June 23, 2010

WheelerNotes

BSN: On June 4, twenty-seven students began their studies the baccalaureate nursing program at Gordon College. Kudos to Professors Quinn, Davis, and Cranford in specific and the nursing faculty in general for this important milestone.

Exemption from Regent’s Testing:
Congratulations to Professors Peter Higgins, Baskin, Davis, Janssen, Raynie, and Whitelock for their work on the proposal that exempted Gordon students from taking the Regent’s examinations. Several years ago, the English faculty developed standard, detailed course objectives in ENGL 1101 and 1102. The argument for RT exemption was based primarily on these course objectives and on the common course outline, which has been in place for many years. (The proposal for exemption is posted [http://www.gdn.edu/regents/index.asp] for public viewing.) This fall, we will undertake a comprehensive review to ensure that these specified course elements continue to be common to all sections of the courses.

Since their work was based on the assessment system put into place in Fall 2005, transcripts of students who completed ENGL 1102 after Fall 2005 will now read, “Regents’ Exempted.” Students who finished ENGL 1102 before that time will have to petition to be considered for graduation without passing the Regent’s Test.

Fighting the Poor Advice - “Just finish the core and then decide your major:” Among our most challenging advisees in both the New Student Orientations and subsequent advising sessions are students who have not yet chosen a major. In some cases we have to counteract the poor advice that has been given to them by guidance counselors or their favorite uncle. Here are four strategies that sometimes help in moving students to a tentative choice of major:

1. Insist the student identify 3-5 majors they are considering.
2. Advise the student to take at least one course in the next semester that will bring them closer to decision. In some cases, there is an obvious course in the core (PSYC 1101 for a "psychology maybe"). In other cases the student may need to go ahead and take a non-core course (BUSA 1105 or 2106 for a "business maybe"; EDUC 2110 or 2120 for an "education maybe").
3. Encourage the student to seek part-time work or volunteer experiences that will move the student closer to decision. Remind the student that a choice in major can be easily changed .. and that committing tentatively to a major helps clarify one’s thinking.

Teaching Excellence – Nominating Dr. Janssen: Each year the University System of Georgia invites nominations of individuals with “a strong commitment to teaching and service to students” to be considered for the Regent’s Teaching Excellence Award. This year Gordon College nominated Dr. David Janssen for the “Two Year and State College” award. In the twenty page nomination package, his references provided abundant evidence of these three markers of excellent teaching:

- Participation in Janssen’s Classroom is a transformative experience for
students: Testimonies were included from students in Janssen’s Honors English classes where student teams write a textbook and from colleagues who had watched his students grow over the years.

- **Janssen is committed to providing students with learning experiences that transcend the walls of the classroom:** Among the evidence cited were David’s role in the creation of the Writing Center and his work in preparing two student panels to present at regional meetings.

- **Janssen has found ways to “teach” beyond the boundaries of his campus:** His frequent presentations to peers on literature and pedagogy at regional meetings and his recent publication with Ed Whitelock of a book were cited as evidence of this marker.

**Teaching Excellence – Nominating Associate of Science in Nursing:** Each year the University System of Georgia invites nominations of an academic program with a “strong commitment to teaching and service to students.” This year Gordon College is nominating the Associate of Science in Nursing program and its faculty. The nominating team in a twenty page nomination noted these things:

- The novel and effective program called “Camp I Can” that has raised retention rates in a noteworthy way since its inception.
- The very high passing rates on the NCLEX test
- The faculty’s commitment to regularly assess and make changes in their program, changes that are both large and small, with the goals of enhancing student success in program, on national tests, and in patient care.

**Baskin no longer S.A.D … but:** Over the past two years we have added three baccalaureate majors, submitted proposals for two more such majors, opened three external centers, and struggled through an increase in student census of 22%. All of these developments have increased the complexity of the task in the academic affairs office. Last year Dr. Baskin helped us by adding the responsibilities of Special Assistant to the Dean (SAD) to his already over-filled plate. This year we are pleased to announce that Dr. Baskin has agreed to serve as Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs beginning August 1, 2010. Much of his work in Academic Affairs will be project based, but he will have primary responsibility for the following areas:

- Student communications with Academic Affairs
- The care and feeding of four Gordon external programs
- Gordon QEP

In addition, Dr. Baskin will continue to teach courses in the Division of Humanities. As Richard prepares for this change in responsibilities, we want to take a moment and thank him and his humanities colleagues for excellent service to our students over the last six years.

**Director Theresa Betkowski:** We are pleased to announce that Professor “Terry” Betkowski will serve this next year as Director of Learning Support at Gordon College. Over the past two years Terry has already assumed many of the responsibilities of this position including serving on a System-wide Learning Support Task Force, monitoring the progress of Gordon’s learning support students, and assisting division chairs in learning support matters. To these tasks she will add representing the college at the regular state-wide learning support meetings and serving as liaison to the Dean on learning support matters. This summer Director Betkowski has organized what appears to be a highly successful initiative. She has worked with a team to pre-assign schedules to students with two and three learning support requirements. We are very grateful to Terry and the rest of the learning support faculty for their labors on the behalf of this important part of our student population.

**Thank you, Dr. Whitelock:** Richard Baskin’s move to Academic Affairs leaves a big hole in
our fine Humanities division. We are very grateful that Dr. Ed Whitelock has agreed to serve as **Interim Chair of Division of Humanities** during this academic year. We will be launching a national search for a chair of the Division of Humanities, but we can do so with great confidence with Dr. Whitelock serving in the leadership role while we search. As Dr. Whitelock moves into this leadership role, we want to acknowledge and honor his excellent work in the classroom and in leadership of the QEP effort during the reaccreditation process and beyond.

**Baskin Notes**

**Dr. James Wallace** attended the summer conference of the Ohio Choral Directors Association (OCDA) at Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio, June 21-23, 2010. He will attend the summer conference of the Georgia Choral Directors Association (GCDA) at Spivey Hall on the Clayton State University campus, June 24-26, 2010. Both state associations are affiliated with the national American Choral Directors Association (ACDA).

**Dr. Masoud Nourizadeh** has been nominated for inclusion in the Marquis 2011 edition of *Who’s Who in America* for educators.

**Dr. Richard Baskin**’s review of *Religion and Revelry in Shakespeare’s Festive World*, by Phebe Jensen, will be published in the next edition of *The Sixteenth Century Journal*.

**Dr. Rhonda Wilcox** was the co-convener and program co-chair of the fourth biennial Slayage conference on the Whedonverses at Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida. She also, as president, chaired the first general meeting of the Whedon Studies Association.

**Dr. Doug Davis** has also been busy:
- **His essay, “Shiftlet’s Choice: Flannery O’Connor’s Fordist Love Story,”** was recently published in the edited volume, *Flannery O’Connor in the Age of Terrorism: Essays on Violence and Grace*, from University of Tennessee Press.
- **He presented a paper in May at the annual meeting of the American Literature Association in San Francisco titled “The Material Culture of Race in Flannery O’Connor's Short Fiction.”**
- **In late June he will attend the annual meeting of the Science Fiction Research Association in Phoenix, Arizona, where he will participate in a roundtable discussion on the topic of Immigration and Alienation in Science Fiction** (specifically, he will be speaking about SF films about immigration such as *Brother from Another Planet* and *Alien Nation*) and also deliver the presentation speech for the Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service in the field of science fiction studies.
  - He has begun to co-edit a special issue of *Configurations*, the journal of the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts, on the fiction of Kim Stanley Robinson
  - He has written a review of the scholarly monograph, *Master Mechanics & Wicked Wizards: Images of the American Scientist as Hero and Villain from Colonial Times to the Present*, by Glen Scott Allen, which will be published in the next issue of *Studies in Popular Culture*.

**New full-time faculty:**
- **Dr. Marc Muneal**, Ph.D. in English Language and Literature, Emory University, 2010, and B.A. in English (Valedictorian), Morehouse College, 2004.

**Burstein Notes**


**Dr. Karen McCarron** took part in the meeting of the Business Environment and Concepts Content Subcommittee for the AICPA exam which reviewed and approved new questions for the CPA exam.

**GahrNotes**

**Dr. John George:** Currently reviewing galley proofs of Introductory Combinatorics by W. D. Wallis and J. C. George; this textbook is due to be released in September 2010.
**Dr. Lynn Rumfelt et al.** Gave a Student Success Workshop on April 15th, titled, “You, the Scientific Method, and Why Your Pizza is Burning: The Science of Daily Living”, to help non-science majors become more aware that they use science and the scientific method daily in their normal routines. Burnt pizza was used in the demonstration and unburnt pizza was offered as a snack to attendees.

**Dr. Rumfelt** gave Lamar County Middle School 6th graders, invited to our campus on April 29, 2010 for the “I’m Going to College” event, a lesson in nature observations by a walk around our campus. She also, attended a Grant writing workshop on May 10, 2010 at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, GA to learn about successful ways to write and obtain grants to fund my basic research.

**Drs. Rumfelt and Cathy Lee** attended an iPLANT Faculty workshop at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on April 23-24, 2010. The purpose was to provide instruction on use of a plant genome annotation database called iPLANT. The iPlant Collaborative (www.iplantcollaborative.org) is a project funded by NSF to develop computer (cyber) infrastructure that provides plant researchers and educators access to the large-scale datasets and high-powered informatics tools that drive modern biology.

June 7th, **Dr. Rumfelt** gave a science lesson, using hands-on activities, to local children at the Barnesville Lamar County Library “Make A Splash Vacation Reading Club”. The Vacation Reading Club program is sponsored by the library to promote reading and activities centered around the theme of water. **Dr. Cathy Lee** kindly assisted in the session, approximately 60 children of ages 4-12 yrs (preschool through 6th grade) attended. The session ended by having the children run around on the grass while hosing them off. Of course, this was another experiment to have the children experience first-hand the power of water's ability to help them cool off!

**Dr. Richard Schmude, Jr.:**
- Gave a talk about civil war coins to the Barnesville Blues organization at the Garden Patch Restaurant on June 3 at about 7:30 pm (about 30 people attended).
- Gave a public telescope viewing session on June 3 at 9:30 pm.
- Presented a talk titled “Jupiter: Recent Events (2007-2010)” at the Charlie Elliott Section of the Atlanta Astronomy Club on Saturday June 12 to about 25 people.

**Drs. Dan Swetman and John George:** Went to the regional meeting of the Mathematical Association of America on March 26 and 27 in Elon, NC where they heard a series of talks on the history of math and assessment of capstone courses in mathematics.

**Mrs. Mickie Weldon:** Have you ever wanted to do a Triathlon? Mickie did her first one two years ago and loved it! A Sprint Triathlon includes a .5 mile swim, 12 mile bike ride and 3 mile run. Peachtree City has a sprint triathlon scheduled for August 21, 2010. There is an 11 week program for those who wish to prepare for a triathlon. If you are interested email or call Mickie Weldon, at m_weldon@gdn.edu or 678-359-5835. Mickie says that you will not be the last one to come in because she will be right behind you, encouraging you all the way!

**O’Sullivan Notes**
The Education Division graduated 52 future teachers during Gordon’s May graduation ceremony, and several of these graduates have already gotten teaching positions even in this tough market. Thanks to all of you who helped to educate and nurture these students during their time at Gordon. We will again welcome a full complement of juniors and seniors into the Early Childhood program next fall, and even have a few secondary biology and mathematics majors beginning their junior years. Also, the Education Division has had a couple of other reasons to celebrate lately. Education faculty member, Dr. Becki Jones, has had a proposal accepted to present at a popular culture conference in South Carolina this fall. And Dr. Sheryl O’Sullivan has had an entry on Katherine Paterson published in The Encyclopedia of Christian Literature.

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