PROFESSION: The word connotes a vow, a calling, a commitment to a series of rules and virtues. It started off as a religious term, not a technical one. Look where it ended up. This issue of InterAction takes a look at three of Stanford’s professional schools – Business, Education and Law. Acknowledging that today’s world requires students and researchers to use their heads, hands and hearts to cross a multitude of disciplinary and professional boundaries, as well as combine theory with practice, these schools are working with each other, with other departments and with their respective professional communities to ensure that Stanford’s graduates do, indeed, profess both service and skill.

see page 2
Making Practice Perfect

A focus on 3 of university’s seven schools

In academic year 2004-05 Stanford enrolled a total of 8,093 graduate students. The three schools addressed in this issue of Interaction accounted for the following percentages:

- Graduate School of Business: 902 (11%)
- School of Education: 335 (4%)
- School of Law: 567 (7%)

The commission’s recommendations were issued in late 2003 (http://www.stanford.edu/dept/president/CGE2005.pdf). They include more cross-disciplinary training for students and faculty; more joint and dual degrees; new seminars and programs; enhanced funding and fellowships; and the removal of unnecessary administrative barriers and complexity.

“This issue of Interaction will look at just three of Stanford’s professional schools—business, education and law—and how they are responding both to larger professional challenges and to Hennessy’s call for transformation. Faculty and administrators at the three schools are talking to one another and to colleagues in the other schools. They have established innovative research and practice centers, launched joint and dual degrees; new seminars and programs; enhanced funding and fellowships; and the removal of unnecessary administrative barriers and complexity. Leaders at all three schools are emphatic, as was the commission, that disciplinary excellence cannot be sacrificed; indeed, many researchers have very good reasons for remaining within the confines of their discipline. But more adventurous faculty members are impatient. There are projects begging to be undertaken, and they say, and too few hardy souls willing to take the chance to do research or sponsor projects or experiment with methods that don’t quite fit into traditional molds.

Yet these same scholars, straining at the leash, say they’d rather be at Stanford than anywhere else. It’s hard everywhere, they said; it’s less hard here. The call for a new style of professional education is not unique to Stanford. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (which has its offices on the campus) is undertaking a nationwide study of a series of professions, among them law. One of the lead scholars in that venture is William Sullivan, author of Work and Integrity: The Crisis and Promise of Professionalism in America (1995). In a recent article on the Carnegie Foundation’s website, he argued that professionals must be moral agents.

“The idea of the professional as neutral problem solver, above the fray, which was launched with great expectations a century ago, is now obsolete,” William Sullivan said.

‘The pressure to want to be the best in the world in one’s specialization keeps people in silos, but it’s also human nature to want to collaborate,’ Joss said.

“The hallmarks of Stanford’s departments and schools is excellence. The Commission on Graduate Education is charged with exploring how that excellence might be used to augment our graduate students’ abilities to think critically and communicate effectively in a complicated world...”

Please send comments, feedback or story ideas to multi-feedback@lists.stanford.edu
What this world needs most, in the eyes of Robert Joss, dean of the Graduate School of Business (GSB), is better management. There is virtually no social or economic problem, he argues, that isn’t, when you get down to it, a management problem.

“How do you get humans to work with each other?” Joss asks.

“Our faculty have degrees in economics, psychology, engineering, math, politics and statistics. Every one could have a top job in their discipline. But they chose the GSB because they like the idea of applying their discipline to the challenges of management.”

The existence or absence of social justice also has become a question of management, on the level both of nation-states and organizations, he said. Chances are that societies that work well and fairly are well managed; those that don’t, aren’t.

So it behooves anyone interested in social justice to get interested in management, said Jim Phills, director of the Business School’s Center for Social Innovation.

In the 1980s, “business was the enemy” for many people, he said. “What turned it around was the tech boom, the tremendous accumulation of wealth. Suddenly there were young people with fortunes, passions and resources. Entrepreneurial zeal was turned toward education and the environment, especially here [at Stanford].”

“The MBA students of today want to change the world, build something, have an impact, be actively engaged.”

The best business students—the ones who come to the Stanford Graduate School of Business—know that this world needs most, what Joss argues, that isn’t, when you view it from as many places as possible.

Business School leaders have made it clear the school is a full partner in university President John Hennessy’s effort to make Stanford one of the world’s centers of multidisciplinary research and learning. It has created a multidisciplinary innovation fund to pay for a broad range of projects, courses and infrastructure. Dozens of the school’s faculty are working with the university’s four multidisciplinary initiatives.

The school also is taking a cue from its longtime executive education program, and this summer will launch a four-week management course, the Summer Institute for Entrepreneurship, for graduate students outside business. The program is based on the idea that there are few fields that couldn’t benefit from instruction in management.

In some ways, this anticipates the report of the Commission on Graduate Education, which recommended that Stanford develop summer programs for graduate students so they can interact with colleagues and faculty members from outside their field.

With financial support from the President’s Office and several of the university’s schools, the institute will bring together students from medicine, engineering and the social and natural sciences and teach them some of the analytical and practical skills associated with running a business.

The first cohort will be nearly all from Stanford, and nearly all of those are from the schools of Engineering or Medicine. Their objectives include developing and marketing medical technologies, providing health care services to underserved communities, marketing their own inventions and setting up energy and resources consulting firms.

Along similar cross-training lines, Joss said he would like to see a series of brief “101” courses that would enable business students to acquire, say, enough knowledge about genetics or computer science to capably lead a biotech company. Inversely, courses could instruct science students in the basics of accounting and management.

A similar proposal also came from the Commission on Graduate Education, which urged cross-disciplinary training but cautioned against a “dumbed-down version of what [a department] would otherwise provide to its own students.”

That will be one of the major challenges for Stanford’s dean of graduate education, Joss said, a new position that also was recommended by the commission.

“How can we help graduate students make connections? What if a law student wants to learn about genetics? The genetics professor won’t want to teach the law student. And the same is true for us; how do we teach them management? But we should help law and business students learn about science. They don’t need degrees, just instruction. But you don’t just flip a switch.”

One of the reasons such courses have been difficult to organize until now is that the Business School, like the Law School, had its own calendar, which did not conform to that of the rest of the university. Classes generally are held on a Monday-and-Thursday or a Monday-and-Wednesday schedule.

Many first-year MBA students live in the Schwab Residential Center, above, a complex of modern apartments.

“How do you get humans to work with each other?”

Joss asks.

continued on next page
Continued from previous page

Tuesday-and-Friday schedule, which often makes it impossible for graduate students and Business School students to attend each other’s classes. Cross-listing classes might help with credits, but if the classes are on the wrong day, it makes no difference. That will change in the fall, when the Business School will adopt a Monday-and-Wednesday and Tuesday-and-Thursday schedule.

Despite the calendar conflict, there have been no table examples of cross-school collaboration, showing that intellectual curiosity and a desire to solve problems can outweigh the relative inconvenience of an awkward schedule.

One such case is that of environmentalist Erica Plambeck, who has a PhD from the Department of Management Science and Engineering in the School of Engineering. Her field is operations management, which she succinctly defined as “getting the right stuff in the right place at the right time.”

“When we teach MBA students about stocks and flows,” she explained, “we should talk about stocks and flows in the atmosphere.” Which is to say, there is way too much stock of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

“The trend in business education is to integrate ethical issues, social issues and the environment into the core curriculum but to address these issues in passing when we talk about, for example, paper manufacturing or oil refining,” Plambeck said. “The point is that the tools students are learning apply not just to companies and regular inventory management but to the management of carbon dioxide. They have to see the larger picture.”

Last year, Plambeck joined forces with management science and engineering Professor Jim Sweeney (also a senior fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research and, by courtesy, at the Hoover Institution and the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies) and with Pamela Matson, the Chester Naravore Dean of the School of Earth Sciences and a great advocate of the larger picture, to teach a course called Business and the Environment, whose origin lay in a suggestion from students.

This year Plambeck taught Environmental Entrepreneurship, about how market forces can be harnessed to encourage private solutions to environmental concerns.

One challenge she faced is that courses from the various schools are not listed in the same place. It is difficult to find out what courses other schools are offering. As a result, she had a hard time rounding up students from the Business School, which disappointed her, especially as the seminar is based on teamwork.

“How do I get my class on the radar screen for students across campus?” she asked. “How do we manage the schedule so that students can attend?”

The commission, too, addressed this issue in its final report: “In today’s online world, there is no reason that the Stanford Bulletin could not be organized in a manner that would permit a student to search it by topics, without regard to department structure.”

Awaiting such an innovation, Plambeck resorted to publicizing her course by sending e-mails to professors outside the Business School whose students she figured might be interested.

“It’s wonderful in a class to have teams of students from different schools,” she said. “We had mostly GSB students this time around, but they were from variety of backgrounds. We had people who worked with non-profits in Africa and with women’s organizations, and there was an executive from China and someone in waste management.”

Management is a key issue in her class, as it is in similar classes such as Business School Professor Stefanos Zerous’ Biodesign Innovation (taught with colleagues in the schools of Medicine and Engineering) and Social Entrepreneurship Startup, taught by James Patell, the Herbert Hoover Professor of Public and Private Management, with colleagues in the School of Engineering. Echoing Joss, Plambeck pointed to management as the activity that puts scholarship to test and which, almost by definition, must cross boundaries.

“At the GSR, when we teach operations, we focus on the quantitative part, but someone who goes on to be managerial integrates all the disciplines. They’re more applied,” Plambeck said.

“Some learn that while they’re very creative, they’re not necessarily all there is to persuading people,” she said. “They learn that while they’re very good at making logical arguments, that’s not necessarily all there is to persuading others.”

But ambiguous roles and loosely defined projects are common in the business world. A collaboration this year paired the Business School’s Leadership Development Platform, a program for first-year MBA students, with the Digital Vision Program (http://rdvp.org/), a mid-career sabbatical program for fellows working to develop projects to solve problems in the developing world. The goal of the collaboration was to give the business students a real-world challenge while providing the Digital Vision fellows with business expertise.

As the MBA students sought to define their role, they learned the importance of simultaneously building strong relationships while managing performance.

The projects were one part of the two-quarter Leadership Development Platform, in which 72 first-year MBA students improve their leadership and teamwork skills.

“It was really surprising by how paralyzed I felt without an explicit, pre-defined goal,” Breden recalled.
to lead and when not, how you build a capable and effective team from individuals with different capabilities.

Thus there can be a tension between the disciplinary and the applied. People at the Business School are experts in their discipline, and they also come together, or teach their students to come together, to solve problems outside the academy. Those are two different things.

Making sure the two things coexist is one of the missions of the Center for Social Innovation, which focuses on three sets of relationships in the nonprofit world: across sectors, between theory and practice, and among disciplines.

From Director Jim Phills’ point of view, “the problems of the world don’t respect the clean boundaries of the academy. So, if you’re interested in climate, there’s science, politics, business, law and sociology. If you want to be effective, you must draw on many disciplines.”

Phills, a social psychologist (he will be at Yale University in 2006-07), relies upon the Business School faculty to participate in the Center for Social Innovation. But he noted, echoing people all across the campus, rewards in academia—and not just at Stanford—tend to be bestowed on disciplinary work, not on interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary or even applied work.

There are significant pressures on junior faculty who want to buck tradition, he said.

“But sometimes I’m lucky,” he said. “They see the possibilities; they see that new joint chairs are being created. The faculty is very intellectually curious. So we take them out of their comfort zone; we try to expose them to others.

“We need other forces to propel us toward interdisciplinary. But larger forces mitigate against that. So for now, it’s a person-to-person campaign. It’s door-to-door. It takes only two or three visible cases of people who made a career doing something people said couldn’t be done.”

Like Stanford’s other schools, the Business School must weigh the relative strengths of disciplinary rigor and multidisciplinary innovation. Ways to achieve both include cross-listing classes, offering joint and dual degrees, and giving courtesy appointments to faculty members who actively cross disciplines.

One such joint degree is the MBA/MS with the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Environment and Resources (IPER). IPER has had programs with the Schools of Business, Law and Medicine since 2001; they are currently being revamped so as to attract a broader student base. In November the Business School faculty voted unanimously to support a new joint degree with IPER that will draw faculty from all seven schools. Students (who will be admitted by the Business School) will complete 129 units in two academic years plus two quarters with a concentration in one of four areas: natural sciences; culture, law, institutions and politics; technology and engineering; and economics and policy analysis.

Another such joint degree is the MBA/MA with the School of Education, the first—it began 30 years ago—and possibly the only such degree program in the country. (See related article, page 8.)

As at the Law School, the push toward cross-disciplinary work, toward working in that unstable space between theory and practice, comes most often from business students and alumni.

“You’re asking a lot of flowers to bloom,” Joss said. “Faculty work really hard, and it’s hard to learn a second discipline. You’ve invested years in a certain field. There are lots of demands on your time. It’s got to fit your self-image of what you want.

“It’s amazing we have the degree of excitement we do.

The excitement for people like Plambeck, who does not yet have tenure, is that, as she said, “this is where my heart is.”

The way she sees it, a transition must be made from multidisciplinary to interdisciplinary work. In order to effectively tackle on the world’s biggest problems, scholars must start off working deeply in their field, but side-by-side with people from elsewhere.

“That’s the heart of it. In order to train people well and have them succeed and get tenure, we need to train within the disciplines. We can’t just say to a PhD student, ‘Tackle global warming,’” Plambeck said.

“Students have a hard enough time getting to the top of their discipline, let alone the challenges of interdisciplinary work. The challenge is to help people master their discipline and then collaborate later in their careers.”

"One thing the Business School does well is throwing students into teams and having them learn to manage, learning when to lead and when not, how you build a capable and effective team from individuals with different capabilities," Erica Plambeck said.

"People used to sort of be allergic to business practices and knowledge. Now they just crave it." he said.

He noted that younger people are increasingly trying to align their business lives with social goals. "It’s not just the best-paying job, it’s not just one that has the most potential for career development. It’s got to be something they care about socially," he said. "I think that’s new, and I think it’s quite a healthy trend for society."

And the blurring of lines between disciplines is also something students will undoubtedly see in the business world.

“Business School students, computer science students and members of the business community working with fellows from all around the world on real problems and creating solutions—there’s something cool about that,” Sandhu said.

“That’s the future. We’re all going to have to work together. The world’s problems are getting too complex.”

"Business School students, computer science students and members of the business community working with fellows from all around the world on real problems and creating solutions—there’s something cool about that," Sandhu said.

"That’s the future. We’re all going to have to work together. The world’s problems are getting too complex."
The Law School establishes a precedent

The aim of law school has always been to get students to “think like lawyers.” Dean Larry Kramer thinks that’s a big mistake—if they’re thinking only like lawyers. What about thinking like clients? Like scientists? Like entrepreneurs? Like professors? William Sullivan, one of the lead authors of a forthcoming Carnegie Foundation publication on legal education, put it this way: “Professional education, including legal education, tends to divide performance into three parts: the mostly intellectual or conceptual (the head); the doing (the hands); and meaning and purpose (the heart).”

“Thinking like a lawyer” is the head. The challenge for professional education is to recombine and reintegrate the whole.

Since Kramer arrived in 2004 from New York University, he has continued taking the school in the directions mapped by his predecessor, Kathleen Sullivan, implementing a host of changes aimed at integrating not only the whole but at reestablishing connections between the school and the university and at encouraging the faculty to build their own bridges.

The signs are everywhere. During a recent lunch hour in March, faculty members were building those bridges from tables in the student lounge. They were there to promote joint degree programs, of which Kramer hopes there will be as many as 18 by 2007-08. Representatives of legal specialties concerning the environment, economics, policy, sociology and others, met with prospective students who, tax law Professor Jeff Strnad said, were “stunned” at how easy the Law School is making it.

One of the joint pioneers is Peter Morgan, who is pursuing a JD and an MS in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Environment and Resources. (Though the terms often are used interchangeably, a dual degree means one completes all requirements for both degrees; a joint degree means some units apply to both degrees.)

“I came to Stanford specifically for that program,” he said. “I only considered schools that offered joint degrees. A joint degree was attractive to me because I became interested in a career working in the environmental area after finishing my undergraduate degree, and I had gaps in my background knowledge. There were classes I wish I had taken. Also, I’m developing research interests that don’t fall strictly within one discipline.”

Nearly everyone consulted for this article said the push toward innovation came not just from the dean’s office but also from alumni. Once out there, graduates realized their tool boxes could and should be expanded.

Chief among the changes aimed at dissolving barriers between law and other fields was to propose that the Law School alter its calendar, which for years has been on the semester system.

“The Law School went its own way in the 1960s, and the calendar is the most obvious manifestation of that,” Kramer said. “Faculty members might do multidisciplinary research, but, on the whole, it was an individual operation. The school was only episodically involved with the rest of the university, which was a waste, considering that it is sitting amid one of the great universities of the world,” Larry Kramer said.

Many members of the Law School faculty had good reasons for being wary of the change, Kramer said. Most other law schools run on semesters; law firms expect their summer associates to be on that calendar; and there are economic and opportunity costs. But he believed the advantages outweighed the disadvantages, and many of the faculty were with him; intellectual property pioneer Lawrence Lessig, the C. Wendell Pratt Professor of Law and Karthik M. Ramasamy, Professor of Law, said he was “wildly in favor” of the change.

In January, Kramer announced that the transition will begin this fall and should be completed by 2007, by which time the Law School will be fully on the quarter system.

The second-most important change Kramer championed, predicated on the first, are the joint degree programs.

“The Commission on Graduate Education noted in its recommendations that the onerous requirements of existing dual and joint degree programs can function as a discriminative filter because they set conditions for work in two different programs, with little overlap and double the cost.”

According to Strnad, the Charles A. Beardsey Professor of Law, the school is committed to changing that.

“We’re very enthusiastic, very flexible, as long as it makes sense,” he said. In essence, there will be now two sorts of joint law degrees. The first allows students to apply units acquired outside the school (even outside Stanford) to another degree. This arrangement existed when Kramer came to Stanford, Strnad said, though it is now more flexible than before.

Then there are the new joint degrees, which entail four years of study in exchange for two degrees. Certain courses will count for both, a structural innovation that came into being thanks to several Law School administrators. “They worked very hard to put together exotic and risky degree programs, and they deserve a lot of the credit,” he said. “This is a very ambitious initiative, reaching out to almost every department, and will greatly increase the possibilities of people wanting to do work in two fields.”

So far, the school and the respective departments have approved programs in law and philosophy, educa-

Legal Technicalities

An impressive group of people stared out from the cover photo of a recent issue of Stanford Lawyer. Together, they provide legal advice to the leaders of a host of top high-tech companies in Silicon Valley and beyond, companies such as Microsoft, Google, Cisco, eBay, Yahoo, Qualcomm, Autodesk and Oracle.

But Stanford’s legal expertise does not just guide tech companies in the law; it also explores ways in which technology itself can help navigate the law.

The law school’s Program in Law, Science and Technology (LST), launched by former Dean Kathleen Sullivan is an umbrella for several centers that address the ramifications of such issues as intellectual property on the Internet, bioscience and ethics, and the interaction of law and computers in consumer society.

Intellectual property is an obvious example of a field that has been utterly transformed by the Internet. On the one hand the technology unleashed massive copyright infringement; on the other, through informational technology, the technology has the potential to vastly increase the possibilities for human creativity.

In a slightly different vein, computer scientists and legal scholars under the auspices of LST have established a center focused on computational-legal methodology to help people make their way through thicket of codes and regulations.

“The legal field is one that in many ways operates the same way it did hundreds of years ago,” said Roland Vogl, executive director of LST and one of the forces behind the center’s CodEx, and the computational-legal methodology behind it, is designed to increase the efficiency of certain legal procedures such as copyright clearance.” Basically, he said, software could translate code along the lines of what TurboTax does. Professor of Information Technology and Law Michael Genesereth, who leads the Logic Group at the Computer Science Department, is particularly enthusiastic about the possibilities in managed health. Genesereth, who said he once spent several days lodged in limbo between an HHB and hospital that agreed this was a problem that could be fixed.

“This is very much a computational law problem,” he said. Although lawyers certainly stand to gain from such innovations, the CodEx people are especially concerned with helping people affected by the law. “It’s legal empowerment through informational technology,” Genesereth said.

The goal is a world in which consumers could click and their way through the world of health insurance, reading the relevant rules, regulations and statutes as they go. What each party to a dispute would bring to the site of conflict, be brought to the site of conflict, would be brought to the site of conflict, where code would be made manifest to physicians, pharmacists, patients and HMOS.

Genesereth said he was bothered by what he saw as widespread cynicism toward the law, the result of excessive complexity and unequal access. So, with money in hand, thanks to his own successful startup during the tech boom, he turned his attention to issues of social justice.
tion, management science, public policy, international and area studies, and the environment. In the pipeline are programs in history, psychology, political science and bioengineering. And in the future, programs with computer science and the various departments in the School of Engineering are possible.

Law students interested in public policy for years have taken courses at Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School for Public and International Affairs or at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. That will no longer be necessary, Deborah Hensler, the Judge John W. Ford Professor of Dispute Resolution, empirical political scientist and long-time policy analyst (but not a lawyer), is heading up the new JD/MPP, which will be administered by the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. She hopes to admit the first students in 2007.

“The idea for the program started with a group of faculty,” she said. “We went to Larry and said, we have a group of people here [at the Law School] with other degrees, so we could teach political science within the faculty,” she said. “We went to Larry and said, we have the first students in 2007.

Research. She hopes to admit a new center with folks from many disciplines, and work at the boundaries,” Genesereth said. “We’ll do tech, they’ll do law, but together we’ll be able to do things we couldn’t do alone.”

It was years ago that such a mutual need was first recognized by Professor Margaret Jane Radin, of the Law School. She had a feeling that the intersection of law and cyberspace was a field begging to be figured out, so in 1995 she directed the law firm of Orrick, Herrington and Sutcliffe. She joined Genesereth’s Logic Group, which then approached Vogl, which in turn led to the establishment of CodeX.

“We all decided we wanted to create a new center with folks from many disciplines, and work at the boundaries,” Genesereth said. “We’ll do tech, they’ll do law, but together we’ll be able to do things we couldn’t do alone.”

The legal field is one that in many ways operates the same way it did hundreds of years ago,” Vogl said.

But they can. We’re making it very flexible. We’re breaking down barriers between departments so it matters less to some extent that they publish in their own journals. We’re giving the clients what they need. But Stanford would appear to have an edge, which Kathleen Sullivan, Kramer’s predecessor as dean, took advantage of to promote a wide range of faculty research colloquia.

“Barriers can be overcome, especially here, because no one tells us, ‘You can’t do that because it’s not law,’” Hensler said. Not all schools are as ecumenical, she suggested.

“These will be the most attractive programs in the country for joint degrees for many reasons,” Strnad said.

For law students not interested in a joint degree, the opportunities for interdisciplinary work are still immense, thanks to the school’s research centers.

One of those is the Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation, whose director, Allen Weiner, has a joint appointment with the Freeman Spiegel Center for International Studies. His exact job title bears noting: He is an associate professor of law (teaching) and the Warren Christopher Professor of the Practice of International Law and Diplomacy. The title is interesting for at least three reasons. First, Weiner emphasizes the word “practice.” Second, it was former Secretary of State Warren Christopher, ’49, who once told Kathleen Sullivan (according to Stanford Lawyer magazine) that the international component of the law program was better when it was a

The pragmatic, useful intersection of law and technology being studied and continued on page 10

Bill Koski, below, is the director of the Law School’s Youth and Education Law Clinic, and he also has a Ph.D. from the School of Education.
The Business of Education

Ask most people to name the most urgent problem facing their community and they will tell you it is the public schools. No money, no facilities, no good teachers, too much violence, not enough content, the wrong content.

“We’re in a historic period,” said Anthony Bryk, the Spencer Foundation Professor of Organizational Studies in Education and Business. “The public education system we grew up with is gone. There’s been massive immigration, technological transformations, extraordinary forces, and we hold expectations that schools must educate all our students. What hangs in the balance is the future of our society. The system is really broken, but that’s not yet fully in the public consciousness.”

If the system is broken, someone’s got to fix it, and that would seem to be a job for people with advanced degrees in education.

Schools of education have a divided mission. Years ago, they were teacher-training institutes. Later on, they began hiring Ph.D.s and awarding Ph.D.s, and they became research centers. Some schools, such as Stanford, do both, which means the faculty represents a broad swath of the social sciences.

Dean Deborah Stipek says she wouldn’t have come here from UCLA if that hadn’t been the case. “We’re in a comfort zone here,” she said. “We’re a professional school, and education is the domain we’re investigating. And if you study education, there are many angles: families, income, psychological, and so on. It’s much more interesting for the faculty that there’s such a mix. When people work together, the questions demand different perspectives.”

Professors train teachers, work on policy reform and study organizational theory, the philosophy of education, childhood psychology and the job market, to name just a few pursuits. To a greater or lesser extent, however – and Stipek says it’s Stanford’s strength – they all combine theory and practice. Individually they cross disciplines and they inevitably end up working with colleagues in other areas, other schools or outside the university altogether.

For example, take Eamonn Callan, an educational philosopher who at present is studying civic and moral education and the ethics of migration. “My work takes place at the intersection of political philosophy and educational policy,” he said. “I’m interested in citizenship in multicultural societies, so migration has always been at the periphery of my vision. I’m interested in the integration of migrant populations, in how multicultural societies get formed in the first place.

“It’s not a question of a pre-packaged theory being applied. Practice disrupts theory, it leads to better, subtler theories. Political philosophy has to catch up with the problems of contemporary migration.”

Or take Professor of Education Myra Strober. A labor economist and a feminist scholar, she began life at Stanford at the business school. A graduate student she sat in on a seminar and decided Stanford was a much better place to do her dissertation. Today she’s associate professor of education, who will oversee more than 30 researchers from think tanks and universities nationwide, has degrees in engineering, political science and economics, and she also teaches at the business school.

“There’s exciting freedom and autonomy, but it’s very complicated,” Powell said, referring to the multidisciplinary initiatives at Stanford. “Funds are flowing, so now we have a wonderful challenge. But the faculty is like a medieval guild. Stanford is the most decentralized university I’ve ever been at. Everyone is a department of one.”

Or, finally, take the economist Susanna Loeb, Associate Professor of Education and, by courtesy, in the GSB. She is the lead researcher on a $2.6 million statewide study announced in late March that aims to identify ways of restoring California’s public education system to good health [http://news-service.stanford.edu/news/2006/april5/finance-040506.html]. This associate professor of education, who will oversee more than 30 researchers from think tanks and universities nationwide, has degrees in engineering, political science and economics, and she also teaches at the business school. It’s actually not that wide a range, she says, considering her primary interest is policy.

“It’s true, I lose something by not being in an economics department,” she said, “but I gain from the expertise of a wider community in Education.” For example, another of her research projects looks at how it is that the best teachers tend to avoid poor areas. While that may not be much of a surprise, Loeb and her collaborators tried to get at the roots of this cycle of poverty, which go far beyond particular teachers and their districts. In order for that study on teacher retention to be meaningful, however, economics was not enough, so she turned to political scientist Pam Grossman, also

Stanford and the non-profit Aspire Public Schools have jointly run East Palo High School since 2001.
at the School of Education, who studies why and how people become teachers to begin with. “I’ve been fine playing at the edges, but that’s because I’ve been lucky,” Loech said. “I’m not sure how safe it is. But there’s much more space at Stanford for that than elsewhere.”

These disciplinary scholars are all housed at the School of Education because they care about the act of educating, or the institutions in which people are educated, or the means by which education is financed, or the cognitive processes by which one is educated. It is a vast expanse of inquiry, and each one of those research areas feeds on the next.

That interconnectedness fuels a commitment on the part of these scholars to help fix the broken system Bryk spoke of.

On the frontlines of that battle are the practitioners: teachers, administrators and policymakers. They increasingly are working hand-in-hand not only with researchers but with colleagues in the business school, because education, whether public or private, requires funding and management.

Stanford’s Program in Ethics in Society in January sponsored a panel discussion on charter schools that drew a large and diverse audience. One of the speakers was Mark Kushner, founder and CEO of Leadership Public Schools, on whose board Stipek sits.

“I’m a teacher, and I’ve learned that running a business is really hard,” he told the audience. It was a theme that ran through that meeting and through nearly every conversation conducted for this article. The world of education needs the world of management, and the world of business is increasingly interested in education.

At Stanford, the two schools have acted upon this mutual interest. They work together on charter school projects, host joint conferences, together run the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute for school administrators and have had a joint MBA/MA program for more than 30 years.

Strober is in charge of the recently revamped degree program, cross-listed at both schools, is one of its core classes.

“The cultures are very different in Business and Education,” she said. “It’s very interesting to watch students make that cultural shift daily. Lots of Education faculty had preconceptions regarding the business students, but by and large the faculty really enjoy them. They ask different sorts of questions; they use different sorts of reasoning.”

Students must apply to both schools; the GSB admits them first, and applications are then sent on to the School of Education, whether public or private, requires funding and management.

One student who came to Stanford specifically to get the two-year joint degree was Gloria Lee, today the chief operating officer for Aspire Public Schools, a nonprofit organization that owns and operates high-performing charter schools in low-income neighborhoods.

If you want a joint MA/MBA, you come to Stanford, because as far as anyone here knows, it’s the only such program in the country.

Looking back, Lee commented on how educators sometimes act as if they are immune to the principles of business. “There is a real philosophy that ‘we’re different,’ ‘you can’t apply the Starbucks principles to us, we’re not McDonalds.’ There’s a real philosophical rejection of business thinking,” Lee said, suggesting that this can be a problem.

But at the same time, “educators are skeptical about people who think they know all the answers,” which some people in the business world might appear to do. “So the joint degree helps with actually creating bridges among people, it makes them conversant in both fields,” she said.

The GSB has a history of reaching out to under-served educational institutions. Alumnus Dave Michael in 1992 established a local chapter of I Have a Dream and raised enough money to “adopt” entire classes of elementary school children in East Palo Alto. The Dreamers maintain mentoring programs and continue keeping an eye on the original adoptees, the vast majority of whom went on to college.

Stipek, too, acknowledged the challenges. “There has been miscommunication between the two professions, and that’s why we married them,” she said. “You can’t go around the Ed School. There is a set of knowledge about how to teach children. But they are very different cultures. Stanford is different in its level of commitment to make this work.”

Bryk, who teaches a course in the core program of the MA/MBA, said it took some persuasion recently to get a class of GSB students to visit a school in East Palo Alto. Bryk prevailed, they all went, and as a result, he said, “their thinking became more complex.”

Bryk, Stipek, and others say, conversations between people in education and business can be difficult at times.

“There has been miscommunication between the two professions, and that’s why we married them,” she said. “You can’t go around the Ed School. There is a set of knowledge about how to teach children. But they are very different cultures. Stanford is different in its level of commitment to make this work.”

Stipek, too, acknowledged the challenges. “There has been miscommunication between the two professions, and that’s why we married them,” she said. “You can’t go around the Ed School. There is a set of knowledge about how to teach children. But they are very different cultures. Stanford is different in its level of commitment to make this work.”

At Stanford, the two schools have acted upon this mutual interest. They work together on charter school projects, host joint conferences, together run the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute for school administrators and have had a joint MBA/MA program for more than 30 years.

Strober is in charge of the recently revamped degree program, cross-listed at both schools, is one of its core classes.

“The cultures are very different in Business and Education,” she said. “It’s very interesting to watch students make that cultural shift daily. Lots of Education faculty had preconceptions regarding the business students, but by and large the faculty really enjoy them. They ask different sorts of questions; they use different sorts of reasoning.”

Students must apply to both schools; the GSB admits them first, and applications are then sent on to the School of Education, whether public or private, requires funding and management.

One student who came to Stanford specifically to get the two-year joint degree was Gloria Lee, today the chief operating officer for Aspire Public Schools, a nonprofit organization that owns and operates high-performing charter schools in low-income neighborhoods.

If you want a joint MA/MBA, you come to Stanford, because as far as anyone here knows, it’s the only such program in the country.

Looking back, Lee commented on how educators sometimes act as if they are immune to the principles of business. “There is a real philosophy that ‘we’re different,’ ‘you can’t apply the Starbucks principles to us, we’re not McDonalds.’ There’s a real philosophical rejection of business thinking,” Lee said, suggesting that this can be a problem.

But at the same time, “educators are skeptical about people who think they know all the answers,” which some people in the business world might appear to do. “So the joint degree helps with actually creating bridges among people, it makes them conversant in both fields,” she said.

The GSB has a history of reaching out to under-served educational institutions. Alumnus Dave Michael in 1992 established a local chapter of I Have a Dream and raised enough money to “adopt” entire classes of elementary school children in East Palo Alto. The Dreamers maintain mentoring programs and continue keeping an eye on the original adoptees, the vast majority of whom went on to college.

Stipek, too, acknowledged the challenges. “There has been miscommunication between the two professions, and that’s why we married them,” she said. “You can’t go around the Ed School. There is a set of knowledge about how to teach children. But they are very different cultures. Stanford is different in its level of commitment to make this work.”

Kim Smith, who has an MBA from Stanford, has spent 20 years working at the intersection of the two fields. She is co-founder, former CEO and current executive chair of NewSchools Venture Fund, which invests in schools.

“There is huge potential at Stanford, and I give Stanford credit for having the first joint program, which has an impressive list of graduates,” Smith said. “We were at the front end of the wave of business leadership management.

“Now, 30 years later, we’re at a new inflection point with an even bigger opportunity, and Stanford should be out in front again. We’ve taken a step, now what are we going to do? If we’re not going to fundamentally restructure the incentives in academia to motivate people to get out of their silos, to reward them, help them find dissertation committees, encourage and reward advisers, then they’re not going to be able to get there.”

Smith’s great hope is to establish an institute independent of either school that could be flexible regarding the disciplinary rules of research, publication and...
Technicalities continued from page 6

championed by scholars today is the most recent development in a long history of collaboration at Stanford. In the 1970s, the university already was in the vanguard of artificial intelligence and computational logic, which essentially asked, can computers think or reason? And if so, how? From the start, legal and computer scholars wondered if the legal system could be streamlined with the aid of computers, if information retrieval could be improved and if the theories being developed in artificial intelligence could help in developing models of legal argumentation and reasoning. It is fact the nation's very first AI and Law course was taught here, in 1984. (The International Conference of AI and Law, which meets every two years, will hold its 2007 meeting at Stanford Law School.)

But from the start the new field had snags.

For one thing, the U.S. legal system has historically been based on case law, which is practically impossible to systematize as it develops. (That is why CodeX is concerned with regulations or rules rather than with cases.) Perhaps for that reason, the field is stronger in Europe, which has a tradition of civil law, not common law. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that law uses natural language, as opposed to a constructed language. Furthermore, statutes are not necessarily inert or neutral; judges and lawyers are committed to the notion that AI can help uncover the bases for how we argue and what we mean by rationality. As an example, Gardner’s first project was to work on a Supreme Court case with Stanford law professor (and associate dean) J. Keith Mann. In the course of analyzing, constructing and writing legal arguments, Gardner said, she was struck by the huge discrepancy between our simple computational models and the complexity of the real thing.

“It’s important to be accurate in describing the facts, the law and the arguments, and there was much more room for error than I had realized. A tool like I’d like to see would help keep this all straight — an argument-checker, we might call it — that would raise flags if you make unsupervised assertions or contradict yourself or engage in wishful thinking about what a case holds.”

That idea has something in common with one of the projects on the desk of Deborah McGuinness, a senior research scientist and co-director of the Knowledge Systems AI Lab, which is about to join up with Genesereth’s Logic Group. The project, funded by the National Science Foundation’s Cybertrust program, concerns the Privacy Act and the way information can and cannot be used.

Despite its ambiguity, “law is very amenable to AI,” McGuinness said recently in her office at the Gates Computer Science Building. “We can code for ambiguity,” she explained. An expression like “routine use,” for example, can be partially encoded by representing some ways of determining examples. Not all cases will be covered, but most of them can, and human beings can fill in the gaps.

And law is a lot easier than medicine, she noted: “How do you encode a case that involves a patient who needed a kidney and there was no matching donor? You can code for that.”

Legal precedent continued from page 6

Haas Center for Public Service in March.

“Faculty [at all law schools] would ask, ‘Why should we divert resources to practice when students spend only three years in school? They have their whole career to practice.’”

If Kramer, Marshall and much of the faculty have their way, however, it will no longer be the case that students meet their first client only after graduation.

Not so long ago, the Law School’s clinics were “downstairs,” as opposed to “upstairs,” and the difference was not just geographic, according to Marshall and William Koski, director of the Youth and Education Law Clinic and the Eric and Nancy Wright Professor of Clinical Education. Today, both men have endowed chairs, showing that donors and alumni support the shift and are willing to put their money on practice.

“We’re trying to create a national precedent,” Marshall said, referring to a departure from long years in which theory ruled alone.

The Carnegie Foundation’s book also emphasizes the need for such a change.

Speaking of the foundation’s image of the head, hands and heart, Koski said, “Law schools have not done a good job with the hands. Whether it’s with clergy or social work or teaching, you need clinical experience.”

Working at the environmental clinic was the highlight of my experience at the Law School,” said Peter Morgan, the JD/MS student in environment and resources. He and a colleague argued before U.S. District Court Judge Susan Illston in a case concerning the introduction of aquatic invasive species into water bodies through the discharge of ballast water from vessels. Similarly, Morgan’s colleagues studying constitutional law have the opportunity to participate in one of just two Supreme Court clinics in the country (though they do not argue before the high court). Former Dean Sullivan, one of the nation’s preeminent constitutional scholars, was instrumental in establishing that clinic, along with others in areas such as community law, cyberlaw, civil rights and criminal prosecution.

Koski’s clinic offers future educational reformers, policymakers, attorneys and educators a chance to litigate, advocate and analyze. Koski, a professor (teaching) like Weiner, has a PhD from Stanford’s School of Education and continues doing scholarly research. Indeed, he’s working on a book with political philosopher Bob Merriam on the normative case for equitable educational opportunity.

“Clinical experience makes you think, it makes you ask, what do I need done in order for there to be reform?” Koski said. “Lawyers wear many different hats; they can be accountants, advocates and legislators. Some students say this isn’t lawyering. But then they learn that clients want you to solve problems, not just file complaints. We’re problem solvers. We think holistically.”

Strnad, meanwhile, one of the dean’s biggest boosters in the effort to overhaul the school’s approach to legal education, could not be more pleased.

“We have lots of people with PhDs on our faculty, and Stanford is a very porous place. There’s lots of sharing; it’s an ideal place to do this.”

Miguel Mendez, the Adelbert H. Sweet Professor of Law who has taught at the school since 1977, provided some historical perspective at the Haas Center forum on clinical education. Crediting former President Donald Kennedy with initiating the shift toward a more inclusive, collaborative form of legal education, he was one very happy discusser.

“The battle at the Law School has been won; upstairs wants to come downstairs now!”
Education

continued from page 9

tenure, which she believes constrains the best practical work.

"I watched Business and Education collaborate on [Bryk’s] Spencer chair," she said. "They’re fundamentally different disciplines.

"Sometimes they truly believe different things, and sometimes they just don’t get along; it’s a learning experience.

But though they may talk differently, the two are irrevocably linked in their commitment to fixing the problem.

The Goldman Sachs Foundation in 2002 offered financial aid to create the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute (SELI), dedicated to the professional development of educational leaders, and said it wanted it to be run jointly by the two schools (http://seli.stanford.edu). The foundation spoke to Linda Darling-Hammond, the Charles E. Ducommun Professor in the School of Education, and she then went to the GSB. The institute has operated for three years and currently is seeking funding for new projects.

Darling-Hammond is one of two faculty co-directors of SELI; Jim Phillips, director of the CSI, used to be the other.

"SELI reflects all the possibilities and perils of cross-disciplinary work. I learned a tremendous amount about myself and others," said Phillips, who is in charge of the management hurdles faced by school administrators. The challenge is how to integrate business and education.

His successor was Bryk, who took over with the creation of his joint chair.

"There’s a very small universe of people who could have held Tony’s chair," Stipek said. "They have to be able to believe in it, she said. "My job is to leave an audit trail of sources and reasoning."

"You have to tell people what you’re doing and how you reasoned, and create tools so people can follow the crumbs and dig down when they need to do.

For Radin, it makes more sense to reach for the ‘business of teaching the future’; the more standardized legal thinking, the more standardized legal reasoning” to ensure that explanation and reasoning are clear.

‘We should be creating broader spaces with multiple visions,’ Bryk said.

‘But education scholars are endangered.’

McPherson has no immediate plans for more chairs of this type, however. One of its current emphases is a program called Discipline-Based Scholarship in Education, at Indiana University, in which graduate students from Education and Sociology train together. The foundation also funds individual research grants.

“Spencer is different than other foundations that just go after the things they’re interested in,” said Love, a recipient of more than one Spencer grant. “Spencer is not narrow.”

"A superintendents or a principal obviously has to know about education, because those are the services they’re delivering, but at the same time a school is an enterprise," McPherson said.

"No margin, no mission," they say in the nonprofit world. You have a bottom line, revenues need to match expenses, and you have to make sound decisions on resource allocation. I think the idea of collaboration across that boundary makes an enormous amount of sense.

Bryk’s commitment to cross-disciplinary collaboration as the most effective – indeed the only – way of correctly assessing problems and their practical solutions is mirrored by that of many of his colleagues.

Bringing theory to bear on practice, the School of Education helps run Summit Preparatory High School in Redwood City, a charter school; with Aspire, it took over management of East Palo Alto High School, whose June 2005 commencement speaker was Stanford Provost John Etchemendy; it is one of the centers for the Carnegie Corporation’s Teachers for a New Era initiative on teacher education; and SELI will soon house a training program for the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), another charter school organization.

Bryk, after a conversation about disciplinary collaboration, brought the subject back to the essential problem: education. He had recently read Thomas Friedman’s The World is Flat, and he connected the New York Times writer’s take on globalization to the challenges in his own field.

"As a society, we’re unable to move fast enough," Bryk said, referring to the imperative need to act on dozens of fronts simultaneously in order to get a grip on a world in which well-being and education are gradually eluding all but the most prosperous.

The stakes have never been higher, he said. “What will our children be doing? Will we get there fast enough? America has a colossal problem.”
the blend of literature, imagery, politics and history has inspired some singularly original interdisciplinary work by graduate students. “We’ve been interdisciplinary for 30 years,” said David Palumbo-Liu, as he prepared to step down as director, and indeed MTL is a veteran of the interdisciplinary world. Its first students were enrolled in 1971, when many universities were challenging traditional departmental arrangements; MTL’s closest relative, the History of Consciousness program at UC-Santa Cruz, was founded at around the same time. The program’s early leaders were Ian Watt, who also was founding director of the Stanford Humanities Center and who died in 1999, and Albert Guerard, who died in 2000. Their original motivation was to move literary studies at Stanford toward the modern and away from the formalism that characterized the English Department at the time, Palumbo-Liu said. More sociology, philosophers, and history, in other words, and less close textual analysis.

“Basically, you were just adding one discipline to another,” said Palumbo-Liu, a member of the Comparative Literature department. “But today, our approach is about complementarity, static, dissonance, agency, choices and different kinds of writing.”

“Productive dissonance can dispel people from their assumptions,” said Palumbo-Liu. “It creates something new, in other words. It’s more than the sum of its parts.”

The program, though venerable, has not gone unchanged. When MTL was authorized to stay in business for five more years; the previous time it came up for review, however, it got only a two-year renewal, a decision that was challenged and later overturned. Boyi credits her predecessor with having saved the program.

“We explained to the administration the specificity of the program. He showed them that a student in MTL couldn’t just move to another language department,” she said.

Palumbo-Liu, looking back, remarked that critics think English, Comp Lit and Modern Thought and Literature are all the same because they all deal with texts. We all read Faulkner, we all share the same object, if you like, but text is different. We’re not literary-centered, though we use literature.”

“We’re not fuzzy,” he went on. Ultimately, he said, students’ topics “all have to do with community. We’re asking how texts change claims to community, how they change knowledge.”

The program is both highly selective and highly rigorous, and graduates do vary very well, Boyi noted. They go on to a wide range of Ph.D. stud¬ies, area studies, feminist studies or anthropology. While they are here, they work as teaching assistants in a wide range, in its statement for renewal in 2003, specifically noted that Modern Thought and Literature “is a source of extraordinary talent.”

The program gets around 130 applications a year. Boyi said three applicants have been admitted for fall 2006. “If they’re truly interested in interdisciplinary work, I’m confident they’ll come,” she said. Their project pro¬posals include a study of historical memory and one on law, literature and intellectual property.

At present there are around 30 students; their interests range geo¬graphically from South Asia to the Middle East to Latin America, the¬matically from families to imperi¬alism to tourism, and materially from novels to photography to phi¬losophy.

MTL couldn’t just move to another language depart¬ment, and indeed MTL is a veteran of the interdisciplinary world. A three-quarter core sequence introduces students to a wide range of interdisciplinary methods to study how occupiers of territories end up claiming the symbols of the natives they are displac¬ing. Think Spaniards who appropriated Aztec iconography, think European settlers in North America who fancied themselves Indians, or think the Middle East, which happens to be where this University of Paris student was from. In all these cases, texts, languages and symbols end up contribut¬ing to the structures of a new society that at the same time creates new definitions for itself and for the very texts that are its foundation.

“Most of the students in MTL are from Europe,” Palumbo-Liu said. “They’re all the same because they all deal with texts. We all read Faulkner, we all share the same object, if you like, but text is different. We’re not literary-centered, though we use literature.”

“We’re not fuzzy,” he went on. Ultimately, he said, students’ topics “all have to do with community. We’re asking how texts change claims to community, how they change knowledge.”

The program is both highly selective and highly rigorous, and graduates do vary very well, Boyi noted. They go on to a wide range of Ph.D. stud¬ies, area studies, feminist studies or anthropology. While they are here, they work as teaching assistants in a wide range, in its statement for renewal in 2003, specifically noted that Modern Thought and Literature “is a source of extraordinary talent.”

The program gets around 130 applications a year. Boyi said three applicants have been admitted for fall 2006. “If they’re truly interested in interdisciplinary work, I’m confident they’ll come,” she said. Their project pro¬posals include a study of historical memory and one on law, literature and intellectual property.

At present there are around 30 students; their interests range geo¬graphically from South Asia to the Middle East to Latin America, the¬matically from families to imperi¬alism to tourism, and materially from novels to photography to phi¬losophy.

MTL couldn’t just move to another language depart¬ment, and indeed MTL is a veteran of the interdisciplinary world. A three-quarter core sequence introduces students to a wide range of interdisciplinary methods to study how occupiers of territories end up claiming the symbols of the natives they are displac¬ing. Think Spaniards who appropriated Aztec iconography, think European settlers in North America who fancied themselves Indians, or think the Middle East, which happens to be where this University of Paris student was from. In all these cases, texts, languages and symbols end up contribut¬ing to the structures of a new society that at the same time creates new definitions for itself and for the very texts that are its foundation.

“Most of the students in MTL are from Europe,” Palumbo-Liu said. “They’re all the same because they all deal with texts. We all read Faulkner, we all share the same object, if you like, but text is different. We’re not literary-centered, though we use literature.”

“We’re not fuzzy,” he went on. Ultimately, he said, students’ topics “all have to do with community. We’re asking how texts change claims to community, how they change knowledge.”

The program is both highly selective and highly rigorous, and graduates do vary very well, Boyi noted. They go on to a wide range of Ph.D. stud¬ies, area studies, feminist studies or anthropology. While they are here, they work as teaching assistants in a wide range, in its statement for renewal in 2003, specifically noted that Modern Thought and Literature “is a source of extraordinary talent.”

The program gets around 130 applications a year. Boyi said three applicants have been admitted for fall 2006. “If they’re truly interested in interdisciplinary work, I’m confident they’ll come,” she said. Their project pro¬posals include a study of historical memory and one on law, literature and intellectual property.

At present there are around 30 students; their interests range geo¬graphically from South Asia to the Middle East to Latin America, the¬matically from families to imperi¬alism to tourism, and materially from novels to photography to phi¬losophy.

MTL couldn’t just move to another language depart¬ment, and indeed MTL is a veteran of the interdisciplinary world. A three-quarter core sequence introduces students to a wide range of interdisciplinary methods to study how occupiers of territories end up claiming the symbols of the natives they are displac¬ing. Think Spaniards who appropriated Aztec iconography, think European settlers in North America who fancied themselves Indians, or think the Middle East, which happens to be where this University of Paris student was from. In all these cases, texts, languages and symbols end up contribut¬ing to the structures of a new society that at the same time creates new definitions for itself and for the very texts that are its foundation.

“Most of the students in MTL are from Europe,” Palumbo-Liu said. “They’re all the same because they all deal with texts. We all read Faulkner, we all share the same object, if you like, but text is different. We’re not literary-centered, though we use literature.”

“We’re not fuzzy,” he went on. Ultimately, he said, students’ topics “all have to do with community. We’re asking how texts change claims to community, how they change knowledge.”

The program is both highly selective and highly rigorous, and graduates do vary very well, Boyi noted. They go on to a wide range of Ph.D. stud¬ies, area studies, feminist studies or anthropology. While they are here, they work as teaching assistants in a wide range, in its statement for renewal in 2003, specifically noted that Modern Thought and Literature “is a source of extraordinary talent.”

The program gets around 130 applications a year. Boyi said three applicants have been admitted for fall 2006. “If they’re truly interested in interdisciplinary work, I’m confident they’ll come,” she said. Their project pro¬posals include a study of historical memory and one on law, literature and intellectual property.

At present there are around 30 students; their interests range geo¬graphically from South Asia to the Middle East to Latin America, the¬matically from families to imperi¬alism to tourism, and materially from novels to photography to phi¬losophy.

MTL couldn’t just move to another language depart¬ment, and indeed MTL is a veteran of the interdisciplinary world. A three-quarter core sequence introduces students to a wide range of interdisciplinary methods to study how occupiers of territories end up claiming the symbols of the natives they are displac¬ing. Think Spaniards who appropriated Aztec iconography, think European settlers in North America who fancied themselves Indians, or think the Middle East, which happens to be where this University of Paris student was from. In all these cases, texts, languages and symbols end up contribut¬ing to the structures of a new society that at the same time creates new definitions for itself and for the very texts that are its foundation.

“Most of the students in MTL are from Europe,” Palumbo-Liu said. “They’re all the same because they all deal with texts. We all read Faulkner, we all share the same object, if you like, but text is different. We’re not literary-centered, though we use literature.”

“We’re not fuzzy,” he went on. Ultimately, he said, students’ topics “all have to do with community. We’re asking how texts change claims to community, how they change knowledge.”

The program is both highly selective and highly rigorous, and graduates do vary very well, Boyi noted. They go on to a wide range of Ph.D. stud¬ies, area studies, feminist studies or anthropology. While they are here, they work as teaching assistants in a wide range, in its statement for renewal in 2003, specifically noted that Modern Thought and Literature “is a source of extraordinary talent.”

The program gets around 130 applications a year. Boyi said three applicants have been admitted for fall 2006. “If they’re truly interested in interdisciplinary work, I’m confident they’ll come,” she said. Their project pro¬posals include a study of historical memory and one on law, literature and intellectual property.

At present there are around 30 students; their interests range geo¬graphically from South Asia to the Middle East to Latin America, the¬matically from families to imperi¬alism to tourism, and materially from novels to photography to phi¬losophy.