



Integrated Liberal Studies

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

*“Thinking together,
independently”*

-Alexander Meiklejohn

Early Spring 2014 • 228 North Charter Street • Madison, Wisconsin 53715 Phone (608) 262-2190 • www.wisc.edu/ils

Notes from the Chair

Greetings from frigid Madison, where classes are underway and students actually seem happy to have arrived in a warm classroom!



Actually I’m writing from less-frigid Florence, Italy, where I’m directing the UW Study Abroad program at the beautiful Villa Corsi-Salviati. ILS has long collaborated with Study Abroad and a number of our faculty have developed and led programs around the world as another means of broadening the undergraduate experience.

The value of such educational opportunities, and a liberal education in general, has always been a matter of public debate and a basis for change on the campus. In the current climate shaped by the economic downturn and characterized by reassessment of the “worth” of a liberal arts degree relative to future employment, student engagement with humanistic studies is declining across the country. As a result, and as it has since the original Meiklejohn “X-College” was reborn as the Integrated Liberal Studies Program in the post-war years and the two-year undergraduate program gave way to the more flexible certificate program in the early 1980s, ILS must respond to changing circumstances and develop innovative ways to remain relevant and necessary to a new generation of undergraduates.

As we consider how best to reorganize and renew the program, we invite the thoughts and ideas of our valued alumni. Whether you experienced ILS as an intensive two-year course of study (from the 1940s through the 1970s) or constructed your own certificate path via the option-based program in place since the 1980s, we solicit your engagement as we construct a program for the 21st century. Upcoming newsletters will feature some of your responses, and we will soon release a survey to collect yet more data and ideas, even as we consult with current certificate students on campus. *(continued on next page)*

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This mini-newsletter will pave the way to a much larger version coming to you this summer. The ILS Program is very proud of the outstanding benefactors in both academia and funding, as well as the amazing accomplishments of its students.

Please send us your email address if you wish to continue receiving these newsletters.

ON WISCONSIN!

As a first step in the direction of engaging alumni, we are printing below on page three (and as a separate sheet in the hard copy version of the newsletter) the reflections of Richard Olson, a Madison-based alum whose life beyond the University attests to the lifelong value of his own ILS experience. I had the opportunity to meet with Dick to discuss and contextualize some of the signs of change he witnessed firsthand, and I can say honestly that if even half our alumni base is as avid in their support for the liberal arts as Dick is, we are in pretty good shape. While much has changed on the campus since Dick arrived as a "Pioneer," the value of the liberal arts as a foundation not just for a University degree but for a life lived ethically, passionately and with true

commitment has not wavered. It will serve as the basis for our planning and the ultimate goal of all our endeavors. We invite you to take up the challenge Dick Olson so articulately poses, and to support the liberal arts generally and the ILS Program more particularly in the months ahead. Please feel free to contact me directly (mvandenh@wisc.edu) or either the interim associate chair, Richard Avramenko (avramenko@wisc.edu) or the ILS office (ils@mailplus.wisc.edu).

On Wisconsin!

With best wishes,



Mike Vanden Heuvel



An ILS Pioneer reflects on the first ILS class and today's challenges



I was a member of the first ILS class in 1948. We called ourselves Pioneers. Lately I have been reading national articles about the decline of liberal arts education and whether a college education is worth the cost. I find this very disturbing.

This concern prompted me to attend a recent "Thursday After Class w/ ILS" at Meiklejohn House. It was described as a meeting "to unwind with an informal discussion with fellow ILS students, TAs, and professors after a long week of class." During the discussion I asked whether stories about declining interest in liberal arts applied to ILS. The response was a rather dispiriting lament about the status of the ILS program. They commented on the decline in support for the liberal arts across the campus as well. I also learned that the program has changed a lot since the late 40's and has been "restructured" before.

I decided to write to the Dean of L&S and the Chair of ILS. I thought it might be useful for them to hear about my ILS experience and how important it has been in my life. The following paragraphs are a pared down version of what I communicated to them. *(continued on next page)*

“During my senior year in high school I learned about a new UW-Madison program starting in the fall of 1948 called Integrated Liberal Studies. At the time I had no clear idea what I wanted to do with my life. In a way, I was probably going to college to find my future by learning about the world and how it worked. I wanted to try to become an educated, well rounded, interested, and interesting person. I believed a person with that experience would find a way to make a good living and become a productive and contributing member of society. ILS sounded like just the right program for me.

I arrived on campus in the fall of 1948 as a 17-year-old farm boy. I lived in the dorms surrounded by WWII veterans. (Those veterans proved to be an important part of my liberal education too.) But the Integrated Liberal Studies Program was the highlight of my education. Greek and Roman Culture was one of the first semester courses. Walter Agard was the Lecturer. He was also my quiz instructor. One morning I picked up a copy of Life Magazine and found my quiz instructor’s picture on the cover. Walter Agard was being featured in an article about the country’s great teachers. I remember how astonished I was to have this acclaimed teacher in my freshman year.

The ILS faculty took the word “integrated” seriously. In our first year we all noticed a distinguished looking silver haired gentleman attending every lecture. In our sophomore year we learned that he was our biology teacher, Professor Lowell Noland. He explained to us that he wanted to know what his colleagues were teaching so that he could make connections in his own teaching. Not all the professors were as diligent, but they all made cross-references to other courses where appropriate. This was not generally true of the other courses I took at UW-Madison.

ILS in those years was not just about the classics and western civilization. We had seven credits of biology and four of science in a course called Physical Universe. There were also courses called The International Scene, Modern Industrial Society, and Transition to Industrial Society. (For the entire course list, see the article available on the ILS website by former ILS Chair Michael Hinden. http://ils.wisc.edu/documents/archives/Hinden_article_1982.pdf at page 67.)

ILS was then a two-year course with a core curriculum of about 12 credits per semester. All ILS students were required to take these courses. As a result, we became well acquainted with one another. The teachers were among the best in the University. I had the feeling of being enrolled in a small liberal arts college in the middle of a very large and great university. Because of the resources of this large campus, I was introduced to ballet, symphony orchestras, theater, and amazing diversity. For me, it was ideal. I could not imagine a more favorable environment for learning.

The first section of the 1982 paper by Michael Hinden is entitled “The Recent Crisis.” It appears that the University has to rediscover the value of studies that are integrated and liberal every decade or two. I believe it is time to renew the vows and restore the passion. I am a little old to volunteer to get involved in the challenge, but for heaven’s sake I hope someone is willing and able to fight to support something as valuable as liberal arts education and the Integrated Liberal Studies Program. I think that if the University administration looked at the careers of ILS graduates over the years, they would find that the investment has paid off handsomely for the University and for the country.”

(continued on next page)

Since writing to Dean Scholz and ILS Chair Mike Vanden Heuvel, I have received their replies and talked with others and have learned that the problem is far more complex and far reaching than I thought. I have also come to the conclusion that ILS is in a state of great uncertainty – and risk. There is talk of restructuring, relocating and possibly folding ILS into some other department. I find this all a bit unsettling. The end result of these choices could be a good thing, but there are so many possibilities that it is hard to tell what might happen. Clearly, the problems that concern the College of Letters and Science are not limited to ILS. The concern appears to be that students are listening to the charges that liberal arts will not lead to a job and so they are moving to engineering, finance and other courses they perceive will offer better job opportunities. This creates challenges for the University and its many constituencies. There certainly will be changes – and there will be winners and losers.

I am concerned that some of the possible outcomes will seriously curtail the ILS program. My own experience was so valuable to me that I'd rather not let this happen. For that reason, I have decided to keep informed. I will pay very close attention to developments and provide whatever support and encouragement I can to the program. I will also communicate my concerns to those I know at the University of Wisconsin. If you valued your ILS experience, you may wish to do the same.

Respectfully,

Richard L. Olson,
ILS 1948-50



Image courtesy of the UW-Madison Archives,
#S12709.

Mr. Olson was a student of Professor Robert C. Pooley (seated, second from right), the first chair of the new Integrated Liberal Studies Program. While he isn't in the picture, might some of you take a moment to let us know who is? This picture will join Mr. Olson's letter on the ILS website's archives, found at:

<http://ils.wisc.edu/archives.html>

Stay tuned for more pictures and notable ILS interviews!

IN MEMORIAM



Professor Charles Anderson (1934-2013) inspired students of all ages of life, from freshmen taking their first political science course to professors he mentored through their early years. ILS Emeritus Professor Booth Fowler grew close to Professor Anderson as one who followed in his footsteps. During a tribute to Professor Anderson at the Spring 2013 ILS Annual Banquet, Professor Richard Avramenko spoke eloquently about how he listened intently to all of Anderson's tapes, found at: <http://www.uwalumni.com/home/andersonlectures.aspx> , while prepping for his initial foray into teaching ILS 205/206 (among others). Please see <http://ils.wisc.edu/archives.html> for Professor Fowler's tribute and others, as well as course syllabi for Professor Anderson's 205/206 course.



Robert W. Frase (1912-2003) was born in Chicago. He was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Wisconsin and received a master's degree in political economy from Harvard University. In 1935, he began working in Washington, D.C. as an intern at the Social Security Board. Frase went on to work for the Labor Department's Wage and Hour, the Agriculture Department's land use office, the War Relocation Authority and the Commerce Department, where he was social science analyst and special assistant for the office of program

planning. He served in the Army Air Forces during World War II.

He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1948 to Study control of atomic energy.



Frase was chief economist and vice president of the American Association of Publishers. After he retired from the association in 1972, he became chair of the National Commission of New Technology Uses.

In 1946, Robert Frase headed the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration team to Byelorussia.

From 1978 to 1982, he served as Executive Director of the American National Standards Committee, Z39, responsible for the standards in the field of libraries and publishing.

ILS FACULTY NEWS

Richard Avramenko (Political Science) has been promoted to Associate Professor as well as awarded the Howe Bascom Professorship for his excellence in teaching.

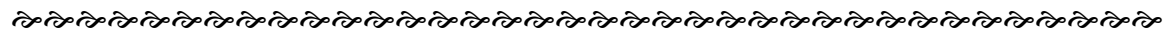
Richard Davis (Music) was honored with the title, "Jazz Master" by the National Endowment of the Arts. Others that have received this high honor include Tony Bennett and Miles Davis. Davis was taught by Nat King Cole in his early years. Some of his quotes include:

Don't let the music stay on the page.
I want you to play the answer.
Most of it is teaching about life; let life follow the music.
The bass is in the background, supporting the building.
Notes say things that nothing else can.
With Jazz, you compose as you play.

For more information about his amazing career, please see <http://arts.gov/honors/jazz/richard-davis>

Laura McClure (Classics) continues to serve as chair of the Classics Department. She has been named the 2013 Philip R. Certain fellowship, recognizing outstanding service to L&S along with excellence in research and teaching.

Cathy Middlecamp (Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies) shares the good news that she was promoted to full professor in 2013. After teaching a great group of ILS capstone students this past fall, she'll teach another ILS course this spring that is co-listed with Environmental Studies. ILS certificate student, Travis Blomberg, '12, returns for the second year to this course as a Teaching Assistant and will receive his masters degree in Environment and Resources this year. Check out his home page as a graduate student: <http://faculty.nelson.wisc.edu/middlecamp/travis/>



During the fall 2013 semester, interviews of past ILS chairs, as well as a past administrator, were performed to gather their insight on a number of issues. First, Emeritus Professor Booth Fowler (Political Science) and Jackie Ballweg, got together and later on a separate occasion, Emeritus Professor Michael Hinden (English). Each spoke with candor about ILS during their time of administration. For a full list of questions (used by the 400 Capstone Seminar students for their own interviews) and interview transcripts, please see www.ils.wisc.edu/archives.html under "Interviews".

Above are Joe Oswald ('14 ILS Grad), Emeritus Professor Booth Fowler and former ILS administrator Jackie Ballweg

OUTSTANDING GRADUATING ILS STUDENTS - 2013



Erica Carballo

During my time at UW, I have learned that the best way to tackle a tough question is to be active in seeking out the answer. Starting my freshman year, I did research in the Department of

Rehabilitation Psychology on increasing creativity in children with autism leading me to win the College Library Research Award. During my senior year, I completed my senior honors thesis studying the replication mechanism of herpes virus. Last winter break ('12-13), I went to Texas on a trip I planned with my student org PALMA to learn about health disparities in communities near the Mexico border and volunteer in community outreach. I spent a month of my last true summer break in the Dominican Republic. My independent travel

was paid for largely through the ILS Pooley Prize scholarship. While in the DR, I lived in Santiago, improved my Spanish, volunteered at the local children's hospital and learned more about the state of the Dominican health care system. I am now in medical school this past fall with hopes of ultimately practicing medical oncology and cancer research where I will continue to seek out answers to tough questions.

Major: Medical
Microbiology
and Immunology
Hometown: Franklin, WI
53132



Stuart Mott

While a student at UW, I acted in seven University Theatre main stage shows (*You Can't Take It With You*, *title of show*, *Bat Boy: The Musical*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *The Two Gentleman of Verona*, *The Mousetrap*, & *The Cradle Will Rock*), motion capture acting in *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3*, which originated a role in an

original musical *Off Broadway* at the New York City International Fringe Festival. I also produced and acted in the regional premiere of Bill Cain's award winning play *9 Circles* as honors thesis. Major: B.A. Theatre & Drama, with Honors
Career Plan: Professional Actor
Hometown: Wauwatosa, WI 53213



New Giving Opportunity ILS “Sense of Community” Fund

We are excited to announce that a new fund is available for alumni to express their support for the newest generation of ILS certificate students. The “Sense of Community Fund” supports the vital daily educational activities that build and sustain community among students, staff and faculty. Whether it be a film night related to a class, an “after school” conversation between ILS faculty and students, or pizza for an ILS study group going late into the night, these funds will serve as the glue that holds together our disparate yet vibrant intellectual community.

Please consider donating by writing “ILS Sense of Community Fund” on your next check or by directing your donation via a letter or email to the ILS office (ils@mailplus.wisc.edu).

Thank you!

ON WISCONSIN!

