Assessment of Student Learning

College of Fine Arts

A unique collaboration between WMU’s Schools of Communication and Music and radio station WMUK demonstrates the talent and creativity of WMU students in a professional setting. The student music ensemble Trio Aparicion was profiled in a special half-hour program broadcast on Tuesday, Apr. 22 at 9:06 a.m. on WMUK. The group, which has been active in the community and in recruiting for Western, was offered a chance to record at the station’s Yoshimi Takeda Performance Studio and to be the subject of a radio feature produced by WMU Department of Communication student Molly Rent as part of her independent study. In addition to being broadcast on the air, the program will also be available “on demand” from WMUK’s website (wmuk.org) and iTunes University.

One notable aspect of the production is that it was created entirely by students, with coaching and technical assistance from WMU faculty and WMUK staff. The goal of this pilot project was to produce a radio program that met the quality standards of a National Public Radio station. The result is a fresh, personal perspective on the student experience at Western showcasing the caliber of skills and remarkable dedication of its students.

Members of the Trio Aparicion are School of Music students Monica Washington, Patricia Billings, and Sonoma Bryant.

- A BA senior dance major Francesca Bourgault has accepted a Production Internship with The American Dance Festival for June and July 2008. The American Dance Festival, located in Durham, NC, is considered the premiere modern dance festival in the United States.

- Based on their outstanding performance at the 2008 East Central Conference of the American College Dance Festival Association, four WMU students have been invited to the May company audition for the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (Dayton, OH)—Matthew Baker, senior; Adam Crain, senior; Tercell Waters, junior; and Jeremy Neal, junior. Dayton Contemporary Dance Company is known for its performances of works by African American master choreographers including Donald McKayle, Dianne McIntyre, and Talley Beatty.

- A dance by Western Michigan University senior BFA dance major Marissa Staniec was selected for the gala concert at the East Central Conference of the American College Dance Festival Association. The dance, entitled Carson Keepsake, was one of 12 selected from 37 dances adjudicated during the conference. The conference, which took place Mar. 5-8, 2008, was hosted by the Department of Dance at Western Michigan University. The gala concert dances were selected by the three adjudicators as the best of college/university dance in the east central region.

- The University Chorale, a select ensemble of mixed voices, and Cantus Femina, WMU’s women’s chorus, have been chosen to perform at the National Collegiate Choral Organization’s annual conference in October 2008. Choirs considered for performances must apply via a recorded audition, which is evaluated by a selection committee. The selection committee does not know the identity of the choirs. It is extremely prestigious for two ensembles from the same institution to be selected. The NCCO

Continued on next page
conference will be held at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. The University Chorale and Cantus Femina are conducted by faculty members Dr. James K. Bass and Dr. Dee Gauthier, respectively.

The prestigious Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) selected WMU Department of Theatre’s production of Dracula to compete at the regional level in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in January 2008 and for a chance to perform at the world-famous Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. Any university can enter a show for consideration and a committee of judges chooses only six to eight to compete at the regional level. Of the eight regions, the Midwest is the most active and competitive. Three of the best and most diverse productions from the regional competitions are then selected to showcase at the national festival in Washington D.C. later in the spring.

Two graduate students in the Frostic School of Art had their paintings included in juried national exhibitions. Heidi Weiss (MFA, 2009) had one of her large scale paintings included in a show titled nth degree, at the Off the Wall Gallery in Philadelphia from Dec. 2-28, 2007. Thirteen other students from graduate schools across the United States were included in the show. Ms. Weiss also had a solo exhibit of her work at the Kingscott Gallery, Kalamazoo in January 2008. Nicole Miller (MFA, 2008) exhibited a painting in the Emerging Artists Series at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey from Dec. 14, 2007 - Jan. 25, 2008. This juried exhibition featured up and coming artists in the process of finishing their graduate education and entering the professional market.

The Design Center Intern Students from the Graphic Design Program, Frostic School of Art designed and produced three television commercials for apexart gallery in New York City. The commercials entitled “Bart Discovers apexart”, “ape x art” and “Appreciate Your Senses” were 3 of 19 pieces in the The (Self) Promotion Show on exhibition at the gallery Jan. 9 - Feb. 16. Viewers to the site were encouraged to vote for a winning entry. A professional designer won the competition, but our student designers made a respectable showing in this national, juried competition. The pieces can be viewed at http://www.apexart.org/promotion/ or at the Gwen Frostic School of Art website: www.wmich.edu/art. The work was created as part of a class (Art 5700, Intern I) under the direction of Professor Tricia Hennessy and with student designers Fleurie Berish, Aaron Bragdon, Kristi Breisach, Brent Casanova, Nancy Cornillaud, Christine Emmer, Michael Goliver, Jared Graham, Eric Karcz, Yuuya Masada, Ephraim McNair, Adrienne Mesnard, Breana Robinson, Amanda Schwarz, Anna Tomlonson, Lauren Watt, and Danielle Webb.

The Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies in partnership with Springer Publishing Company, has selected the Social Problem-Solving Inventory for Adolescents developed by Drs. Marianne Frauenknecht, professor in the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation and David R. Black from Purdue University to be included in the current multi-volume series on assessment instruments titled the “Clinical Assessment Series: Practitioner’s Guide to Empirically-Based Measures of Social Skills.” Each series features a specific clinical problem area and presents a comprehensive compendium of measurement devices available to disseminate empirically validated instruments as broadly as possible to researchers, academicians, and clinicians. Editors commented, “Many instruments were included in our review of adolescent social skills assessment measures and the Social Problem-Solving Inventory for Adolescents stands out as an excellent example.”

The Department of Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology faculty have revised their assessment system for the programs in Educational Leadership. The new assessment system is directly linked to the standards of the Educational Leadership Constituent Council, the professional organization overseeing the preparation of leaders for K-12 schools and districts. The newly designed assessments are performance-based and use detailed rubrics to guide students and faculty.
artifacts for each program assessment in areas of need, 3) identifying key projects to look for promising artifacts and their major assignments and needs, 2) examining existing courses to assess strengths and criteria currently in place for program assessment activities and results. Cummings provided examples of assessment plans, guidelines for the development and improvement of plans, and suggestions for integrating electronic portfolios within a university-wide assessment program.

Colleagues in the Elementary Education Program of the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Educational Studies have initiated an examination of their program’s assessment structure. Assistant professors Paul Vellom and Allison Downey have spearheaded the project to align course assignments and artifacts with standards from the North Central Accreditation in Teacher Education. While the program is already in good standing with NCATE, colleagues sought to create a reliable structure for on-going programmatic assessment, using NCATE standards as a guide, that would ensure consistency in meeting departmental standards and goals for the program as well as national standards. The process has led faculty to identify areas of connection and overlap among course curricula, enabling them to better support key concepts throughout the program. It has also encouraged faculty to re-examine course content and course sequencing within the program. The process includes 1) examining artifacts and criteria currently in place for program assessment to identify strengths and needs, 2) examining existing courses and their major assignments and projects to look for promising artifacts in areas of need, 3) identifying key artifacts for each program assessment area and designating these as essential program and course components, 4) working with instructors to clarify and share criteria for success on each key artifact, and 5) developing flow and articulation charts to support data collection aligned with current standards. The program has completed steps 1 and 2, and is working to complete the remaining steps by mid-summer so that data can be gathered in fall 2008. Because of impending revisions in the Michigan Entry-Level Teaching Standards and the need to bring instructors of multi-section courses up-to-speed, this process will be ongoing and recursive.

Drs. Lynn Nations Johnson, professor, and Carol Crumbaugh, associate professor, from the Department of Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies, along with Kathy Mitchell, Director of Field Placements and Kelsey Woodard, graduate assistant, have received an assessment grant to examine the current measurements used to document elementary and secondary intern teacher growth as based on the Michigan Department of Education Seven Entry-Level Standards for Teachers that are supported by the North Central Accreditation in Teacher Education organization, the national accreditation body for the College of Education. This project will determine whether current instruments measure the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and thinking processes that are critical to successful teaching and if these seven measures should be replaced, restructured, and/or refined in order to represent and evaluate elementary and secondary students’ preparedness to teach. Over 18 months, each preparing teacher in the College of Education prepares a set of documents used for placement, self-reflection, and assessment of the intern teacher’s performance as a novice teacher. In addition, each intern teacher is evaluated at the midterm and at the conclusion of the semester internship semester. The

University Libraries

Assistant Professor Maira Bundza, reference librarian, received an Assessment Fellows grant in 2004. She attended the Information Literacy Immersion program of the American College and Research Libraries, and assessment of library skills and applications was a major component. Bundza used newly acquired assessment methods to redesign the reference student training program for student library employees, and modify her library instruction sessions.

Assistant Professor Dianna Sachs, instruction librarian, has been accepted to participate in the Information Literacy Immersion ’08 program sponsored by the Association of College and Research Libraries. The program focuses on developing, integrating, and managing institutional and programmatic information literacy programs. Sachs will use change dynamics, systems thinking, institutional outcomes assessment, scalability, and the integration of teaching, learning, and technology to analyze and meet the programmatic challenges specific to Western Michigan University.

The University Assessment Steering Committee will be sponsoring a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Workshop on Friday May 30, 2008. The purpose of the workshop is to encourage faculty researchers who have received University Assessment Grants or are in some way engaged in research in the teaching and
What do our “customers” say about their library? How do they describe their experiences? How do they perceive their library? To help us answer such questions and maintain accountability, in 2004 University Libraries administered LibQUAL+™, a web-based national survey of academic libraries designed to measure library users’ perceptions of service quality. The LibQUAL+™ survey is an assembly of up to 27 closed-ended questions and one open-ended question. The questions ask respondents to rate their minimum, desired, and perceived levels of performance of the University Libraries in three central areas related to learning: Affect of Service (customer service supporting learning), Information Control (library collection and access to the collection, essential for learning and research) and Library as Place (physical buildings and learning environment). In 2004 the University Libraries completed the survey and received aggregate data from LibQUAL+™. Researchers from the University Libraries then conducted detailed analysis of data and comments received about the library and its services. This was also the focus of two peer reviewed journal articles, two presentations and two poster sessions at national library conferences, and also one upcoming poster session at a national assessment conference. LibQUAL+™ administrators Dr. Barbara Cockrell, Dr. Galen Rike and Prof. Brad Dennis were also charged with effectively communicating survey findings back to stakeholders, such as library and institutional administrators, library employees, and colleagues. Data from the survey was also used by the University Libraries Strategic Planning Steering Committee and several task forces created from the University Libraries Strategic Planning Steering Committee recommendations. Improvements were made based on data and comments received:

- Increased full-text online content
- Scholar workstations
- Web redesign
- EZ Proxy
- Find it @ WMU (SFX – full-text linking software)
- RefWorks
- Extended loan periods for students (from 2 weeks to 4 weeks)
- Email notification reminders and overdue notices
- Training tutorial and customer service training for employees
- Extended hours (open until 3 AM – Sunday through Thursday)
- Cafe
- Comfortable lounge area

Data from the 2004 survey established the baseline and the LibQUAL+™ survey was administered again in 2007. The 2007 University Libraries scores showed improvement across all three areas measured, Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place. Incoming graduate and undergraduate scores indicate a rise in expectations. However, the University Libraries scores show improvement above the rise in expectations.

A poster proposal submitted by Dr. Barbara Cockrell, associate dean for Collections and Technical Services, and assistant professor Brad Dennis, education librarian, has been accepted for inclusion in the Library Assessment Conference, to be held this August in Seattle. The poster, entitled “Using LibQual+™ to Inform Strategic Planning,” outlines how WMU Libraries used LibQual+™ assessment data collected in 2004 to identify some needed improvements in service, information control and library as place. Goals and action items to address these issues were incorporated into the libraries strategic plan. A measure of the effectiveness of these implemented plans was afforded when University Libraries repeated the LibQual+™ survey in 2007. We observed measurable improvements across all three service dimensions by each of the user groups (faculty, graduate students and undergraduates).

University Libraries and the Cistercian Studies Institute have collaborated to provide experiential learning opportunities for graduate students in history. An activity, titled “Beyond Books,” has afforded graduate students in history hands-on opportunities to work with monastic manuscripts and incunabula in Special Collections and Rare Books under the direction of assistant professor Dr. Susan Steuer. Students are refining critical catalog descriptions of the Cistercian Collection at WMU on permanent loan from the Gethsemani Abbey, Trappist KY.

Students Micah Erwin, Arthur Russell, Peter Sewell, and Katie Brambrink joined Dr. E. Rozanne Elder, director, and Ms. Karen McDougall, Cistercian Studies Institute, and Dr. Steuer, and Mr. Neil Chase, Special Collections, Mr. Jim Dexheimer, Special Collections cataloguer, and Dr. Joseph Reish, dean, University Libraries, at a working seminar at Gethsemani Abbey during midwinter break. The research team, with the students taking the lead, prepared a draft catalog of the Cistercian holdings. The preeminent scholar Fr. Chrysogonus Waddell fine-tuned the catalog entries while discoursing on the Cistercian legacy bounded within the handwritten volumes and earliest examples of printing with moveable type. After a second visit to the abbey this June by the research team and
further proofing of the catalog, the bibliographic text of Cistercian founding documents will be put online. It will then be virtually accessible by medieval scholars worldwide. The graduate students now have a tangible credential of exceptional opportunities beyond books that has already counted for entry into prestigious graduate programs. Moreover, University Libraries has high expectations for the increased use of the monastic literature the WMU collections.

The School of Social Work has now completed its second year of gathering, analyzing and considering comprehensive student and alumni data. The assessment feedback is used by curriculum committees and administration within the School to inform decisions about curricular planning, as well as program development. Information about the School of Social Work’s assessment plan and reports are available at: http://www.iwebfolio.com/public/mccormickm.

The WMU Bronson School of Nursing faculty developed an evaluation tool to assess the degree to which nursing students are achieving specified clinical learning outcomes. The faculty first developed clinical performance outcomes with key indicators in the form of behavioral objectives by incorporating the baccalaureate program outcomes, ANA Standards of Care (2004), ANA Standard of Professional Practice (2004), and essential characteristics of nursing students from a variety of sources. The faculty then adapted Bondy’s (1983) rating scale that provided criterion-referenced definitions in the areas of standard of performance, quality of performance and level of assistance. Bondy’s rating scale lends itself to the rating of psychomotor skills. Clinical learning and performance also includes the cognitive and affective domains, thus the key was modified and criterion definitions were added for these domains. The rating key that is now a part of the clinical evaluation tool provides precise definitions of Independent, Supervised, Guided, Marginal, or Dependent in terms of the standard of performance, the quality of performance and the level of assistance required. The faculty teaching in the sophomore, junior and senior levels of the program, using the same evaluation tool, determined expected levels of performance on each standard by semester and year. The advantages of using this type of tool have been numerous. The clarity of the definitions provided in the rating scale has improved the accuracy of measuring student clinical performance. Additionally, the leveling of the tool has allowed faculty to better track students’ clinical development as they progress through the curriculum. Students have expressed satisfaction in not only knowing what performance outcomes are expected, but also the level at which they must perform during each year of the program. This tool is used for both formative and summative clinical evaluation in the affective, psychomotor and cognitive domains.

The nursing faculty responsible for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program that admitted its first cohort of students in fall 2006 have developed an innovative assessment process using iwebfolio. Faculty believe that graduate students need to be active participants in assessing their own learning. They worked with students to understand the need to focus on program outcomes throughout their course of study and the importance of periodic reflection on progress toward meeting these outcomes. Students were introduced to the iwebfolio system to begin development of a professional portfolio during the first semester of the MSN program. A decision was made in fall 2007 to reframe the set up of the iwebfolio accounts using the six MSN program outcomes. Students were then instructed to select specific learning activities (formal papers, career map, teaching practicum, case presentations, community activities) from each course they have completed and place these under the appropriate program outcome. It was agreed that revised papers and updated career maps could be used instead of the original draft of papers. Of greatest importance in this self-assessment of learning is the student’s rationale for the placement of the learning activities within a given outcome, followed by their reflection on how this activity has assisted them in addressing and eventually meeting the program outcome. Initial response to this self-assessment was reticence because of the lack of familiarity with the iwebfolio system. Several sessions with experienced faculty users of iwebfolio have diminished this reticence and students are progressing well at this time. Faculty believe this self-assessment process has increased the graduate student’s awareness of the fit between learning activities and success in the graduate program. It has also reinforced the individual’s responsibility and accountability for learning.

The nursing faculty responsible for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program that admitted its first cohort of students in fall 2006 have developed an innovative assessment process using iwebfolio. Faculty believe that graduate students need to be active participants in assessing their own learning. They worked with students to understand the need to focus on program outcomes throughout their course of study and the importance of periodic reflection on progress toward meeting these outcomes. Students were introduced to the iwebfolio system to begin development of a professional portfolio during the first semester of the MSN program. A decision was made in fall 2007 to reframe the set up of the iwebfolio accounts using the six MSN program outcomes. Students were then instructed to select specific learning activities (formal papers, career map, teaching practicum, case presentations, community activities) from each course they have completed and place these under the appropriate program outcome. It was agreed that revised papers and updated career maps could be used instead of the original draft of papers. Of greatest importance in this self-assessment of learning is the student’s rationale for the placement of the learning activities within a given outcome, followed by their reflection on how this activity has assisted them in addressing and eventually meeting the program outcome. Initial response to this self-assessment was reticence because of the lack of familiarity with the iwebfolio system. Several sessions with experienced faculty users of iwebfolio have diminished this reticence and students are progressing well at this time. Faculty believe this self-assessment process has increased the graduate student’s awareness of the fit between learning activities and success in the graduate program. It has also reinforced the individual’s responsibility and accountability for learning.

Developing history taking and physical exam skills is essential in the initial training of the Physician Assistant (PA) Student. Assessing
those skills is a challenge. The PA Department has developed a process to help students become cognizant of their performance of these skills. During the first semester of a three-semester course in “The Diagnostic Process”, students are required to critique each other as they learn to interview patients and learn the hands-on performance skills. After a lecture presenting the methods of obtaining a component of the medical history or a specific physical exam skill, the students are divided into groups of three to practice their skills, allowing one student to be the PA, one student to be the patient, and one student utilizing a formalized checklist to critique the student who is the PA. Three times during the semester, each student group will perform a formalized role-playing scenario. At the end of the semester, students are expected to perform a complete and accurate physical exam, which is then graded by a faculty member. During the peer-group sessions, students invariably share amongst themselves ways of perfecting their technique. Utilizing the peer-assessment model has allowed students to gain increased confidence in their performance of these skills in a non-threatening way. Our goal as faculty is to prepare the student sufficiently to begin the clinical phase of their training. The application of this process becomes evident at the beginning of the spring semester, when the students begin their mentoring process with physicians and PAs in the community. Students are able to demonstrate performance of the PE skills with relative ease. Mentors are able to allow students, with appropriate supervision, to practice their new skills and are then able to supply advice on improving their techniques.

Assessment of student learning in the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology is driven, in large part, by the standards for professional certification and accreditation maintained by the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) and its accrediting body. Educational programs must demonstrate mechanisms for formative and summative assessment of students’ acquisition of an array of knowledge and skill competencies. The Master’s program in speech-language pathology and the doctoral audiology program (Au.D.) each require different competencies, the development of which are assessed through ongoing formative assessment tools. Knowledge competencies are assessed through course work requirements, such as specific case study assignments, developed by individual faculty members. Audiology students take the First-Year Knowledge Assessment (first year material) each spring, while basic diagnostic clinical competencies are assessed mid-year. Students’ knowledge base and skills development relative to clinical competencies in speech-language pathology are evaluated in each clinical assignment according to a 5-point scale of increasing levels of independence. Instructors meet individually with student clinicians for one mid-semester and one end-of-semester evaluation focused on performance outcomes. During these formative assessments of student learning, the student submits a self-evaluation of performance which is discussed relative to the instructor’s data, to share perspectives and identify strengths and weaknesses. Students keep an ongoing record of accomplishment for the required knowledge and skill outcomes using the Knowledge and Skills Assessment Summary Form (ASHA, 2003). In advising meetings, the student data are verified through review of instructor-designed competency checklists and clinical competency evaluation documents. Students retain these documents as well as artifacts of their work in individual portfolios. The primary summative assessment is the PRAXIS examination taken by all graduates before they are allowed to apply for certification in their respective professional areas of emphasis.

Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation

The Ph.D. program in Interdisciplinary Health Studies used a competency-based assessment model measured through coursework and four innovative comprehensive examination products, prior to the dissertation. The comprehensive examination products are: (1) a journal article based on a research practicum, which must be submitted to a peer reviewed journal; (2) analysis of a health or human services policy based on a systematic review of relevant literature and using a published analysis framework, defended in an oral examination; (3) a grant application, which must be submitted to a funding agency; and (4) a portfolio, presenting all of the materials for a course the student has taught, which includes a reflective self-assessment narrative that incorporates information gleaned from assessment of the learning of the students who completed the course. The program admits students every two years and has just admitted 12 students in our fourth cohort. Data from the 2007 annual review regarding subsequent publications, presentations, and grant funding are summarized in Table 1. Accomplishments announced within the past month include the following:

• Priscilla Barnes (cohort 2) has been awarded a $10,000 grant from the University of Kentucky College of Public Health “Assuring the Future of Public Health Systems Research.” She and her mentor, Dr. Amy Curtis, attended a meeting with other grantees at the University of Kentucky in April, 2008.

Kim Ballard, Writing Center Director, and Scott Williams, Assistant Writing Center Director, traveled with 9 Western Michigan University students to Columbus, Ohio, for the 2008 East Central Writing Centers Association Conference. WMU was well represented on panel presentations; the Writing Center staff collaborated on a total of six different sessions that included:


At the 2007 ECWCA Elena Adkins was selected as the ECWCA Tutor of the Year, so her 2008 conference registration was paid for this year.

On Saturday, April 19, four men with Michigan connections will be enshrined into the Air Zoo’s Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame. During the same ceremony, Western Michigan University’s College of Aviation will also be honored. Western Michigan University’s College of Aviation will be presented with the “Spirit of Flight” award at the ceremony, which highlights the outstanding achievements of aviation space organization. With more than 60 years of experience, WMU’s College of Aviation strives to establish and maintain state-of-the-art, world-class professional aviation programs that are among the best in the world.

The Capital Area Higher Education Network (CAHEN) is a group of twelve area colleges and universities whose mission is to work collaboratively to promote life-long learning in the Lansing metropolitan area, foster discussion of higher education issues, and encourage employers to support professional development of their employees. CAHEN’s target audience consists of adult learners who need to earn an undergraduate or graduate degree in order to advance professionally, remain competitive in the work force, and wish to conduct their studies in the Lansing area.

Upcoming Events

The Frostic School of Art is pleased to present three one-person exhibitions by emeriti Joseph DeLuca and Paul Robbert, and Kalamazoo College professor Richard Koenig. The exhibition will be in the Monroe-Brown Gallery, RCVA, from Apr. 24 - May 1, 2008.
• The College of Fine Arts will host the Michigan Youth Arts Festival May 8-10, 2008. The Festival brings approximately 1,000 of the most talented high school students in the arts to campus to rehearse, perform and exhibit their talents while participating in master classes. A schedule of public performances is available on the website at www.myaf.org.

University Libraries

An exhibition entitled The Transmission of a Medieval Text: Bernard of Clairvaux’s Sermons on the Song of Songs will be on view in the Edwin and Mary Meader Rare Book Room of Waldo Library May 5-16. The exhibition explores the transmission of Bernard’s text from manuscript to modern critical edition and features two medieval manuscripts and four fifteenth-century editions of the sermons, along with other relevant material. The manuscripts and early printed books, coming from throughout Western Europe, are part of the Obrecht Collection of Gethsemani Abbey, on permanent loan to the Institute of Cistercian Studies and University Libraries. The display was developed by Micah Erwin as a part of his course of study for the MA in Medieval Studies at WMU and focuses primarily on how the physical presentation of the text developed over the centuries from its handwritten form on parchment to its printed form on paper.

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences

A “Bridge Design, Management, Assessment, and Rehabilitation Techniques” workshop is planned for Friday, May 2, from 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. in Room D-109 at the CEAS Parkview Campus. The workshop is sponsored by WMU’s Department of Civil and Construction Engineering (CCE), the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Southwest Michigan Chapter, and the American Public Works Association (APWA). Dr. Sherif Yehia, a CCE associate professor and a workshop organizer, said the event will present state-of-the-art techniques in bridge design, construction, evaluation, and rehabilitation. Speakers include Larry O’Donnell, bridge management/inspection engineer from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); Richard Smith, bridge inspection program manager from Michigan Department of Transportation; Benoit Kroelyn, project manager from Advitam Infrastructure Management Solutions; and Jagan Gudi-mettla, from FHWA project engineering. Topics include FHWA’s National Initiatives, commendable bridge inspection practices, changes to Michigan’s Bridge Inspection program, Bulgarian bridge inspection processes, examples of the bridge maintenance program applied by European toll bridge agencies, and the FWA Mobile Concrete Lab durability-related testing. “The objective of the workshop is to provide engineers and other professionals involved in bridge design, construction, management, maintenance, and even ownership with state of the art knowledge related to bridges,” Yehia said. Other workshop organizers include Dr. Osama Abudayyeh, CCE associate dean; Dennis Randolph, APWA president and Calhoun Co. Road Commission managing director; and Dr. Haluk Aktan, CCE chair. The workshop costs $175 before and $200 after April 11 and is limited to the first 100 registrants. Included in the registration fee are workshop activities, handouts, coffee, and lunch. Attendees will earn 7 PDH continuing education awards. More information is available from WMU at (269) 276-3218.

The SAE Formula race-car team from WMU’s student chapter of the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) is heading for the 2008 Formula SAE® competition. The annual event is set for May 14-18, 2008, at the Michigan International Speedway, Brooklyn, Michigan. Approximately 120 colleges and universities from around the world compete with formula-style prototype racing cars they designed and built. According to Sarah Gerbig, WMU’s SAE chapter president, about 20 WMU team members plan to attend the event to compete in a variety of static and dynamic events. Static events include a technical inspection, cost report, business presentation, and design presentation, and dynamic events include skid pad, acceleration, and endurance testing. An intensive 150-page cost report documents pricing of every vehicle component and details any manufacturing processes used in the vehicle’s production. “The most prestigious static event is the design presentation,” Gerbig said. “The team has an allotted time to explain to a panel of top-notched experienced judges why the car was designed the way it was.” WMU’s team has been preparing for the competition for the past three semesters. Its organizational structure allows tasks to be evenly divided with Continued on next page
Attending the IIE Annual Conference and Expo – IERC are (back row) Dr. Steven Butt (left) and Dr. Tycho Fredericks. In the front row are Supreeta Amin-Kumar (left) and Ilgin Acar. Both IE Ph.D. students are presenting papers at the conference.

Two industrial engineering Ph.D. students are presenting papers at the IIE Annual Conference and Expo – Industrial Engineering Research Conference (IERC), set for May 17 to 21 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Supreeta Amin-Kumar is presenting “Determining the Aesthetiometric Thresholds at the Low Back Region: A Pilot Study” in a session on Posture and Motion Ergonomics, and Ilgin Acar is presenting “Modeling Independent Pharmacy Staff Schedules” in the in a session on Analytical Methods. Both are members of WMU’s Human Performance Institute (HPI), which is directed by Drs. Tycho Fredericks and Steven Butt, IE professors in the Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering (IME) who are also attending the conference. Co-authors of Amin-Kumar’s paper include Butt and Fredericks, Teresa Bellinger of Haworth Inc., and three other WMU graduate students who are HIP members: Fehime Utkan, Amanda Glick, and Ashley Hovenkamp. Amin-Kumar’s paper is related to ongoing chair research being done by the HPI. Acar’s paper is based on data collected from a retail pharmacy project and was co-authored by Butt. Acar presented a paper on the initial mathematical models for the pharmacy project last November at the 2007 12th Annual International Conference on Industrial Engineering Theory, Applications & Practice sponsored by the International Journal of Industrial Engineering (IJIE) in Cancun, Mexico. In addition to making presentations at IERC, all WMU attendees plan to attend numerous presentations and workshops. Fredericks said that IERC is the largest international industrial engineering conference in the world.

College of Education

The Golden Apple Award nomination deadline is June 1. The Golden Apple Award is given to honor an outstanding individual who attended or graduated from the WMU College of Education and is presently working or retired from the many professions involved in the educational experience. The individuals will be personally selected by their peers as being representative of educational excellence and commitment. Nomination forms may be found at http://www.wmich.edu/coe/alumni/goldenawd.htm.

Haworth College of Business

A long-standing need of HCOB students will, finally, be fulfilled on Apr. 25, 2008, at the formal inauguration of the Career Services Center. Over the past decade, each fall and spring, HCOB seniors have been surveyed to assess their level of satisfaction with facilities at the college. The survey instrument used is prepared by Education Benchmarking Inc. (EBI). The data gathered are analyzed and the results are compared with information from EBI surveys administered at other universities across the country. One finding that has consistently surfaced in the surveys is the pressing need for an in-house career services center at the HCOB. Given the tight budget situation in the state of Michigan, and consequently, a challenging resource environment at WMU, the HCOB set out to raise private funds for the construction of an in-house career services center. A Senior Leadership Cabinet, consisting of five distinguished friends of the college who attended or graduated from the WMU College of Education and is presently working or retired from the many professions involved in the educational experience. The collective efforts to raise funds for the construction of an in-house career services center at the HCOB.
the Senior Leadership Cabinet, the HCOB administration, faculty, staff and students resulted in the collection of cash, pledges and gifts in-kind of nearly $3 million. The funding made it possible to go ahead with construction of the center in December 2007. The HCOB Career Services Center will support career development, career planning and employment needs of students. National and regional businesses are expected to use the facilities at the Center to interview WMU students for employment. In addition, students will have opportunities for career counseling and internship placements. The WMU Career &Student Employment Services will train, supervise and oversee center operations. The Career Services Center is a big step forward in the endeavors of the Haworth College of Business to provide continuous improvement in educational quality and opportunities for our students.