

Tenor of Our Times

Volume 13

Article 8

2024

Faculty Spotlight

Zoie Dean

Harding University, zdean@harding.edu

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Recommended Citation

Dean, Zoie (2024) "Faculty Spotlight," *Tenor of Our Times*: Vol. 13, Article 8.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/tenor/vol13/iss1/8>

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HARDING
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Faculty Spotlight

By Zoie Dean



When considering who would be honored by the *Tenor of Our Times* faculty spotlight, it was evident that either of the Kleins was the obvious choice. What became even more obvious, was that you cannot honor one without the other.

Dr. Klein is a historian specializing in American History, Southern History, and American Political Thought, he has taught these subjects at Harding since 1994. Dr. Klein was later joined by Mrs. Klein

in 1997, where she utilized her invaluable experience working for the Florida Legislature to teach Political Science and Public Administration classes. Brilliant academics and even better individuals, the Kleins have taught students the existence and relevance of Christian principles in history and politics alike. Their classes and contributions have influenced generations of Harding students, and the legacy they leave behind is an essential part of what makes Harding's History and Political Science Department, so impactful.

Dr. Kevin Klein attended Harding University for his bachelor's degree in History before obtaining his master's degree and his doctorate from Florida State University. Since returning to his alma mater, Dr. Klein has served as the Chair of the History and Political Science Department from 2003 to 2016, has twice received Harding's Distinguished Teacher Award, and served as the Clifton L. Ganus Jr. Endowed Distinguished Chair of History from 2018-2022. Dr. Klein is also responsible for implementing the American Experience Tour back in 2012, a summer program that took students to various points in the United States, where pivotal historical events took place. Dr. Klein explained the program was intended to be a fun journey that showed students "the foundations of the American Republic," in a trip that was both informative and inexpensive.

Mrs. Klein earned her bachelor's degree in Social Work at Florida State University, where she also earned her master's degree in Public Administration. Mrs. Klein took an internship as a student lobbyist, establishing her love for state and local government and its necessity. Each year, for 25 years, Mrs. Klein took her students on a trip to the state capital. She believed that the best way to learn about the realities of government was to witness it firsthand. Mrs. Klein said she takes this trip because she wants her students to know: "If you're interested in this, you can do this. It is achievable. It is available to you." Along with the Capital trips, Mrs. Klein ensures that her students are aware of the Harding graduates who work at all levels and fields of the government. Over the years, Mrs. Klein invited numerous former students and faculty members to come talk to her classes, to show her students what their peers have achieved, and encourage them to make useful connections. Living by example, Mrs. Klein also served for a term on the Arkansas Ethics Commission, appointed by Arkansas State Senator John Dismang. Mrs. Klein is an incredible role model for public

service, but most importantly, she is also a role model of what it means to be a servant of the Lord.

When asked what it was like to work together for over two decades, Mrs. Klein gave a knowing smile and stated simply, “It was wonderful.” Dr. Klein said: “It was an honor, it was the model you see in the Bible. Husbands and wives working side by side.” It is this perspective and attitude that make the Kleins such a remarkable blessing in the lives of students and faculty alike. The Kleins have demonstrated what it means to walk with Christ concerning all components of life—in our observation of history, in our participation in politics, in the integrity of our academics and labor, and finally, in our marriages and relationships. Harding is blessed to have had the Kleins teach thousands of students, and as a result, promote the Christian mission. The *Tenor of Our Times* is honored to deem this year’s Faculty Spotlight, Kevin and Lori Klein.