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He is a premed student in the Honors Program with second majors in Finance and Economics and minors in Biology and Biochemistry. As if that isn't enough to keep him busy, he serves as the vice president of the Baylor Medical Service Organization and Response Team, and is a member of the Future Healthcare Executives graduate organization. He has already completed an internship with M.D. Anderson in Houston, and will be studying in Madrid, Spain, for the fall 2009 semester.

Initially, you could stereotype Andre Samuel as an overachiever, but he serves as an example of the caliber of student Hankamer is attracting these days. And he's not the only one. Well-rounded students just like Samuel can be found in Hankamer's newest major— Baylor Business Fellows (BBF). Students in the major are scholars, athletes, musicians, singers and artists. They are aspiring scientists, lawyers, doctors, and community leaders. And they are young men and women who will certainly impact our world.

BEGINNINGS OF FELLOWS

Within the Bachelor's of Business Administration degree, the Baylor Business Fellows (BBF) major was approved in February 2007 and launched in the fall 2007 semester. Allen Seward serves as director of BBF, associate professor, and department chair for Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

“We envisioned a new academic path through Baylor that would not be for the average student and would yield significant outcomes,” Seward said. “This path would have a business focus to it as opposed to other scholar programs that have a traditional, liberal arts based curriculum.”



BAYLOR BUSINESS

CHRISTINE TANG

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a light pink blazer and a black skirt, carrying a red folder with 'THE LAW' written on it and holding glasses.

ERIN CASEY

A man with long brown hair, wearing a grey t-shirt with 'BTBAM' on it, sitting at a drum set.

CHRIS LANE

Exclusive admission into the major is based on SAT or ACT scores, letters of recommendation, a strong resume, and intellectual curiosity. Seward said current Fellows have median scores of 1430 on the SAT and 32 on the ACT. Thirty percent of Fellows are National Merit Scholars and 30 percent are premed.

"These are highly intelligent and motivated students who want to maximize the value of their educational experience," Seward said. "Most have well above the required university credit hours by the time they graduate due to their widespread interests."

The competitive major is geared toward incoming freshmen, but students beyond their freshman year can also be admitted under some circumstances. Applicants complete an online application, are evaluated by an advisory committee, and then notified of their acceptance.

FELLOWS

BY KRISTIN TODD STIRES

A man in a black soccer jersey and white shorts, kicking a red and white soccer ball.

MARK STOVER

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CUSTOMIZED CURRICULUM

The Fellows major features an innovative structure where students meet with an advisor to create a customized curriculum tailored to their specific interests. A few guidelines do apply.

Students are required to take 31 hours of courses offered in the business school and six hours of religion courses. Creating an interdisciplinary approach, the remaining hours for the major are pooled from courses of the students' choosing—these courses may be offered within different schools or colleges of the University.

Heather Owen, a senior from Benton, Tenn., said after remaining undecided in a major during her freshman year, the Fellows major was the answer to her prayers.

After hearing about BBF from a friend, she applied and was accepted to the major, which had just launched that fall semester of her sophomore year.

Through the Fellows major, Owen decided on a Religion minor and a second major in Economics with a second minor in Studio Art.

“In order to study both business and religion and graduate on time, I would have had to take 18 hours each semester for three full years,” she said. “As a regular business major, I would also not be able to take the graphic design classes in which I was interested.

After I was accepted into Baylor Business Fellows, I realized what an answer to prayer it was. Through the major, I can pursue my interests in business, religion and art.”

Owen, who is also in the Honors Program, said she plans on earning a graduate degree in Economics but first wants to pursue her passion for economic development.



SARAH MONTGOMERY

“When I graduate I would like to work with a non-governmental organization in another country to find economic ways to help alleviate poverty,” she said. “I recently went to Nairobi, Kenya, and worked with organizations that are doing incredible things to help people improve their lives. I would love to contribute to efforts like these in any way possible.”

The flexibility of BBF is key for students to explore their potential and creates a diverse learning experience, preparing students to excel in the job market or pursue education past the undergraduate level. For example, a student may take business courses in conjunction with a pre-professional curriculum.

Andre Samuel, entering his third year at Baylor, applied to BBF before his freshman year at Baylor.

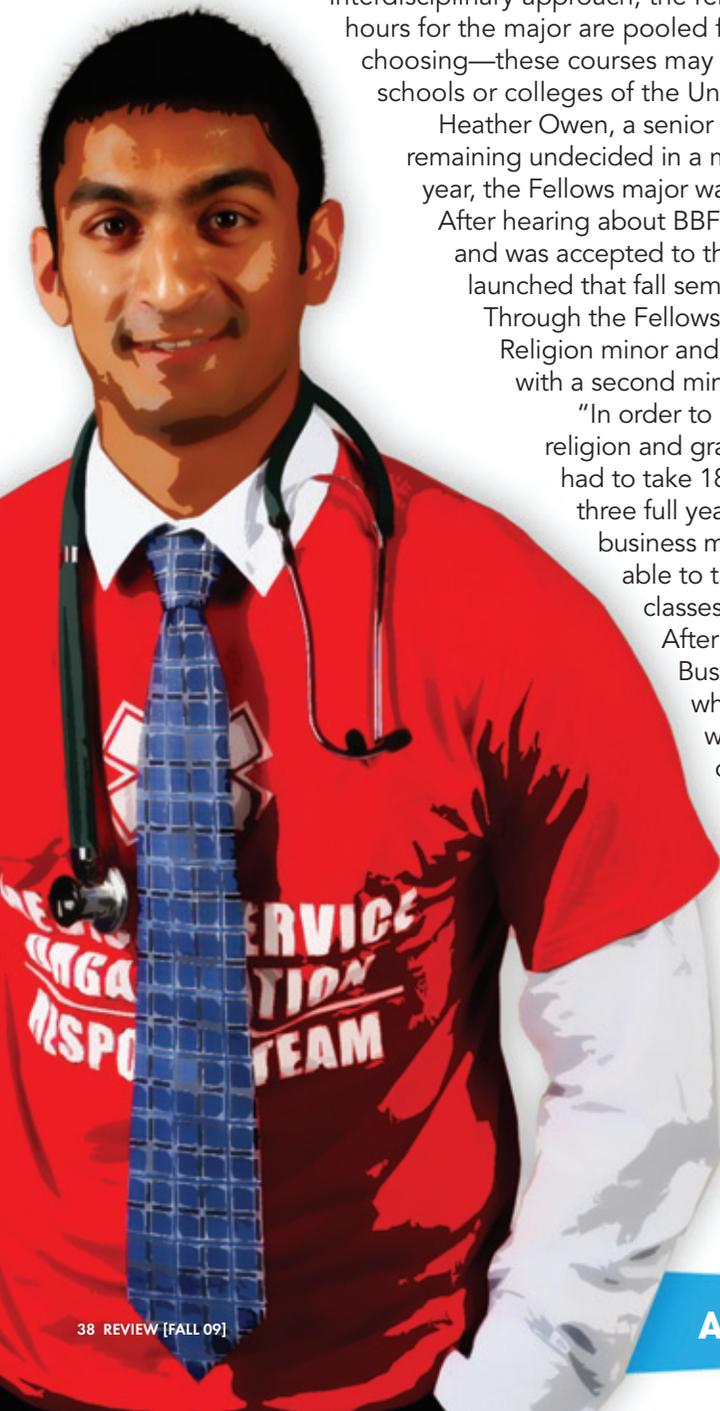
“I was looking for a major that would allow me to pursue my interests in both medicine and business,” he said. “Business Fellows is a more academically rigorous major, allowing students to bypass most core course requirements to take more advanced upper-level courses. It’s great for getting both a diverse and more in-depth education.”

Samuel said upon graduation he hopes to attend medical school or business school and pursue a career in medical practice, medical administration, or “something at the crossroads of the two.”

CROSSING BORDERS

The flexibility of BBF allows for students to engage in international study. During their time at Baylor, Fellows have crossed borders participating in study abroad opportunities in Argentina, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Rwanda, Spain, Taiwan, and Trinidad.

“Through this major, we try to encourage international study for our students to gain a broader perspective of the world,” Seward said. “Right now, about half of the students study abroad.”



ANDRE SAMUEL

Fellows are also encouraged to study a language. Seward said Fellows have studied or are proficient in Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Urdu and American Sign Language.

Sarah Montgomery, an Austin senior, became interested in pursuing Asian Studies after developing a love for Japanese culture. She lived with a host family and attended a public school in Yokohama for six months during her senior year of high school.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of acclimating myself to a completely different culture and learning a new language," she said. "At the end of my stay, my personal understanding of the Japanese culture and love of the Japanese people gave me the desire to become a liaison between Japan and America."

When she arrived at Baylor, Montgomery enrolled in Japanese language courses while also studying finance in the business school. She then applied to BBF the fall semester of her junior year.

"Joining BBF has allowed me to continue studying finance, but at the same time, opened up many credit hours for Japanese studies and international business," she said.

Montgomery hopes to have a career in the financial industry and incorporate her knowledge of both American and Japanese cultures. She is studying abroad in Japan for the 2009-2010 academic year.

FUTURE OF FELLOWS

BBF has experienced significant growth as enrollment in the major has increased substantially over the last two years. Two students graduated from the major in 2008, and five more in 2009. There are currently 97 students enrolled for the fall 2009 semester.

With all its benefits, BBF essentially sells itself. Many students have applied due to word-of-mouth from former and current Fellows.

"I've personally recommended Baylor Business Fellows to many of my friends, some of whom are Fellows themselves now," Samuel said. "Any science or humanities majors who also have an interest in business, from studying world economies to starting a small business, should consider Business Fellows."

Due to the wide spectrum of student interests in the major, not all Fellows have classes together. Seward schedules events such as dinners and receptions to maintain a sense of community among Fellows.

"Since we are different than most business majors, it is always nice to meet someone who is a Fellow because we have a mutual understanding of our academic experience," Owen said.

Samuel said the work ethic and academic diversity among Fellows help drive the success of the major.

"Being connected to students who have such a strong drive to excel and succeed can be very motivating," Samuel said. "Everyone comes from very diverse academic backgrounds, so it's interesting to see how a business education can be applied to anything from theater to medicine to English literature."



HEATHER OWEN

**"THROUGH
THE MAJOR,
I CAN PURSUE
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IN BUSINESS,
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