Welcome back. I hope you each had a restful break and are eager to resume the academic year. Many exciting things happened during the holiday closure at ISU. One event I would especially like to highlight was the 8th Annual University-Wide Symposium on Teaching and Learning. Nearly 300 people attended the symposium held at the Double Tree Conference Center in Bloomington on January 9, 2008. The theme in this sesquicentennial year was “Gladly We Learn and Teach: Past, Present, and Future.”

I am particularly proud to say that CAST was very well represented among the attendees and in particular, among those presenting at this year’s symposium. I attended every presentation given by CAST faculty and want to publicly congratulate each and every presenter on a fine job. There were presentations on cross campus collaborative efforts (Dr. Aslihan Spaulding, AGR); overcoming negative student attitudes in STEM courses (Dr. Anu Gokhale, TEC); new approaches to classroom considerations of diversity (Dr. Dawn Beichner, CJS); teaching in synthetic worlds (Dr. Bo Park, TEC); analyzing and improving college teaching (Drs. Alan Lacy, CAST, Marilyn Morrow, HSC, Tricia Johnson, FCS, and Mardell Wilson, UAO & FCS); the impact on student learning styles on curriculum design and delivery (Drs. Lori Woeste and Bev Barham, HSC); and instructional podcasting (Dr. Jessie Krienert, CJS). Poster sessions were presented by Dr. Cara Rabe-Hemp, Ms. Susan Woollen, Dr. Jeff Walsh, and Dr. Jessie Krienert all from CJS and Jessica Murphy, an Agriculture Graduate Student.

The Department of Criminal Justice Science was recognized at the symposium luncheon for faculty dedication to strengthening their teaching with a “Path to Excellence Award”. CJS was cited by CTLT for its commitment to faculty development, as measured by faculty participation in teaching development activities during the previous calendar year. I’m proud to say the faculty in CJS participated in development activities at a rate which is 63% above the campus average. Congratulations to all in CJS for your strong commitment to teaching and giving the “extra degree”!

Good luck to all as you begin the new semester!

JAW
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RefWorks, the popular web-based citation management service, is now available to Illinois State University students, faculty and staff on a pilot basis. An invaluable tool for research, RefWorks helps you create and share bibliographies in a variety of styles, such as APA and MLA.
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The Agricultural Leadership Review Committee met January 17th at the ISU Farm. The group was composed of 16 leaders from the local agricultural industry who act as an advisory board for the Department. Participating from the Department of Agriculture were Drs. Pat O'Rourke, Rob Rhykerd, Aslihan Spaulding, Dick Steffen, Kerry Tudor, Rick Whitacre, and Randy Winter. Also participating were Acting Provost Jan Shane Murphy, CAST Director of Development Dorothy Witte, Dean Jeff Wood, and Associate Deans Deb Gentry and Alan Lacy. Dr. Randy Winter presented "Wind Energy Issues and Updates" at the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District annual meeting on January 16th in Pontiac, Illinois. There are three wind farm proposals under development in Livingston County, so there is intense interest in this subject.

Dr. Ralph Weisheit received a $70,983 grant from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority for the research project "Methamphetamine and Violence in Illinois." It is an interview study of the link between methamphetamine and violence in three Illinois counties with the highest number of methamphetamine arrests. Drs. Dawn Beichner, Jessie Krienert, and Bill Anderson (FCS) received a grant through the Research and Scholarship Development Program at Illinois State University for a proposed Community and Family Center for Prisoner Reentry. Ms. Susan Woollen, Ms. Gail Humiston (CJS Graduate student) and Dr. Cara Rabe-Hemp presented a poster presentation entitled, "Impact of student expectations on experiences, performances, and satisfaction with an online class" at the Teaching and Learning Symposium at Illinois State University in January, 2008.

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