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## Tyler Wiese

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## Tyler Wiese

Tyler Wiese doesn't shy away from tough questions.

Wiese was drawn to his majors—political science and philosophy—because they explore ideas that have been challenging thinkers for centuries.

“The aspects of political science that intrigued me most were the philosophical issues that dealt with questions such as the basis of government and rule,” he explains. “In philosophy, I was drawn toward a similarly humanistic and societal focus—what exactly is the good life, and in what ways can a good society help, and a bad society hinder, the possibility of a meaningful existence.”

These are no simple questions for anyone to consider, but Wiese embraced the challenge. “Tyler was simply electrified by his courses and threw himself into his studies with an unbridled enthusiasm that was infectious,” praises Lissa Skitolsky, assistant professor of philosophy. “He exhibits both a strong intellectual curiosity and a kind sensitivity to others.”

That curiosity extended well beyond Luther's classrooms. In the summer of 2007, Wiese—a magna cum laude graduate and Phi Beta Kappa member—did research with John Moeller, professor of political science, studying the nature of the heated debate in Decorah over preserving East Side Elementary School. Under his guidance, Wiese constructed a detailed timeline of events and wrote a commentary about the factors that determined the East Side case.

“I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Tyler,” says Moeller. “He's a really good guy with an exemplary character and commitment to excellence in all he does.”

His quest for excellence served Wiese well in other activities at Luther. He was captain of the mock-trial team for four

years, practicing three to four times per week from September to March and attending four to five regional tournaments each year. He also sang in Undeclared, a student-run male a cappella group that arranges all of its own music.

Wiese talks with enthusiasm about being part of Undeclared. “It was honestly an amazing experience to create great music with up to 10 other guys and then be able to perform that music and have people go wild over it,” he says.

Wiese, who chose Luther after realizing “it was a friendly and open place filled with professors and students who care about both academics and each other,” loved his time on campus. He talks enthusiastically of professors Moeller and Skitolsky, saying that Moeller has “an almost innate gift for teaching” and that Skitolsky, also a first-rate teacher, “truly changed the way I view the world around me.”

He praises his liberal arts experience as well. “Luther changed the questions I ask, the way in which I ask them, and the answers that make sense,” he says.

This fall—after a summer of working, seeing family and friends, and scoping out the Twin Cities apartment scene—Wiese began law school at the University of Minnesota. He likes the fact that being an attorney will offer an opportunity to help others while providing for intellectual challenges but says he doesn't anticipate practicing law forever.

“I hope to be able at some point in my life to teach at either a liberal arts college like Luther or at a law school, with a focus on issues such as the interaction between the individual and the law at the philosophical and normative level,” he says.

The vocation suits the curious and thoughtful Wiese. It seems there will be lots of difficult questions in his future—and, hopefully, some meaningful answers.

—original article by Marguerite Moeller, published in the Fall 2008 issue of the Luther Alumni Magazine