WCU Team to Attend Summer Learning Communities Institute

This summer, several faculty and staff will attend the National Summer Institute on Learning Communities at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. The institute will guide the team in its continuing efforts to create meaningful, high-impact activities in the lives of our students (especially first generation and traditionally underserved student populations with the highest risk of attrition). Learning Communities serve to create a better relationship between students and their institutions by improving retention rates, student satisfaction, and grade point average. While in Olympia, the team will develop a two-year action plan for the creation of a new Learning Community model.

The proposed model will link courses across multiple disciplines and semesters for cohorts of 24 students. The cohorts will begin their time together in two to three courses (a USI course, as well as liberal studies courses) during the fall semester. The same group of students will continue to have one class together in the Spring semester of their first year followed by a culminating academic experience such as a research proposal, a travel experience, or a service project during the sophomore year.

The development of the two-year action plan created at the institute will be guided by resource faculty who will offer feedback and recommendations to ensure the success of the Learning Community model. Proposals will be shared with other teams attending the institute to troubleshoot in the development process. Upon the team’s return, WCU will have a solid plan to roll out a new, comprehensive, high-impact program that will benefit both students and faculty alike.
The 2015 One Book Selection
A Common Reading Experience for WCU first-year students!

The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates
A New York Times Bestseller by Wes Moore

♣ The 2015 selection is intended to be complementary with the WCU commitment to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) National Initiative focused on the topic of Economic Inequality.

♣ Common Intellectual Experiences are one of ten high impact practices identified by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

♣ Research guides, plus a variety of sponsored programs will be available to assist with course planning as faculty see appropriate.

♣ Please look for the calendar and other updates to be posted on the One Book website this month. The selection committee welcomes your suggestions! You will find us listed on the One Book website.

A common reading experience encourages new students to engage early with faculty, staff, and peers as they launch their college career. Early engagement fosters student success!

One Book 2015
Western Carolina University
onebook.wcu.edu

For more information contact The Office of First Year Experience @ 227.3017
Updates from International Programs and Services

The Office of International Programs & Services is working to increase global awareness through community outreach efforts and study abroad opportunities, as well as streamlining application and immigration processes.

Faculty/Staff/Community Outreach:

IPS has offered five training workshops for WCU faculty and staff, which were well attended. The purpose of the workshops was to provide a venue for faculty and staff to explore and comprehend international activities on campus. The workshop dates were as follows:

- International Admissions and Intensive English Program: Feb. 25th (Wednesday), 12:30 – 1:30 p.m., UC Catamount Room
- Basic Immigration Regulations: Feb. 26th (Thursday), 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., UC Catamount Room
- Classroom/Academic Expectations + Culture: Mar. 2nd (Monday), 12:30 – 1:30 p.m., UC Catamount Room
- International Partnerships and International Visiting Scholars, Mar. 4th (Wednesday), 12:00 to 1:00 p.m., UC Catamount Room
- Study Abroad: Mar. 5th (Thursday), 3:30 – 4:30 p.m., UC Catamount Room.

Upcoming Events:

- Beginning in April, teams composed of WCU students and faculty and staff members, along with international cultural “hosts” from the university, will be available to visit schools in the region to give talks designed to raise students’ cultural awareness and understanding. School teachers and administrators around the region who are interested in scheduling presentations should contact Ling Gao LeBeau at 828-227-3433 or lglebeau@wcu.edu.
- The 36th annual International Festival will be held Wednesday, April 8 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on the University Center Lawn.
- The Global Speaker Program is being re-launched. According to Margaret Basehart, International Student Advisor for Outreach and Programs, this initiative will allow international students to share their culture and country with the surrounding community.

Study Abroad:

- WCU students are studying abroad in Australia, England, Scotland, Germany, Japan, South Korea, China, Costa Rica, Spain and Israel. According to Study Abroad Coordinator Josie Bewsey, a total of 24 WCU students are currently in the process of going on independent study abroad programs for the semester, including a sport management internship in England and a TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) graduate student teaching practicum in China. Also, a TESOL Masters graduate student will be performing her teaching practicum in China. The College of Business selected a student who will be attending Fachhochschule Dortmund in Germany, WCU’s newest study abroad exchange partner.

International Student and Scholar Services:

- The Student and Scholar Services section of the office is working to assist students with immigration and admissions issues. Dana Moore, International Student and Scholar Advisor, recently returned from maternity leave and is working to streamline immigration procedures. She also manages the fall 2015 international admission application process.
Updates from International Programs and Services, Continued

Intensive English Program (IEP):

- The Intensive English Program is offering its first non-credit course for international students’ partners on Fridays from 11:00 am-1:00pm. For more information, contact IEP Director Jill Cargile at jscargile@wcu.edu. Course registration can be found at https://wcupg.wcu.edu/C20252_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=168&SINGLESTORE=true.
- The IEP, in conjunction with the English Department, is also providing a practicum experience for several undergraduate students in the English Education and TESOL certificate program. Students observe IEP classes and participate in practice-teaching as part of their teacher preparation.
- Jill Cargile is also teaching a 3-credit course entitled Academic English for International Students for all newly matriculating international students or exchange students who need additional instruction in academic English as they pursue their studies.
- IEP students and Core Instructor Ashlea Green picked up trash along Highway 107 North as part of a WCU service learning event on January 30. Green is currently completing data analysis of her study of WCU faculty reading and writing expectations of students.

WCU Revamps Summer Session Website

We have just begun the spring, and Summer School will be here before we know it, with registration already under way.

As most of you know, WCU’s Strategic Plan includes goals to expand summer session resident and distance course offerings and increase enrollment in Summer School. We hope the increased focus on summer school marketing with the newly revamped summer school website (summer.wcu.edu) is a strong step in that direction.

WCU’s Marketing Division is developing a student-driven marketing program and we don’t want to spoil the surprises that the student group will come up with to market summer school to their peers. But, we do know that the summer school website as remodeled by WCU’s Marketing Division provides an appealing preview of what summer in Cullowhee can be like. “Experience Summer at Western Carolina University” is the title of the catchy video with an energetic tune that gives us views of long reaching summer mountain vistas, white-water rafting, group picnics, hiking and hula hooping on the lush and green UC lawn. The initial focus is all on the appeal of the outdoors and touts the recognition of WCU as the Southeast’s No. 1 outdoor Adventure College, but scroll down just a little further and the site is all about summer school content including a focus on featured courses as provided by faculty in response to a call for summer courses. Also included are the 2015 Summer Calendar, a listing of courses offered this summer that will satisfy liberal studies requirements and links to the Dynamic Schedule so students can find the courses they need. Links to the important information on Housing, Tuition and Aid and How to Register are there as well.

We hope the layout makes it easy for students to find what they need, and we know our marketing team is working to increase the interest factor and send students to the website to learn more. We’re open to suggestions and would gladly take more content for summer courses to be featured on the site. Contact, Ann Green, Provost Office, at ahgreen@wcu.edu if you have courses you would like to see included.
Posthumous Degrees

Western Carolina University now has solidified policies for awarding posthumous degrees and certificates of achievement for both graduate and undergraduate students, as well as procedures to ensure consistency going forward. This was presented at APRC last week.

Part Way Home

Iveta Imre, a faculty member in the Communication department, was selected among several applicants to facilitate a grant from General Administration to support part-way home students. Drs. Lowell Davis and Carol Burton interviewed the applicants. Dr. Imre has a proposal to rename the Special Studies program to Interdisciplinary Studies and Faculty Senate will vote on that proposal.

Chancellor’s and Dean’s Lists

Western recently created the Chancellor’s List to recognize students for high academic achievement. The Chancellor’s List is distinguished from the Dean’s List by a higher minimum grade standard; to be included in the Chancellor’s List, students must have a semester GPA of at least 3.80. WCU recently hosted its first Chancellor’s List event with excellent attendance by students, faculty, staff, parents and friends. I would like to thank all of the faculty and staff who attended this inaugural event.

LSAT Test Prep Course

Western is now offering an LSAT test prep course to support students intending to attend law school. The course is prepared and led by Bonnie Claxton, a local attorney with a practice in Sylva. This course is free to students through the Writing and Learning Commons, and is supervised by Chesney Reich, Director of the WaLC. The WaLC is also offering GRE and GMAT study groups.

Fostering Undergraduate Student Success – Dr. Davis

Dr. Lowell Davis reported the details of how Western Carolina University was impacted by Fostering Undergraduate Student Success (FUSS) at the end of the Fall semester. Our Fall-to-Spring semester retention rate is 92.4% which is a significant increase. He provided a report that details retention by academic program.

Athletic Clustering

Lowell Davis, Brent Kinser and the University Athletics Committee are in the process of compiling information to report to General Administration on course clustering. We should not have more than 25% of student athletes enrolled in a specific course. General Administration released guidelines on academic integrity and required course clustering analysis of student athletes in July of last year.

Searches in Academic Affairs

Dr. Jeff Ray, Dean, Kimmel School is chairing the search for Dean of the Honors College

Dr. Brian Railsback is chairing the search committee for Dean of Hunter Library. The search committee began reviewing applications on February 23rd.
Dr. Lane Perry is chairing the search committee for the Director of Career Services. The search committee began to review applications at the end of last month.

Dr. Laura Wright is chairing the search committee for the Director of Undergraduate Advising. The search committee began reviewing applications at the beginning of March.

Mr. Shea Browning is chairing the search committee for the Chief Diversity Officer. The review of applications began February 19th.

**Awards/ Recognitions**

NORTH CAROLINA CAMPUS COMPACT has awarded its 2015 Civic Engagement Professional of the Year Award to Lane Perry, Director of the Center for Service Learning. This award recognizes a staff person at an NC Campus Compact member campus in the civic engagement field for 4 years or less that has worked towards the institutionalization of service, created and strived towards a vision of service on their campus, supported faculty and students, and formed innovative campus-community partnerships.

**Notes from Chief Academic Officer Meeting**

General Administration is seeking participants to serve on the UNC Data Governance Committee. This committee should (1) increase the consistency and reliability of UNC data that touches multiple business and academic units within campuses and GA (2) establish system-wide data standards and (3) establish rules of engagement. Someone from IT or OIPE (Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness) will be appointed to serve on this committee.

Academic Advising: As discussed in the September CAO meeting, the Board of Governors is extremely interested in exploring academic advising on the UNC campuses. During the September Board of Governors meeting, Mr. Craig Sousa, chairperson of the Educational Planning, Policy, and Programs committee, recommended that a BOG workgroup be formed to review academic advising at UNC institutions.

A meeting was held on November 4th at UNCGA with academic advisors and transfer student advisors from 11 campuses to discuss academic advising on the campuses. The discussion centered around the complexities of academic advising on the various campuses. Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Success, Lowell Davis, and Interim Director of Undergraduate Advising, Kim Cherry-Beck, will survey the campus to obtain information about academic advising climates, structures and effectiveness. Some of the potential questions are listed below.

- What is the academic advising climate and structure on your campus?
- Does your advising system include faculty and professional advisors? If so, describe the roles of each.
- Is academic advising required on your campus? If so, which students are required to see an academic advisor and when?
- What are the best features of academic advising on your campus?
- What are areas in need of improvement?
- What role does academic advising have in achieving student success goals on your campus?
GradesFirst

GradesFirst is the new student performance monitoring system that is now available to staff and faculty. The system includes features such as documentation for student advising meetings, Issue Alert case management, appointment scheduling, and more. It will increase efficient and open communication among the offices and personnel who interact with students, and it can also provide useful reports and data. The College of Business and the College of Education & Allied Professions will be piloting the system this spring, and our goal is to roll it out to all faculty for implementation during Fall 2015.

Meetings have already taken place with department heads in the College of Business and the College of Education and Allied Professions.

Feb. 18 Introduce GradesFirst at the campus-wide department heads’ meeting
Feb. 20 A day of workshops in COB and CEAP where we will provide training on:
- Entering notes on students
- Issue Alert
- Scheduling appointments (for those who want it)

Our goal is work with departments throughout the spring semester and provide training. Any department that would like to use GradesFirst prior to “Advising Day” should contact Alicia Cameron in the Advising Center at ajcameron@email.wcu.edu or (828) 227-3883 as soon as possible. Additional training opportunities will be available for faculty, in the summer and fall.

For information from a previous senate meeting: Impact of adding any Doctoral Program on Carnegie and SACS-COC qualifications.

- The addition of a Psy.D. program will not impact WCU’s Carnegie classification. WCU will remain a Master’s L (greater than 20 doctoral degrees are required for a change from Masters L).
- For SACS-COC, an institution adding a fourth doctorate degree, causing it to be reclassified from Level V to Level VI is required to request the level change in writing in order for SACS-COC to reclassify the institution within its data base (this level classification is specific to SACS-COC and has no relationship to the Carnegie classification). However, since none of the three doctoral programs currently offered at WCU is very closely related to the proposed Psy.D., this will be a significant departure at the current level (doctoral) and thus will require a prospectus to SACS-COC for approval.
Student Spotlight

Bond Warner
Senior, History

Bond Warner will be graduating with a B.S. in History and a minor in Political Science this May. She is particularly interested in 20th Century European history, Colonial American history, and religious history. She held an internship at Crab Orchard Pioneer Park and Museum during the summer of 2014 in Tazewell, Virginia. During her time there, she led tours of the pioneer park and museum and participated in a Civil War reenactment.

A very busy student, Bond is also a tutor for the Writing and Learning Commons where she tutors several history courses and a geology course. She is also involved in the community outside of WCU; Bond has been involved with Biltmore Baptist Church at WCU for three years. She plans on returning to the university in the fall to begin work on a graduate degree in history. She also plans on marrying Reece Strong, a WCU baseball player, this summer.

Above all, Bond believes her education at Western Carolina University has made her a more informed and caring citizen. Her experiences have revealed to her the true value of community. Her future plans include moving back to her hometown of Richlands, Virginia, homesteading, and becoming a foster/adoptive parent. Bond enjoys reading historical fiction, traveling, politics, theological discussions, cooking, and being outdoors.
Annette Debo, professor of English at WCU, teaches classes in modernism, African American literature, and literary theory, and in 2014 she was awarded the Board of Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching. She has taught a wide range of classes—twenty-six classes in total—from first-year seminars in literature to specialized MA classes. In every class, Dr. Debo strives for active learning. Dr. Debo also directs the MA program in English.

Much of Dr. Debo’s research is in modernism, the literary period that stretches from 1909 to 1945. Her monograph The American H.D. (U of Iowa P, 2012) weaves together literary criticism, biography, cultural history, and extensive archival research, telling a new story about the significance of nation in the artistic vision and life of modernism writer Hilda Doolittle (H.D.). H.D.’s wide-ranging career enables a study centering on a single figure to become an expansive narrative about modernism’s relationship with the United States and the nuances of the American nation, from the Gilded Era through the Cold War. Her scholarship also includes work on pedagogy, and she is the lead editor of Approaches to Teaching H.D.’s Poetry and Prose (MLA 2011).

In September of 2014, Dr. Debo’s edition of H.D.’s Within the Walls and What Do I Love? (UP of Florida), short stories and poetry written during World War II, was published. Illustrated with war propaganda posters from London’s Imperial War Museum, it addresses the Blitz, the conscription of women, the Women’s Land Army and rationing, and the role of art during wartime. This edition was possible because Dr. Debo held the H.D. Fellowship—which provides a month-long residency—at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University for 2012-2013.

In the past year, Dr. Debo has given five radio interviews (local and national) on H.D.’s life and work because she believes it is important for the humanities to engage the public. Most significantly, she served on a panel discussing H.D.’s epic Helen in Egypt and the literary movement imagism. These discussions are part of Poem Talk (hosted by Al Filreis and supported by the Kelly Writers House at the University of Pennsylvania, PennSound, and the Poetry Foundation) and are indexed at jacket2.org/podcasts.

Currently, Dr. Debo is writing the monograph The Necessary Past: The Historical Poem in Contemporary African American Poetry to answer the questions of why has the black history poem become so popular since the mid-1980s; how is history being appropriated, revived, and recounted; and how does the venue of poetry impact the story? The current popularity of the black history poem is the next step in the recovery movement—it reinstates African American history into the popular memory.

Since moving to western North Carolina, Dr. Debo has begun whitewater kayaking and hopes to eventually manage a loop or cartwheel in her boat without so very much roll practice. She enjoys being outside boating, hiking, and biking, and she volunteers as a coach for youth soccer.
Staff Spotlight

Ann Green
University Program Associate, Office of the Provost

Ann Green has been a staff member in the Provost Office since May, 2009. Her position as University Program Associate involves performing duties in support of university curriculum, the Faculty Handbook, Faculty Senate, and Summer Session.

Ann has lived in the Sylva area since right after 9-11 when she and her husband decided to make a life change and move to the mountains. Ann and her husband, Mike, both worked for large corporations in Charlotte so moving to rural Western North Carolina was a significant, but welcome change. Prior to her work at WCU, Ann worked in mortgage lending and real estate. Although Ann is originally from central Florida, she spent summers throughout her early childhood vacationing in Sylva with her family, and graduated from WCU with a B.S.B.A. in Finance, so she knew the area well and had always hoped to retire to the mountains one day. Luckily, she was able to get here a little early.

She is amazed that although they didn’t all start out here, she and her two siblings, Larry Hammer and Stan Hammer, and their families have all chosen to live in Western North Carolina and all three siblings now work at Western Carolina University.

Ann loves to read and knit when she finds time. Her most long-lived interest is painting with oils or pastels and she spends much of her free-time time pursuing art — either by taking painting workshops, or by painting outdoors or from life as often as she can. Working at WCU, living in a place where beauty is all around, and having family so close are just a few of the reasons Ann is glad to be here.

Want to include news in next month’s issue? Please send information to vcacademicaffairs@email.wcu.edu