



News and Updates

Who are we? What have we been doing? (see the website <http://www.minotstateu.edu/artsnscli/>)

Please email your good news to us so that we can share it within the College

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1. Dean's Brief Letter

Dear CAS faculty and staff:

It is a great pleasure to work with you. To us, the primary duty of a dean is to serve you, to serve our students and to serve the University and the community. We sincerely enjoy interacting with you and communicating with you.

We would like to send you the first issue of the CAS^{IQ} (College of Arts and Sciences' Identity and Quality News and Updates). We will send this to you periodically in the future. In this issue, you will see that at the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), we had our mission and vision statements discussed among the College faculty (see below). While we have several College initiatives based on the NDUS Cornerstone (see our website www.minotstateu.edu/artsnscli/), more discussion will be needed and is in progress. We have made progress and will hope to make more progress in the initiatives of diversity, global education, and student engagement. The Art Program has completed its program review.

We have eight new full-time faculty members this year who are covered in this newsletter, and we welcome them on board. You will see their bios. We also had an informal meeting with them. They are excellent!

If you or your students have any good news or significant accomplishments (e.g., publications, professional performances or presentations, art exhibitions or grants, or any other achievements or work of which you are proud, etc.) and you would like to share them with other colleagues at the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), please feel free to email us at (shan_haarsager@minotstateu.edu) and also cc to your chairs. It is great to communicate more so that we can enhance our identity (or image) and academic quality. We thank you for collaboration in advance!

We are proud of all of our faculty and staff members at the College and thankful to all of them for their hard and good work. Our chairs and directors are diligent and collaborative. Thank you, all chairs and directors! Our administrative assistant, Ms. Shan Haarsager does a fabulous job in our office. Ms. Sherry Wheeling is also very kind and helpful to us whenever we need any assistance. Thank you, faculty and staff members!

Sincerely,



Yueh-Ting (Y-T). Lee, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor

2. CAS Mission and Vision Statements

CAS Mission Statement: "The College of Arts & Sciences provides a comprehensive, holistic, and interdisciplinary education at Minot State University. College faculty integrate excellent teaching with scholarly and creative activity, thereby preparing undergraduate and graduate students with the knowledge, values, and skills needed in our diverse world."

CAS Vision Statement: "To be recognized as one of the best liberal arts colleges among mid-sized, comprehensive state universities in and beyond the USA."

3. Program Review Updates

Thanks are extended to all art faculty members for their good work in our Art Program review. The Art Program in the Division of Humanities is almost completed with its program review. Their self-study report was submitted in the summer. The external consultant was invited to visit our campus in

September. A copy of the consultant's report was received. The self-study report for the Radiologic Technology Program in the Division of Science will be due in Mid-October, 2005; the self study report for the Physics Program will be due in December, 2005.

4. Diversity, Global Education, and Student Engagement

At the last chair's meeting (see the minutes of September 27), Professors Linda Olson and Michelle Sauer were invited to discuss the importance of diversity issues with chairs; Professor Robert Kibler and Ruth Kihm were also invited to address how we can get our students engaged in global learning and service learning.

With help from Mr. Wylie Hammond, Dr. Lee also visited two tribal colleges (i.e., Turtle Mountain Community College and Fort Berhold Community College) in September hoping to recruit more Native American students from them and to build partnerships with them. Also, in October, President Shawn Chen from the SIAS International University in China visited our campus and met with some of our faculty and students so that we will hopefully build collaboration between the two universities.

We will promote more discussion of this initiative. Dr. Patricia Lomire (Chair of the Division of Social Science) is willing to help coordinate other interested faculty within the College with regard to how to implement this initiative (e.g., diversity or global events, diversity curriculum, recruitment, and training etc).

We also need a group of students to advise us on student learning and engagement at the College. Would you please nominate a student representative from a club to be part of the College Student Advisory Group? Please email the name and contact information of the student to our office (Shan.haarsager@minotstateu.edu) and also cc to your chairs. Thank you.

5. Bios for our new faculty: Who are they?

Johnny Coomansingh, Ph.D. **Assistant Professor of Geography**

Johnny Coomansingh was born and raised in the town of Sangre Grande, Trinidad, West Indies and is the father of two sons, Josh Randall and Jessel Reuen. In 1998, he graduated from Fort Hays State University with a Master of Science in Communication. Coomansingh applied to Kansas State University KSU where he completed a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Philosophy, both in geography. At KSU he was named as the distinguished graduate teaching assistant for 2001.

Wearing the hat of a cultural geographer, he has found interest in contested sacred space, especially with regard to aboriginal peoples, for example, American Indians. As an environmentalist, Coomansingh's pet peeve is the "throw away" mentality of Americans and the urgent need to use less and recycle more. Another facet of his research is rural economic development. He has presented at conferences organized by the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in several states, including California, Montana, Kansas, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Nebraska, and over the period 2000 to present. His geographical journeys and field trips have taken him to well over 36 states since his arrival in the United States.

When not at his computer or cooking, Coomansingh enjoys writing poetry, listening to classical music, wood craft, and playing the classic guitar or the four-stringed, *cuatro*, the Venezuelan national instrument. Several of his poems are published on www.poetry.com/

Susan Jensen, Ph.D. **Assistant Professor of Mathematics**

Susan Jensen, originally from Hazen, ND, is the newest tenure-track member of the MSU Mathematics Department. With an MS in Mathematics and nearly-complete Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Minnesota, she is able to serve the campus

in the areas of mathematics and education. Her dissertation is on the impact of classroom settings (cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning environments) on math anxiety in teaching mathematics to secondary vocational education students. Math anxiety, increasing student understanding of applied mathematics for non-math track students, and academic major selection are among her research interests. Service interests include establishing a stronger bond between the mathematics and science departments and programs through colloquiums or math/science club related activities. The activities would serve the students, community, and faculty as they explored the use of mathematics across the curriculum in its various applied forms. Sue has a deep belief that mathematics should not just cater to those who major in it, but also to the rest of the world that interacts with mathematics outside the classroom in its practical (applied) forms.

Paul Lepp, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Biology

Paul Lepp received a B.A. in Biology from Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN in 1990. In 1997 he earned his Ph.D. from Michigan State University in East Lansing, MI in the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and the Center for Microbial Ecology. From 1997 until 2004 Dr. Lepp was a Postdoctoral Fellow and a Research Associate at Stanford University School of Medicine in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, where he worked on the Microbial Diversity of the Subgingival Crevice Associated with Gingivitis funded by Procter & Gamble. Dr. Lepp joined the Biology faculty at Minot State in 2005.

Dr. Lepp's research interests lie primarily in the area of microbial ecology. He has a particular interest in how microbial communities respond to their environment, regardless of whether that environment is soil, seawater or the human body. A second aspect of his work is the application and extension of mathematical tools and models to microbial communities that were originally developed for "macroecology". These have included statistical estimates of the species comprising a microbial community, predator-prey models and density dependent models of microbial interactions. Dr. Lepp teaches Biology 142 (General Microbiology), Biology 215 (Genetics), and Biology 301 (Evolution).

Liana Esperanza Solorzano Henderson
Assistant Professor of Spanish

Liana Henderson was born in Bluefields and raised in Managua, Nicaragua. She graduated from Utah State University in 1991 with a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education with a major in History and a minor in Spanish. She obtained her Masters Degree from American Intercontinental University in Education. Liana has taught elementary, middle school and high school Spanish. She has also has taught community college level courses in Spanish, and English as a Second Language.

Liana is married to Leonard D. Henderson, Ssgt. USAF Ret. They have four children: Tani, a student of Computer Animation and Music at San Francisco State; Mark Austin, Marine Veteran of the Iraq War and a student at Brigham Young University, currently doing an internship at the Senate for Senator Warner in Washington D.C.; Christopher, a freshman at Minot State University; and Jason, a freshman at UNC Chapel Hill. Her mother, Esperanza, lives in Nicaragua and has served as a Vice-President of the Red Cross for fifteen years. She has one brother, Leonidas Solorzano Moody, an MBA who has been a banker in Miami, Florida for 23 years.

Ursula Schittko, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Biology

Ursula Schittko received a Biology Diploma from Würzburg University, Germany, in 1997. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Jena, Germany, where she graduated as a student of the Max-Planck-Institute for Chemical Ecology in 2000. She continued to do research in the field of plant-insect interactions at the Max-Planck-Institute for another year, and then worked as a research scientist in phytopharmaceutical industry. Dr. Schittko joined the Biology faculty at Minot State University in 2005. Her research interest is in the field of plant molecular ecology, with the focus being on medicinal plants.

Paul Sims, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Chemistry

Paul Sims earned his Ph.D. in Biochemistry (August, 2005) from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His research was focused on mechanistic enzymology, specifically on the mechanism of catalysis of the glycolytic enzyme enolase. This work involved the use of steady-state kinetics, pH studies, site-directed mutagenesis, kinetic-isotope effects, and, in collaboration with Dr. Todd M. Larsen, structural investigations via X-ray crystallography. During the course of these investigations, the substrate of enolase, 2-phospho-D-glycerate, became unavailable commercially. This situation forced a search for a simple means of producing the compound efficiently and inexpensively. We eventually settled on an enzymatic synthesis using the enzyme D-glycerate-2-kinase. This strategy ultimately required cloning of the gene/enzyme, but through this work he has become interested in using enzymes to synthesize various compounds, and has ideas to involve undergraduates in this research. Dr. Sims is also interested in applying the tools of enzymology to determine transition-state structures of medically relevant enzymes so that potent inhibitors (with possible medical use) can be designed.

Prior to studying at the University of Wisconsin, Dr. Sims obtained a M.S. degree in Zoology from Colorado State University (where he studied the overwintering strategies of hatchling turtles) and a B.A. in both Biology and Physical Education from Adams State College in southern Colorado. Dr. Sim's wife, Tauri, is a certified K-12 teacher in art and physical education and is currently teaching K-12 Art at the Berthold School District. They have a son, Matthew, who is starting third grade, and a daughter, Jenna, starting first grade. Their main interests are soccer and squabbling with each other.

Melissa J. Spelchen
Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice

Melissa began her undergraduate work at Minot State University as a criminal justice major in the fall of 1995. During this time, she was a member of the MSU volleyball team for four years and the MSU softball team for 2 years. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree cum laude in Criminal Justice in May of 1999 and began her graduate work that fall. While she completed her Master of Science, Criminal Justice degree- criminology discipline, she was a graduate assistant for the Rural Law Enforcement Education Project, which turned into the Rural Crime and Justice Center. She was exposed to the inner workings of a research center under the tutelage of Dr. Gary Rabe, interim vice president of academic affairs, and Dr. Harry Hoffman, associate professor- Dept. of Sociology.

Ms. Spelchen had the opportunity to teach three CJ courses during her graduate work: Intro to Criminal Justice in the Spring of 2002; and Juvenile Justice @ MSU and Victims and Victimology @ BSC in the Spring of 2003. In November of 2003, Melissa was hired as a full time research associate for the Rural Crime and Justice Center, and was working there until her adjunct faculty appointment this past summer.

Melissa completed her master's degree in December of 2004 after an extensive thesis, wherein she assessed 400 cases at the North Dakota Youth Correctional Center in Mandan, ND and measured whether or not treatment had changed over time and what had affected that treatment.

Ms. Spelchen is honored to be a part of the faculty at Minot State for this one year term. Her blood runs "Red and Green" through and through, and she looks forward to this next chapter in her life at MSU. Melissa is a native of Canora, Saskatchewan, Canada and is currently applying to doctoral schools to begin her PhD in the fall of 2006.

Richard Viglucci
Assistant Professor of Music

Richard Viglucci recently graduated from Northwestern University with a MMus in Clarinet Performance. Richard has also received a B.M. in Music Performance and Psychology from SUNY Potsdam & the Crane School of Music. While attending Northwestern, Richard studied both clarinet & bass clarinet with world renowned clarinetist J. Lawrie Bloom of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Russell Dagon of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. Richard has also performed in many master classes throughout his career, most notably with Ricardo Morales and Anthony McGill. Currently Richard studies clarinet with Victoria Luperi, principal clarinetist of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra in Canada. Previous teachers include Dr. Alan Woy & conducting with Dr. Christopher Lanz.

6. College's Accomplishments and Highlights

(Below are just several highlights as an incomplete list. Please also refer to kudos and good news in the Chairs' minutes)

- **Dr. Gary Rabe (PI)** and Mr. Rodney Hair in the Rural Crime and Justice Center received an award letter funding the Rural Methamphetamine Education Project for 2006. Total funding is **\$986,643.00** from the fiscal year 2005 budget.
- **The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science** is pleased to announce the extension of their three year No Child Left Behind higher education grant to a fourth year. The grant funds graduate classes for students in the Master of Arts in Teaching: Mathematics program, and also provides many professional development mathematics workshops for secondary teachers who don't happen to be part of the MAT program. The one year extension brings an added **\$78000** into the program.
- **Professor Lee Ellis** organized an international development symposium on biological basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex-typical behavior (August 3-6), and in September he was informed that a special issue of the Archives of Sexual Behavior was devoted to a dozen or so of the papers presented at this conference.
- **Dr. Alexandra Deufel** had been invited to speak at the Joint Meeting of Herpetologists in Tampa, FL.
- **Dr. Conrad Davidson** was inducted into the ND Speech and Theatre Association Hall of Fame in September, 2005.
- **Dr. Chad Heinzel** presented a talk on climate changes and global warming in September, and he and one of his students attended a national conference the end of September.
- On September 22, the College hosted a **Language Arts Festival** and had over 300 high school students involved in a variety of events all day long. We thank Prof. **Robert Kibler** and many other Humanities professors for organizing this festival.
- Thanks are extended to the following Departments/divisions and/or students clubs at our CAS College who had their floats during the **homecoming** weekend on October 1, 2005--the Criminal Justice Club, the Biology Club (Biology), the Media Club (Humanities), the German Club (Humanities), Math/CS, the Music Education Club (Music), the Geology Club (Science) and faculty club advisors such as Guy Hanley, David McCormack, Chris Beachy, Neil Roberts, and Maila Zitelli.
- **Professor Lynne Rumney** reported that 48 students are enrolled in the Honors Program, including 12 or 13 freshman.
- Prof. **Richard Viglucci** conducted an MSU Concert Band (Alumni Concert) on Sept 30, 2005. Professor **Dennis Simmons** directed the Minot Symphony of Orchestra on October 8, 2005.

7. CAS Faculty Forum at 12:30—1:30pm on Oct 18 (Aleshire Auditorium)

At 12:30 on October 18 (Tuesday), all our College faculty members are **invited and also encouraged** to have a college-wide discussion on the direction of both our **Economics** major and **French** major in Aleshire. What shall we do with them? We need your input and guidance. Also come to advise us on how we will implement our college **initiatives**. Thank you for your participation in advance.

Acknowledgement:

Thanks are extended to Professors Duane Halvorson and Bill Harbort for their professional advice on this newsletter. Please feel free to email your accomplishments to us (shan.haarsager@minotstateu.edu) and also cc to your chairs. Thank you!