Academic Affairs Announcements

There is so much good going on at WCU. Classes are underway, new and returning students are all over campus (a record 80% retention 1st to 2nd year – yeah!), and new pathways around campus are developing because of construction, to name just of few of those things. What is constant is the culture of conversation across campus. I encourage you to engage in the "Collaborate: A Series of Campus Conversations" events, addressing four areas of the 2020 Strategic Plan, that are central to WCU’s future success. They are as follows: increasing diversity on campus, preparing for a comprehensive fundraising campaign to boost scholarship dollars, enhancing the total student experience, and investing in our people. Each session will have up to 40 participants (registration required) and will be facilitated by a staff and a faculty member. If you can’t make the conversations, an online comment tool has been developed so that you may be involved. Information on each topic, the schedule, registration instructions, and the online comment tool can be found at [http://www.wcu.edu/collaborate/](http://www.wcu.edu/collaborate/). Please make plans to participate in this important university initiative.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 1st</td>
<td>8:00 - 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Graduate School &amp; Research Meeting</td>
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<td>1:30 - 2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>College of Health &amp; Human Sciences Meeting</td>
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<td>2:30 - 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>QEP Topics Presentations</td>
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<td>September 2nd</td>
<td>5:00 - 7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Samaritan’s Feet with Manny Ohonme</td>
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<td>September 3rd</td>
<td>11:00 - 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Employee Appreciation Day Luncheon Event</td>
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<td>September 22nd</td>
<td>12:00 - 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Distinguished Professor Luncheon</td>
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<td>September 25th</td>
<td>2:00 - 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>College of Business Meeting</td>
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<td>3:30 - 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Judaculla Garden Dedication</td>
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<td>September 26th</td>
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<td>Mountain Heritage Day</td>
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<td>September 30th</td>
<td>8:30 - 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs Council Dept. of Geosciences &amp; Natural Resources</td>
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<td>11:00 - 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Chancellor’s List and Awards Presentation</td>
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<td>5:00 - 6:30 p.m.</td>
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Announcement from the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

Welcome New Faculty Associate for Assessment

The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness and Coulter Faculty Commons would like to welcome Dr. Laura DeWald, Professor and Program Director for Environmental Science in the Department of Geosciences and Natural Resources, as the 2015-2016 Faculty Associate for Assessment. Dr. DeWald brings her experiences in curriculum and program assessment gained at several academic institutions, including here at WCU, to this position. These experiences include mentoring faculty in the development of their assessment plans and teaching assessment in forums such as WCU’s Summer Institute for Teaching and Learning. In addition to her experience gained at academic institutions, she has served for many years on a national committee on accreditation for a professional organization where curriculum assessment was based on student learning outcomes. Her service on this committee exposed her to assessment plans for many different types and sizes of programs throughout the US. As Laura said “I look forward to learning even more about what is happening at WCU and am excited to share my assessment experience with the community.”

Amazon Web Services Immersion Days

During the spring of 2014, the Academic Engagement and IT Governance office performed a study on “Faculty IT Research Needs” from which it concluded that faculty need high performance computing for scholarly research. To that end, WCU’s High Performance Research Computing (HPRC) Services will provide Amazon Web Services (AWS) for faculty use starting in October. To kick off the new services, we will be offering AWS Immersion Days for faculty and staff to learn about the services. Watch for registration news coming out soon. The program will take place on October 21st with lunch at noon and hands on learning until 5:00 p.m. and again on October 22nd at 9:00 a.m. until noon in Cordelia Camp. Save the dates, and stay tuned for more information!
The Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC) and the Mathematics Tutoring Center (MTC)

Submitted by Chesney A. Reich, Director, Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC)

On any given day, hundreds of students visit tutors in the Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC) and the Mathematics Tutoring Center (MTC). In some instances, students need minor assistance—help with APA style or with a particularly difficult math problem. In many cases, students’ interactions with peer tutors empower them to succeed in ways they never imagined. Ashleigh Gay, a senior Spanish major who sought help at the WaLC as a sophomore, now works there. “My tutor, Miranda Welgos, not only helped me with Spanish but also encouraged me to broaden my horizons and study in Latin America. She was very influential in my life, and her passion for Spanish was contagious. I decided to become a tutor in order to inspire and help others,” Ashleigh shared.

During the previous academic year, 4,215 students visited the WaLC and MTC 16,913 times for help in 475 different courses. Pre- and post-tutoring surveys indicate that tutoring increases students’ confidence in their abilities and gives them a renewed sense of responsibility for their academic success.

Each year, the WaLC and MTC employ more than 150 student tutors. To be eligible for tutoring positions, students must secure two faculty recommendations and participate in an interview. WaLC and MTC tutors are trained together in a series of 1-hour credit classes that have been certified by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), an internationally recognized organization that establishes common standards for tutoring in higher education. Key competencies taught in training include active listening, Socratic questioning, collaborative learning, referral skills, assertiveness, and learning theory. Tutors who complete training courses and work a minimum of 25 hours receive CRLA certification and pay increases.

The WaLC and MTC rely on faculty to identify courses in which tutoring services are needed, and to recruit qualified tutors. Faculty are encouraged to contact the WaLC and MTC to discuss how tutoring services can benefit their students. For more information, contact Chesney Reich, WaLC Director, at reich@wcu.edu, or Ben Kearns, MTC Director, at btkearns@wcu.edu.
WCU Community chooses “Courses to Careers” as QEP Topic

Submitted by Arthur Salido, Director of SACS-COC

“Courses to Careers” will be the topic of focus for the university’s next Quality Enhancement Plan. After a September 1st public forum that included presentations about eight proposed QEP topics, WCU students, faculty, staff, and alumni were given the opportunity to vote for their favorite through a web link sent by email. Voting took place between September 2-12, and nearly 1,000 votes were recorded. Sloan Despeaux, chair of the QEP Topic Selection Committee, said, “‘Courses to Careers’ was the clear winner not only winning in our points system of voting, but it also was a clear winner in the popular vote.” With the full title, “Courses to Careers: Building Psychosocial Competency,” the chosen topic was authored by Shauna Sleight, director of Campus Recreation and Wellness, and Ty Marion, a graduate student in the Master of Business Administration Program. Tonya Westbrook, WCU associate professor of Social Work, will be heading up the QEP implementation committee as the university goes forward in developing the new plan. More information about the topic can be found at qep.wcu.edu.

Faculty Activity Database (FAD) News

The campus-wide implementation of the Faculty Activity Database (FAD) is now in full swing, and the latest developments are truly exciting for Western Carolina University. This fall marks the first time that faculty members in the College of Business and the College of Education and Allied Professions will be using the Cumulative Professional Record from the FAD in reappointment, promotion, and tenure dossiers. As detailed in the Provost’s Guidelines that Associate Provost Brandon Schwab distributed to the faculty last May, the Cumulative Professional Record replaces the CV and features a schedule teaching report that is pulled in automatically from Banner. We are fast approaching the day when preparing all evaluations will be done electronically using the FAD.

Digital Measures, the company in Milwaukee that designed the FAD, released its new user interface over the summer. A great advance over the sterile, one-column format many users may recall from the past, this new interface makes identifying screens easy and provides a better experience for those who use the database. The FAD team at WCU has worked with IT Services and Web Services to implement a new, shorter URL to make locating the database easier. Faculty can now type in fad.wcu.edu and quickly find the log-in screen.

The WCU FAD Coordinator, Andrew Adams, will attend the national User Group conference in Milwaukee this October. Adams has been selected to present a thirty-minute paper on his experiences with WCU’s implementation of the FAD over the past two years. In addition, he will take the required training to become a Certified Activity Insight Administrator.

Transitioning to the FAD has been remarkably smooth. If issues do arise please contact Andrew Adams at aadams@wcu.edu.
Student Spotlight

Nicole Martin
Film & Television Production Major

Nicole Martin is a Film & Television Production major at Western Carolina University. Within her major, she has chosen a concentration in production.

Throughout the past year, Nicole has produced two short films, and worked as an assistant stage manager of “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” at WCU. Also, she has recently become the president of the Eta Theta chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota.

Nicole moved to Los Angeles for the summer of 2015 to pursue an internship in the film industry. She worked for Revelations Entertainment, a production company created by Morgan Freeman and Lori McCreary, and was very involved with the development of upcoming films. Nicole also worked with a company called Dancing Pictures, a marketing and advertising company in Beverly Hills. She considers her biggest mentors of the summer to be Tracy Mercer, C. Fitz, and Diane Keaton.

This fall, Nicole is the Media Chief for the Pride of The Mountains Marching Band. She will also be producing the senior project film at WCU called “Love Is The Longest Con,” which will be featured in the 2016 Controlled Chaos Film Festival.

After completing her degree, Nicole plans to move back to Los Angeles to continue her career in the Film industry. “If I could pass along any advice I learned this summer, it would be that you will make mistakes. Own up to it, apologize once, and don’t make the mistake again. Work as hard as you possibly can, because words mean nothing without the work to back it up. And lastly, treat everyone with genuine kindness, because those who help you on the way up will catch you on the way down.”
Brent Kinser came to Western Carolina University in 2005 having completed his PhD at UNC Chapel Hill. His greatest source of pride is his teaching, in particular in his work with students on undergraduate research projects.

He received the RODIN Award from the Honors College (2013) in recognition of distinguished instruction and nurturing, and the College of Arts and Sciences Teaching Award (2015).


He is co-editor (with David R. Sorensen) of Carlyle’s On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History (2013), an edition published in Yale University Press’s “Rethinking the Western Tradition” series. He also co-edited (with Rodger L. Tarr) Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings’s Cross Creek Sampler (UP of Florida, 2011) and The Uncollected Writings of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (UP of Florida, 2007).

At present, he is working to complete Carlyle’s Literary Essays for the Strouse edition of Carlyle’s works, to be published by the University of California Press and an abridged edition of Carlyle’s biography of Frederick the Great.
Lane Perry
Director of the Center for Service Learning; Adjunct Faculty - College of Education and College of Business

Lane Perry completed his Bachelors of Business Administration and Masters of Adult Education and Training at the University of Central Oklahoma. As a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar, New Zealand International Doctoral Research Fellow, and Canterbury Doctoral Research Fellow, he achieved his Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education degree at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Most recently he has been recognized as the 2015 North Carolina Campus Compact Civic Engagement Professional of the Year and the 2015 co-recipient of the John Saltmarsh Award for Emerging Leaders in Civic Engagement.

One of Lane’s current projects involves collaborating with Kyra Huffsmith (Junior, Information Technology) and a team of representatives from Waynesville on a project named ARTPATH. ARTPATH plans to build capacity around the on-line marketplace for artists who would like to increase sales while helping the homeless and transition populations through the Pathways Center. The team is currently soliciting donations and partnerships with burgeoning and established artists in the county and through this ARTPATH is building an inventory to be valued at nearly $20,000. These artifacts will then be sold through the ARTPATH online marketplace, and all proceeds go back to the Pathways Center to assist with homeless and transition populations.

Lane lives by the belief that the only thing better than watching someone grow is helping them grow. He strives to help others grow in their passion, purpose, and calling on a daily basis, and in turn he consistently lives his purpose and calling. Currently, Lane lives in Waynesville, North Carolina with his wife, Dr. April Perry (Assistant Professor in the College of Education, Higher Education Student Affairs Program), his two year old daughter Prescott Perry, and his golden retriever – Riley.