



Academic Affairs Mission

Under the direction of the provost, the Office of Academic Affairs at Cal U comprises three undergraduate colleges and the School of Graduate Studies and Research. The Office of Academic Affairs supports the mission of building the character and careers of individuals by ensuring quality academic programs, classroom technology, student enrichment activities, and world-class instruction. California University of PA provides students with the tools they need to have a lifetime of success, both educationally and professionally.

Academic Affairs Newsletter

From the Desk of Acting Provost Dr. Barnhart

As I write this, snow is falling on the Quad behind Dixon Hall. But hopefully, spring is just around the corner.

As faculty and students settle into their routines, we have been busy in Academic Affairs. One of our top priorities is the Middle States Periodic Review Report (PRR), which is due from every Middle States accredited institution at the halfway point of the 10-year accreditation cycle.

Dr. Caryl Sheffield, Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, is leading the charge on this project. Her faculty co-chair is Dr. Holiday Adair, chair of the Department of Psychology. My hat is off to both of them for their top-notch work with the PRR.

A draft of the PRR has been forwarded to our consultant for review. When completed, the PRR will be about 150 pages long, including the narrative and appendices.

Faculty, staff, students, and administrators from all over campus have contributed to the work. Our final draft is due to Middle States by June 1. I wish Dr. Sheffield, Dr. Adair, and all contributors good luck as they put the finishing touches on the PRR.

The academic year 2014-15 will be remembered for many things, but I want to take a moment to recognize the distinguished faculty members who have either retired or expressed their intention to retire by the end of the year.

They include Dr. William O'Donnell (Theatre and Dance), Dr. Michael Slavin (Theatre and Dance), Professor Margarita Ribar (Modern Languages), Professor Ed Mendola (Business and Economics), Dr. Peter Wright (Applied Engineering and Technology), Professor Cheryl Bilitski (Student Services), Dr. Paul Williams (Mathematics), Dr. Lisa Schwerdt (English), Dr.

Debra Shelapinsky (Nursing), and Professor Michael Amrhein (Science and Technology). Each of these faculty members has contributed greatly to the success of California University and our students during their tenure, and I thank them for their collective efforts. If you should see any of these fine faculty members on campus, please congratulate them on their outstanding careers and wish them well in the next phase of their lives. I know that I will certainly miss each one of them.

Finally, I want to remember Dr. Burrell Brown, late chair of the Department of Business and Economics. Dr. Brown was a distinguished faculty member and campus leader, and his unexpected passing early this semester was a shock to us all. Burrell was a faculty member for all of us to emulate.

Bruce D. Barnhart



Dr. Thomas Mueller (Earth Sciences) won the quarterly Hazus Excellence Award given by FEMA, January 30, 2015. Hazus is a nationally applicable standardized methodology that contains models for estimating potential losses from earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes. Each quarter, FEMA spotlights the contributions of a Hazus user who has provided exceptional services to the expansion of the Hazus program. Dr. Mueller's work with Hazus in FEMA Region III involved the collection of responses to a region-wide assessment survey of geospatial data.

Office of Sponsored Programs and Research

The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research reports that five Cal U faculty and staff members received notification of new grant awards totaling \$229,525 during this quarter.

Dr. David Argent (Biological and Environmental Sciences) was awarded \$52,125 from CONSOL Energy for the grant *Biomonitoring Streambank Fencing Sites 2015*.

Mr. Craig Butzine (Marketing and University Relations) was awarded \$75,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the grant *Marchezak Farm Stream Mitigation Project*.

Mr. Robert Mehalik (Student Affairs) was awarded \$2,500 from the Cardinal Health Foundation for the grant *Generation Rx: Preventing the Abuse and Misuse of Prescription Drug Use*.

Dr. Katherine Mitchem (Special Education) was awarded \$75,000 from the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust for the grant *Technologies to Support Students with Intellectual Disabilities*.

Dr. Thomas Mueller (Earth Sciences) was awarded \$24,900 from U.S. Geological Survey through America-View for the grant *America-View 2013-2014: Stateview Program Development and Operations for Pennsylvania*.

Faculty & Staff Presentations

Dr. David Argent (Biological and Environmental Sciences), et al., presented "An Evaluation of Interstate Efforts to Restore Paddlefish to the Northeastern United States" at the *75th Annual Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference* in Indianapolis, IN, February 8-11, 2015.

Dr. Argent also presented, with Ms. Chelsea Gilliland and Dr. Louise Nicholson, "Examining Genetic Diversity Among Rainbow Darters (*Etheostoma caeruleum*) in the Monongahela River" at the same conference.

Dr. Clarissa Confer (History and Political Science) presented "A World

of Turmoil: Women in the Civil War" to the Donora Historical Society, March 2015.

Dr. Susan Jasko presented "Conversations on Consilience: SPC Operations and Social Science" and "Developing the Weather DOSPERT: A New Weather Risk Scale" at the *Annual Convention of the American Meteorological Society* in Phoenix, AZ, January 6, 2015.

Dr. Jeff Magers (Professional Studies) presented "Finding the Proper Balance for Use of Military Style Equipment and Tactics by Law Enforcement Agencies in the U.S." at the

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Conference in Orlando, FL, March 4, 2015.

Dr. John D. Massella (Counseling Center) presented "Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers: Addicted Professionals" at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in Pittsburgh, PA, March 19, 2015.

Dr. Theresa Thao Pham (Social Work) chaired the panels "Best Practices with Immigrant Populations" and "Establishing Roots: Localizing Human Trafficking in Spain" at the *Society for Applied Anthropology Annual Conference* in Pittsburgh, PA, March 27, 2015.

Faculty & Staff Publications



Dr. Bob Diotalevi (Legal Studies) published, with Connie Communale, "The ethical Paralegal: An elementary guide" in *Know* magazine, Estrin Education, Palm Desert, CA, January 21, 2015.

Dr. David Argent (Biological and Environmental Sciences) published, with Mr. Frank Christopher and Dr. William Kimmel, "Temporal macroinvertebrate community structure in leaf packs from a stream dominated by riparian Japanese knotweed" in the *Keystone Journal of Undergraduate Research*, Spring 2015.

Dr. John Confer (Earth Sciences) was appointed to the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Advisory Committee as the Trails Advocate Representative by Secretary Ellen Ferretti of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, effective January 1, 2015. This 20-member advisory committee advises the Secretary of DCNR, the Governor, and the Commonwealth on the use of trails funding in Pennsylvania, reviewing and ranking trail project applications, and presenting an annual report on trail accomplishments to the Secretary.

Faculty & Staff Accomplishments

Dr. John Cencich (Criminal Justice) was appointed to the Editorial Board of the *EC Forensic Science Journal*, January 2015.

Dr. Michael Hummel (Criminal Justice) earned Act 235 Lethal Weapons Training Instructor Certification and Handgun Instructor Certification in January 2015.

Dr. Yugo Ikach (Music) conducted the Washington Symphony Orchestra in the concert *Love Hurts* at Trinity High School, Washington, PA, February 14, 2015.

Dr. Susan Jasko (Communication Studies) recorded an episode of The Weather Channel's *The Weather Geeks* at the AMS Annual Convention in Phoenix, AZ, January 5, 2015. The episode is scheduled to air February 22, 2015, at noon EDT.

Dr. Libby Larsen (Modern Languages, Philosophy, and Socio-Cultural Studies) and her Evaluation Research students, in collaboration with Cal U's Career and Professional Development Center, designed, carried out, and analyzed an evaluation of CPDC's Mock Interview Program, January-March 2015.

Dr. Thomas Mueller (Earth Sciences) was appointed co-coordinator for the 2015 *Undergraduate Geospatial Technology Skills Competition*, January 15, 2015.

Dr. Michele Pagen (Theatre and Dance) was asked to serve as Artistic Consultant on *Gala 100: An Evening with Itzak Perlman* at Carnegie Hall, Pittsburgh, PA, March 31, 2015.

Dr. Matthew Price (Chemistry and Physics) was appointed lead for the ACS "On the Road" series in the

American Chemical Society-Pittsburgh Section for 2015-16.

Dr. Marty Sharer (Music) was guest conductor for the Washington County High School Honor Band at Charleroi Area High School, February 6, 2015.

Dr. Emily Sweitzer (Modern Languages, Philosophy, and Socio-Cultural Studies) participated in a promotional spot on WPXI Pittsburgh for the new Sociology concentration in Social Deviance, featuring the TV show *Blacklist*, January 27, 2015.

Dr. Sweitzer is a psychological and socio-cultural consultant for *Blacklist*, *Bones*, and *CSI*.

Dr. Kimberly Woznack (Chemistry and Physics) accepted a three-year appointment as a member of the Committee on Women Chemists of the American Chemical Society.





ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STAFF

Dr. Bruce D. Barnhart
Acting Provost

Dr. Daniel E. Engstrom
Associate Provost
for Student Success

Bobbie Jo Cetera
Administrative Assistant

Andrew Galla
Application Developer

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Jodie Rooney
Academic Events & Act 48
Coordinator

Dr. Caryl Sheffield
Associate Provost

Caleb Tom
Application Developer

Dr. Stephen H. Whitehead
Associate Provost of
Innovation

Heidi Williams
Registrar

Department & Program Accomplishments

Chemistry and Physics students Sharon Groover, Topher Leghart and Jodi McAnulty participated at *Pittcon 2015* in New Orleans, LA, March 8-12, 2015. Faculty sponsor Dr. Gregg Gould served as Chairman-Elect of Exposition.

Dr. Thomas Mueller co-created, with Earth Sciences students, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Flash Flood Potential Index for the National Weather Service's Pittsburgh Office, January 14, 2015.

History and Political Science faculty Dr. Michael Slaven, Dr. Melanie Blumberg, and Dr. Kelton Edmonds, along with Dr. Mohamed Yamba (Dean, Liberal Arts) and student Wes-

ley Attwood, presented a paper, "The Party Playbook" at the *2015 Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association* in New Orleans, LA, January 15-17, 2015.

Dr. Marty Sharer (Music) took four Cal U Band members to participate in the *Intercollegiate Band Festival* hosted at Bloomsburg University of PA, March 6-8, 2015.

The Pi Rho Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (the Honor Society of Nursing) held their *Spring Educational Program* at Palazzo in Quail Acres, Washington, PA, March 4, 2015. The program featured Dr. Martha Kingman Liberty presenting on "Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension."

Dr. Sheri Boyle and Dr. Norma Thomas (Social Work), along with MSW student Matthew Crutchman, presented "The Silver Generation Program: An Example of the Importance of Community Attachment and Aging in Place" at the *American Society on Aging Annual Conference* in Chicago, IL, March 26, 2015.

Dr. Michele Pagen and Mr. Brian Eisiminger (Theatre and Dance), along with students Jason Capello, Molly Malady, Sarah Martik, and Clayton Rush, attended the *Estill World Voice Symposium* in Melbourne, Australia, January 1-9, 2015.

Student & Alumni Accomplishments

The Cal U Jazz Ensemble performed at Latitude 40 in Pittsburgh, PA, February 15, 2015.

Dr. Kelley Flaherty (M.S., Biological and Environmental Sciences '04) completed her Ph.D. at West Virginia University and is now an assistant professor at

Alderson Broaddus University in Philippi, WV.

Andrew McLynch (Senior, History and Political Science) is nominated for the Syed R. Ali-Zaidi Award for Academic Excellence. Thus far, he has been accepted to the University of Virginia School of Law, Wake Forest School of

Law, and Washington University in St. Louis School of Law.

Jared Zinn (B.S., Biological and Environmental Sciences '04) is now the Watershed Specialist for the Greene County Conservation District.