I just read a Chronicle of Higher Education article titled “Finishing Strong.” The author shared stories about his end of semester encounters and invited readers to join a blog concerning last day ideas. One blog entry especially resonated with me…

“On the last day of class, I like to think about “relevance” -- after a semester of working/thinking hard about some topic (possibly quite esoteric, from the point of view of the students), I think it’s important to spend some time talking about how they’re going to take this material out into the world with them. Through a combination of freewriting and informal discussion, we talk explicitly about what ideas were new to each of us (self included), and how we think differently about the topic now. Then, I have each of them articulate an argument about how this material is relevant to their lives. (I always tell them that I know that they won’t always remember or refer to all of the specific material of our course, but maybe there is an idea or approach or perspective that they can imagine remembering 20 years from now.) This last part is especially wonderful -- obviously, there are no wrong answers, and relevance can be as mundane or exalted as the student wishes. I feel like it makes them own the material (as well as their educational process) and also imparts a real sense of accomplishment in terms of the “usefulness” of the semester; it also is a nice shift in who is dictating “what’s important” (usually the professor, for most of the semester). Often, these conversations turn into wonderful discussions of “I never thought about the idea that X!” and “Now every time I read about Y in the newspaper, I think about it differently!” If the class is small enough (say 25 or under), I leave enough time that we actually go around in a circle and everyone has to say at least a few words about their personal experience of “relevance” related to the class. It really ends the semester on a positive (and reflective) note, on a number of levels."

There are obviously as many ways to close out the semester as there are classes and professors. I want to encourage you to end the semester in a meaningful way for your students as well as yourself. An abrupt end is not pedagogically sound nor is it satisfying for the student or teacher. Give students time to assimilate the knowledge and skills they experienced in your class. This assimilation time is useful because it allows us to reflect on our content and pedagogy which then causes us to refine our craft. An abrupt end to the semester leaves a gap for the student and professor alike. You and your students deserve a more meaningful conclusion to much hard work. Try a new semester closure technique and share it with your students.

This entry in the final NewsCAST of the calendar year signals the conclusion of my first semester as your Dean. It has been both thrilling and challenging, and it gave me deep personal satisfaction to have worked with so many fine professionals. I am humbled and honored to have been able to do so and for that, my sincere gratitude and utmost respect to each of you.

Have a restful and joyous holiday.

Jeff

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CAST Office

As we approach the end of the semester, I want to acknowledge the fine work done by the CAST Curriculum Committee (CCC). With catalog deadlines in the fall, the bulk of the curricular proposals are submitted in the fall term. The CCC met on a weekly basis since mid-September to review curricular proposals. I was quite impressed with the diligence and professionalism exhibited by the members of the committee in carrying out their tasks.

Thus far, the CCC has reviewed and approved thirty-one curricular proposals. The scope of these proposals ranged from changing prerequisites to a course to proposing new sequences and majors. The breakdown of proposals approved by the CCC during the past semester is:

- New courses: 5
- Revised courses: 11
- Revised sequences or majors: 10
- New sequences or majors: 3
- Program deletions: 2

Members of the CCC this year are: Lori Woeste (HSC - chair), Donna Vandiver (CJS – vice chair), Paul Walker (AGR), Susan Winchip (FCS), Lou Reifsneider (TEC), Brent Beggs (KNR), Tom Portegys (ITK), and Erin Harvill (KNR – student rep). The efforts of Lori Woeste in providing leadership to this committee were excellent. The consistent commitment of each member to attend the meetings and to provide lead reviews for their fair share of the proposals was also quite commendable. Cindy Greskivcz also has done a fine job preparing agendas, taking the minutes of each meeting, and tracking the proposals in the curricular process.

Finally, I want to thank the many faculty members and chairs that attended the CCC meetings to clarify issues and answer questions about proposals they had submitted. Having colleagues in our meetings with first hand knowledge certainly facilitates the processing of most proposals. Developing good curricular proposals is a team effort, and I appreciate the efforts of each of you who have contributed to the successful work of the CCC this fall. Best wishes for a smooth close of the fall semester.

ACL
CAST RESEARCH OFFICE

CAST OUTSTANDING RESEARCHER AWARD RECIPIENT

CAST Research Committee members are pleased to announce Dr. Martha Power, Department of Family & Consumer Sciences, has been selected as the recipient of the 2006-2007 CAST Outstanding Researcher Award. In recognition of her exemplary work, she will be awarded $500 and a plaque for her office wall. Additionally, her name will be added to a plaque dedicated to this award that hangs in the reception area of the CAST Dean’s Office. Finally, she will present highlights of her research efforts at the CAST Spring Faculty Meeting in April, 2007. When you join members of the CAST Research Committee and the College Dean’s Office is congratulating her on this accomplishment.

Among Dr. Powers’ most noteworthy research efforts has been her involvement in a collaborative longitudinal study of families adopting older children from the foster care system of Illinois. This work has provided a foundation for the development of an intentional intergenerational neighborhood in Rantoul, Illinois, called Hope Meadows. The support program that keeps this neighborhood functioning at optimal levels is called Generations of Hope. Funding for operations and research has come from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In recent years, this program has earned multiple awards and national acclaim. Marty’s work and that of her collaborator, Brenda Krause Eheart, is well published and cited.

New Staff Member Joins Programs Office

Dr. Joseph M. Casto joins the staff at Research and Sponsored Programs as the Assistant Director of Research Ethics and Compliance. He is the former Executive Director and Director of Research at the Central Illinois Neuroscience Foundation in Bloomington, Illinois. For the past three years he oversaw the Foundation’s clinical research at local hospitals and clinics and also directed the stroke research conducted in the preclinical stroke research laboratory located on the ISU campus. In addition to his recent biomedical research, Casto has experience in field-based, laboratory-based, and university farm-based animal research. He looks forward to working with researchers and staff at ISU to further its research mission.

Casto earned his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University, his M.S. from Villanova University, and holds a bachelor’s degree from the College of the Holy Cross. He has conducted postdoctoral research at Indiana University and the University of Virginia’s Mountain Lake Biological Station.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The Department of Agriculture, with financial support from the IAA Foundation and McLean County Farm Bureau, hosted Dr. Lowell Catlett on November 28 in the Bone Student Center Brown Ballroom. Dr. Catlett, Regent’s Professor at New Mexico State University, is a highly-respected agricultural economist, futurist and speaker. His presentation, New Frontiers that Change Everything, explored five major economic, demographic and technological trends that are changing society and providing opportunities for those ready to meet the challenges.

Dr. Randy Winter provided an overview of renewable energy initiatives underway at Illinois State University at the Peoria Farm Show on November 30.

Drs. Ken Smiciklas and Rob Rhykerd attended the American Society of Agronomy International meetings held in Indianapolis, Indiana from November 12-16 and presented the following papers: Smiciklas, K.D. Collegiate Crops Contest - Noncompetitive Coaching Perspectives. Hembra, A., J. Corbin, R. Rhykerd, K. Tudor, and B.R. Wiegand. Fostering Autonomous Learning in Production Agriculture. During the meetings, Dr. Smiciklas completed his term as Past Chair for Division A1 Resident Education and Dr. Rhykerd assumed the duties and Chair Elect for Division A1. Additionally, Dr. Rhykerd served as a judge for the National Student Research Symposium Contest Poster Session.

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SCIENCES


Dr. Reitzel was also made an honorary member of the Golden Key International Honour Society.

Dr. Tom Ellsworth has been selected by the Regional Superintendent of Schools to sit on the newly-created Trunacy Review Board, which will hear referrals from school districts in DeWitt, Livingston and McLean Counties. Students coming to the Board have missed an average of 25 days of school this year.

In November, at the University of Florida, Dr. John Reitzel successfully defended his dissertation entitled, “Race Differences in Persistence/Desistance: A Trajectory Analysis of Serious Youthful Offenders Followed into Adulthood.” Please join the CJS Department in congratulating the new Doctor.

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Dr. Yoon Jin Ma and assistant professor Linda Niehm from Iowa State University had the article “Service expectations of older generation Y customers: An examination of apparel retail settings” published in Managing Service Quality.

Dr. Yoon Jin Ma and Mary Littrell, a professor at Colorado State University, presented, “The dress culture of Muslim Malay women” at the International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA) annual conference, “Confluence of Culture”, held in San Antonio, Texas from November 1-4.
Professor Paul Ronczkowski, Dr. George Byrns, 10 Safety students, and 5 Environmental Health students attended a joint meeting of the Central Illinois Chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers and the Prairie Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association in Bloomington on November 14. The meeting was a panel format, wherein each table was given safety topics to discuss and share with the rest of the group. The students were actively involved in these discussions.

Dr. Jane Turley presented "ICD9 Coding, DRG's, APR-DRG's, FY 2007 and Beyond" at the Central Illinois Health Information Management Association quarterly meeting in Decatur, Illinois. HED senior, Lauren Cheek, received the Health Education Student of the Year award at the HED program senior banquet on November 4 at the NV Lounge. She will be recognized by the American Association for Health Education at their conference to be held March 13-17 in Baltimore.

Dr. Dave Thomas, Interim-Director College Freshmen". Anna gave a presentation highlighting her study.

Dr. Dave Thomas, Interim-Director of the School, gave two presentations at the annual conference entitled, "IAHPERD Endowment Funding Opportunities" and "Physical Education Instructional Profile and Needs Assessment in the Chicago Public Schools." This presentation highlighted a study funded by IAHPERD’s Jump Rope for Heart Program, the University Research Grant program at ISU, and the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children.

Dr. Thomas also received an IAHPERD Honor Award and the IAHPERD Presidential Citation for his work with IAHPERD.

Professor Kim Walker-Smith and Dr. Margo Coleman presented, "Fitness and Sport - Yes, You Can Teach Them Together" A number of ISU students also attended the convention. A team of Alley Holman, Dave Earnest, Paul Bartnicki, Mindy Gamble and Amy Clementz participated in the “SuperStars” competition and won first place. A second team of Kelly Taylor, Pat Gronbach, Jen McLoughlin, Sophia Petmezas and Chris Rierson finished in third place. All team members are enrolled in the Physical Education-Teacher Education program.

School of Kinesiology and Recreation

Dr. Kristen Lagally presented
"Ratings of Perceived Exertion during Resistance Exercise" as part of a symposium entitled "The OMNI Scale for Perceived Exertion: New Applications in the Public Health, Wellness and Performance Settings" at the MARC-ACSM meeting in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on November 11th.

The 2006 Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (IAHPERD) conference was held in St. Charles, Illinois, November 16-18. Ashley Reum, Lindsay Gallowitch, Leah Wagner (undergraduate student - exercise science), and Christine Keillor (undergraduate student - athletic training), received IAHPERD Student/Mentor Awards for their work on a project mentored by Dr. Dave Thomas entitled, "McLean County Back to School Event". These four students gave a presentation at the conference highlighting their efforts in providing fitness information and instruction to economically disadvantaged students.

Anna Rinadli (graduate student - exercise physiology) received an IAHPERD Student/Mentor Award for her work on her thesis mentored by Dr. Dave Thomas entitled, "Examining the Freshman 15: Body Composition Changes in Female College Freshmen". Anna gave a presentation highlighting her study.

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School of Information Technology

ITK summer interns and their companies/supervisors reported good experiences with their internships this past summer. ITK would like to highlight two students who had exceptional experiences: Emile Ohanian and Stephen Meyer. Emile interned at State Farm Mutual Insurance Company and Stephen, at Aldridge-Electric Inc.

Emile Ohanian participated in the Speech Program that State Farm has for all of their interns. This program requires prepared speeches as well as impromptu speaking and culminates with a prepared speech contest. This summer, out of approximately 150 interns who participated in the contest, Emile Ohanian finished in second place – quite an honor.

Stephen Meyer had a unique experience during his summer internship. The project manager for the project on which Stephen was working left the company. At that time, Stephen was the only one that had an overall understanding of what needed to be done, so he functioned as the project manager for the rest of the internship. In fact, he is still working for the company on a consulting basis. This situation speaks highly of Stephen’s professionalism and skills.

Dr. Amy Chou had three research papers published in the Decision Science Institute 2006 Annual Meeting Proceedings: "Measuring Interpretive Flexibility of Information Systems," co-authored with W. J. Doll and X. Deng; "Empowerment of Technology Belief and Sales Task Performance," co-authored with E. B. Pullins and S. S. Senecal; and "BPR and IT As Complements to TOM Practices," co-authored with D. C. Chou. The 37th annual meeting of Decision Science Institute was held in San Antonio, Texas, November 18-21.

Drs. Joaquin Vila Ruiz and Winn Mahatanankoon also attended the conference and presented a peer-reviewed paper entitled "Exploring the Barriers of Mobile Commerce Adoption". Juan Garcia, an ITK graduate student, co-authored the paper.

Dr. Billy Lim presented a paper co-authored by Dr. Chu Jong entitled "Integrating Service-Oriented Paradigm into Introductory IS Courses" at the Information Systems Education Conference (ISECON) held in Dallas, Texas, November 2-5. ISECON is sponsored by the Foundation for Information Technology Education of the Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP).

Dr. Tom Portegys presented his paper "Instinct Evolution in a Goal-Seeking Neural Network" at the IASTED Computational Intelligence 2006 conference in San Francisco, November 20-22.
CHILI COOK-OFF A SUCCESS

Dear CAST Family,

Thank you to all of you (participants and judges) who joined us for the First Annual CAST Chili Cook-Off. There was a total of 10 submissions from almost every department/school in the College, including the Dean's Office. If you weren't able to stop by, you missed delicious chili and a great time, not to mention perfect weather on the patio!

This year's winner is Tal Parmenter from the School of Information Technology. Tal's chili was a smooth-textured, venison chili with a hint of jalapeno.

Second place went to Pam Fuller of Criminal Justice Sciences with a traditional kidney bean, ground beef and tomato chili.

In third place, Gary Bachman from the Department of Agriculture created a white bean, turkey chili concoction accented with mixed-pepper confetti.

Again, thank you. Make sure you attend the University Chili Cook-Off in the spring where Tal will be entered as the CAST representative.

Thanks,

CAST Council Social and Morale Committee

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DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

On November 9th, the Department of Technology served as host for the Thursday program of the Illinois Drafting Educators Association's 49th Annual Conference. Drs. Ryan Brown and Ed Livingston were in attendance. Dr. Livingston presented "How Do We Know Our Students Know What We Want Them to Know?" at the Friday program, which was conducted at Heartland Community College.

From November 15th to the 18th, Dr. Ryan Brown attended the National Association of Industrial Technology [NAIT] Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. On Saturday, he was installed as president of the Graphics Division and in that capacity will serve on the NAIT executive board for the next two years.

Dr. Louis Reifsneider and five students from the IMS sequence visited Illinois Valley Plastics, a custom injection molding company in Washington, Illinois on November 10th. The company employs ISU graduates in quality management, process engineering, and product design.

Drs. Kevin Devine and Ken Stier made a refereed presentation entitled "Planning an Integrated Manufacturing Laboratory" on Friday, November 17, 2006 at the National Association of Industrial Technology Conference held in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio.

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