Welcome to another edition of Ovations, highlighting the outstanding achievements of students, faculty and supporters of the UTSA College of Liberal and Fine Arts.

THE CURRENCY OF INTELLECTUAL PROSPERITY

On a recent trip to Mexico to arrange new student and faculty exchanges, in the beautiful colonial city of Puebla, I came upon the Biblioteca Palafoxiana. Founded in 1646 by Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, this first and oldest library in the Americas houses over 47,000 items dating from the 1400s through the twentieth century. Bishop Palafox is said to have observed, “He who succeeds without books is in an inconsolable darkness, on a mountain without company, on a path without a crosier, in darkness without a guide.”

How much can the bishop’s sentiment possibly live on in today’s world of bits, bytes, and The Cloud? Actually, “the book” (and its equivalents, such as journal articles, technical reports, musical compositions, drama performances, artworks, films, media appearances, and—yes—digital publications) remains coin of the realm when assessing intellectual prosperity. Even all-important grant funding is only fully validated when the research makes print.

COLFA faculty and students maintain a distinguished record of publication, which we must understand in the original sense: the public sharing of newly created knowledge. Dr. Christopher Ellison, who publishes 40 or more refereed articles in a typical year, is one of the most widely cited sociologists on the planet. History professor Catherine Clinton has 22 influential books to her credit, and consults for Steven Spielberg and the History Channel. The UTSA English doctoral faculty collectively ranks among the top 100 in the nation for its productivity in publishing. Sculptor Ken Little has placed his works in over 30 major museums and public spaces nationally. COLFA students, even undergraduates, regularly apprentice with faculty in publishing research. Largely because of their regimen in publishing even as junior scholars, UTSA anthropology doctoral students have won a remarkable seven National Science Foundation fellowships over the past few years. And the issue of Ovations you hold documents several more similar achievements.

Indeed, students are the ultimate reason for all this activity. It is their exposure to, and involvement in, the processes of creation and dissemination of new knowledge that forms the most important and lasting effect of their education. Our students and their tangible works will be the new guides through darkness known and not yet imagined. The good bishop would no doubt approve of our efforts in COLFA.

Daniel J. Gelo
Dean
Stumberg Distinguished University Chair
Mud-slinging, Gridlock, and Other Venerable American Political Traditions

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Bad for Business: Bullying and Segregation in the Workplace

Student Spotlight: Ariana Bocanegra Trevino – Honoring my Mother’s Sacrifice

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In the traditional model of academic inquiry, researchers must conform to the highly circumscribed role of the analytical observer who remains emotionally detached from the research subject. Engagement at a personal level is to be carefully avoided because it clouds objectivity and leads to bias. It’s about data, not people; behavioral trends, not the individual stories behind them.

But to a group of UTSA anthropologists and artists involved in research and creative work that engages indigenous peoples across the world, standard research methodologies omit an entire range of valuable human input from the equation. These faculty members rely on their ability to establish mutual trust, respect, and interests with people of radically different origins and cultural outlooks from their own. For them, getting personally involved is not a weakness; it’s a necessity and an intrinsic dimension of the varied work they perform.

What follows are the inspiring personal reports of seven faculty in the college whose lives have been transformed by enduring bonds formed with members of indigenous communities. Their experiences demonstrate that research can be at its most effective when it stems from deep emotional involvement and a sense that, far from being a detached observer, researchers are intimately connected with and responsible to their environment and the individuals they study among.
Richard Armendariz
Department of Art and Art History
Research Location: Sapello, New Mexico (Genízaro Apache Tribe)

I’ve known my teacher, David Atekpatzin Young, since 1995. He is Mexica / Lakota and belongs to the Genízaro Apache tribe. We met through a shared acquaintance when I became interested in collaborating on a project with a local artist as a graduate at the University of Colorado. It took a year or so before “Ate” told me he was a curandero [a traditional Native American healer] and head of an indigenous community. He began inviting me to sweat lodge ceremonies, and things grew from there.

The Mexica way is a deliberate lifestyle of earth-based teachings and practices that touch all aspects of life, from the food we eat to the way we treat others. There is a tremendous amount of trust that has to be earned in this community before being welcomed in. Once that happens, you are given small amounts of responsibility. The duty to heal the community first came for me when I was asked to tend fire in a sweat lodge ceremony. It’s a big and important job. You pray with stones, which represent our grandfathers, to prepare the cradle that the fire will be built on. If the fire is not prepared properly, healing will not take place.

My experiences have informed my research practices in a number of ways, from imagery in my own work to participation in collaborative projects. I’ve made artwork that is a direct response to the Mexica teachings, people, and imagery, interpreted through a contemporary lens. I have even used our healing practices I collaborated on with Artpace and Washington Irving Academy titled “Calle Rojo,” where I attempted to reacquaint students with their indigenous roots. Most of their ancestors went back many generations, as San Antonio is on Lipan Apache land. As part of the performance, we prepared the space with copal [tree resin] and sweet grass, organized talking circles, created altars, read indigenous stories, and made medicine bags. Little by little, we prepared our bodies and minds for the task of building, preparing, and performing a sweat lodge ceremony.

Kathryn Brown
Department of Anthropology
Research Location: San Ignacio, Belize

Victoria Uck, or Ms. Vicky as my husband [fellow UTSA anthropologist Jason Yaeger] and I called her fondly, first joined our archeological project in Xunantunich examining the Maya civilization of Central America. As camp cook and manager, she was the glue that held everything together. Everyone loved her. She was kind, generous, and always happy. She also took care of our son, who always traveled with us to Belize and couldn’t wait to make the trip every summer to see the wonderful woman he called his Belizean Grandma. The bond between the two was incredible; she was family to him and to us. We were fortunate to have her visit us in San Antonio on two occasions, including a visit to celebrate her birthday.

When Ms. Vicky was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, we were all devastated. Our students and staff worked to pull together funding for her treatment in Guatemala. It extended her life for almost a year. It was amazing to see all the emails and get well cards from students who had worked with us over the years. It was clear just how much of an impact she had on so many, and this was very special to Ms. Vicky. She knew she meant so much to all of us. She died holding a blanket that one of our students gave her when she started chemotherapy, and was buried with a dress we had given her for her birthday. We are going to place a tile mosaic on her tomb depicting a scene from San Antonio; a place she loved, a place where many of her close friends and family were from, and a place she longed to visit again.

Our relationship with Ms. Vicky added so much to our lives. She was one of the most incredible people we have ever met, an inspiration to our family and project.

Atekpatzin Young at Tulum, Mexico
Victoria Uck teaching archaeology students how to make tortillas in Belize
members. Although she did not have many material things in her life, she had a heart of gold. Her passing was one of the hardest things we have gone through. We think about her every day. Of course, her family is still very much a part of our project. Several of her sons and two of her brothers still work for us. We will miss her terribly, but her spirit lives on.

MICHAEL CEPEK
Department of Anthropology
Research Location:
Sucumbíos Province, Ecuador (Cofán Nation)

I have many close relationships with individuals who belong to the indigenous Cofán nation of Amazonian Ecuador, a people with whom I’ve been working for twenty years. I started research in Cofán territory when I was an undergraduate, and I continue to visit my Cofán friends, family, and collaborators every year. To date, I’ve probably spent about four years in Cofán communities. Although there are many individuals about whom I could talk, one of my favorite relationships is with Roveto, a young man from the community of Dureno who is one of my three ritual children. Basically, he’s a godson, although in the Cofán version of that relationship. I call him “Du’su” in the Cofán language of A’ingae. It’s the same term that you use for a son-in-law. He calls me “Opi’su Quitsa,” which means “lifting father” or “carrying father.”

I’ve seen Roveto grow from an infant to the twelve-year-old he is now. I love the kid. He’s sweet, a hard worker, and he loves to fish and walk in the forest. One of the most interesting things about my relationship with him is how it began. His parents – Alejandro and Lucia – are “traditional” Cofán people who decided to adopt a non-Cofán child through Ecuador’s national adoption system. Anti-indigenous racism is still present in Ecuadorian society, and they knew they’d face challenges in the adoption process; neither speaks Spanish or has a job, and Alejandro loves to wear his tunic and face paint, and to speak about his prowess as a shaman in the world of healing via the use of hallucinogenic drugs. I was asked to testify on their behalf as an anthropological specialist on Cofán society. I fielded all of the tough questions from the judges, and at the end of the hearing the court decided to give Roveto to Alejandro and Lucia. It was actually the first case, to my knowledge, of a very visibly indigenous Amazonian couple getting adoption rights through an official governmental process over a child who did not come from their society. I helped with the entire adoption process, and at the end of it all Alejandro asked me to become the ritual father of Roveto. I’m currently on a grant to study the relationship between Cofán people and the transnational oil industry, which has been operating in their territory for four decades. After that, I’m planning on doing an intensive study of Cofán shamanism. I also have a whole set of more applied research projects that I take on to aid the Cofán ethnic federation with various cultural or political activities. One of them has involved teaching a number of young Cofán men to become their own anthropologists. A lot of that has focused on mapping traditional Cofán territory to help with land rights and cultural documentation. I always make sure to work with Cofán collaborators and assistants to hammer down agreements for reciprocity before beginning any new project. Having good social relationships makes that possible. It’s the only way to do anthropology ethically these days.

DAN GELO
Department of Anthropology
Research Location:
Cyril, Oklahoma (Comanche Nation)

As a young researcher I became an adopted grandson of Margaret Thomas, a Comanche elder and medicine woman. Our relationship evolved over the course of my first year of fieldwork, as her family underwent many changes and I became immersed in the Comanche community. Margaret saw one grandchild die in a car wreck and another move away around the time I first arrived. It has always been customary among Comanches that when they lose a loved one, they seek someone else to take that place. We were close for many years, from 1982 until her death in 2006. Margaret took me in and took care of me, and freely shared her deep knowledge of tribal history and traditional ways with me. She saw pretty quickly that I was someone who really cared about the perpetuation of that knowledge.
Margaret was the descendant of several prominent chiefs and ritual leaders. Her father, Shannon Wahnee, was a noted figure in the peyote religion in the 1940’s. Her tutelage gave me a strong basis of knowledge about traditional Comanche language and culture. She was respected throughout the tribe for her knowledge of the old ways, and that gave others confidence in my own work. Her network of relatives and friends became my network of additional consultants. To this day, my relationship with Margaret continues to benefit my work recording the way Comanche people make their attitudes and ideals manifest through ritual, myth, music, dance and language.

For most anthropologists there is a need, if not an obligation or primary purpose, to give back to the community that has shared its way of life. I am grateful to have had some opportunities in this regard. For example, in 2009 I consulted with the tribal language and cultural preservation committee as they produced their valuable revised dictionary of Comanche that is being used by young people of the tribe to perpetuate the language. For this project I interviewed elders to clarify certain words and definitions, and advised the writers about the best way to represent certain sounds. During the last three years, I conducted research jointly for the tribe and the U.S. Army’s Fort Hood, identifying potential traditional cultural properties on the vast military post, which was once Comanche territory. This project involved lots of archival research, plus bringing about twenty elders to the post and recording their knowledge of the plant and animal life and the terrain. The Army is interested in protecting the places we identified for future Comanche generations. It feels good to use one’s learning to foster this kind of practical outcome.

**JAMON HALVAKSZ**

**Department of Anthropology**

**Research Location:** Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea (Biangai People)

I feel fortunate that the people I have come to know and care about while doing research in Papua New Guinea have been so welcoming to me. As I have tried to respect them, so they have come to respect me. It began when Joe Songoa, or Papa Joe as I call him, took me in as a volunteer with a local nonprofit called the Wau Ecology Institute. I was doing a report for them as an intern, and Joe agreed to host me during my time in the village. Over the course of several months, I learned to think of him as a father, of his wife Nawasio as a mother, and of his family as my family.

Adoption happens all the time within families in the community, and I simply fit into that system. When I mentioned to Joe that an article about our relationship was going to be published he asked me to share the following statement from him: “For us, looking after kids from elsewhere is not new. We have looked after so many, some were family, some were not.” This is certainly true as Joe and Nawasio have raised the children of relatives and have adopted homeless children from a nearby town. James [pictured in the photo to the right of Halvaksz] was welcomed into the house at the same time I was. We have grown up in the family as brothers. Having first stayed with Papa Joe and his family in 1998, I have been back to visit many times. They offer me a place to stay, we exchange gifts, and I spend time with my namesake, a young boy who is named after me. Instead of retiring to my own house every night to sit in silence, I sit with my host family around the fire and tell stories, am consulted on important matters, and am often asked for advice on everything from business to child rearing and education. In return, my brothers and other members of the community help with my research examining the transformations of work and identity as expressed through subsistence agriculture and cash crops. When my daughter was born, I gave her the middle name of Kabi in honor of my Biangai sister.

I typically have to hire a crew of field assistants to gather the data that I need about gardens, and while being adopted in Joe’s family is certainly an asset when it comes to their family lands, it also challenges my relationship with other community members. I have to stay neutral, try to take in as many opinions and hire from as many different families as possible to ensure that there are no jealousies. So far,
it has worked, and the communities have been most supportive of my work.

SCOTT SHERER,
Department of Art and Art History
Research Location:
Arnhem Land Region, Australia
(Yolngu People)

Over the years, I’ve enjoyed a relationship with Terry and Clely Yumbulul. Terry is an artist, Yolngu elder, health care advocate, and community leader. Within the broader Yolngu culture, he is a Warramiri man, leader of his tribe, and custodian of the Warramiri estate, which comprises the Wessell Islands, the English Company Islands, the Bromby Islands, and areas on mainland Australia in the northeastern part of the country.

Terry is also a prominent artist and advocate for Aboriginal cultural history and survival, and I met him in this capacity in 2008 while conducting research for an exhibition at UTSA Satellite Space titled The Lam Collection of Aboriginal Art. As a result of our encounter, I was able to invite Terry to San Antonio to include him in Spiritual Dreaming, a two-person exhibition with Penelope Speier. He and Clely stayed in San Antonio for several weeks, during which time he lectured and shared his work and culture with various groups and individuals across the city. In 2009, I had the good fortune of being hosted by Terry in Australia. For three weeks, I attended ceremonies and observed aspects of both traditional culture and the changing contexts of Aboriginal life within modern Australia.

The main objective of my research in Australia was to gain an understanding of Aboriginal art, the history and current circumstances of the Aboriginal art movement (which since 1971 has gained remarkable international acclaim), and the relationships between traditional and global cultures. The experience has had a direct influence on my teaching. We discuss contemporary Aboriginal art in my courses dealing with the history of primitivism in modern art as well as my courses on postcolonialism and global cultures. I discuss how Aboriginal art inherently functions with the rights and responsibilities of Terry’s cultural traditions as well as how his work engages with contemporary circumstances. My relationship with Terry has also instructed my understanding of the continued significance of preserving and exhibiting traditional arts. His work has influenced my understanding and interest in Chicano and African American art as subcultural voices that strive to maintain their significance and influence.

JASON YAEGER
Department of Anthropology
Research Location:
San Ignacio, Belize

Most of the local people with whom my wife [Kathryn Brown] and I collaborate on excavations haven’t had the opportunity to pursue a degree in archaeology or anthropology. However, there is one young woman with whom we have been working for many years who just finished her bachelor’s degree and will soon, we hope, be coming to the U.S. to pursue a graduate degree at UTSA. Her name is Sylvia Batty, and she is one of the up-and-coming young professional archaeologists in Belize. Sylvia is of Maya and Creole descent, and her parents are both trained archaeologists. Although she is only in her early twenties, she has been participating in archaeological excavations for a decade or so. She has a passion for her country and for the ancient Maya past, and we believe she will play an important role in Belize as one of the country’s top archaeologists in future decades.

I met Sylvia’s parents in 1991 when I began researching the political and environmental dynamics of Maya civilization in Belize, and I have known her since she was a young girl. She was always interested in archaeology, and in 2007, as a teenager, she participated in an archaeological project that was investigating the ancient Maya site of Chan. She subsequently joined our team in 2010, and has worked with us every summer since then.

I believe it is important that foreign projects working in Belize and other countries establish collaborative relationships with local partner institutions. Belize is a small country, with less than 300,000 inhabitants. There are thousands of archaeological sites in the country, but not enough resources to study them. As part of our research team Sylvia gains valuable field experience and builds relationships with our graduate students, creating a network of next-generation archaeologists, both foreign and nationals, working in Belize.

Each of these stories resonates with a profound sense of respect for people and places. Respect, trust, belonging, love—these are the essential ingredients as COLFA fieldworkers seek to conduct their investigations with maximum integrity. Their work shows how basic research, academic success, life-changing experiences, and local community empowerment can all go hand in hand.
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RINGSIDE IS WHERE IT'S AT
Mud-slinging, Gridlock, and Other Venerable American Political Traditions

BY CINDY TUMIEL

American politics has always been a contact sport. Contemporary students, looking at the powdered wigs and fussy garb of revolutionary patriots, might get the impression that the earliest democratic elections of the fledgling United States were mannerly and genteel affairs. But in reality, the presidential race of 1796 was the forefather of the political acrimony and incivility that continues today.
John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, who stood shoulder to shoulder during America’s fight for independence, practically turned into street thugs a few years later as they ran against each other to succeed George Washington. Adams and his supporters, the Federalists, tried to link Jefferson’s Democratic-Republican party with the violence of the French Revolution. Jefferson’s camp accused Adams of being beholden to the British monarchy. Adams was labeled a fool and a tyrant; Jefferson was portrayed as a weakling and a coward.

America’s third presidential campaign is the starting point for discussions with Bryan Gervais, an assistant professor of political science at UTSA who has a scholarly interest in political communication, political psychology and legislative behavior. He has a special research focus in the growth of the Tea Party and the parallel growth of incivility among people on all sides of the political spectrum.

Politically-inspired acrimony really is nothing new, Dr. Gervais said. Since the dawn of the nation, Americans’ right to self-govern has always stirred passionate ideals and competitiveness, and vitriol inevitably follows.

“You will find that throughout American political history,” said Gervais, “what is different today is that there is just so much more of it. And it’s not just the politicians who are doing it. Everyone can contribute to the political discourse.”

Gervais defines political incivility as speech and behavior that is deliberately disrespectful and marked by insulting language, histrionics, conspiracy theories or “spin” hyperbole.

“Deliberate is the key word,” he said. “It is overt. It is not a passive enterprise and it is not accidental.”

Gervais finds plenty of material for his research on the comment boards of political news Web sites, such as this remark from Politico.com, directed at an Obama supporter: “You’re the Big time Loser!! You voted for this LYING Marxist Devil TWICE!! How Insane is that Numb Nuts!!!”

Democratic supporters are equally capable of slinging uncivilized speech. Gervais noted this remark: “The regressive conservatards in the fringe right also hate the constitution.”

The rise of the Tea Party has been the most significant development in the 21st-century political landscape, Dr. Gervais said. But while this movement has fostered much conflict in our political institutions, it is more of a symptom, rather than a cause, of the growing incivility in our political discourse.

Effects of Social Media

“While people associated with the Tea Party certainly use uncivil rhetoric, so do other groups,” Dr. Gervais said. “It would be too easy to say that the Tea Party is to blame for it all.”

The exploding media environment, which has opened a multitude of forums to ordinary citizens for the exchange of ideas, has contributed as well. No longer are mainstream television networks or major newspapers in command of the discussion. The Internet offers people instant access to a vast array of sources from which they can seek information. E-mail and social media open an equally vast array of venues in which people can share information and express their opinions, Dr. Gervais noted.

From Twitter and Facebook posts to YouTube videos to personal blogs, the Internet has opened the floodgates for political opinions.

“Think back 40 or 50 years ago. There were three main television broadcast channels for news, and the news media stuck to a pretty strict standard for civility,” Dr. Gervais said. “Now there are multiple cable news networks, which can narrowly cast to different audiences. Then there is the Internet, which sort of blows the whole thing open so everyone can participate.”

“The Internet has been somewhat of the proverbial two-edged sword for political discussions, however. On one hand, it makes political discourse available to all, and allows a free flow of ideas and opinions among individuals who otherwise might never speak,” Gervais said. “But the incessant incivility over politically divisive issues hardens people into their positions and makes them less open to other viewpoints,” he said.

“Now everyone can contribute to this political discourse,” he said. “But if people don’t abide by any sort of code of civility, there is a...
Think back 40 or 50 years ago. There were three main television broadcast channels for news, and the news media stuck to a pretty strict standard for civility,” Dr. Gervais said. “Now, there are multiple cable news networks, which can narrowly cast to different audiences. Then there is the Internet, which sort of blows the whole thing open so everyone can participate.

The polarization and acrimony show in political institutions as well as among the general public. “Politicians are less likely to be bipartisan when they are throwing insults,” Gervais said.

While ground rules in the legislative chambers keep name-calling in check, there are no such restrictions on the general public, he noted. “This leads people to have a lower regard for the other side,” he said. “There is less willingness to compromise, and when they go to vote, they will elect people who share these same views.”

Gervais, who earned his doctorate at the University of Maryland and came to UTSA last year, plans to develop a political research laboratory here that will evaluate the effect of social media on the political process. Scholars have only just begun to observe and measure how political partisans are using these tools to sway public opinion, he said.

“The Internet is a great way of connecting with each other, but we don’t use it for good,” Dr. Gervais added. “We don’t use it to consider other points of view. It becomes a wasted opportunity.”

As the nation tumbles towards another presidential contest in 2016, the forecast seems set for continued political incivility, mudslinging and hardened stances that foster gridlock. But Dr. Gervais reminds his students that the phenomenon of social media is barely 10 years old, and it continues to press forward as an all-pervasive part of people’s lives. As that rapid evolution continues, there is no predicting where it will lead and what effect it will have on our political discourse. Maybe, he said, the acrimony will run its course and we will experience a rebirth of manners.

“The media is something that changes so quickly,” Gervais said. “I imagine at some point things are going to change enough that the ways in which we communicate will revert to a more simple fashion.”

One new trend is the end of purely anonymous posting, he noted. More and more, social media “identities” follow users as they surf and as they post. Forum providers are requiring users to register and establish a profile that identifies them as they comment. People can be put on restrictions, or completely banned, if the providers find their comments too offensive.

Electronic profiles and even moderate policing may lead people to become more considerate in their discourse.

“This probably is going to be happening more and more,” Dr. Gervais said. “Anonymity makes it a lot easier for people to say really nasty things. There are no consequences.”

“Censorship is not a solution,” he added. “Ideally, we want people to feel free to express themselves, while also holding off on some of the superfluous insults that make discourse less constructive.”
Abel Ramirez started to get the feeling he had chosen the wrong major.

Then he stumbled upon a game-changer.

“I stepped outside the science building one afternoon and heard the wind ensemble practicing,” said Ramirez, a 1993 UTSA graduate who earned a bachelor’s in music education. “It changed my life. I knew exactly what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.”

Ramirez had entered UTSA as a geology major. He had friends whose parents were executives of major oil companies, and he wanted to follow in their footsteps. After several years of studying, however, he knew he was going down the wrong path.

“I realized I wasn’t in love with science,” he said. “I was in love with music. I thought, ‘I’m going to go back to what I love.’”

Soon he met Dr. Bob Rustowicz, associate professor in the music department, who so inspired Ramirez that he felt “homesick for music.” He admired the faculty in the liberal and fine arts and never wanted to look for another school to follow his passion.

While undertaking his coursework, Ramirez also taught private percussion lessons. He found it difficult to attend every class, but he credits his professors for sticking with him and encouraging him to focus on earning his degree.

“They said, ‘There’s plenty of time for [teaching], but you’ve got to get through this to get to that,’” Ramirez said. “They were patient in addition to being great musicians.”

Now that he’s teaching students of his own, as assistant professor of music and conductor of the Del Mar College wind ensemble in Corpus Christi, Ramirez passes on that patience and support to his own students. He accepted the Del Mar position in 2012, coming home to Texas after his musical journey took him all over the nation.

After years at the podium, Ramirez feels confident about his teaching and conducting ability. But the first time he stood in front of his own students, in a high school band right after he graduated in 1993, he was scared.

“I was so nervous, but I started reflecting on what [my UTSA professors] taught me,” he said. “This was no different than the UTSA wind ensemble, just the way you approach it. A whole note is a whole note, no matter whether it’s high school students or doctoral students.”

Ramirez enjoyed his work as a Texas high school music educator for seven years, and never intended to pursue a graduate degree. That is, not until he received a tempting invitation from the University of California, Los Angeles, an opportunity he couldn’t pass up. While he was participating in the American Classic Buccaneer Music Festival at Del Mar College Abel’s conducting ability caught the attention of UCLA’s Tom Lee who was impressed with his conducting and encouraged him to study at UCLA. In 2004, he earned a doctor of musical arts degree in conducting from UCLA.

From there, his career took him to several exciting teaching positions and prestigious accomplishments. Immediately after earning his doctorate, he worked at California State University, Los Angeles as director of bands, head of the conducting division and chair of the instrumental area. From there, he moved to the Midwest to teach at the Illinois School of Music, which boasts the oldest and largest band program in the world. In 2007, he conducted a concert at Carnegie Hall, and later co-founded the International Honors Wind Symphony as a collaborative effort with Distinguished Concerts International New York.

Despite all he had accomplished after leaving the Lone Star State, homesickness brought him back to Texas.

“I am a huge family guy, a big mama’s boy,” Ramirez said. “I was away from
home so much, it started taking a psychological toll on me. I wanted to come home.”

After being unable to visit family for two consecutive winters due to snow, he knew it was time to find a way back. He decided that as soon as a position came open close to his family, he would apply. Turns out, he didn’t need to. He received a call from Del Mar College asking him to teach and conduct its wind ensemble. He gladly accepted.

Today, Ramirez continues to hone his craft, often with UTSA’s Rustowicz’s standard as his guide.

“Dr. Rustowicz is still as elegant as he’s always been at the podium, and it motivates me because I’m always evaluating my own conducting,” Ramirez said. When UTSA hosted the College Band Directors National Association, he had the opportunity to watch Rustowicz in action again. “Dr. Rustowicz conducted a piece I’d recently conducted. He did something a particular way, and I thought, ‘I wish I’d done that.’ But I put it in the memory bank, and I’ll do it next time.”

Rustowicz has an equally high opinion of Ramirez’s ability as a conductor. “His passion for making music,” Rustowicz said, “coupled with a natural talent to display this passion through physical motions and gestures, made him an unusually successful conductor. I would say that his conducting skills easily make him one of the most talented students I have worked with in my years at UTSA.”

“I used to feel that you had to be associated with a large school to really be amazing at something, but in the past 20 years, that thought has been washed away,” Ramirez said. “Dr. Rustowicz is a musician’s musician. There are only about five people in his league. His conducting skill, I call it poetry in motion.”

Ramirez said he’s thankful for the entire UTSA faculty who helped him hit all the high notes throughout his musical education, which led him to where he is today.

“None of this would have happened if I didn’t have a great start somewhere. Walking into that music building did that,” Ramirez said. “All I had to do was hear that band playing and see that gentleman with a baton. Holy moly, did my life change after that. You cannot put a price tag on the things I learned at UTSA.”
BLURRED GOVERNANCE

Multinational Enterprises and the Future of Global Politics  BY PATRICK COLLINS

In the novel Jennifer Government, Max Barry paints a bleak picture of a not-too-distant future where government powers are radically diminished and unscrupulous, profit-mongering corporations have taken control of global governance. The story revolves around a marketing ploy by Nike to enact a string of teenage killings that will imbue its new line of shoes with valuable street cred. Jennifer Government, who like the novel’s antagonist John Nike bears the namesake of her employer, takes it upon herself to uncover the conspiracy. In the end (spoiler alert), despite lack of funding for crime-solving activities and intense corporate bullying, she succeeds at bringing the evil plot to a halt.

The book is a work of fiction, but its premise may not be as far-fetched as you might think. Consider two of the current research topics of Matthias Hofferberth, assistant professor in the Department of Political Science and Geography specializing in global governance and international organizations in world politics. On one hand is the situation in the Ogoni region of Nigeria, where Royal Dutch Shell has been accused of standing by when Nigerian soldiers carried out extended assaults on Ogoni people who peacefully protested against Shell after their agricultural livelihood was ruined by the company’s disastrous impact on the environment. Wrongful arrests, tortures, and killings ensued on a widespread scale, including the questionable execution of environmental activist and Nobel Prize-nominated writer Ken Saro-Wiwa. Since then, international outrage has forced Shell into court settlement, but the company continues to operate in the Niger Delta and is regularly cited for environmental and human rights violations in the region.

In a similar case, U.S. oil giant ExxonMobil was accused of hiring military forces to protect a massive natural gas extraction project amidst the conflict of a separatist movement in the Aceh province of northern Indonesia, with allegations of human rights abuses numbering in the thousands.

Alarming as these cases are, they represent only one end of the spectrum of corporate behavior in international politics. Hofferberth himself is quick to shrug off conspiracist notions of a world headed for corporate domination. He will, however, point to trends he says are in the process of altering our current understanding of how world politics is being made. “I think we’re at a stage where we’re seeing something interesting,” he says. “We see the state retreating to some extent, and that comes as a big surprise for political scientists and international relation scholars because for more than three hundred years we’ve been told that the state is the only relevant political unit.”
What’s occurring, according to Hofferberth, is a blurring of the historical divide between governing institutions and profit-making organizations, between the public and the private realm. Perhaps the most evident illustration of this public-private melding is in the security industry, where it’s becoming increasingly common not only for corporations to hire security forces, but also for government agencies to delegate large-scale military duties to private companies (think Blackwater in Iraq). Other examples of the eroding distinction between corporations and government in the U.S. include the privatization of the prison industry and the frequent circulation of high-ranking executives between the Food and Drug Administration and the pharmaceutical industry.

With or without the awareness or consent of the governed, the narrative of governance built around separate nation-states is giving way to a more complex and multi-layered constellation. “But I think that story was a little bit of a myth to begin with,” says Hofferberth. “We’re rightfully afraid there might be a dystopia, but we’ve never really had a perfect division between public and private anyway. Think about the British East India Company, which was pretty much a corporate state in itself. They made their own money, had a standing army, and basically made their own laws. Although they deferred to the Crown, communication was slow and decisions had to be made on the ground, so you basically had a company running an entire sub-continent.”

**Scenarios**

Will history repeat itself then, and see the reemergence of the corporate state only on a much wider scale? In Hofferberth’s opinion, that represents an extreme and improbable outcome. Equally hard to envision, however, is a future where the complex balance between public and private is handled with total integrity.

“In a best-case scenario,” he says, “enterprises fully embrace the notion of social responsibility and all actors involved – corporate personnel, shareholders, stakeholders, and consumers – understand the need for broader corporate responsibilities. Those enterprises engaged most in this would become recognized leaders and would be more visible based on certification schemes [such as the Fairtrade certification system] that truly work. Pressing issues such as environmental degradation and human rights violation would no longer be accepted as collateral damage of corporate activity but would become their prime responsibility, fundamentally revolutionizing the idea of what it means to be a corporation.”

“On the other end of the scale, we
find enterprises not embracing the idea in any meaningful way but rather limiting their commitment towards global governance to instrumental and strategic greenwashing [falsely representing ethical initiatives]. Instead of truly engaging with any of the issues, profit would remain the end-all be-all. Everything else would be subordinated to that. In this scenario, corporations would become more influential in global governance but would not be responsive to public concerns. Instead of solving pressing problems, they would continue to contribute to them.”

Most likely, Hofferberth believes, corporations will retain their focus on profit while at the same time assuming public roles, remaining sensitive all the while to consumer perceptions. This will give way to a complicated dynamic in global governance, but one that Hofferberth believes will be navigable thanks to increased consumer awareness and emerging initiatives such as the Global Compact, a United Nations program that sets ethical standards for multinational corporations. “Instantaneous communication has brought about more demand for transparency,” he says. “Any corporate decision can be made visible on a global scale. With social media, the rate of scrutiny and the ability to affect large enterprises has changed even more.” While the internet by no means guarantees that enterprises will act responsibly, it opens the door for a more outspoken, informed civil society and augmented grassroots-level watchdog capabilities.

Hofferberth is interested in the UN’s Global Compact as an example of the organization’s rule-making activity beyond the nation-state. He will soon have a chance to explore this research interest alongside students thanks to the introduction of a new course on the UN and the creation of the UTSA Model United Nations Society, in which every year participating students will take up the role of a delegate from a given country and engage in Security Council and General Assembly discussion on various topics. He’s also in the process of developing a study-abroad course in his home country of Germany to give UTSA students the chance to study global politics with students and instructors in an international context. He believes the experience will be especially fruitful for those interested in the department’s newly offered degree in global affairs.

And for those concerned over the future of global governance, Hofferberth offers encouragement. “Globalization has left us with large corporate enterprises,” he says, “but it has also created opportunities for global exchange of ideas and greater scrutiny of these new corporate empires. It is up to us to take advantage of these.”

In a best case scenario, enterprises fully embrace the notion of social responsibility and all actors involved – corporate personnel, shareholders, stakeholders, and consumers – understand the need for broader corporate responsibilities.

Matthias Hofferberth, Assistant Professor, Political Science & Geography
The first time I read Homer in high school,” remembers Joel Christensen, “I really didn’t understand it. I thought that Achilles was a selfish twit and that Odysseus was undeserving of his fame.” Yet years later as an undergrad Christensen found himself writing a senior thesis on Homeric similes. Then came the M.A. and Ph.D. in classics at NYU, and before he knew it he’d devoted an entire academic career to a subject that had originally mystified him: “Over time, what I was doing as a foundation became my prime interest because I was never satisfied that I understood the epics and their language well enough.”

Christensen’s magic moment came when reading the works in the original Greek. "I had never, and haven’t still, read lines so full of meaning and so effortlessly yet elegantly phrased," he says of the revelatory experience. But even as a full convert he retained a touch of his early critical response to the epics. Today, as a professor of classics, Christensen understands that his original take on the Iliad and the Odyssey was not only perfectly valid, but valuable, and he’s managed to parlay his lifelong intellectual curiosity into an original body of research that offers a fresh and engaging perspective on one of the most traversed topics in academia.

People are taking note, both in the classroom and in the academy at large. Christensen recently completed a fellowship at Harvard University’s Center for Hellenic Studies, and his teaching accomplishments have earned him the American Philological Association’s prestigious Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Classics at the College Level, which recognizes the exceptional achievements of a single classics professor each year. In the citation that accompanied the award, APA chair Gregory Aldrete lauded the young professor’s remarkable commitment to his students – a topic of budding legend within the Philosophy and Classics department – and his extensive contributions to program development at UTSA.
Deciphering Homer

Christensen’s unique history and genuine passion for teaching make him one of the most interesting people on the planet with whom to discuss Homer, especially for a newcomer who might feel some trepidation at approaching the daunting territory of classical literature. In his book Homer: A Beginner’s Guide, he and coauthor Elton Barker show with razor insight and humor that the Iliad and the Odyssey are neither foreign to the modern experience nor should they be intimidating. “Homer’s epics are powerful, gripping, and exciting tales about the big themes of human existence,” they write in the introduction. “They tell of the life and death struggle of battle; the love for a wife or husband, parent, sibling, or friend; the desire for honor and glory set against care for one’s city, family, or comrades; respect for the gods and pity for the weak.” These are enduring topics, says Christensen, that are continually revisited throughout history. It is Homer’s adept exploration of human nature through myth that has kept the epics front and center throughout Western cultural development. From literature (James Joyce’s Ulysses) to popular films (Big Fish, O Brother, Where Art Thou?) to common consumer products (Ajax detergent, Trojan condoms) and the everyday idioms “Achilles heel,” “siren song,” and “odyssey,” their influence persists even today.

Less direct influences of the epics on contemporary culture are even more ubiquitous – at least to the trained eye. As part of his Harvard fellowship, Christensen published a paper on the Hour 25 website titled “Emerging from the Cyclops’ Cave: Odysseus and Walter White.” The paper represents his latest research into the parallels between the Odyssey’s hero and the protagonist of the hit TV series Breaking Bad. As Christensen explains, the comparison illuminates positive and negative aspects of both characters: they each endure great strife and overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges thanks to their intelligence and their use of deception and false personas, yet their cunning and lying robs them of their identities and estranges them from the families they had been trying to protect. “Thinking about the way Walter White becomes the monster he once feared has helped me see that at the end of the

FACULTY PROFILE: Joel Christensen

Who was Homer?
The old textbook answer is that Homer was a blind poet from the Aegean Islands who lived sometime between the 8th and 6th centuries BCE. But this is pure fantasy made up by later biographers.

Homer from my perspective is an idea and not actually a historical entity of any type. There are really two schools of thought about this but both agree that we can say nothing absolute about a historical person named Homer. One school posits that there was a living oral tradition of epic poetry in ancient Greece and that at the end of this tradition there was someone who composed either the Iliad or the Odyssey (or both) and that, though we do not know who this person is, we call him Homer because the Greeks did. Another school recognizes that the ancient Greeks have a mythic tradition of a great poet named Homer to whom many ancient poems were attributed and that an entire section of the oral epic tradition can be characterized as Homer. This perspective – to which I subscribe – remains largely agnostic about where and when the epics gained their final form, since we attribute the unique character and “genius” of the poems to the cultural oral tradition and its performance. The former school I mentioned considers the Iliad and the Odyssey largely the product of a single genius who composed in a way more akin to James Joyce’s creation of Ulysses.

So, for me, ‘Homer’ is an idea, a metonym for a way of looking at the world and a way of describing it.

Do you have a favorite line from one of Homer’s epics?

I object! This is an unfair question! The Iliad is almost 16,000 lines; the Odyssey is over 12,000. I love them all. But there are some that linger with me.

I love what Odysseus has Achilles say in the Odyssey (11.489-91): “I would rather serve as slave to another man / a man with no land and livelihood / than be a king over all the rotted corpses.”

And I also love what Zeus says to begin the Odyssey (1.32-4): “Wretches! Mortals are always blaming the gods, / claiming that evil comes from us even though / They have pain beyond their due thanks to their own stupidity.”

But I am a sucker for what the king of the Phaeacians says to Odysseus in Book 8 of the Odyssey (685-6): “A friend who knows you well is in no way less than a relative.”

Do you analyze every movie or novel you encounter?

Absolutely. This doesn’t mean that I am a snob – I have a real love for dramatic television narrative, especially in the sci-fi fantasy mold (Battlestar Galactica, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Game of Thrones) and I guess I provide different latitude for film and TV than I would for literature, but I am keenly interested in the way that any story we enjoy affects and shapes the lives we live. As I have gotten older and time has become more precious, I am more discerning (and, with children now, a little more careful), but students have been known to get me pretty riled up about contemporary culture.

While I think being entertained has its value, I also really believe the Socratic dictum that the good life is the examined one. If you were to ask my wife, she would probably tell you that this gets a little tiresome. But the fact is that I do enjoy the deeper engagement of the analytical process.
Odyssey, Odysseus is eerily similar to the Cyclops Polyphemos [the one-eyed monster Odysseus blinds towards the beginning of the epic],” says Christensen.

The analysis is a perfect example of the surprising and thought-provoking approaches Christensen brings to the epics that have students coming away from his courses genuinely inspired, with a newfound passion for the big questions in life as explored through classical literature. Yet why is it that so few of us take to Homer when his work is so intrinsic to the very fabric of our culture? One reason is that they are written in verse, a style we’re not accustomed to experiencing in long-form reading. Then there are the names, which are unfamiliar and difficult to remember (Telemachus, Astyanax) albeit often cool-sounding (Agamemnon, Tiresias). Most daunting, however, is their length and complexity; both works feature multiple interweaving plots and extensive character lists. But none of these are reasons to be dissuaded, insists Christensen.

“One of the things that often overwhelms readers is the sheer number of names,” he says. “I advise people to operate by the rule of threes: don’t worry about the name of a person, place, or thing unless it comes up three times. The ancient audiences had a great deal of contextual information about the contents of the poems, but they never quite knew which version they were going to hear or what elements were going to be emphasized, so another bit of advice is patience: the epic will provide you with the relevant information. If it isn’t in the poem, you probably don’t need to know it for the first reading. Finally, I would suggest reading the poem aloud to yourself – these epics were meant to be enjoyed aurally, and that type of engagement can make a serious difference.”

Armed with these tips, perhaps even the most hesitant among us has a chance of making it through the Iliad or the Odyssey unscathed. But don’t expect to understand everything on your first reading – or perhaps your second or third, either. After all, even for Christensen, truly comprehending the epics continues to be a lifelong proposition: “I still find more questions than answers when I read Homer, so I suspect I have many years of work ahead of me still.” Don’t we all?

What do you do for fun?
I read a lot – I do like science fiction and fantasy books, but I also love modern novelists like Don DeLillo, David Foster Wallace, Salman Rushdie and Philip Roth. I also like to run (3 to 4 days a week). I combine these pursuits by listening to audiobooks while running. I am a bit of a baseball fanatic (I am from New England, so I love the Red Sox). And I also used to play in bands in college, so I try to stay engaged in independent music as well (again, something I can do while running). In graduate school, I played a lot of basketball even though I was terrible at it.

What would your students say about you?
I suppose that some students think I am a little intense. I hope that they know I really care about their education. And I know that I have a reputation for being tough that has only a small purchase on reality. A student once commented complaining about me that I “make simple things difficult.” I actually take this as an unintended compliment. It is my job, I think, to show how things that seem simple and self-evident are far more complicated and, conversely, when things seem complicated, to make difficult things simple.

Students seem always to say I am passionate. I’ll take that one too.
Long before a professional football locker room made Americans acutely aware that bullies don’t just hang out in schoolyards, two UTSA academics were immersed in examining the so-called “dark side” of communication that can undermine harmony and productivity in the workplace.

As many as 20 percent of American workers say they have been bullied on the job at some point in their careers because of a coworker or supervisor who persistently made negative, abusive comments or continually engaged in threatening or demeaning behavior towards them.

A more subtle issue, occupational segregation, occurs when stereotypes about race, ethnicity, gender or sexual preference creep into the workplace culture. This happens either deliberately or inadvertently, and it influences the way certain kinds of employees are treated by managers or co-workers, potentially having a negative effect on individual career paths and company productivity.

Renee L. Cowan, Ph.D., and James McDonald, Ph.D., are assistant professors in the Department of Communication at UTSA and experts in examining and tracking these workplace issues. Both have researched and published extensively on the topics, and they offer insights for corporate managers and human resource professionals who want to address these challenges in their companies.

Many Americans were unfamiliar with the term “workplace bullying” until the high-profile events on a National Football League team in 2013. A player actually left his team and sought professional counseling because of the emotionally abusive behavior that he said he was subjected to by a teammate. The NFL commissioned an outside investigation, which produced a voluminous report that presented graphic details on the negative and demeaning behavior by one player against several targets on his team.

The incident fits the classic pattern of bullying, said Dr. Cowan. “What we are talking about in a bullying situation is not just the language or the behavior. It is about the persistence and duration
these behaviors,” she said. “It creates emotional abuse. It is a harassment situation.”

Workplace bullying is the cumulative effect of an assortment of verbal and non-verbal negative behaviors, Dr. Cowan explained. Targets have reported that they are the subject of derogatory remarks, mocking behavior, threats, or malicious gossip. Sometimes the “bully” manipulates others to socially ostracize or isolate the target from colleagues or supervisors. Both men and women can be engaged in bullying, Dr. Cowan said. Women most often target other women, while men will target both men and women about equally. Bullying behavior can come from a supervisor or from a peer.

Research suggests that seven percent of the American workforce has experienced a bullying situation on the job in the past year, while 20 percent of workers have faced it at some point in their careers. “They get out of it by quitting, or many times they are fired,” Dr. Cowan said.

Seldom do the aggressors see themselves as bullies. “They rationalize it,” Dr. Cowan said. “They can be highly competitive people and tell themselves that they are not behaving badly, [but instead are] doing what they have to do to get ahead.”

Sometimes power-hungry personalities are involved. At its heart, though, the bullying culture is a leadership issue, Dr. Cowan said.

“The top leadership of a company is culpable in these situations,” she said. “What happens at the top gets reflected throughout the organization. They are enabling the bullying culture.”

Occupational segregation is a more subtle issue. It is often not communicated directly, but through the attitudes and actions of people who still are guided by social stereotypes. Even though the workforce has grown more diverse, some professions remain stratified by sex, race and class, Dr. McDonald noted. Even workers themselves can perpetuate segregation, based on the social attitudes they acquire.

“We have been socialized to consider some jobs within our reach and some jobs outside of our reach,” Dr. McDonald said.

For example, prevailing stereotypes still consider teaching, nursing and flight attendant jobs as appropriate for women, while men are considered more suited for jobs like principals, physicians or pilots, jobs that come with more prestige and higher pay. Science and engineering professions are also largely perceived as being work that is more naturally suited to white men, he said.

“The glass slipper is a metaphor that can help us better understand how occupational segregation operates,” Dr. McDonald said, referring to the fairy tale in which the prince uses a glass shoe to identify Cinderella. “The slipper represents certain types of work, and we talk about certain types of work as though they only fit certain types of people.”

Occupational segregation is a problem from both a social justice and a
business perspective, Dr. McDonald added. It contributes to an unequal distribution of wealth among social groups and creates barriers for individuals who seek careers in occupations outside of the accepted stereotypes.

One such barrier is tokenism. When an individual is seen as representing a minority group in an organizational setting, that person’s work performance is perceived as representative of their entire social group, whether on the basis of ethnicity, race, sex, age, or sexual identity. “This means that all the stereotypes of your social group are going to be projected on you,” Dr. McDonald said.

Research shows that occupational segregation is bad for the business bottom line. “The research shows that occupations and organizations with high diversity have access to more employee resources,” Dr. McDonald said. “If a business is brainstorming for a new product, but only a small subset of the population is involved in the discussion, the product may not respond to the needs of the population at large. When more diverse people are involved in the brainstorming process, perhaps they can develop a product that appeals to a broader customer base.”

Dr. Cowan’s focus is on helping human resource managers meet the challenge of handling bullies in the workplace. Many organizations lack specific policies that give managers the authority they need to take action against an employee who engages in this behavior.

“The human resource managers say they want clear policies that define bullying and workplace harassment, that set expectations for behavior in the workplace and that outline the steps that will be taken when there is an incident,” she said.

Tokenism and occupational stereotypes are more difficult to tackle from a corporate policy standpoint, Dr. McDonald said, since stereotypes remain part of contemporary society, even among well-meaning people who are trying to be fair.

“Well-intentioned people can talk about diversity in highly problematic ways,” he said. “What is good for women is also good for many men, and what is good for Latinos is good for many people from other cultural communities... so when we start saying that we are going to do special things for women or for people of color, maleness and whiteness are reinforced as the norms against which everything is judged.” Dr. McDonald explained that this approach implies “that what we do for white men is not anything special, but what we do for other groups is.” Ultimately, he said, “it’s more productive to talk about what we are going to do to promote and value difference in general. Diversity is about treating people as people first, and not projecting social stereotypes on them. We need to let the topic develop organically, let it come up naturally.”
Ariana Bocanegra Trevino’s motivation to achieve her full potential is rooted in her mother’s selflessness.

“My biological mother gave me up for adoption to her sister here in the U.S. so I could get an education and have a good life,” said Trevino, a communications major concentrating on public relations. “That’s what has always driven my desire to do well in school. I wanted to honor my mom’s sacrifice.”

At just 6 years old, little Ariana Bocanegra arrived in the United States, undocumented, to live with her aunt and uncle, Veronica and Mauricio Trevino, who were American citizens.

Now 22 and formally adopted, Trevino honors her mother by giving all she’s got to her studies and her future, and she has spared nothing in that pursuit. A casual observer might ask if Trevino ever has time to sleep.

While working hard to maintain straight A’s, Trevino served as president of PRSSA, the UTSA chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America. She worked four internships throughout her college years, and as a senior, in addition to an internship, she worked part time as the marketing manager at the Woodlawn Theatre. She graduated magna cum laude in May.

Trevino accomplished all this despite facing extra challenges. Without a Social Security number, she was forced to search for scholarships that didn’t require citizenship. Then, after she started UTSA in the Fall 2010 semester – which was completely paid for, including on-campus housing, by scholarships she had won – Trevino missed the next three semesters due to travel related to obtaining residency in the United States. When she returned for Fall 2012 as an official U.S. resident, she kicked her studies into high gear, taking on full schedules and summer classes so she could graduate within four years of first setting foot on campus.

Even while maintaining such a busy schedule, Trevino lamented that she couldn’t do more. Because she doesn’t drive due to a medical condition, Trevino rode a VIA bus every day to class, a two-and-a-half hour ride from her downtown San Antonio home.

“I had to plan my day right, balance my classes, internships, organizations,” she said. “If I had that time, I’m sure I could have spent a lot more time making a difference on campus.”

But she didn’t waste those five hours on the bus every day. She used the time to read class assignments and study for exams, ensuring she could maintain her grades.

“I calculated my final semester, but didn’t expect to start working [at the Woodlawn Theatre] before I graduated,” Trevino said. “I did plan everything according to what I could handle, but then life happened.”

Ariana found that she now had to juggle working part-time in addition to finishing her undergraduate degree.

Her post-graduate plans include taking a year off from her studies to work full time at the theater, and then returning to UTSA to pursue an MBA. She foresees a management-level job in her future and wants to be prepared. But the young dynamo also envisions the possibility of entrepreneurship down the road, possibly with her own PR firm.

Trevino realizes her ambitious path may be more than many undergrads are willing to attempt, but she still encourages other students to become involved in activities outside the classroom. Mentorship and participating in student organizations played a vital role in her own college success, and may help her realize her career goals.

“It helps connect you to a network of people who are going to help you find a job after you graduate,” she said. Having a support network of students and faculty is “better than doing your entire college career by yourself.”
She speaks from experience, since her membership and leadership in PRSSA resulted in several internships. She especially enjoyed working with the Boy Scouts of America Alamo Area Council. At the time, her mentor, Angel Martinez, was assembling the Council’s marketing and communications department from scratch. He showed Trevino every building block he used and also welcomed her ideas. Because they both had such a good experience during the internship, Martinez was able to secure a stipend and UTSA credit hours for future interns.

Trevino feels proud to know that her internship with the Boy Scouts will benefit other students. At UTSA, she encouraged her peers everywhere she went. For example, helping PRSSA members reach their goals was a big part of her job as the organization’s president.

“Helping students find internships is the biggest reward,” Trevino said of the leadership position. She knew what the organization did for her, and she wanted to share that with other members.

Trevino also recognized how her professors had helped her. As a first-generation college student, she couldn’t go to her parents to ask even basic questions about college life. Instead, she turned to her professors to guide her, which developed into an informal mentorship each semester.

“I strongly recommend getting a mentor, whether it happens casually or you set out to find a mentor through a program,” Trevino said. “Every setting can be more successful with a mentor to help advise you.”

Trevino’s communication professor, Dr. Kim Kline, is one such mentor. Kline served as the PRSSA faculty advisor and introduced Trevino to the organization.

“Ariana [has displayed] a stunning amount of self-motivation to excel in her coursework, get involved with campus activities, pursue scholarships and negotiate all the challenges of university education,” Kline said. “She’s a role model for all students at UTSA.”

Above all, Trevino urges students to zero in on post-graduation goals, which pushed her to succeed. “Always be determined to reach that goal and remind yourself about the reason that you’re there,” she said.
**STUDENTS**

Honors student **Alejandro Camacho**, a double major in political science and public administration, won third place in the 2014 Elie Wiesel Prize in Ethics contest for his paper titled “Exploring the Ethics of National Loyalty: The New Compromiso – Mexican Students Abroad in the U.S.” He received a $1,500 award in New York and also met Mr. Wiesel.

Camacho also won a UT System Archer Fellowship. He will spend the fall semester as a public policy intern at an agency in Washington, D.C. Only 40 students from across the UT System receive the award, which provides opportunities for career development and cultural enrichment.

**Sarah Gibbens**, an English major, and **Alfredo Hickman**, a political science major have been awarded Archer Fellowships for fall 2014.

Philosophy and Classics student **Sylvia Salazar** was UTSA’s Gilman Scholarship Program award winner for 2014. The Gilman Scholarship Program is for undergraduate students who are planning to study abroad. Sylvia traveled to Europe with William Duffy, professor in the Department of Philosophy and Classics, for the month-long faculty-led program The Classical World: Anthropology, Art and Culture.

**Kristin Wilborn**, a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology, was the recipient of an award from the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology at the annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, an international organization. The award was for a poster Wilborn presented titled “Appraised Discrimination Predicts Inflammation via Increased Expression and Blunted Cortisol in Mexican-Americans.”

**Jason Roberts**, a doctoral student in the Department of Anthropology, received a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant to conduct 14 months of ethnographic and ecological research in Papua New Guinea. The title of Jason’s project is “The Political Ecology of Post-logging Livelihoods and Landscapes on New Hanover Island, Papua New Guinea.”

The following COLFA students received UTSA Undergraduate Research Scholarships. The competitive awards were $1,000.

- **Evelyn Head**, Department of Communication
- **Shane Jones**, Department of Sociology
- **Victoria Olivio**, Department of Psychology

**FACULTY**

**Financial Awards**

The UTSA Institute for Health Disparities Research in the College of Liberal and Fine Arts, directed by **Thankam Sunil**, professor of sociology, was awarded $900,000 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s Center for Substance Abuse Prevention for a project to prevent and reduce substance abuse and HIV/AIDS transmission among young adults.

**Michael Baumann** and **Rebecca Weston**, associate professors in the Department of Psychology, have been awarded a $637,443 grant from the Department of Defense for their research project titled “Spin, Unit Climate, and Aggression: Near Term, Long Term, and Reciprocal Predictors of Violence Among Workers in Military Settings.”
Department of Anthropology Professor Robert J. Hard received $20,000 to support his research project, “Reconstructing Holocene Paleoclimate in Southwestern New Mexico.”

The award was one of six granted by the UTSA Office of the Vice President for Research’s Grants for Research Advancement and Transformation (GREAT) program.

Department of Music Assistant Professor Kristen Pellegrino was honored with the American Educational Research Association’s Outstanding Early Career Paper Award in Music Education.

The award recognizes an outstanding music education paper presented at the AERA annual meeting by an early career music education researcher.

COLFA Recipients of UTSA University Excellence Awards 2014

President’s Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in University Service

James Dykes, associate professor of psychology

President’s Distinguished Achievement Award for Research Achievement

Rebekah E. Smith, associate professor of psychology

President’s Distinguished Achievement Award for Performance, Creative Production, or Other Scholarly Achievement

Bonnie Lyons, professor of English

The Richard S. Howe Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award

Kolleen Guy, associate professor of history

Jason Yaeger, professor of anthropology

The Richard S. Howe Excellence in Service Undergraduate Students Award

Gabriel Acevedo, associate professor of sociology

Faculty Fellowships

Rhonda M. Gonzales, associate professor in the Department of History, has been named an American Council on Education Fellow for 2014–2015.

The ACE Fellows Program, established in 1965, is designed to strengthen institutions and leadership in American higher education by identifying and preparing promising senior faculty and administrators for responsible positions in college and university administration.

Joshua Thurow, assistant professor of philosophy in the Department of Philosophy & Classics, was one of only two scholars selected for a one-year research fellowship in the Center for Philosophy of Religion at the University of Notre Dame.

Aida I. Ramos-Wada, assistant professor in the Department of Sociology, was one of ten social science researchers selected as a Latino Protestant Congregation Study Research Fellow for 2014-2017. The Latino Protestant Congregations Project is a research grant awarded to Davidson College and funded by Lilly Endowment to capture the diversity of liturgy and worship in Latino churches.

Department of Music Assistant Professor Kristen Pellegrino was honored with the American Educational Research Association’s Outstanding Early Career Paper Award in Music Education.

The award recognizes an outstanding paper presented at the AERA annual meeting by an early career music education researcher.
Alfredo Flores Jr. marches to the beat of a different drummer. Which is fitting, since he’s in the music business.

Thanks to his leadership and vision, Alamo Music Center has evolved from a simple one-man piano shop to the sprawling musician’s haven it is today. Flores’ father, Alfredo Sr., established the business in 1929. “The business was born out of need,” Flores said about Fresh Air Piano Company, which his father founded at the beginning of the Great Depression. Before going to work for himself, Alfredo Sr. had been a technician at a piano store. When it went out of business, he was forced to fend for himself, and so began Alamo Music.

Ever since he accepted the first-chair position at the music store in the 1960s (by which time the business had been renamed Alamo Piano Company), Flores has embraced the modern along with the classical, recognizing that customers play and appreciate music in different ways. To accommodate San Antonio’s diversity, Flores began incorporating more options – digital pianos, computers, amplifiers, guitars – and adopted a new vision for his company to keep pace with the demands of the city’s changing music scene. The once-quaint piano shop became Alamo Music Center.
Today, you’ll find instruments for all genres: from orchestra to folk, mariachi to heavy metal, classical to jazz. Shoppers can browse through guitars, violins, ukuleles, piccolos, accordions, trombones, mandolins, and of course, pianos.

“We have a large and diverse arts community here,” Flores said. “Our music scene is one of the largest heavy metal communities, but there’s also mariachi, jazz, Tejano, country and bluegrass. George Strait lives here along with the most well known accordion player in the country, Flaco Jiménez.”

**Community Accompaniment**

Though Flores studied for an MBA in marketing at U.C. Berkeley, it was his liberal arts undergraduate degree at UT Austin that he believes taught him the greatest lessons about running a business.

“Business deals in dollars and cents and markets,” Flores said. “Liberal arts deals with the human element. All good literature has main characters that show you life’s chores and life’s joys. These characters show you that everyone’s life is a continuous struggle to grow one’s self. One must be tenacious, passionate and relentless to reach the goals one sets.”

Flores revealed his tenacity as a board member of the National Association of Music Merchants. At the time, NAMM focused on music product sales. Flores recognized a pressing need that business owners could meet in the music community. He presented a radical idea to NAMM directors: The organization should focus on educating business owners and customers about the benefits of music and how to make music part of everyday life. Despite early dissent by conventional-minded peers, the unique proposal was accepted. In 1985, Flores was elected president of the association, and he helped transform NAMM into a trailblazer organization— one that demanded music businesses partner with educators, performers and institutions for the good of the whole community.

“My passion was and is to educate others,” he says. “Our business and its people must be involved in and after the sale. Their real passion must be to partner and network with educators, educational institutions and arts people around the city.”

He has done exactly that with his own business. His daughter Adriana and two of his grandsons, Zachary and Patrick, now carry the passion of Alamo Music Center and have developed special outreach programs for the community in partnership with teachers and performers. For example, lessons are available for senior citizens in assisted living residences, and music programs attempt to help wounded warriors transcend their pain.

Flores’ two sisters, Diana Boffa and Maria Flores, have also contributed valuable support and advice to inspire musical passion among younger generations. Alamo Music reaches out to youth on a regular basis; for example, the Flores family offers the store’s downtown concert hall as a free venue for teachers to hold student recitals and other events. Free music workshops are available to all on a weekly basis.

“Zachary, Adriana and Patrick insist that each sale must result in people being shown how to use the instruments and to enjoy playing them,” Flores said. “If an instrument is not used and it sits in the closet, Alamo Music has failed. It’s not just about making a buck. It’s about expanding lives and making lives more meaningful through music.”

Flores’ wife, Tenchita has worked alongside Alfredo for 30 years and has brought special insight to the business. “We’re selling something that feeds the soul,” she says. She also is the Community Music Scholarship Chairman for the Gardenia Music Club that has awarded scholarships to UTSA students and others around the city.

The couple’s desire extends to San Antonio as a whole.

“The vision I have and that of Zachary, Adriana and Patrick and all those who work at AMC is one where every school district educates deeper than just how to work for a living,” Flores said. “It’s one where the arts are a larger part of education for the individual as well as the community. We need kids to work well, but also to know how to enjoy life to its fullest potential by appreciating and hopefully playing music.

“Our theme is and has been, ‘Life is more fun when you play music.’ And we believe it.”

**Harmony with UTSA**

Today, Flores also focuses on community service through his support of UTSA’s music program. He serves on the Liberal and Fine Arts Advisory Council and the Development Board.

One of his personal influences was Rhoderick Key, the first director of UTSA’s Division of Music, whom Flores calls “a visionary that built the foundations of what UTSA music is today.”

“He was an innovator and a pioneer who saw beyond convention to the future of what music of all kinds could do to augment one’s life,” Flores said.

The Flores’ dedication to UTSA has flourished ever since that early relationship. The couple established the Alfredo Flores/Alamo Music Endowed Scholarship in Music at UTSA more than 15 years ago to support talented students in need of financial assistance. Tenchita Flores worked with COLFA Dean Dan Gelo to establish a technician fund for upkeep of the university’s pianos.

Despite being a UT Austin graduate, Flores’ longstanding commitment to serve local students has led him to focus his philanthropic efforts on UTSA.

“I don’t root for the Longhorns anymore,” Flores said. “I’m a Roadrunner now.”
ENGLISH


MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES


PHILOSOPHY


POLITICAL SCIENCE

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4,417 total students
411 total faculty
98 scholarships
23 undergraduate degrees
11 master’s programs
3 PhD programs
1 great education!
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