

## News

### Does humanities ever end?

By Amy Noel Howard  
Reporter

When the four sophomore Humanities professors sit down to write the last sophomore Humanities test, one question must be answered: where does Humanities end?

"Many of us operate under the assumption that recognizing greatness requires a little bit of distance," said Dr. Pat Magness, director of the Humanities program at Milligan College. "Most of us could not name right now the greatest book written in 1998. So you're always running a little bit behind.... Even at a 20 year distance you may not have a real clear picture, but you'd have a little better picture at 20 years than at one year."

The purpose of Humanities is to give students an understanding of their history, philosophy and culture that they can then apply to the events of their own lives. Ironically, the course itself covers almost nothing that actually took place during their lives.

"I'd be fairly comfortable saying 1975. We've not gone beyond that; sometimes we limit it more than that," said Dr. Tim Dillon, who teaches history and sophomore Humanities at Milligan, when questioned about the cut-off year for the Humanities course.

That means the upheavals of Communism, the student uprisings of the late 60s, Africa and Asia's rise against imperialism, the end of the American economic dream, the end of Vietnam and the Nixon scandal may never be covered in a Humanities class.

"The nature of our teaching doesn't require an end point. Humanities kind of peters out rather than ending at one point," said Dillon.

### Cheating is hard work, really!

By Amy Noel Howard  
Reporter

For the last month, Milligan College has buzzed with reports that someone hacked into a professor's computer and tried to steal a sophomore Humanities test.

It may be true.

"There really isn't any evidence that any cheating ... happened, but there is evidence that someone was at my computer," said Dr. Tim Dillon, humanities professor.

On the morning of a recent sophomore Humanities test, Dillon said he found a student's password and the word "student" typed into the network domain slot on his office computer. When he left the Faculty Office Building the previous evening, he had turned off his computer, locked the building and took the tests and blue books home with him, he said. He was sure the test was safe, even though he left his office door open.

"I tend to sleep on the test," he said. "I put them in my brown bag, take them home and put them up on the bed with me when I sleep. It's probably more superstition than anything else, but it gives me a certain

If there is no established end point, how do professors decide what to teach and what not to in that last semester of Humanities?

Dillon says he won't teach as history anything that has happened in his adult life because he feels he is too biased about it. He thinks historians need about 20 years to distance themselves from an event and reflect on it before they can teach with the integrity required of a college level course. Otherwise, students will be given "undigested first person accounts that can not have historical proof."

Magness agrees that history requires critical distance. She describes the Desert Storm conflict as a good example of an extremely significant event that is still too recent for us to understand its full impact on our society and history. She carefully draws a distinction between Humanities and a current event class.

"In the debate of popular culture versus high culture, Humanities would not be considered a popular culture class. And we're certainly bucking the trend there. The trend right now is that the only thing that matters is anything that's happened since 1998 probably, and the only culture that matters is pop culture. So we're on the other side of a big divide there," said Magness.

Dillon sees the value of a current events class, but he questions how to teach such a class in an academic setting. It would have to be an informal discussion group in his opinion.

"If I lose the ability to offer a historian's viewpoint... then it's just Tim Dillon," said Dillon.

amount of comfort that no one's looking at those tests and nobody's going to."

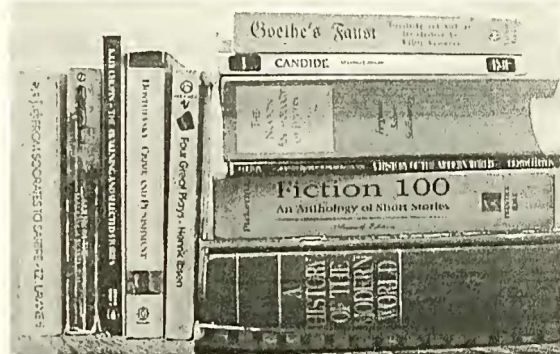
What Dillon did not realize was that anyone can access a computer's hard drive if he or she is, physically, at that computer's keyboard. Dillon assumed his computer's hard drive could not be opened without his password.

The morning of the test, Dillon said he sat down at his computer and typed in his password. It didn't work, but in his haste to get to Hyder Auditorium to start the test, he ignored it thinking he would contact Computer Services later.

About half-way through the test, he realized there was something strange about the computer not responding. He went back to his office and discovered a student domain and password on his computer instead of his own.

Dillon knew from the password who the student was, but he said he was hesitant to confront the student because the person who accessed his computer may have used another student's password. So, he decided to wait and see if there was a significant im-

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### Humanities: pain or pleasure?

By Amy Noel Howard  
Reporter

Though he doesn't have to, freshman Matthew Trumbull has chosen to participate in the entire Humanities Program.

Most students at Milligan College would think this is something like volunteering for a root canal.

"I really liked their idea of the Humanities Program — kind of integrating everything.... That's part of the reason why I came to Milligan," he said.

Trumbull came to Milligan with a semester or so of college credit, including an English class that applied toward three hours of Humanities credit. He was required to take three hours of history this semester, but

he chose to experience the whole program, which, according to Dr. Pat Magness, his section leader, is a rare phenomenon.

"I don't think the Humanities program would be the same without taking the whole thing as a package. Sitting in on the history would be kind of defeating the purpose," she said.

Approximately 28 Milligan students jumped at the chance to get out of some Humanities hours this semester. After all, Humanities is an intensive four semester, 24-hour course which surveys the history, philosophy, literature, art, music and comparative religion from the beginning of recorded history until the mid-20th Century. It also includes an extensive writing program.

"It's a good program to a certain degree, but I think they put too much emphasis on it here.... Since I've been out of Humanities, I've been on the Dean's List every semester," said senior Heather Williams, who also completed the entire Humanities course.

Some students go on the annual six-week, summer semester Humanities Tour of Europe to avoid taking one full, six-hour semester of Humanities.

"I wanted to go to Europe, but it was an

added bonus to get out of Humanities," said junior Leslie Gaskins.

But Trumbull remains glad he chose to complete the whole Humanities program.

"I want to be an educated person so I can talk to anyone and make obscure allusions to ancient classical literature and sound pretentious," said junior Sharon Allen. "I already regret what I didn't do, when I skipped the homework."

For Trumbull, who is getting married next summer, it was a tough decision to spend the extra three hours on Humanities when he could have been concentrating on his other core classes.

"If I didn't do the writing, I would have missed out on most of the literature," he said.

Trumbull said he learned about the Humanities program when his older sister Tracy attended Milligan. He said he values what many consider a burden — a full Christian liberal arts curriculum.

Trumbull was home-schooled during high school. When he finished, he spent three years working, taking some classes at a community college and setting some goals for himself. His conclusion was to pursue a history and education major.

"Milligan is much more demanding than community college — it might have actually given me a false impression of college.... I definitely like this environment much better for learning than at community college," he said.

At this point, Trumbull remains highly committed.

"It opens up your understanding," he said. "It's very intriguing to study the origins of everything. We can understand how humanity has evolved into what civilization has become today, where it has its roots.... It's helping me to deepen my understanding of why things are the way they are. It definitely has a lot of application to the future and to life in general."

*"I really liked the idea of the Humanities program — kind of integrating everything," said Trumbull*