CAST Research Office

STEM: What is it and how can CAST be a participant?

One of the first committees that Jeff Wood asked me to serve on as a CAST representative was the STEM Initiative. I agreed to serve on the committee during my substitution for Deb Gentry, even though I wasn’t sure what it was. Chaired by Rod Custer, this committee is comprised of a variety of people across campus that are currently or have potential to provide expertise in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). This is an area of tremendous potential for external funding and interdisciplinary collaboration and CAST faculty have the expertise to be a significant part of the STEM Initiative.

The focus of STEM at Illinois State University is to provide outstanding teacher preparation in science, math, and technology as well as strengthen undergraduate and graduate programs in these areas. Interest in formalizing STEM committees at many campuses came as a result of a publication, Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future. The National Academies were asked by several United States senators to identify the top 10 actions, in priority order, that federal policy makers could take to enhance science and technology enterprise in order for the U.S. to successfully compete, prosper, and be secure in the global community of the 21st century. This work identified the preparation of science, technology, and mathematics teachers as a very high priority as well as increasing the number of students who earn Bachelor’s degrees in science, engineering, and mathematics. It seems evident that significant research funding will be made available by the federal government for STEM-related activities.

CAST is already involved in STEM activities with the potential to provide more. Examples include our Technology Education Program, the soon-to-be-implemented Renewable Energy Degree as well as the Integrated Manufacturing Lab (IML) in the Department of Technology.

Dr. Anu Gokhale, Department of Technology, also serves on the STEM Committee and she and I hope to be active members and involve many faculty and units in CAST. Now that I know what STEM is, I am glad to have the opportunity to work with such a multidisciplinary committee and know that Dr. Gentry and Dr. Gokhale will continue to update CAST faculty in the coming year.

MJM
I hope everyone had a wonderful spring break and that each of you is ready for the second half of the 2007 spring semester. As signs of spring begin to emerge, the remainder of the semester will be quite busy as we finish the academic year. To help you plan for upcoming activities, please mark the following events on your calendar:

- IDEA Administration for full semester courses: April 16-27 (please check with your unit for more specific dates.)
- CAST Spring Faculty Meeting: April 19 at 3:00 p.m. in the BSC Ballroom with CAST Expo beginning at 2:30 p.m.
- Last Day of Class: May 5
- Final Exam Week: May 7-11
- Commencement: May 12 at 1:00 p.m.
- Grades Due: May 15 by 9 a.m.
- Celebrate CAST Golf Outing: May 18
- Alan Lacy’s Birthday: July 4 (Take the day off...no gifts please!)

For those of you who really like to plan ahead:
- CAST Fall Faculty Meeting: August 16
- Fall 2007 Classes Start: August 20

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Dr. Tricia Widner Johnson has had the manuscript “Appearance Management Behavior and the Five Factor Model of Personality” accepted for publication in the Clothing and Textiles Research Journal.

Dr. Mark A. Temple traveled to Washington, DC during Feb. 28 to March 2. He met with National Institutes of Health project officers regarding potential funding opportunities. He also visited with Julia Leer, Executive Director of the Center for Health and Healthcare in Schools.

Drs. Sara Cole and Mark Temple, as part of the Center for Healthy, Safe, and High-Performing Schools, received a mini grant to conduct a community dialogue on the Society for Public Health Education’s Transdisciplinary Research Agenda in Health Education for the Elimination of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities.

Professor Paul Ronczkowski attended the Central Illinois Chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers meeting in Champaign on March 13.

Dr. Dr. Rod Simmons met with the Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) Credentialing Board in Kuwait on March 10 and 13. During March 10-14, he conducted a series of Job Analysis Survey Workshops, as part of a project to develop a credentialing program for HSE professionals in the Kuwait national sector.

Two students from the Environmental Health program attended a leadership conference sponsored by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) in Fairfax, VA on March 2-4. The conference was designed to train AIHA Section president-elects to be more effective leaders. This year was the first time that student leaders were invited.

During Spring Break, two ISU staff members and Dr. George Byrns accompanied 26 students on an Alternative Spring Break outing to the Florida Everglades. They were helping the Park Service demolish buildings that were damaged by the hurricanes.

The HSC Department-based Radon Awareness Program had a booth at the HOME SHOW at the Interstate Center, March 9-11. Several hundred people stopped by the booth to get radon information, ask questions or purchase a $10.00 home test kit, sold through the town of Normal. Volunteer members of the McLean County Radon Task Force, who are professionals in the radon industry, helped staff the booth. Ruth Ann Lipic.

Dr. Donna Vandiver, “An Examination of Re-arrest Rates of 942 Male and 471 Female Registered Sex Offenders.” Dr. Vandiver organized and chaired this featured panel as well.

Dr. Ann Stemm and three students from Apparel Merchandising and Design, Leslie Morgan, Andrea Ness and Elizabeth Fuller, were in Springfield on Sunday, March 18 to attend the Springfield Area Arts Council’s “Wearable Art 2007” fashion show. Designs by the three students were included in this year’s show.

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ACL
Dr. Kevin Laudner was interviewed on WJBC (AM 1230) on March 13th discussing the academic and clinical education of athletic training students and the future of the profession.

Dr. Chad McEvoy’s co-authored article “Treatment of Travel Expenses by Golf Course Patrons: Sunk or Bundled Costs and the First and Third Laws of Demand” was published in the peer-reviewed International Journal of Sport Finance.

On Thursday, March 15th, Kim Walker-Smith and Dr. Margo Coleman presented “Fitness and Sports-Putting a Fitness Focus into Your Sport Education Program” at the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) Conference in Baltimore, Maryland.

Drs. Chris Merrill and Rodney Custer, along with three doctoral students at the University of Illinois (Jenny Daugherty, Martin Westrick, and Yong Zeng), were awarded the “2007 Outstanding Research Award” by the Council on Technology Teacher Education at the International Technology Education Association (ITEA) Conference in San Antonio, Texas. In addition, three presentations were given by this same group of individuals on delivering core engineering concepts to high school students.

Dr. Chris Merrill also presented an “Analysis of Preservice/Licensure Technology Education Programs in the U.S.”

The ISU Technology Education Collegiate Association competed against sixteen other universities in various competitions and earned a third place award in the TECA Challenge and a first place victory in the Communications contest. Former Department Chairperson, Dr. Rodney Custer was the keynote presenter for the Foundation for Technology Education Spirit of Excellence Breakfast.

Dr. Chris Merrill completed a Technical Assistance Visit at Litchfield High School as part of the national High Schools That Work program. The High Schools That Work program is similar to a National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) process at the university level.

The College of Applied Science and Technology, through its teaching, research, and service programs, will be a leader in preparing broadly educated, technologically competent professionals who can solve real-world problems in a workforce that builds economic viability and better communities in the State of Illinois and beyond.