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Something in the Water?? - November 2014

There is a huge shortage of Ph.D.s in accounting. According to studies by the American Accounting Association the average accounting professor is now unbelievably 60 years old. Very few people are electing to pursue the rigorous and lengthy trail toward that degree, and we don't have a Vietnam-type war that young people are trying to defer joining (perhaps a bit of hint about the 60-year olds).

Nevertheless, something very strange is happening in Logan. A number of recent Aggies have found their way to an academic career, and there are several other current students planning on pursuing an academic career. We asked these alums about their decision to pursue a Ph.D. and their experience in the Ph.D. program. Aggies that have recently begun their academic careers include:

- Brady Twedt ('09), received a Ph.D. from Texas A and M in 2013, now on the faculty at Indiana
- Brian Monsen ('10), starting the third year of his Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin
- Remington Curtis ('08), starting the third year of his Ph.D. at the University of Arizona
- Chez Sealy ('14), starting a Ph.D. at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst this Fall.

Why did you decide to pursue a PhD?

Brady Twedt: Chris Skousen was a fantastic mentor and helped me to better understand what the research component of being a professor would be like.

Brian Monsen: Professors have freedom to explore whichever area of accounting they want and that they feel needs an answer.

Chez Sealy: The lifestyle of a Ph.D. is appealing, and I like that faculty can research whatever subjects interest them.

Remington Curtis: Most importantly I enjoy research. I also was drawn to the profession because I enjoy teaching.

How would you describe your experience in the Ph.D. program?

Brady Twedt: I have never been so challenged in my entire life: the combination of graduate-level coursework in econometrics, statistics, economics, and finance, combined with research and teaching responsibilities, was at times overwhelming, but exciting.

Brian Monsen: I have enjoyed the ability the program provides to spend time on more targeted development of my skills.

Remington Curtis: I am excited each day because I know there will be concepts taught to me and research papers read that I have never seen before. This makes days seem less mundane because there is always something new.

How did your experience at USU help you on your way to a Ph.D.?

Brady Twedt: It has helped me to develop better research ideas, and it has also given me the ability to do a good job in the classroom.

Brian Monsen: The open-door policy that faculty maintained allowed me to ask questions about my courses, but also about the work they were doing.

Chez Sealy: The accounting department allowed me to take a number of classes to specifically help me prepare for a Ph.D. while I worked towards my MAcc.

Remington Curtis: The quality of instruction prepared me to translate accounting principles from the classroom to real-world settings.