BRIDGING DISCIPLINES
Professor teaching biomath

Liberal arts have enduring value

Award-winning writer = award-winning teacher

Gov’t, business changed women’s image for war
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Fall/Winter 10
Bill, what attracted you to the field of journalism?

In short, *The Adventures of Superman*, football and money. I loved the old, black-and-white TV Superman with George Reeves when I was a kid, and thought those Daily Planet folks seemed to be having such a good time. In high school in Carthage, I stopped playing football after I broke my leg but still liked it — and most of my pals still played, so when the local weekly asked my English class for someone to cover football games, I volunteered. Then, they paid me, which as a 16 year old was very noticeable.

However, what attracted me in college at WIU and afterward was the fun of talking to people and telling stories.

What is the most memorable interview that you conducted?

There were memorable interviews and meaningful interviews. When I worked in Washington, D.C., I interviewed comic and recording artist Weird Al Yankovic and Hall of Fame ballplayer Harmon Killebrew — both of which were quite memorable. However, the Weird Al interview didn’t make for a very good advance story, and the Killebrew piece was killed by an editor who didn’t fully appreciate the local angle of the ex-Senators home-run hitter in a publication aimed at Yuppies.

Also, what most people think of as “interviews” are the self-contained conversations with someone well-known, whether an artist, athlete or some other kind of official or celebrity questioned by Oprah, Barbara Walters or Interview Magazine. In reality, most interviews journalists do are short chats with sources to get facts or insights, and they usually make up significant but small parts of larger stories.

For instance, one of the most meaningful experiences I had as a result of interviewing someone was when an editor sent me to check out the story of a guy trying to jump-start his car after a blizzard and cold snap. It turned out that he was somewhat desperate because his daughter had an appointment for a checkup after fighting leukemia; his family had just moved after a house fire and had virtually nothing; he was jobless; and it was during the holidays.

The newspaper ran the story inside, but readers had such an outpouring toward this man and his family — literally hundreds of people sent food, clothing, Christmas gifts, furniture, even a used car — that I was assigned to do a follow-up story on the community reaction. The

Continued on page 28

*Focus*
Like all state agencies and schools, Western Illinois University is facing financial pressures. However, the state-assisted university is taking a dramatic, proactive approach to its fiscal future and just opened up the second phase of its successful $60 million campaign to fund capital improvements, scholarships, improved technology and endowed faculty programs.

The public phase of the ambitious $60 million campaign – “Set the Standard: Higher Values in Higher Education” – is gearing up to continue the positive momentum built up in recent years, according to WIU President Al Goldfarb.

“When we announced our goal of $60 million more than four years ago, the campaign consultants thought our goal was lofty, and suggested we set the target at $30 million,” Goldfarb said in an WIU Foundation event in October. “Since launching the pre-public phase of this campaign in 2006, I am pleased to announce that we have surpassed that $30 million mark.

“Thanks to the generosity of so many loyal supporters, nearly $40 million has been raised since 2006, with the last two years breaking fund-raising records at this great institution,” Goldfarb added. “I wish to personally thank our alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends of the University for their response in support of Western.”

“Set the Standard: Higher Values in Higher Education” centers on four key goals: increased scholarship support for students; creating endowed programs in support of Western faculty; funding improvements to capital facilities; and enhancing information and technology to enrich the educational experience for students and faculty, according to Brad Bainter, vice president for advancement and public services and executive officer of the WIU Foundation.

Securing $20 million in endowment to support scholarship resources will expand Western’s efforts to attract and retain a highly qualified and diverse student body and to ensure access and affordability. Raising financial support of $15 million to endow faculty chairs, professorships and fellowships to support faculty teaching, research and service is the second major campaign goal.

A goal of $15 million also has been set for capital improvements to create new facilities and upgrade or expand existing facilities, and $10 million in additional funds will allow for technology upgrades for instruction and course delivery.

“The generosity of Western’s alumni, friends, faculty, staff and students thus far has allowed the University to add new scholarships; establish new academic programs, such as nursing and engineering; and further enhance the learning environment,” Bainter said. “Our success to date is significant and the response from our alumni and friends to the campaign is encouraging, and we enter into the public phase with great confidence.”

For more information on the WIU Foundation and contributing to “Set the Standard: Higher Values in Higher Education,” visit wiu.edu/giving or call (309) 298-1861.

— University Relations
By Alyse Thompson

Matt Bonnan never expected to see so many bones.

When Scott Williams, director of expeditions at the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford, Ill., asked Bonnan, an Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at WIU, to participate in an excavation in 2007, Williams said that someone could take a push broom, push sediment off the top of the rocks, and find dinosaur bones.

Bonnan did not believe him – until he saw it for himself.

“When we went out there, I was just speechless,” said Bonnan, who earned his Ph.D. at Northern Illinois University in 2001. “What Scott Williams was telling us was actually happening. It’s like a log-jam of bones.”

Bonnan took the seven students in his ZOO 476 class to the Hanksville-Burpee Dinosaur Quarry in Hanksville, Utah, to help the Burpee Museum with the excavation. And according to Bonnan, the experience was invaluable for the students.

“Bringing students out there who are enthusiastic and interested in helping us helps further the science and helps us accomplish what we want, so it is kind of a win-win situation,” Bonnan said. “The students who go on this trip get an amazing education. They get to do something very few people get to do in their lifetimes. Every student who goes out there finds a new dinosaur bone, that’s just how much is coming out.”

The students, who worked from May 20 to June 1, helped not only with the digging up and extracting the bones, but also mapping their locations. And although this process is difficult, Bonnan said it was a good opportunity to expose students to paleontology and field work in general.

“I wanted to bring students out there because I know when I was an undergraduate and I was interested in science, there were very few opportunities to work with faculty and very few opportunities to do field work,” Bonnan said. “A lot of students are interested in dinosaurs and interested in paleontology, but they’ve never been exposed to it, and they’ve never had an opportunity to test the waters and see if it is something they would really like to do.”

The excavation site is a half-mile-wide opening located on the Morrison formation, a 150 million- to 145 million-year-old rock formation that probably contains sauropods, dinosaurs with long necks like the brontosaurus.

“We may not end up finding any new dinosaurs here because we’re in the Morrison formation, and it represents a period of time when these sauropod dinosaurs were very common and very big,” Bonnan said.

Bonnan says the rock, a silty sandstone, is very unique.
“The rocks are various shades of red, green and purple, and so it’s beautiful looking, and it looks like the surface of Mars,” Bonnan said. “When you’re out there, it definitely feels remote. You almost feel like you are on the surface on a different planet.”

The terrain looks so much like Mars, in fact, that Disney was filming the movie *John Carter of Mars* with Willem Dafoe while they were excavating. Bonnan said the excavation crew would often go see what the movie crew was doing, and vice versa.

In addition to meeting a movie crew, the excavation workers also had the opportunity to find something very rare: a skull. Senior biology major Megan Luczak uncovered a disarticulated sauropod skull, much to everyone’s surprise.

“Dinosaur excavations are always hard work, and there is some tedium in there,” Bonnan said. “It’s always amazing when you brush away some rock and you start to find some new bones. That’s always very exciting.”

Bonnan himself is no stranger to scientific discovery. In 2007, Bonnan worked with a team of four other scientists which discovered Aardonyx celestae, a dinosaur seeming to be related to a common ancestor of all sauropods. The team found the 20- to 22-foot skeleton in Free State, Africa, and its discovery helped fill in some ecological and evolutional gaps.

“My interest has always been in dinosaurs as living animals, and what their lives and their extinction can tell us both about them and present-day ecosystems,” Bonnan said. “You dream that one day you might find a new dinosaur, but you never expect to. It was a very pleasant surprise. It was a really amazing feeling to know that I was able to contribute that way to scientific knowledge and have an animal out there with a new name.”

And although Bonnan is representing Western, a smaller public institu-

Bonnan (left) took seven students to the Utah excavation.

ition, it does not diminish the significance of his discovery.

“One of the things that attracted me to working here is that it is a small state school and it is an opportunity to reach students and get undergraduates involved in research who at other universities might not have that opportunity,” Bonnan said. “I think that WIU is a great place to work in that it offers a lot of really good opportunities both for the faculty and the students. And I like how there is this sort of familiarity between the faculty and students here you don’t see at a lot of larger places, so if there are people that are surprised that something as cool as Aardonyx came out of somewhere like Western Illinois University, well let them be surprised. It’s not surprising to me.

“I think that doing good science is the same everywhere, regardless of where you’re at,” he added.

Bonnan, who also co-directs Western’s Functional Morphology and Evolutionary Anatomy (FMEA) lab with his wife, Dr. Jessica White, is now working to organize the next trip in June 2011, once more in partnership with the Burpee Museum and Hanksville.

“We want this to be something that benefits everybody and not simply a bunch of scientists who come out there, dig up bones and go away. We want this to be a long-term project and from which something that the town and the people there can benefit.”

Thompson is a Journalism major and Spanish minor from West Chicago and Campus Editor of the Western Courier
Eight new compounds expected to serve as inhibitors to slow or stop the activity of cathepsins B, D and K have been developed by Western Illinois University chemistry faculty researchers, along with university/high school students and teachers, who’ve gained experience in biomedical research the last two summers. The cathepsins are protease enzymes that promote metastases in tumors found in breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

Initial screenings of the compounds are very promising, and they are now being tested on breast cancer cells, according to the work’s principal investigator (PI), Professor Rose Marie McConnell, chair of the Department of Chemistry.

McConnell received funding of $196,833 in March 2009 from the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A supplemental grant of $122,781 was awarded in June 2009 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which provided research experiences for students and science educators for summers 2009 and 2010 for the project, “AREA: Synthesis and Evaluation of New Cathepsin B, D and K Inhibitors.”

“Discovery has been the key to this project, which helped train existing faculty and students who will someday become scientists and engineers,” McConnell added. “While I see our project as being about the development of new medicines, I also see another outcome being the development of new scientists and new science teachers who will carry the inspiration on in their future classrooms.”

Western Illinois faculty members participating in this research and training students and high school teachers were Professors Thottumkara (T.K.) Vinod and Lisa Wen, along with McConnell. Students and teachers received training and experience on an array of laboratory equipment and techniques that are not always part of undergraduate instruction, according to McConnell. They synthesized, isolated, purified and characterized compounds by current chemical and instrumental techniques (HPLC chromatography, NMR spectroscopy, etc.). They learned to analyze enzymes in whole cancer cells for potential inhibitors; gene cloning techniques, protein expression and isolation to produce procathepsin B, D and K; and tissue culture techniques. Participants also were taught methods used for selection of target compounds by rational design based on computer modeling and SAR (structure activity relationship) information.

“Student summer successes in synthesis and/or evaluation of inhibitors also served to accelerate the tempo of this project through progress in the generation of a library of inhibitor information,” McConnell said.

Announcements of open student and teacher positions for these summer research sessions were posted on Western’s website, submitted to local and state newspapers and sent to area high schools.

Over the two summers, three high school chemistry teachers participated in the research experience: Thomas Johnson (Carthage, Ill.), a teacher at Macomb (Ill.) Senior High School who was a two-summer participant; Laura Berryman, Savannah (Ga.) Chatham County Public School, 2009; and Audrey Putnam, Bushnell-Prairie City High School, Bushnell (Ill.), 2010.

Seven high school students also were part of the two-summer study, with two students participating two years: Kenneth Liang from Northview High School, Duluth (Ga.) and Derek Lessard from Macomb High School (2009) and Grinnell (Iowa) College (2010). One-year members included Jacob Ayers, Hamilton (Ill.) High School; Lance Curtis, Bushnell-Prairie City High School; Dilyana Dimitrova and Jessica Hunter, Illinois Math and Science Academy, Aurora (Ill.); Noel Puthenveetil, Galesburg (Ill.) High School; Omar Rivzi, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf (Iowa); and Alice Ye, Macomb High School.
Eight undergraduate students spent six or eight weeks at Western during Summer 2009 or 2010. Ryan Keefer (Downers Grove, Ill., B.S. Spring 2010), presently a graduate assistant in chemistry, and Nicholas Saichek (Rockford, Ill., B.S. Spring 2010), presently a teaching assistant, were members of both summer groups. WIU students who participated one summer included Michael Bordowitz (Macomb); Franklin Rahman (Nauvoo, Ill.); and Jennifer Chmielowski (Lake Zurich, Ill., B.S. Spring 2009), presently a graduate student at Iowa State University. Three students from other colleges and universities were Tara Orech of Knox College (Galesburg, Ill.), Allison Glick of Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Va.) and Roxana Obregon of Northwestern University (Chicago).

Students were placed in one of two groups: the synthesis group or the testing group. McConnell, Vinod and Wen trained the undergraduate students and the high school teachers in the art of scientific medical research. They learned different synthetic wet chemistry techniques, including setting up reactions under inert atmosphere, carrying out reactions at subzero temperatures, the proper use of modern laboratory instrumentation, TLC, HPLC and column chromatographic techniques for purification and for analysis of compounds, sample preparation and interpretation of NMR and GC-MS spectral data, and the proper disposal of chemical waste, among other techniques.

Students in the testing group learned gene cloning, protein expression techniques and DNA mapping. They also learned to use a refrigerated ultracentrifuge, liquid scintillation counter, DNA sequencer, UV and fluorescence spectrophotometers, micro-plate reader and cell culture techniques.

All students and teachers participated in weekly group meetings, where they met as a whole and discussed each new technique learned and progress made. Students and teachers took turns presenting their results, with four PowerPoint presentations made each week by student/teacher teams. McConnell, Vinod and Wen advised them on their presentation skills, which will be necessary for future employment in biotechnology, medical and/or chemical industries. At the end of each summer program a poster session was held at a local conference, with seven poster presentations made by the high school students and teachers.

High school teachers served as leaders of the synthesis and testing groups; conducting hands-on laboratory research, leading undergraduate students and high school assistants. They also led discussion groups during the weekly research group meetings.

Undergraduate students set up experiments, recorded data and mixed chemical solutions. High school students served as secondary assistants in a “watch and learn” role, but always as part of the team.

“ Collegiate research participants have the opportunity to be listed as co-authors in subsequent journal articles,” explained McConnell, who taught and conducted research at the University of Arkansas at Monticello (UAM) from 1992 until her move to Western in 2006. “Having a research background in a grant-funded program will give these students a leg up in getting into highly competitive research institutions when they are ready.”

McConnell is the PI on 17 external grants totaling more than $1 million. In 2004, she was voted Teacher of the Year by students in Alpha Chi honor society; and she was UAM’s nomination for U.S. Professor of the Year, sponsored by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Barker is Assistant Director of University Relations at WIU.
By Alison McGaughey

Western Illinois University graduate student Dustin Hinrichs is on a mission to educate people about a certain insect.

However, he’s not a biology major – nor even all that interested in bugs.

Instead, Hinrichs, who came to WIU after completing Peace Corps service in Panama, is seeking to spread the word about the tree-harming Emerald Ash Borer as part of a unique program at WIU – a program recently named one of the best of its kind in the nation.

As part of the internship component in the WIU Peace Corps Fellows (PCF) Program in Community Development, Hinrichs is working with an organization called Trees Forever, which aims to help small Illinois towns prepare for the arrival of the destructive insect.

“The ash tree is a common shade tree used in lots of cities, especially in this region, and the Emerald Ash Borer is working its way across our area,” Hinrichs explained. “Our goal is to get communities to have some level of preparedness before it arrives in their area.”

Hinrichs, who earned his bachelor’s degree from Iowa Wesleyan, had previously been an intern or worked in entry-level positions for the county health department and for the University of Iowa Extension Office in Linn County, Iowa. He wanted to advance toward management level, but still felt there was much to learn in the field.

“I’d been looking into Master of Public Health programs, but I ultimately decided I was more interested in local government in general, so the public administration option within the Political Science program at WIU seemed logical,” he said.

Like many of the other Fellows in Western’s program, Hinrichs learned about the WIU program from the Corps as he was completing his service and researching his options after his return.

Since its inception, the WIU PCF program has been gaining recognition for its impact in the Midwest. Last month, the nation’s University Economic Development Association (UEDA) recognized the WIU Peace Corps Fellows Program with the Award of Excellence in Community Development.

Western’s location and the financial support available through the WIU program were imperative in his decision, Hinrichs said. He received a graduate assistantship, through which he gained experience with the City of Macomb, working on special projects for the Building and Zoning office.

“That, combined with the coursework, has definitely provided me with a good foundation for understanding public administration and all its different facets,” Hinrichs said.

Similarly, Matt Wakefield, an Arlington Heights, Ill., native, learned about Western’s program for returning Peace Corps volunteers while he was still conducting his service in Morocco, where he had concentrated on environmental education.

“I really liked the idea of having a semester doing a hands-on internship in a rural community,” Wakefield said.

In addition to his coursework in community development as part of the master’s program in Geography, Wakefield has also been completing his graduate assistantship at Macomb City Hall, conducting research related to the proposed historic preserv-
tion district downtown.

“I’ve enjoyed seeing the complexities of city government and how it runs from the inside,” said Wakefield, who earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Minnesota. “It’s helping me shape my professional goals. I’m interested in the ideas of sustainable agriculture, local food systems, and social justice, and I’d like to work with a city addressing some of these issues, as well as other issues of community and economic development, in some capacity.”

Like Hinrichs and Wakefield, Leo Dion gained practical experience through an academic project that involved local leadership. During the Fall 2010 semester, as part of a required course for the Community Development option in the PCF program, Dion was one of four graduate students who conducted a survey asking respondents about business opportunities for Macomb’s downtown square. Other Fellows working with underserved communities while studying political science through the PCF are Theresa Milstein and Daniel Socha, who served in Panama and Gambia, respectively.

Hinrichs views the Fellows’ role as helping facilitate solutions to problems that larger cities are more readily able to tackle.

“In larger cities, they have more resources and funding to take care of these issues, but in smaller towns, they’re behind the curve,” he said. “I’m not just working for a non-profit organization, but one that’s seeking to help local governments enhance their capabilities to deal with their own problems; in this case, with trees and forested areas within their communities.

“It’s a long process,” he continued. “The program comes with grant funding to do some plantings in each community. But some see it as one more thing they have to deal with. And I understand the pressures of all the things local governments already are required to do. So it’s been a process of slowly nurturing relationships within those communities. It’s a challenge, but I enjoy that challenge. And as Peace Corp volunteers, we’re kind of bred to look for challenges. We’re ready for them.”

Alison McGaughey is a Public Information Specialist in University Relations at WIU. She completed her M.A. in English at Western at the end of the Fall 2010 semester.
AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES
Associate Professor Jo-Ann Morgan received a 2010 Provost’s Award for Excellence in Multicultural Teaching.
Chair Alphonso Simpson was selected as one of 10 participants in the National Council of Black Studies Administrative Workshop held in Atlanta, Ga., in July. Dr. Simpson wrote the book Mother to Son: A Collection of Essays and Readings in African American Studies, scheduled for publication in 2011 (Cognella/University Readers).

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
Assistant Professor Andrea Porrata-Alfaro received continuation funding in the amount of $88,000 from the National Science Foundation for “Collaborative Research: Dynamics of Plant-Soil Feedbacks in Changing Environments.”
Assistant Professor Susan P. Romano received $22,000 from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for “Spatial Distribution of Indiana Bat Habitats, Flight Patterns & Wind Farms in Iowa & Illinois.”
Assistant Professor Tim Spier received $30,000 from the Illinois Natural History Survey for “Asian Carp and Water Productivity.”

CHEMISTRY
Professor Netkal Made Gowda was the invited speaker at BIT’s 1st Annual International Conference of Medichem-2010 in May in Beijing, China.
Chair Rose McConnell offered an eight-week summer research project through the National Cancer Institute. Participants included high school teachers, high school students, undergraduate and graduate students.
Professor T.K. Vinod received a National Science Foundation grant for $21,000 & Petroleum Research Funds of $65,000.
Professor Lisa Wen received a $172,000 National Science Foundation-Transforming Undergraduate Education in Science grant for “Transforming Undergraduate Education in Chemistry.”
Wen also co-authored an evaluation of metal oxide nanoparticles by the bacterial reverse mutation assay for Chemosphere and co-authored “Cloning, Expression & Characterization of a Thioredoxin Reductase cDNA from Taiwanofungus camphorate” for the Journal of Agricultural & Food Chemistry. Wen and McConnell presented a poster on “Cathepsin B Inhibition by Natural & Synthetic Inhibitors for Cancer Research” there.

ENGLISH & JOURNALISM
Assistant Professor Neil Baird presented “The Pleasure of Confusing Boundaries in World War Robot” at the 2010 Purdue University’s comparative literature program’s conference Graphic Engagement: The Politics of Comics and Animation in September. Baird also presented “Transmedia Narratives as Civic Participation in World of Warcraft” at the Computers and Writing conference in West Lafayette, Ind., in May; “Undergraduate Ethnographies of Digital Communities: Methodological Adaptation in Studies of World of Warcraft and Second Life” at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Louisville, Ky., in March; and “A Practical Grounding in Contrastive Rhetoric: How Tutors Approach Cultural Difference in the Writing Center” at the Midwest Writing Center Association in Rapid City, S.D. in October.
Assistant Professor Roberta Di Carmine published “Matteo Garrone: A New Voice in Italian Cinema” in Wide Screen. She also presented “History and Italian Colonial Cinema (1920s-1940s)” at the Fifth International Conference on the Arts in Society, at the University of Sydney (Australia) in July.
Assistant Professor Everett Hamner published “A Humanist’s Reflections on Evolutionary Biology” in History News Network.
Assistant Professor Timothy Helwig received a McLean Contributionship Fellowship at the Library Company of Philadelphia.
Professor Bill Knight wrote a feature on Pulitzer Prize winning poet, historian and newspaperman Carl Sandburg’s advice to the press in the September issue of St. Louis’ Gateway Journalism Review. Knight, named WIU’s annual John Hallwas...
Assistant Professor Dan Malachuk presented “Transcendentalism and Green Republics” at the American Literature Association’s annual national conference in San Francisco in May, and published “Human Rights & a Post-Secular Religion of Humanity” in the Journal of Human Rights.

Assistant Professor Charles McLeod published “The State Bird of Minnesota” in Michigan Quarterly Review; “Microclimates” in Post Road; and “Settlers of Unassigned Lands” in the South Dakota Review. McLeod also received a Jentel Artists Residency in Banner, Wyo..

Assistant Professor Chris Morrow served as Senior Instructor of Book History at the 9th Annual Book History Workshop at Texas A&M.

Associate Professor Amy Patrick Mossman co-organized and participated in the Upper Mississippi River Conference in the Quad Cities.

Dr. Mohammad Siddiqi presented “Citizenship, Engagement and Dissociation: Muslim- Non-Muslim Relationship – A comparative analysis of the emerging discourses among Muslims living in the West and non-western countries, including the Muslim world,” at the International Conference of the International Association of Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) in Portugal, in July.

Siddiqi also conducted a day-long media workshop at the Islamic Center of Nevada in Las Vegas in October.

Professor Pat Young presented “Delving into Alice Dunbar-Nelson” at the American Literature Association conference in San Francisco in May.

Associate Professor Guada Cabedo-Timmons in May was awarded a University Research Council grant for a joint project with the College of Education focusing on Heritage Speakers of Spanish and how to assist them.

Assistant Professor Weijia Li published his first book, China und China-Erfahrung in Leben und Werk von Anna Seghers, part of the publisher’s German Life and Civilization Series.

Assistant Professor Marisol Garrido, Associate Professor Guada Cabedo-Timmons and Instructor Margarita Obregon have been conducting research in the uses of technology in language learning and recently presented a paper, “The Top Technology Tools Currently Applied in our Foreign Language Classes,” on the subject at the State Conference of the Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Peoria.

Chair Andrew Lian gave a keynote address by videoconference on the occasion of the AsiaCALL2010 International Conference in India, held Nov. 29-Dec. 1. Dr. Lian is Vice-President of AsiaCALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning).

Professor Catherine Moore presented a paper on teaching commercial French through macromodeling to the 2010 Colloquium of the Société des Professeurs Français et Francophones d’Amérique (SPFFA), at Fordham University in October.

Chair Samuel Thompson co-authored “Liberia: America’s Closest African Ally” in Mother to Son, A Collection of Essays and Readings in African American Studies.

Associate Professor Tom Williams was interviewed by the Macomb cable-TV program 15 Minutes with Jo-Ann Morgan, discussing his summer storm chasing and as a caregiver at Special Touch Ministries camp for people (primarily adults) with disabilities. Williams also was featured in a story on storm chasing in an article in the Western Courier, “When Lightning Strikes.”

Dr. Melim and colleague Kyle Mayborn this summer ran a six-week Field Camp in South Dakota, Wyoming and Yellowstone National Park.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

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GEOLOGY

Assistant Professor Marcus L. Beker co-authored “Modeling the effects of Southeast Asian monsoon outflow on subtropical anticyclones and midlatitude ozone over the Southern Indian Ocean for the Journal of Geophysical Research.

Associate Professor Jongnam Choi published “Naming Patterns & Policies of Mapmaking Companies in the US & the UK” and “Proceedings of the Workshop on Geographic Names and the Name ‘East Sea’” in the Northeast Asian History Foundation. He and Christopher Sutton received $12,548 from the Northeast Asia History Foundation for “Preliminary Study on the Naming Patterns and Policies of Mapmaking Companies in the United States and the United Kingdom.”

Associate Professor Redina Herman evaluated National Environment Education Foundation online teaching materials in the summer and fall.

Assistant Professor Ranbir S. Kang co-authored “Downstream effects of urbanization on Stillwater Creek, Oklahoma” for the Journal of Physical Geography.

Professor Leslie Melim presented “The Secret Life of Cave Pools: Biosignatures in Pool Fingers” at the University of Illinois-Chicago in September.

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Assistant Professor Ranbir S. Kang co-authored “Downstream effects of urbanization on Stillwater Creek, Oklahoma” for the Journal of Physical Geography.

Chair Samuel Thompson co-authored “Liberia: America’s Closest African Ally” in Mother to Son, A Collection of Essays and Readings in African American Studies.

Associate Professor Tom Williams was interviewed by the Macomb cable-TV program 15 Minutes with Jo-Ann Morgan, discussing his summer storm chasing and as a caregiver at Special Touch Ministries camp for people (primarily adults) with disabilities. Williams also was featured in a story on storm chasing in an article in the Western Courier, “When Lightning Strikes.”
HISTORY

Chair Virginia Boynton received a $31,000 grant in continued funding from the Regional Office of Education for “Disseminating Traditional American History to Teachers Through Innovative and Cohesive Professional Development to Further Student Learning — Year 3.”

Associate Professor Lee Brice presented “Philip II of Macedonia and a Revolution in Military Affairs: A Reconsideration,” at the annual meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians, in April in Salt Lake City. Brice also wrote “The Republic is Dead, Long-Live the Republic: The res publica of Rome after March 15, 44 B.C.E” in World History: Ancient and Medieval Eras.

Associate Professor Peter Cole presented “On and Off the Waterfront: Dockers, Labor Unions, and Race Relations in Durban and Oakland during the 1960s and 1970s,” at the Northeast Workshop on Southern Africa on April 10 in Burlington, Vt., He also presented “Dockers Matter/Dock Matters: Labour & Race Relations in Durban & the San Francisco Bay Area, 1960s & 1970s” at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.


Associate Professor Greg Hall presented “The Radical West, 1890-1920” at the Western History Association meeting in October in Reno, and “Labor, Coal, and Reclamation: The Rise and Fall of Coal Mining in Fulton County, Illinois” at the Conference on Illinois History in Springfield in October.

Associate Professor Virginia Jelatis represented WIU on a “Teaching American History” U.S. Dept. of Education grant-funded trip with 37 secondary school history teachers to historic sites in Boston and Philadelphia. She also reviewed Frontiers of Iowa: Indians, Traders, and Soldiers, 1632-1862, for the Annals of Iowa.

Assistant Professor Barclay Key, history, presented “Race on the Radio: The Rhetoric of Repentance in 1968” at the Conference on Faith and History in October in Newberg, Ore., and reviewed Burning Faith: Church Arson in the American South for the Journal of African American History.


Assistant Professor Jennifer McNabb presented “‘Talk of Marriage’ in Northwest England: Continuity and Change in Matrimonial Litigation, 1560-1640” at the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association in August at Southern Utah University, Cedar City. McNabb also received the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association’s 2010 Delno C. West Award for Best Conference Paper by a Senior Scholar for her paper “‘Talk of Marriage’ in Northwest England: Continuity and Change in Matrimonial Litigation, 1560-1640.”

Assistant Professor Febe Pamonag presented “Education For and By Women: Trans-Pacific Linkages in Japanese Women’s Higher Education in the Early Twentieth Century” in May at the Western Association of Women Historians in Tacoma, Wash.

Assistant Professor Tim Roberts succeeded in getting C-SPAN to come to WIU’s Macomb campus in November to cover Dr. Bruce Levine’s lecture on “Abraham Lincoln as a Revolutionary Leader,” the culmination of the Lincoln Speaker Series held in conjunction with the NEH-funded Lincoln Exhibit currently at Malpass Library. The series was co-sponsored by, among others, the Departments of History, Political Science, Philosophy & Religious Studies, and African-American Studies, and the College of Arts and Sciences, plus the McDonough County Bar Association, the Abraham Lincoln Association, the Illinois Humanities Council, and the Organization of American Historians.

Roberts – selected to receive the Joan Nordell Fellowship, one of eight visiting fellowships awarded by Harvard College’s Houghton Library for the 2010-2011 academic year – also wrote “Learning about Civil War, Separatism, and Nation Building through Teaching in the Turkish Republic” in the Journal of American History in March. He was also selected as a participant in the 2010 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Seminar on “The American Civil War at 150: New Approaches” in Savannah, Ga.

Associate Professor Ed Woell wrote a review essay on D. M. G. Sutherland’s Murder in Aubagne: Lynching, Law, and Justice during the French Revolution, for H-France Forum this summer.

INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
Dr. Roger Viadero, director, helped organize the Third Annual Upper Mississippi River Conference in Moline in August. Participants included citizens, planning professionals, public officials, and experts from a range of supporting fields, as well as WIU’s Department of Geography, Biological Sciences, and English & Journalism.

MATHEMATICS
Associate Professor Victoria Baramidze and Assistant Professor Amy Ekanayake were awarded Summer Stipends for 2011 by the WIU Foundation Office.

NURSING
School of Nursing Director P. Lea Monahan reports that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program was accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education for the maximum time that a first-time applicant can receive: five years.

PHILOSOPHY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES
Associate Professor Amy Carr presented “Liturgies for the Living Dead: Jones, Lange and the Tension between Trauma as Disabling Terror and Liberating Trope” at the American Academy of Religion in Atlanta, Oct. 30-Nov. 2.

Assistant Professor Sarah Haynes presented “The Living Dharma Centre: The Challenges of Revitalizing Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in Canada” University of Toronto’s at the Buddhism in Diaspora Conference in May; “Tibetan Buddhist Monastic Performance: Ritual Adaptation and Cultural Preservation” at the Buddhism in Canada Conference, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, in mid-October; and “On the Road: Ritual Adaptation in the Buddhist Diaspora” at the American Academy of Religion, in Atlanta, Oct. 30-Nov. 2.

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Associate Professor Christopher Pynes presented “The Army of God and the Army of the Buddha: Religion and the Russo-Japanese War” at the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies in Los Angeles in November.

Associate Professor Christopher Pynes presented “The End of Ethics Education: Theories or Actions?” during The Program for the Study of Ethics annual Ethics Day, “Ethics Education in the 21st Century,” at WIU’s Macomb campus in October.


PHYSICS

Continued on page 26
GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS, MEDIA REMADE IMAGES OF WOMEN TO MOBILIZE FOR WORLD WAR II

By Tawnya J. Adkins Covert

The iconic “We Can Do It” poster of “Rosie the Riveter” represents one of the most enduring images from the Second World War. The poster, created by J. Howard Miller for the Westinghouse War Production Coordinating Committee, has come to represent American women’s contributions to the war effort. The graphic is also representative of a larger set of images and messages created by the government, and businesses and advertisers working in conjunction with the government, in an effort to “sell” the war and women’s place in it.

While Rosie the Riveter is the most enduring image of the female worker during World War II, and many women took positions in defense industries and manufacturing, more than two million women took jobs in clerical work and sales, too. Plus, another 150,000 women joined the ranks of the military as members of the Women’s Army Corps (WACs) and 100,000 served as members of the Coast Guard (SPARS), Navy (WAVES), and Women Marines.

On the home front, wartime government campaigns explained how to deal with rationing and grow victory gardens. American women were admonished to “Use it Up—Wear it Out—Make it Do” in an effort to reduce the need for consumer durables in the face of increased war production. Women’s magazines provided advice on how to prepare nutritious meals despite limited access to sugar, butter, meat and other rationed goods. Cosmetic companies assured women that they could (and should) be beautiful even in “these stressful days” of war if they purchased their advertised products. Other ads promised a return to civilian production as soon as the war was over and encouraged readers to buy War Bonds that could be cashed post-war to purchase durable goods not yet available.

Rosie and the multitude of media images and messages created during the war were more than simply posters or advertisements intended to inform American women about the contributions they could or should make in the war effort. The wartime campaigns also were more than informational messages to address labor needs or product restrictions and salvage campaigns. They represent the product of the shifting interactions among social forces brought on by the changing economic, political and social structures during the 1940s. They were overt, conscious constructions of women’s identity, of women’s prescriptive roles within a particular social, economic and political time in history. The portrayals of women in the media during this period were the direct result of an intense cooperation between the advertising industry, business leaders, and the federal government, a cooperation that redefined women’s roles in reaction to wartime economic and political requirements. Some of these messages were also a sharp departure from the dominant media images and messages appearing in previous decades.

The Role of Media in Defining Women’s Place

Women’s place in the public and private sphere has always been shaped by prevailing political, economic and social structures. This interrelationship need not be seen as conspiratorial in nature; rather, it is the result of the interrelated nature of all social structures. The interrelationships among these structures shape women’s roles within the society and create a dominant gender script for women’s lives. This script is transmitted through various agencies of socialization, including religion, family, education and the mass media. Among the most influential of all socializing agents in modern society, media spread through and influence all other social institutions. They provide visual, textual and auditory messages about women’s role in the society.

While it cannot be said that images are equivalent to experiences, mass media images allow us to examine prevailing social norms regarding
acceptable roles for women in the larger society. Given the influential role of the media in our society, we can assume that the actual roles women decided to undertake in the wartime economy were, at least in part, influenced by the messages created through the cooperative efforts of advertising agencies, corporations and government. While we cannot directly measure the impact of these images and messages transmitted via advertising and other media content, such images had concrete social consequences.

In addition, the interactions among political, economic and social structures cannot be said to affect all women in the same way. Insofar as women’s lives are impacted not only by their gender, but also by other factors such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and social class, resulting media portrayals of women cannot be assumed to take on a single form. It is therefore important to note class-based differences in imagery because images prescribing women’s roles are created by and reflect a hierarchical society. There was a class-mediated nature of gender roles and a conscious recognition and use of class in the construction of war-related imagery and messages by government, business and media.

The Second World War provides a case study not only in how the government can function to manipulate and alter media coverage and media portrayals of groups and events, but also how this manipulation functions within the larger context of gender and class inequality. The shifting relationships between social forces are usually unseen. The Second World War provides a unique window through which the continuous, but normally implicit, interactions among these social structures are revealed, recorded and made accessible for study.

The Importance of World War II for American Women
The prevailing images of women in the mass media can be understood as the product of prevailing economic, social and political conditions. Periods of crisis alter the interrelationships among the forces that create and reinforce gender scripts regarding appropriate behaviors for women in society. The period surrounding World War II provides an opportunity to investigate changes within these relationships occurring within a relatively short span of time. Between 1941 and 1946, the lives of American women changed dramatically: first as they mobilized and adjusted to war, and later as they prepared and transitioned to peace in the postwar era. Rapid change took place in women’s employment, family dynamics and public lives.

The Second World War also represents an important period of change in employment opportunities for American women. The labor crisis created by the movement of millions of male workers into the armed forces and an increased demand for production of goods for the military and a wartime consumer market necessitated the use of women in all types of employment in unprecedented numbers. During the Second World War, over six million American women took on various jobs.

This was a daunting task for the government. Before the war, only 25% of white women were employed outside of the home. While some women held jobs before getting married, few married women were in the workforce. In 1940, just over 15% of married women were employed. In order to employ enough workers for war production, the government needed to entice women, including married women, into the labor force. This task was made more difficult by the widespread public resistance to women’s employment, particularly to the employment of married women. Resistance grew in part from the scarcity of jobs during the Depression a decade earlier. Women were seen as competing with men, taking jobs away from husbands and fathers with families to support. The Depression-era program of “one job per family” benefited male workers and rested on the assumption that female workers were not primary breadwinners.

This resistance was particularly strong against the employment of married women. Many employers had long-standing policies against hiring married women and summarily dismissed female employees upon marriage. During the war, meat producer Swift and Company overturned a 90-year policy against employing married women. Resistance grew in part from the scarcity of jobs during the Depression a decade earlier. Women were seen as competing with men, taking jobs away from husbands and fathers with families to support. The Depression-era program of “one job per family” benefited male workers and rested on the assumption that female workers were not primary breadwinners.

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By John Hallwas

One hundred years ago, western Illinois experienced the return of Halley’s Comet and the tragic death of Western president Albert Bayliss. This year, new wonders and challenges face the thousands of students completing their degree programs, either in Macomb or at the Quad Cities campus. They will receive degrees in more than 50 major fields and head into the difficult job market or go to graduate school.

While students’ specialized study in this or that field is important, so they can compete for a job or be eligible for graduate school, it is also well to remember that most graduates will switch careers several times, which makes their specialized occupational training largely irrelevant, except to help them get started in some direction.

What society needs to ponder, for that reason and others, is the continual decline in liberal arts education. In 1900, for example, more than seventy percent of American college students attended liberal arts institutions, devoted to rigorous general education programs, while today fewer than five percent of our students do. And in virtually all of our universities, there is enormous pressure to emphasize courses in major fields and de-emphasize, or trivialize, the general education requirements. As scholar Stanley Aronowitz has pointed out, “The crisis in American higher education consists not only in its budget difficulties . . . but in the new demand that it become a multi-layered, mass technological training institute.”

Moreover, recent surveys show that most college-bound high school students feel that the goal of higher education is just to get necessary training in order to secure a job. Simply put, today’s students tend to be career-oriented, as well as impatient for material rewards, and they place a premium on acquiring specific skills (in accounting, law enforcement, chemical analysis, etc.) that will credential them for a particular occupation.

Those students are simply reflecting our culture at large—a culture that often sees liberal arts education as an expensive extravagance or a waste of time, a diversion from the “real world” of jobs, money, status, and power. No wonder many of them dread their college or university’s general education courses and don’t really engage themselves with those subjects. Hence, they diminish the complex transaction of self-growth that is the essence of higher education.

As Associate Provost Beverly Kahn of Pace University said several years ago, “The challenge we face is to assure that our students have a real liberal arts experience, and become truly ‘educated,’ even when they are simply focused on careers.”

She is exactly right, for here in America we believe—or have believed until recently—that higher education should cultivate the individual for contributing to a democratic culture. As philosopher Martha Nussbaum points out in a fine book on the liberal arts called “Cultivating Humanity” (1997), “Unlike all other nations, we have [traditionally] asked higher educa-

Professor Emeritus John Hallwas.

Photo by Visual Production Center
Moreover, the need for such a background has increased during recent generations. In the modern world—characterized by lingering prejudice, violent social conflict, selfish politics, rampant materialism, impersonal relationships, and a deteriorating environment—a liberal arts education must include critical reflection on the implications of participating in a global society. Our military, economic, and social ventures into other countries must be as ethically well-grounded and culturally sensitive as our handling of issues within the U.S., but that is commonly not the case. And if the decline of the liberal arts continues, we will surely lack the human resources to comprehend our enormous international challenges.

What we need to understand is that the fate of liberal arts education is inseparable from the fate of multi-cultural America and, for that matter, the fate of the world. Teachers, students, parents, and others who believe in America’s deepest values and in our nation’s role as a global leader—a model and inspiration for social progress and cultural understanding—must encourage and support our traditional commitment to an effective liberal arts education. That’s the indispensable foundation for national and worldwide social responsibility.

Graduates who can see no further than the goals and procedures of their specialization, and no deeper than the provincialism of their own time and place, are not likely to be committed or successful collaborators for the common good in a diverse and rapidly changing world.

**Author, historian and Professor Emeritus John Hallwas is a columnist for the McDonough County Voice, where this appeared in another version.**

**from “Women” page 15**

employment as well viewing women as competitors for jobs that, while plentiful during the war, would be scarcer in the postwar period. Trade unions initially resisted hiring women for unionized positions. In the face of increasing labor scarcity, though, union leaders required that female employees be part of the union and receive equal pay. But they also required that women hired during this time be designated as temporary members not covered under seniority regulations. This allowed the unions to protect the wages for the positions women held during the war, which might otherwise be lowered, and ensure that women did not compete with men for positions once the war was over.

**The Mass Media Enlist with Uncle Sam**

Women’s role in the war extended beyond their economic and productive roles as workers: It reached into their homes and daily routines. Media messages about women’s roles also encompassed their responsibilities as mothers, housewives, household managers, volunteers and consumers. The war was present in the food a woman served her family, the products she used in her home, the war bonds and stamps she purchased, and the contributions she made to organizations such as the Red Cross and United Service Organization (USO). The home front was framed as the “second front” in the war and women were enlisted as “kitchen patriots” to do their part to speed the war’s end and the return of husbands and sons. The American mass media provided a powerful tool for the federal government to mobilize women. Media representations of women’s roles were expanded to encompass the widespread employment of American women in both traditional and non-traditional occupations. These wartime media representa-

**Adkins Covert is an Associate Professor in WIU’s Department of Sociology and Anthropology. This is excerpted with permission from Manipulating Images: World War II Mobilization of Women through Magazine Advertising, Copyright 2011, Lexington Books, Lanham, Md. All rights reserved.**
Focus

Math and environmental science

When worlds collide (good things can happen)

“Statistics are used … in much the same way that a drunk leans against a street lamp; it’s there more for support than enlightenment.”
— sportscaster Vince Scully

By Bill Knight

Assistant Professor Amy Ekanayake of WIU’s Department of Mathematics knows that statistics – plus sophisticated methods of math modeling – can enlighten and inform as well as support thoughts, ideas and more. This Spring she’s launching a new course that promises to be a refreshing, interdisciplinary way to study the environment and life in general, a course that will give Western another distinctive offering: Mathematical Modeling in Biology.

“I love that Western Illinois will have something fairly unique,” says Ekanayake, who earned her doctorate at Texas Tech University in 2009 and started at WIU that Fall.

“Biomathematics is a wide and expanding discipline within applied mathematics, employing virtually every field of mathematics to gain insight into a variety of fields in biology,” she says, “including ecology, conservation biology, natural resource management, evolution, epidemiology, immunology, genetics, toxicology and physiology.”

Sure, skeptics in the Humanities or Fine Arts might scoff at linking math and biology. Some may see them as about as compatible as oil and water. But like in the successful interaction and collaboration of seemingly disparate fields such as philosophy and neuroscience, interdisciplinary approaches can yield fresh perspectives and unique angles to subjects.

It’s no academic equivalent to the BP spill in the Gulf of Mexico. If one grants that numbers can illuminate – from birth rates and budget trends to actuarial table and checkbook balances – then why not use mathematics to better study the world?

Math can offer opportunities to more fully analyze what’s happening and more accurately predict what’s to come. Using models (see box) math can anticipate likely outcomes.

The mind reels thinking about if the tools used by mathematicians such as Pythagoras, Pascal, Babbage and Einstein were employed with the passion and curiosity of environmentalists such as Aldo Leopold, John Muir, Bill McKibben and Rachel Carson.

Mathematical Modeling in Biology will teach students to evaluate local and global stability of equilibria, study sensitivity to parameter values, develop models for biological systems, and use stochastic models to look at genetics, logistic growth and many other models that can be considered birth-and-death processes: competition, predator-prey, host-parasitoid, age-structured, epidemic, or pharmacokinetic models, says Ekanayake.

“This course is designed to provide experience applying mathematics to real-world problems,” she says. “As our knowledge expands, topics in pure math – initially thought to be only abstract – inevitably end up having real-world applications.”

Her work – and her students’ – will be less advocacy than application.

“Hopefully such research will end up actually making a difference in this local area,” she adds, "especially related to, but not limited to, the Mississippi River.”

Elsewhere, others are adopting overlapping strategies to study different phenomena. Binghamton
University’s Professor George Catalano earned his Ph.D. in aerospace engineering and today is the co-author of the 2010 book *Engineering and Society: Working Towards Social Justice* (Morgan & Claypool), which addresses the long- and short-term implications of engineering projects on the planet.

A recent issue of the Notices of the American Mathematical Society included articles by Martin Walter of the University of Colorado and a group of mathematicians from the University of South Australia on topics connecting math and the physical world. Walter’s “Earthquakes and Weatherquakes: Mathematics and Climate Change” extrapolates from earthquake data to formulate a way to examine extreme weather events such as tornadoes and hurricanes, and he goes on to forecast the likely outcome should Earth’s climate heat up: more and more extreme storms.

Australia’s John Boland, Jerzy Filar and Phil Howlett use math’s control theory to study how systems are affected by outside influences to show how appropriate levels of intervention and evaluation of various effects can be anticipated.

If there’s an upsurge of interest in biomath, it probably stems from a happy happenstance: the explosion of data available to study and more powerful computers to better analyze and understand the information.

However, history shows an affinity, if not an alliance, between math and environmental science. For instance, most people probably don’t realize that the term “Greenhouse effect” was coined in the early 19th century not by some worried conservationist, but by Joseph Fourier, a French mathematician.

Nevertheless, it wouldn’t be surprising for the public to be confused.

So consider this: Someone reading only a story about a Chicago Bulls game and someone reading only the box score could come away with different conclusions, like looking at sheet music to determine the quality of a concert performance. More information or another point of view is sometimes required for a fuller picture.

Ekanayake nods agreeably and presents, “[In the course] we’ll explore the world using math, but in an interdisciplinary way, especially with biology. I’m really trying to pull in students from Biology.

“Possible subjects include the presence of species to population dynamics,” she continues. “Next summer, I hope to do some research with the Department of Biological Sciences’ Kibbe Life Science Research Station.”

Such faculty efforts seem in line with WIU’s Mission Statement, which in part says that it “will have a profound and positive impact on our changing world through the unique interaction of instruction, research and public service...”

But more than conforming to a purpose, it’s the urge to explore that seems to drive Ekanayake.

“The course may sort of round out our curriculum, but I’m curious, too,” she says. “We’ll see how many [students] sign up.”

That openness and optimism may help the class deal with the inevitable doubters, too.

“Statistics are like a bikini: They show a lot but not everything.”
—Lou Pinella, ex Cubs manager

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**Biomath terminology**

**BIFURCATION THEORY** is the mathematical study of changes in the structure of a family, or group of items. Often used in the study of dynamical systems, a bifurcation takes place when small, smooth changes cause a sudden “qualitative” changes in behavior, which can be chaotic.

**BIOMATHEMATICS** stresses math in interdisciplinary research using various applications in biology, biotechnology and medicine. Practitioners use mathematical representation, treatment and modeling of biological processes. For instance, a model of some biological system is converted into equations sometimes using logical assumptions about biological behaviors, and solving the equations describes how the biological system acts.

**MARKOV CHAIN** is a random process in which the next state depends solely on the current state. A Markov chain model is a statistical model wherein the process can have only a finite or countable number of states.

**A MATHEMATICAL MODEL** uses mathematical language primarily numbers, to describe a system. It can be used in biology and the Earth sciences, but also in physics, engineering, the social sciences (economics, political science, psychology, sociology) – virtually anything, really. Such modeling can take various forms, including differential equations, dynamical systems, game-theory modeling, and statistical models.

**PHARMACOKINETICS** is the study of how the body handles administered drugs. Mathematical models looks at how the concentration of a medicine changes with factors including dosage and the time between doses, permitting predictions of the extent and duration of clinical effects.

**A STOCHASTIC PROCESS** is a non-deterministic, or random, behavior based on the theory of probability. For example, a stochastic perspective would hold that a system’s state results from random effects as well as predictable influences, such as pressure in a gas.

By Matt Kosek

Charles McLeod knew that he wanted to be a fiction writer when he was an undergrad at the University of Iowa. But, as he quickly learned, just because you’re ready to announce to the writing world that you have arrived, doesn’t mean that anyone will care.

In McLeod’s case, the better part of his young writing career was filled with dead-end jobs and letters from publishers describing their lack of interest. McLeod decided that he wanted to be a writer while in Iowa City, but it would take five years for the world to notice.

“I knew that I had wanted to do it for a while but there can be a pretty big time gap between like when you know you want to do it and when it’s going to actually happen,” McLeod says.

After graduating from Iowa, McLeod stayed in Iowa City to play music, then moved to Seattle. It was there, while working 65 hours a week at three jobs, that he realized that he wanted to go back to graduate school and get an MFA in creative writing.

He ultimately picked the University of Virginia after the school offered him a full-ride. The scholarship waived his tuition and granted him a cash stipend, which made it even more appealing. After working at odd jobs for two years in Seattle, he longed for time to focus on his writing.

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McLeod spent two years in Charlottesville, Va., as a Hoyms Fellow, then taught two more at San Jose State University, where he was a Steinbeck Fellow, before being offered a teaching job at Western Illinois University.

Through it all, McLeod continued to write whenever he could. His fiction has appeared in publications including Alaska Quarterly Review, Conjunctions, CutBank, Gettysburg Review, Michigan Quarterly Review, Post Road and Third Coast. One of his stories, “Edge Boys,” won a prestigious national Pushcart Prize and was included in the 2010 book Pushcart Prize XXXIV: Best of the Small Presses.

Then, shortly after landing the job in Macomb, he was offered a two-book deal by Random House UK. “It’s a long process from when you start writing short stories to when you’re actually going to see books in print,” McLeod says.

Some people may think “long” is an exaggeration; by the time the book comes out the oldest story in the collection will be six years old.

McLeod’s short-story collection, National Treasures, and his first novel, American Weather, both will be published by Random House UK.

Random House UK liked the partial so much that it offered to buy both books. When the offer was made, the deadline for the novel’s rough draft was set for August of 2010. This gave McLeod about 15 months to finish the novel.

“I think [writing for a deadline] helped,” he says. “There were moments overall where I think it was difficult and not that much fun because I’d be writing scenes for a first draft where, you know, there is this constant pressure of ‘I need to get through this. I need to get
through this.’ I think it forces one to not spend as much time making sure every last word is as nuanced as they want it to be.”

When he delivered his first draft he was nervous, McLeod concedes. He knew there was a possibility that his draft would be returned to him completely shredded. He also knew that his editor had decades of experience, working with hundreds of novels, so he had to trust that any suggestions would strengthen the novel. McLeod also knew that his editor would have more objectivity with his work than he could.

“Believing in and trusting in the editorial process is something that I think is a skill that needs to be learned,” McLeod says. “A lot of young writers will just dismiss any editorial comments.”

He may have believed in the editorial process, but McLeod will be the first one to stress how difficult it is to delete parts of your own text. Some writers will agonize over a particular chapter or section for hours, only to find out later that it was all for nothing.

“There’s moments where before you highlight the text and hit the delete button, you kind of spend five or ten seconds remembering the two months you spent writing whatever chapter or part of a chapter it is they want gone,” McLeod says. “It’s so hard to see how the overall text is better until you get rid of that section that maybe isn’t quite right.”

Random House UK didn’t shy away from pointing out what parts of the first drafts they considered to not be “quite right” either. The novel was originally 370 pages; by the time it was ready to be published, it was cut to 300 pages.

However, talking about McLeod exclusively as a fiction writer shares just part of the story.

He’s also a creative writing professor at Western Illinois University, and an excellent one according to students, who enjoyed his courses so much that they voted him “Best Professor” last April when the school newspaper ran its annual “Best of Macomb” issue.

“It was quite an honor,” McLeod says. “The highlight of it for me was that it was something where it was students voting on this.

“It came as quite a surprise because it was during my first year at Western,” he continues, “and it was just a really big honor to know that students felt that they were getting good feedback on what they were producing in my creative class.”

McLeod says he benefits from teaching, too, since it provides him the opportunity to step back and re-evaluate his own writing, using the same techniques that he shares with students.

“It forces me to analyze writing at a very foundational level,” he says. “When I’m giving comments and ideas to students in fiction workshops, there is something that goes on inside me where it will force me to go back and sort of re-think a part of a novel or re-think a character in a short story.”

McLeod also credits teaching for playing a part in his ability to produce his best writing. He’s “far less productive in the summer” when he’s not teaching, for instance.

“I think it’s kind of a symbiotic relationship where I try to write every day and doing that, I think, helps me in the classroom,” McLeod says. “And I think the fact that I teach winds up, in turn, helping my writing.”

McLeod finds time to write while working a full-time schedule that would have most people pulling out their hair. Describing himself as “someone that thrives on routine,” he says, writing is the first thing that he does when he gets up in the morning. During a typical week, he says, he writes every day for two or three hours.

“You’re going to learn it faster and a in a way that’s somewhat more genuine if you just immerse yourself in it daily,” McLeod says.

For anyone having the misconception that writing is a chore that McLeod subjects himself to daily, it’s actually quite the opposite.

“In regards to what I do for fun...I write,” McLeod says. “I think that if one’s going to try to do writing around a full-time job, then not only do you have to be serious about it, but I think you really do have to find some joy in it, too. That this is something you really want to be doing.”

Writing certainly seems to be something that McLeod wants to be doing. He’s known it since his time in Iowa City and Seattle. Then, he struggled to make ends meet, and the possibility of having a book deal seemed distant. Now, each day that he rolls out of bed, he once more confirms his commitment to his craft.

“You’re working around what is a 40-50 hour a week schedule,” McLeod says. “And if it seems like nothing but torturous work to get up hours before you have to so, you know, your neighborhood and the world is kind of quiet and you can get some actual writing done … if there isn’t some sort of joy in that, you’re not going to do it for very long.”

McLeod’s life doesn’t solely revolve around writing though; he used to play drums and is thinking about buying a drum set.

“It’s a good stress reliever,” McLeod says, “but I’m not really sure that my neighbors would really appreciate it.”

On the other hand, it probably wouldn’t take long for them to notice that a creative talent lives down the street.

Matt Kosek is a Journalism major from Naperville, Ill.
Roland. Seeing the respect and reverence that private citizens had for an officer of the law, Roland became determined to seek a career in law enforcement. That brought him to Western Illinois University.

After high school, Roland came to Macomb and took up residence in Tanner Hall.

“There was another individual from my high school – I went to Wheeling High School – who had planned to go to WIU for the same reason, so we got together and became roommates,” says Corvington, who remembers his years in Macomb fondly – some of the best experiences of his life, he says.

Roland wasted no time getting involved.

“I worked for the University Police for a time, first as a dispatcher, briefly, then in parking services,” he recalls, “And after that, I became a Resident Adviser.”

Time management was a challenge, but one the undergraduate met.

“It really became quite normal to balance it all,” says Corvington, speaking with a matter-of-fact measure of confidence.

The memories Roland made at Western were not all related to work and school, he adds.

“I certainly enjoyed the town,” he says. “There were various clubs there, one was called McCabe’s, we used to go dancing there, I think it was every Wednesday night they had disco dancing.

“‘I enjoyed Western,’ he continues. “‘It was a good time. That first taste of independence as a freshman caused a little angst, but also a lot of excitement as well.’”

Corvington knew that he wanted to work for the FBI and took the first opportunity to pursue the opportunity when it presented itself.

“When I graduated with my Master’s I was 22,” he says. “I interviewed on campus with an FBI recruiter who told me, ‘Son, you’re too young and you don’t have any work experience,’ and I thought to myself without saying anything to the recruiter, ‘Why are you here then?’”

Over the next five years, Roland gained experience working security for the government contractor...
McDonnell-Douglas, dealing with significant amounts of classified government information, and as a claims adjuster for a subsidiary of the Kroger Corporation.

In 1987, “I was sworn in as an FBI agent and worked eight years in Kansas City, then about four and a half years at FBI Headquarters,” Corvington says. “The cases I worked as an agent were drug cases, police corruption cases. I supervised violent crimes and white-collar economic crimes.”

He pauses and adds, “The cases were always similar – someone was a victim and had been wronged.”

As serious as these matters may have been, nothing could prepare him for his next assignment. After a promotion, Roland transferred to Pittsburgh, where he would find himself on the frontlines of one of our nation’s most infamous days. Corvington was the Incident Commander on the scene of the crash of Flight 93 on September 11, 2001.

“It was very surreal,” he recalls. “You knew that things were happening around, but it was as if it couldn’t be happening.

“The most profound part of it was addressing the victims’ families because they were looking for answers as to how this could possibly happen,” he adds.

Roland’s next promotion took him to the FBI Academy, where he would oversee new classes of FBI recruits.

“During my time at the FBI Academy we would meet with each incoming class and each member of every class would be asked to tell why they joined the FBI and, invariably, money was not the reason,” he says. “You’re not going to be wealthy working for the FBI. More often than not the reasons were a sense of purpose and/or patriotism; 9/11 changed everything at the FBI. If you wanted to be promoted prior to 9/11, then you wanted experience in the criminal division, but after, the emphasis changed to counterterrorism.”

Corvington earned another promotion, this time taking him to St. Louis, where he served as Special Agent in charge of the Eastern District of Missouri. It was while he was working in this capacity that Roland oversaw three cases reach very heartwarming conclusions.

“Abby Woods – a baby kidnapped from the same county as the two boys only a few months prior to their disappearance – was found,” he says. “Working together with state and local authorities … that was truly miraculous and then to have Shawn Hornbeck and Ben Ownby found together was unbelievable.”

Retiring from the FBI this year, Corvington accepted the post at SLU, in some ways bringing him back full-circle to a campus setting.

“Oh, yeah, absolutely,” he says. “It’s interesting because in my current capacity I interact a lot with representatives of student development and residential life and I reflect back on time as an RA or working at public safety.

“In terms of the issues, things don’t change that much,” he continues. “I love the university environment. It’s very vibrant and it’s nice to see the students every day.”

Asked for his advice to current students, Corvington doesn’t hesitate.

“Pursue something that you want to do [and] ask questions of those in the profession,” he says. “Take your time figuring out what it is you want to do. You don’t realize how much time you have until you’re on this end of the equation.

“While I was with the Bureau there were things I did that I never would have done but for the Bureau, whether it was traveling to Russia, or Bangkok, Thailand, Australia, [or] working with the CIA, the NSA – just incredible experiences you can’t put a price on.”

Jesse Patridge is a senior Journalism major from Table Grove.
opportunidades” at the Astronomy & Astrophysics Colloquium in Universidad de Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica, and co-wrote “High Angular Resolution Observations of Four Candidate BLAST High-mass Starless Cores” for Astrophysical Journal.

Assistant Professor Kishor T. Kapale authored “Subnanoscale resolution for microscopy via coherent population trapping” for Optics Letters; wrote “Coherent Superpositions of Quantized Vortices in Bose-Einstein Condensates via Stimulated Raman Adiabatic Passage Despite Interparticle Interactions” for the International Topical Conference on Atomic & Molecular Physics; and presented a poster, “Sub-nanoscale Resolution for Atom Localization, Lithography & Microscopy via Coherent Population Trapping,” at the Annual Meeting of the Division of the Atomic, Molecular & Optical Physics in May; a colloquium on “Fundamentals of Quantum Computing” at Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill., in May; and delivered an invited talk at the WE Heraeus Research School’s Frontiers in Matter Wave Interferometry conference in Germany in June.

Instructor Saisudha Mallur won the $45,000 M. Hildred Blewett Annual Scholarship for Women in Physics from the American Physical Society.

Associate Professor Pengqian Wang presented “Dissociation of Multiply Ionized Small Heteronuclear Molecules through Electron Impact” at the Annual American Physical Society’s Division of Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics meeting in May in Houston.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Associate Professor Julia Albarracin co-authored “Demographic Factors and Sexist Beliefs as Predictors of Condom Use among Latinos in the USA for AIDS Care in August.

Chair Keith Boeckelman and Associate Professor Janna Deitz were named to the Board of Advisers for Project Vote Smart’s “Key Votes” program.

Assistant Professor Jonathan Day presented “The Strategy and Effects of Presidential Campaigns” at the 2010 Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, held Sept. 2-5 in Washington, D.C.

Associate Professor Janna Deitz co-authored “If You Can’t Join ‘Em, Beat ‘Em: The Gender Gap in Individual Donations to Congressional Candidates” in Political Research Quarterly in September.

Professor Rick Hardy was the keynote speaker for the Leadership Institute conference held in Columbia, Mo., in October, when his speech was “The Constitution: Essential Elements.” Dr. Hardy also conducted four summer workshops: on the Constitution for high school teachers throughout the nation at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., in July; sponsored by the Center for Civic Education; on the Constitution at the Illinois Institute for Chicago Area Teachers at North Park University in Chicago in July; for Missouri secondary social studies teachers, sponsored by the Missouri Bar Association, at Columbia College, Columbia, Mo. in July; and for high school teachers from Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio, sponsored by the Indiana Bar Association, at Indiana University in July.

Assistant Professor Casey LaFrance wrote “A Quantitative Analysis of Accountability Indicators in Sheriffs’ Offices and Municipal Police Departments” for the Law Enforcement Executive Forum Journal; co-authored “Reacquainting the Academic Bureaucracy of Social Science with its Subjects” for the Journal of Social Sciences; co-authored “Sheriffs’ and Police Chiefs’ Perceptions of the Residents they Serve” for Law Enforcement Executive Forum; and co-wrote “Reacquainting the Academic Bureaucracy of Social Science with its Subjects” for the Journal of Social Sciences.

Instructor Daniel Ogbaharya wrote “Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Customary Systems of Conflict Resolution (CSCR)” for Sociology and Anthropology.

PSYCHOLOGY

Professor Tracy Cruise wrote “Identifying and reporting child maltreatment among adolescents” for the National Association of Secondary School Principals: Principal Leadership; co-authored the “Physical abuse” and “Sexual abuse of children and adolescents” handouts for the National Association of School Psychologists; and co-authored “Problematic behaviors: Mediating differences and negotiating change” in Handbook of Education, Training, and Supervision of School Psychologists in School and Community, Volume II.

Professor Virginia Diehl co-authored “Elaborated metaphors support viable inferences about difficult science concepts” for Educational Psychology.


Associate Professor Melanie
Hetzel-Riggin wrote “Peritraumatic dissociation and PTSD effects on physiological response patterns in sexual assault victims” for Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy.

Professor Ruth Marie Kelly co-wrote “Assistive technology for students with disabilities: A guide for parents and educators” in Helping Children at Home and School III: Handouts for Parents and Educators from the National Association of School Psychologists. Kelly and colleague Hiroko Sotozaki co-authored “Cross Linguistic Comparisons to better teach reading in English and Japanese” for the 32nd Annual Conference for International School Psychology Association in Dublin, Ireland.

Associate Professor Tracy Knight reviewed the film The Headless Woman for PsycCRITIQUES – Contemporary Psychology: APA Review of Books. Dr. Knight also wrote “Client-centered therapy” in The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology and Behavioral Science; and presented the workshop “Developing multicultural competence in supervision” for the annual Illinois School Psychologist Association convention in East Peoria.

SOCIology
And ANTHropology
Faculty Assistants William Faulkner and Richard Mathers received funding for $219,000 from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services for “Test Construction, Delivery, Scoring, Test Evaluations and Trainer/Course Evaluations - FY11.

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interview and the results remain memorable.

Why should students pursue a career in journalism?

Journalism will be a career as long as people tell stories to each other, whether in newspapers or social media, radio or some medium that hasn’t been developed yet.

The skills journalism builds and needs are useful beyond newsrooms, too. I’ve had students go to law school and write comic books as well as do public relations for medical centers or become crime reporters or business journalists. People go through many jobs and several careers in their lives, but being able to gather information and write with clarity and brevity serves them in many places. A good sportswriter could also produce a corporation’s annual report; a solid arts critic could also write a police incident report.

Of course, if someone with journalism skills works full-time for a magazine, TV station or web site, they’ll also realize that informing people can make a difference. And it can be a heckuva lot of fun.

What will make students successful in journalism here at Western Illinois University?

I guess to look for the fun in whatever it is they’re doing, no matter the seriousness of the assignment. One can find fun and fulfillment in the craft of writing obituaries, the toil of reading government reports or the creativity of designing advertisements. Also, students benefit from “training” themselves to write regularly— not a lot necessarily, but almost every day.

Actor Woody Allen is credited with saying, “Eighty percent of success is showing up,” and that’s generally true, too. I think good journalists develop the talent to find out information, the knack of being persistent without being obnoxious, the tendency to be skeptical without being cynical, the ability to write in ways that make even the mundane engaging, and do it all with a healthy dose of respect for newsmakers, sources and, most of all, the public.

Knight’s Hall was lecture has been posted on the web: http://wiu.edu/news/lecture_archive/liberalArts10.php

Also, a 14-minute interview WIUM-FM 91.3 did with him is archived at http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/wium/news.main/article/562/0/1696470/Emphasis/Emphasis.-September.3

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Associate Professor Robert Hironimus-Wendt received an award from “H.O.P.E. - Honoring Our Professors of Excellence” from WIU’s Housing and Dining Services.

Associate Professor David Rohall co-wrote “Future Leaders’ Perspectives on National Defense: A Comparison of the BASS and TISS Studies” for the American Sociological Association Meeting in Atlanta, Ga., in August. Rohall also received the CAS Outstanding Research/Scholarly Activities Award, and is the co-investigator on a $12,500 grant entitled “9/11 Study of Undergraduates, Office of Undersecretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness.”

Assistant Professor Craig Tollini co-authored “Fraternity Members’ Views of Negative Stereotypes” for Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, and wrote “A Comparison of Faculty Members’ and Students’ Definitions of Political Bias in the Classroom” for the International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology. Tollini also received a $500 grant from the Center for the Study of College Fraternity for “Perceptions of WIU Sorority Members.”

Assistant Professor Bridget K. Welch co-presented two papers at the American Sociological Association meetings in Atlanta, Ga., in August: “Toward a Shared Identity Theory of Race and Ethnicity: Structure and Agency in Identity Creation” and “The Racialization of Latino/a Groups as Symbolic Interaction.”

Chair John F. Wozniak presented “Prisons as a Peaceful Community: Confronting Suffering in a Society of Captives” at the Annual Meeting of the Justice Studies Association, in Knoxville, Tenn., in June. Wozniak served as the president of the Justice Studies Association from July 1, 2009, to June 30, 2010.

from “Fanfare” page 27

Assistant Professor Craig Tollini

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