



MarymountManhattan

a college of the liberal arts

The Academic Affairs Update

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Six Searches Completed

In January thirteen search committees began the work of reviewing CV's, conducting phone interviews and arranging on-campus visits to fill newly created and vacant spots in MMC's full-time faculty roster. From late February through the last week in April more than 45 candidates came to our campus to interview for the positions.

We are please to announce that the seven of the thirteen searches have been filled. In the Humanities Division Magdalena Maczynska will join the English Department as an Assistant Professor of Writing, Michael Colvin has been hired as an Assistant Professor of Spanish and current adjunct M. J. Robinson has been hired full-time as an Assistant Professor of Film and Media in Communication Arts. The Theatre Department has added Assistant Professor of Voice and Speech Jeff Morrison and Theatre History Instructor, Jill Stevenson to its ranks. Twila Liggett will join the Education Department as an Assistant Professor of Teacher Education, Literacy and Adrienne Baxter-Bell has accepted the Art History Position.

Interviews are still being conducted in Dance History, Math, Chemistry and Accounting. The Public Speaking and International Studies searches have been reissued as one-year appointments.

Advisement Day

On Tuesday, April 11th, MMC piloted Advisement Day. Devoting a single day of the semester to student advisement and registration is the administration's response to a resolution passed by Faculty Council in the spring of 2004 asking that specific time be built into the academic semester to be devoted exclusively to advisement. Faculty requested the change in response to the reality that most advisement was very rushed because it often had to be fit in between both students' and their faculty advisor's classes. This time crunch made the process less effective than the faculty imagined it could be. We hope that the dedicated day will allow faculty and students to have a more concentrated and meaningful dialogue about planning a college career and creating a degree that meets the College's requirements while remaining challenging and interesting to our students.

This Spring MMC has dedicated two days for advisement. Ideally, juniors and seniors will be advised on April 11 and sophomores and first year students on April 20, given that upper class students register first. The trick to planning for these days has been to convince students that neither of these days represents a day off, so to speak. We are communicating that they will be the only days on which a student can see his/her advisor for the purpose of advisement for registration, which begins on April 17. Other activities, including group advisement (some divisions), peer advisement (several departments) and extracurricular activities (films, food, etc, sponsored by the College Activities Board CAB) will be ongoing to ensure that students show up and perhaps even stay for the day. A survey is being drafted to collect feedback from both students and faculty on this pilot.

The College plans to continue with one advisement day each in the Fall and Spring semesters of next year.

Retention Conversations Across the College

Last December, Michael Salmon was appointed to the position of Dean of Advisement and Retention, and among other things, was given the charge of initiating and coordinating the College's retention program. At a recent retention strategy meeting with Paul Ciraulo, VP for Administration and Finance, Dawn Weber, VP of Academic Affairs and Dean of the college, Ron Jackson, Dean of Students and Jim Rogers, Dean of Admissions, Dean Salmon outlined a broad set of proposals designed to better understand and ultimately improve the level of student retention within the college. While it was acknowledged that over the past few years we have made substantial gains in our first year to sophomore retention, it was also clear that to sustain or improve upon such a statistic calls for a comprehensive college-wide retention plan. Among the set of short-term initiatives presented, Dean Salmon proposed the immediate launching of a series of Retention Conversations between students, administrators, staff and faculty. As part of this effort, the Office of Advisement & Retention is currently conducting a number of focus group panels among different cohorts of students, grouped according to majors, residential status, graduation class and enrollment status, among others. Thus far, these meetings have proven to be extremely informative and have already yielded a wealth of information about students' attitudes regarding a wide cross-section of institutional issues, many of which are directly related to student enrolment and retention. Not only have students been quite forthcoming and engaging, many have been quite appreciative of the opportunity to share their views on this important topic. Shortly, these Retention Conversations will be expanded across faculty, administrators and staff, as we seek to gather diverse opinions and observations from those most directly connected to students on a regular basis.

Further, as part of its ongoing work, the Office of Retention and Advisement is also conducting a comprehensive statistical analysis of the subsequent enrollment decisions of those students who were registered during the Fall 2005. Such a study is expected to shed further light on the complex mix of academic, social and economic factors behind students' departure and assist in minimizing future student attrition. This, along with exit surveys completed by departing students, will hopefully provide a body of quantitative data upon which effective retention policies can be formulated.

Election of New Officers and Member to Board of Trustees

At the May 2006 Board of Trustees Meeting Anne C. Flannery, Esq. was elected to a 3-year term as Chair, Sr. Catherine Patten to a one-year term as Vice Chair and Barbara Hack, Esq. to a one-year term as Secretary. Ms. Flannery and Ms. Hack are alumnae of Marymount Manhattan and Sr. Catherine once served as an adjunct faculty member. It is the first time in the College's history that an alumna is serving as Chair of the Board of Trustees.

The Board's election of two new members to its ranks signaled further commitment to academic excellence within the College. New member Helen Demetrios is a Marymount alumna and holds a Masters of Science in Mathematics from Stonybrook University. An entrepreneur who has built and sold several software companies, Ms. Demetrios is a recognized expert in the development of systems on time and budget. New member Danielle Carr Ramdath holds a Ph.D. in Mathematics from Duke University. Dr. Ramdath is the current Commissioner of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and a member of the Committee on Opportunities in Sciences as well as the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

New Major in Philosophy and Religious Studies

Also at the May meeting the Board approved the addition of a major in Philosophy and Religious Studies. Humanities Chair David Linton was thrilled to end the year on this good note. Dr. Linton and his colleagues Mark Conard, David Gandolfo and Jeanne Evans worked with the support of Dean Weber and President Shaver to create the proposal and present it to the Board for approval.

The College looks forward to strengthening the Philosophy Department through the addition of the major. While the Board approval is in time to include the addition in the 2006-2007 Catalogue, the major still needs to be registered with the New York State Department of Education, which we hope to complete in time for Spring '07 registration.

Articulation Agreement with Kingsborough Community College

We are happy to announce that a draft agreement has been sent to Kingsborough Community College as the latest development in our ongoing drive to form Articulation Agreements with Community Colleges throughout the region. The

Through the continued work of Dean Marguerita Grecco and Division and Department Chairs and Program Coordinators to evaluate programs and recommend courses of study that will allow Community College graduates to successfully transfer into MMC degree programs, agreements are also being negotiated with Nassau and Westchester Community Colleges as well as CUNY's BMCC.

It is our hope that these programs and several others being negotiated with local community colleges, business CC. and art schools will strengthen our upper level programs and serve the College's mission of educating a socially and economically diverse population.

Academic Outcomes Assessment at the Local, Regional, and National Level

In 2007, Marymount Manhattan College will be halfway through its current ten-year term of accreditation by our regional accrediting agency, Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Routinely, at the fifth year, MSCHE member institutions are required to submit a Periodic Review Report (PRR). Recently, Judith Slisz, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, attended a MSCHE workshop for representatives of institutions who will submit their PRR next year. At the workshop, John Erickson, Executive Director of MSCHE, explained that the goals of the PRR were (1) to help institutions gauge progress in achieving their own goals, (2) to enable the Commission to assess the current status, as well as future prospects, of institutions, within the framework of accreditation standards, and (3) to fulfill the Commission's accountability to the public, to the academic community, and to its member institutions. Key components of the PRR include a "look back" on recommendations made at the time of the last self-study in 2002 and the response of the institution --and an update and a status report on enrollment and finance trends, assessment processes and plans, and linkage between institutional planning and budgeting.

At the national level, you may be aware of the work of the Commission on the Future of Higher Education from articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and from reading key position papers from the Commission sent to the MMC Community by Dean Peter Baker on April 6, 2006. These papers are helpful in understanding the climate of higher education with its current focus on accountability, outcomes assessment, and access. While the report of this Commission is not due out until August 2006, the topics under discussion by the Commission are similar to those taking place in Congress as it reauthorizes the Higher Education Act. Mr. Erickson advises that, while various issues remain open like the future of distance learning and the use of standardized tests, “greater public disclosure is certain.”

Jeanette K. Watson Fellowships Announced

In 1999, the Thomas J. Watson Foundation created the Jeanette K. Watson Fellowship Program, which works with students from ten New York City colleges, offering skill-building internships and other summer learning opportunities. To be eligible, students must be a second semester freshman or sophomore pursuing a liberal arts track at one of the ten invited colleges.

This year four Marymount students applied for Watson Fellowships. Freshmen **Tina Jones** and **Alejandro Fernandez** and Sophomores **Jamielynn Argenta** and **Daniel Mathews** competed with others from Brooklyn College, City College of New York, the College of Mount Saint Vincent, the College of Staten Island, Hunter College, Lehman College, Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus, Pace University, Manhattan Campus and Queen’s College.

We are pleased to announce that Jamielynn Argenta was awarded a Watson Fellowship. The Fellowship will begin in June 2006 and continue through August 2008. During this time period, Jamielynn will be expected to successfully complete three summers of paid internships of up to 10 weeks that will enhance her vocational goals and personal interests. She will also be required to attend a weekend orientation session and a program of seminars and cultural events during the summers and during term time that are designed to complement the internships

Well Attended Spring 2006 Rudin Lecture Addresses America’s Position in the World from a Business Perspective

On April 10, Keith Reinhard, Chairman of DDB Worldwide, and President of Business for Diplomatic Action, presented his lecture “The Decline of Brand America: Why We Should Care and What We Should Do” as the Spring 2006 Jack and Lewis Rudin Distinguished Visiting Scholar to a crowd of nearly 200 students, faculty members, staff members and guests of the College.

Mr. Reinhard presented an engaging power point slide show relating how America is viewed as an entity by foreign populations to what that view means for American business. Business Management Professors Richard Garret, Eileen Tynan, Len Hollie, Mary Robinson, Corinne Crawford and Vladimir Pashkevich brought their classes to the evening event. A class from the College of Mount St. Vincent to the lecture and their professor Dr. Brad Crownover also joined us for the lecture.

Earlier in the day, the personable CEO met with about 70 Marymount students to discuss Advertising in the modern age, where it has come from and where he sees it going. He spoke briefly and answered student's questions for about an hour. At one point he spoke to students about interning with Business for Diplomatic Action.

Mr. Reinhard's presentation was the fourth such lecture to be hosted by the College. Previous speakers have included author Martha Nussbaum, Art Historian Linda Nochlin, and Physicist Lawrence Krauss.

Honors Day

On March 15 Marymount presented its 29th Annual Honors Colloquium. Fifteen students and two faculty members presented scholarly and creative works on a variety of topics. The Dean's Award of Excellence went to Anna Montach for her paper "A Modern-Day Civil Death: Criminal Disenfranchisement" sponsored by Dr. Kenton Worcester. Honorable mention went to Alison Price for her paper "Gendered Space in the Victorian Home and the Compulsory Significations of Class" and to Andrea Gise for her dance piece "monumentality" sponsored by Dr. Peter Naccarato and Elizabeth Higgins respectively. Carla Bromberg received the Alpha Chi Award for her paper "More Truth, Less Spin: Sweatshop Labor Versus Social Responsibility" sponsored by Dr. Leslie Levin.

The awards were presented at the well-attended Opening Ceremonies. In addition to the two student awards, the following six part-time faculty members received Teaching Recognition Awards: Margaret Bruen, Humanities; Janet Burroughs, Writing Seminar; Mary Elizabeth De, Natural Science/Math; Gary Levinson, Fine and Performing Arts; Isabel Miller, Accounting/Business Management; and Kat Safavi, Social Sciences.

Throughout the day, induction ceremonies were conducted for the College's five honor societies. Beginning with the induction of forty-seven students into Alpha Chi, whose New York Iota Chapter was one of the events co-sponsors, the ceremonies included the induction of thirty-five students into Omicron Delta Kappa, eleven students Kappa Delta Pi, thirty-five into Omicron Delta Kappa, nineteen into Pi Sigma Alpha, and nine into Sigma Beta Delta.

The event was co-sponsored by the Academic Honors Committee which was comprised of Elizabeth Higgins, Morgan Schwartz, Ghassan Shabaneh, and Gerald Williams, and chaired by Dr. Peter Cain who said Honors Day "was very successful and served to showcase beautifully some of the best efforts by our students. These students made the College proud" He went on to thank the members of the committee and the members of the administration faculty and staff "who helped make this opportunity to showcase scholarship so successful."

Faculty Lounge Keys Distributed

With the locks installed, the Office of Academic Affairs has distributed keys to part- and full-time faculty to allow them access to the improved lounge. Faculty members who have not yet picked up their key may do so in the Office of Academic Affairs during regular business hours through April. If you are unable to come to the Office of Academic during that time, please contact Yvonne Roen at x519 to make other arrangements.

At the end of the semester, Facilities will take charge of Key distribution and maintenance.

Grants and Gifts

The Offices of Institutional Advancement and Academic Affairs are pleased to announce the receipt of the following grants:

- The Chilton Foundation, through the auspices of Maureen Kavanagh Chilton '83, made a grant of \$100,000, payable over four years, to establish the William Kavanagh Endowed Scholarship Fund. The Fund will support students, especially Theatre Arts majors, who demonstrate financial need and who maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher.
- The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation made a grant of \$45,000 to support the marketing of the College's Summer Programming.
- The Mortimer Levitt Foundation made three grants, totaling \$22,500, to the Writing Center.
- The Brand Foundation gave \$15,000 to Writing Center.
- The James S. & Merryl H. Tisch Foundation made an unrestricted gift of \$10,000 to the College.
- The Jewish Chautauqua Society \$2,000 to support the instructional expense for the Jewish Scholar-in-Residence, Rabbi Philip Hiat, to teach "Faith After the Holocaust" and "Heritage: Civilization and the Jews" in 2005-2006.
- The Art Department received an anonymous gift of \$1,000 to support the Department's "digitization."

The Academic Affairs Update will be published five times during the academic year: September, November, February, April and July. We invite you to suggest topics or submit articles for future newsletters. Please forward all feedback to Yvonne Roen at yroen@mmm.edu.