HISTORICAL TUGS ON THE CURRICULUM
BASKETBALL’S CROATIAN SENSATIONS
PUTTING WORDS IN THE PRESIDENT’S MOUTH
CROWE HALL DEDICATED
S

tudents attend Northwestern to participate in the intellectual excitement of a research university. To take classes with professors who are making important discoveries, and then to go beyond the classroom and work directly with those faculty on research projects, can be a defining academic experience for undergraduates. The collaborative problem-solving fostered through research is a skill that is also vital in life beyond Northwestern.

Weinberg College has successfully brought undergraduates into research in a range of fields, sometimes helping to shape their career paths. For example, Sudhi Kurup and Jessica Kroeger, two recent students working with biologist Teresa Woodruff, had planned to go to medical school. Their work with Professor Woodruff in the field of molecular endocrinology convinced them to pursue joint MD/PhD degrees and combine medicine and research as careers.

Two social science departments — Anthropology and Sociology — require a senior thesis for the major. Recently, Brian Sandstrom and Anya Yakhedts in Anthropology went to Bolivia with support from a Research Experience for Undergraduates grant from the National Science Foundation. In Bolivia, they worked at a research site developed by Professor William R. Leonard and Assistant Professor Thomas McDade, where they collected data on the health and nutritional status of the Tsimane’ Amerindian children.

In these and other examples, the teamwork of research carries many advantages for the juniors and seniors involved. In a laboratory, undergraduates work side-by-side with graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, learning how to carry out advanced experiments. The same is true in field projects where students may also have the opportunity to interact with host researchers who bring fresh perspectives to the problems under study. Because an undergraduate project likely represents just part of a larger, collaborative study, narrowly-focused achievements by one student can still lead to a publication and presentation at a conference. Finally, fellowships and grants often provide support for students’ full-time research in the summer before senior year. By concentrating solely on research for those three months, students are able to make significant progress on a project, which can lead to a successful senior thesis.

To stimulate more undergraduate collaborative projects in Weinberg College, we have initiated junior research seminars, which will bring students with different interests together to work on a common project. The students’ varied backgrounds should lead to complementary contributions, and teamwork will encourage students to challenge the unknown and to confront a variety of perspectives. We expect that many of the students will use the seminar as a springboard into further research.

In 2003–04, we are testing this approach with two humanities seminars. One, offered by Jennifer Brody in English and visiting professor Judith Sensibar, takes up “20th Century Literature: Race, Sex, Modernism.” Students are exploring concepts of “modernism” in terms of cultural perceptions about race and gender. Carl Smith in English and Brian Dennis in Computer Science have organized a seminar entitled “Using Technology, Making History” in which students will build computer models to explore Daniel Burnham’s plan for the city of Chicago. Imagine historical photographs which overlay the sketches of the original plan, helping students “see” how the grand scheme evolved, while readings and discussion illuminate how cultural, economic, and political developments shaped the final outcome.

We will look to these seminars, and to those we are now planning for next year, to engage students in new ways of learning. I look forward to hearing your thoughts about this approach, and the importance that an involvement in research had for you as an undergraduate. I can be reached by e-mail at dean@wcas.northwestern.edu.
Northwestern students applying for major fellowship competitions. She assembled a diverse team of professors with perspectives like those the candidates would face at their real interviews. “There were even mock cocktail parties at Dr. Vaux’s home,” says Carson. “We were taught how to mingle, how to interrupt conversations nicely...We dressed up and professors were there. They advised us not to drink. They rang a bell when the session was over.”

Carson and Rhodes scholarship winner Cristina Bejan quizzed each other on current events and prepared for the award interviews as rigorously as they would for a sports competition. When the two first met, at a mock cocktail party, they both felt their chances of winning were slim because of the fierce competition for the awards. “Why are we even applying?” Carson remembers thinking. “But once we got to the interview stage, we thought winning was a possibility. It’s an air of confidence you develop working with the Office.”

History professor Nancy MacLean, Carson’s honors thesis advisor, was also instrumental in her Marshall win. MacLean strengthened her student’s skills at primary-source research and pushed her writing performance to its highest level. She also helped a distraught Carson see the folly of attempting too much when she was both studying for the law boards and completing her Marshall application. “Go to the Rock,” she told Carson. “Calm down. Chill out. Try to figure out what it is you really want to do.” That advice helped Carson decide to go all-out for the Marshall and put law-school plans on hold. Carson came to Northwestern for its famed debate program and became the first African American woman to win a major national debate tournament. She has tutored at community centers and coached high-school debate teams. As president of the black student alliance, she helped organize a 500-person rally at the Rock in November to protest hate crimes on campus. (The Northwestern community found out later that day that two of the several alleged crimes. Her summer plans include coaching in the first high-school debate program offered at a traditionally black institution, Howard University in Washington, D.C. and, of course, packing for England.

When Cristina Bejan visited Weimar, Germany, in summer 2002, she noted that the area had produced many of the best minds of Germany—Bach, Goethe, Schiller, Lizst, Nietzsche, and Kafka, among others. But she also visited Buchenwald Concentration Camp, just five kilometers away, where 35,000 prisoners died from overwork, torture, and starvation before and during the Second World War. The juxtaposition of cultural richness and horror overwhelmed her, Bejan says. But what makes this philosophy-and-theater major different from those of us who don’t win Rhodes scholarships is that Bejan came back to Northwestern and wrote a play about the deep feelings the experience produced. The result is Buchentäfel, a three-person dramatic exploration of what happens in 1946 when a former Nazi officer is imprisoned and tortured in his own camp by members of the conquering Soviet army. The play—one of nine Cristina Bejan has written since age 15—premiered in May on the Northwestern campus, at first stunning audience members into silence, then moving them to heartfelt applause.

“I think my play will shock people that but that isn’t my intention,” says Bejan, who will graduate in June ’04 and head to Oxford in the fall. “My most important goal in theater is to spread information that people wouldn’t normally get, to expose a point of view. People can use it or leave it, but at least they’ll think about it, experience it, for the 48 minutes that they’re sitting in the theater.”

In describing Cristina, the Rhodes Scholarship Trust noted that she has become a passionate advocate for ethical and religious tolerance, especially in Eastern Europe and her father’s native Romania, a common theme in many of her plays. Her father, Adrian Bejan, one-time member of his country’s national basketball team, won an academic scholarship to MIT during a softening of relations between the U.S. and then-communist Romania. He now teaches mechanical engineering at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, where Cristina grew up. Her American-born mother, Mary Bejan, has a PhD in accounting.

Cristina’s goal after high school was to become an actress. She says she chose Northwestern because of its renowned theater department, but discovered her zeal for philosophy shortly after arriving on campus.

She credits the philosophy faculty, especially her advisor, Professor Terry Pinkard, with her life-altering change of course. “I took a survey of political philosophy from him my freshman year,” says Bejan. “I found his lectures to be so enlightening, I had this epiphany: I’ve got to be a philosophy major... Professor Pinkard started talking about ideas for my senior thesis when I was a freshman, and told me to go to Oxford my junior year. ‘I’ve done everything he has told me to do and it’s changed my life.’ She also praises as mentors Bacir Diane, philosophy professor and advisor on her senior thesis, and Ingrid Zeller, lecturer in the German department, under whose guidance Buchentäfel was produced as an independent-study project.

“I was drawn to philosophy because I needed the tools to investigate these big looming questions of existence. We can depict them in a theatrical piece, but I wasn’t getting any answers. I felt that philosophy gave me a vocabulary by exposing me to the great minds of the past”—for example, German philosopher Emmanuel Kant, whose writing, she says, expresses many of her own thoughts. For her senior thesis, entitled “The Autonomy of the Individual in a Newly Free Society: The Problem of Freedom in Romania,” she used Kantian texts on enlightenment theory to explore ways and means of inspiring people to embrace their newfound freedom.

She says she is thrilled that the Rhodes scholarship will allow her to return to Oxford University. At Oxford, another of her plays, To Those
IN MEMORIAM

SHERMAN LEWIS, 67, vice chairman of Lehman Brothers and founding member of Weinberg College’s Board of Visitors, died March 2 in New York City. A 1958 graduate of the College of Arts and Sciences, he was an early member of its Visiting Committee, now known as its Board of Visitors, whose members advise the Dean of the College. According to Lawrence Dumas, Northwestern provost and former Dean of WCAS, Lewis was a loyal and dedicated member of the Board, hosting meetings of its executive subcommittee in New York City. “He gave me very good advice on strategic thinking and planning,” said Dumas. “He was always positive and upbeat about the College and eager to help me find ways to make it better for its students and faculty.”

Lewis’ long and distinguished career in investment banking included positions as president and co-chief executive with Loeb Rhoades, Hornblower & Company, president and vice chairman of Shearson Loeb Rhoades, and vice chairman of Shearson American Express.

JOHN POPE, Nobel Laureate and Board of Trustee Professor of Chemistry, died March 21 in Chicago at the age of 78.

Pope, a native of England, received three degrees in mathematics from Cambridge University, including his doctorate in 1951. He became an adjunct professor at Northwestern in 1968 and joined the faculty full-time in 1999. His life’s work was developing mathematical methods to calculate molecular properties. With the advent of sophisticated computer technology, Pope’s techniques began to have enormous impact on drug and environmental research. The user-friendly software he developed enables researchers to predict the interplay of atomic particles while reducing the need for costly laboratory experiments. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1998. In 2003 he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II.

LEFTEN STAVROS STAVRIANOS, 91, renowned world historian and former history professor, died March 23 in La Jolla, California. An authority on the history of modern Greece and the Balkans, he taught at Northwestern from 1946 to 1973. After leaving the University, he became adjunct history professor at University of California at San Diego, where he taught for many years. He wrote 18 books and monographs including Lifelines from our Past, presenting a new approach to the study of history. His basic tenet—that the key to understanding contemporary political events was the study and interpretation of history from a global perspective—left its mark on a generation of students through his widely-read texts for college and high-school students.

KATE ELSWIT ‘02 (Far Left) Also Won a Marshall Scholarship and Will Study European Dance Theater at Laban in London. At Left Are Andrea Allen, Winner of an Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship and from the Office of Fellowships, Director Sara Vaux and Assistant Director Christopher Hager.

OTHER AWARD WINNERS

Sherry Radcliff, biological sciences; Fiona Wong, psychology. Not pictured is Theodore Kouo, biological sciences.
the 1984 GI Bill for the all-volunteer force, and the formation of AmeriCorps, a network of national service programs that engage more than 50,000 volunteers each year.

His common-sense approach to military service continues to challenge the established order—especially after September 11. His latest solution to what ails this country (“We have this homeland security crisis now and we’re asking people to do nothing”) is a three-tiered approach to mandatory government service: men could choose jobs in the military, homeland security, or civilian services like Teach for America, while women could choose opportunities in the latter two categories. For the military, a universal draft would be a boon both economically and morally—asking for sacrifices from families at every economic level. Moskos notes with alarm that the current all-volunteer force, a legacy of the Viet Nam War, allows the nation’s elite to escape the dangers of combat, while a disproportionate number of the poor fill the ranks. He says that in his Princeton graduating class of 1956, 450 of 750 men served, while last year, only 3 of Princeton’s 1,000 graduates joined the military. He put forth these views in an Op Ed piece in the Washington Post, co-authored with Washington Monthly editor Paul Glastris, who is also featured as a speechwriter in this issue on page 16.

The observations he brings to the classroom are as fresh as his most recent visit to a world trouble spot. The “bloody face” he received in Iraq last December, when hitting the ground after hearing distant mortar fire, has long since healed, but the opinions he gleaned from his field research are still very much with him, ready to be discussed with his classes next fall. He traveled at the personal invitation of General John Abazaid, commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East, and has recently briefed Defense Department officials on what he found:

• “The morale of the active duty forces was higher than I had anticipated. They were getting a better reception from the Iraqis—especially the kids—than they had anticipated. They weren’t talking about weapons of mass destruction. They were talking about doing good for Iraq.” During our April interview, however, Moskos expressed concern that armed forces’ morale would plummet in light of the increasing Iraqi resistance to U.S. occupation of recent weeks and the heavy casualties inflicted on American soldiers and civilians. He also worried that a downturn in U.S. public support for the war would affect troop morale.

• “The reserve components were in the dumps because they thought they were being treated like second class citizens by the U.S. Army. I told the Chief of Staff that is good in one way because it’s fixable. It wasn’t the mission in Iraq that turned them off, it was the way they were being treated.”

• “I thought the soldiers would say more about the heat. But their [complaint] was more that they thought they were going home at a certain time and now they’re not. They also had a lot of anti-Jessica Lynch feeling—not against her as a person, but the way the Pentagon and media played up her role. She was the Audie Murphy of the Iraq war, pretty and blond, while her fellow soldier, Shoshanna Johnson, got hardly any attention.”

He relates better to his current students than to any he’s had in the past. He finds today’s students more like his contemporaries, the Silent Generation of the ‘50s, than any he has taught in the past. “It seems like we’ve skipped over generations and we’re back on the same wavelength: somewhat conservative socially, but wanting new experiences. Not trying to revolutionize or change the world à la the ‘60s, but doing good for people and at the same time, doing good for themselves.” He calls the new crop of students more intellectually curious about other cultures and countries than the preceding generation. “I’ve always had fun with Northwestern students, with their intelligence and wit, but the current generation has been the most exciting and most interesting of all...Also, I can ask them about things like current movies and it’s one way I can keep young.” When he’s not teaching Northwestern students, he speaks to audiences around the world—Slovenia, Switzerland, Japan, Australia, Israel, Germany, England, and Turkey—and works on his next book on the heritage of Greek Americans.
ART LECTURES MARK DEDICATION OF CROWE HALL

Festivities began with a talk by Ed Paschke, long-time member of the Department of Art Theory and Practice and the new Mary Jane Crowe Professor of Art and Art History, who spoke on “Ideas in Transition.” Paschke showed slides of his vivid, sometimes-startling paintings by way of illustrating the artist’s journey from original intention to final product, often via unforeseeable bypaths and detours.

Hans Belting, distinguished German scholar and Mary Jane Crowe Visiting Professor of Art History, gave the second lecture of the day, on “Art History and the Art Museum.” In historical terms, he said, art museums are youthful institutions, dating only from the French Revolution, built on the confiscated collections of the aristocracy and the Church. At one time centers for artists to study, museums have changed their focus to become centers for every kind of art-related activity, with increasingly prominent roles for art conservators, single-exhibit curators, and marketers, working to attract masses of spectators.

The focus of festivities then moved to the courtyard enclosed by Crowe and Kresge Halls, where President Henry Bienen and Dean Daniel Linzer expressed the gratitude of the Northwestern community to the family of the late Mary Jane McMillen Crowe – for providing the lead gift for the building of Crowe Hall. Her grandson Eric Tresslar, Communication ‘96, son of the building’s namesake, Mary Jane McMillen Crowe (WCAS ’33 and Henry S. Bienen ’35, Life Trustee) for her and her family’s lifelong generosity and devotion to a grateful Northwestern University.

Hans Belting, Mary Jane Crowe Visiting Professor of Art History

The Barbara and Richard Franke Courtyard

Ed Paschke (second from left) and MFA students Alex Herzog, Zach Buchner, Michael Ellis and Joseph Pfieger

The Barbara and Richard Franke courtyard now became the site for a reception with international cuisine and bluegrass music. The courtyard is the gift of Barbara Franke, who graduated from the College in 1954, and her husband Richard Franke. Ellen Wright, lecturer in the Writing Program, and John Wright, Professor of Classics Emeritus and bluegrass specialist, played guitar and banjo and sang. The menu reflected the myriad language and literature departments housed in Crowe and Kresge – falafel and feta cheese for the Middle East, empanadas from Spain, galettes from France. Images of Paschke’s paintings were on view in a room in the new building. The Crowe Café on the first floor became an impromptu smart classroom, with demonstrations of technologies created by the Multimedia Learning Center’s director Janine Spencer, colleagues, and students to enhance teaching at Northwestern. A favorite was Weinberg senior Molly Harnischfeger’s project, “Français à dire et à chanter,” which uses a variety of French poems and songs performed by hip-hop artists to encourage correct pronunciation of the language.

At the conclusion of the festivities, one professor whose overcrowded Kresge office has been replaced with a new one in Crowe Hall, was heard to remark, “The only thing nicer than this celebration is the addition itself.”

The architects and designers: from DelStefano & Partners, Avram Lothan, AIA, and Alexandra Shnewaid; from Northwestern facilities management, Andrew McGonigle and Bonnie Humphrey

The Barbara and Richard Franke Courtyard

Images of Paschke’s paintings were on view

The Barbara and Richard Franke Courtyard

Hans Belting, Mary Jane Crowe Visiting Professor of Art History

From left, President University President Henry S. Bienen; Leigh Buchanan Bienen; Ed Paschke, Mary Jane Crowe Professor of Art and Art History; Dean Daniel Linzer

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EARLY NORTHWESTERN: WHAT STUDENTS STUDIED AND WHY

THE COLLEGE CURRICULUM FROM 1855 TO 1900

BY WILLIAM N. HAARLOW

When a backpage chart on changes in the curriculum (Spring 2002) brought a flurry of responses, we decided the subject was worth a closer look. After all, the history of the College can be told by highlighting curricular changes and evolving conceptions of what constitutes an educated individual. Some issues deep in Northwestern’s past are remarkably similar to those hotly debated today. We are pleased to present this first of a three-part series.

Ten young men, required to be at least fifteen years of age, made up the first class at Northwestern when it opened on November 5, 1855. In that inaugural year the new university consisted entirely of what was to become the College of Arts and Sciences. The whole university fit into Old College Hall, the institution’s sole building, situated among the oaks that dotted the low bluff overlooking Lake Michigan. Because only gentlemen, scholars, and ministers sought a college education (training for law, medicine, and business in those days came primarily via apprenticeship), fewer than two percent of Americans went to college at that time. College men—college women were extremely rare—experienced a curriculum concerned far more with the development of character and piety than with the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

CLASSICAL COURSE WAS THE “GOLD STANDARD”

Northwestern’s original curriculum in the 1850s reflected the latest thinking on undergraduate education. Like other antebellum schools, Northwestern offered two courses of study: a classical course for the Bachelor of Arts and a scientific course for the Bachelor of Science. The classical course had been offered in North America since the founding of Harvard College in 1636. According to historian Frederick Rudolph, the colonial curriculum was part medieval with its scholastic concerns, part Renaissance with its interest in producing a governing class and a gentlemanly refined culture, and part Reformation with its dedication to Protestant Christianity. During the 18th century the addition of belles lettres, modern languages, history, and especially the sciences increasingly crowded the classical study of Greek, Latin, and mathematics. By the early 19th century an ever-increasing number of subjects meant that important choices had to be made. Although the old classical—and prescribed—curriculum for the Bachelor of Arts had expanded, the trend could not continue unchecked. Gradually antebellum colleges and universities developed parallel programs that emphasized practical knowledge. Completion of these new scientific or “English” (vernacular) programs was recognized by a Bachelor of Science degree, but the classical curriculum remained the gold standard in higher education.

LITTLE CHOICE IN EARLY CURRICULUM

From 1855 until the 1880s students in the classical course at Northwestern studied a prescribed curriculum consisting of Greek, Latin, mathematics, physics, chemistry, anatomy, physiology, ancient history, natural history, political science, eloquence, belles lettres, philology, aesthetics, and proofs of Christianity. Students concluded their four years with a capstone course in moral philosophy, usually taught by the college president, intended to demonstrate the unity of knowledge and God’s designs. Initially, all these subjects were taught by five faculty members, headed by the Reverend Randolph Foster, President of Northwestern and professor of moral philosophy and logic, who held the highest degree in the land: Doctor of Divinity.

GREEK AND LATIN BUILT CHARACTER

The famous Yale College Report of 1828 had argued that study of the classics provided both “the discipline” (pedagogy) and “the furniture” (subject matter) most appropriate for a gentleman citizen, irrespective of vocation. Antebellum faculty believed the mind had to be exercised, like a muscle. Latin and Greek were the languages of scholarship, of course. But learning to parse them in their written form was also beneficial because of its difficulty. The difficulty of the exercise meant that classical languages built character, like a coat and tie on a young boy. Reading and parsing were supplemented with oratory and elocution, which were developed through declamations, or student speeches, sometimes given in Greek or Latin, sometimes in the vernacular.

BACHELORS OF SCIENCE SIT IN THE BACK OF THE CHAPEL

The 1858 Circular of what was then called the “North-Western University” noted that the degree of Bachelor of Arts was conferred “only on those who complete the Classical Course.” The Scientific Course was thought inferior. Students seeking the Bachelor of Science degree at Northwestern studied French and German instead of Latin and Greek, as well as more mathematics and science. At this stage, the B.S. degree was perhaps more practical, and was initially offered in the United States as an accommodation to those who clamored for greater relevance in higher education. Yet when these courses had been introduced in the early 19th century, they did not command much respect from educators. Students who were studying for the B.S. at Yale, for example, had to sit in the back of the Chapel, behind the B.A. students, during daily prayer. B.S. students at Northwestern were afforded greater regard, but as late as the 1870s the Catalog had to note that although “special attention” was “given to practical knowledge” in the Scientific Course, pursuing that course was legitimate: “The old culture courses hold the first place in order of time; but the courses for the application of science are equally honorable.”

CHAPEL EVERY DAY AND TWICE ON SUNDAY

Pursuit of all branches of knowledge in the College was greatly enhanced in 1868 with the completion of University Hall, “a substantial and elegant edifice.” In addition to lecture halls, it housed a chemistry lab, rooms for various societies, a chapel, a library, and even its own museum of natural history. By this time the “College” was known as the Department of Science, Literature and the Arts. Central to all these pursuits was a dedication to Protestant Christianity. While the emphasis on religiosity may strike modern
readers as quaint or at least extracurricular, in fact, most 19th century colleges, including Northwestern, cannot be understood outside of their deeply religious character and mission. The early curriculum at Northwestern reflected this dedication, as did its policies and publications. The 1866-67 Catalog noted that “devotional services are held daily in the University Chapel. All students are required to be present, and also attend public worship twice on Sabbath.” While Northwestern’s mission as a college was to add “luster” to the Methodist Church, the modus operandi of the university was pan-Protestant. A signal piece of evidence of the College’s dedication to Christian ideals was that “students preparing for the Christian Ministry are admitted to instruction, without charge for tuition.”

In addition to prescribed chapel attendance and specific courses such as moral philosophy, proper moral character was developed by Northwestern’s location and faculty. According to the 1872 Catalog, Evanston “is as free from immoral influences as any in the land; and nearness to the city of Chicago affords the advantages, without the moral dangers, of city life. The high character of the people, churches of several denominations, and the social advantages, add much to the educational value of the University.” Likewise, the faculty could be counted on by anxious parents to serve dutifully in loco parentis. The 1878 Report of the President noted that the faculty comprised “generally Christian men. We believe that the moral difference between the influence of the instructions of a man of deep religious convictions, and the instructions of a skeptical man, on the life and the character of the pupil is immense…”

**EVANSTON “FREE OF IMMORAL INFLUENCES”**

In the decades following the Civil War, however, the old college curriculum and its philosophical assumptions were increasingly challenged, at Northwestern and across the country, by coeducation, public land-grant institutions, the German research model of university education (and its baby, the Ph.D.), and the introduction of the elective curriculum. Northern social proscriptions against women’s education began to relax and Northwestern’s trustees voted to admit women in 1869, although the number of female students remained small. Then in 1873, a separate institution, the Evanston College for Ladies, presided over by Frances Willard, consolidated with Northwestern. With Willard as dean of the Women’s College of Northwestern University, coeducation on a significant scale became a reality. Further, education itself, gentility, and social status had always been part of the reason that a fortunate few women attended college in the antebellum era. During the 50 years after the war, social service, the feminization of elementary teaching and other job opportunities outside the home, such as working as a “typewriter,” had become additional reasons that young women pursued higher education. By 1900 fully half of Northwestern’s undergraduates were women.

**ELECTIVES: A REVOLUTIONARY IDEA**

The rise of the large public university, with its largely practical curriculum, brought challenges to the established collegiate order. The pure and applied research and professional emphases of the newly founded and expanded universities were inspired by German higher education ideals and fueled by philanthropic largess as well as increased public funding. Both the land-grant institutions, made possible by the Morrill Act of Congress in 1862, and the newly emerging research universities gained acceptability in a society increasingly impressed by claims made for practicality, social service and scientific investigation provided by higher education. These changes eventually broadened the appeal of higher education in an American society that, throughout much of the 19th century, had not considered higher education to be of much practical value. These changes also created a clash between curricula
with mostly prescribed courses and ones in which choice was encouraged.

Although the elective system had first appeared at Jefferson’s University of Virginia in the 1820s, electivism was not widely accepted until the 1870s. Under the promotion of Harvard president Charles W. Eliot, he believed that Harvard was doing American higher education a great service by allowing students to select some of their courses from a set of options, that such freedom was the mark of a true university, and that by relieving the student of curricular mandates, he or she would learn self-discipline. Reaction throughout higher education was swift. Most educators, led by President James McCosh of Princeton, vehemently opposed the idea. McCosh and others put forth the perennial arguments that electivism assumed a maturity that students did not possess, that students would avoid essential subjects not to their liking and, in the process, lose the unity of knowledge that colleges had always sought to provide.

At first the older ideal held sway at Northwestern. When the College changed its name to the College of Liberal Arts in 1880, Acting President Oliver Marcy suggested that “this change expresses a conviction of the Faculty in regard to the object for which this College should be maintained...liberal learning.” It was a widespread belief in the older colleges, and Northwestern considered itself in this group by 1880, that practical skills were rightly attained through apprenticeship and on-the-job training, not learned pursuits. Marcy continued:

To teach the trades, to make artisans, engineers, book-keepers, merchants and farmers is not directly the purpose of this College. It contributes to this end, indirectly, by developing the mind of the pupil, by giving him language, which is the greatest instrument of thought and expression, by making him acquainted with the laws of matter and the laws of mind, which every practical man must understand whether he be in the senate or in the shop, by training the logical faculties, exercising them vigorously in the deductive processes of mathematics and metaphysics, and in the inductive processes of the chemical and physical laboratories, and in psychology. Liberal learning trains the pupil for no one occupation in particular, but tends to make him a more successful man in any occupation than his uneducated fellow. Liberal learning differs from special or scientific learning so much in vogue at the present time in that it develops the whole man.

Many of Marcy’s arguments in favor of a liberal education are still made today. Marcy posited “a college of liberal arts should cultivate all the faculties” of the human mind: the intellectual, the moral, and the aesthetic. Although only a few elective choices were offered to upperclassmen, Marcy could rightly claim, “The scope of the College of Liberal Arts at the Northwestern University is much broader than the scope of any of the colleges in the country thirty years ago.”

That wider scope meant that, while there was intense debate at colleges around the country about what constituted a proper college education, the old-style required curriculum with its emphasis on the discipline of the classics and the moral emphasis of its pieties was losing sway. Marcy was followed by Joseph Cummings, Northwestern’s last minister-president, who in 1883 began to introduce more electives—especially in history, the sciences, and German—at the expense of requirements in Greek and Latin.

GREEK NO LONGER AN ADMISSION REQUIREMENT
In 1890, at the age of thirty-seven, Henry Wade Rogers became president, and during the next 10 years Northwestern’s curriculum began to enjoy significant growth. The manifestations of this change are numerous. In 1892 the College dropped Greek as an admission requirement. In 1895 college advisers, who acted effectively as major advisers, were introduced. Whereas the College of Liberal Arts offered only 41 courses in 1890, by 1900 fully 177 courses were offered, and almost all of them were elective, including the courses in Christianity. Rogers did not take exception to religion, but he did want to move Northwestern in concert with changes being made by other leading universities.

THE MODERN NORTHWESTERN BEGINS TO EMERGE
By the time Rogers retired in 1900, Northwestern had begun to take the shape that would be recognizable to today’s viewer. In 1901 a large banquet was held at the Auditorium Hotel in Chicago to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the signing of the University’s charter. Acting Northwestern President Daniel Bonbright, who had been one of the original five faculty members in 1855, presided over the dinner. Of Northwestern’s enormous progress Bonbright noted: “That every year more than two thousand young men and women gather to the University, in its various schools, to fit themselves for whatever they may find to be their work in after-life, is a tribute to the wisdom that founded the institution fifty years ago; it is a reward and incentive also to those whom the good work of the founders has come as an inheritance and a trust.”

Bonbright’s speech marks the close of Northwestern’s collegiate era. While the university, with the College of Liberal Arts at its core, moved into the twentieth century with a strong sense of its past, it was clear that the new century would bring great opportunities.
LEE HUEBNER, BA in history, Northwestern; PhD in history, Harvard. Speechwriter for President Nixon. Now a Northwestern professor.

Northwestern’s fabled debate program drew Huebner to Northwestern, and it was diplomatic historian Richard Leopold who impressed him while here and brought him back to teach many years later. “Dick Leopold was my mentor and still is. He was just so very interested in the students and so clear about the standards that he expected everyone to meet. One had to be very thorough and accurate and conscientious….My whole history background was immensely useful in speechwriting. You could be called upon to write about so many different subjects. A good generalist was critical.”


“I learned a ton in college that I apply every day and always have in both speechwriting and journalism. History was excellent training for this because it’s essentially non-fiction research and writing and that stresses logical argument backed up with evidence. And that’s what a speech is….We had a lot of professors who were very, very fine prose stylists. I took a couple of David Joravsky courses on the intellectual history of Europe, which I loved. Joseph Epstein taught essay writing. He has become a friend and has contributed pieces to [The Washington Monthly, where Glastris is editor-in-chief.] He more than anyone else got me hooked on the writing profession.”

DAN PINK, BA in linguistics, Northwestern; JD, Yale Law School. Speechwriter for Vice-President Al Gore. Now an author.

Pink says Judith Levi and Rae Moses were terrific teachers and friends and linguistics was an enormously useful major. “Linguistics touches on the whole range of liberal arts disciplines that are unified by the fact that human beings have made their way on our planet thanks to language. Linguistics is in many ways the quintessential liberal arts major because it touches on so many different things….the social sciences with areas like sociolinguistics; the hard sciences with introductory neuroscience, psycholinguistics, and phonology; and the humanities—I had an entire course on metaphor….You begin to have a deeper respect for the power of language and the intricacy of language. That informed not only my job as a speechwriter, but also who I am as a human being.”

RESPONDING TO PAGERS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Hopping aboard Air Force One (or Two) for a trip into history. Ripping pages out of a printer seconds before a televised speech. As three former speechwriters—all Weinberg graduates—described their jobs to Crosscurrents, the swirl of activity sometimes resembles an episode from NBC’s “The West Wing.” But for all of them, speechwriting provided a chance to be in the room as history was made and sometimes even to shape policy in the process of putting language to their boss’s ideals and goals.

The pressures of speechwriting make the job both exhilarating and exhausting. Speechwriters especially earn their keep during times of crisis. Lee Huebner worked for President Richard Nixon from January ’69 to January ’74, his last months on the job coinciding with the Watergate investigation. Paul Glastris’ time on President Bill Clinton’s team—September ’93 to January ’01—included the darkest hours of the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Daniel Pink was chief speechwriter for Vice President Al Gore from ’93 to ’99, when the administration was under fire for Whitewater and ‘travelgate.’

“You do burn out and you are a slave to your pager,” says Glastris of the long and unpredictable hours. “But government service at that level you take whenever you can get it.” And their bosses aren’t the only ones who aged on the job. As Pink laughingly put it during a telephone interview, “When I started the job, I was 31 and when I ended two years later, I was 57.”

All three have gone on to successful careers in communications post-speechwriting. Lee Huebner was publisher of the International Herald Tribune before becoming a professor at Northwestern. He teaches courses on speechwriting, the Nixon presidency, and presidential rhetoric in the School of Communication, and, in the Medill School of Journalism, courses on international media and global journalism. Paul Glastris ’81 is editor-in-chief of The Washington Monthly, a widely-quoted liberal magazine, and a senior fellow at the Western Policy Center in Washington, D.C. Dan Pink ’86 has written one book, Free Agent Nation: The Future of Working for Yourself, and is working on another, A Whole New Mind, about the six essential aptitudes white-collar workers must master in an outsourced, automated, upside-down world.

Though Nixon and Clinton/Gore were on opposite sides of the political fence, their speechwriters had much in common. They all toiled in the Old Executive Office Building at the corner of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, just steps away from the West Wing of the White House. They knew the frustrations of writing by committee and having their phrasing end up “on the cutting-room floor” of the Oval Office. They experienced the joy of hearing their words used by the nation’s leaders to persuade the American public.
Public. We invite you to compare and contrast their experiences as they recalled them for us in separate interviews recently.

**What was the reality of having Clinton/Gore/Nixon for a boss versus his public image?**

**Glastris:** Clinton was great. I never saw but an occasional flash of his storied anger. More than once he rewrote everything I gave him. But mostly he was a dream to work for because he was a great wordsmith and deeply involved in the policies behind the speech. He knew an amazing amount of detail about the policies. He had a vision of where he wanted to go and these policies all fit into that...He wasn’t a lot different from his image. He had an astounding ability to remember our last conversation or a book I’d recommended...My Mom once brought some Greek sweets. He wasn’t there when she dropped them off, but she got a thank you note. He was a classy politician in that way.

**Pink:** Having had Al Gore as a boss, the public image is almost unrecognizable. The Vice President happens to be a very, very funny guy which often doesn’t come through. We ended up doing a number of comedy routines during my time there, including a “mockumentary” slide show about the history of the Vice Presidency. I enjoyed working for him, in part because, before he went into politics, he was a newspaper reporter and editorial writer. He’d written a book himself. So he had a greater respect for the writer’s job than the typical politician.

**Huebner:** I think Nixon was in many ways two people. He had a very dark, insecure, angry, resentful side. And that’s the one that’s probably remembered best and it’s not inaccurate. It’s there. You hear that Nixon on tape sometimes. But he was multi-layered and many of the layers were very attractive. Most people who’ve ever worked for him talk quickly about how kind and pleasant he was with his staff, polite to the point of being almost formal in his politeness, probably because of his shyness and reserve. He was very solicitous and attentive, nice to work for in that way...It’s probably the side his family saw most often.

**Did your boss’s working style allow you much face time with him?**

**Huebner:** Nixon probably spent less time with his speechwriters than earlier Presidents had, but then, he spent a lot less time with anyone than previous Presidents had. He was such a loner kind of President. We [speechwriters] were all together in the Executive Office Building, and he would be on the same floor in his hideaway office. This didn’t mean we were in and out of his office all the time. He preferred to work with people on paper or even on the phone.

**Glastris:** I don’t think I ever had a phone conversation with Clinton. We were in his presence quite a bit, but didn’t have much one-on-one time with him. I wasn’t an intimate in the inner circle of the West Wing. But for every third speech you wrote for him, you’d be with him in the briefing before he gave it, answering questions, watching interaction between him and his staff, gathering changes from the staff to put in a last-minute rewrite. You’d watch him work the room, give the speech, work the room afterwards. He’d come back and pat you on the back and say, “Good work.” You really were part of the whole thing.

**Pink:** Unlike the President, the Vice President doesn’t have a whole fleet of speechwriters, so I found myself in fairly frequent contact for someone who had absolutely no power or influence. But for most speeches, we’d say to him, “We’re speaking at this meeting, this gathering, here’s why you’re doing it, here’s what the event is like, here’s what we think you should say. Does that make sense to you? Do you have anything to add?” We’d do this by e-mail because Gore is a ferocious e-mailer. And that worked incredibly well. That allowed him to focus for literally 30 seconds of his time, rather than schedule a meeting.
The two are intimately involved. It’s the high point of almost every speech
writes, to use a single microphone, and have the podium taken away. He had
a photographic memory which would allow him to give a verbatim speech without any notes at all—he was very proud of that.

WHAT WAS THE MOST FRUSTRATING ASPECT OF THE JOB?

HUEBNER: I think any speechwriting job at some point involves explaining decisions that other people are making. You’re helping to make them, perhaps, you touch a little bit on every issue, but you don’t have control of any one. One day it’s foreign policy and the next it’s the economy and then it’s jokes for a state dinner. And we were the people who provided the connective tissue, the language that bridged all these gaps and made it all seem part of a whole worldview, a whole philosophical approach. But in none of these areas could we say, “Gee, I worked on this for two years and got that bill through Congress.”

GLASTRIS: There was more pandering to interest groups than I would have liked. But you appreciate the need for that when you’re there.

PINK: Speechwriters should come with a date of expiration stamped on their foreheads. If you do far too much, you start reverting to stuff you’ve already done, you stop thinking fresh and you stop serving your boss. And that’s ultimately what you’re doing. You’re not saying what you think, but what someone else thinks, in as compelling a way as possible. You are giving voice to someone else’s thoughts, not your own. You are really the housepainter, not the architect. You are there to provide external raw material. For another category of material—suggested remarks—he spoke without notes. And for those occasions what he wanted from us wasn’t so much polish as language as anecdotal material, stories, humor, statistics, personal references, all the colorful material that helped dress up a speech.

He would put his hands behind his back, use a single microphone, and have the podium taken away. He had a photographic memory which would allow him to give a verbatim speech without any notes at all—he was very proud of that.
JULY, 2001, SPLIT, CROATIA

There was no chatter—that's what struck coach Bill Carmody first.
No trash talk smack mouth get that raw out of here.
No “Coach, I need some water.”
No cheering or clapping or backslapping.
Just sneakers on hardwood, the bounce of the ball, the occasional whistle.

The temperature in the old gym, the American coach estimates, had climbed to 95 degrees.
You could sit in the bleachers sipping a cold glass of lemonade and still sweat.

Northwestern’s status as Big Ten cellar dweller. And, perhaps most importantly, there were athletes with high school transcripts that would impress even the most truculent admissions officer.
There was only one problem: The players didn’t speak English.

THE APARTMENT

Ivan Tolic, Vedran Vukusic, and Davor Duvancic reeled on the couches in the living room of their Evanston apartment, watching a tennis match on the television with mild interest. Tolic’s leg is in a brace after having undergone knee surgery earlier in the week. All three drink from two-gallon jugs of orange juice, which appear strangely proportioned in their hands. Duvancic and Vukusic are 6-foot-8. Tolic is an inch taller.
They banter with each other in English, and their vernacular is indistinguishable from that of the average American college student. For a recent assignment for his public-speaking class, Tolic had to interpret a movie scene in his own words. He chose a Samuel L. Jackson scene from Pulp Fiction.

“I LANGUAGE IS A SKIN: I RUB MY LANGUAGE AGAINST THE OTHER.”
—ROLAND BARTHES

Carmody had come to Split on a tip from former Northwestern basketball player Pat Baldwin, who was playing professionally in Croatia. Named as the replacement for Kevin O’Neill shortly before the 2000-2001 season, Carmody had missed most of the previous year’s recruiting period. He was looking for some big bodies to plug the gaps Carmody had missed most of the previous year’s recruiting period.

No, they hadn’t decided what they will do after graduation. It depends on where their basketball careers take them. Tolic has been hampered by knee problems his entire Northwestern career, and Vukusic red-shirted during the 2002-2003 season due to a shoulder injury.

No, they could not have pursued both athletics and academics in Croatia. European colleges do not field sports teams, and professional athletes are discouraged from taking classes.

No, they didn’t lose any family members, though there was no chatter—that’s what struck coach Bill Carmody first.

The three had taken English language courses since elementary school, but Carmody said it took them about two months of total immersion before they felt comfortable speaking it aloud.

They have all come a long way since their early days in America, when Vukusic’s patchy vocabulary limited him to a rambling exposition on hamburgers during an interview with NBC Channel 5 Chicago.

“When I first got here, the biggest challenge was the language. I thought someone was going to laugh at me,” says Vukusic, who arrived with Duvancic in Evanston in the fall of 2001.

“You now can’t stop talking,” teases Tolic, who joined them the following year.

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After multiple interviews about what it’s like to leave Croatia and play basketball in America, the players have perfected their interview patter. “We have all our answers ready,” they joke.

Yes, Evanston’s inclement winters sometimes make them long for the balmy currents of their hometown, Split, a port city on the Adriatic Sea.
No, they could not have pursued both athletics and academics in Croatia. European colleges do not field sports teams, and professional athletes are discouraged from taking classes.

Yes, Vukusic’s mom cried when he told her he wanted to leave home and play basketball in America.

No, they didn’t lose any family members, though there was no chatter—that’s what struck coach Bill Carmody first.

If the players didn’t speak English, it was the best move I’ve ever made.”

The trio’s manifest enthusiasm for the university—for its students, professors, classes, coaches, and fans—is a dominant theme in nearly all their interviews.

“You know how they put you in a room with similar people?” Tolic is describing his freshman year roommate with the enthusiasm he brings to every aspect of his Northwestern experience. “Well, they put me in a room with this little Jewish boy from Boca Raton, Florida. He was so scared when he walked in the room for the first time,” Tolic laughs. “But we became the best friends ever. It was a great thing.”

Vukusic credits his teammates with smoothing his transition to America. “The guys in the locker room made it easy on me. They taught me all the good words,” he grins.

THE BASKETBALL COURT

In this season’s 51-49 victory over Iowa on March 11, Tolic started and played 11 minutes. Duvancic had a career night, grabbing nine rebounds and netting 14 points. And Vukusic, the Cats’ second leading scorer, hit the game-winning shot with 0.7 seconds remaining. It was the kind of night Carmody envisioned when he watched them play in Split.

“Yes, they like Northwestern—a lot. “Coming to America was a dream,” Duvancic told the Daily Northwestern. “[Northwestern] is a great school in a great community. I am super glad I came…. It was the best move I’ve ever made.”

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“You all have good basketball sense, probably from playing soccer,” Carmody said. A high basketball IQ is a prerequisite for Carmody’s intrusive offense. Its signature is the “backdoor pass,” which requires a passer and a cutter to coordinate their movements so that the passer delivers the ball at the precise moment the cutter slices through the basket. If the
backdoor is properly executed, the cutter never breaks stride and the defender looks like a fool. Tolic had an assist on a backdoor layup in the first minute of his first game as a Wildcat.

The offense came naturally to the trio, even before they mastered English. “It’s not about language,” Vukusic said. “You don’t even have to learn the name of the plays once you understand it.”

Tolic concurred, “Once you get the basic principles, it just flows.”

The language of basketball is universal enough to compensate for the fact that at times this season no one on the court for Northwestern was speaking English.

“If it’s Mohamed [Hachad], T.J. [Parker], me, Vedran and Davor on the court, you will not hear a single word of English,” Tolic said. “The two of them talk in French and the three of us talk in Croatian.”

THE CLASSROOM

Tolic and Vukusic name Linguistics 222, senior lecturer Elisabeth Elliott’s course, Language, Politics, and Identity, among their favorite classes at Northwestern. The class focuses on linguistic issues in various Balkan languages, including Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, Macedonian, and Albanian. Students study Balkan history through the prism of language, exploring connections among language, politics, nationalism and identity. For the Croatians, Bulgarians, and Albanians enrolled in the class, this is more than an academic exercise.

Elliott explains: Language became a propaganda tool during the Croatian War for Independence, which began in 1991 and ended in 1995 when leaders from Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia signed the Dayton Peace Accords. Both sides attempted to eradicate foreign borrowings from their languages in an attempt to fashion a more “pure” form of Serbian and Croatian. Croatian expressions were expunged from the Serbian language, and vice versa. People could be jailed—or worse—for word choice.

Elliott said she was a bit nervous when she saw who was enrolled in the class. “I knew we were going to talk about some really sensitive issues,” she said. “The country they were born in no longer exists. In their lifetime their neighbors became their radical enemies.”

She said their response to the class has been gratifying. “They have been extremely generous and open with their opinions, ideas and experiences,” she said. “It’s been a wonderful experience for the rest of the class to see people who are really struggling with these issues on a personal level.”

Elliott said Tolic asked last week in class, “What’s so bad about sharing words?”

Carmody speaks with obvious affection when he reflects on his three Croatian basketball players. “They wanted to make it work,” he said. “They’re from a war-torn country. So that made them push through some of the little stuff that happens. Maybe a kid from California would say, oh, man, I’m not going home for Christmas. They play through that.”

Tolic said adjusting to America wasn’t as hard as some people imagine. “The whole barrier was language,” he said. “But, you know, chicks dig accents.”

AUTHOR EMILY KRONE PLAYED WOMEN’S VARSITY BASKETBALL AT PRINCETON FOR TWO YEARS, WHEN BILL CARMODY WAS COACHING THE MEN’S TEAM. AFTER GRADUATING IN 2001, SHE EARNED A MASTER’S DEGREE IN JOURNALISM FROM MEDILL.

TWO REASONS TO GET EXCITED ABOUT WILDCAT MEN’S BASKETBALL

1. Big Ten Coach of the Year Bill Carmody, who led this year’s Wildcat team to its best conference season since 1968.
2. Those three fellows from Croatia and the rest of the returning 2003–04 roster (the ’Cats return every regular but Jitim Young).
3. Duke transfer Michael Thompson, a 6’10” center who was a McDonald’s All-America selection in high school, and St. John’s transfer Tim Doyle are eligible to play in 2005.
4. One of Chicago’s top high school players, Sterling Williams, a 6’5” guard from Whitney Young.
5. Two recently signed players named Lee—Brandon (Peoria, IL – Central H.S.), a 6’1” guard, and Gary (Flint, MI – Flint Northern H.S.), a 6’6” shooting guard.