

Academic journey still in progress

When Ben Coleman graduated from Vernon Secondary School in 1986, he didn't have a clear career goal in mind. He was somewhat leaning toward Sciences, but at the time, he had no idea he would eventually earn a doctorate in Psychology and return to his home town to teach at Okanagan College.

Looking back, Dr. Coleman describes himself as an average High School student who was more interested in sports than spending long hours with his nose in a textbook. Following high school graduation, Dr. Coleman first spent two years performing church service before enrolling in a Liberal Arts & Science program at Ricks College (now BYU-Idaho), a small private college in Idaho. Dr. Coleman has fond memories of his first year at Ricks where he took a variety of courses including English, Math, Calculus, Humanities, Psychology, Computer Science and Biology. "It opened my eyes to all kinds of areas that I wasn't exposed to in High School". In his second year, Dr. Coleman became very intrigued by a Biopsychology course he was taking. His professor was extremely passionate about the subject and allowed students to dissect human brains in the lab. Dr. Coleman credits the small class sizes and the close interpersonal contact with his professors for his initial academic success at college.

After two years at Ricks, Dr. Coleman transferred to Boise State University in Idaho, where he began majoring in Psychology. There, he became fascinated with research design and statistical analysis. "I was truly impressed to learn how empirical testing methods could be applied to fields outside of the natural sciences. Upon finishing his bachelor degree, Dr. Coleman returned to Canada to start his Master's work in experimental Neuropsychology at Carleton University in Ottawa. During his doctorate program at Carleton, he was trained in experimental cognitive psychology doing research on the role of working memory in solving complex arithmetic problems.

In July 2004, Dr. Coleman graduated with his Ph.D. in experimental psychology and returned to the Okanagan where he was offered a lecturer position with Okanagan University College. When OUC split into two new institutions, Dr. Coleman choose to stay with the college because he wanted to work at an institution similar to the one where he first began; an institution that has passionate professors and puts student learning first.

Dr. Coleman teaches psychology courses, such as, introductory Psychology, Cognition, Biopsychology, and Health psychology at the Kalamalka campus. He encourages all students to take introduction to Psychology regardless of their future career plans as it gives individuals a better understanding of human behavior. "Psychology is in everything, it is interrelated with all aspects of human life whether it's Business or Nursing. Dr Coleman currently works on a research team at UBC-O studying happiness in children. "I am not finished my academic journey. I plan to continue my quest for further understanding on the complexities of human behaviour and how they relate to the human mind and body".

If you would like to learn more about starting your university education at Okanagan College, please call 545-7291 and ask for either Jeanne or Tawnya.