March seems to be evaluation month for administrators on the ISU campus. All Administrative-Professional evaluations are due April 1 of each year. The need to complete ASPT and budget work during January and February pushes writing personnel evaluations to March.

The Dean’s evaluation committee from the CAST Council has given me feedback based on comments received from those of you in the College who completed the Dean’s Evaluation Survey. There is continuing concern about the small return rate as one never knows if this is an affirmation of support or a lack of faith that the evaluation will make a difference. Being an optimist, my default assumption is that it is a sign things are generally okay. I appreciate the comments from those of you who did respond.

You noticed that I have made an effort to visit departments and interact with faculty. I try to have a no-agenda meeting with the employees from each unit at least every semester plus visit initial unit meetings at the start of the school year. I try to meet with School Directors and Department Chairs in their offices rather than mine in order to get out and around the College more often. I am glad you noticed and I like doing it. CAST operates in fourteen venues on campus. So creating a more frequent and widespread presence is difficult considering the time that must also be allocated to other endeavors.

I will try to remain accessible and in contact with you as well as allocate time to the other important interaction processes that improve the College. Meeting with every candidate for a faculty position is one such activity. I interviewed a candidate for one of our positions last week who commented to me that he had never even seen the dean of the college where he has been enrolled for the past three years. He was somewhat surprised to learn that at ISU he would interview with the dean and an associate dean.

A dean has many responsibilities and must make decisions about which ones will receive priority time and attention. Three years ago, you asked for more frequent and visible contact with me, and I think we were able to remedy this with the meetings that have been occurring. I appreciate your comments about the outcomes you desire from the dean, as this enables me to adjust how time and other resources are allocated.

CAST OFFICE

On Wednesday, March 23, Dean Rossman will present our annual budget request to the Provost and staff within Academic Affairs. In preparation for his presentation, the Dean asked that I develop a CAST profile that would help describe for the campus community what we value and put into practice through our teaching efforts. To meet that challenge I turned toward our CAST Group Summary Report which is a composite analysis generated through the IDEA System. What follows is a brief synopsis of the CAST profile that was generated from data compiled during Spring and Fall 2004 semesters. It is important to keep in mind that broad generalizations are inferred using data from across all disciplines within the College.

Faculty in CAST tend to emphasize 5 major objectives in the classes they teach. This practice is consistent with the body of literature on teaching effectiveness and in complete harmony with suggestions provided by the IDEA Center. To include more than 3-6 major instructional objectives in the courses we teach often results in insufficient instructional attention across too many objectives. Thus, our instructional pace is negatively affected and we resort to “cramming” information in the last few weeks of a semester that we feel needs attention. The “cramming” methodology often results in information overload and lower retention rates among students. This sometimes manifests itself in lower ratings of teaching effectiveness.

Faculty emphasize instructional objectives that are appropriate for our curriculum. Consistently, the top four objectives tend to be 1) gaining factual knowledge, 2) learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories, 3) learning to apply course material to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions, and, 4) developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to the course. “Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems” is usually rated as essential or important in our courses also.

The data suggests that instruction within CAST is appropriately designed to educate students to be problem solvers and to employ critical thinking skills. Anyone would have a difficult time arguing that our curriculum isn’t strong and well suited for preparing the leaders of tomorrow in our respective disciplines.
CAST RESEARCH OFFICE

Promoting Undergraduate Research

The Honors Program at ISU facilitates undergraduate students' involvement in research in a variety of ways. Mentorships and grants are intended for research or some project related to a student's academic and/or career plans. Students with mentorship awards work personally with individual faculty members who direct the project and advise the student on the project. Mentorships are awards of $600 per semester, to support and encourage student work with individual faculty members. Fall application materials, including the Mentor Endorsement form, should be returned to the Honors Office by Friday, May 6. Summer research grants are worth up to $2500 for full-time research over the summer. Summer application materials, including the Mentor Endorsement form, should be returned to the Honors Office by Monday, April 4. The main purpose of these awards is to familiarize students with research and project development which can help them succeed in their chosen fields. More information, including application forms, can be found on the Honors webpage: http://www.arr.ilstu.edu/honors/research/.

Intellectual Property Seminar

On Thursday, March 31, from 9am-Noon in Room 114 of the Conference Services building, there will be a seminar offered by the Office of General Counsel. This seminar will include a general overview of intellectual property issues, with the first two hours focusing on patenting and licensing inventions in the university context and the last hour being a discussion of copyright and trademark issues in academia. Robert M. Gerstein of Marshall, Gerstein & Borun will be the presenter. Some of the topics will include:

- A general overview of patent, trademark, copyright and trade secret law.
- The requirements for obtaining a patent under U.S. Law.
- Licensing university inventions to industry.
- Academic freedom, publishing, sponsored research and other common university issues.
- Trademark protection, licensing and compliance.
- Copyright protection, permissions/licenses and ownership.

If you are interested in attending this seminar, you can RSVP to the Office of General Counsel at 438-3393 by March, 21, 2005.

Department of Agriculture

Dr. Rob Rhykerd was recognized by the ISU Student Education Association for "Excellence in Teaching" during their March 2nd reception, held during Professor Appreciation Week. The award is based upon nominations from students campus-wide.

Dr. Gary Bachman and students from AGR-252 Landscape Management, attended the Hardscape Expo held in St. Charles, Illinois on February 23, 2005. Afterwards the group toured Midwest Groundcovers and met with Ag Alum Audra Davey (04) who is the nursery's shipping supervisor. Midwest Groundcovers is an ornamental plant nursery of 400+ acres in northern Illinois with a third location in Michigan.

Dr. Kerry Tudor participated in the Annual Program Planning Meeting of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center that was held in East Lansing, Michigan on February 11-13. Dr. Tudor served on the executive committee of the Research/Technical Committee.

Graduate Research Assistant, Wade Meteer and Dr. Doug Kingman traveled to South Dakota and Minnesota to study two separate incidents involving individuals who had become engulfed in flowing grain during the unloading of grain bins. One incident resulted in a fatality while the other involved the successful rescue of a partially engulfed victim. Findings from previous research have indicated that the chance of a successful extrication of a victim is less than 20% and will frequently involve the death of coworkers, bystanders, or rescue workers in addition to the original victim.

Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Karen Stephens presented "Reaching out to Families and the Community with Technology" at the 2005 annual conference of the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers. It was held in Charleston, South Carolina.


Dr. George Byrns accompanied 5 Environmental Health students to the Chicago American Industrial Hygiene Association's Annual Student Research Competition on February 23rd. ISU won 1st and 2nd place in the undergraduate categories. Giordan Kaplan and Nora Greene's poster, Making the Connection between Plastics and Oil, won 1st place and Anthony DiMaggio and Eric Hartke's poster, Analyzing Mold Sampling Techniques, won 2nd place.

Dr. George Byrns coordinated a special seminar by Mr. Eugene Satrun, industrial hygienist from the Exxon-Mobile refinery in Joliet on February 24th. At the seminar, Mr. Satrun spoke with a group of approximately 25 Safety and Environmental Health students and faculty about the job of an industrial hygienist working in the petrochemical industry. Later that day, Mr. Satrun spoke to the Prairie Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association on the role of the industrial hygienist in emergency response. One Environmental Health student and Dr. George Byrns attended the Prairie Section AIHA meeting.

Drs. Jim Broadbear and Marilyn Morrow received a grant from the Illinois Department of Public Health Office of Women’s Health to develop a comprehensive women's health curriculum. After development and pilot testing, the curriculum will be offered through local health departments to women throughout the state.

Department of Health Sciences

Drs. Beverly Barham and Lori Woeste moderated round table discussions on active learning strategies used in the Clinical Laboratory Science classroom at the Clinical Laboratory Science Educators Conference held February 23-26 in Williamsburg, Virginia. Dr. Barham addressed the use of active learning strategies in the traditional classroom setting, while Dr. Woeste addressed active learning strategies in the distance education classroom.

Dr. Gary Erisman presented "First on the Scene: What You Should Know" at the 14th Annual Downstate Illinois Occupational Safety and Health (DIOSH) Day Conference in Peoria, Illinois on March 2nd. Other faculty members attending the conference were Drs. George Byrns and Harvey Thomas. Twelve Safety and Environmental Health students attended the conference, and many assisted with conference registration and other instructional presentations. The conference is well attended by ISU alumni.

Professor Paulette Miller co-presented "What's It Like to Teach Online?" at a program co-sponsored by the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Technology Support Services on March 1st. On February 24, 2005, Ruth Ann Lipic presented the program "Good News and Bad News about Radon" at the Community Cancer Center. Lipic stressed that indoor radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer, following smoking, and that all homes should be tested for radon.

Ruth Ann Lipic, of the Radon Awareness Program, co-hosted the second annual Radon Networking Day on March 8th with officials from the Nuclear Safety Division of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). Attendees represented grantors and other interested representatives from county health departments, code officials, and the University of Illinois Extension office. Among the presenters was Carl Wenning, education specialist in the physics department, who demonstrated theory and construction of a cloud chamber for viewing alpha tracks.

On Saturday, February 26th, radon measurement and mitigation professionals and technicians came from throughout Illinois to attend the Radon Education Day. The Radon Awareness Program in the Department of Health Sciences plans and implements continuing education days twice yearly for Illinois licensees to earn credits for maintaining licensure requirements. Patrick Daniels from IEMA presented new revisions to Illinois Administrative Code 422.

The Health Sciences Department held its annual Student Recognition Day program on Sunday, March 6th at the Bone Student Center. Students from the five programs in the department (Clinical Laboratory Science, Environmental Health, Health Education, Health Information Management, and Safety) were recognized for scholarship and leadership activities. There were more than 200 attendees, including students and their families.

School of Information Technology


Dr. Matthew Kuofie has seven students registered to present at ISU’s Undergraduate Research Symposium and two students registered to present at the Graduate Research Symposium.

Dr. Billy Lim presented a paper entitled, "On Integrating Web Services from the Ground Up into CS1/CS2", at the international conference ACM SIGCSE 2005 in St. Louis, Missouri, February 23rd-26th. SIGCSE is the premier conference in computer science education. There were more than 1350 attendees at this year's conference. The paper is co-authored by Drs. Chu Jong and Winn (Pruthikrai) Mahatanankoon.

School of Kinesiology and Recreation

Dr. Dave Thomas, Professor of Exercise Science, presented "Profile of Physical Education Instruction and Needs Assessment in the Chicago Public Schools" at the quarterly meeting of the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) on March 3rd. Co-authors of the study were Pat Faire, physical education manager, Chicago Public Schools, and KNR student Sara Verbel.

Dr. Steve McCaw was reappointed for a third term as Biomechanics Section Editor of Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise, the official journal of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Department of Technology

Dr. Richard Boser was nominated to a three year term as an Educational Trustee for the American Council on Construction Education (ACCE). The Board of Trustees is the governing body of ACCE and is comprised of construction educators and representatives from industry and professional associations, and the public-at-large. Dr. Boser's term begins July 2005.