FESTIVAL OF SCHOLARSHIP, APRIL 10 - 12

WWU Hosts Conference that Highlights Student Voices

Luke Ware, Festival Student Co-coordinator

Western Washington University is hosting a national academic conference celebrating collaborative inquiry that honors the inclusion of student voices, on April 10-12, in the Viking Union.

The three-day conference, Festival of Scholarship: Celebrating Collaborative Inquiry, features approximately 175 presenters including 65 undergraduates, 20 graduate students, 65 faculty, and 20 staff/administration/community members from 15 different institutions nationally and internationally.

The conference is distinctive, not only because students have been so integral in its planning, but also because it features a majority

Continued on pg. 2

NWCCU accreditation site visit set for April 7 - 9

An accreditation evaluation team will be on Western’s campus April 7 – 9, performing a site visit as a final part of the university’s 10-year accreditation review process with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU),

The evaluation team (composed of 10 administrators and faculty, all except the chair from NWCCU member universities) will evaluate how well Western fulfills the nine standards required for NWCCU accreditation. Prior to its visit, the team will review Western’s comprehensive accreditation self-study report, which was done over the past two years and published in February.

Western’s final self-study report, information about the evaluation team, accreditation process and standards, are available at the Accreditation Resources website:

http://www.wwu.edu/depts/vpue/accreditation/index.html

The website can also be reached via a link from the President’s home page, or by going to the Provost’s home page and clicking the link in the “Announcements” section.

Meet with Accreditation Team Members

Three separate public forums for students, faculty, and staff have been organized, so that one or more members of the evaluation team have the opportunity to talk with as many individuals as possible. The campus community is encouraged to attend:

Students Forum—Monday, April 7 at 1 pm, Bond Hall 403
Staff Forum—Tuesday, April 8, 11 am, Bond Hall 225
Faculty Forum—Tuesday, April 8 at 1 pm, Science Lecture Hall 110

Festival of Scholarship: Celebrating Collaborative Inquiry
April 10-12, Viking Union
Complete conference schedule at:

http://www.festivalofscholarship.com

(Sessions free to campus community, registration required for meals)

WWU’s Teaching-Learning Academy—serving as the national conference coordinating group—invites students, faculty, staff, administration and community members into a sustainable dialogue on teaching and learning.

The program has 65 sessions on disciplinary-based topics ranging from art to writing, as well as presentations focusing on teaching and learning research. Sessions are free to the campus and community though space may be limited.

To learn more—and if you want to sign up for a cruise of Bellingham Bay on the evening of April 11 ($45)—go to the website or call x/6304.

> > Inside—
Western Reads pick, pg. 2
CII Spring workshops & events, pg. 3
Western Reads
“The Battle Over the Meaning of Everything” selected for 2008—’09

Western Reads, the campus-wide reading program, has selected its 2008 book, Gordy Slack’s “The Battle Over the Meaning of Everything: Evolution, Intelligent Design and a School Board in Dover, PA.”

The book will be given to all incoming first-year and transfer students. Author and journalist Gordy Slack will also visit campus for two days in November and lead discussions on his book.

According to Mary Janell Metzger, Western Reads Director and associate professor in the English Department, Slack offers readers a compelling account of the 2005 lawsuit against the Dover, PA school board’s mandate to teach “Intelligent Design.” A former editor of the journal Natural History and son of a creationist advocate, Slack provides an even-handed narrative of the community and issues at the core of this historic trial.

Faculty members who are interested in using Slack’s book in classes, participating in programs focused on Slack’s book, or participating during his visit to Western—or who simply require more information—should contact Metzger via email, Mary.Metzger@wwu.edu, or phone, x/3238.

Festival of Scholarship (continued from pg. 1)

of student presenters.

“Our goal from the beginning has been to ensure that students, and not just faculty and staff, are part of the process,” said Bill Lay, Woodring professor and conference Advisory Board member.

The idea for a conference that embodies collaboration with students emerged from a partnership between the Teaching-Learning Academy (TLA), the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL), and Fairhaven College, a member of the Consortium for Innovative Environments in Learning (CIEL).

Over a year ago, members of the TLA and CIEL— a growing network of progressive higher education institutions that focus on faculty development through sharing ideas and broadening resources for teaching—put together an advisory board including students, faculty, and staff to help shape the entire conference together from the ground up.

TLA Director Carmen Werder notes that another hallmark of the Festival is that all sessions will close with a dialogue segment, modeled on the TLA and facilitated by students, including many WWU Resident Advisors.

Two Thursday sessions will highlight findings from studies involving the TLA itself.

11 am—12:30 pm—“Talking Like the Teaching-Learning Academy: Building Sustainable Dialogue,” co-presented by Megan Otis, Cora Thomas, and Luke Ware.

2—2:45 pm—Dialogue as Assessment: A Case Study on Disruptions in the Classroom,” co-presented by Michael Murphy and Carmen Werder.

Continued on back page
Center for Instructional Innovation:
April is Assessment Month!
Karen Casto, CII Director

Writing Effective Exams
Monday, April 14, from 1-4 pm, VU 462 (A&B)
(Reservations required)
Guest speaker and University of Illinois Professor Emeritus Doug Bernstein will conduct his in-depth “Writing Effective Exams” workshop, which focuses on how to create effective multiple-choice tests. Attendees will discuss principles, tips and suggestions for the creation of useful multiple choice items and take part in an analytical exercise on collectively strengthening the content of peer-submitted examples. Space is limited, so please RSVP to Karen Casto at Karen.Casto@wwu.edu or x/4943.

Using Data to Understand Western Students
Thursday, April 24, from 3-4 pm, Miller Hall 158
Richard Bulcroft and Linda Clark from Western’s Office of Survey Research will discuss the role of the Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) as a means to analyze crucial social and academic precursors to Western students’ performance. As told through the voices of the students themselves, the relationships between students’ pre-collegiate experiences (expectations, high school, family background) and their effect on the struggles and outcomes of their first-year experience will be thoroughly explored and discussed. No RSVP is required for this event.

Online Learning Modules (AKA, “5-Minute Workshops”)
Additionally, the CII is excited to introduce several assessment-related videos in its ongoing online learning modules program. These modules—which are approx. five minutes long—can be viewed by faculty from their desktop computers:

“Using Assessment to Improve Instruction,” written and narrated by Bill Moore, coordinator of student Outcomes Assessment for the Washington State Community and Technical College system. This module illustrates the valuable potential of integrating assessment as a means to improve courses.

“Concept Maps” highlights Communication professor Karen Stout’s new method for students to effectively learn concepts in a course. These modules—and others in the series—will be available in the coming months at http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/cii/resources/modules.

CII’s Innovative Teaching Showcase Explores “Creating a Culture of Writing”
The Center for Instructional Innovation’s annual Innovative Teaching Showcase will be published on the web on June 1, “Creating a Culture of Writing,” honors faculty who emphasize the crucial importance of writing fundamentals in their course assignments. Faculty members featured in this year’s showcase are: Robert Mitchell, Geology; Julia Sapin, Art; and Kathleen Saunders, Anthropology.

Showcase Open House
Tuesday, June 3, 11:30 am-1:30 pm at the CII, College Hall 310
At the open house, you can see it all, as well as meet the directors and staff of the CII, enjoy refreshments, and meet this year’s featured instructors. Additional topics of discussion will include the implementation of effective writing principles into coursework, as well as the promotion of writing comprehension through Western’s rich network of instructional resources. (http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/cii/)
More Festival of Scholarship, continued from pg. 2

“I’m really looking forward to hearing from student scholars from other institutions and connecting with them,” said Megan Otis, anthropology graduate student and Advisory Board Member.

The advisory board met regularly to coordinate all conference sessions and events as well as relaying information from the Festival’s five work groups. Members are: Diana Cline (Univ. Planning/Budgeting), Deb Currier (Theater Arts). Whitney Dunbar (Accounting jr), Leslie Driediger (Human Services, sr); Craig Dunn (Management), Marie Eaton (Fairhaven), Roger Gilman (Fairhaven), Joyce Hammond (Anthropology), Bill Lay (Spec. Ed), Mike Murphy (Human Services, jr), Megan Otis (grad student, Anthro); Kathy Patrick (Huxley); Karen Stout (Communication), Jane Verner (Human Services), Luke Ware (Communication senior), Carmen Werder (Communication and TLA Director)

The event is possible through the generous support of a number of WWU sponsors including the President, the Provost, Student Affairs, six colleges, the TLA, and the AS Student Voices club, as well as CIEL and a number of local businesses.

Festival of Scholarship on the web: http://www.festivalofscholarship.com/
TLA on the web: http://www.wwu.edu/tla/