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Report of the President's Task Force on Undergraduate Research

In October 2012, President Jones formed a Task Force for Undergraduate Research at Cal U as a follow up to a PASSHE-wide project with the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) focused on institutionalizing undergraduate research throughout the system. The Cal U task force was given the charge "to make recommendations to the President on how Cal U can enhance and expand undergraduate research" and assigned three targeted objectives:

1. To maximize opportunities for faculty members and undergraduate students to engage in research, scholarship, and creative activities, which contribute to academic and professional success
2. To increase faculty-student engagement, improve undergraduate students' perceptions of their self-efficacy in conducting research, increase students' perception of the level of academic challenge at Cal U, and make students more active participants in their own education and development
3. To develop Cal U's infrastructure, operational policies, and resources so the institution may support, enhance and expand undergraduate research

The members of the President's Task Force included Summer Arrigo-Nelson (Biological & Environmental Sciences), Margaret Christopher (Social Work), Paul Crawford (History and Political Science), Marcia Hoover (Secondary Education and Administrative Leadership), Kurt Kearcher (English), Stan Komacek (co-chair, Graduate Studies and Research), Anthony Mauro (University Development), John Nass (co-chair, Justice, Law and Society), Cynthia Persinger (Art and Design), Robert Skwarecki (Communication Disorders), Stephen Whitehead (Academic Affairs).

During an eleven-month period, the task force reviewed published CUR resources; including a standard definition of undergraduate research, presented and solicited information in various venues on campus, surveyed the organization of undergraduate research at colleges/universities similar in size to Cal U, and conducted separate surveys of Cal U department chairs and faculty. On September 6, 2013, the task force submitted their report to President Jones. The report describes the work completed by the task force, summarizes the findings of the surveys conducted, and presents a series of recommendations and action steps organized around five broad categories:

1. Build on Successes
2. Education & Internal Marketing
3. Curriculum Revisions & Faculty Workloads
4. Funding
5. Change the Culture

The task force members hoped the report would be a starting point for discussions campus-wide regarding this important topic at Cal U. The members of the task force look forward to working with the campus community to review the report and develop a blueprint for enhancing and expanding research by undergraduate students as a high-impact practice.

December
2013

Academic Affairs

Newsletter



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 provides students with the tools they need to have a lifetime of success, both educationally and professionally.

From the Desk of Acting Provost Dr. Barnhart

By providing external funding, grants create opportunities for our students, our faculty and our University. The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research reports that seven faculty and staff members were notified of new grant awards totaling more than \$246,067 this quarter.

Accreditations provide assurance that our University's programs meet national standards for excellence. This quarter the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education extended the accreditation for Cal U's bachelor's degree program in nursing through 2023, and it accredited the master's degree program in nursing until 2018.

The Graphics and Multimedia program was awarded national re-accreditation beginning September 1, 2013. The program at California University of Pennsylvania was originally awarded accreditation by ACCGC on September 1, 2007. This program is among eleven, associate and baccalaureate level, graphic communications related programs nationwide to have received this distinction.

The Department of Chemistry and Physics hosted a visit from the accrediting wing of the American Chemical Society. This is an important step for the Chemistry Department, which is seeking its initial ACS accreditation.

Endorsements by outside agencies also validate the work of our student support initiatives. This quarter Cal U was ranked among the nation's best colleges for service

members and military veterans by three different groups: Victory Media, publisher of GI Jobs magazine; Military Times, which produces publications for the Army, Navy and Marine Corps; and U.S. Veterans magazine. This recognition reflects our military-friendly climate on campus, our active Veterans Affairs Office, and our outreach to service members through Cal U Global Online.

And finally, a round of applause for student Nick Patton, a senior whose research project on the chemistry of a Washington County wetlands earned him first prize in the PASSHE STEM Conference. Nick's poster was one of 75 submitted by science and technology students from all 14 PASSHE universities. His project was supervised by Dr. Min Li, of the Chemistry Department, and Dr. Kyle Fredrick, of Earth Sciences.

Wishing you the best this holiday season.
Sincerely,

Bruce D. Barnhart

Acting Provost



Masters in Sports Management Ranks # 6 in the Nation

We are pleased to announce that Cal U's online M.S. in Sports Management program has been ranked #6 in the nation by TheBestSchools.org.

The program was selected on the basis of a variety of weighted factors, including overall academic excellence, course offerings, and return on investment, among others.

Other colleges on this list are Texas A&M, Washington State University and Drexel University.

This ranking is recognition of the hardwork of the faculty who support this program. We want to congratulate Dr. Carol Biddington, Dr. Mary Kries, Dr. Laura Miller, Dr. Robert Taylor, and Dr. Brian Wood on this accomplishment.



Office of Sponsored Programs & Research

The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research reports that 7 Cal U faculty and staff received notification of new grant awards totaling more than \$246,067 during this quarter:

Dr. David Argent (Biological and Environmental Sciences) received \$10,000 from the Richard King Mellon Foundation through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the grant Inventory of Fishes in Unassessed Tributaries within the Kiski-Connemaugh and Youghiogheny River Basins.

Ms. Donna George (Student Affairs) received \$40,000 from the PA Liquor Control Board for the grant Reaching Each in Our Cal Community.

Dr. Gregg Gould (Chemistry and Physics) received \$3,000 from the Society of Analytical Chemists of Pittsburgh (SACP) for the grant Chemistry Lab Equipment Fall 2013.

Dr. Daniel Harris (Earth Sciences) received \$109,438 from Midland Valley Exploration Ltd. for the grant Move – Academic Site Software License.

Dr. Vanessa MacKinnon (Exercise Science and Sports Studies) received \$3,675 from the Women's Sports Foundation for the grant Cal U Girls' Golf Initiative.

Dr. Katherine Mitchem (Special Education) and Dr. Kalie Kossar (Special Education) received \$53,139 from the U.S. Department of Education for the grant HQ-TEEMS 2013-2014 (Highly Qualified Teachers in Exceptional Education, Math and Science).

Dr. Thomas Mueller (Earth Sciences) received \$26,815 from the National Science Foundation through Jefferson Community and Technical College for the grant The National Geospatial Center of Excellence – GeoTech Center.



Faculty and Staff Publications

Dr. Paula Caffrey (Biological and Environmental Sciences) has coauthored a research paper with Gerald D. Frenkel (Rutgers University) entitled "Prevention of Carboplatin-induced Resistance in Human Ovarian Tumor Xenografts by Selenite" in the journal *AntiCancer Research*, Vol 33, no.10, pp.4249-4254, October 2013.

Dr. Kevin Govern (Professional Studies) was the lead author of: *Guns for Hire, Death on Demand: The Permissibility of United States Outsourcing of Drone Attacks to Civilian Surrogates of the Armed Forces and Challenges to Traditional Just-War Theory*, in *Florida Journal of International Law* Vol. 25, Issue No. 2 Fall 2013.

Dr. Justin D. Hackett (Psychology) published "Further to the right: Uncertainty, political polarization and the American "Tea Party" movement" in the *Social Influence*, with Amber M. Gaffney, David E. Rast III, and

Michael A. Hogg, 2013. Dr. Brent House (English) published "Augur of Screen," *Poecology*, 3 (2013); "from Augur of Magus," *Tupelo Quarterly* 1 (2013); "Pastoral [O fall down barn]," *2 Bridges Review* 3 (2013); and served as co-editor with Jeff Newberry of *The Gulf Stream: Poems of the Gulf Coast*. Valdosta, GA: Snake Nation Press, 2013.

Dr. Elizabeth Larsen (Justice, Law and Society) published, "Doing It Our Way! Women in Harness Horse Racing" in the *Journal of Applied Social Science*, Volume 7, Number 2, September 2013.

Dr. Thomas Mueller (Earth Sciences) and Bethany Bowersox published "HAZUS Data at Pennsylvania County Level" for *Federal Emergency Management Agency* December 10, 2013.

Dr. Mariana Pensa (Modern Languages and Cultures): "Across Borders: Latin Perspectives in the America Reshaping Religion, Theology

and Life". [Book review]. In *Critica Hispanica*, XXXVI, 2, December 2013.

Dr. Nancy Shaffer (Philosophy) published "Nicholas of Cusa's Idea of Theophany and the Retrieval of a "New" Model of God, in Jeanine Diller, ed., *Models of God and Other Ultimate Realities* (Springer, 2013).

Dr. Jody Spedaliere (English) published "Just Off the Highway to Discovery": Teaching Gary Margolis' James Wright Was My Teacher" (Chapter 14) in *The Poetic Classroom*. Pittsburgh: Autumn House Press, 2013.

Dr. Greg Taranto (Administrative Leadership) published "Behind the switch: A school-business project-based learning partnership is energizing learning for middle school students" in *The Pennsylvania Administrator*, September 2013.

Cal U student clubs offer solution for real world problems

Two student-run organizations, PRactitioners and Studio 224, are using the skills they are learning in their public relations and graphic design classes to serve real-world clients.

Their services have been utilized by on-campus clients, like the Provost's office, where they were key in the Eval week project undertaken this semester. They have expanded past campus, with clients ranging from Zelenski's Bridal and Prom Shop in Charleroi to a day care center located in the South Hills.

Susan Jasko, a professor in the communication students department at Cal U and faculty advisor for Cal U's PRSSA chapter, said the partnership prepares students for what they will likely experience after graduation.

"After graduation, PR students are going to be working alongside designers anyway, so why not start building those relationships now?" she said. "This way students begin to understand each others roles and learn how to effectively collaborate."