

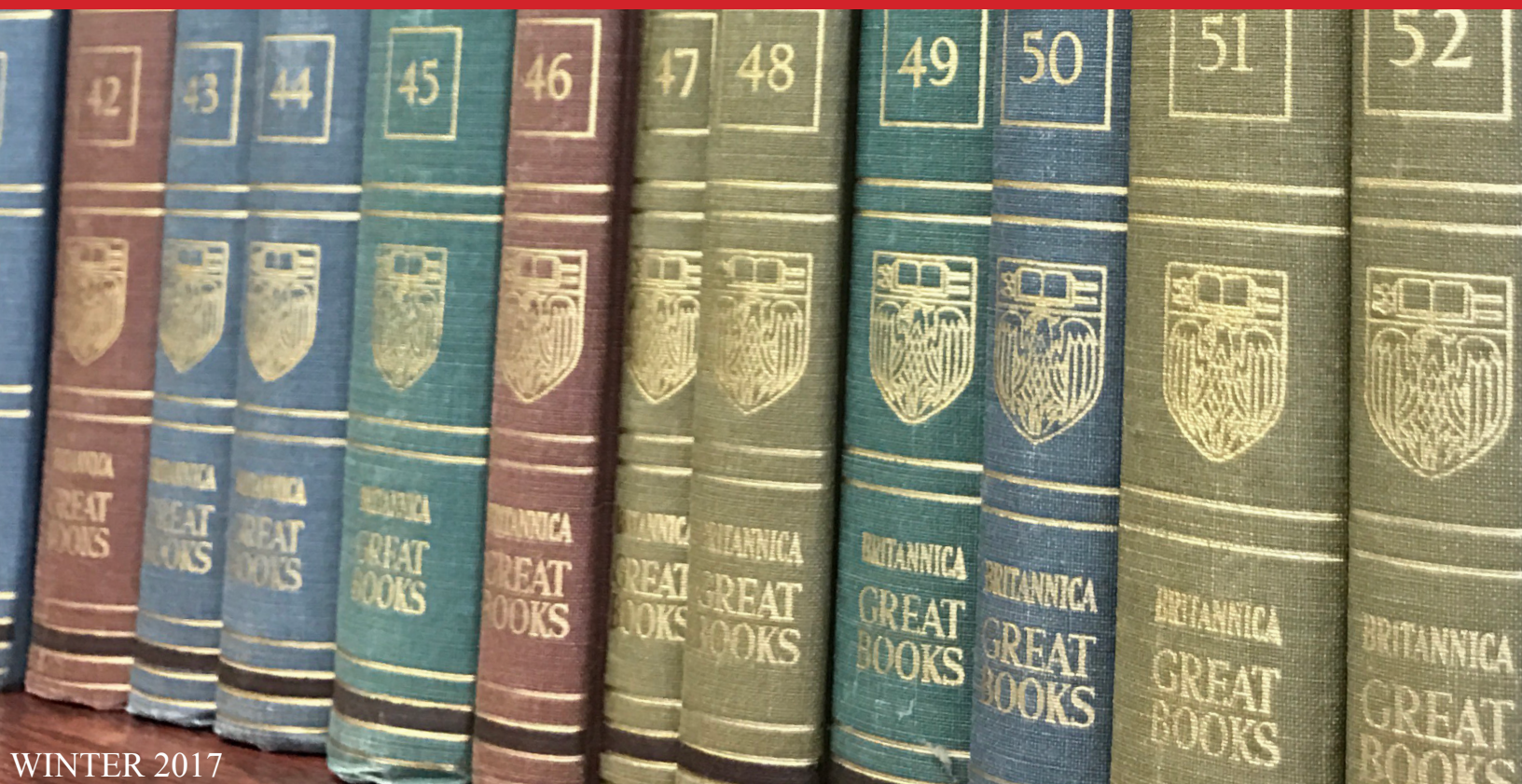


College of Letters & Science

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



THE MEIKLEJOHN EXPERIMENT



WINTER 2017



"To find yourself, think for yourself."

— *Socrates*

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Letter From the Chair

Dear ILS students, alumni and friends:

It is with both excitement and trepidation that I write my first Chair's letter. I take over the Chair position in Integrated Liberal Studies as the program approaches a hundred years of serving UW students. Alexander Meiklejohn, and the many Chairs who followed, have bequeathed us a program that has made deep differences in the lives of thousands of UW Alumni. I am deeply grateful to our outgoing chair, Mike Vanden Heuvel, for leaving the ship in such good shape and for his patient mentoring through the transition. I am also grateful to Katrina Peterson, our amazing program specialist, who picks up the ball I so frequently drop.

As Prof. Vanden Heuvel outlined in our last newsletter, ILS is sailing into uncharted waters. The University of Wisconsin is coping with budget cuts that have nearly every program and department scrambling to make ends meet. This is nothing new—in the nearly thirty years I have been studying and working on college campuses, I cannot recall a different idiom. Universities are always dealing with shortfalls, cuts, and restraints. The difference today, however, is a shift in how the UW budgets. Rather than one big budget for the whole of Letters & Sciences, departments are individually measured on the efficiency of their own budgets. Simply, departments will be evaluated on a credit hours taught ÷ faculty salary equation. This is uncharted waters, indeed.

I suspect this is not a horrible thing. If departments have a measure and a goal, they might well use our limited resources more efficiently. The problem for ILS, however, is that almost all of our teachers are “on loan” from their home departments. Under this new model, departments are not only reluctant to lend us faculty, they will be, in effect, penalized for it. Gone are the days when great professors, like Booth Fowler, could simply decide to focus their teaching energies in ILS rather than Political Science—which, after all, lent itself to the collective and collaborative teaching mission of Letters and Sciences.

While these are troubled waters, they are also exciting. Rather than borrowing faculty to teach our classes, we are more and more sharing. This means that our classes will be “meets-with” or cross-listed with other departments. This semester, for example, I am teaching a class called “Tocqueville's Democracy in America” which will be listed as ILS371/PS506. Next Fall, Professor McClure will teach “Literature and Society: Ancient Texts, Modern Contexts” which will be ILS253/CL401. Professor Howard Schweber will teach “The American University” (ILS371/PS506). In short, the emphasis on sharing classes might very well allow us to re-engage our regular faculty as well as reach out to new, great teachers around campus.

Finally, and as always, we have reason to be excited about our alumni. The last homecoming weekend in October provided me with the privilege of meeting a dozen people from the Class of '66. These ILS'ers regaled us with stories about a generation of faculty I never had the chance to know. Around Madison, when I mention that I'm Chair of ILS, I regularly meet alumni who recount their very first lecture on campus with Charlie Anderson, Booth Fowler, Tim Allen or Joe Elder. Last month, we received a gift of over \$200,000 from Terry CoBabe (Class of '62). For her father, Ms. Emily CoBabe-Ammann wrote me, by integrating the humanities, social science, and science, “ILS represented the ideal education that anyone would, could, and should attain.”

As the new chair, my hope is to continue this tradition by faithfully stewarding both the program and such generous gifts towards the kind of education that has made a difference in the lives of Badgers for nearly 100 years.

Richard Avramenko
ILS Department Chair

The Meiklejohn Experiment

is the Student, Faculty & Alumni newsletter of the Integrated Liberal Studies (ILS) Certificate Program at the University of Wisconsin - Madison.

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Donations Enlighten and Enrich ILS

Great Books Collection Augments ILS Library

In the library of the Meiklejohn House, two well-worn couches face bookshelves filled with an eclectic mix of books ranging from political theory, history of science and philosophy, literature, drama, and poetry. The welcoming space is open for students and faculty to hold study sessions, refer to texts related to ILS course content, or relax with a new book.

ILS is thrilled to announce that Dr. Susan Will-Wolf has donated a series of foundational books to grace the shelves of our library, including the 1952 edition of the Great Books hard cover set (54 books) and 10 volumes of the Great Ideas Program, among others.

Authors in the series range from classical thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Herodotus to literary legends like Shakespeare, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Leo Tolstoy. Since courses on the history of Western philosophy, Western Art, and 'Literature and Politics' draw on these texts, it is vital that they are made available to students – and now they are assembled together as a unified set.

Thank you again, Dr. Will-Wolf, for trusting us with this valuable collection.



Stocked Shelves

Dr. Susan Will-Wolf has donated over 100 books with authors ranging from Plato, Aristotle, Herodotus to Shakespeare, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Leo Tolstoy to the ILS Program.

Generous Alumni Donation Supports ILS

The Integrated Liberal Studies Program sincerely thanks Dr. Terry CoBabe and the entire CoBabe family for a generous donation of over \$200,000 to the program. Dr. CoBabe trusted in the power of a liberal arts education to cultivate inquisitive minds, and though he passed away December 23, 2015, his ideals will continue to live on and thrive in the ILS program.

In the words of his daughter, Mrs. Emily CoBabe-Ammann: “My dad was a broad and critical thinker who saw great value in engaging the pluralism of world views. As a clinical psychologist, he saw the value of integrating science, humanities and social sciences in his work - and he translated that interest to almost everything he did. He traveled widely, enjoyed opera and sailing. For him, ILS represented the ideal education that anyone would, could, should attain.”

Public Service and the Liberal Arts

Alexander Meiklejohn at Amherst College

By Elena Mederas

The association between Amherst College and the ILS Program at UW is ambiguous at first, but they share many elements in common. Not least of the similarities is that the Integrated Liberal Studies Program and the long-standing core curriculum program at Amherst college were implemented by the same person – Alexander Meiklejohn.

Before coming to Madison in 1925 to initiate “the Meiklejohn Experiment,” Meiklejohn served as president of Amherst College, where he implemented a new method of learning in the small, liberal arts college. Meiklejohn’s revolutionary vision for higher education called for the reintroduction of a unified curriculum that introduced students to 1) philosophy through the narration of moral and intellectual challenges and

discoveries since the classical age, 2) social institutions such as property, courts, family, church, and workplace, 3) the natural sciences, 4) history, so that one can see the connection between events, and 5) the study of artistic expression.

The rigorous curriculum was developed not only to explore one’s culture, but to train students to be critical thinkers and to thirst for knowledge that supplements the foundation offered by the core courses. This was driven by his conviction that “the intellectual road to success is longer and more roundabout than any other, but they who are strong and willing for the climbing are brought to higher levels of achievement than they could possibly have attained had they gone straight forward in the pathway of quick returns.”

Amherst College 1912-1924



University of Wisconsin-Madison 1925-1932



1933-1947 School of Social Studies in San Francisco

Interested in reading more? Check out the works below:

Brennan, Robert T. “The Making of the Liberal College: Alexander Meiklejohn at Amherst.” *History of Education Quarterly* 28.4 (1988): 569-97.

Nelson, Adam R. *Education and Democracy: the Meaning of Alexander Meiklejohn, 1872-1964*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001.

Amherst College Alumni and UW-Madison Adjunct Professor of Medicine Reflects on Public Service

By Elena Mederas



Dr. Cyril Hetsko

Dr. Cyril Hetsko is a direct beneficiary of Meiklejohn's experiment in Amherst College. Dr. Hetsko, who attended Amherst from 1960-64, is a practicing doctor of internal medicine at Meriter Hospital and St. Mary's Hospital in Madison and as well as an adjunct clinical professor of medicine at the UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health.

I had the pleasure of meeting and speaking with Dr. Hetsko about his experience in Amherst College and how being immersed in his own version of the Meiklejohn Experience affected him personally and professionally. In fact, his time in Amherst College studying under a unified liberal arts curriculum proved essential in forming his own humanitarian ethics and commitment to public service.

In the 1960s, the United States was embroiled in the Cold War, waging a war in Vietnam, the civil rights movement was sweeping the country, and it was the era president Kennedy was assassinated. Amid the turmoil of the times, there was an institution that stood for unity and community upon a shared trust in the power of a core curriculum to develop contentious and fundamentally curious citizens.

The core curriculum program at Amherst College was essentially different than the electoral model used in other colleges, and Hetsko contends that there were advantages to this model:

"The core curriculum was universally appreciated. Everybody had to take diverse topics. For example, everyone had to take physics, calculus, American history, world history. We all read the bible from cover to cover, we all read the Quran, we all read big parts of the Jewish Torah. There was a very strict English composition course. This went on for the first two years of college. Everybody had the same experience; it was unifying to the members of the college."

By being part of the Amherst intellectual community, Dr. Hetsko asserts, "You were forced to broaden your horizons,

to be not just focused on one tiny area but to look at the whole picture, and I think it is a different perspective and a valuable and necessary perspective."

Relating this unifying experience to his own medical career trajectory, he emphasizes the necessity of a broad, liberal education for pulling ahead in a medical career and being able

to approach problem solving from different angles:

"The experience was necessary to be a complete person – we used to have a term 'the whole man' or you could say 'the complete person' – and that is what we really need. Say I go into medicine, I can go ahead and take some of my other skills – my understanding of government, my understanding of the humanities – and work towards making life better for all. And that's important, and lacking that base, it is a lot harder to achieve."

An ethic of public service was also instilled in students outside of their university preparation. As Hetsko reminds us, men were forcefully draft-

ed into the war during this time period.

"All of us doctors from 1941 to 1974 were drafted and had to serve either in the army, air-force, navy, public health service, and it could be Peace Corps, but we had to serve. It was mandatory," he asserts. "That is quite a bit different philosophy than today."

Within an education that emphasized responsibilities to communities both inside and outside of the classroom, Dr. Hetsko and others educated like him were convinced of the importance of public service.

On the significance of a liberal arts education and its connection to public service, Dr. Hetsko concludes, stating, "I think it is the best way for American society to go, for us at the university, in any program that is a laudable thing to do, to try to help and improve the wellbeing of our population and of our people. And I'm talking about the poorest of the poor to the richest of the rich."

"You were forced to broaden your horizons, to be not just focused on one tiny area but to look at the whole picture, and I think it is a different perspective - and a valuable and necessary perspective."

McClure Receives Howe-Bascom Professorship

The Howe-Bascom Professorship Fund supports faculty members who teach in Integrated Liberal Studies. The fund was started in October 1996 and has been funded since April 2000 with gifts from UW/Ford Foundation Early Admissions Participants (1951-1959). Mr. & Mrs. Earl Dolven have generously donated over \$20,000 over the last three years to this fund.

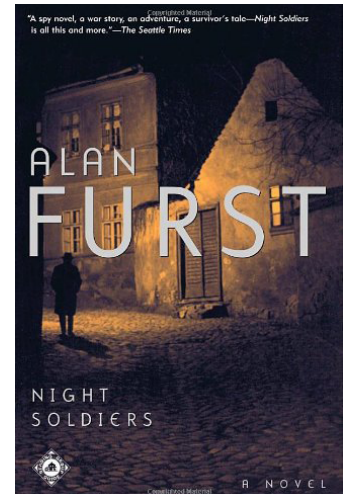
This year, [Dr. Laura McClure](#) has won the professorship. McClure has been involved with ILS since the 1990s and served as the Chair of the program from 2002 to 2006. She will be teaching ILS 253: Lit and Society: Ancient Texts, Modern Contexts in Fall 2017. She is currently completing a textbook about women in ancient Greece and Rome.

Faculty and Emeriti Book Recommendations



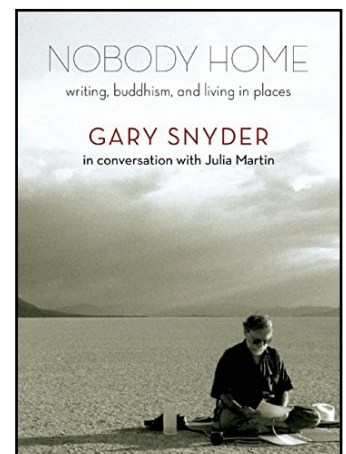
[LYNN NYHART](#)

Night Soldiers by Alan Furst is a spy novel that evokes the dark uncertainties of the 1930s in Bulgaria, France, and Spain. I love the smoky flow of Furst's novels. And they are meticulously researched. Great for reading aloud!



[CRAIG WERNER](#)

Nobody Home: Buddhism, Writing and Living in Place by Gary Snyder and Julia Martin is a book of conversations and letters between one of my favorite poets, ecological thinkers and spiritual guides (Snyder) and a South African writer working with a similar vision in the context of pre- and post-apartheid South Africa. Wise and warm, a model of the sorts of friendships that don't depend on proximity.

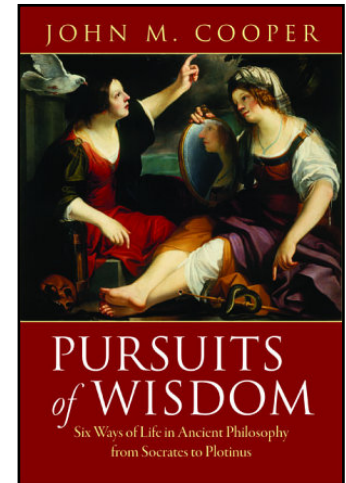


Faculty and Emeriti Book Recommendations



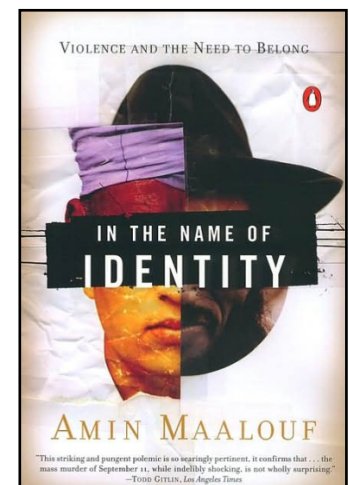
[KATHI SELL](#)

As a political philosopher, I heartily recommend John Cooper's *Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy from Socrates to Plotinus*. The ancient Greek philosophers gave us deep gifts that retain meaning for contemporary lives and political considerations. In fact, this might be a particularly apt moment in the history of our own form of government to consider the roles of reason and passion, Socratic questioning, contemplation, high ideals of virtue, skepticism, stoicism, and the social embeddedness of politics (and here, let me also give a shout-out to UW's Kathy Cramer for her recent volume, *The Politics of Resentment*, and suggest you could do well to read the two books together) in both our political lives and our personal lives. I have a particular fascination with Aristotle, who combines empiricism and idealism in a fascinating manner. Cooper grapples here in an especially valuable way with Aristotle's situating of our personal lives in the social and political communities that define us and each have both virtue and failings, and with his demanding preparation for not only political leaders and effective citizens, but for anyone wishing to lead a full and happy life.



[MIKE SHANK](#)

I recommend *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* by Amin Maalouf highly, and just about everything else Maalouf has written. Maalouf is a fascinating character who settled in France after the fragmentation of Lebanon in the 70s and has become a prize-winning French author. He is now a member of the prestigious Académie Française and writes a lot about belonging to, or at least interacting, with multiple cultures. He is adamantly opposed to the notion that each of us has a single one-word identity.



Life Lessons From a Liberal Arts Education

2016 ILS Certificate Program graduate Hannah Frank reflects on her ILS experience

For the entirety of my educational career I've been trying to decide which I like better: open-ended questions or questions that have one, definite answer. I've recently come to the conclusion that I like both, and I like seeing how each affects the other, and that is why I appreciate my liberal arts education. My liberal education, especially within the Integrated Liberal Studies program, has allowed me to take the facts I know and connect them both to each other and to larger, open-ended ideas.

Training myself to think within the context of the liberal arts has forced me to think of things as interconnected and to understand that every single thing has implications that go beyond itself. It has encouraged me to recognize and cultivate my own unique thoughts, pursue sometimes difficult conversations (like the first time I talked about race in one of my classes and still had the overwhelming fear that I would "sound racist," which was there simply because I was not used to talking about race), and has given me the confidence to know that my thoughts on a topic are not stupid or ill-conceived but are instead integral in the creation of a greater dialogue and in the fostering of a deeper understanding for all.

In truth, these lessons affect my life in many more ways than only influencing my education and methods of learning, and that is why I am so appreciative of the ILS program. I don't have to be right all the time; in fact, sometimes within ILS there is no right or wrong at all. But the fact of the matter is that the things I'm learning about are allowing me to think deeply and learn about myself and my surroundings, and that is more important than knowing a fact or fully understanding every part of a theory.

Throughout all of my classes and experiences in college, ILS has consistently been what I always go back to. It was the first certificate I declared, before I even declared my major. It houses some of the classes that have been most influential to me, like some of my music courses and Professor Werner's independent film studies. It has been where I've worked as a Student Ambassador for the last year, and it has been where I've studied, learned, discussed, grown, and appreciated. ILS has been and continues to be one of my most welcoming academic homes.



Congrats Grad!

Hannah Frank has graduated this Dec. 2016 with a B.A. in Communication Arts (Radio/TV/Film). Hannah served as a ILS Student Ambassador and is a previous recipient of the Pool-ey Prize, a scholarship for high achieving ILS certificate students.

To Infinity and Beyond

The UW Madison 2016 Winter Commencement featured speaker Captain James A. Lovell Jr. Lovell is a renowned astronaut who has traveled to the moon who is especially known for the perilous Apollo 13 mission.

To read his entire speech, [click here](#).

For more about the Winter Commencement, [click here](#).

A Year Abroad in the City of Fog

Jed Hobson, B.A. English and ILS '17

Studying abroad in London was an amazing experience for me culturally, academically, and socially. I shared a flat with six other international students in a centrally located East London borough called Hackney. Getting to know my flatmates and hearing their stories was really inspirational, and we got along well despite our diverse backgrounds. The neighborhood itself was interesting, too. A five minute walk could lead anywhere from urban street art installations to ancient cemeteries housing the graves of William Blake and Daniel Defoe.

When I was not busy with schoolwork, I spent my time visiting the innumerable museums and galleries that London had to offer, taking in the works of as many iconic British and non-British artists and historical figures as I possibly could. I met a lot of friends by attending concerts and plays, and I even got a chance to see a production of *Richard II* at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

I did not simply limit my travels to London. During break I took the opportunity to travel and see as much of Europe as I could. My adventures led me through The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal. I am so happy and grateful to have had these experiences, and the personal growth and development I have experienced is truly self-evident.



Acculturation

ILS student Jed Hobson spent the 2015-16 academic year studying in London, England. In his adventures, he explored British literature, culture, and the arts while studying English and Creative Writing at the University of Westminster. His travels were funded in part by the Meiklejohn Travel Award.



Comfortable and Productive

Students study and eat snacks in the Meiklejohn House at our semesterly ILS Study Day.

www.ils.wisc.edu



Your Donations Matter!

Help support current ILS Certificate students by donating to one of our general funds. To help foster a community between students and faculty, ask for your donation to be sent to the [Sense of Community fund](#), which is used to fund student activities.



Majors Fair Fall 2016