they start to feel a little more comfortable with the subject and start to feel more comfortable talking about it.”

“This is an unusual campus in that so many students are active, not only in the LDS church, but in many other religions.”
Another challenge, according to Professor McDannell, results from the religious nature of the students themselves. "This is an unusual campus in that so many students are active, not only in the LDS church, but in many other religions." Professor McDannell noted that it is necessary in a class to explain right away that students of religion must be prepared for the fact that a study of religion is a difficult and critical task. Typically, a student must read many books, write papers with in-depth research and analysis, memorize extensive facts and information pertaining to different aspects of religion, and have a working knowledge of foreign languages. Students who undertake an academic study of religion are trained to view religion in general without a lens of faith. All of this work is necessary to force the student to approach religion from a new perspective.

"You can't use the same language to describe someone else's tradition as you do to your own because that's hard." Professor McDannell explained. "It [religious studies] is a knowledge base in which, like any academic discipline, you have to master the basic language." She concedes that it is a difficult shift for many students to make, especially ones who come from homogeneous communities where one religion is predominant, like the LDS church in most of Utah, because they don't have much experience with religion outside their own.

The predominance of the LDS church in Utah can account for some of the hesitation to accept religious studies as an academic field. A common fear arises among students and faculty alike that an atmosphere of neutrality would be difficult to maintain at the University of Utah. Critics of religious studies fear that classes focused on religion would quickly turn into sessions used for either bashing or promoting the LDS church and its beliefs. Faculty members and students already involved with religious studies believe that those arguments have no serious merit. "If you are trained in religion, you are going to be thinking about this issue," said Margaret Toscano, a professor in the languages and literature department. "As an academic, you want to have a balance of points of view. That is part of what an academic approach to religion is. You're trying to look at this in a scholarly, balanced, academic way. You're not trying to go to either extreme, which is what people fear."

Professor Toscano argues that any professor can effectively set up a classroom atmosphere that does not degenerate into bashing or testimonials of any religious belief system, whether it be Mormonism, Catholicism, or Islam. "I think if you're trying to be open, trying to be academic, trying to be tolerant, trying to promote a balance and fairness, [this] is not as much of an issue." Professors, according to her, are not going to be "proselytizing or favoring a certain religious viewpoint."

Currently the University of Utah has no religious studies major or minor. Any student who seeks to focus on religious studies in particular must declare a University Studies major. There are, however, many classes offered in various colleges and departments that focus on aspects of religious studies. In the history department for example, students are offered courses that deal with the Protestant Reformation, early Christian history, and American religions. Some Middle Eastern Studies courses focus on the role of Christianity and Islam in historical and societal developments in that region. Even departments from philosophy to languages and literature offer classes exploring some aspect of ancient or modern religion that correlates to their specialized field of study.

According to Watson, religious studies ultimately has much to offer as an academic field. In his words, students involved in religious studies will gain "a deeper understanding of society, how it works, how the structures of society look together, and a better appreciation of [the student's] own society."
LITERATURE on Spirituality

AUTHOR MITCH ALBOM:
SPIRITUALITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

BY LYNDSEY SCULL

Graduation looms ever closer, tightening its choke hold and whispering, "Lyndsey, you have to figure out what you're going to do for the rest of your life." Try as I might, I cannot ignore the inevitable. For many students, graduation signifies the end of the easy-to-follow series: elementary school, junior high, high school, college and... then what? The ominous void of "the real world" gapes open and big decisions loom overhead. Where should I work? What should I do? How can I get a job? Am I going to get married and have a family? And most importantly, where can I go if I need help?

The answer is quite simple: have faith. Religion, for many, provides solace during life's difficulties. Religion helps to answer the seemingly unanswerable questions by reassuring its followers that life has a way of making sure all the pieces fall into place. By offering hope even in the darkest times, religion can be the motivating force that helps someone get up, dust off and get back on track. For students worried about life after graduation, this kind of reassurance is the ultimate tonic. I've observed religious friends and co-workers rely on their respective faiths to help guide them through uncertainties and difficult decisions. I'm always elated at their resulting determination and confidence, but then I stop and ask myself, "That's great, but what should I do?"

I am not a religious person. I was not raised to be particularly religious nor do I believe I will ever be religious. Without the option to turn towards religion to seek for hope and ask for guidance, I find myself confused and anxious as I regard my future. Where should I turn when life gets me down and I need some chicken soup for my non-religious soul?

My relaxation technique usually involves some kind of caffeinated beverage and a good book. Feeling clueless and desolate about my unforeseen future, I followed my usual routine one day and picked up a book to read in search for some inspiration and encouragement for the days that lie ahead. Judging by its subtitle, "an old man, a young man, and life's greatest lesson," I hoped this book might help me alleviate some of my anxiety and perhaps ease my apprehension. To my own surprise, reading Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie was indeed the answer. This book led me to an epiphany as it gave me some of the most meaningful and useful answers that I long awaited.
Tuesdays with Morrie is a quick read, not due to any over-simplicity or lack of substance but because once I started it, I didn't want to stop. Throughout this book, I knew that its “lessons” were closely connected with my recent concerns about the future. Tuesdays with Morrie chronicles a series of meetings between Morrie, a former college professor, and his young friend and former student, Mitch Albom. Morrie has a fatal degenerative nerve disorder known as ALS, and as his condition worsens, both men decide that in order to help ease Morrie’s transition from life to death, they will meet regularly to discuss life’s big questions and decisions: the world, regrets, family, emotions, money, marriage, culture, death and finally, saying goodbye. Morrie’s final “course” will be about his own death, and through his death, he teaches Mitch about life.

Mitch’s questions about life seem to mirror those of mine and doubtless, those of many other young post-college professionals. Morrie understands the basic questions that plague anyone who is unsure what to do with his or her life. Morrie realizes the positive effect that others can have on those in need. In one of their first meetings, Mitch asked Morrie how he stays so upbeat even though he knew he was dying. Morrie replied that it is because his family and friends are there, visiting him, calling him and sharing their problems with him, reaffirming Morrie’s notion that “dying” is not the same as “useless.” Through Morrie’s example, Mitch realizes that despite the fact that sadness and fear are inevitable, there is hope and support in others.

When I read this, I realized a fundamental flaw in my own thinking. This whole time that I have been fretting about what I am going to do after graduation I have kept my fears to myself. By pretending that I was confident and fearless about my future, I figured that I could fool everyone, even myself. After learning Morrie’s philosophy, I realized that there is nothing weak or shameful about confiding my insecurities to others, as I had previously, and erroneously, thought. Why go through life’s challenges alone? I now know that I should take advantage of the fact that I am lucky enough to have loving friends and family that can offer reassurance, comfort and confidence as I embark on my post-graduation journey.

Later in Tuesdays with Morrie, Morrie explains why he needs the support of others in his life, both previously and now that he is approaching death. He explains to Mitch that all people, himself included, need to feel “fully human.” That is, we all need to need others as well as be needed by others because this is how society functions. Again, I recognized my own flawed approach to my recent anxieties: I was being inhuman. I wasn’t allowing myself to connect with others around me by letting my guard down and admitting that I am nervous about my future. As Morrie tells Mitch, “the most important thing in life is to learn how to give out love, and to let it come in.”

As I read Tuesdays with Morrie I came across some important realizations that helped me understand that even though I am not religious, I still have somewhere to turn to when I’m feeling less than optimistic about life. I still had my doubts, but it’s okay because so did Mitch. Morrie and Mitch examined the problems within our society and culture: America has so much to offer, yet too many people walk around consumed by self-pity and overwhelming grief that their misery and unhappiness are blinding them from seeing all that is great about their surroundings. Concerned that he might wind up this way, Mitch asked Morrie, “how can we avoid this? How do I find purpose in life?” In response, Morrie explained to Mitch that unhappy people are “chasing the wrong things.” Morrie further expressed, “The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning.”

After reading this paragraph, I thought to myself, that’s it? It sounded so simple, but how do I find purpose? Just pick something that contributes to my community and devote myself to helping others. Contemplating this philosophy, I realized that this is just one side of the cycle of interconnectedness in which all humans participate. I devote myself to helping my family, my friends, and my community and in turn, they help me. Simple as that. In fact, this devotion can also take many forms. In Morrie’s case, he devoted himself to teaching and lending an ear whenever someone needed to talk. For the majority of people, it could just be simple acts of volunteerism or a lifelong commitment to community service. The point is not the quantity of someone’s devotion but rather accepting that we are all in this together, connected for better or worse. This realization can either prompt detachment and thus, unhappiness, or instead spark active participation that can leave anyone feeling a sense of involvement and purpose.

Morrie’s words and advice are simple and applicable to many of life’s situations. Mitch’s interpretation of his old professor’s advice is that everyone is intertwined and responsible for one another in some unique way. For me, Tuesdays with Morrie elicited some important realizations about life’s difficulties and my choices in facing them. I now know that, even without religious faith, I have support from all those around me, and in return, I can be the same for someone else.

So if you haven’t already read Mitch Albom’s Tuesdays with Morrie, it is an inspirational book that I
A Church? On our Campus?

"It is not a church, used by some as a church, by others as a temple, mosque, synagogue or holy place," said Rev. Rick Lawson. Lawson, an Episcopal priest, is very familiar with the University of Utah's Fort Douglas Post Chapel.

The Fort Douglas Chapel is a 2,653-square-foot building built between 1883 and 1884. Throughout its 120 year history it is held religious services for many faiths, weddings, military events, and community gatherings. Until 1991, when the chapel closed for renovation, it had been the longest operating military chapel in the history of the U.S. Army.

This historical yet simple structure offers more than a place for unity between the interfaith community of students, campus organizations, alumni, faculty, and community groups; it stands as a treasured landmark for the United States.

-Laura Jones
APPRECIATING OUR RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

BY JESSICA EVANS

When I tell people that I am from Utah, one of the first things they ask me is if I am LDS. This stereotype is heard around the country, the world, and even in popular film and TV shows. While Utah is home to the LDS religion, there are many other religious organizations in the Salt Lake valley, and especially at the University of Utah. The University of Utah campus hosts over 35 different religious groups where people of different religious backgrounds such as Protestant, Catholic, and Muslim, etc., can go to worship and express their faith. These religious groups all seem to have one thing in common; networking with people of their same background whom they can share ideas and beliefs with.

Religious diversity is important because it gives you a better understanding of the world as a whole. It is also important to maintain a sense of religious identity to capture your own sense of individualism. The religious groups on campus are helpful in order for people from different religious denominations to find each other and worship freely with those of similar faith backgrounds.

Although most of the groups focus on their own religion, they welcome students of different faiths to participate in their activities. The Student Interfaith Council promotes diversity and exploration of other religions. This group welcomes Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, LDS, Protestant and many more to take part in monthly activities. The Student Interfaith Council has one main goal, to build community between faith groups. Devan Hite, the program management chair said, "It is nice to feel as if you are a member of your own faith, but interact with others on a religious level."

The Student Interfaith Council organizes a hosting series, where each faith takes a turn hosting an event for others. This is a unique way of learning about other members in our community. Hite believes "asking questions and creating dialogue" are key functions of these group activities.

This philosophy behind the interfaith mingling can easily be paralleled to higher education. For instance, if you are a communication major yet you take a course in history for self-interest, this does not necessarily mean that you are planning on becoming a history major. It is a way of making you a well-rounded individual. This is the purpose of the Student Interfaith Council, to broaden individual’s horizons and build relationships with people from different traditions.

Another nondenominational group on campus is Elevation. This group is part of the Assemblies of God organization. The mission of the Assemblies of God is to unite all Christians. Their gatherings are quite different than most religions. The atmosphere is casual and laid back. The activity opened up with a folk song about God, and everyone was singing along and clapping their hands simultaneously. Then, they played a game called the Elevation quiz game where people would answer multiple-choice questions about God and receive prizes. When I asked Christian Hancock, a devout member, why they did this he responded, "To loosen the atmosphere and show people that religion can be fun."

Another unique group on campus is the Campus Ambassadors. This group is directed towards international students who are interested in getting involved with a protestant affiliation. The Campus Ambassadors not only participate in activities such as bible studies and social services, they also help foreign students with their English. Bob Nakaoka, the campus director of the Campus Ambassadors, said "our focus is to engage people in culture and religion." This is a main focus of this group, to incorporate God...
and Jesus with culture. As Nakaoka put it, "You can't take culture away from religion, we are respectable, sensible, and engaging with people from other religions."

The Campus Ambassadors have been at The University of Utah for 11 years now. They are not exclusive to the University of Utah but are affiliated with college campuses nationwide. They also are located at Weber State University in Logan, Utah, which Nakaoka also resides over. Their events include bible studies, collective worship time, music, and prophetic prayer.

The Intervarsity Fellowship is another on-campus religious group. This is a conservative protestant group that is fairly new. Their purpose is to develop a community of believers who follow Jesus and Lord. This group has been around for about a year now and has about ten members. Will Newton, the president of this small organization, said, "We find each other, learn a lot and are committed to grow and learn more."

The number of these religious groups on campus is far too many to cover in detail. Some groups have over a hundred members, whereas others have as few as ten, but they all have formed in order to grow individually in an environment where they feel comfortable around peers sharing their faith. Networking amongst students on campus is important for these groups to thrive and grow. Even though the University of Utah has a strong LDS population, it is important to realize that there are many more students that are of other denominations and practice devoutly. This creates a strong religious culture at the University of Utah that promotes diversity amongst the students.

Photo collage courtesy of the Committee on the Study of Religion at Harvard University, http://www.pluralism.org/resources/slideshow/brown/index.php
JOHN COON will be graduated with a bachelor’s degree in History in May 2004. His ultimate goal is to either write for Sports Illustrated or have a New York Times bestselling book, whichever happens first. If neither is attainable, he will be satisfied to write about his experiences visiting the home cave of a tribe of belly-dancing clowns for some obscure travel magazine.

ALLY DANIELS is a photographer pursuing a mass media - news editing degree in the Department of Communication. She loves to travel, and of course take pictures! After she graduates in Spring 2005, she plans to get an awesome job at a magazine. Aly currently lives in Sandy, Utah.

JESSICA DURFEE is a graduate student and research fellow in the department of communication. She is focusing her research on interdisciplinary collaboration and environmental conflict management.

JESSICA EVANS is a senior and is anticipating graduating this semester. She enjoys snowboarding and writing.

ELLIOTT FRAUGHTON is a philosophy major interested in photography on the side.

DOUG HAGEMAN is the administrative assistant for CTE. He is working on his MA in international relations, which helps him better understand his mania with all things Star Wars. He and his wife recently had a baby boy.

KIRA JONES is a double majoring in mass communication and psychology. When she finally graduates she plans to work for a magazine in New York.

LAURA JONES is a mass communication major and on the University of Utah’s Swim Team.

BRIAN PRETTYMAN “My name is Brian Prettyman... and yes, if you were wondering, I’m extremely good looking. I’m 28 years old and look forward to finally getting my degree and getting the heck outta here! (Yes, there is a light at the end of the tunnel?) I love pizza. Am I boring? ... Don’t answer that!

STEPHANIE RICHARDSON continues to enjoy her dual appointment and thinks the staff of lessons does “A” work.

SHELLIE SCOTT-WILSON also goes by “Michelle”. She is studying mass communication and business. She loves hiking, running, and ice cream.

LYNDSEY SCULL recently graduated with a communication degree and is teaching English in Prague, Chekoslovakia.

RUBY WANG is a mass communication and piano performance major. She plans to graduate in spring 2005 and pursuing her love of piano teaching and performing. She also dreams of going to graduate school in New York and working in the magazine industry. Twenty-one-year-old Ruby loves reading, swimming, traveling, working with people, and snowy winters.

OUR THANKS to the faculty and staff of the Department of Communication.
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