Associate Provost’s News

This week, we are welcoming to campus two finalists for the inaugural position of Director for the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. The idea for the Center arose out of our strategic planning discussions and was included as one of the institutional initiatives supporting the strategic plan starting in the 2014-2015 academic year. The role of the Center is to support broad faculty adoption of innovative course and curriculum design, technology use and integration into classroom experiences, and state-of-the-art pedagogical approaches.

Day-to-day services provided by the Center are expected to include: course consultation and re-design services; new course consultation including online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses; assessment and recognition of current innovative practices; advancement activities related to adoption of innovative teaching and pedagogy across campus; training opportunities for faculty and students; and technology access and support services. The hiring of a Director for the Center is our first, but certainly not our last action in developing the infrastructure needed to support faculty as they engage in innovative education at Mines.

Examples of other model Centers include:

- University of Tennessee, Knoxville - Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center
- Stanford - Center for Teaching and Learning
- Cornell - Center for Teaching Excellence
- Brown - The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning

The two candidates visiting campus were recommended by a search committee composed of both academic and administrative faculty and were selected from a pool of 50 qualified candidates. These two candidates are highly qualified and have experience establishing centers for teaching and learning at other institutions; working with faculty to develop innovative teaching materials; assessing student outcomes; offering and supporting training activities; and working with external funding agencies.

I want to encourage you to participate in the search process by: sending comments on either candidate to the search committee, attending one or more of the open meeting sessions, or attending a candidate presentation. It is only with your help and support that our Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning will thrive and become an instrument of positive change on campus.
Faculty Achievements

Assistant Professor, Cecilia Diniz Behn (AMS), has received a $158,000 NSF award from the Division of Mathematical Sciences (Mathematical Biology program). The funded research project, entitled "Collaborative Research: Multiscale Modeling of the Physiological Interactions Between Sleep and Circadian Systems," will run over 3 years.

AIP Publishing and Applied Physics Letters announced the appointment of Professor, Reuben T. Collins (PH), as the Journal's new Editor-in-Chief beginning September 1, 2014. (Read more)

Mines by the Numbers

Introduction of Studio Teaching Style Classes at Mines

In the last few years a number of classes at Mines have adopted a more innovative course and curriculum design. The chart on the right shows the introduction of some of the courses taught in a studio setting since 2001. This chart shows a slow start in the adoption of studio classes in the early 2000s with a significant increase in studio classes in the last year. We are looking forward to supporting faculty as they continue to improve all instruction on the campus.
What's Happening

Update from the Center for Academic Services and Advising (CASA)

CASA was established in 2013 to meet the growing need for coordinated and careful freshman and sophomore advising. CASA offers a vast array of services ranging from tutoring to academic coaching and registration advisement.

Advisement: As part of our Fall Pre-Registration Advisement, CASA held 1,800+ individual advisement meetings. Over 600 students who had advanced through the Core Curriculum were declared into their respective major departments.

In addition to individualized course planning, advisement meetings often address academic policies/deadlines, degree exploration, and academic support services. CASA took on two new significant advising efforts this year. First, CASA advised all incoming transfer students who had not declared a major. Second, CASA held eight summer webinars for incoming first-year students, prior to the start of school. These webinars complemented New Student Orientation and focused on academic support services, Bulletin policies and requirements, and scholastic best practices.

Faculty in CASA: The Faculty in CASA program continues to successfully offer an alternative space for faculty office hours. 811 instances of students utilizing the program were recorded, which significantly exceeds all instances recorded in the 13-14 academic year. In addition to hosting office hours in CASA, faculty hosted review sessions and participated in the Pre-Finals Workshop. Faculty also provide an invaluable opportunity for members of CASA to discuss student scenarios, gather feedback, and share the faculty perspective. Faculty in CASA continue to collaborate with the LAIS Writing Center and will expand drop-in hours in spring 2015. The Faculty in CASA for 2014-2015 are Prof. Renee Falconer (Chemistry), Prof. Holly Eklund (Applied Math and Statistics), Prof. Vince Kuo (Physics), Prof. Justin Latici (LAIS), and Prof. Erik Siegel (LAIS).

Mines Vision

Mines will be the premier institution, based on the impact of its graduates and research programs, in science and engineering relating to the Earth, Energy and Environment.

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