

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Spring 08 Academic Notes

International Study Tragedy

The CASNR family was deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Brian Smith while on a study abroad trip in Puerto Rico. Brian was a sophomore in the School of Natural Resources with a distinguished academic record and a bright future. We extend our deepest sympathy to Brian's family in Omaha and promise that his spirit will be remembered.

Salute to Graduates Grows

The CASNR Salute to Graduates ceremony takes place Friday, May 9 at 4:00 PM in the Great Plains Room of the East Campus Union. The ceremony personally honors graduates in the presence of family, friends, faculty and staff by sharing their stated accomplishments while in the College and future plans. Each graduate is individually recognized by the College and the sponsoring CASNR Alumni Association. The 4:00 PM ceremony allows travel time for families, the opportunity that evening to get together for dinner and then be on hand for the Senior Send-Off and general commencement exercises the following morning. Many departments host receptions preceding the ceremony to allow faculty to meet parents. To date over 1500 family members have visited campus to attend receptions and the 'Salute'.

The 'Salute' began with the December 2005 graduating class, where 41 percent of graduating seniors participated. By last May the participation rate had grown to 65 percent. Faculty support and encouragement are keys to its growth.

New minor available

Beginning in Fall 2008, students will be able to opt for an Energy Sciences Minor. The new focus area consists of 18 credit hours with a comprehensive overview of energy in society, fundamental energy principles, the economics of energy and environmental issues related to producing and using energy. The new minor is coordinated by the Department of Biological Systems Engineering.

Progress Update for Veterinary Medicine

In Fall 2007 the inaugural class of 2011 began their studies in the Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine. This class will have 2 years of study at UNL and will continue with their final 2 years of study at Iowa State University. The students will graduate with a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine degree. Twenty-five students from Nebraska make up the class of 2011. The class is made up of 17 females and 8 males with an average undergraduate GPA of 3.54. Faculty, staff and students all share a great deal of enthusiasm for the program and the admission process for the class of 2012 is already underway. In January 2008, 40 students were interviewed for the Class of 2012. Of these 40 applicants 25 new students will join the program in Fall 2008.

Progress Update for Forensic Science

The undergraduate degree program in forensic science has experienced steady growth, as it is currently home to 39 students. At present, 42 students have been admitted for the fall semester. The forensic science curriculum also continues to grow with three new courses being offered in the 2008-2009 school year. Dr. Karl Reinhard (SNR) will offer NRES 445 Human Remains in Forensic Science and NRES 446 Pollen Analysis in Biological, Behavioral and Forensic Science this fall. Dr. David Carter (Entomology) will offer FORS 485 Current Issues in Forensic Science as the capstone course in Spring 2009.

Recruitment Progress

Spring enrollment for CASNR increased 11.7% from last spring. This is the second semester in a row CASNR has led all UNL Colleges in increased undergraduate enrollment. This semester, we've been involved with numerous recruitment events including: Red Letter Days, CASNR Admitted Student Event, Nebraska Preview Days, campus visits, DECA, FCCLA and FFA conferences, and hosting the Science Olympiad and the Southeast Regional Science Competitions.

As of March 24, 2008 applications are up 14% over last year, admissions are up 14%, and enrollment deposits are up 11%. On April 2, Vice Chancellor John Owens hosted a celebration in the East Union to recognize the faculty and staff responsible for the hard work that resulted in this growth. Over one hundred faculty and staff were able to attend this celebration. The high point was an address by Dr. Gale Buchanan, Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics with the USDA. Dr. Buchanan reflected on the changes that have taken place in agricultural research and education in land grant institutions and presented a vision of a future emphasizing food and bioenergy systems. The top programs in terms of total enrollments were Animal Science, Agribusiness, Professional Golf Management, Fisheries & Wildlife, and Biochemistry. The top degree programs in terms of percent growth for Fall 2007 were Veterinary Technology (300%), Ag Economics (38%), Professional Golf Management (38%), Pre-Veterinary Medicine (35%) and Environmental Studies (29%). For Spring 2008, the leading programs were Veterinary Technology (80%), Plant Protection Sciences (66%), Ag Economics (51%), Environmental Restoration Science (50%) and Pre-Veterinary Medicine (42%). We hope to have equally strong numbers for the next academic year.

ACE General Education System Adopted

In December, UNL adopted a new system for undergraduate general education requirements. The new system is called Achievement Centered Education (ACE). The new system will go into effect in Fall 2009. During the next year, the interim ACE Committee will review courses submitted for ACE status. The new system will involve major changes in advising undergraduate students. More information on the ACE program may be found at <http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/gened/>. The CASNR representative on the ACE Committee for the next year is Tiffany Heng-Moss, and the CASNR ACE course facilitator is Lloyd Bell.

CASNR Senators Elected to ASUN

Congratulations to Kat Farris and Ryan Hassebrook who were reelected as ASNU Senators. We are pleased to have two such able representatives for our student body.

CASNR Week Schedule

We are very excited about CASNR Week; our theme is 'Fulfill Your Fate in '08'. The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources hosts a week of activities that celebrate the successes of our students, faculty and staff. We partner with residence halls, campus recreation, student involvement, career services and departments throughout the entire week. The Burr Hall Bull Fry is on Saturday, April 12, a new addition is a car show. An International Reception followed by our CASNR Awards banquet on Sunday, April 13 starts the week. We have a Club Adviser Luncheon on Monday, April 14, Lunch on the Lawn and Community Night on Tuesday, April 15, Undergraduate TA Luncheon is on Wednesday, April 16 and our Blood Drive is on Thursday, April 17. The 50th Annual UNL Rodeo is on Friday, April 18 and Saturday, April 19 to round out the week. For a full list of events and details go to <http://casnr.unl.edu/casnrweek>.

CASNR-Led Study Abroad

In 2007 there were 94 CASNR students who visited 12 countries on study abroad. This included trips to Australia and New Zealand during winter break. Nebraska Foundation funds allowed CASNR to provide over \$80,000 for study abroad scholarships. Study abroad in 2008 has already included Puerto Rico and Argentina during spring break. Planned trips include group study in France for two weeks in May and individual study in Mexico and Canada in summer and fall and Norway in fall. We are also working on future study abroad programs for Germany, Spain and Morocco. Other individual internships, semester study or short-term travel can be arranged with time and patience. For questions about those programs, call Arlen Etling at 2-7018 (aetling1@unl.edu).

Faculty Fulbright Fellowships

Fulbright Fellowships provide funding for faculty for teaching, research or outreach, at a university in virtually any country in the world. The generous stipends are awarded through the U. S. State Department and bring honor on the individual faculty member, the departments and the universities involved. UNL hosts visiting Fulbrighters and sends Fulbright Fellows abroad every year. A new "senior specialist" program allows faculty to consult on a short-term basis (two to six weeks). For questions about Fulbright opportunities and procedures, call Arlen Etling at 2-7018 (aetling1@unl.edu).

Update on PEARL Assessment

We are now in the third year of the PEARL program for assessment of student learning. All twelve CASNR undergraduate programs participating in PEARL submitted assessment plans and received feedback from Peer Reviewers during the 2006-2007 cycle. Six of these programs had at least one component identified as a "best practice". All programs are using PEARL data to confirm student learning, identify issues, enhance assessment methods and/or implement program improvements. The successes to date are due in large part to the leadership provided by faculty serving as PEARL Program Leaders or Peer Reviewers. The Department of Entomology and School of Natural Resources currently have their graduate programs enrolled in the PEARL system, and

Agricultural Economics, Biochemistry and Food Science & Technology will be joining them for the 2008-2009 cycle.

How to Implement CIEQ

It is time to start thinking about administering the CIEQ evaluation for the spring semester. For the most meaningful results, the instrument may be administered anytime during the last five weeks of the semester. Do not administer the instrument on the day before an exam, the day of an exam, or the day following an exam. Make sure that students have adequate time to provide feedback on the back of the instrument. If you have questions about interpretation of the CIEQ results, contact John Markwell.

Scholarships Update

So far in the 2007-2008 academic year CASNR has given scholarships to 638 students. This represents 44% of the students in CASNR. The total amount awarded is \$879,588 and the average value is \$922 per student. If students are interested in learning more about scholarship opportunities, they may contact Dann Husmann or Melissa Sailors in the CASNR Office.

“Applied Science” Name Changes Update

The year-long effort to re-brand two of our degree programs is underway. A proposal to change the B.S. in Applied Agricultural Sciences to Applied Science is under consideration in the Academic Program Committee. The proposal to change the Master of Agriculture degree program to Master of Applied Science is being considered by the UNL Graduate Council. These changes were proposed to better reflect the diversity of CASNR programs and the integrated nature of our courses in the Applied Life Sciences, Applied Natural Resource Sciences, and the Applied Social Sciences.

Justin Smith Morrill Scholars Update

The Morrill Scholars held their yearly elections in January to elect club officers. Kat Farris was elected President. The other new officers are Vice President - Karoline Kastanek, Secretary - Brittany Sturek, Treasurer - Tami Cullen, and Event's Committee Chair - Suzy Hammons. On February 24, the Scholars sponsored the first of three ASUN debates. This debate, held in the East Campus Union, focused on issues that were particularly relevant to the East Campus community and its users. On February 22, the scholars sponsored a Dessert and Jazz event in the East Campus union which featured music by Steve Hanson and Nancy Marshall. In addition to social activities, the Scholars have been busy with several service activities, including their monthly Lincoln bike trail clean-up and having a team participate in Relay for Life. Plans are also being made to celebrate Justin Morrill's birthday on April 14, as part of CASNR week. The scholars will staff a booth in the East Campus Union where they will distribute free ice cream. The flavor of the ice cream is still a big secret as it will be a new commemorative flavor honoring Morrill and symbolic of the types of fruits and nuts grown by Senator Morrill at his homestead in Strafford, Vermont. Come out and taste this new and unique flavor for the first time!

Self-Guided Tours of East Campus

A self-guided "Own Time Any Time" tour of a part of the Maxwell Arboretum on East Campus was created from a suggestion made by Vice-Chancellor John Owens and funded by an IANR Innovation Grant. Professor Kim Todd and Elizabeth Killinger, a student in Agronomy & Horticulture, did the research into various technologies, and ultimately chose the university's voice mail system which is available to any person with a cell phone. The pilot tour allows entry and exit at any point and at any time, and is a generic tour of the East Campus Arboretum. The system can be modified for specialized tours, plant identification and a module about the new Quilt Center is under development. To initiate a tour, you may pick up information at the Dairy Store.