DEAN’S CORNER

Last week I attended a leadership summit in Washington DC with Drs. Jan Shane, Pat O’Rourke and Rob Rykerd. The summit was sponsored in part by the National Academies, USDA, Kellogg Foundation, NSF, USEPA, Farm Foundation, and the American Farm Bureau. The purpose of the meeting was to hear about current and future challenges and opportunities for undergraduate education, specifically within agriculture. A secondary objective was to explore overlapping interests from other disciplines that may impact the future of agriculture.

Concerning the secondary objective mentioned above, it was interesting to note how many disciplines that overlap with agriculture were represented at the summit. Many of the summit participants were from disciplines allied with those also represented within CAST. Several faculty and administrators spoke at some length about interdisciplinary approaches to curriculum design and delivery. Most of those representing land grant institutions shared stories about how extremely difficult it is to collaborate across disciplines at their institutions. It was interesting to be part of discussions with my colleagues from around the country and to share some of the things we have accomplished in CAST and do very well. It seems we have been able to resolve cross discipline differences and break from the traditional silo model of instruction more easily than most. Interdisciplinary work was one of many buzz words that seemed to resonate well with the summit sponsors.

Another topic that I found interesting was that of venerating the teaching function of the professoriate. Many research intensive institutions around the country are grappling with this issue right now. I sensed a desire among all strata of attendees at the summit to move toward a model that recognizes the importance of undergraduate instruction and, to develop a paradigm that rewards and recognizes “good” teaching. This is another of those areas that we have succeeded in, which should come as no surprise given our heritage, mission, and vision.

Lastly, I met with several alumni who now hold various positions within higher education. It was encouraging to hear about what an impact ISU has had upon their lives, both professionally and personally. One described what we do at ISU as analogous to throwing a stone into a still pond. The ensuing concentric circles created by the ripple effect of the stone entering the water are like the faculty that emerges from the ranks of our undergraduate and selected graduate programs. They radiate outward with far reaching effects.

It felt good to be from CAST.

JAW

CAST Office

Do you realize that Friday, October 13, marks the end of the first half of the fall semester? You will have to decide if that is lucky or unlucky according to how your classes are going. For me, the past eight weeks have flown by. As you know, we use the IDEA student course evaluation each semester. Those will be administered prior to Thanksgiving break and provide student feedback to you. Many of you consider this feedback carefully to make modifications in your content or course delivery for the next semester.

However, keep in mind that this feedback does not help the students who provide it. The adjustments to your teaching that you make will help future students, but not the current ones. If you have not done so previously, I suggest you incorporate a more informal mid-term evaluation to see how your courses are going. Use open-ended questions such as:

- What particular aspects have you liked the most and least about this class? Please give reasons for your answers.
- Which topics covered in this class have been most valuable to you? The least valuable? Please give reasons for your answers.
- How would you suggest changing this course to improve it? Please be as specific as possible.
- What, if anything, have you learned in this course that will help you as a physical education teacher?

An assessment like this only takes about ten minutes. It should be done anonymously to get candid responses. It shows the students that you care about their opinion, and it might provide valuable insight that can positively impact your current students as well as future ones! Thanks for your instructional efforts so far this fall and good luck with the rest of the semester.

ACL

CAST Office Important Dates & Deadlines:

- CAST Outstanding Service Award Application due to CAST Office 10/13/06
- CAST Outstanding Teacher Award Application due to CAST Office 10/13/06
- CAST Outstanding Researcher Award Application due to CAST Office 10/13/06
- Homecoming Parade 10/14/06
- Homecoming Tailgate CAST Tent 10/14/06
- CAST Chili Cook-off 10/20/06
- University Research Grant Proposal Writing Workshop 11/13/06 1:00-2:15 pm

Burgers, Brats and Beverages! Tailgate with CAST! Catered by Times Past Inn!

CAST tent in the Redbird Tent Zone!

Immediately following the Homecoming Parade until game time.
**Department Of Agriculture**

Dr. Robert Rhykerd, Chair
Patrick O’Rourke, Dean Jeff Wood and Associate Provost Jan Shane represented Illinois State at the Leadership Summit to Effect Change in Teaching and Learning in Washington DC, October 5-6. The Summit was attended by approximately 300 professors, university administrators and agriculture industry leaders from around the country. It was sponsored by the Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources and The Board on Life Sciences of the National Academies of Science. The purpose was to begin developing recommendations to improve agriculture undergraduate preparation for careers in agriculture, environmental and life sciences.

Dr. Gary Bachman, the Gardendoc, has been a frequent guest on WJBC’s “McLean County Saturday” for horticulture and gardening question call-ins.

Drs. Randy Winter, AGR, and Dave Wiegand, TEC, attended the Advancing Renewable Energy Conference in St. Louis, Oct. 10-12. Featured speakers included both the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and U.S. Secretary of Energy. The conference addresses issues in both liquid fuels and electricity; two primary areas of emphasis in the proposed renewable energy major at Illinois State University.

Several AGR faculty were busy this past summer with week-long short courses: Dr. Gary Bachman (From Seeds to Plants), Drs. Bryon Wiegand and Jeff Wood (Summer Ag Institute), and Dr. Bryon Wiegand (Meat Science Short Course). These courses serve an important role of helping elementary and high school teachers to promote the significance of agriculture in Illinois classrooms.

Dr. Rob Rhykerd and Kara Nelson hosted the Section 9 High School Land Judging Contest on October 3rd at the ISU Farm in Lexington at which 120 students from 11 high schools competed.

The ISU Soil Judging Team, coached by Dr. Rob Rhykerd and Kara Nelson, participated in the Region III Soil Judging Contest hosted by the University of Wisconsin at Platteville, October 5th to 7th.

Dr. Gary Bachman and 12 Horticulture students traveled to Joliet and competed in the 2nd Annual Illinois Green Industry Challenge against 100 students from eight 2-year and 4-year schools. The event was sponsored by the Illinois Landscape Contractors Association and included 8 different events. The placing for ISU students follows: Jenna Rozum (1st Annual/Perennial Identification), Eric Burroughs and Rafael Alvarez (1st Landscape Equipment Operation), Eric Burroughs (1st Skid Steer Operation), Erin Dietmeier and Tim Tammen (2nd Paver Installation), and Ryan Olejnik and Chris Hocker (3rd Arboriculture Techniques).

Jessica Chambers organized the 1st Autumnal Festival at the ISU Horticulture Center on Saturday, October 7th. As an introduction to the community, the Horticulture Center offered fall children’s activities free of charge, a bird stroll, and sold many of the fall amenities the Center had grown this past season. Those included over 40 varieties of pumpkins, gourds, and squash as well as Indian corn, mums, and corn stalks.

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**Department Of Criminal Justice Sciences**

Dr. Ling Ren, J. Zhao (University of Nebraska at Omaha), N. Lovrich, & M. Gaffney (Washington State University) have co-authored a peer-reviewed article entitled, “Participation in Community Crime Prevention: Who Volunteers for Police Work?” in Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management 29 (2006): 464-481.

Drs. Jeff Walsh and Donna Vandiver presented a paper entitled, “Utilizing Active Learning Techniques: Practical Considerations in Teaching Research Methods to Criminal Justice Students -- Employing the "Research Project Model", at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association in Chicago. Dr. Cara Rabe-Hemp also presented at the meeting. Her paper was entitled, "The Effect Of Officer Gender on Police-Citizen Interactions".

At the Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Association of Criminal Justice held in Ft. Worth, TX, Dr. Donna Vandiver, K. Cheseman, and R. Worley (Sam Houston State University) presented, “A Qualitative Assessment of Registered Sex Offenders: Characteristics and Attitudes toward Registration.

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**Department Of Family and Consumer Sciences**

On October 5th, Karen Stephens, Director of Child Care, presented “Early Childhood Program Accreditation: Improving quality of life for families and staff” for the Child Care Resource and Referral’s accreditation cohort kick-off celebration in Bloomington.

Dr. Jean Memken presented a paper entitled, “Are Housing Education and Research Critical in Today’s Environment?” at the 40th anniversary of the Housing Education and Research Association meeting at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. The conference was held October 8-11. Co-authors of the paper were Dr. Shirley Niemeyer, University of Nebraska, Dr. Carolyn Turner, North Carolina A & T State University at Greensboro, and Dr. Becky Yust, University of Minnesota.

Dr. Jean Memken edited a book of housing abstracts entitled “Celebrating our Past With a Look to the Future.” The peer reviewed abstracts were authored by members of the Housing Education and Research Association, an international organization of housing educators, researchers, and extension personnel. Abstract topics were related to housing research, policy, educational programming and theory.

Dr. Jean Memken served as the housing and environment division chair at the annual meeting of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences in June. Her duties included serving on the AAFCS Board which directs the organization’s program of work, and serving on the AAFCS Senate, the governing body of the organization. In addition, Dr. Memken has just completed a term as associate editor of the Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal, one of the official publications of the AAFCS. The journal is published by SAGE Publications.

Dr. Tricia Widner Johnson and Sally K. Francis recently had the manuscript "Personality Factors and Dress Style Tribes of Undergraduate Students" accepted for publication in the Research Journal of Textile and Apparel.
**Department of Health Sciences**

Dr. George Byrns and four Environmental Health students attended the September 28th meeting of the Prairie Section American Industrial Hygiene Association in Peoria. Fritz Bach, an industrial hygienist with Caterpillar, spoke on establishing equivalent industrial hygienist with Caterpillar, specifically the Women, and Children Program, with the McLean County Board of Health, specifically the Women, Infants, and Children Program, Dr. George Byrns and 25 students from the Environmental Health and Safety programs attended an October 6th presentation and demonstration on industrial hygiene in the petroleum industry given by representatives from Marathon Oil Company including Jake Nowicki, a 2006 EH alum. Six members of the ISU student section of ASSE attended the ASSE senior chapter meeting at the Praxair plant in Pekin on October 10th, which included dinner and a plant tour.

**School of Information Technology**

Dr. Amy Chou published an article entitled "Product development flexibility in a changing business environment" in the peer reviewed International Journal of Information Systems and Change Management.

**School of Kinesiology and Recreation**

Dr. Deb Garrahy, Kim Walker-Smith and volunteer Physical Education Teacher-Education majors began offering a monthly Saturday morning movement program for low income families in the Bloomington-Normal area on October 7th. Through a collaboration with the McLean County Board of Health, specifically the Women, Infants, and Children Program, families are invited to participate in developmentally appropriate movement experiences for children ages 2-5. The goal of this new program is to instil an enjoyment of physical activity at a young age that is of no cost to families. The Physical Education-Teacher Education program hosted Dr. David Gallahue, Dean of the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Indiana University, on October 2nd. Dean Gallahue, an international expert on motor development and children’s physical education, spent the afternoon speaking to physical education-teacher education majors in KNR 225: Motor Development and KNR 221: Elementary Physical Education Curriculum.

**Department of Technology**

Dr. Kevin Devine conducted a three-day robot training course for the engineering and maintenance staff at Anchor Coupling, Inc., a Caterpillar subsidiary located in Menominee, Michigan. Anchor Coupling recently installed an automated manufacturing cell that contains two ABB robots identical to those recently installed in the Department of Technology’s new Integrated Manufacturing Lab. Dr. Mohamed El-Gafy and Dr. Richard Boser have been awarded a $70,105 competitive grant from the Illinois Waste Management and Research Center (Illinois Department of Natural Resources), “Overcoming Barriers to P2 and Recycling for Construction Waste”. The project goal is to accelerate adoption of waste minimization and pollution prevention (P2/ recycling) practices by Illinois home builders. The project will be guided by the ADOP2T™ model for diffusion of innovation. Expected outcomes of the work include a partnership with influential Illinois home builders who are interested in P2/recycling and a pilot P2/recycling demonstration project where other builders can see first hand how the waste management plan can be implemented.

Dr. Louis Reifschneider presented a half-day seminar entitled “Industrial Plastics: Identification Methods and Processing Technologies” to twenty employees of Mervis Industries on September 9th. Mervis Industries is based in Danville Illinois. They are a scrap materials distributor with processing centers throughout the Midwestern and Southwestern United States.

Dr. Reifschneider and two Department of Technology students attended the annual Society of Plastics Engineers Thermoforming Division Conference in Nashville Tennessee from September 18th to the 20th. The conference highlights the latest developments in thermoforming technology and business practices for the industry. In addition there was an exhibition of sixty vendors showcasing new developments in materials, tooling, and machinery. The entire trip was sponsored by the Thermoforming Division. In a related news item, Illinois State University was recognized at the conference for submitting the best part made by a university in a parts competition the conference sponsors each year. The part Dr. Reifschneider submitted was a thermoformed product designed and made by a team of students in the TEC 315 Design for Manufacturability class.

Dr. Dan Wilson was elected to the Board of Directors for the Accrediting Council for Collegiate Graphic Communications (ACCGC). The purpose of the ACCGC is to promote and encourage sound baccalaureate level educational programs in graphic communications.
University Research Grant (URG)
Proposal Writing Workshop

Faculty who are new (or nearly new) to CAST are invited to attend. Find out how to prepare a URG proposal that is eligible for the Grant Development or Research Development Categories. URG proposal deadline is February 5, 2007. See guidelines at:
http://www.cast.ilstu.edu/facultyresources/research/universityresearchgrants.shtml

Monday, November 13, 2006
1:00-2:15 p.m.
Turner 104A
Light refreshments provided

Contact Deborah Gentry, CAST Dean’s Office, if you plan to come
Email: dgentry@ilstu.edu Telephone: 438-8748