

From the Provost

Finals to proctor. Essays and reports to grade. Oral presentations to score. The race to semester's end is in full swing but the finish line draws near. Staff and administrators, too, have been feeling the crunch, whether busy preparing for Commencement ceremonies or leading "Wellness Wednesday" stress-reduction programs to help our students conquer Finals Week.

When you have a chance to catch your breath, take a break and enjoy this newsletter. You'll learn about news that impacts you and your colleagues – including a proposed restructuring of the College of Arts and Sciences and the development of a comprehensive new plan for graduate education. You'll find out about new policies for Study Abroad program approval and upcoming professional development opportunities. Plus, you can vicariously travel to South Africa and Costa Rica with two WCU students who won PASSHE Study Abroad scholarships.

Speaking of travel, I hope you get a chance to enjoy a bit of travel yourself this summer, whether to distant lands, a nearby beach house or lakeside cabin, or day trips here in scenic and historic southeastern Pennsylvania. You have worked hard and given your best to our students all year long and deserve some downtime. Whatever you do, and wherever you go, have a wonderful summer vacation!



Dr. Linda Lamwers

RESTRUCTURING PROPOSED FOR COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Changes would better support WCU's mission

The past two decades have brought tremendous growth to West Chester University, and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) has been disproportionately impacted by the growth.

The College of Arts and Sciences is the largest college at WCU, with 13 departments enrolling nearly 4,000 undergraduates and more than 600 graduate students. Additionally, the college is home to many interdisciplinary and special programs, including the Sandra F. Pritchard Mather Planetarium, the Gordon Natural Area, cable TV station WCCTV, and the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project.

"The College of Arts and Sciences is one of five colleges at the University but we represent 52 percent of all course credit hours at both the undergraduate and graduate levels," notes Lori Vermeulen, dean of the college. "The growth has been beyond what our infrastructure can handle. Despite the work load, we have the same level of administrative support as the other colleges. It became clear that this imbalance needs to be addressed."

Provost Linda Lamwers called upon Roberta Snow, chair and professor of management, to conduct a review of the current administrative structure of Arts and Sciences. Snow is currently serving as a faculty associate to the provost.

"The first step in the process was to review how similar institutions are organized," says Snow. "We discovered that once a university surpasses 11,000 in enrollment, it typically either splits its liberal arts college or adds administration within the college."

The second step was to carry out an internal review, utilizing a collaborative process to engage as many faculty, staff and administrators as possible. Two open forums were held to solicit input from the college's 360-person faculty, and almost 40 program directors, chairs, and staff were interviewed.

Two key recommendations emerged from this internal analysis. First, there was overwhelming consensus that CAS should not be split into multiple colleges at this time. Instead, it was recommended that the core administrative structure be modified. Specifically, academic departments within CAS should be clustered into two schools — Humanities and Liberal Arts in one cluster, Sciences and Mathematics in another. An associate dean would oversee day-to-day operations for each school. Additionally, a budget administrator would be added.

"Such a structure would be more responsive to the academic programs and allow better targeting of internal and external resources," notes Snow.

The other major recommendation was to determine the appropriate home within the University for some of the college's existing interdisciplinary and special programs. In other cases, the goal is to find the appropriate administrative support for some of these special programs. Among the programs being reviewed are all teacher education programming in CAS, Professional Studies, Liberal Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, the Gordon Natural Area and the Center for Micro-analysis and Imaging Research and Training.

Formal memoranda of understanding will be made for externally funded programs such as the journal *College Literature*, the Poetry Center, and the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project to stipulate roles and responsibilities. In addition, the roles of academic deans in student extracurricular activities such as *Daedalus*, the student newspaper, and the radio and television stations, will be clarified.

Detailed project plans have been developed to address each recommendation. For each project, participants will include key stakeholders who have the critical expertise and those who will be affected by possible changes to the CAS structure.

Things are expected to move quickly, says Snow. A sense of urgency is appropriate, as projections call for continued growth in the College of Arts and Sciences. Twenty-two new faculty members were hired this academic year and 20 searches – all of them successful – were conducted for the 2014/15 academic year. A timeline for implementation suggests changes beginning at the end of this semester and continuing through the 2014–15 academic year.

For additional information about the review of the college's administrative structure, contact Snow at RSnow@wcupa.edu.

YES, WE HAVE BANANAS AT WCU

Annual tradition is a beloved stress-buster

The University community was going absolutely bananas April 23. But no one was unduly alarmed because, after all, it was Banana Day. The 18th annual tradition was celebrated with games, activities and plenty of free bananas on the Academic Quad and elsewhere on campus.

Banana Day was created in 1996 when student Rodolfo Tellez distributed 3,000 bananas on campus. Ever since, students have carried on and expanded this WCU rite of spring, which now features mascots, games and t-shirt giveaways.



WCU EXPLORES NEXT STEPS IN GRADUATE EDUCATION



WCU's strategic plan, *Building on Excellence*, includes the goal of expanding academic opportunities in a number of areas, one of which is graduate education. Specifically, Academic Goal 3.1 calls for strengthening and expanding "graduate programs for which there is projected market demand, including applied doctorates."

Jeff Osgood, chair of the department of public policy and administration, is currently serving as a faculty associate to the Provost, with the aim of helping to move Academic Goal 3.1 further, and to explore next steps in graduate education. The Office of Graduate Studies and Extended Education will be developing a comprehensive new plan for graduate education at WCU over the next two years.

As the first part of the planning process, a Graduate Strategic Planning Town Hall was held in early March, bringing together Provost Linda Lamwers, Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies Laurie Bernotsky, all of the college deans, the graduate coordinators, and other interested members of the University community to examine such key issues as removing obstacles to degree completion, professional development as part of masters' programs, attracting minority students, and maintaining connections with graduate alumni.

The Town Hall's working lunch focused exclusively on doctoral education, debating the merits of specializing in just a few specific types of doctorates, how WCU should decide which doctorates to offer, and what doctoral education should look like at WCU. For example, the University's first doctorate, the doctorate of nursing practice, is exclusively online except for an initial four-day course. Should future WCU doctoral programs also be offered in the online format or are some better suited to physical classroom and laboratory settings?

The Town Hall featured plenty of lively discussion and debate but there was one thing everyone could agree on – that the need for advanced degrees is real. It is estimated that about 2.5 million jobs in the U.S. will require a master's, doctoral, or other advanced degree between 2008 and 2018.

"Graduate education provides our workforce with the training and skills they need to succeed in today's knowledge-based economy," notes Osgood.

However, despite the fact that graduate degrees are critical in an ever-increasing number of career fields, many undergraduate degree holders never go on to obtain a graduate degree. In addition, retention and graduation of graduate students are critical concerns.

The plan also will look at the changing face of tomorrow's graduate student. Demographics indicate that the percentage of non-traditional students pursuing graduate education will increase. The structure of WCU's graduate programs will be assessed to determine if they are meeting the needs of nontraditional students who are juggling work and/or family commitments.

One of the strongest selling points of a WCU graduate degree is the quality of the educational experience, notes Osgood. "Quality is talked about a lot at the undergraduate level and people understand that West Chester University offers

an unbeatable combination of quality and value,” he says. “We need to do a better job of getting the word out that WCU provides the same level of quality and value in its graduate education.”

The Office of Graduate Studies and Extended Education welcomes input from the University community into its new graduate education plan. Faculty and staff are encouraged to contact the graduate coordinators in their departments with ideas and suggestions.

GOLDEN RAMS TO MARCH IN 2015 MACY’S PARADE



President Weisenstein is joined by Macy's representative Wesley Whatley at the announcement that the Incomparable Golden Rams Marching Band has been invited to participate in the 2015 Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

Look out New York – here come the Golden Rams! The Incomparable Golden Rams Marching Band has been invited to perform in the 2015 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The Golden Rams beat out stiff competition to take part in this beloved holiday tradition.

According to Wesley Whatley, creative director of the parade, the Golden Rams was one of only 10 marching bands selected to march, out of hundreds of high school and college bands that applied. Whatley was on WCU's campus in mid-April to make the announcement about the band's invitation, which occurred at intermission at a concert band and wind symphony performance.

The marching band was selected based on its “very unique approach that mixes fantastic college level musicianship with a high energy and artistic style,” said Whatley.

It will be the second time the Golden Rams participates in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade; the first time was in 1986.

The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade annually attracts an estimated 3.5 million spectators along the parade route, as well as 50 million-plus television viewers.

“We are beginning to prepare for this very large audience, and for one of the most memorable days in the 125-year history of our marching band — November 26, 2015, the 89th annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade,” said WCU director of bands Andrew Yozviak.

WCU GOES GLOBAL

CIP Offers “One-Stop” Study Abroad Support

Even for a seasoned world traveler, leading a Study Abroad trip involves a whole new level of trip planning. Will meals be included in the program? What are the in-country transportation arrangements? Are there any health or safety risks at the destination?



Assistant professor of languages Gloria Hernández led a Winter Session program to Cuba, where she taught “Culture, Ideology, and Society in Post-revolutionary Cuba.”

These questions and many more can be found on the Center for International Programs’ Study Abroad Program Proposal worksheet. While it may look a bit daunting, the proposal process is designed to make faculty- and staff-led travel go more smoothly.

“The more you have thought out and planned your Study Abroad program, the more successful it will be,” notes WCU’s Interim Assistant Vice President for International Programs Peter Loedel.

“There has been a lot of energy and excitement on campus recently about international opportunities for teaching, research, and service,” says Loedel.

“The Center for International Programs is here to support that interest and help potential trip leaders learn best practices for Study Abroad.”

A new process for developing faculty-led Study Abroad programs has been introduced for 2014/2015. A formal Faculty/Staff Led Study Abroad Proposal is required. The process is not meant to dissuade faculty from pursuing Study Abroad programs but rather to help them navigate through all the necessary pre-trip logistics. Anyone interested in developing a program for 2015 should contact the center now.

Excitement about international travel already has translated into more Study Abroad programs. The number of WCU students participating in faculty-led programs this year increased by over 130 from last year. Programs thus far have included a Winter Session nursing trip to South Africa, an alternative spring break in Paris, a nutrition program in Spain, and a student teaching experience in the Bahamas. Summer trips planned include an economics and finance program in China, study of physics in London, a Chamber Winds performance in Austria, and an interdisciplinary program in Rwanda that will investigate animal behavior, psychology, African history and Holocaust/genocide studies.

Loedel bills the Center for International Programs as WCU’s “one-stop shop for any kind of international program.” The center’s team includes Angela Howard, who is the assistant director. She primarily works with WCU’s international students who are studying on F-1 visas, as well as visiting scholars on J-Scholar visas. She handles issues related to the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, a U.S. government initiative which monitors students and exchange visitors. Jeff Conradi, the center’s project director, is the chief contact for faculty-led Study Abroad and exchange programs. He also works closely with students to help them explore international study options. As an undergraduate, Conradi studied in Mexico and Costa Rica and says he enjoys advising students who are seeking the same types of life-changing experiences. Administrative support is provided by Daniele Clay.

Even if a faculty or staffer doesn’t need any logistical assistance, they must contact the Center for International Programs to receive approval for their trip. This should be done at least four to six weeks prior to travel. And it’s not just

Study Abroad trips that require approvals. Any WCU international travel must be approved by the center, as well as the provost and president. This includes faculty and staff travel to conferences, for research purposes, or any other business reason, with or without students. In addition, a Technology Control Plan form must be filled out to ensure that WCU employees are in compliance with federal regulations relating to export control laws. “The Technology Control Plan ensures that sensitive digital research data is appropriately protected,” says Loedel. “Our office can help direct you to the IT support you may need to make sure you are in compliance.”



The Department of Special Education offered a spring break student teaching program in the Bahamas, which was led by Claire Verden and Corinne Murphy.

Loedel has co-led numerous WCU Study Abroad trips, such as the Honors College annual leadership experience in South Africa. What he enjoys most about his job is helping other faculty members refine their Study Abroad curricula and troubleshoot potential challenges that could crop up.

“We look at the academic rationale for the program and why a particular location makes sense for this area of study,” he says. “I help faculty members determine whether they need to do a reconnaissance trip first, and which travel providers are best for their location and type of trip. Whenever possible, I encourage them to design a sustainable program that will be offered for multiple years. That way, a student has some time to save and otherwise plan ahead for a particular program that interests them.”

For more information about planning a Study Abroad program, or any other international experience, contact the Center for International Programs at international@wcupa.edu or call 610-436-3515.

DIETETICS PROFESSOR & GRAD RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

The Philadelphia Dietetic Association recently recognized two members of the WCU community — a professor and a graduate — for outstanding performance in their fields.

Mary Beth Gilboy, an associate professor in the department of nutrition, was presented with the Outstanding Dietetic Educator Award from the Pennsylvania Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Regions 6 & 7. This award recognizes the excellence of educators in an Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics accredited and approved dietetic education program.

Dara Blomain was one of three recipients of the Young Dietitian of the Year Award. Blomain received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from WCU – a B.S. in nutrition and dietetics and a master’s in public health. This award is presented to members of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics who are 35 years of age or younger and who have demonstrated leadership qualities and performance in public relations, research, community outreach, management, legislation, education, and other areas related to the profession, on the job and in the community.



Mary Beth Gilboy, left, and Dara Blomain

TWO WCU STUDENTS AWARDED PASSHE STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS



Charnaee Jubilee, right, and fellow WCU student Irene Hagerty, on a visit to a rain forest and volcano in Costa Rica.

Shanna Giedl is paying for her WCU education through a combination of scholarships, grants, loans and income from part-time jobs. When she heard other nursing students talk about their Study Abroad program in South Africa, she grew wistful. She knew she wanted to have a similar experience, working as a student nurse at hospitals in South Africa, but she didn't see how it would be possible financially. But Jeff Conradi, project director for the Center for International Programs, encouraged Giedl to apply for a PASSHE Study Abroad Scholarship, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Giedl was one of two WCU students to receive a PASSHE Study Abroad award this academic year. She received \$2,000 to offset the cost of the Department of Nursing's Winter Session program that traveled throughout South Africa. Charnaee Jubilee, a senior communications studies major, received \$1,500 to study Latin American culture and history at Universidad Nacional in Costa Rica.

Shanna Giedl assisted at an orphanage in Pretoria, South Africa



The only other time Giedl had been out of the country was on a spring break trip to Jamaica. This was Jubilee's first experience traveling outside the U.S. For both, it was a life-changing experience they say they will never forget.

Giedl, 23, is working on her second degree at WCU. After graduating last May with a nutrition degree, she decided to go back to what had been her original major – nursing – for a second degree. She is now a student in Advance 2 BSN, an 18-month accelerated program.

In South Africa, Giedl and 12 other nursing students helped to conduct prenatal check-ups at clinics, worked in orphanages, and assisted in hospital obstetric units. The program was led by assistant professors Marcia Welsh and Chris Moriconi. Giedl said the work ranged from chopping vegetables at an orphanage in Pretoria to assisting at her first delivery.

"I had already done my maternity rotation at a local hospital, but I had mostly assisted with postpartum care of women and their babies," says Giedl. "In South Africa, I was able to assist at a birth and it was an amazing experience. My love for the field of obstetrics and pediatrics has grown even more."

But it wasn't nursing 24/7 for Giedl and her fellow students. They also learned about the people, culture, and traditions of South Africa. They visited a settlement in Pretoria, went on a safari in Kruger National Park, and rode horses on the beach near Cape Town. Giedl also got in touch with her inner daredevil; she went shark cage diving in the Atlantic and abseiling – a form of rappelling – off Cape Town's Table Mountain.

Jubilee also got in touch with her inner daredevil on her Study Abroad trip, when she tried zip-lining. She didn't like it, and didn't finish the full zip-line course, but found plenty of other things to like about Costa Rica and her first experience abroad.

"We stayed with host families and my host mom was so nice," says Jubilee. "I'm not a big breakfast person but she didn't want me to go out without eating so she would wrap up a snack for me to take to class. My host mom fed me a lot."

"I still miss her rice and beans," she adds. "I'm going through rice and beans withdrawal."

Her host family lived close to Universidad Nacional, which is in Heredia, a city about 30 minutes from the capital of San Jose. "It wasn't as busy as Philadelphia, where I'm from," says Jubilee, "but it was still a good-sized city. It's not like we were in a little village out in the countryside."

Jubilee did get plenty of opportunities to be out in the countryside, too. Instructor Ana Sánchez led field trips to Arenal Volcano, Baldi Hot Springs and Manuel Antonio National Park, home to such species as sloths, howler monkeys, mar-mosets, and ocelots.

"We hiked a volcano, went on a jungle cruise, and toured a coffee plantation," says Jubilee. "I am one of 10 children so I didn't buy gifts for all my siblings but I got my grandmom authentic Costa Rican coffee at the plantation."

Jubilee and her fellow classmates learned about Costa Rican culture on these road trips but they also took a traditional three-credit class, in Latin-American culture and civilization, which met every weekday.

Jubilee is heading to Orlando for a Disney internship after graduation. She is excited about working in Florida but already thinking ahead to when she can take time off. Studying in Costa Rica has whet her appetite for international travel. "I really want to figure out a way to get to Europe for my next trip," she says.



They call it abseiling, not rappelling, in Cape Town. But whatever you call it, it's definitely an adrenaline rush, reports Shanna Giedl.

LEARN ABOUT ONLINE TEACHING THIS SUMMER

Online faculty development program starts June 2

Are you planning to teach an online or blended course next year? Then you won't want to miss the online/blended faculty development program presented by the Office of Distance Education. This fully online program, offered June 2-13, provides faculty members with information on best practices in online course development and delivery.

"Even the most seasoned professor can find that there are key challenges to teaching online, such as transforming in-class activities into the online environment, keeping students engaged, learning new technology tools, and building an online learning community," says Rui Li, executive director of Distance Education & Instructional Design at WCU.

The Office of Distance Education offers the online/blended faculty development program every summer and winter session. It meets the Curriculum and Academic Policies Council requirement for faculty to have the appropriate training before teaching a distance education course.

Participants will learn various strategies to help them become successful in the online format. One of the keys to success is “continual presence,” says Li. “We recommend and try to model continual presence,” she says. “In other words, you need to continuously show your presence in the online course through multiple communication methods, such as email, a discussion board, online video conference rooms, as well as social media tools such as blogs and wikis.”

In addition, faculty are encouraged to utilize multimedia content for both instructional materials and student deliverables, and to foster collaborative and active learning in online and blended courses.

Sometimes faculty members are surprised that their students aren’t as technically savvy as they had assumed, notes Stephanie Taitano, an instructional designer with the Office of Distance Education. “Students have grown up with technologies but they don’t always have an intuitive sense of how to problem solve when these technologies go wrong, which they eventually will in one way or another,” says Taitano. “Faculty need to communicate to students the best ways to trouble-shoot new technologies.”

To register for the online/blended faculty development program, or for more information, contact the Office of Distance Education at DistanceEd@wcupa.edu or 610-436-2948.



BIOLOGY PROFESSOR SHARES IN \$1.5 MILLION RESEARCH GRANT

WCU partners with 4 other universities on multidisciplinary project

Frank Fish, a professor of biology, received a grant from the Office of Naval Research for a Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative (MURI) program exploring the program topic of hydrodynamics of non-traditional propulsion. The research project, “Bio-inspired Flexible Propulsors for Fast, Efficient Swimming: What Physics Are We Missing?” is a collaboration between the University of Virginia, Princeton University, Harvard University, Lehigh University and West Chester University.

Fish and his fellow researchers will receive \$1.5 million each year for up to 5 years.

The Department of Defense’s highly competitive MURI program supports research conducted by teams of investigators that intersect more than one traditional science and engineering discipline in order to accelerate research progress. For more than 25 years, the MURI program has resulted in significant capabilities for U.S. military forces while opening up new lines of research.



*Frank Fish has consulted for a range of organizations, including the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, where he provided technical advice for a prosthetic tail for Winter, an injured bottlenose dolphin. Winter’s story provided inspiration for the movie *Dolphin Tale* and sequel *Dolphin Tale 2*, which will be released this September.*