Updates in Academic Affairs: 09/15/2016

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Inside Updates: Fall Convocation offers a daylong slate of activities on Sept. 30, a new document offers tips on creating a “trans-inclusive” classroom, the University adopts official definition of plagiarism and University Libraries extends loan period.

Fall Convocation features workshops, awards, annual presidential address

Reflecting the promise every new academic year holds, an action-packed Fall Convocation is set for Friday, Sept. 30, and is based in the Bernhard Center. The day includes keynote lectures, workshops, an awards ceremony recognizing faculty and staff achievement, and President John M. Dunn’s State of the University address.

The convocation’s morning programming begins at 8:30 a.m. in rooms 208-210 and includes keynote presentations by past WMU Distinguished Teaching Award recipients, teaching with technology training and virtual reality experiences.

At 11 a.m. in the East Ballroom, faculty and staff members will be recognized for demonstrated excellence in their work. This year’s awards and recipients are as follows:

2016 Annual Make a Difference Award
Sheila Atherton, Accounts Receivable
Earl Conner, Building Custodial and Support Services
Stacy Thinnes, Intercollegiate Athletics
Cindy Town, Office of Institutional Equity

2016 Distinguished Teaching Award
Dr. Jennifer Machiorlatti, School of Communication
Dr. Lisa Paulius, Department of Physics

2016 Emerging Scholar Award
Dr. Jessaca Spybrook, Department of Education Leadership, Research, and Technology

2016 Distinguished Service Award
Dr. Howard Dooley, Department of History

Amy Seth, University Recreation Programs and Facilities

Following the awards presentation, President Dunn will deliver his annual State of the University address outlining goals for the University community for the 2016-17 academic year. Immediately following the address, there will be a picnic luncheon at the Sangren Plaza. The rain site for the luncheon will be in the Bernhard Center Ballroom.

Members of the Bronco Marching Band are scheduled to play briefly in front of the Bernhard Center before workshops resume for the afternoon. Slated from 1:30 to 3 p.m., the afternoon program offers assessment mentor discussions, new TracDat information sessions, and assessment techniques for new and seasoned faculty.

For additional details about the workshop schedule and offerings, contact the Office of Faculty Development at Faculty-Development@wmich.edu or (269) 387-0732.

**Document offers tips on fostering a trans-inclusive classroom**

by Tim Greene, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs

In a collaborative effort, the Office of Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender Student Services and the Department for Gender and Women’s Studies developed a document to assist instructors of record with fostering a classroom environment that is welcoming and inclusive for transgender students.

The document is available at wmich.edu/lbgt. These recommendations should be referenced by faculty, all instructors of record and staff members.

I would like to extend my thanks to Dr. Susan Freeman and Codie Stone for leading this effort to help establish an inclusive environment for all WMU students. For assistance with questions or concerns, contact the Office of Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender Student Services at lbgt-director@wmich.edu or (269) 387-2133.

**University adopts official definition of plagiarism**

During the spring 2016 semester, the University adopted the following universal definition of plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s language, ideas, or other material without making the source(s) evident in situations where there is a legitimate expectation of original work. Plagiarism does not occur when efforts to promptly identify sources by making source use apparent to the audience of the submitted material are obvious. Plagiarism may not necessarily include mistakes in citation style.
A legitimate expectation of original work exists for numerous circumstances, including (but not limited to): scholarly writing, technical presentations and papers, conference presentations and papers, online discussion postings, grant proposals, patents, book and other manuscripts, theses and dissertations, class assignments, artistic works, computer code, algorithms, and other creative works.

This definition applies to the entire WMU community, which includes all faculty; students; staff; visiting faculty, scholars and administrators; and any other person governed by the academic research and other policies of the University (as per Faculty Senate MOA-15/08).

The universal definition of plagiarism is also referenced at the website for the Office of Student Conduct under the Definitions of Academic Honesty Violations.

For assistance with questions or inquiries regarding instances of potential student academic misconduct, contact Nicole Millar Allbee, director of the Office of Student Conduct, at nicole.allbee@wmich.edu or (269) 387-2160.

**University Libraries extends student loan period, nixes overdue fines**

In an effort to improve services and provide better support for student learning and discovery, University Libraries has extended student loan periods and will no longer charge overdue fines.

All WMU borrowers can take advantage of full-semester loan periods for most items, with an option to renew materials for additional semesters. And all video loans have been extended to 14 days.

In addition, email notices have been enhanced and automated for faculty, staff, and students to receive multiple reminders to return or renew checked out items to avoid lost item fees for unreturned items. All lost and missing fees will be reflected in the borrower’s WMU account.

These changes in borrowing policies allow University Libraries to support extended use of materials while providing users with the ability to recall loaned materials early. Borrowers will be granted a guaranteed two-week check-out time, and will receive automatic email notifications if an item has been requested by another library user.

For assistance with questions about these policy changes, contact Barbara Cockrell, associate dean of University Libraries, at barbara.cockrell@wmich.edu or (269) 387-5143.