

LAStory

Newsletter of the College of Liberal Arts

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Service learning: History students help us understand our past

Through two new courses in spring 2006, Introduction to Historical Administration and Archives and Oral History, USI history students will have an opportunity to work in the community, contribute to the preservation of local history, and develop practical skills as working historians and archivists.

"The History Department is committed to giving our students practical experience in the various types of positions they might have after graduation," said Dr. Tamara Hunt, chair of the Department of History. "Most of them are not going to get a Ph.D. in history, and they need practical applications and ideas about what possibilities are available to them. These courses will give them that practical knowledge."

Students in Introduction to Historical Administration will learn about collection development, exhibit design, grant writing, and other practical applications of what historians do in the public sphere. "It will give students

an inside view of what goes into running a museum or historic site," Hunt said.

In Archives and Oral History, students will work on several different projects, including an oral history of New Harmony, Indiana, and archival work at Willard Library and Deaconess Hospital.

The oral history project began in spring 2005 in Hunt's Historical Methods class. "That convinced me that we needed an entire semester-length course that specifically emphasized these skills, to give students more scope for the type of work we were doing in that course," she said.

The purpose of the project is to understand what it means to live in a modern living community that is at the same time a national historic site with a significant past. Students identify and record interviews with subjects, and create transcripts from the interviews for the archives at USI, Historic New Harmony, and the Workingmen's Institute in New Harmony.

At Willard Library, students will work with and identify records that have not been archived, and work with the photographic archive, researching photographs and writing captions. Using documents and photographs, they will design displays within the library.

The lay person might find the Deaconess Hospital archival project unusual. "It doesn't occur to people that a hospital would have an archive, but most businesses of any size are going to have records that are in fact their archive," Hunt said.

Students will design displays that reflect the history of the hospital and work on an oral history project on its nursing school. Hunt believes the project will be of great value both to students and to the community.

"Many people aren't aware of what historians can offer to a community. I hope through these courses the community will have a better idea of how historians can help the community as a whole understand its past."

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Stephen Pace Visits Campus



Stephen Pace, a founding member of the New York School Abstract Expressionists, was Artist in Residence in the College of Liberal Arts in November. Here, he gives painting student Belinda Holsing (left) feedback on her work as Tiffany Nicholl (right) awaits her turn. He also gave a sideshow lecture about his work that was open to the public. Pace grew up in Posey County and resides in New York and Maine.

Dean's Message

The Best Gift of All

by David Glassman, Dean of Liberal Arts

In our College of Liberal Arts Mission Statement the faculty declares its pledge to "... ignite intellectual curiosity and a passion for lifelong learning." The target of this pledge is, of course, our students and the faculty doesn't take this statement lightly. Professors work endless hours, developing and redeveloping the most informative, well-organized, and inspiring classes: classes that challenge the mind; classes that inform and are thought-provoking; classes that develop skills and prepare our students for successful careers. The work is done with generosity and a sense of pride in seeing our students graduate, become good citizens, and achieve fulfilled lives. Obviously we don't hear back from all of our graduates to learn the impact we have had on their lives, but when we do it brings a wonderful excitement and reinforcement of purpose.

John Lawrence '73 recently has given us that opportunity. John was a business major at USI in the early 1970s where educational requirements found him taking history from Dr. Daniel Scavone, professor emeritus of history. Those of you who know Dr. Scavone are well aware of

manuscripts from throughout the world. His lifelong dedication to the preservation of these invaluable objects of art and culture, and his conviction to save medieval books from being broken up by brokers ruthlessly willing to sell individual pages, has resulted in the acquisition of a most academically important, world-class collection.

Last year I met with John and he outlined his interest in honoring his mentor who initiated his love for the liberal arts in general, and medieval studies, in particular. I am pleased to announce that John has established and endowed the annual Scavone Awards in Medieval Manuscripts and Culture that will award one student and one faculty member a substantial cash prize for completion of an outstanding work in the history, nature, translation, art, symbolism, technique, culture, and spirituality of medieval manuscripts and the art of illuminating and calligraphy.

At a recent dinner party in John's honor that brought him together with Dr. Scavone and other faculty of the College of Liberal Arts specializing in medieval studies, John led us spellbound through story after story about his life and love of collecting medieval icons. And as John passed around two 15th century, beautifully illustrated manuscripts, the excitement of the group was exhilarating.

We are most grateful to the generosity of John Lawrence for honoring Dr. Scavone and the College of Liberal Arts by establishing and endowing this wonderful competition for our students and faculty, but the best gift of all is for us to know we succeeded in igniting his intellectual curiosity and his passion for lifelong learning.



An example of a beautifully illustrated medieval manuscript from the collection of John Lawrence '73.

his incredibly enthusiastic style of teaching that year after year inspired students. John was touched by this class more than Dr. Scavone or anyone else could have possibly known. Impressed by lectures on medieval times, John began researching and collecting medieval

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Professors planning retirement

When **Dr. John Gottcent**, professor of English and founding director of the University Core Curriculum, joined USI in 1970, faculty members had to be generalists, he said. "In my first three years here, I taught 15 different courses. I was helping out in all different kinds of fields."



Gottcent has been with USI since 1970 and is founding director of the University Core Curriculum.

Gottcent arrived at USI trained as a specialist in 19th century British literature, but has rarely taught a course in it. Instead, he became an expert on biblical literature. "The English department decided in the late seventies that we needed a course on the literature of the Bible, and I was assigned the project of designing the course. It's been very successful and has expanded from one course to two."

He also developed Concept of Evil, a course on evil in literature. "My wife always says I'm trying to play it safe by teaching evil one semester and the Bible the other," he said.

After retirement, he plans to pursue a systematic study of the Hebrew of the Old Testament and Greek of the New Testament, and a writing project that draws on his interest in biblical studies. He also would like to teach an occasional course at USI.

He and his wife JoAnne plan to travel, and eventually relocate.

Gottcent has served on the Executive Council of the national board of the Association for General and Liberal Studies; was appointed by the governor as state faculty representative with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in the mid-nineties; and was chosen by his colleagues as the 2000 Integra Bank Distinguished Professor.

The Sociology Department is losing two of its founding professors to retirement pursuits. **Dr. Howard R. Gabennesch** has been with the University since 1972. For his students, Gabennesch's name is synonymous with the term "critical thinking."

"Back in 1968 I read a book called *Invitation to Sociology* by an important sociologist named Peter Berger, and that really got me started in what I would later come to realize consciously, and articulate explicitly, as critical thinking," he said.

Though critical thinking has influenced his teaching from the start, he has specifically incorporated it into his teaching in the last 15 years. "I started off using a critical thinking approach to teaching sociology, and then I realized the biggest contribution I could make to my students' education was to use sociology as an instrument to teach critical thinking," he said. "That's how I've viewed my teaching goals ever since."



Gabennesch's students laud him for teaching them how to think. He's been with USI since 1972.

In an article entitled "Critical Thinking: What Is It Good For (In Fact, What Is It?)" (*Skeptical Inquirer*, January 2006) he discusses his "no-holds-barred" approach to critical thinking, in which "everything is scrutinized and there are no sacred cows."

He would like to continue to teach a seminar in critical thinking after retirement. He also plans to do more writing on critical thinking, and reading in subjects outside of his own areas, such as the Civil War and classic American literature. "Those are subjects I've felt guilty reading, subjects that don't seem to have a direct bearing on my teaching. I have a list of books and areas that I want to educate myself in."

He and his wife Judy also plan to spend more time with their combined 13 grandchildren, who range in age from 18 years to six months.

The well-traveled **Dr. Charles Petranek** and his wife Diana plan to visit 50 countries in the next 10 years. The couple has already visited 51, as well as spending seven summers in Hawaii, where Petranek taught as a visiting professor at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. They will return to Hawaii in January 2006 for a month's vacation.



Petranek has been with USI since 1973 and was Sociology Department chair for 16 years.

Petranek would like to teach at USI as an adjunct professor for a few fall semesters, and travel in spring. "It's going to be a phased-in retirement," he said. "It's all about process, not abruptly leaving one thing for another."

Petranek is nationally regarded for his scholarship in the field of experiential learning and social simulations. He has created 16 social simulations to enhance his courses. His simulations have been published and are used in high schools, colleges, and businesses. In 1996, the North American Simulation and Gaming Association presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award. He will continue to offer his social simulations to organizations.

He also specializes in marriage and family, and estimates he has taught 45 Marriage and Family courses during his career, both at USI and Cleveland State. He and his wife wrote a book on the subject, *Inside Marriage: You, Me, and Us*, in 1976.

Petranek served as chair of the Sociology Department for 16 years and was actively involved with students beyond the classroom. He received the USI Student Government Association's Spirit of the Eagle Award for Faculty in 1997 and Teacher of the Year in 1999.

In 1995, the USI Faculty Senate honored him as the Integra Bank Distinguished Professor. He received the USI Alumni Association Faculty Recognition Award in 2002.

Language bowl concentrates study, inspires creativity in area high school students

The USI Foreign Language Departments annual Foreign Language Academic Bowl will attract hundreds of high school students from throughout the Tri-state to the USI campus on April 6.

Thirty-six schools from Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky have participated in the language bowl over its 15-year history. Five more schools participated in 2005 than in 2004. Five-member teams compete in French, Spanish, German, and Latin. Last year, 16 teams competed in Spanish alone.

"All of the Vanderburgh County schools compete in at least one language, and very often all of them. They are big contenders," said Leslie Roberts, acting chair of the Foreign Language Department. "It's a big competition among the teachers as well."

During the language rounds, each team is asked 25 questions of increasing levels of difficulty. Topics include grammar, culture, spelling, and geography. Most questions are asked in the target language.



Teams gather in Carter Hall for a language round during the 2005 Foreign Language Academic Bowl.

The competition encourages high school students to develop their language skills. "It's very good for the high school students because they are motivated to win. It concentrates their studying," Roberts said.

The language rounds are followed by a song contest that inspires creativity in the teams. "The students love it," Roberts said. "One German group once did a rap song in German. A French group did a French fairy tale. Very often, students wear costumes and use props."

While the high school teams are on campus, they meet and talk to USI faculty and students. Foreign language faculty act as facilitators and USI students assist with registration, contests, and refreshments.

"I consider the language bowl a very strong recruiting tool because high school students get to talk to students here," Roberts said. "They see what USI is like and meet the professors of foreign languages, and see our enthusiasm."

"We also distribute materials from International Studies and other majors, and International Programs and Services. Students find out the amazing array of opportunities to study abroad if they choose USI."

High schools pay a fee to participate in the language bowl. Money remaining after expenses is used for small scholarships for the foreign language student who makes the most progress in scholarship in his or her sophomore year. "Some years, the recipient is someone who was in the language bowl a few years before," Roberts said.



A Spanish team competes in the song contest in 2005. Students commonly use costumes and props in the competition.

College of Liberal Arts welcomes new faculty

Dr. Ginette Aley, assistant professor of history, previously taught at Drake University, Virginia Tech, and Iowa State University, where she earned her Ph.D. with a dissertation on the social and racial history of the American West of the early Republic. She is a member of numerous societies and organizations including the Agricultural History Society, the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR), and the Southern Historical Association.

Jason Baldwin, instructor in art, previously worked as an adjunct assistant professor at the University of Mississippi and a visiting professor at Memphis College of Art. He has an M.F.A. from the University of Mississippi and a B.F.A. from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He is an active member of the College Art Association and the Mid-America Print Council.

Dr. Charles Conaway, instructor in English, previously taught at Indiana University and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he earned a Ph.D. in English Literature specializing in Shakespeare and Renaissance literature with a secondary interest in the drama of the Restoration and the eighteenth century. He has published articles in *Comparative Drama and Restoration and Eighteenth Century Theatre Research*, and is a member of the Modern Language Association, the American Society of Eighteenth Century Studies, and the Shakespeare Association of America.

Shari Dinkins, instructor in English, was employed at universities in California and taught composition at City College of San Francisco. She has an M.A. in English with a concentration in creative writing from San Francisco State University, and a B.S. in English from San Jose State University. She is a contributing editor and columnist for two teaching publications and has been published in literary and mainstream magazines. She is a member of the Modern Language Association and the National Council of Teachers of English.

Jo Kirch, instructor in sociology, was previously an assistant professor of sociology at Mountain State University, and prior to that was an instructor at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where she is a doctoral candidate and earned her M.A. in sociology. She earned her B.A. in sociology at State University of New York at Fredonia, and holds an A.A.S. in human services from Jamestown Community College. She is a member of the American Sociological Association, Midwest Sociological Society, National Council on Family Relations, National Women's Studies Association, National Organization for Women, and American Association of University Women.



Aley



Baldwin



Conaway



Dinkins



Kirch



Mann



Park



Passmore



Stoll



Truxaw

Dr. Rob Mann, assistant professor of anthropology, previously worked as the Southeast Regional Archaeologist for the State of Louisiana and was based in the Museum of Natural Science at Louisiana State University. He is an archaeologist primarily interested in the colonial period of the eastern United States. He earned his Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Binghamton in 2003. He is a member of the Society for Historical Archaeology, the Society for American Archaeology, and the American Society for Ethnohistory.

Dr. T. J. Park, visiting instructor of history, previously taught as a visiting assistant professor at West Virginia State University, and as an instructor at West Virginia University, where he earned a Ph.D. in 2003. His dissertation was on U.S. policies about China in the 1930s. In recent years he worked for or participated in the National Consortium for Teaching About Asia, the West Virginia Consortium for Faculty and Course Development in International Studies, and *International Journal of Korean Studies*. He earned his master's degree from State University of New York at Albany and had a business career in South Korea, where he is originally from.

Dr. S. Elizabeth Passmore, assistant professor of English, has an M.A. in English from the University of Massachusetts, Boston, as well as an M.A. and Ph.D. in Medieval Studies from the University of Connecticut. Her dissertation is entitled "The Loathly Lady Transformed: A Literary and Cultural Analysis of the Medieval Irish and English Hag-Beauty Tales," and she has published articles on the figure of Hunger in *Piers Plowman* and on the significance of medieval male writers writing

about medieval women. Her research interests include medieval English romance, medieval Irish literature, and literary fairy tales. She is a member of Medieval Academy of America, the New Chaucer Society, and the John Gower Society.

Dr. Mary Lyn Stoll, assistant professor of philosophy, was previously employed as a fixed term assistant professor at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio; a visiting assistant professor at Minnesota State University, Mankato; and an instructor at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, where she earned her Ph.D. and M.A. in philosophy. She wrote her dissertation on collective moral agency, arguing that sufficiently organized collectives ought to be viewed as moral agents if we are to deal adequately with business ethics, the environment, and the poor in a global economy. Stoll also holds a B.A. in mathematics and philosophy from Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan. She is a member of the American Philosophical Association, the Society of Women in Philosophy, and the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy.

Danny Truxaw, instructor in theatre, will oversee lighting for USI Theatre. He is from the Los Angeles area and has produced over 60 set and light designs for theatre and production designs for film in the past two years. He was resident lighting designer at the West Valley Playhouse for the last five years, and has worked at the Actor's Studio West, the Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute, and several independent theatre companies. He is designing the set and lights for *The Exonerated*, opening February 2006 in the Mallette Studio Theatre.

Retirement - cont. from page 3

At the end of fall 2005, **Dr. Dal M. Herring**, professor of journalism and chair of the Department of Communications, will have completed 42 years teaching in the classroom. He has taught in junior high schools, high schools, a junior community college, and three universities, including a year as an exchange professor at the Beijing Second Foreign Language Institute in China in 1989, the year of the Tiananmen Square protests.



Herring, chair of the Communications Department, has been with USI for 15 years.

Herring was already an advocate for First Amendment free expression, but his experience in China made his appreciation of those freedoms more profound. "If you've ever lived in a communist country where there is no freedom of the press, or civil liberties as we know them, you understand how valuable and precious our liberties are in this country," he said.

When Herring came to USI in 1990, Dr. Robert L. Reid, then vice president for Academic Affairs, recommended he apply to the East-West Center's Asian Studies program at the University of Hawaii-Manoa. Herring spent a month in Honolulu in 1993, a month in Japan in 1995, and a month in Southeast Asia in 1998.

Herring helped pioneer the distance education curricula at USI, has delivered lectures and published articles on First Amendment rights, and has worked with free-press groups. The Society of Professional Journalists has recognized him for his work on behalf of freedom of information.

After retirement, he plans to "read, read, read," travel, spend time with family, and pursue hobbies. He and his wife Donna recently bought a retirement home in Evansville. He'd like to return to USI as an adjunct in fall 2006.

Darrell is director of Humanities

Dr. Sherry Darrell, professor of English, was appointed director of Humanities in August 2005, succeeding Dr. Dine Moeller-Sahling, assistant professor of German.

"Sherry is no stranger to the Humanities program and her involvement can be traced to its initial development at USI, and its incorporation into the University core curriculum," said Dr. David Glassman, dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

"Sherry brings strong leadership skills and experience to the program. I know she will be a tireless advocate for its recognition of excellence on campus, and its importance in the University experience."

As director of the program, one of Darrell's responsibilities is Humanities faculty development, designed to improve teaching, share materials and approaches with other faculty, learn new ways of teaching course requirements, and improve syllabi and writing assignments. Cultural activities and



Dr. Sherry B. Darrell

workshops are planned in Indianapolis, Nashville, and Chicago in 2006.

Darrell joined the University as a part-time assistant professor of English in 1975 and became full time in 1978. She has served USI as Academic Skills coordinator, Honors Day coordinator, and inauguration writer, as well as founding sponsor of Alpha Chi Honorary.

Darrell holds a Ph.D. and M.A. from George Peabody College for Teachers, Vanderbilt University; and a B.A. in English and philosophy from McMurry College.

RopeWalk Retreats

The RopeWalk Winter Retreat February 24-26, an abbreviated version of the week-long summer retreat, will offer an opportunity to study poetry with Allison Joseph or fiction/nonfiction with Ken Smith at the Barn Abbey in historic New Harmony, Indiana.

Joseph, director of the Young Writers Workshop at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, is the author of five poetry collections and was recently featured on NPR's *Morning Edition* reading her poem "Kitchen," from *Sweeping Beauty: Contemporary Women Poets do Housework*, edited by Pamela Gemin.

Smith teaches creative writing, American literature, and Western humanities at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. He is the author of two short story collections and his work has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *Crazyhorse*, *Sonora Review*, and *Tri-Quarterly*, and has been featured in the collection's *Best American Short Stories* and *Best of the West*.

The RopeWalk Writer's Retreat, June 11-17, will include a new screenwriting workshop led by Jack Stephens, who has scripted five award-winning IMAX films. Stephens, a published poet and novelist, lives and works in New York City as a freelance screenwriter. The faculty also will include Susan Neville in nonfiction; Stephen Dobyns in short fiction; and Heather McHugh and Ellen Bryant Voigt in poetry. The guest reader will be David Wojahn.

To register, or for more information, contact USI Extended Services at 812/464-1863 or 800/467-8600.

15th annual Toast to the Arts

College of Liberal Arts students benefit from the USI Society for Arts & Humanities Toast to the Arts through programs and scholarships, and through the process of designing a theme for the event. Students in Joan Kempf's Graphic Design III courses competed to design the theme and invitation for the 15th annual Toast to the Arts, which will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, February 3, 2006, at the Evansville Museum of Art, History and Science.

A piece from the student art show serves as inspiration for the theme each year. The 2006 theme, "Pitcher Perfect," is based on a salt-fired stoneware pitcher by sophomore Nicholas Mason of Poseyville. His pitcher, "Twenty Hours," was purchased by the Society for Arts & Humanities to be

auctioned at the event. The winning theme was submitted by junior Heather Rooks of Evansville. Nyle Musgrave, a junior from Fairfield, Illinois, designed the winning invitation.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for the students to design a real project," said Kempf. "Utilizing students to create the design is another way the Society for Arts & Humanities distributes its monies to benefit students."

Tickets for the black-tie-preferred event are \$125, of which \$50 is a tax-deductible charita-

ble gift. The evening will include cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and live music, followed by dinner and wine, and silent and live auctions. At auction will be paintings, sculptures, ceramic pieces, jewelry, antiques, dinners, and

special events. USI art faculty and alumni will donate some of the artwork.

Proceeds benefit College of Liberal Arts student development and scholarships, New Harmony Theatre, and the RopeWalk Writers Retreat. The 2006 honorary chairs are Bruce and Carol Baker and John and Gail Dunn. For more information, call the College of Liberal Arts at 812/464-1735.



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Upcoming Events

January

- 14 USI Senior Seminar Exhibition I opening reception** New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art (January 7-21)

February

- 3 Society for Arts & Humanities "Toast to the Arts"**
Evansville Museum of Art, History and Science
- 4 USI Senior Seminar Exhibition II closing reception** New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art (January 25-February 4)

15-26 The Exonerated Mallette Studio Theatre

23 RopeWalk Reading Series: Ken Smith

24-26 RopeWalk Winter Retreat

March

2-13 Travel study program: European Tour to Spain and Morocco

4-12 Travel study program: The Art of Ancient, Colonial, and Modern Mexico

16 Liberal Arts Distinguished Scholar Lecture: feminist philosopher Nancy Tuana
Carter Hall, University Center

23 RopeWalk Reading Series: Michael Waters

April

1 25th Annual Mid-America Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference

6 Foreign Language Academic Bowl

9-16 36th Annual USI Juried Student Art Exhibition University Conference Center

19-29 Quilters USI Theatre

22 Vectren RISC Showcase

Conference founded at USI celebrates 25 years

The 25th annual Mid-America Undergraduate Psychology Research Conference (MAUPRC), founded at USI by Dr. Joseph J. Palladino, professor of psychology, in 1982, returns to campus on Saturday, April 1.

Designed to recognize and encourage research by undergraduate psychology students, the MAUPRC has become one of the oldest and most successful conferences of its kind.

The conference was originally called the Tri-State UPRC, and Palladino hoped to attract participants from Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky. The 1982 conference included participants from all three states, representing seven institutions, with 20 paper presentations.

Now, the MAUPRC regularly attracts an average of 20 institutions from several states, including Michigan, Ohio, and Missouri, and students deliver 100 paper and poster presentations.

Since 1990, the MAUPRC has been sponsored by a consortium of schools, includ-

ing USI, Franklin College, Thomas More College, Eastern Illinois University, University of Indianapolis, and Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

Palladino will present the 2006 keynote address, "Myth and Mysteries of the Humor Impaired."

"It's based on my perception that academia in general, and certainly my discipline, tends to be humor-impaired," he said. "We tend to denigrate humor in academia. We ought to know better, given the attention humor can draw to material."

Palladino teaches a course on humor. He said it is one of the few characteristics that separates us from lower animals.

"One can argue that low animals are intelligent," he said. "They certainly problem-solve, they can make tools, and some have language. One of the characteristics that separates us is laughter and humor. Why do we shy away from it?"

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