

Education Matters

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

2010

Happy New Year! Faculty are appearing again in their offices to clean out the vestiges of last semester's courses and gearing up for the next semester, reviewing assigned texts and creating or enhancing the next semester's syllabi. Students' e-mails begin or end with messages about enjoying our "break," not realizing that we are already hard at work on materials for the upcoming semester, or that we are working again on the scholarly piece that was put aside amid the grading frenzy at the end of term.

Good News!

Faculty and students have engaged in a variety of special activities and events in the last several months, and I'd like to take this opportunity to make you aware of some of our recent accomplishments.

■ **Katharyn Nottis** and her students have received recognition for their involvement with students in local Old Order Mennonite schools near campus. Each spring, Professor Nottis offers her course, *Teaching in Diverse Environments*, involving the selection of a culturally appropriate science-related topic, research, lesson planning, preparation of materials, and implementation of the lesson for students in multi-age, one room school houses near campus. Our students regularly note that they learn more about themselves, refining their ideas about students and meaningful instruction, as they interact with the children in these unique environments who are the recipients of their carefully crafted lessons.



Katharyn Nottis, sitting; Left to right Dana Cardona '10; Jeanne Roberts, Herr Memorial Library staff; Jenny Taylor '10; Justine Daggett '09; Valerie Rippey '11; Margaret Hartman '09; Lauren Gertz '10; Carol Hollister, Herr Memorial Library staff



■ Each fall semester, **Lori Smolleck** pairs the elementary certification students in her *Teaching of Science* course with engineering students in their introductory engineering course to present the "gizmos" that are the main attraction of the Engineering and Science Education Expo. For the fourth year in a row, Larison Hall was packed on December 9 with boy scouts, girl scouts, area home schooled students, and local science and technology education teachers and parents with their children. All came to sample the "gizmos" crafted to teach science and engineering concepts to children from grades kindergarten to eight. Our students, with their specialized knowledge of child development and their facility with lesson plans, helped engineering students match their ideas and constructs to the needs and abilities of young children. Teacher-ready unit and lesson plans

Bucknell
UNIVERSITY

www.bucknell.edu Lewisburg, PA 17837

using the “gizmos” were provided to interested adult volunteers, parents, and teachers.

- Members of the Bucknell chapter of prestigious **Kappa Delta Pi**, the national education society, continued the *Ready, Set, Read!* initiative pioneered by the previous years’ KDP membership. Last spring, Montandon Elementary in the Milton School District was the focus of our students’ efforts. Our students, lead by president **Molly Babcock ’09**, set a goal of 350 books for students to read in a little over a week. Elementary students surpassed their goal by reading 1,169 books, entitling their teachers and the school library to add multiple new books to their classroom and library collections. In addition to our department, Bucknell’s Women’s Varsity Lacrosse, Softball, Swimming and Diving and Men’s Swimming and Diving Teams also contributed funds for this initiative.
- Our Bucknell Buddies program continues to flourish, carefully supervised for the last two years by **Lura Wasileski Good**, a graduate student in our College Student Personnel Program, and her cadre of undergraduate school leaders. This after school program serves children at Kelly and Linntown Elementary Schools. In addition, many of our students work with children at Essex Place and Meadow View, local low income housing developments, and at the ESL tutoring program at Milton High School, capably supervised for the last two years by **Bethany Romig**, an Americorps/VISTA volunteer.
- Our certification students regularly contribute over 5000 hours in service each year to students in local schools as part of their coursework. **Katie Shemory** has just succeeded **Marcey Nolan ’09**, both graduate students in our School Counseling program, as coordinator of this organizational challenge of matching each student with just the right classroom placement, based course requirements, availability, and preferences. Our emphasis for future teachers is getting them into classrooms early and often, and recent changes to our certification program mandated by the PA Department of Education

will increase even more students’ classroom time prior to student teaching.

- **Katharyn Nottis**, Michael J. Prince, and Margot A. Vigeant, from Bucknell University, and Ron Miller, Colorado School of Mines were awarded a \$500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to study “Collaborative Research: Inquiry-Based Activities to Repair Persistent Student Misconceptions of Critical Engineering Concepts.” Their research has generated multiple presentations and papers that have garnered international interest.
- **Candice Stefanou**, along with **Katharyn Nottis**, and Michael J. Prince from Bucknell University, and John Chen, Rowan University, Jonathan Stolk, Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering, and Susan M. Lord, University of San Diego were awarded a \$259,069 grant, also from the National Science Foundation to study: “Role of Faculty in Supporting Lifelong Learning: An Investigation of Self-Directed Learning Environments in Engineering Undergraduate Classrooms.”

New Faculty

In August, we welcomed two new professors to our department, Professors **Richard Henne** and **Lakeisha Meyer**.

Professor Henne, recently engaged in post-doctoral research at the Folklore Center at Indiana University, Bloomington, earned his Ph.D. in Education, with specialization in cognition, learning, language and culture, at the University of Illinois. Through his ongoing work with the Lakota in South Dakota, Richard explores the surprisingly sophisticated ways that children use their home language. His research suggests how second language teachers



might capitalize on the linguistic knowledge and skills children already possess in the process of second language acquisition.

Professor Meyer comes to us from Western Kentucky University. She is certified as a school psychologist, and is teaching courses in educational psychology, counseling techniques, and others



relating to our graduate program in school psychology. She earned her Ph.D. from Indiana University. Lakeisha's current research interest is determining more about how two popular school-based intervention models,

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports and Response to Intervention, might intersect for the benefit of students.

More Changes on the Horizon

As a result of internal and external reviews, a departmental retreat, Bucknell's renewed focus on the enhancement of the undergraduate program, and much soul searching and conversation among our department members, we are instituting a number of changes in our department in the coming years.

Master's Level Program Changes

With regret, we have decided to end our Master's programs in School Counseling and School Administration, and have eliminated the general Master's as an Instructional Specialist. We are committed to making sure that all graduate students currently enrolled in these programs will finish with their degrees and certification in hand. We continue to offer Master's degrees in College Student Personnel and School Psychology, and will assist students with bachelor's degrees who want to become certified to teach. In addition, we hope to maintain our certification program for aspiring school superintendents, who come to us with Master's degrees in hand.

Pre-K-12 Certification Program Changes

The PA Department of Education has mandated massive changes in how K-12 teachers are certified starting with next year's entering class at Bucknell, and we have been hard at work redesigning our certification programs so they will meet the new criteria. One big change is in the certification itself. The former K-6 certificate has been split into a Pre-K-4 and a 4-8 certificate. This split no doubt reflects a desire to strengthen the pre-K-4, or Early Childhood Education preparation program, and will ensure that school programs are being staffed by teachers with specialized training and expertise for that age group. As full day kindergartens become the norm across PA, and school districts offer programming to ever younger children, it seems evident that the state wants to ensure that teachers for this age group are highly qualified. After much discussion and analysis, our faculty determined that we will not offer a program for the grades 4-8 certification. The array of content course requirements in multiple subjects combined with pedagogical courses specific to middle grades students were judged undoable for students who must also meet Bucknell's general liberal arts requirements.

While secondary programs remain relatively unchanged, they, like the Early Childhood Education Pre-K-4 certification program, will require the addition of the equivalent of 3 semester hours in ESL instruction, and 9 credits in teaching children with special needs. Rather than adding an array of additional courses to our certification programs, we decided to infuse this content into existing courses. Additional work in assessment will also be added to both programs, along with the newly mandated 190 hours of pre-student teaching observation and experience in schools. While our faculty has included content specific to ELLs (English Language Learners) and special needs learners in their syllabi for some time, documentation of these initiatives is now mandated. We continue to offer a PA ESL (English Speakers of Other Languages) certification for interested students already becoming certified in elementary education, English, and foreign language.



The Redesigned B.A. in Education

Our B.A. program in Education has recently undergone long overdue scrutiny and redesign. As our enrollment in this program has increased, faculty worked together to redefine the goals of the major and create specific concentrations within it. To complete their major requirements, students will be able to select from a variety of strands that reflect their interests and career goals. Strands include: College Student Personnel; Contemporary Landscapes of Education; Educational Research; Human Diversity; and Support Services for Children and Adolescents. All programs leave room for education electives and require a culminating experience that can be a thesis or a unique internship designed to meet students' goals and interests.

Thanks for your ongoing support for our department and its many programs! As a result of your generosity, we are able to support young scholars as they present their work at regional and national conferences, and help our students as they design and implement programs that impact local schools. Curricular materials that reflect the hands-on kind of instruction we provide our certification students are purchased with the funds you designate for our department. We look forward to another productive year in the Education Department. Thanks for your contribution to our efforts.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Hoffman Ed. D
Chair, Department of Education

