

Since 1996, the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree has offered ASU students an opportunity to apply knowledge in new ways to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. Ranked among the top interdisciplinary studies programs in the nation, we currently have 2,178 majors and over 6,870 graduates.

## Welcome Back, BIS Devils!

The Interdisciplinary Studies Alumni Club (ISAC) is excited for another great year of Sun Devil activities! Please mark your calendars for Friday, October 30, 2009, for the Annual ISAC Homecoming Extravaganza! We will be at Dos Gringos Trailer Park enjoying all the delicious treats before the Homecoming activities that are sponsored by the ASU Alumni Association. More details will follow, so be sure to sign up for updates on our blog at [www.asuisac.blogspot.com](http://www.asuisac.blogspot.com). All current students and their friends are invited to our events!

Hope you have an amazing year!  
*Meghan Dorn, '02*  
*President, ISAC*

## The Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Gets a New Director

Dear BIS Students,

I'm delighted to be in my new position as head of interdisciplinary and liberal studies. I realize, though, that I have big shoes to fill because Kevin Ellsworth directed the BIS program so well for so many years. Thanks to his great work and the efforts of many other talented colleagues, the BIS degree is serving several thousand students well, and our newly inherited bachelor of liberal studies (BLS) degree is growing each month. I have had great admiration for the BIS degree and faculty for years, especially because my son earned a BIS degree with concentrations in Spanish and religious studies. I have seen how well the degree has served him in his young career.



I've enjoyed interdisciplinary work all of my life—probably because I grew up on a Wisconsin dairy farm, where we had to draw on knowledge from many fields (excuse the pun) each day. That experience and many others have helped me understand that solving problems effectively and efficiently in any arena of life (academic, professional, civic, personal) often requires interdisciplinary knowledge and thinking. In my professional life, I frequently draw on knowledge from multiple fields as I engage in teaching, research, writing, administration and service.

I hope that you will drop by my office in UASB 228 to say hello or to chat about your academic, professional, civic or personal aspirations.

Best,  
*Dr. Duane Roen*

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Original artwork in the *Kaleidoscope* masthead was created by BIS student Rebecca Soltis.

## Are you a creative BIS student

Interested in having your work featured in an upcoming issue of *Kaleidoscope*?

Any type of creative work will be considered, such as poetry, short stories, art pieces, or photography.

Please send submissions to  
[Denise.Bates@asu.edu](mailto:Denise.Bates@asu.edu)

## Catching Up With BIS Interns and Alumni

BIS students are as diverse as they come. During their time at ASU they pursue a wide range of disciplinary interests, which is why BIS is so appealing. Upon graduation alumni launch careers in just about every industry imaginable. Over the course of the summer, student writer Kelli Dodd and faculty editor Denise Bates, Ph.D. had the pleasure of interviewing an array of current BIS students and alumni—some of whom just recently graduated and others who have been out of school for several years. Despite their diversity, these individuals chose the BIS program for very similar reasons. You may even find several of them echoing your own experiences. We hope these interviews will serve as a source of inspiration and will give you some insight into the types of internships and careers this degree can lead to!

### Gilbert Cardenas

**Q** *Where are you originally from and what brought you to ASU?*

**A** I'm originally from Phoenix and I'm always surprised when I hear someone say they are a native Arizonan because so many people I meet are from out of state. I came to ASU because I wanted to complete my bachelor's degree after I left full-time military service.

**Q** *What influenced you to choose the BIS program at ASU?*

**A** A good friend of mine talked to me about the BIS program initially, and I found it to be in line with my educational goals.

**Q** *What two concentrations did you choose and why?*

**A** I chose public administration and management and communication. I felt that my time in the military influenced my desire to continue a career in the public sector. With regards to my second concentration, I felt that effective communication is an important element for success in any career.

**Q** *Would you briefly describe the internships you had, what your responsibilities were, and how they related to your concentration areas.*

**A** I had three internships while at ASU. I first worked for a company called Cytec Engineered Materials, which primarily develops specialty composite materials for the aerospace industry. I worked as a business development intern for two years. I felt it was a great experience and allowed me to better understand the private sector in areas such as accounting, marketing and program management. Although I did not have a business concentration, I thought the experience was invaluable and allowed me to see what career options I could pursue in the future. The other two internships were at the Maricopa County Attorney's Office (MCAO) in the fall of '08 and at the Arizona State Senate in the spring of '09. Both were great experiences. At the MCAO I interned as a victim's advocate, and was responsible for advising victims of crime of their rights and to help guide them through the judicial process. Advocates are generally the first to contact victims who provide support and resources, advise them of their rights, and ensure restitution is paid. At the senate, I was assigned to the finance committee and researched, composed and presented legislative fact sheets for various committee meetings. The latter two internships definitely reinforced my learning in public administration and communication, as I had to use both in order to perform well in my assigned responsibilities.

**Q** *How do you plan to use your degree? What are your plans for the future?*

**A** I plan to use my degree as an opportunity to gain more experience and to continue on with graduate school in the near future. At the moment, I plan to work for the Department of State as a foreign service officer. I am studying for the foreign service exam, which I am scheduled to take in October. I want to enter this field because it offers much of what I want in a career: service, travel and good experience.

**Q** *If you had to give incoming BIS students one piece of advice, what would it be?*

**A** First, I would like to congratulate incoming BIS students for choosing a great major. A big thing I have learned throughout my time at ASU is how important it is to keep an open mind to a variety of experiences. Every internship and volunteer work has been both unforgettable and extremely valuable to me, and I would encourage new BIS students to not pigeonhole themselves in one career track but to gain a broad experience while in college.



## Erin Paquette

### **Q** *Where are you originally from and what brought you to ASU?*

**A** I am originally from Littleton, Colo., but I spent most of my life in Chandler. I homeschooled myself for most of my high school years until I started at Mesa Community College (MCC) shortly after turning 17. After spending a year and a half at MCC, I transferred to ASU. I'm now 22, and graduated from the BIS program this past May.

### **Q** *What influenced you to choose the BIS program at ASU?*

**A** Honestly, I feel as if the BIS program chose me. I was at a crossroads that no student wants to be in college: the point where I had to decide whether I would be able to continue my education. Unfortunately, my husband and I both have health problems and were both scheduled for surgeries that promised long recovery times. I didn't think I would be able to make it to class when needing to care for my husband and eventually undergo surgery myself. The current degree program I was in at ASU required that I be on campus for class, and I knew that I would be unable to do that once the surgeries and corresponding recovery times started.

Luckily, one of my friends worked for the BIS program. She said I should talk to Tamara, the advisor there, before deciding to leave college. I will be forever grateful for that because it was by talking to Tamara that I found I would be able to still graduate thanks to the amazing way that the BIS program works with nontraditional students like me. On top of that, I felt as if it was the degree program I was meant to be in all along. If I had known about the BIS program when I first entered ASU, I would have chosen it from the beginning because it offered the tools for what I wanted to do with my life.

### **Q** *What two concentrations did you choose and why?*

**A** I was a part of the BIS organizational studies program, so I didn't have two formal concentrations, but I was only a few classes short of completing my English degree when the events with my health and my husband's health occurred, so I suppose I would have to count English as my second unofficial concentration. I know that when in the BIS program, I continued to build on what I learned in my English degree.

I chose the BIS organizational studies program because I liked the fact that it emphasizes the symbiotic relationship between people and organizations. I do not believe in the traditional business model of the "bottom line," where organizations use people for their own ends, or people see their involvement with organizations as one-sided.

### **Q** *How have you furthered your education and career since receiving your BIS degree?*

**A** I plan on attending George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. to start on my master's degree in 2010. After that, I will continue on the Ph.D. path so I can eventually teach at the university level.

While I had already started my freelance writing career while in the BIS program, it was because of the BIS program that I was able to pursue my career as a writer even when I hadn't graduated yet. Before I entered the program, I assumed that I would have to have a degree before I could work as a freelance writer. But as the BIS program taught me, for lack of a better phrase, "just go for it." The program gave me the confidence in my abilities that I didn't have before. It showed me that I wasn't just a college student; I was a person with skills, abilities and dreams.

### **Q** *What is your best memory of college?*

**A** Meeting with my poetry group; even though my ENG 310 class was an online course, my group mates and I wanted to get the most out of it that we could. We would meet once a week at the Xtreme Bean on Southern and McClintock. I think it is because of that experience that I became as involved with poetry as I have. It also cemented my desire to teach online classes when I'm eventually a professor myself, with the option of meeting in person should students have the time or the inclination.

### **Q** *What advice would you like to give current BIS students?*

**A** Get all the experience you can. You only get as much out of the BIS program as you put in, so be sure to take advantage of opportunities like internships, directed studies and groups on campus if you are able.



## Heath Pyle

**Q** *Where are you originally from and what brought you to ASU?*

**A** I am originally from Yucaipa, Calif., which is a small city about two hours from Orange County. What brought me to ASU is a long story, but in short, my high school youth pastor, Linn Winters, came to Arizona to start a church in Chandler, the Cornerstone Christian Fellowship. Linn asked for some help and so I moved out here. Once I qualified as an Arizona resident, I attended Mesa Community College before transferring to ASU.

**Q** *What influenced you to choose the BIS program at ASU?*

**A** I don't remember how I originally found out about the program. The main thing that influenced my choice for the BIS degree was that I was interested in both business and psychology. The BIS program allowed me to take classes from both disciplines.

**Q** *What is your best memory of college?*

**A** By far my best memories of college were my friends! I was involved in a college-age ministry group at Grace Community Church in Tempe, and the friends I met there and activities we did are the things I remember most from my college years. Homework, tests, projects are all a lot of work and my friends were a great outlet and support!

**Q** *How have you developed your career since graduating with your BIS degree?*

**A** I was working full time while attending college in the IT industry, and after graduating ASU I continued to work in that field for a few more years. However, recently I moved into the financial services industry and opened an insurance and financial services agency in Queen Creek. I believe that my BIS degree has aided my career by giving me a foundation in a number of areas. From business skills and understanding from the business concentration, to having a better understanding of people from the psychology concentration. I believe that there is a huge crossover and integration of these disciplines in the work force. For example, I better understand how a group of business professionals are motivated (through the use of psychology) to complete a task or take a business to the next level.

**Q** *What advice would you like to give current BIS students?*

**A** Your college years go by so fast so don't try to rush through them as if things are going to be so much better on the other side. If you don't have to work while going to college, DON'T! You have the rest of your life to work.

Other than student loans, try to not use credit cards. I am sure most students have heard this before, but it is easier said than done. The big problem with coming out of school with debt is that it might influence you to take a job for the money. My next point of advice would be to focus on doing something that makes you happy.

Get involved with an organization or group! This is not always easy at the beginning, but in time relationships and friendships will develop.

Stay active—run, hike, walk, ride a bike, play recreational sports, etc. Exercise is great for the brain!

To do the above you will need to set a goal and have a friend who will hold you accountable!



## Brian P. Kritzstein

**Q** *Where are you originally from and what brought you to ASU?*

**A** I was raised in South Orange, N.J. and, through a series of family moves, wound up in Scottsdale where I started taking classes at Paradise Valley Community College. ASU, given its large selection of programs and exceptional staff, was a natural progression for my educational pursuits.

**Q** *What influenced you to choose the BIS program at ASU?*

**A** The ability to customize a BIS degree unique to the talents and skill sets of an individual are what originally attracted me to the program. Not able to decide between a business or communication degree, the BIS program allowed me to pursue two areas which I deemed critically important to success in the business world.

Business and communication seemed like a natural fit for me. Given that I was already working in the high-tech industry, I knew that an increased understanding of business would help further my career. In addition, while I always considered communication one of my strengths, including that area of study within my BIS program helped build confidence with written, verbal and interpersonal com-



munication. These two areas of study went together very well for me and I believe complimented each other throughout the degree program.

**Q** *How have you furthered your education and career since receiving your BIS degree?*

**A** My current employer, Battelle Memorial Institute, supports a variety of opportunities to further one's education. While I am currently exploring numerous master's degree programs at Ohio State University, Battelle also supports continuing work-related education through its own "Battelle University" online. A selection of courses including business writing, proposal and project management, and others are available on demand to supplement one's studies at a traditional college or university.

My job as a principal research scientist at the Battelle Memorial Institute has grown in scope and responsibility due to the lessons learned while in the BIS program. I am responsible for technology transfer activities with our department of energy national laboratories, manage projects for a variety of government and commercial clients, and participate in our philanthropic pursuits related to STEM education through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

For those individuals unfamiliar with Battelle, it is the world's largest nonprofit independent research and development organization, providing innovative solutions to the world's most pressing needs through its four global businesses: laboratory management, national security, energy technology, and health and life sciences. It advances scientific discovery and application by conducting \$5.2 billion in global research and development (R&D) annually through contract research, laboratory management, and technology commercialization. Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, Battelle oversees 20,400 employees in more than 130 cities worldwide, including seven national laboratories that Battelle manages or co-manages for the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and two international laboratories—a nuclear energy lab in the United Kingdom and a renewable energy lab in Malaysia. Battelle also is one of the nation's leading charitable trusts focusing on societal and economic impact and actively supporting and promoting science and math education.

**Q** *What advice would you like to give current BIS students?*

**A** Pick areas of concentration that you believe represent your true interests. While it may be common to think about job prospects before embarking on a degree program, I sincerely believe that if you pursue the focus areas that are important to you, success will follow both in school and in business.

## Miranda McFadden

**Q** *Where are you originally from and what influenced you to choose the BIS program at ASU?*

**A** I am originally from St. Cloud, Minn. I chose the BIS program because I had the opportunity to choose my concentrations. I was primarily looking for an online degree program and ASU offered the perfect program to meet my needs. I chose a concentration in organizational studies that allowed me to complete my degree by taking online classes. I loved the freedom and flexibility of classes that were offered in this degree. Even though this program had my classes laid out for me, I absolutely loved every class I took and learned a lot from them.

**Q** *Briefly describe your internship experience and what your responsibilities were.*

**A** I did my internship at an assisted living facility. I worked primarily with the marketing department but also floated to other departments, such as nursing, activities, billing and the front office. I worked closely with the marketing director, which entailed giving prospective residents and their families tours of the facility, putting together brochures, answering phones, giving prospective residents information about the facility, attending seminars and conferences, filing, auditing residents' charts, and doing accounts receivables and payables. These responsibilities related to organizational studies because it allowed me to view situations from multiple perspectives. I was able to address problems by thinking outside the box.

**Q** *How do you plan to use your degree? What are your plans for the future?*

**A** I plan to use my degree to move up the ladder at the Mayo Clinic, which is my current employer. I have already returned to school taking prerequisites for the nursing program at ASU. My plans are to become a nurse and, hopefully someday, have a career in health-care management.

**Q** *What advice would you like to give current BIS students?*

**A** Don't give up. Learn as much as you can from the classes you take. The internship is a great learning tool. I would suggest doing it somewhere of interest and within your career goals. It gives you the opportunity to gain insight to what the daily job duties involve.



## Daniel Subaitis

**Q** *What influenced you to choose the BIS program at ASU?*

**A** I needed to finish my degree and my wonderful advisor, Tamara, suggested the BIS organizational studies concentration. It was appealing because it can be applied to any organization and it is geared towards students who are working full time. I was interested in an interdisciplinary course of study and it was a great fit!

**Q** *Where are you currently employed and how has your BIS education helped in your career?*

**A** I currently work as the director of animal management at the Phoenix Zoo overseeing the Living Collection, animals and plants, along with the staff that care for them. The Phoenix Zoo is a large, multifaceted, private, nonprofit organization encompassing all the challenges one finds in any modern organization. Because we deal with other institutions and organizations, the BIS program has provided me with several tools to apply directly to my work.

**Q** *How do you plan to use your degree? What are your plans for the future?*

**A** I have been working in this field for more than 30 years and this degree will better prepare me to advance my career. It will also allow me to either advance in this field or change directions down the road if the opportunity presents itself.



## Anthony Berland

**Q** *As a current BIS student, what are your two areas of concentration?*

**A** Business and communication

**Q** *What is the site of your BIS internship and what does the company do?*

**A** Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics, the Seventh Street branch in Phoenix. Hanger fabricates prosthetic limbs for amputees of all ages, from babies to the elderly. Hanger provides patient care for limb loss and aids in the mobility recovery for each patient. They are also the largest prosthetic and orthotic provider in the United States with 640 locations.

**Q** *Briefly describe your BIS 401 internship experience.*

**A** I am responsible for the fabrication of custom prosthetic limbs, patient evaluation, and product selection. My daily activities are with assistance from a certified prosthetist. On a daily basis I get to use my communication skills through verbal communication with patients or written communication with charting and work orders. For the business end, I do product selection and ordering on an individual patient basis, while accounting for what the insurance companies will pay.

I chose this internship for the sole reason that I will be attending a post-baccalaureate prosthetic school in 2010. This internship provides me with the patient-care knowledge and hand skills required to be a prosthetic practitioner. I also chose this internship because Hanger is the largest fitter of prosthetics in the U.S. and I figured I would get the most exposure to the field there. I got this internship from the aid of a family friend who knew I wanted to go into the field of prosthetics. He set me up with a contact at Hanger, whom I e-mailed for months trying to get into the facility for this internship. This is not an internship that anyone can get, you must either know someone in the field or know about the field to get it.

**Q** *What are your plans for the future?*

**A** This is the field I will be entering, but not after ASU; first, I must finish schooling for prosthetics, do a year of residency with a certified prosthetic practitioner, and sit for my certification exam. I will be a certified practitioner in 2012 or 2013, depending on my residency. I switched my major a few times trying to find out what I wanted to do with my life. When I heard about working with amputees, something not everyone thinks about during their life, I knew that was the job for me. I have always wanted to be in a profession to help people. I also cannot sit behind a desk all day or in a cubicle. Having patient interaction, along with being able to help people regain their mobility and everyday life after a traumatic incident in their lives, just seemed to fit what I wanted to do with my life.



## Tulli Dobler

**Q** *Where are you originally from and what brought you to ASU?*

**A** I was born and raised in Spokane, Wash. Looking for a new adventure and wanting to get away from the brutal winters in Spokane, ASU seemed like a nice change of scenery; it was also not too far from home in comparison to the East Coast.

**Q** *What influenced you to choose the BIS program at ASU?*

**A** I must have changed my major four times before I became an “undeclared” major my sophomore year. I decided to stop stressing about declaring a major and to just take a lot of different classes, see what I was interested in, and then go from there. At the end of my junior year, I went to my advisor with the dilemma that I was interested in two concentration areas. He told me to look into the BIS program and when I did I found that it was exactly what I was looking for (and more!).

**Q** *What two concentrations did you choose and why?*

**A** My two concentration areas are child development and family studies, and political science. I chose child development because I have always known I want to help children. I used to think I wanted to teach; however, through my BIS courses I learned there are many other ways to accomplish this. I chose the concentration area of political science because I discovered I loved the courses offered in this discipline at ASU and was interested in pursuing more of these courses. I was challenged in the political science courses, and I was passionate about finding a way to improve the lives of children.

**Q** *Briefly describe your BIS 401 internship experience.*

**A** During the summer, my internship for BIS 401 was at Children's Action Alliance (CAA). CAA is a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and families in Arizona. I do not believe that there could have been a better organization for me to have my internship with. It combined my concentration areas of political science and child development. For example, interning at CAA required me to be up to date on what was going on at the Legislature in regards to budget cuts, while understanding the issues that affect children and families. During my time at CAA, I had an immense amount of responsibilities that led to a truly life-changing learning experience. One of my responsibilities was participating and assisting in planning three advocacy events, one was at the state capitol that allowed me to see firsthand how lobbying works. I observed the complex process of lobbying in all forms that it takes from writing letters and e-mails to representatives, to press releases and media events, and finally to actually being at the capitol interacting with legislators and constituents.

Another one of my responsibilities at CAA was writing two issue briefs on topics relating to children that may be useful to CAA as the issues begin to arise in Arizona. The first brief was a research report on an issue that is being called a pandemic amongst teens, which is sexting (the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, primarily between cell phones). The second report was on children immigrants who come to America and are put in school not knowing how to speak English. These children make up an immense amount of our elementary schools' population here in Arizona. As these issues develop further in the future, these papers may prove quite beneficial to the organization.

Some final tasks I had while at CAA were responding to queries from the general public about services available to children and families, assist in the preparation of post-legislative analysis of how Arizona children fared in the state budget, raising awareness about the critical issues currently in Arizona, and attending a democratic caucus meeting with state legislators.

My internship ended up being the most intellectually challenging and rewarding experience of my collegiate career. Interning at CAA allowed me to learn policy and the legislative process, specifically pertaining to children's issues. In all, the skills I developed in my internship this summer were invaluable to my future career goals and aspirations.

**Q** *How do you plan to use your degree? What are your plans for the future?*

**A** I plan to use my BIS degree to pursue a job in a nonprofit advocacy organization similar to CAA. My plan for the future is to move to Washington, DC! I'm currently looking for jobs at nonprofit organizations and hope to move there sometime around next May.

**Q** *What advice would you like to give current BIS students?*

**A** For incoming BIS students I would give two pieces of advice: firstly, the BIS program, specifically the 401 internship, is what you make of it—work hard, find what you're passionate about, and enjoy it. Secondly, *hard work really does pay off!*



## Making Connections in BIS 402

BIS 402 is the class where it all comes together. During the spring semester, Dave Thomas, Ph.D., designed an assignment around the book *Cracking Creativity* by Michael Michalko to help students generate new and exciting ideas. The following excerpt from Ryan Smith's paper is an insightful description of the value of the BIS degree from a student's perspective.

"As a BIS student, I was greatly intrigued by the strong emphasis the book placed on combining ideas to generate a greater concept or solution to an issue. The combination and connection of multiple ideas seemed to come up in just about every part of the book. The more I read on, the more proud and excited I became at the thought of being a part of the BIS program. It made me feel as if I have a similar trait in a way to all of these geniuses since I will be proficient in more than one fields of study come graduation time. An author by the name of J. Bronowski made a claim that said 'a genius is a person who has two great ideas.' The work of the genius is their ability to get them to fit together (Michalko 133). This is incredibly moving to me because I feel in the past year my two fields of study have been coming more and more close together since taking my BIS classes. Leonardo Da Vinci says 'The human brain can't concentrate on two subjects or ideas, no matter how dissimilar, without eventually forming a connection between them.' If he is an advocate of combining ideas and fields, than I feel I am in good company. Honestly, when I first joined the BIS program, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life or my degree, and just thought I would take BIS to be able to have some business classes, and just have fun with music and thinking that the degree wouldn't necessarily be worth my while. Well all that has changed since I have been making exceptional connections and combinations with the two fields and using them to pursue things I would've never imagined doing one year ago. I now find myself interning at Live Nation, which is one of the biggest music concert production companies in the world. Everything I have learned in my business classes is being used in my experience, and obviously my music knowledge comes in handy just as much. Since being at Live Nation, I have also found an occupation that I may wish to pursue after graduation, which is advertising. I have found that the times I mostly enjoy my time and work at Live Nation is when they let me use my creativity to design a flyer or an advertisement for a show. I always liked working on pictures and being creative on the computer but I never thought you could get paid the big bucks to do such things. These are the kinds of connections that make me so glad I have been part of the BIS program at ASU, because through this whole process I may have found something that I can be passionate about, enjoy, and also get paid for. It's all about discovery, chance, and experience in life to truly find what it is you love to do. Everybody has those random happenings that lead to 'eureka!' moments in their life, and I believe I am having one now. That is much like the way of the genius: you work and work until you finally have a positive breakthrough that is exactly what you hoped for."

— Ryan Smith, BIS 402, Spring 2009

## Meet the BIS Academic Success Specialists

### Gerald West

Gerry West is one of the many great BIS advisors available to help you. Prior to coming to ASU, he was an advisor at the University of Arizona. We are so lucky to have him! Gerry is involved in many activities and aspects of our college, one of which is coaching the School of Letters and Sciences Academic Bowl team. He encourages anyone who is interested to look into the team. Gerry is still a newlywed and likes spending most of his time with his family and dog, Sonny. Gerry has taken up the hobby of film-making and has even assisted in the making of a wonderful BIS video that is available to view from our program Web site.

So, here is a bit about Gerry West:

**Q** *Where did you grow up and why did you decide to come to Arizona?*

**A** I was raised in Columbus, Ohio. I decided to come to Arizona to work for the U of A as an academic advisor after graduate school. It was the best decision ever; I really like Arizona and I Love ASU.



**Q What was your college experience like?**

**A** My college experience was terrific, but just like most college students, I had no idea what I wanted to do after graduation. I chose to go to graduate school after meeting with one of my professors and mentors. He talked me into going to graduate school and I received my master's degree in education in May '03.

**Q How long have you been an advisor for BIS and what are your favorite parts of your job?**

**A** I have been an advisor for the BIS program for three years. My favorite part of the job is seeing the students I meet with graduate.

**Q What do you feel are the main benefits of the BIS program?**

**A** The main benefit of the BIS program is the diversity the degree comes with. It can be a very broad degree or a very specific degree depending on the students' needs. The options the degree offers are limitless. Working with great faculty members allows the student to have a profound experience, and that experience is what makes the degree and this college so special.

**Q Do you have any advice for current BIS students?**

**A** Be sure you meet with your advisors and professors at least once EACH SEMESTER until you graduate.

## Words of Wisdom

### Online or Face-to-Face Classes, Which is Right for You?

*By John Coughlin, BIS Academic Success Specialist*

So, you are thinking about taking an online class? Can't decide if you want to take an in-person class? Well, there are a number of factors that make taking an online class very appealing. Not having to go to a specific class at a specific time, not to mention being able to take the class from anywhere in the world are great incentives to choosing such an option. On the other hand, the appeal of taking an in-person class is equally obvious! Getting to hear the instructor's perspective and getting the face-to-face interaction. However, having both taken and taught in-person and online classes, I have seen a number of students choose both options with differing results. Which one is right for you? Well, it depends.

Taking an online class tends to heighten your study habits. In other words, if you are a good manager of time, focused and prepared for class, you will likely do well in online classes. If you are not, well, then I will let you fill in the blanks. The best indicator, then, of your ability to take online classes is YOU. You know better than anyone else if you are going to be motivated, dedicated and "on the ball" to log into the course Web site and direct yourself to achieve success. If you decide to take an online class, all the responsibility is going to lay with you. YOU are the one who has to log into MyASU to make sure there have not been any changes to the syllabus. YOU are the one who is responsible for initiating contact with your instructors with any questions you may have about course material. All of this seems pretty intuitive, but the fact is that many students find themselves ill prepared to tackle this challenge. Ask yourself, honestly, if you are self-motivated enough to take an online course. If the answer is "yes," you can't beat the flexibility and independence that an online class offers!

In-person classes also have a number of benefits. While you have to go to an actual room at an actual time, you tend to be able to get more classroom interaction. While discussion boards and e-mails are a great way to interact, the face-to-face contact between peers and instructors cannot be beat. Spontaneity in the classroom can add more information that a Web board post doesn't address. Additionally, you get to hear the instructor's perspective on the topic. While you certainly get this in an online course, the ability to talk about something extemporaneously allows the instructor a lot of leeway to add anecdotal evidence or share personal stories that are germane to the topic at hand. Thus, it can be like one of those "DVD commentaries." This in the end helps solidify the main points. You don't get this in an online class from simple posts and e-mails.

So, what is the right answer? Well, if you have been reading carefully, you can tell there is no right answer. Ultimately, YOU know best. Having the two options are incredible ways to integrate your learning styles and demands into a busy schedule. You just have to be honest with yourself about what you are looking to get out of your experience and decide the best format that helps you achieve your goals. Good luck!



## Reflection

By Kelli Dodd

I don't have the money. I don't have the time. I don't know what I want to do with my life. I'm too old. It's too hard. I can't.

At some point over the last nine years, all of the above have crossed my mind. That's right, nine years. With my degree finally within reaching distance, I am able to look back and reflect on those nine years and see all of the things that I have overcome to make this dream a reality. Five schools, probably close to a hundred classes (although it feels more like hundreds...), hours upon hours of studying, countless tests and papers, and now I can say that I am DONE!

At 27, I had painted the picture of where I thought I would be much differently. I would have graduated college about five years ago; I would be married and possibly a few kids would be in the picture. Instead, I find myself single, still living at home and wondering if I ever even want kids. Don't get me wrong, I am happy about where I am and fortunate for what I have, but life isn't always as we imagine it to be.

Even though this road I have taken may not be the intended route I had set out on when I graduated high school, it is still the road that has brought me to this destination. I have had an incredible amount of support from both family and friends through the years, and to them I credit my success in reaching my goal!

The money has not always been there, the drive was sometimes not there either, but I always had the crowd cheering me on telling me that I could do it. With my college career almost over, I just want to share with others how amazing this feeling is. For anyone who has ever had doubts or setbacks, just know that whatever you set your mind to you can achieve...no matter how old you are or how long it takes just know that it can be done!



### Call for Interns!

Kaleidoscope is looking for interns to aid in the continued production of the newsletter for the spring semester. If you are looking for a BIS 401 opportunity and would like to get writing experience and hone your research and interviewing skills, please contact Denise Bates at [Denise.Bates@asu.edu](mailto:Denise.Bates@asu.edu). Please include two writing samples and your concentration areas with your inquiry.

The Arizona Centennial Commission is looking for an intern who has strong journalism, writing and communication skills. Graduate and undergraduate students are encouraged to apply. This will be an unpaid internship. Please send your résumé, availability and writing sample to Lois Enochs at [lenochs@azot.gov](mailto:lenochs@azot.gov).

The ASU English Club is looking for participants in its 2nd annual undergraduate academic and creative conference, *Re-Fusing Di-Vision*. The event is set for Friday, November 13, and Saturday, November 14, 2009, on the ASU Tempe campus.

This conference is presented by the English Club @ ASU, ([english.clas.asu.edu/englishclub](http://english.clas.asu.edu/englishclub)), a well-established student organization promoting youth and community literacy, and academic and imaginative social discourse among undergraduate students, faculty and community members aimed at broadening and strengthening all public knowledge of all textual forms.

Last year the club produced a highly successful undergraduate interdisciplinary academic conference titled "Choosing the Future: Critical Issues in American Life." (go to [english.clas.asu.edu/future](http://english.clas.asu.edu/future) for photos and conference program.) The array of disciplines represented at the conference made for an exceptionally exciting day of panels, and this year they aim to include even more variation in disciplines as they expand their invitation range to include creative artists. By presenting the conference with the theme of *Re-Fusing Di-Vision*, they hope to encourage undergraduate submissions from students in both the liberal and performing arts. They seek to learn how individuals apply their disciplines to everyday life and how those applications work to strengthen our human connections.

Faculty members from the Department of English and the School of Music have accepted speaking roles at the conference, as has local spoken word star Divine, and they are looking forward to booking speakers from the other two state universities.

The club is currently accepting paper proposals from ASU, UofA, and NAU undergraduates. To guarantee the academic integrity of this conference, all applicants must secure faculty mentors to supervise student projects. The call for papers is located at [english.clas.asu.edu/refusingdivision](http://english.clas.asu.edu/refusingdivision). The deadline for submissions is October 9, 2009. For questions, please contact Ginger Hanson at [Ginger.Hanson@asu.edu](mailto:Ginger.Hanson@asu.edu).

## Mark Your Calendar

### Academic Dates

Sept. 1	<b>BIS 401 applications available for spring 2010</b> ( <a href="http://sls.asu.edu/bis/bis_courses/401.html">sls.asu.edu/bis/bis_courses/401.html</a> )
Sept. 14	Tuition and fee payment deadline
Oct. 15	Graduation filing deadline
Oct. 30	Interdisciplinary studies Alumni Club Homecoming party and Dos Gringos
Nov. 6	Course withdrawal deadline—in person
Nov. 8	Course withdrawal deadline—online
Nov. 11	Veterans Day observed
Nov. 19	<b>BIS 401 applications due for spring 2010</b> ( <a href="http://sls.asu.edu/bis/bis_courses/401.html">sls.asu.edu/bis/bis_courses/401.html</a> )
Nov. 26 – 27	Thanksgiving holiday observed
Dec. 8	Complete withdrawal deadline—in person and online
Dec. 8	Last day of classes
Dec. 10 – 16	Final exams
Dec. 17	Commencement

The ASU academic calendar can be found at [students.asu.edu/academic-calendar](http://students.asu.edu/academic-calendar)