

CLAS News

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES NEWSLETTER

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- MCOM and CMST Merge
- CLAS Faculty Publish Books
- Honors Program Seeks Seminar Courses
- FSU Partners with MD Commission on Civil Rights
- Planetarium Shows Resume in CCIT
- Marcellus Shale Listening Project Launched
- M.S. in Applied Computer Science Adds Online Option
- Theatre Production Receives Kennedy Center Certificate of Merit
- Student Sculpture Displayed in CCIT
- Faculty Attend Reacting to the Past Institute
- Music Dept. Hosts Guest Workshop

Mass Communication, Communication Studies Merge into Single Department

The Departments of Mass Communication and Communication Studies recently merged to form one department, effective fall 2014.

The merger is the result of a program review last spring by Dr. Jack Orr, professor Emeritus of West Chester University, who recommended it as a way to enhance collegial collaborations and to assist students with a more comprehensive understanding of their academic options for studying communication and media at FSU.

Based on his recommendation and the agreement of faculty, a new department was formed, temporarily called the Department of Mass Communication and Communication Studies. Focus groups involving students, alumni, and faculty will be conducted this academic year to develop a new name and department vision.

All faculty of the new department are housed on the third floor of the new Center

for Communication and Information Technology (CCIT). John Lombardi and Elesha Ruminski are serving as co-chairs.

The academic year will focus on the structural transition and building relationships among faculty and students from the programs. There will also be discussion with input from the Leadership Studies Advisory Committee on whether the Leadership Studies minor should formally be part of the new department or remain an interdisciplinary minor.



Sociology Faculty Member Publishing Book

University Press of America/Hamilton Books will publish "Animals in Human Society: Amazing Creatures That Share Our Planet" by Dan Moorehead, assistant professor in the Sociology Department.

The book provides an understanding of how sociological perspectives and theories can be used to explore the role of animals in human society and apply sociological approaches to the study of human-animal relationships. It also explores the nature and forms of abuse/cruelty animals are subject-

ed to through interdisciplinary inquiry spanning sociology, criminology, moral philosophy and law. The book examines institutionalized forms of abuse in research, zoos, hunting, sport/entertainment and food production. Issues/solutions surrounding factory farming, water pollution and natural resource depletion are discussed.

For more information, contact Moorehead at x7965 or dmoorehead@frostburg.edu.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Honors Program Seeks Seminar Courses



On Oct. 28, FSU students in the course CMST 350/Intercultural Communication engaged in a dialogue with local and campus law enforcement, members of the local and student branches of NAACP and other student organizations, and representatives of the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) to discuss police-community relations. Tara Taylor, director of Education and Outreach from MCCR, led dialogue facilitation. The conversation will continue informally and in a possible future dialogue session next spring.

On Oct. 29, MCCR also facilitated an information program on “Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodations: Building Access for an Inclusive Campus.” The workshop was sponsored by Disability Support Services; Communication Studies and Leadership Studies; the Office of ADA/EEO Compliance; and the President’s Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (PACDEI). The program was facilitated by Taylor. Glendora C. Hughes, general counsel from MCCR, led group discussions on applicable laws, reasonable accommodations, workplace discrimination, disability language and awareness.

Digital Storytelling and LGBT Studies—these are topics for spring 2015 seminars being offered as part of the University’s Honors Program. Dr. Greg Wood, Honors Program Director, would like to expand these offerings and is seeking faculty who would be interested in covering topics that are nearest and dearest to you. These interdisciplinary courses feature in-depth coverage of selected topics, discussion-driven class sessions, and students who are very adept at keeping up with their readings and writing assignments. Usually (but not always) capped at 16 students, seminars provide instructors and advanced undergraduate students with fantastic opportunities for one-on-one interaction, individual mentoring, exploring original research, and examining significant concepts in your area(s) of interest.

One way to offer a seminar is to submit a syllabus draft for review by members of the Honors Program Advisory Group. Once approved by the HPAG, the seminar will be scheduled under the course number of IDIS 491, 3 credits. There are no specific deadlines; HPAG can accept syllabus proposals for any of its upcoming meetings.

In addition, it is common for instructors to cross-list their seminars as “special topics” in their own departments, usually allocating half of the seats to IDIS 491 and half to students in their majors. “I have done this with two of my own seminar courses on U.S. labor and working-class history and the cultural history of New York City, and it worked out very, very well,” stated Dr. Wood. Instructors have sometimes cross-listed pre-existing upper-division courses in their departments as honors seminars as well. This is another good way to work with Honors Programs students while at the same time taking care of majors.

“For three of my own honors seminars, I used the basement lounge of Fuller House as my classroom,” said Wood. “This cozy and comfy spot provides 16-17 students with a casual environment that is more characteristic of a college bull session than a typical classroom; it is a space that lends itself very well to conversation.” Wood noted that the space is available to any faculty wishing to teach honors seminars there; however, there is not a computer available in the space.

In addition to the examination of assigned readings in class discussions, instructors usually supervise individual research projects as part of the work of the seminar. For example, students in Dr. Wood’s NYC course this semester are working on research paper assignments that relate to the politics of the Ground Zero site in the years after the 9/11 attacks, conducting research in various sources on specific themes of their own choosing. “My hope is that some of them will choose to present their work at the Undergraduate Research Symposium this spring,” said Wood.

Looking ahead, the goal is to offer two honors seminars in Fall 2015 and two in Spring 2016. If you are interested in developing a seminar course, please contact Greg Wood at x4998 or by email at gwood@frostburg.edu.



Honors students visit Washington, D.C. for an IDIS 151 course

FSU Planetarium Shows Resume in New CCIT Building

Planetarium shows have resumed in the new Multimedia Learning Center housed in the Center for Communications and Information Technology. Shows are held each Sunday through December 21 at 4 and 7 p.m. Each program runs about 45 minutes and is free and open to the public.

“The new projector is much more versatile than the previous one,” said Bob Doyle, the MLC director and associate professor in the Department of Physics and Engineering. “Our digital projector system has no gears, motors or mirrors like the old projector, so we can go from one sky location to another as quickly as we like.”

The 70-seat center includes a large 40-foot-wide tilted dome and more than 70 seats underneath, also tilted, which provide viewers with wide angle images and animation. For astronomy, central projectors cover the dome with the night sky or views of trips to other planets and star systems. The powerful computers in the console also allow space and time travel, journeying back many thousands of years and forward far into the future.

The December program is “The Heavenly Connection,” describing the use of the heavens by the three major monotheistic



faiths (Christianity, Judaism and Islam). First discussed will be the possible explanations of the Star of the Magi in terms of planetary line ups. Next will be the origin of Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights arising from the defeat of the Syrian-Greece kingdom that suppressed Jewish workshop in the 2nd century BCE. Last will be the Muslim calendar, whose starting event was the fleeing of Mohammed and his followers from Mecca to Medina in the 6th century CE. Both Jewish and Islamic months start with

the first sighting of the crescent moon at dusk from their holy cities, Jerusalem and Mecca respectively. “The Heavenly Connection” will be shown on Dec. 7th, 14th, and 21st at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.

For information, contact Doyle at rdoyle@frostburg.edu.

FSU Students and Savage River Watershed Launch Marcellus Shale Listening Project

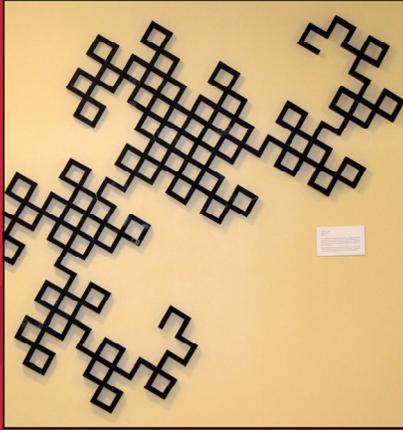
FSU students are partnering with the Savage River Watershed to engage in a listening project to document local hopes and concerns regarding proposed natural gas extraction in western Maryland. Modeling their work after similar successful projects in Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania, students and members of the Savage River Watershed Association believe that an awareness of public opinion on the issue will be beneficial to decision makers as the region continues to debate the role of gas development in the state.

Two FSU classes will work on this project throughout the academic year—Folklore in Appalachia in fall 2014 and Sociology of the Environment in spring 2015. Both

courses are taught by Kara Rogers-Thomas in the Sociology Department. Students will be trained to listen, record, and respect a full range of opinions and attitudes while avoiding imposing an agenda or opinion-based approach to the topic.

Students are scheduling community listening days in Frostburg, Mt. Savage, Finzel, Lonaconing, Westernport, and Grantsville, with a schedule posted on the project’s blog at: <http://fsumslp.blogspot.com>. Research results will be shared through a report and at a public forum in May 2015.

The project is one of a number of experiential learning projects in the Appalachian region supported by the Appalachian Regional Commission’s Teaching Project administered through East Tennessee State University. In December, FSU students will join participants from more than 15 regional institutions to share their work with ARC representatives. In March, students will travel to Johnson City, Tennessee to present a summary of their findings at the annual meeting of the Appalachian Studies Association.



Student Sculpture Displayed in CCIT

Meghan Voelkel, 2013 graduate in Mathematics with a Fine Arts minor, designed and assembled the sculpture "Dragon Curve" as a project for her Advanced Sculpture course. The sculpture is comprised of 128 pieces of wood and was inspired by an iterative paper-folding construction that was discovered in 1966 by NASA physicist John Heighway and his colleague William Harter. The limiting case of this construction, called Heighway's dragon curve, is a plane-filling fractal whose properties were first explored by mathematicians in 1970. The Department of Mathematics decided to purchase the sculpture from Meghan after seeing it on display in the Roper Gallery. The piece is now handsomely displayed in the main entryway of the department's new home in CCIT.

M.S. in Applied Computer Science To Be Fully Online in Spring 2015

Starting in spring 2015, students will be able to earn a Master of Science in Applied Computer Science degree from nearly any location now that FSU has received approval from the Maryland Higher Education Commission to offer the program as a fully online degree option. This option will be in addition to the face-to-face program that has been in existence at FSU since 2000.

"The role FSU plays in Western Maryland has never been more significant, and the future economic prosperity of the region depends on the University's growth and vitality," said President Jonathan Gibraltar. "FSU is keenly aware of the importance of developing a highly educated and technologically competent workforce needed to meet the needs of today's knowledge economy."

"FSU's applied computer science master's degree provides the necessary skills needed to meet demand in the workplace. The program focuses more on the applied technical skills than the theoretical foundations. The master's offers the opportunity to specialize in one of two concentrations: the database concentration, which provides a comprehensive approach to detailed study

in database, data mining and data warehousing; and the general concentration, which provides a broad applied knowledge in computer networking and communications, software engineering, databases, modern web development instruments and computing security concepts.

The structure of the online program is designed to allow students to balance employment and other life commitments while they complete the program, which can be done in as little as two years for a part-time student and 12 months for a full-time student. FSU's tuition and fees are comparatively less expensive than those at many other institutions, and courses are available year-round.

Within the University System of Maryland, FSU will be the only institution offering an online M.S. in Applied Computer Science.

She Kill Monsters Receives Certificate of Merit from Kennedy Center Festival

The Department of Theatre and Dance recently participated in the Kennedy's Center's American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) with their fall production *She Kills Monsters*, directed by Darrell Rushton. KCACTF is a national program that seeks to "encourage, recognize, and celebrate the finest and most diverse work produced in university and college theater programs." With a student-centered focus, regional festivals take place every January. FSU has participated in KCACTF for four consecutive seasons.

As a Region II participating production, the cast and crew of *She Kills Monsters* received favorable feedback from KCACTF adjudicator Laura Smiley of Slippery Rock University following the October 24 performance. Smiley honored the cast with a Certificate of

Merit for Ensemble. In addition, two Theatre majors, Maureen Groff (junior) and Deion Dawodu (sophomore), were nominated for the prestigious Irene Ryan Acting Competition, and one scene from the production was invited to perform at the festival. Sara Danley (senior) was also honored as an alternate for the acting competition. This January, 14 Theatre majors and two faculty members will attend the festival in Cleveland, Ohio.



Philosophy, History Faculty Attend Reacting to the Past Institute

A group of five faculty from the Philosophy and History departments recently made a trip to New York to attend the Fourteenth Annual Reacting to the Past Faculty Institute at Barnard College, thanks to the support of the FSU Foundation and the Office of the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. FSU is a founding member of the Reacting to the Past Consortium, and Drs. Shoshana Brassfield, Nicholas Clulee, Sally Boniece, Eleanor McConnell, and Jo Ann Circosta are all using Reacting to the Past (RTTP) role playing games in their classes at FSU. During an intense four days at the Annual Faculty Institute, they play-tested condensed versions of RTTP role playing games for the classroom in addition to giving presentations during concurrent sessions on teaching, learning, and faculty development.

On Saturday, June 7, 2014, Dr. Eleanor McConnell gave a presentation titled, "Gaming the System: Using Game Elements in Reacting and Non-Reacting Classes." She shared examples of how she used game elements to reinvigorate the history survey course and make it into a more meaningful experience for students.

Also on June 7, Drs. Sally Boniece, Jo Ann Circosta, and Nicholas Clulee participated in a panel discussion titled, "Using 'Reacting to the Past' to Advance Various Disciplinary Goals." They highlighted the versatility and broad applicability of RTTP pedagogy by relating how the Climate Change in Copenhagen 2009 game was used productively in Philosophy, International Studies, and History courses to help achieve discipline-specific goals of each.



From left, Sally Boniece, Jo Ann Circosta, and Nick Clulee participating in a Reacting to the Past panel discussion

On Sunday, June 8, Dr. Shoshana Brassfield participated in a panel titled, "Our Colleagues as Students: Organizing RTTP Workshops, Conferences, and Micro-Games On Our Campuses," exploring how to organize a successful RTTP workshop game for faculty on campuses and at conferences. Shoshana described how she and Nick Clulee organized a workshop last year for faculty, students, and community to try the Reacting game Frederick Douglass, Slavery, Abolitionism, and the Constitution: 1845.

For more information about Reacting to the Past pedagogical method, visit <http://reacting.barnard.edu>.



Shoshana Brassfield, FSU Philosophy Department discusses how to organize workshop games for faculty on campuses and at conferences



Eleanor McConnell, FSU History Department, presents on using gaming elements in classes

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Have any interesting news items
about faculty, staff, or students
in your department?
Submit them to Linda Steele
(lsteel@frostburg.edu)
for the next issue.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Music Department Hosts Guest Workshop

Dr. Jeffrey Marlatt, Director of Music Education and Associate Professor of Music from Shenandoah University visited FSU for a two-day workshop with students, faculty, and community of the Music Department. Dr. Marlatt presented an evening interactive session on Thursday, Nov. 6. This session was also sponsored by the FSU Collegiate Chapter of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and assisted by faculty members Rebecca Birnie, Phil Klickman, and Karen Soderberg. The session was titled, “Why Music?”

The event was open to the public and included community members and music teachers. Attendees were engaged in an active discussion about the act of “musicizing,” and the importance of music in the schools, the community and the lives of individuals. Attendees were presented with strategies for awareness, advocacy and for teaching.

Dr. Marlatt presented a second workshop

session the following morning, Nov. 7, related to “Teaching Music Methods in the Elementary and Secondary School,” where students experienced a hands-on workshop titled, “The Developmental Recorder.” Music students experienced strategies for teaching elementary music using the recorder, based upon curriculum sequencing and children’s and folk song literature. The participative session included singing, moving, and instrument playing, focusing on the objectives of teaching and assessing with the recorder as a teaching tool.



Visual Arts Faculty Member Publishes New Book

Jamison Odone, Assistant Professor of Illustration and Drawing, recently released his first graphic novel, “Lies in the Dust: A Tale of Remorse From the Salem Witch Trials.” This book was also his first released under the pen name of Jakob Crane and is targeted toward a young adult audience. According to an August review in The Boston Globe, it is a “stark and affecting graphic novel” about Ann Putnam, Jr., the only participant in the witch trials to publicly express shame and remorse.

The Globe’s review stated that “Jakob Crane’s narrative puts the Salem witch trials in a historical context, before delving into the trials and resulting deaths, and Ann’s life afterward, including the letter of contrition she

wrote in 1706. ‘Lies in the Dust’ approaches the familiar history with a unique paradigm by exploring the powerful role words played by the tragedy.”

According to Odone, the novel will likely hit the stage as a play at the Salem Theater sometime in 2015.



Dean’s List by the Numbers—Spring 2014

Students in CLAS achieving 4.0 GPA— 210

Students in CLAS achieving above 3.47— 470

Total Spring 2014 CLAS Dean’s List students— 680