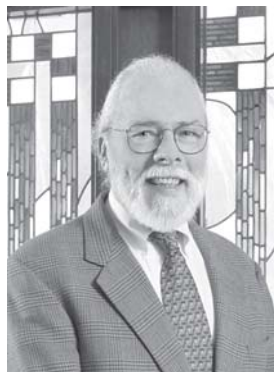




# The Honors Alternative

Fall 2004



## A TRIBUTE TO JOHN PAUL MONTGOMERY

Dean John Paul Montgomery retired on June 30, 2004, after 35 years of professional service to MTSU as a full professor in the English Department, as director of the Honors Program, and as dean of the Honors College. In his 13 years of leading the Honors Program and Honors College, Dean Montgomery presided over a 660% increase in Honors students while MTSU as a whole grew approximately 45% during the same time, from 13,923 students in January 1991 to 20,229 in June

2004 (FTE headcount numbers).

Dr. Montgomery also oversaw, in 1998, the transformation of the Honors Program into the first Honors College ever at a public institution of higher education in the state of Tennessee. He visited and researched Honors Colleges throughout the South, designed a blueprint for the new College, and secured Tennessee Board of Regents approval for this bold initiative to enhance MTSU's academic mission.

When Paul Jr. and Lee Martin challenged the University with a \$2 million gift, in memory of their father and to be matched by MTSU for the construction of a new Honors College building, Dean Montgomery threw himself into fundraising and building design with his characteristic skill, energy, and attention to detail. In addition to his crucial role in helping raise more than

\$2 million in matching funds, Dr. Montgomery's creative oversight resulted in design features such as the bell tower, a gabled roofline, furniture and carrels, retro-styled lighting for student study areas, fireplaces in the student commons and conference room, an intimate amphitheater, a science demonstration classroom, an outdoor plaza, a library, a thesis meeting and defense room, and interior and exterior ornamentation. Every detail of the design was carefully reviewed by the dean and included only if it harmonized with his steady vision of a comfortable, functional, and beautiful building that would simultaneously serve as home to a new phase of community building in Honors and as a challenge to spur MTSU to greater aesthetic achievement in future building projects. As Dean Montgomery was fond of saying, "I don't want this to look like all the other buildings at MTSU."

The Honors concept may be defined in a variety of ways; however, from the very beginning, Dr. Montgomery fought against the

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## McPhee Highlights Honors College at THEC Meeting

President Sidney McPhee highlighted past successes and future hopes for the MTSU Honors College at a scheduled meeting of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) held in Nashville on July 15, 2004. The THEC meeting was one of a series in which college and university leaders are invited to report to the commission on some special program designed to stem the outflow of Tennessee's best and brightest students to other states. Research has indicated that many students who choose to attend colleges and universities in other states fail to return to Tennessee to live and work. The result is a significant loss of human resource potential.

President McPhee showed how the University Honors College at MTSU is helping to address the outflow problem. He indicated that the Honors College continues to help the University attract more midstate valedictorians and salutatorians than any other Tennessee university. (After eight consecutive years, it might be argued that this is an MTSU tradition.) Dr. McPhee went on to describe how the University Honors College (the only Honors College at a Tennessee university) is helping to recruit National

See **THEC**, page 2

## Tribute

Continued from page 1

widely held perception on campus of Honors as a program for the ivory-tower elite; for impractical intellectuals divorced from reality; and for withdrawn bookworms afraid to live, to mix with others, and to have fun while engaged in the serious process of gaining an education.

Instead, Dean Montgomery championed the idea of Honors as enrichment, accessible and open to all who would work hard enough to maintain a 3.0 GPA. Honors classes should, above all else, be exciting, thought-provoking, intimate, and fun. Students feel they receive more from their Honors classes than from regular sections because of their small size, the professor's knowledge and enthusiasm, and the participation and engagement of other Honors students.

MTSU's Honors College works well because of its flexible curriculum (students from departments with low participation in Honors can receive Honors credit from interdisciplinary seminars, from H-Options, from study abroad courses, from service learning, etc.). It works well too because the program continues to be the ongoing creation of the professors who actually teach in Honors, governing themselves with a dean who enacts the will of the Honors Council. In this thirty-year tradition, students come first.

Dean Montgomery's fondest hope has always been that the Honors model would gradually but inevitably become the pattern governing the University at large: the recent initiative to foster undergraduate research at MTSU, for example, seeks to duplicate what has already been happening across disciplines for more than thirty years in the Honors thesis and creative project. The University now officially recognizes the value in research and independent study for undergraduates, borrowing an idea that has been working well for many years in Honors.

Ever a people person, Dr. Montgomery has always recognized the superiority of personalized, one-on-one teaching and mentoring. Knowledge and cultural values are best transmitted not in huge lecture halls or through disembodied online courses but as it has always occurred over thousands of years of human history, slowly and carefully from one person to another. When the personal is eliminated from learning, the passion and knowledge it produces will die. Dean Montgomery's years at MTSU bespeak the primacy of personal engagement as the *sine qua non* of all successful teaching and learning, (having himself won three outstanding teaching awards from the University and two from Honors), and he passes on an Honors College whose rich traditions rest firmly on this idea.

—Dr. Tom Strawman, Professor

## THEC

Continued from page 1

Merit Finalists and to open doors to prestigious postgraduate programs. Among the successes he cited were the recruitment of a student from Georgia who had a perfect composite score of 36 on the ACT test and a recent graduate of the University Honors College who is now enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Oxford in Oxford, England (see Alumni Corner, page 8).

McPhee gave a visual tour of the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building, praised the outgoing leadership of Dean John Paul Montgomery and the generosity of the Martin family, and introduced Dr. Philip M. Mathis as the new interim dean. Paul W. Martin Jr. was in attendance. He was recognized by the commission and given a welcome befitting his contributions to Tennessee higher education.

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## Dr. Greg Schmidt Returns to Teaching

Dr. Greg Schmidt returned to teaching full time in the Psychology Department on July 30. He has made an enormous, if understated, contribution to the University Honors College over most of the last decade. It was always his way to solve problems quickly and quietly and never call attention to himself. In all these years, he grew to the job as chief Honors recruiter travelling the state and serving as representative for the Honors College during the grueling months of CUSTOMS in the summer, as competent advisor to Honors College thesis writers in the College of Education and Behavioral Science, and as chief technical advisor for all the new equipment in the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building.

The Honors students in the Honors Lecture Series (UH3000) will long remember his "laid back" humor, his care in grading their responses to the speakers' presentations, and his ability to make the speakers comfortable before and after their lectures. The Lecture Series on Popular Culture for Fall 2004 is entirely his creation.

One of the keys to Dr. Schmidt's success as associate dean of the University Honors College was his commitment to students. His willingness to meet with them on a personal, one-on-one basis created a growing student following. They knew he would listen—really listen—and that he would give them the best advice. Dr. Schmidt's extensive knowledge of the Honors College curriculum further contributed to his reputation as an advisor.

In all matters, Dr. Schmidt gave us his best. He will be greatly missed by his colleagues on the Honors staff. He helped us work together with his gentle humor and high spirits and provided even, steady leadership to help us through both good and challenging times. He has been a friend to us all. We wish him well in all of his future academic and scholarly endeavors.

# UH 4600-001

## Economics and Culture

MW 2:20 to 3:45 p.m.

Call Number 05336



This course is presented in an interdisciplinary seminar format. It is experimental in that it will not be taught with a traditional economic textbook. Instead, texts reflective of the evolving American cultural experience (and its global context) will be the devices through which economic thinking is taught. All the texts will be non-technical and readable for students who have not had economics prerequisites.

The general objective is to enrich and expand student critical thinking skills by relating economics to art and

sciences in a manner that does not rely on prior technical knowledge about economics. The basic idea is that critical thinking transcends disciplines, and Honors students in particular have the ability to rely on this development of intellect to penetrate new dimensions of thinking. In this context, the specific objective is to add economic reasoning as a dimension of critical thinking when contemplating the cultural experience within which one lives. Specific examples include economics as reflected in literature and drama, advances in technology, changing demographics, globalization, and commercialization of almost every aspect of American life.

This course may count as three hours upper-division economics credit. For more information, contact Dr. Richard Hannah at (615) 898-2228 or by e-mail at [rlhannah@mtsu.edu](mailto:rlhannah@mtsu.edu).



# UH 4600-002

## Literature and Television

MW 1:00 to 2:25 p.m.

Call Number 05713



This course investigates the cultural and historical impact of television on U.S. culture through literature on the subject. Students will read novels and stories that help us to explore the ways in which television affects us as individuals, in groups (by gender, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.), and as a nation. From science fiction that tells us we are entertaining ourselves to death to children's books that caution against television addiction (some even using television characters to do so!), this seminar will use the medium of creative writing to help us contemplate television's cultural place and impact on emotional as well as intellectual levels. Readings will likely include George Orwell's *1984*, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, Laurie Foos' *Ex Utero*, Harlan Ellison's *City on the Edge of Forever*, Gloria Naylor's *Women of Brewster Place*, and several children's picture books. Assignments will include a reading journal, essay examinations, and a seminar paper. This course may count as three hours upper-division English credit.

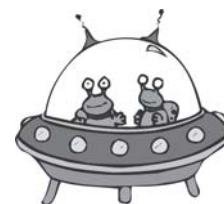
For more information, contact Dr. Elyce Helford at (615) 898-5961 or by e-mail at [ehelford@mtsu.edu](mailto:ehelford@mtsu.edu).

# UH 3500-001

## The UFO Debate

W 2:40 to 4:50 p.m.

Call Number 05564



The UFO Debate will consider the UFO phenomenon from a variety of perspectives, including a historical overview from 1896 to the present. In addition, the course will examine psychological interpretations of UFO sightings and abductions, theories that explore the interdimensional aspects of the experience, the relationship between New Age beliefs and UFOs, and the treatment of aliens in popular culture including television and film.

This course has been approved for English major and minor credit and will substitute in group "H" of the major. For additional information, contact Dr. Angela Hague at (615) 904-8123 or by e-mail at [ahague@mtsu.edu](mailto:ahague@mtsu.edu).



Have questions about the Honors College? Make an appointment today with our academic advisor to discuss your future goals. Ms. Michelle Gadson can be reached at (615) 898-5464.

# Spring 2005 Honors Class Schedule

Students with a 3.0 GPA may enroll in any Honors course as long as they meet the prerequisite(s) and the class has space available.

**PRIORITY REGISTRATION BEGINS NOVEMBER 8, 2004**

For the latest, up-to-date course offerings, visit  
[www.mtsu.edu/~records/sbooks.htm](http://www.mtsu.edu/~records/sbooks.htm)



## HONORS COURSE

### Classical Political Theory - P S 4230

This course fills a unique role in that it examines the foundations of Western political culture by engaging the authors who were most influential in shaping that tradition. As such, it sits at the very core of a "liberal" education. Its methodology is specifically designed for an advanced liberal arts seminar. The course also fills an important niche at the upper level of Political Science and is cross-listed as a Great Books course. In addition, it connects directly to the core liberal arts mission of the college and to the interest of the University in promoting a critical understanding of Western culture.

Prerequisites are P S 1010 or 2010 or permission of the instructor. This course will meet an upper-division requirement in the Political Science major, an option in the International Relations major, and an option in the Great Books minor.

For further information, please e-mail Dr. John Vile at [jvile@mtsu.edu](mailto:jvile@mtsu.edu).

## HONORS COURSE

### Tennessee History - HIST 2030

This survey of the state's history focuses on its people and how they shaped Tennessee's society, culture, and politics. It also emphasizes the role of Tennessee in the development of the nation. It will address such topics as geographic regions, Native American cultures, early exploration and settlement by people of European backgrounds, mid-nineteenth-century society and politics, and the institution of slavery. Students will have the opportunity to learn about the careers of the state's three presidents, the Civil War and Reconstruction eras, twentieth-century progressive reforms, the impacts of WWI and WWII, the Civil Rights movement, and political and economic trends of the last fifty years.

Students taking this course may satisfy three of the six hours required in the History division of the General Education curriculum. In addition to meeting a General Education requirement, Tennessee History is a required course for elementary education students.

For more information, please e-mail any one of the following Honors faculty members:

Dr. Mary Hoffschwelle, [mhoffsch@mtsu.edu](mailto:mhoffsch@mtsu.edu)

Dr. Fred Colvin, [fcolvin@mtsu.edu](mailto:fcolvin@mtsu.edu)

Dr. Robert Jones, [rjones@mtsu.edu](mailto:rjones@mtsu.edu)

## Student News

Congratulations to Katherine Powell, who won first place in the Freshman Writing Awards "Researched Essay" category for "Car Wrapping: Profitable for Both Consumers and Advertisers," an essay she wrote for Dr. Ron Kates' 1020 Honors English class. Kendra Creekmore placed second in the "Non-Researched Essay" category with "Morality Is for Man," which she wrote in Dr. Philip Phillips' 1010 Honors English class. These awards are sponsored by the English Department each fall.



### Journalism 4210 Mass Communication and Society



This Honors class, taught by Dr. David Ryfe, is participating in a new online forum called "Democracy Lab." It is an opportunity for students to deliberate virtually on important public issues (in our case the role of the news media in American political life) with other students in similar classes across the country. Students are required to make three submissions to the online dialogue per week and to report to the class periodically on what is transpiring in their conversations.

If you missed out on this class this semester, give serious consideration to taking this great course in the near future.



## From the Bell Tower



Hear the tolling of the bells—  
Iron bells!

What a world of solemn thought their monody  
Compels!

How we shiver with affright

At the melancholy menace of their tone!

For every sound that floats

From the rust within their throats

Is a groan.

—Edgar Allen Poe

The somberness of this passage from Poe's *The Bells* resonates with the sense of loss felt by many upon learning of Dean John Paul Montgomery's unexpected decision to retire. It is sad, in a way, that **From the Bell Tower's** first message should bear the unwelcome news of the retirement of the first and only dean of the University Honors College.

However, this is not a time for sadness; rather, it is a time for celebration! The new Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors building has just opened. Interest in the University Honors College is growing. Program quality is high. The Honors faculty is packed with first-rate scholars who stand ready to help capable students explore new realms of knowledge. Great things are happening in the college, and the stage is set for future success.

Dean Montgomery's vision of a University Honors College and his efforts to build it have received and deserve much praise and recognition. We offer still more heartfelt praise, along with warm wishes for a long and rewarding retirement.

What should not be lost in the lavish praise of his work with the Honors program is that Dr. Montgomery represented the highest standards of the profession. He was more than a good teacher; he was truly outstanding! His teaching was defined by a charismatic personality and a special knowledge of and approach to the work of Herman Melville. He touched the hearts and minds of many students and knew, in his heart, the truth of Daniel Webster's words:

*If we work upon marble, it will perish; if we work on brass, time will efface it; but if we work with men and women and imbue them with principles, we engrave upon those tables something that will brighten lives for all eternity.*

—Philip M. Mathis, Interim Dean

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## Honors Scholarships

Honors scholarships are available to students who have successfully completed one or more Honors courses. All applications are available in the Honors College Office (HONR 205) or on our Web site at [www.mtsu.edu/~honors/Scholarships.htm](http://www.mtsu.edu/~honors/Scholarships.htm).

All scholarships are for returning students and will be applied to the student's Fall 2005 account. Award recipients will be recognized at the annual Awards Reception in Spring 2005. Check with our office early in the Spring 2005 semester for deadline dates.



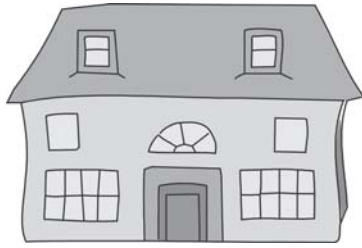
## Student News

Six Honors students presented their two research projects at the MTSU Undergraduate Research Symposium during the spring semester.

1. *Genetically Based Tasting Abilities Do Not Influence Food Preference or Smoking Behavior* by Katie Onks, Rodney Kincaid, and Emily Wolfe.

2. *Characterization of Genes Involved in Cytokinesis from Baker's Yeast* by Sarah Hayes, Wesley Skelton, and Elliott Tenpenny.

Drs. Rebecca Seipelt and Philip Mathis are very proud of these students and encourage them to continue pursuing research. They are also hopeful that their success will inspire other students to engage in undergraduate independent study!



**Come join our neighborhood!**

We may be a distant outpost to most of the campus, but our new building is the place to be! We are creating the Honors neighborhood. In addition to numerous entertainment events, we have the following amenities to offer: a student commons with a fireplace and game chest; a variety of newspapers available daily; lounge seating outside classrooms; a courtyard patio area with benches; a large, quiet study area on the second floor; a student computer lab with specialty software; two laptops for day use; books available for checkout from the Michael Martinelli Memorial Library; wireless network access throughout the building; and an on-site academic advisor. Come join us and be part of our neighborhood!

### *Honors College Residential Society*

**2004–2005 Officers**

- President - Bethany Farr**
- Vice President - Katie Powell**
- Secretary - Laura Whitson**
- Treasurer - Brandon Ennis**
- Advisor - Petar Skobic**

**HCRS Administrative Sponsor - Michelle Gadson**

HCRS membership includes unique parties, academic support, community service programs, and access to Honors faculty outside the classroom. Join HCRS anytime! For a one-time membership fee of \$15 members also receive a t-shirt and water bottle.

### **Did you know...**

Honors students participated in MTSU's Political Science department to win the annual Mock Trial tournament in November 2003. The competition consisted of 64 teams from across the nation, including groups from The Citadel, Duke University, Rhodes College, Emory, and Vanderbilt, to name just a few. For this great accomplishment, MTSU received the Gene Reifsnider National Trophy. This trophy travels annually with the champions of the American Mock Trial Association's National Intercollegiate Mock Trial Tournament. The trophy is on display in the Honors College office, Suite 205. Want to know more about participation in a mock trial? Contact Dr. John Vile at [jvile@mtsu.edu](mailto:jvile@mtsu.edu), or call (615) 898-2596 for more information.



## **Spring 2005 Deadlines to Remember**

### **Independent Research or Creative Projects Proposals for Fall 2005**

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL  
for committee review  
**February 21, 2005**

FINAL PROPOSAL  
for Honors Council approval  
**March 31, 2005**

### **Independent Research or Creative Projects Completed Spring 2005**

FINAL COPY FOR  
THESIS DEFENSE  
one copy due in Honors Office  
to be graded by committee  
**April 1, 2005**

THESIS DEFENSE  
BEFORE COMMITTEE  
date to be announced

PUBLIC DEFENSE BEFORE  
LECTURE SERIES  
**April 25, 2005**

FINAL PROJECTS  
all post-defense  
corrections must be made;  
two copies due on cotton paper  
**April 27, 2005**

### **H-Options**

H-OPTION PROPOSALS FOR  
FALL 2005 COURSES  
**April 1, 2005**



*All materials are due in the  
University Honors College Office, Suite 205,  
Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building  
by 4:00 p.m. on the deadline date.*

### **Need upper-division courses? You have options...**

### **The Honors H-Option**

The H-Option proposal is a request for Honors credit for a non-Honors, upper-division class. In order to submit an H-Option, students must have completed at least nine hours of lower-division Honors coursework. Honors College students may utilize the H-Option for a total of nine credit hours. Proposals for **Spring 2005** must be submitted to the Honors College office by **November 8, 2004**.

# Introducing Our New Interim Staff

## Dean

President Sidney McPhee recently announced the appointment of Philip M. Mathis as interim dean of the University Honors College. In appointing him to his new post, McPhee called attention to Mathis' strengths as teacher/scholar and to his role in helping to craft the University's current Academic Master Plan.


During his career, Dr. Mathis has directed numerous grants, written many papers in scholarly journals, and published more than a dozen books, including two that are used by students at MTSU and at other colleges. The 2001 winner of the Foundation Career Achievement Award, Dr. Mathis holds four degrees, including an M.S. from MTSU and a doctorate from the University of Georgia.

Dr. Mathis' past Honors College involvement has included teaching, thesis direction, and committee service.

## Associate Dean

Lara Womack has been appointed interim associate dean of the University Honors College. Dr. Womack is an associate professor in the Jones College of Business. She received her bachelor's degree in political science from MTSU and her law degree from the University of Tennessee. She later completed an M.B.A. at MTSU.

Dr. Womack has taught an Honors section of Legal Environment of Business for several years. Last fall, her Honors class assisted in hosting the Tennessee Supreme Court on campus as part of its program to advance an understanding of the judicial branch of government. Dr. Womack has served two terms on the Honors Council. She is a member of the Academy of Legal Studies in Business and will begin a term on its Assessment Committee in the fall of 2004.

Awards and Recognition	Scholarship Recipients						
<p><b>Outstanding Honors Faculty</b> Dr. Robert W. Spires, Electronic Media Communication</p> <p><b>Outstanding Freshman Honors Student</b> Amanda Nicole Guffey</p> <p><b>Outstanding Sophomore Honors Students</b> Jennifer Elizabeth Carter John Kenneth King II John Stephen Trageser</p> <p><b>Outstanding Junior Honors Student</b> Rodney Phillip Kincaid</p> <p><b>Outstanding Senior Honors Student</b> Amanda Kay Cotton</p>	<p><b>Bart McCash Scholarship</b> Lee Travis Baker</p> <p><b>Michael Martinelli Memorial Scholarship</b> Charlotte Ruth Lewis</p> <p><b>Academic Achievement Scholarship</b> Rodney Phillip Kincaid Lynne Carroll Napatalung Teresa Marie Pickering</p> <p><b>Freshman Scholarship</b> Thomas Robert Hefty Sarah Neesa Young</p> <p><b>Ingram-Montgomery Research Scholarship</b> Adam Franklin Farmer</p>						
<p><b>University Honors Graduates</b></p>	<p><b>Paul Martin Scholarship</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Melanie Paige Blair</td> <td>Victoria Leigh Kyes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chasity Lynn George</td> <td>Jodie Lynn Stowell</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maryam Kassae</td> <td>Hayley Jordan West</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Show me the money!</b></p>	Melanie Paige Blair	Victoria Leigh Kyes	Chasity Lynn George	Jodie Lynn Stowell	Maryam Kassae	Hayley Jordan West
Melanie Paige Blair	Victoria Leigh Kyes						
Chasity Lynn George	Jodie Lynn Stowell						
Maryam Kassae	Hayley Jordan West						
 <p><b>Fall 2003</b> Katherine Anne Legare, with Distinction Chandra Cerchione Peltier, with Honors</p> <p><b>Spring 2004</b> Amanda Kay Cotton, with Distinction Adam Franklin Farmer, with Distinction Carrie Elizabeth Hunsaker, with Distinction Stuart Loveridge Rymer, with Distinction Tisha Leth Sherfield, with Distinction</p> <p><b>Summer 2004</b> Bruce G. Burton, with Honors</p>							

Eric Charles Freundt,  
Spring 2003

# Alumni Corner

I arrived in Oxford before the start of the fall term, called Michaelmas, and began adjusting to both graduate school and a new culture. Whereas England is in many ways quite different from the U.S., Oxford has its own unique traditions that can even cause culture shock for British students. An example of such a tradition is the matriculation ceremony at which new students are entered into the register of the university. I joined hundreds of other new arrivals to Oxford in the Sheldonian Theatre, all of us wearing full academic dress and traditional subfusc (black shoes, black suit, white shirt, white bowtie, gown, and cap), as we officially became members of the university. Another tradition is living in a college, which is a cloister-like atmosphere, and attending formal hall (picture the dining hall in Harry Potter). I have enjoyed all of these peculiarities immensely.

The day-to-day life of an Oxford graduate student is dictated largely by the course in which he or she has enrolled. I am pursuing a D.Phil. (Oxonian for a Ph.D.) in immunology, which means I spend the majority of my time conducting laboratory research. No formal coursework is required to complete the degree, although I do spend a good amount of time attending lectures and seminars. I am also a part of a partnership between the National Institutes of Health (NIH), located in Bethesda, Maryland, and Oxford that enables me to conduct my research at both institutions while being co-mentored by NIH and Oxford supervisors. My dissertation research is focusing on the SARS virus's interactions

with cells during infection. Last January I accompanied my supervisors on a trip to Hong Kong, Guangzhou, and Beijing, China, establishing collaborations with Chinese scientists before spending three weeks receiving training in research techniques at the NIH. The questions that I am attempting to answer in my research are challenging, at times even overwhelming, but I feel very fortunate to have the research experience I obtained at MTSU through the Honors College. Without that experience, I'd be completely lost.

My wife and I have managed to get away from our hectic lives a couple of times, including several trips to London as well as Bristol and Paris. We hope to be able to explore more of Europe before returning to the Washington, D.C., area, where I plan to complete my dissertation research at the NIH. After writing my thesis, I will return to Oxford for my viva (i.e., defense) around the summer of 2007 and probably find someplace new to have fun in the laboratory.



Eric at the Great Wall of China

**MIDDLE  
TENNESSEE**

STATE UNIVERSITY

## The Honors Alternative

University Honors College  
Middle Tennessee State University  
MTSU Box 267  
Murfreesboro, TN 37132  
2-45700

A Tennessee Board of Regents University

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