Fall 2005 Farquhar Forum

Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences
A message from the dean

The Real World, Good and Evil, and the College of Arts and Sciences

At institutions of higher education, a college of arts and sciences is considered to be the university’s intellectual core and its academic heart. The intersection of diverse degree programs and the daily investigation of critical questions make the liberal arts a celebration of curiosity, inquiry, and discovery.

As the dean of a college of arts and sciences, I am sometimes curious how institutions of higher learning are seen by the larger community. Are we “the ivory tower,” distant from the problems and challenges of the real world, or are we considered an engaged part of the communities in which we serve?

I suspect that some people consider the subjects of our teaching and scholarship—history, mathematics, literature, psychology, physics, chemistry—to be abstract or irrelevant to the harsh realities of local, national, and global concerns. This perception, of course, would be wrong.

In fact, a liberal arts education is precisely about preparation and engagement. Our college takes great effort to draw from the daily experiences and problems of the world as a foundation for learning and study. Our challenging classes stimulate creative and critical thinking, effective problem solving, ethical reasoning, and clear communication skills. These are the relevant tools to address many (if not all) of the crises and problems with which we are surrounded.

This year, in addition to the sum of our individual pursuits, our college decided to explore a unifying theme. The theme decided upon was “Good and Evil” (see page 12). To those who already consider the liberal arts college a hermetic, old fashioned place, adopting an overlying theme into the college’s academic year might justifiably seem detached from the everyday world. But recent events—terrorism, the war in Iraq, and the devastation caused by hurricanes—have shown the timely relevance of this theme.

As a college with thoughts engaged by investigation of good and evil, we are now witnessing how, at the national level, just like in our college, people are talking with renewed intensity about issues of peace and violence, commitment and neglect, acceptance and prejudice.

We seek meaning and significance in these events. The kind of searching we do in the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences helps prepare students for lives as responsible, committed citizens. If the role of the college, at heart, is to help make sense of our world and our place in it, as well as to learn how to make the world a better place, then the discussions in our classrooms and the time we spend with our texts is as “real world” as it gets.

Sincerely,

Don Rosenblum, Ph.D.
Dean, Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences
**Musical Bridges:** Ars Flores mentors student musicians

Ars Flores, NSU’s orchestra-in-residence, is sometimes difficult to define. If you ask Lynn Luce, Ars Flores’ artistic director since the orchestra’s founding in 2000, she might tell you there isn’t another one like it. “People sometimes put us in a box,” Luce says. Is it a community orchestra? Is it a college or youth orchestra? Ars Flores, in fact, is a unique center for musical education. Made up of half seasoned professional musicians and half student “fellows” from colleges and high schools, Ars Flores has become a home for mentoring the next generation of professional musicians.

During rehearsals, fellows work with principal musicians—a first-chair violinist mentors a violinist fellow, for example—and during concerts, they play side-by-side. Unlike community orchestras, however, at Ars Flores, everyone gets paid. “It’s really a professional setting,” says tuba player James Rivera, a 17-year-old senior at Miami’s New World School for the Arts. “And you get used to rehearsing at a high level.” The orchestra forms a strong bond for fellows like Rivera as they make a transition to a professional musical career.

The relationship between NSU and Ars Flores has been productive and rewarding for both sides. Ars Flores performs regularly at the Miniaci Performing Arts Center on NSU’s main campus. The Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences lends logistic and financial support, while the orchestra provides musical education and collaborative opportunities for the Nova Singers and other campus arts organizations. “Residencies are generally held by string quartets, not full orchestras,” says Luce. “But because Ars Flores is an experimental orchestra dedicated to teaching, it’s been an innovative relationship in which everyone has benefited.”

**Why do we love mysteries?**

We love mysteries. It doesn’t matter if they come to us by way of Edgar Allan Poe’s dark stories, “whodunit” novels, or screenplays with crowd-pleasing Law and Order pacing, but why do we love them so much? Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences Division of Humanities professor Christine Jackson shares one theory. “They give us the illusion that, by following a certain trail of clues, you can control death,” she says.

Jackson teaches literature and creative writing in the college—which now offers a master of arts in writing—and has been active in the mystery writing community for years. Since the late 1990s, she has served as a key organizer for Sleuthfest, the annual meeting of the Florida chapter of Mystery Writers of America that draws hundreds of writers (and their admirers) to Fort Lauderdale. At the national level, Jackson just finished her second year as the organizer for the Edgar Symposium—a companion day-long series of workshops for the Edgar Allan Poe Awards held in New York City each April.

When it comes to why we love mysteries, Jackson has compiled a collection of evidence over the years.

Mysteries are fiction, but they pretend to answer a very real and profound question—how do we deal with death? Novels or stories featuring a solution to a murder give readers the illusion of resolving this issue. The detective hauls in the killer, and the librarian-sleuth explains the puzzling locked-room crime.

Readers love mysteries because they can follow the clues and play along. They learn about crime-solving techniques such as blood spatter or tests for DNA and GPR (gun powder residue). They explore family relationships through the eyes of the private detective or psychologist hero. They examine evidence along with the state’s attorney or study the face of the client to assess if he or she is telling the truth.

Fighting the evil of murder is not just for cops, lawyers, or private detectives anymore. Contemporary mystery fiction also offers a very broad range of sleuth occupations, from librarians to hairstylists, strangers in the national park service, and school guidance counselors. Modern readers can decide how close they want to be to the dead body. They might select a novel by Kathy Reichs, whose main character Temperance Brennan is a forensic anthropologist, or opt for one by Diane Mott Davidson, whose sleuth owns Goldy Bear’s Catering Service and sees poisonings and chokings on a regular basis.

Today’s mystery fiction includes ever-inventive characters and deftly woven plot lines. Like all enduring art forms, these novels have a transformative power. Despite their preoccupation with righting wrongs and catching killers, the mystery ultimately leads readers away from endings and more toward what it means to be fully alive.

**Clues from Christine Jackson**

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**Giving Voice to Common Concerns**

**Television’s Psychology View from NSU**

“I’m not giving any new insight. I’m just putting words to what people already know.” That’s Ellen Flynn, a psychology professor in the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, talking about her public service television series, *Psychology View from NSU*.

What Flynn means is that everyone is faced with the same life issues—aging, children, relationships, and the death of loved ones. But when it comes to reaching out to find help in the community, not everyone knows how to take the first step. Flynn’s series, which features interviews with professionals and resources for getting help, offers outside confirmation of our shared, common problems.

*Psychology View from NSU* is a partnership of the college’s Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences and NSU’s Office of Information Technology. The first series of 12 half-hour episodes, produced in 2003, initially aired on WLRN public television, and then on the Comcast Community Network. The series also will be shown on the Broward Education Communications Network (BECON-TV), beginning in January.

The 12 episodes are broken down into three topics—Parenting Well, Aging Well, and Living Well. Each consists of a studio interview with an expert in his or her field, supporting footage, references to books and other resources, and contact information for viewers to find more help. Feedback from viewers who have gone on to seek therapy or other professional counseling has been positive, Flynn says.

Each show requires an intense hour of studio time for interviews and a week of editing. Before getting to the studio, though, hours of research, guest planning, and preparation are required to create helpful, relevant, and accurate shows. While Flynn and other faculty members from the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences—including professors Michael Reiter, Marcia Silver, and Lena Hall—are the on-air faces, an Office of Information Technology producing team devotes time to the hard work of bringing the shows to life. OIT’s Mark Schuknecht is the office’s leader in creating the programs. His team, which includes producers Maria Prieto and Gabrielle Punch, runs the cameras, tapes interviews, ease guests’ nerves, films complementary footage to support interviews, and creates program graphics. It’s a partnership of OIT’s skills and the college’s expertise.

Flynn currently is filming the show’s second season, which is set to air in 2006 and consists of 10 shows broken down into two topics—Our Aging Memory and Creating Supportive Environments. The second series promises some increasingly relevant topics, including discussion of how trauma affects memory and how families can cope with supporting aging family members.

The seed for *Psychology View from NSU* was a guest appearance on WLRN, says Flynn, where producers encouraged her to find her own voice in her own show. Having climbed a learning curve for becoming a television host, however, Flynn is circumspect about what she is doing. “Words are powerful frames,” she says. “I think everyone knows everything I’m saying and what my guests are saying. But we give words to unexpressed feelings and an opportunity—a nod of recognition—that helps viewers reflect on their own experiences.”

Psychologist Ellen Flynn (in gray jacket) interviews Amy Seigel, director of Advocare Geriatric Care Management, a Weston, Florida-based organization that supports individuals and families through the health and social issues related to aging.
A Laboratory Snapshot
Gene chip technologies and national research networks bring genomics research to biology students

Toxicity of aluminum—used in many commercial products from soda cans to deodorants—has long been a controversial research issue, especially when mentioned in the same sentence with Alzheimer’s disease. Because aluminum concentrations can build up over a person’s lifetime, science is interested in the relationship between high aluminum concentrations and Alzheimer’s. 

Are they simply coincidental aspects of aging? It’s a question that intrigues biology honors student Maria Farrell. Farrell is studying how yeast cells absorb and respond to aluminum. “We’re looking at genes tagged for aluminum tolerance,” she says. “Does an organism lose tolerance over time? Are genes destroyed?” Studying effects on genes in yeast may expose possible correlations in human genetics and physiology.

Farrell is one of several Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences students working since 2003 to incorporate graduate school-level genetics research tools into their curriculum under the direction of biology professor Emily Schmitt of the Division of Math, Science, and Technology. The tools include microarrays, or “gene chips,” used to study how genes respond to the environment.

Using gene chips, biologists can compare changes in gene expression as organisms develop, studying patterns of how genes may be affected in different parts of the brain. They can compare gene expression in healthy versus unhealthy organs. Microarray techniques used to understand gene expression in cancer cells can lead to better cancer diagnosis and treatment. Microarray research analysis has, generally, been reserved for students at the graduate school level who have more access to resources as well as the time to use them. “Very few undergraduate students have the opportunity to work with such relatively new technologies,” says Schmitt. But that’s changing.

Undergraduate-level research projects involving advanced technologies such as microarrays are being made increasingly possible through networks of universities and industry, such as the Genome Consortium for Active Teaching (GCAT), an organization that brings microarray technology into undergraduate labs. GCAT, based at North Carolina’s Davidson College, has connected Schmitt with other organizations able to help with the contribution of start-up research materials as well as others performing similar research. “If it weren’t for GCAT, we might not be doing this research,” says Farrell.

A supportive community within the university is also necessary. Honors students like Farrell use the Undergraduate Honors Program’s emphasis on independent, mentored research in the junior and senior years to focus on longer exploration of topics that intrigue them. Projects also have been part of a continuum of evolving research, passed from one group of student teams to another. The teams have used the college’s annual Student Research Symposium to focus the timing of their research process and communicate their projects with the rest of the university community. “I learned so much from the symposium,” Farrell says, [such as] “how to put together a poster and incorporate what other people did on other projects. I now know I can find other students and professors who are involved in related research.”

The basics of microarray research
Microarray research analysis is traced to a 1995 paper in the journal Science by a Stanford University research team, led by geneticist Pat Brown. The paper, “Quantitative monitoring of gene expression patterns with a complementary DNA microarray,” has been cited more than 1,500 times since then.

Microarrays are used to study collections of genes. In some cases, as with yeast, the entire genome can be studied on one slide.

The human genome has 20–25 thousand genes. The yeast genome has approximately 6,000 genes—which can fit completely onto one microarray, one per spot. Yeast and humans share about 1,900 genes, allowing yeast to serve in some ways as a model organism for comparative studies.

Genomes from organisms exposed to different environmental conditions, such as aluminum-rich environments vs. aluminum-free environments, can be compared to determine which genes are expressed or repressed by the environment.

Some genes are activated, some repressed. By examining effects on potentially all of the organism’s genes at one time, scientists learn more about the overall mechanism of gene expression and how genes work together.
Professors and students study humanity and the environment in the Amazon Basin

The town of Baños, high in the mountainous cloud forests of Ecuador, is 6,000 feet above sea level and half a day’s drive from the capital of Quito, but that hasn’t stopped this remote community of about 30,000 people from becoming an international gateway. As an entry point to the Amazon rainforest, Baños is a melting pot of indigenous Ecuadorians, foreign scientists, and tourists of all nationalities. In Baños, humans meet rainforest.

For more than 20 years, Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences environmental science professor Barry Barker has navigated through this gateway on his way to raising awareness of sustainable development and society’s impact on threatened and endangered species. Through a longstanding partnership with the San Martin Zoological Gardens in Baños, Barker provides an opportunity for students to be involved in active field training through the Division of Math, Science, and Technology’s environmental science/studies major.

One result of those student trips has been to build strong connections between NSU and the San Martin Zoo, which provides care for sick wildlife and endangered species while teaching about biodiversity and conservation. The zoo has seen the pressure on the environmental, economic, and cultural—facing both the ecosystems and the people of the Amazon Basin region. These pressures have, over the years, become clear to NSU students who spend time there, learning important lessons about how to combine international experience, field research, and community service.

The Amazon rainforest covers about two million square miles and spans parts of six nations. About 10 percent of the Amazon rainforest has been destroyed through deforestation and mining. Seeing up-close issues related to slash-and-burn agriculture and clear-cutting can give a different perspective from the classroom.

“People are trying to live and get by,” says environmental science student Philip Darling, who was on the Ecuador trip last winter semester. “Being immersed in a different culture brought to life environmental situations in different countries and how those environmental issues carry through the culture. It gives you a real sense of how sustainable development works,” Darling says, “or doesn’t work.”

Through environmental science field trips in the Amazon rainforest, NSU students (such as Diana Rakine, left, class of 2005) have experienced the region’s beauty, and its harshness. (Photos courtesy of Barry Barker, Cynthia Knupp, Tracy Rice, and Alyssa Rothman.)

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Into the Rainforest

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An Invitation to Explore
Pursuing good and evil together as a college

W

hat could be more archetypal, or perhaps more cliché, to symbol-ize the conflict of good versus evil than this magazine’s cover image of a tree half full of life and half barren? However, the dichotomy of good and evil isn’t so simple. Issues are complex. What is the philosophical nature of good and evil? Is there “good” science and “evil” science? How are good and evil viewed through literature and history? Is there a psychology of goodness? Is there “good” science and “evil” science? Is there “good” technology and “evil” technology?

During the 2005–2006 academic year, the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences is exploring the theme of “Good and Evil” through its speakers series and special events and using it to unify the college in intellectual discovery. Throughout the year, faculty members and students are incorporating the theme into classroom discussions, readings, and assignments.

As faculty members incorporate the theme of “Good and Evil” into classroom activities, it’s clear that interpretation of the theme has some expected, as well as some more surprising, manifestations. In the Division of Humanities, philosophy professor Darren Hibbs is teaching a special topics course on the philosophical problem of evil. The course will focus on two aspects of the problem of evil.

The logical problem is about whether or not the existence of a ‘perfect’ God is logically compatible with the existence of evil,” says Hibbs. “The evidential problem is about whether or not the presence of evil in the world tilts the balance of evidence against the existence of a ‘perfect’ God. We will look at both classic and contemporary treatments of these issues.”

In a less explored exploration, humanities professor Kate Waites is pursuing a decidedly nontheological evaluation. In her composition classes, Waites is assigning students to read books and watch films—such as journalist Barbara Ehrenreich’s Nickle and Dine—and the documentary The Corporation—that consider good and evil as socioeconomic concepts that lie beneath the struggles of the working poor.

In the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, professor Beth Bailey’s field, criminal justice, would seem like a natural place to talk about the college’s theme. “Students must be challenged to look within themselves and answer difficult questions about right and wrong, good and evil,” Bailey says. “As technology changes, so will what is legal and illegal, so will what is right and wrong, so will what is deemed evil and good.”

Also from the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences comes the less expected through assistant director Michael Reiter’s honors course, “Inappropriate Relationships.” It will explore how some relationships can be construed as bad or evil. Why are certain relationships accepted and others rejected?

The theme for professors in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology brings up increasingly relevant debates about morality and the role of technology. “If you had to classify the Internet, would it ultimately be considered good, or is it an evil entity that needs to be controlled?” asks computer and information science professor Evelyn Estes. “Because of ready access, it comes down to the ethics of the end-users, both casual and professional.”

Perhaps a less expected application of good versus evil in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology might fall under the purview of athletic training, where an essential component of the curriculum deals with the everyday, high-pressure, ethical decisions certified athletic trainers must make for those under their care. “It’s sometimes easy to consider ethical decisions in the classroom,” says Elizabeth Swann, director of the Athletic Training Education Program. “But part of our clinical experience education is to make sure that in the field, when faced with pressures from athletes, coaches, and fans, for example, athletic trainers will learn to stand their ground and make the right decision.”

Framing real-world questions
The theme of “Good and Evil” frames real-life questions with multiple, complex answers shaped by experience.

At the college’s August convocation, Shepard Broad Law Center professor Bruce Rogow introduced the theme with a decidedly historical self-exploration of American good and evil. Rogow, who has argued cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and is recognized as one of the country’s top experts on constitutional law, worked as an activist civil rights lawyer during the 1960s.

“You know good when you see it. You know real evil when you see it,” Rogow said. “But there are areas in between where it’s not so clear if something is truly evil. It may not be good. It may not be bad. Is there any doubt in anyone’s mind today that slavery is evil? And yet, slavery was an accepted fact of life in America, and of course, an accepted fact of life in civilization for centuries before. How can anyone justify slavery?”

Rogow charged students at convocation that, while they take their courses, they also try to think about the shades in between good and evil and how times, and people, have changed.

As faculty members and students make their way through the academic year, the entire NSU community is invited to join the college in exploration through the winter semester’s upcoming Distinguished Speakers Series. The series will bring to campus Nobel Prize winner Elie Wiesel and science writer Michael Shermer, author of The Science of Good and Evil.
Keeping Cervantes’ legacy alive

In her fall semester humanities course—HUMN 1000F: Cervantes’ Don Quixote—Delmarie Martinez and her students sorted through different readings of the much-revered, 400-year-old novel by Miguel de Cervantes. “It’s been said that no two readers can read the same Don Quixote,” says Martinez, a professor of Spanish in the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences Division of Humanities. “It’s such a profound work that it’s open to many interpretations.”

Those interpretations include the obvious, well-known romantic interpretation of the novel’s protagonist as a hero, famously depicted through paintings and popular culture tilting at windmills during a passionate quest across Spain. “It’s certainly a valid reading and a popular one,” admits Martinez. “Other interpretations,” she says, “are equally interesting.”

Martinez notes that scholars have debated the question of whether Cervantes is seen as criticizing the chivalry-obsessed books so popular in the Europe of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. “Cervantes meant to show the lunacy behind those stories. In Don Quixote, his character had read so many that his brain literally melted,” says Martinez.

As a break from that chivalric tradition, she explains, Don Quixote is widely considered to be the first “modern” novel. “Cervantes was deviating from the type of novel written before by creating one with very well-developed plots and characters, as opposed to the books of chivalry that had little to do with reality.”

To celebrate its 400th anniversary, Martinez recommends a good, old-fashioned reading of Don Quixote. But she’s also not averse to watching modern adaptations, like the stage musical Man of La Mancha, itself turned into a 1972 movie starring Peter O’Toole and Sophia Loren.

In Man of La Mancha, Cervantes himself has been transformed into the primary character, in a parallel between Don Quixote’s fictional quest and his own life’s struggle under the pressure of censorship and religious persecution. Man of La Mancha was never intended to be a true adaptation. “The end result, though, is the same in the musical as in the book,” Martinez says. “You still get to see a man who followed a quest that seemed impossible, and it’s very inspiring.”

Gary Gershman offers some basic advice for all students. “I would implore every student, whether you are a freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior, to take a chance. At least once a year, if not once a semester, take a class that is not a requirement, not in your major, not a general education requirement. Or do something different. Make a choice that opens new opportunities to you rather than just reinforces old preconceptions.”

A Passion for the Classroom Questions for teacher-of-the-year Gary Gershman

Each year, one professor in the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences is named Outstanding Teacher of the Year. For 2005, that professor is Gary Gershman, history and legal studies professor in the Division of Humanities. Gershman, with a law degree in addition to his doctorate in history, teaches courses that range from American history surveys to upper-level courses on civil liberties and innovative honors seminars. Here are some questions Gershman was asked about teaching.

Which course is your most satisfying to teach? It’s a toss-up. I love teaching the first-year U.S. history survey course. I like the fact that I get to make an instant impact upon students in their first year. For many of them, it may be the only college history class they ever take, so what they learn in that class will be important in how they view the world and America for the rest of their lives. On the other hand, a course near and dear to my heart is Civil and Political Liberties. Because of the contentiousness of many of the topics, the interaction with students is usually outstanding. Often times, an entire class is spent debating and arguing over a topic, with students joining in with passion and excitement that I don’t often see in other classes.

Other than teaching, what other profession would you choose? When I graduated from law school, I had wanted a job doing civil rights enforcement for the Justice Department. I would still love that job. Considering that I do not expect a call from Washington any time soon, I would be very happy to be responsible for leading trips to places all around the world.

If you could choose someone from history to take a class with, who would it be? Tough call. Shoeshoe Joe Jackson would be a strong possibility (he would really help when I teach about the Black Sox scandal in Sports in History); however I’m not sure how great a teacher he would be. Since I am currently teaching a class on famous American trials, it would be interesting to sit in a class with Clarence Darrow.

When it comes to the college’s Outstanding Teachers for the years 2001–2005, what inspires them to devote so much energy to teaching?

Gary Gershman

Gary Gershman offers some basic advice for all students. “I would implore every student, whether you are a freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior, to take a chance. At least once a year, if not once a semester, take a class that is not a requirement, not in your major, not a general education requirement. Or do something different. Make a choice that opens new opportunities to you rather than just reinforces old preconceptions.”

Stephen LeVitt, Division of Humanities, 2001: I grew up in Canada, where the teachers were exceptional examples of caring and committed scholars. Later, in college and law school, I was able to see outstanding examples of both teaching and scholarship.

Matthew He, Division of Math, Science, and Technology, 2002: Real-life events. It’s always fun to see interactions between theoretical algorithms and real-life examples.

Marcia Silver, Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2003: My students. I am truly inspired by them. I learn as much from them as they do from me.

William Hambick, Division of Math, Science, and Technology, 2004: If it weren’t for our wonderful students, I don’t think I’d be able to function at all and would have to break down and become a master criminal, a very common career path in mathematics.

Gary Gershman, Division of Humanities, 2005: I love my job. That is the energy. Why teach if one does not want to put body and soul into it?
Out of the Comfort Zone
Aspiring dentists find hands-on connections with their future profession

Students prepare for graduate school in the health sciences in many ways. They take required courses. They study for entrance exams. They talk with professionals in their fields. Students planning a career in dentistry do all these, but also have some unique, hands-on activities that may take them out of their comfort zones.

Many predental students encounter hands-on experiences through NSU’s Predental Society, affiliated with the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences Division of Math, Science, and Technology. In addition to workshops to help with graduate school admissions and volunteer events that promote dental hygiene to low-income teenagers, the Predental Society organizes workshops on topics like making teeth impression molds and tooth carving that give members a jump on the first year of dental school.

Some activities, such as clinics to learn the basics of suturing, are often organized in collaboration with the college’s Premedical Society. “I am proud of these students who follow their passion and help each other, even while competing for coveted graduate programs,” says faculty adviser Mark Jaffe, a biology professor in the Division of Math, Science, and Technology.

For Maria Bernal, the president of the Predental Society, involvement in the society also means leadership. “I enhance my communication skills by talking to a large group of people each week, and I learn aspects of dentistry that I didn’t know before,” Bernal says. “The experience has made me more confident about what I’m capable of.”

In addition to preprofessional organizations, the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences also offers dual admission programs in dentistry and 20 other graduate fields of study that allow students to be accepted at the same time into both an undergraduate program and the NSU professional or graduate school of their choice.

Students, such as Patricia Gallagher, who graduated in 2004 from the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences with a bachelor’s degree in biology, started at NSU’s College of Dental Medicine the following fall. The Farquhar Forum is checking in with Gallagher periodically as he pursues his goal of becoming a dentist. Back when he was still a senior and applying to dental schools, he had the following to say about getting real-world experience.

“A lot of dental schools require observation hours before you apply so that you see past just the school-related aspects. A couple of times I visited a dental practice in Boca Raton. You might go there, see blood, and get weak knees. You might go there and be shocked. Some people get turned off. But—I had a good time.

The first day I was there, the dentist did an extraction from a busted-up piece of tooth that was rotten and had really infected this old lady’s jaw. It was totally gory, but I liked it. At the end of the day, the dentist gave me a compliment—

that I had a soothing effect on patients. He said he could tell that I would be able to interact well with them. I had introduced myself, was approachable, and carried myself well.”

Now in his second year of dental school, Gallagher is in the lab almost every day (first year, he says, consisted mainly of science classes like anatomy, and the last two years will be primarily clinical). He says the following about his first hands-on doctor/patient experience.

“Besides labs, I do a clinical rotation, and this fall I had my first patient. I was really nervous the night before. But when I walked into the waiting room, called her name, and walked her back into the clinic, she was really sweet and right off the bat lowered the tension level. It wasn’t as weird as I thought it would be. You put them in the chair, put on your goofy goggles and the patient’s bib, lean the chair back, and go. During the clinic, we do a cleaning, which surprisingly, took us three hours to get through. One of my friends was assisting for me and said he thought we had a high entertainment value. I got a hug from our patient when we were done.”

Gallagher says that, as he moves through dental school, he’s slowly figuring out which specializations will form the core of his future practice. Right now, he says with a smile that root canals look like fun.
Shelly Morgan, legal studies, class of 2002, will graduate from NSU’s Shepard Broad Law Center in May 2006. She volunteers for various public interest organizations, including Florida’s Children First. After she graduates from law school, Morgan plans to specialize in child advocacy law.

Jennifer Pearl, legal studies, class of 2003, is now in her third year at NSU’s Shepard Broad Law Center. After she passes the Florida bar exam in 2006, she will begin working with the law firm Broad and Cassel in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Pearl is a member of NSU’s Law Review; Moot Court, American Trial Lawyers’ Association, and Phi Alpha Delta fraternity. She is also the founding vice president of the American Constitution Society.

Mark Powell, psychology, class of 1999, is currently the director of network and software services for NSU’s Graduate School of Computer and Information Sciences. He lives in Jupiter, Florida, with his wife, Nathalie, and their three children.

Virginia Tejera-Jones, psychology, class of 2001, received a master’s degree in criminal justice from NSU in 2004. She currently volunteers for the Coral Springs Fire Department CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) group. The team is called out in cases of emergencies or disasters such as hurricanes or missing children/adults.

Amber M. Stirlien, psychology, class of 2003, is a doctoral student at NSU’s Center for Psychological Studies, where she’s been busy doing research and presenting at conferences, including ones held in Hawaii and China. For the past two years, Stirlien has been actively involved with CPS’ Student Organization for the Advocacy of Psychology and the Ethnic Minority Association of Graduate Students. She recently had her first professional publication, co-authored with psychology professor Michael Reiter and other colleagues. Her next publication is due out by the end of next year. Stirlien also got engaged during the summer. “I look forward to seeing how the university continues to grow during my next few years here as well as into the future when I am finally a psychologist in our community!”

Got News?

Are you a graduate of the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences? We’d like to hear from you. Please take a moment to share what’s happening in your life. The college would like to include your news in the next Farquhar Forum. Contact us at: www.undergrad.nova.edu/farquharforum

Email: DIS@nsu.nova.edu
Phone: (954) 262-8185
Fax: (954) 262-7085

For some reason, we are really good at forming vivid and descriptive memories of tragic events. If you asked people to tell you how they first heard about 9/11, they remember where they were, what they were doing, who they were talking to and, who else was there. A psychology professor, Michael Reiter and other colleagues. Their next publication is due out by the end of next year. Stirlien also got engaged during the summer. “I look forward to seeing how the university continues to grow during my next few years here as well as into the future when I am finally a psychologist in our community!”

Remembering Hurricanes

Psychology professor Alexandru Cuc on collective memory and trauma

The recent hurricanes and the tragic events of 9/11, like other traumatic experiences, raise important issues for social science researchers and counselors. For the past 20 years, one area of increasing interest in psychology has been that of memories shared by the larger social group, known as “collective memory.” Collective memory, and how it changes over time, is a primary research focus for Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences psychology professor Alexandru Cuc. Before coming to the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences in 2004, Cuc was finishing his doctorate in New York City at the New School for Social Research, where he worked on research projects related to collective memory of traumatic events.

This is happening now in relation to hurricanes, especially Katrina. The African American community has very different opinions about what was done wrong and what was done right. They are going to remember these events very differently, and already are according to some polls, than others in the community. If you feel that you were not helped to the fullest extent, as some people in this case feel, of course you are going to have a different reaction than people who feel that everything possible was done. You will have different emotional responses to the actual events, which will affect the formation of your memory.

One thing that I hope would come out of research on collective memory is more sensitivity toward social aspects of the entire process of remembering. Memory is not like a receptacle where you put things and then later extract them intact. It is more of an interactive process that happens over time. Things can get reinterpreted and sometimes misinterpreted. In this context, if a trauma victim undergoes counseling, the focus should not be only on the trauma itself, but also on how the trauma is perceived through the eyes of the larger group to which that person belongs.


Photo NOAA.
You’re Invited!

• Ars Flores: Young Artists Competition Concert—January 28, 2006
• Distinguished Speakers Series: Nobel Prize Winner Elie Wiesel—February 23, 2006
• *Nickel & Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*, presented by NSU Theatre, part of the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences Division of Humanities—February 24–26, 2006
• Admissions Open House—March 18, 2006
• Ars Flores: April Fool’s Concert—April 1, 2006
• Distinguished Speakers Series: Author Michael Shermer—April 6, 2006
• Student Research Symposium and Humanities Festival—April 7, 2006
• The World Theatre Project, presented by NSU Theatre—April 10–11, 2006
• Fourth Annual Forensic Sciences Symposium—April 14–15, 2006