SOE Faculty Member Heads National History Day for Western Wisconsin Region

Professor Gregory Wegner, the Western Wisconsin Regional Coordinator at UW-La Crosse, reports that the National History Day regional program reaches over 1,000 students and 32 teachers in the region, including twelve school districts. National History Day (NHD), a program which involves middle level and high school students in historical research, links well with several model academic standards for the State of Wisconsin.

At the same time, NHD provides students with direct experience in the interpretation of primary and secondary sources as well as the use of area archival collections. NHD is also of special importance for teacher education candidates at UW-La Crosse. For the regional event on March 28, 2007, Wegner expects forty university students from teacher education programs to participate as judges. Many of these same students are judges at the local school district level before the regional at Bangor High School (March 2), Holmen Middle School (March 1) and Longfellow/SOTA II (March 9).

The theme this year is “Triumph and Tragedy in History.” Students choose a research category ranging from historical papers, media documentaries and website development to exhibits and performances. Each entry also includes an annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources along with a brief process paper.

National History Day Judge Gains Valuable Experiences

Laura Godden, a secondary education major (EA-A’), plans to graduate in Spring ’08 and secure a social studies teaching position. Godden has been a judge for National History Day projects for two years. She notes, “I volunteered. I went to one, and I’ve been doing it ever since.” Godden credits judging NHD as an important addition to her teacher education program. She feels there are valuable lessons for her as well as for the students. “It’s a way to introduce research to your students in more authentic ways.” She notes that the use of primary sources as well as opportunity for a public viewing.

Widening the Circle - Act 31
March 29-31, 2007
Teacher education symposium: Helping teachers to teach about Wisconsin Indians’ history and culture, authenticate materials and infuse curriculum: http://www.uwlax.edu/native/act31.html

Master of Science in School Health Education

The Master of Science in School Health Education prepares professionals for positions in schools as licensed health education teachers and coordinators. http://www.uwlax.edu/sah/pehp/gr_she.htm
UW-System Institute for Urban Education

Take some time to learn about the UW-System Institute for Urban Education. This institute places student teachers in the Milwaukee Public School District, conducts a student teaching seminar around urban education issues and culture, and has students take place in various community activities to help them further understand the urban community.

http://iue.uwsa.edu/

Alice Hagar Curriculum Resource Center
Murphy Library

STEM

This site provides a rich array of resources to PK-12 teachers, preservice teachers, librarians and others interested in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education.

http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/departments/curriculum/stem/

Engineering Math (STEM) site highlights and has links to science related educational material, professional organizations, science and math education standards, websites and science fair information. The Curriculum webpage also connects to the School of Education website and to newly purchased curriculum material. Since the main purpose of the Center is to support the School of Education, we encourage instructors to request new material for the center to purchase. An online book order form is found on the Curriculum’s home page.

We offer tours as an introduction to the educational resources at the Curriculum Center for faculty and their classes. Recently the campus daycare brought over 15 three year olds for a tour and story hour. We all had a fun time! Use the contact information listed on the web page to schedule a tour or get information about the Center.

Take a walk over to the Alice Hagar Curriculum Center and get to know us better, besides the exercise will do you good!

SOE Faculty Heads National History Day for Western Wisconsin Region (Cont)

Wegner recently expanded the program to include younger students. Beginning three years ago, the NHD regional program began a special initiative with fourth and fifth grade teachers from Emerson, Hintgen, North Woods and Southern Bluffs Elementary Schools in the La Crosse School District under the direction of Mark White, principal at Hintgen Elementary. UW-L teacher education students are also active in judging this event in late April at the La Crosse Central High School gymnasium. This year, Coulee Region Montessori seventh and eight graders will join the NHD regional event for the first time.

Take a Walk to the Alice Hagar Curriculum Center

We invite you to take a walk across campus to visit Murphy Library’s Alice Hagar Curriculum Center on the second floor. You will find professional education material, elementary and high school textbooks to review, and award-winning books in our children’s collection. The center houses over 10,000 volumes divided into 4 areas: textbooks from publishers, professional material related to curriculum, children’s fiction and children’s nonfiction. Kits and children’s oversized books offer student teachers a variety of material and many resources for them to help develop unique learning opportunities for their classes. The material is classified and shelved according to the Dewey Decimal System, which allows students to see first hand how most school libraries are arranged.

Visit the Curriculum Center’s newly updated webpage at http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/departments/curriculum. It can also be accessed from the Murphy Library website under Departments and Services. At this page you will find general Curriculum Center information plus several subject web pages. For example, the Science Technology
Faculty In The News

Publications


National History Day Judge Gains Valuable Experiences (Cont)
of their work are vital components to effective history teaching that she will take into her future classroom.

Laura describes the ways in which judging National History Day allowed her to document her emerging competencies in assessment. According to Laura, her experience with judging “ties into my portfolio.” She states that she learned a great deal about assessment through the judging process. “It is a competition. But it’s not so much about the competition. It’s about the learning process.” She explains how National History Day gave her experience in “Getting students to go beyond the worksheets to more meaningful assessments with authentic tasks.”

It is the connections to teachers and area students that Laura Godden says have been most valuable for her as a future teacher. “I talk with the teachers and with the students.” She went on to explain that her active involvement with students had changed her view of what students can do. She has been surprised about the quality of work that middle school students produce. Laura exclaims, “At first I thought that the teachers were unrealistic about their expectations, but the students are capable.”

International Presentations

Caravella, Tracy; Davies, Jon; Danneker, Jeanne; Finders, Margaret; Gander, Barb. “Working toward Equity through Standards-Based Field Experiences.” The International Conference on Teacher Education and Social Justice, Chicago, IL. Jan. 13, 2007.


(Cont Pg 9)

School of Education Graduate Reading Program
Reading education at UW-La Crosse is built on a firm foundation of best practice and current research in literacy. Learn more about different options for the master’s degree in education at:

http://www.uwlax.edu/soe/reading/

26th Annual University of Wisconsin Reading Research Symposium
June 15 and 16, 2007
This year’s theme reinforces the understanding that good practice is grounded in research, and that a solid foundation in literacy research is the essence of accountability in education, the under girding of authentic practice and the impetus for advocating for best practice that benefits children.

To learn more about this Symposium, visit:
http://www.uwlax.edu/conted/html/teacher-education.htm#twentyfive
Math, Science & Education Faculty at the Forefront With Electronic PRAXIS Project

The PRAXIS Wisconsin project is a UW-System endeavor involving faculty, students and technical support in the creation of innovative teaching and learning materials referred to as digital Learning Objects (LOs). These LOs are self-contained online applications that have features which allow for a variety of learning styles and are delivered in a well-designed format that is easy to use and adheres to the latest digital standards (see sidebar).

An Evolving High-Impact Content Development Process:

The current design of the learning object template was developed at the Advanced Distributed Learning Co-Lab in Madison. The Co-Lab partnered with a team of educators in the Madison area to create a dozen example LOs but found that the creation and design of these LOs was time consuming and expensive. This is where the PRAXIS Wisconsin project comes in.

This past summer (2006), a grant from UW-System provided support for the development of a dozen teams to work on LO creation. This past fall, the teams created about thirty LOs in mathematics and science. This production model not only creates useful educational materials, but it also has a large impact on the team members that help create them. Both the faculty members involved and the student content writers have enjoyed the process of creating the learning objects. Two models were used wherein group sessions were held as undergraduate research or where content was development as a class writing assignment. The best student materials would be identified and the author would be invited to put the materials in the format needed in the LO design model.

While the end-product of these activities is a high-tech set of learning materials, the process of creating the content does not require a great deal of technical skills. The faculty team leaders and the students are provided templates and tutorials that aid in the formatting of the content.

The other portion of the LOs that the teams need to focus on is the Chalk-Talk. The teams create a script that describes both what should be written and what should be said then one of the members of the team will enter a sound booth (see photo on next page) and record voice and hand movements for the lesson.

Preliminary assessment indicates that the students have enjoyed all aspects of the process - the teamwork, the in-depth study of material that they may one day teach and the use of technology. The faculty members involved have also found the project very rewarding. Above all, the faculty (cont)
Math, Science & Education Faculty at the Forefront With Electronic PRAXIS Project (cont)

members involved in the project enjoy working with the students on a scholarly research project that will have a real impact on both the team members that create the LOs and on the students that will later use the LOs.

From Project to UW-System Institute: This spring, UW-La Crosse has been asked to take steps leading to the creation of a new UW-System Institute that further expands the impact of this project. The new institute, titled the Institute for Innovation in Undergraduate Research & Learning (IIURL) will have the following mission: “To develop, foster and support innovations that use digital technology to enhance undergraduate teaching, learning and research in the UW-System, and to make very simple the storage, retrieval and sharing of digital content for teaching.”

The details relating to the budget and the timeline are still being discussed, but the intent is to secure funding to continue to support content development teams within the System. The LOs developed will not only pertain to PRAXIS but to other areas of need within Wisconsin (e.g., remedial math and science, science misconceptions, placement exams, etc.).

The IIURL Institute will be responsible for the development of assessment mechanisms aimed at measuring the impact on student learning. Also under development is a more convenient means for storing and sharing the completed LOs. The storage and retrieval project, known as the Wisconsin Federated Repository/Registry project, will allow for on-line collaboration of the construction of the LOs (providing a common workspace accessible to all members of the PRAXIS teams). In addition, the ADL Academic Co-Lab in Madison has partnered with the Institute to provide ongoing technical assistance.

Faculty & Students Involved:

UW-L Faculty: Eric Brunsell, Education; Tim Gerber, Biology; Robert Hoar, Mathematics; Jennifer Kosiak, Mathematics; Becky LeDocq, Mathematics; Helen Skala, Mathematics.


More Information:

Further information is also available at the project website http://www.uwlax.edu/mathematics/PRAXIS and at the related Co-Lab site http://www.praxiswi.com. Contact Bob Hoar (hoar.robe@uwlax.edu) if you are interested in getting involved or if you would simply like to hear more about this multifaceted project.
SOE Faculty Designs Innovative Partnership with Emerson Elementary

After many semesters of noticing the gap between students’ perceptions of young children and the reality that Kristi Mally, Assistant Professor of Physical Education, was attempting to teach, she decided to try something different. Little did she know that the collaboration she was about to begin would result in such big gains for everyone involved.

During the Fall 2006 semester, her ESS 112 (Fundamentals of Movement) course joined forces with kindergarten and 1st grade students and their teachers from Emerson Elementary School. The goal was to create opportunities for Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) students to purposefully observe young children being taught quality, developmentally appropriate physical education, while providing movement enrichment for the elementary students.

Three Emerson Elementary classes - one kindergarten class and two first grade classes - agreed to come to Mitchell Hall on the UW-L campus during six ESS 112 sessions. During each visit, Professor Mally taught a 30 minute physical education lesson focused on various physical education skills and knowledge such as underhand tossing, overhead striking, space and body awareness, and creative dance. While the lessons were occurring, PETE students observed and took extensive notes about various assigned topics. Following each lesson PETE students participated in reflective discussions connecting their observations to their current belief systems and to what was being taught in ESS 112.

Mally reports, “This has been an exciting endeavor. I have witnessed much growth in my students’ ability to conceptualize and verbalize the qualities and characteristics of young children in a physical education environment. In the past I have always had to do my best to verbally share and physically model the movement behaviors of 5-6 year olds, but this semester my students actually got to see the real thing.”

Brianne Stankus, an ESS 112 student, remarks, “After watching Dr. Mally work with the children, I became very excited for my future. I saw many things that gave me an understanding of what a quality physical educator looks like. By observing these class periods, I gained a better sense of what I have been taught in class, but unlike most classes I actually got to see it first hand. These observations were a test for me to see if I could visibly point out and identify what we were learning about in class. Learning the class content is one thing, but actually being able to view and understand what you have been learning is another.”

Another ESS 112 student, Brian O’Meara, echoes these thoughts, “Being able to watch a professional physical educator in a classroom atmosphere brought much insight into what is expected of upcoming physical educators. This experience allowed us to become more comfortable around children and more comfortable with the idea that we will actually become quality physical educators. Many students learn by seeing and being able to watch how a well developed lesson is put into action. This allowed us to see the entire picture of not just instruction, but also lesson planning, time management, student development and the overall enjoyment of the (cont)
students and teacher. I certainly could not have visualized all of that just by simply looking at a book.”
Nancy Wettstein-Weaver, a 1st grade teacher from Emerson Elementary, observes, “The benefits of the collaboration between UW-L, Emerson Elementary and the School District of La Crosse are multifaceted. First, my students benefit from the positive, active learning environment that Dr. Mally facilitates, which includes creative lessons that teach and reinforce body awareness, movement and balance. The children also work cooperatively in small groups, which promotes social development. In addition, the pre-service teachers are exposed to young children with differing abilities and are actively involved in the lessons.”
The success of this collaboration could not have been possible without the positive support of the Emerson Elementary teachers Deb Bemis, Jill Fink and Nancy Wettstein-Weaver, and from their principal, Regina Seigel. They not only eagerly agreed to continue this relationship but are also willing to add more visits during the Spring 2007 semester. Jill Fink, one of the 1st grade teachers, notes, “This collaboration between Emerson and UW-L has been a very positive experience! It is not only enjoyable for my students to ‘teach’ the college students and have fun, but it is also a great hands-on experience for UW-L students to study children’s development. What better way to learn and have fun along the way!”

UWL Science Education Students Mentor International Science Fair Teams

Thomas Friedman concludes that the “World is Flat” in his recent bestseller about globalization. As a result of high speed data networks spanning the globe individuals no longer have to be near each other to collaborate and compete. In industry, this means that work can easily and seamlessly flow to and from contractors around the world. But what will this mean for education?
Students in Dr. Eric Brunsell’s secondary science methods course are finding out first hand. These future science teachers are mentoring middle school students from U.S. State Department American Schools in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Johannesburg, South Africa, as they prepare science fair projects for the Near East South Asia Virtual Science Fair. These UW-L undergraduate students will act as a sounding board and guide as their middle school teams identify a research question, develop an investigation, analyze their results, and prepare presentations for the science fair. Middle school teams will initially compete against other teams from their school. Winners of these local events will compete in a virtual science fair by submitting an electronic poster presentation and participating in web-based interviews.
The NESA Virtual Science Fair mentoring program has three goals. First, the program expands participating middle school students’ knowledge of science and transforms their understanding of how to think like a scientist. Second, the mentoring program provides motivation for participating students to commit themselves to their research project through interaction with knowledgeable mentors. Third, the participating students have the opportunity to communicate with mentors from diverse backgrounds, thereby expanding the options for potential career paths in science. The UW-L mentors will gain a better understanding of the needs of middle school students as they participate in authentic science investigations. They will also gain skill in assisting students throughout the science inquiry process. Science inquiry approaches to teaching are at the center of science education reform in the United States. Therefore, the skills that these future science teachers are learning will directly benefit them when they enter the teaching profession.
Learning in the Learning Community Program

Currently 652 graduate students are enrolled in The Master of Education in Professional Development (ME-PD) Learning Community (LC) Program, a 30-credit, two-year program designed for professional educators interested in improving their teaching practice and student learning. The Learning Community Program is offered off-campus in various locations throughout the state in order to best meet the educational needs of working adults.

Curriculum Reform

The Learning Community Program has undergone an intensive curricular reform. The reformed curriculum is now integrated and spiraled over four semesters. The spiraled curricular strands are integrated to foster meaningful connections and are designed for concepts, theories and practices to be revisited at a deeper level throughout the two years. Program leaders have been engaged in continuous improvement efforts by utilizing the Baldrige National Quality Program and Education Criteria for Performance Excellence.

8th Annual Learning Community Conference

The Learning Community Conference held on the UW-L campus on November 11th and 12th is the one time per year that all LC graduate students and faculty from around the state of Wisconsin come together for a weekend of shared learning. The theme for the last conference was Schooling for a Democratic Society and Culture. Keynote speakers included two renowned educational leaders, Deborah Meier and Gloria Ladson-Billings. Deborah Meier is on the faculty at New York University’s Steinhardt School of Education, advisor to the Forum for Democracy and Education and on the Board of The Coalition of Essential Schools. Gloria Ladson-Billings, a scholar whose work focuses on factors that have disproportionately affected students of color, is on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Education and past president of the American Educational Research Association. Both speakers explored the notion of schools as a training ground for democratic life and engaged participants to thoughtfully examine their own beliefs about the purpose of education and their roles as professional educators.

In addition to keynote presentations, graduate students attended breakout sessions on the topic of democratic schools and teachers, (facilitated by SOE faculty Robert Richardson, Joyce Shanks and Greg Wegner), job-alike breakout sessions on the topic of best practice pedagogy and an action research fair. Education professionals from both UW-L and local districts attended.

Left to Right: Kim Harrington and Joe Hamel - Facilitators with the West Allis Learning Community and Rhonda Rabbitz - Facilitator with the Onalaska Learning Community and Member of the LC Leadership Team.

Masters of Education Professional Development Learning Community

Learn more about ME-PD Learning Community. This program is a fully accredited master’s degree program. Its unique format of one weekend a month face-to-face time and community structure sets it apart from many traditional graduate degree programs.

http://www.uwlax.edu/mepd/lc/
Murphy Library & the School of Education to Sponsor Two Events:

PK-8 Teachers Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM) Resource Day
April 16, 2007
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Alice Hagar Curriculum Resources Center
Murphy Library, UW-L
Email Karen Lange lange.kare@uwlax.edu

An Afternoon of International Children’s Literature
April 25, 2007
4:00-6:30
Alice Hagar Curriculum Resources Center
Murphy Library, UW-L
Email Karen Lange lange.kare@uwlax.edu

Office of Multicultural Student Services & the School of Education to Sponsor:
Critical Conversations on Equity, Access & Education
April 20 & 21, 2007
Friday 5:00 - Reception
Saturday 8-4:00 p.m.

*A Wisconsin Teaching Licenses

Developmental Licensure Ranges
(EC-MC) - Early Childhood - Middle Childhood
Approximate ages Birth - 11 (formerly Pre-K - 6)
(MC-EA) Middle Childhood - Early Adolescence
Approximate ages 6 - 12 or 13 (formerly Elementary/Middle Level, grades 1 - 9)
(EA-A) Early Adolescence - Adolescence
Approximate ages 10 - 21 (formerly Middle Level/Secondary, grades 6 - 12)
(EC-A) Early Childhood - Adolescence
Wide range of all ages (formerly K - 12)

Awards and Recognition

Felix, Manny. WAHPERD Merit Award. October 2006.
Richardson, Robert. Member of the National Middle School Association (NMSA) NCATE Program Review Board.
Richardson, Robert. 2006. The NMSA Distinguished Educator Award Finalist.

Grants

DiRocco, Pat; Tymeson, Garth; Felix, Manny. October 2006. UW-L Preservice Personnel Preparation Grant in Adapted Physical Education. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, U.S. Department of Education (Funded $784,672).
Hasenbank, Jon and Kosiak, Jennifer, Professional Development Partnership for Improving Understanding in Algebra. Wisconsin ESEA Improving Teacher Quality (Funded $70,491).

At Onalaska Middle School, students participate in Social Action Theater (SAT). SAT, a student theater/entree troupe that started at UW-La Crosse in 1993, has experienced a tremendous revival under the leadership of Professor Bob Krajewski. The students address diversity, isms, and abuse issues by designing and performing audience interactive skits in classes.