

Current and Recent Visitors

John Phillips, Thomas W. Smith
Doctoral Fellow, 2009-10,
PhD Candidate, Brown University

Kyle Swan, Visiting Fellow for
Spring 2010, Assistant Professor of
Philosophy,
National University of Singapore

Bas van der Vossen, Thomas W. Smith
Post-Doctoral Fellow, 2008-09,
Assistant Professor of Philosophy,
UNC-Greensboro

Graduate Students and Fellows

Adam Arico
Sean Armil
Nathan Ballantyne
Sara Bernstein
Michael Bukoski
Ian Evans
Chris Freiman
Keith Hankins
Benjamin Kearns
Danny Shahar
Daniel Silvermint
John Thrasher
Justin Tosi
Kevin Vallier

Recent Alumni

Matt Bedke, Assistant Professor of
Philosophy, University of British
Columbia

Jason Brennan, Assistant Professor of
Philosophy, Research,
Brown University

Chris Brown, Assistant Professor of
Philosophy, National University of
Singapore

Matt Zwolinski, Assistant Professor of
Philosophy, University of San Diego



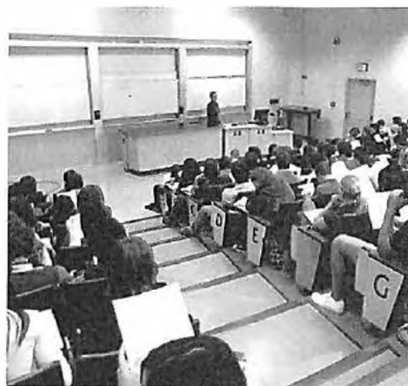
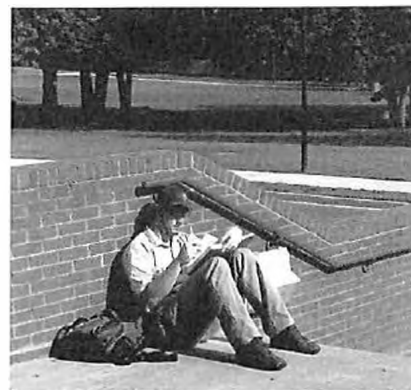
Developments in Undergraduate Education

Although the Freedom Center has, over the last year, been focused on collecting a world-class group of faculty and graduate students, all of this activity ultimately aims at one goal: the education of undergraduates. Current faculty teach hundreds of undergraduates every semester in freedom-related courses, and thousands more through their publications. The Center's graduate students will eventually become faculty themselves, and will take the ideas of freedom with them to their new institutions, teaching thousands more through their courses and publications. Our graduate students and faculty are the production part of our intellectual supply line, with the undergraduates being the end consumers. Over the next year, the Center will be focusing even more on developing programs to improve undergraduate education and the end product that it offers.



This semester, in David Schmitz's Ethics and Economics of Wealth Creation class, students were given a survey on the first day. A questionnaire asked the students to indicate whether a statement about a basic economic claim was true or false. The goal is to give students an entrance and exit survey to measure how well we have communicated important key concepts. This is just the beginning, but it is part of our commitment to measuring and improving our impact on the undergraduate population.

The results from the first survey indicate that there is much work left for the Freedom Center to do. For instance, in response to the question, "Other things equal, raising the minimum wage would tend to raise the unemployment rate" only 72% thought that the minimum wage will tend to increase unemployment while 28% believed the statement was false. While it is certainly good that 72% believe that the minimum wage will increase unemployment, the fact that 28% of people still think it has no effect is troubling. More troubling still is the fact that 87% of students believed that "Unemployment tends to rise in countries that lower their trade barriers." Our goal is to increase the proportion of students who respond correctly to these statements throughout the semester and to improve our methods to make sure we reach this goal.



But this is only the beginning. Once our Politics, Philosophy, Economics, Law (PPEL) is in place, we will be able to expand and deepen the educational effect of the Freedom Center on our undergraduates. The PPEL program, led by Freedom Center faculty member Gerald Gaus, will be an interdisciplinary major to which students must apply for admission. The goal is to create a major, centered on the ideas of freedom, which will become the most prestigious and academically respected major at the university. We see students ambitious and interested in pursuing careers in law, politics, public policy, and academia gravitating to the major. Once the program is firmly in place, we

anticipate PPEL becoming the crown jewel of undergraduate education at the University of Arizona, attracting the best and the brightest Arizona students to the ideas of freedom.