Academic Affairs Announcements

Dean of the Kimmel School

The Division of Academic Affairs is pleased to announce that Dr. Jeffrey L. Ray has accepted the position of dean of the Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology at Western Carolina University effective August 1, 2014. Dr. Ray has most recently served as dean of the School of Engineering Technology and Management at Southern Polytechnic State University in Marietta, Georgia. Please join us in congratulating Dr. Ray and welcoming him and his wife, Tina, to Cullowhee!

Director of SACSCOC Reaffirmation

The provost office is excited to welcome Dr. Stephen Miller as the new director of SACSCOC Reaffirmation. Steve comes to us from the College of Business where he served as associate professor of economics. "I am very excited to join my colleagues in the Provost's Office. Not only do they possess a great deal of knowledge and insight on accreditation issues, but they have made me thoroughly feel welcome in my new role." Dr. Miller’s position is a three-year appointment tasked with the role of ensuring the university’s commitment to quality via the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges reaffirmation process.
Academic Affairs is heavily involved in celebrating the 125th anniversary of WCU’s founding. To that end, students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to view two exhibits in the Mountain Heritage Center (HF Robinson Building ground floor) on the history of WCU and on the 40th anniversary of Mountain Heritage Day, our annual festival for campus and local community. Also, in conjunction with the institution’s birthday, undergraduate and graduate students in Dr. Jessie Swigger’s Public History Course (HIS 471/571) worked with the Mountain Heritage Center and Special Collections to design and publish a Historic Walking Tour depicting the rich history of the Cullowhee campus and immediate surrounding area. Important sites such as the Madison Memorial (named for WCU’s founder), the Catafount (created with the new courtyard in 2011), and Moore Building (the oldest building on campus—built in 1925) are highlighted on the tour. Click on the 125th Anniversary link [www.wcu.edu/celebrate125](http://www.wcu.edu/celebrate125) (click on History and scroll to the bottom of the page) or contact the Office of Undergraduate Studies (burton@email.wcu.edu) to receive a copy of the Walking Tour brochure.

Celebrating 125 Years of History

Executive Director of Programs at Biltmore Park

A search committee chaired by Provost Alison Morrison-Shetlar was appointed to identify candidates for the executive director of programs at Biltmore Park. The committee is in the process of reviewing finalists for the position. For more information, please visit the Programs at Biltmore Park or Provost Office Webpage.

Director of International Programs and Services

The provost appointed a search committee chaired by Dr. Lowell K. Davis. Three candidates have been invited to campus. Please visit the Academic Affairs Administrative Searches page for more information.
Fourteen students associated with the Ripple Effect Learning Community (RELC) traveled to London, Paris and Munich to focus on different community issues and to work with local nonprofit organizations to help address and learn more about the issues.

In London there are over 1,000 registered community gardens. This is a city with one of the greatest community garden concentrations in the world. While in London, students focused on collaborative service experiences with the Chiswick House and Gardens staff and helped within the gardens. Learning firsthand how community gardens can supplement food within a community is an important realization. Seeing how Londoners use community gardens to combat food insecurity was an educational experience for these students. Students continually made connections with their experiences abroad and their WCU life. For example, about the poverty related projects, Cassie Scott said, “[Some of] the service projects were similar to the hours I spent working at The Community Table. It all dealt with poverty and it teaches you to help and ask why, rather than judge or overlook.”

In Paris the team worked with the American Church of Paris on an entrepreneurial project developed by community member, Jurie Ane Feleo. One of Paris’s major societal issues is homelessness. In Paris, homeless people are referred to as “rough sleepers”. Through this project students were able to learn more about this issue and learn some of the solutions occurring at the government and grassroots level. Senior Wes Myers noted that the project in Paris, “is the one that stuck with [him] the most. This is due to seeing both sides of the equation; those locals trying to help and also seeing and engaging with the issue plainly on the street.” With regard to the best part of the project, he noted the possibility of starting something like this where he lives.

In Munich the team visited two refugee centers (Caritas, government and church funded; and Jonas Better Place, privately funded). Currently, Munich has more Syrian refugees than any other European city. While we did not work exclusively with Syrian refugees (there were refugees from many different countries), we did bear witness to some Syrian refugees in transition. Visiting, serving, and learning at the two refugee centers in Munich took an issue that is typically at arm’s length and brought it to life and made it real. Dr. Cyndy Caravelis Hughes noted that, “by visiting the refugee centers, the students were challenged to focus on the inequalities that occur between racial, ethnic, social and economic lines. The course objective most totally captured by the experience was applying the concepts of social justice to reevaluate their worldviews. I don’t think that there was a single student who returned unchanged from the experiences.”
This June, a team of five WCU representatives attended the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ (AAC&U) Institute on High-Impact Practices (HIPS) and Student Success at Vanderbilt University. Team members included Chesney Reich, director of the Writing and Learning Commons; Lowell Davis, assistant vice chancellor for student success; Mark Lord, department head and professor, geosciences and natural resources; Alexander Macaulay, associate professor of history; and Gayle Wells, associate professor of health and physical education. Dr. AJ Grube, department head and professor in business administration and law and sport management, also assisted with the team’s application. Prior to the institute, campus teams submitted an inventory of their institution’s current HIPS, which could include first year seminars and experiences, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity and global learning, service learning, internships, and capstone courses or projects. Teams were asked to gather data on student learning outcomes and achievement, to reflect on factors influencing the implementation and sustainability of HIPS, and to propose a project that would advance their University’s efforts to create an inclusive, engaged, and high-quality educational experience for students.

WCU’s team project focused on the creation of a new learning community model that extends beyond the first year and that connects students with opportunities to participate in undergraduate research, international experiences, internships, and service learning. During the institute, team members were divided into four learning tracks: high-impact learning, assessment, design and implementation, and politics of change. Over the course of four days, team members attended skill-building sessions based on their assigned tracks and then met as a team to share what they had learned. The Institute culminated in the development of an action plan for implementing the extended learning community model at Western. The team’s next steps will include identifying funding sources, outlining an assessment plan, and garnering support from a key group of faculty and staff who will pilot the program in fall 2015.

A recent study by Finley and McNair (2013) reveals that students experience significant gains in learning when they participate in multiple HIPS across their college careers and that students from underserved populations experience even greater educational gains than traditional students. The extended learning community model proposed by WCU’s team has the potential to make a significant impact on student learning by ensuring that students participate in multiple HIPS during their first two years at WCU. To learn more about the HIPS Institute and to access additional resources from AAC&U, visit http://www.aacu.org/summerinstitutes/hips/participants.cfm.
Mackenzie Moody is a rising senior at Western Carolina University studying philosophy. Over the 2014 summer she has worked with the Center for Service Learning (CSL) as an AmeriCorps*VISTA Summer Associate focusing on food insecurity in Jackson County. As a summer associate, she works with several local community groups to evaluate and provide services for underprivileged families in the area.

Supervisor and CSL assistant director Jennifer Cooper said “Mackenzie has done a stellar job of engaging with the community. She has really thrown herself into this project, and it’s been great to see how quickly she’s developed strong relationships with our local hunger relief efforts, community gardens, and education programs.”

In June 2014, she helped the Cullowhee Community Garden grow crops and provided a total of 60 pounds of food that was donated to The Market. In July, the Healthy Futures Garden Initiative program, which she developed from the ground up, took place for the first time. Twenty five students visited the Cullowhee Community Garden to learn about where food comes from, what makes a garden great, and how organic farming impacts individuals and communities. When Mackenzie is not in the garden, she is working with the Jackson County branch of the MANNA Food Pack Program based in the Cullowhee Baptist Church. The program delivers food to children and teens in the Jackson County school system on a weekly basis. To date, the program has delivered over one thousand meals.

CSL Director, Dr. Lane Perry, described having Mackenzie in the CSL over the 2014 summer, “she has a knack for shaping her ideas in a way that engages others and in turn has the skills for organizing people around her ideas. I have been most impressed with her willingness to get into her projects. Her start from yes attitude is contagious!”

When she graduates in May of 2015, Mackenzie plans on getting her master’s degree in public affairs and nonprofit management.
N. Leroy Kauffman has been a member of the Western Carolina University faculty since 1994. Kauffman began his career at Western as an associate professor in the department of accounting and information systems. He was appointed associate dean of the College of Business in May 2000, a position he held until being named interim dean in July 2002 and later dean of the College of Business. Through those appointments, he has continued as an associate professor of accounting.

Prior to joining the Western faculty, Kauffman held teaching positions at Eastern Mennonite College, The Ohio State University and Virginia Tech. Kauffman received a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Eastern Mennonite College in 1977, an MBA from the University of Montana in 1978, and PhD in accounting from Ohio State in 1988. Leroy also maintains a CPA license in North Carolina.

At Western, Kauffman has served on numerous committees at the university, college and departmental levels, including the Dean’s Council, Task Force on Drug and Alcohol, Council on Faculty Affairs, General Education Review Committee, and the Faculty Senate where he currently serves as chair. He is a member of the Beta Alpha Psi accounting honorary society, and the Delta Sigma Pi business professional fraternity.

In 1999, Kauffman was a finalist for Western’s Jay I. Kneedler Professor of Excellence Award, and in 2014 he won the Undergraduate Professor of Excellence Award in the College of Business. He has received other teaching honors while on the faculties of Virginia Tech and Ohio State.

Leroy lives in Waynesville with his wife, Judy. They have three grown children, one of them a WCU graduate, and two grandchildren. Leroy is involved with numerous community and church activities and enjoys gardening and working around the yard when time permits.
“Serving the 1,300 or so Honors Students as Executive Assistant for The Honors College for the last eight years has been only one highlight of my 43 year relationship with Western, although perhaps the best. When my husband was hired into the Theatre Department in 1971, I became involved with the Newcomers Club and the Alpha Xi Delta Chapter on campus. Once our daughters were old enough, we began a long relationship with the Girl Scouts, including my being on Pisgah Council’s Board of Directors. When Dogwood Crafters organized in Dillsboro in 1977, I became inspired to become a “crafter,” and currently volunteer as Newsletter Editor.

When I accepted the position with The Honors College, I had previously achieved five years of state credit. My first day on my new job there was a luncheon and I was asked to fill out a card for them to read as I came to the stage to receive my 5-year charm. As I recall, I said that this was the first day of my ninth position over 14 years at Western and I have finally achieved 5 years of credit. One of my part time positions was with WCU Micronet, teaching NC K-12 faculty as well as WCU faculty and students the tools of email and networking with Patti Johnson. Another was Office Assistant in the Dean’s Office of Hunter Library. I have also served as Communication Specialist with the Local Government Training Program as well as for Tom McClure for NAMTAC and as a Community Development Specialist. Directly prior to The Honors College, I worked with student organizations in the UC.

I don’t think I could pick a favorite pursuit. I have met and enjoyed the people and processes involved in each step of my life here (one third of the life of the university.) A lovely tribute was included in The Honors College graduates’ medaling ceremony this past May, as well as the Order of the Rose ceremony by my AXD sisters. As Richard and I retire, we move to different challenges with great love and respect for Western.”