WMU first in state to become part of higher ed accountability effort

WMU has become the first university in Michigan and one of the first in the nation to launch a Web-based tool aimed at providing prospective students and their families a consistent and comprehensive look at critical data that will help them make institutional comparisons.

The Voluntary System of Accountability is a joint project of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. Participating colleges and universities will post their data using a template called the VSA College Portrait. The template ensures that the data have a consistent look for all participating institutions.

WMU’s College Portrait went live on April 3, with a link to the information prominently placed on the WMU home page. The University has been designated as an “Early Adopter” of the VSA College Portrait and has been authorized to add that designation to its site.

“This is one way we signal our commitment to make sure the families and students we serve have access to good information to use when they make their college choices,” says WMU President John M. Dunn, who says he has wanted the University to be an early adopter since he first learned the template was close to completion.

“Much of this is information that was already available, but sometimes difficult to find. The College Portrait provides more convenient packaging and makes important data more available and accessible.”

VSA College Portraits are intended to communicate standard information about the undergraduate student experience at participating institutions through use of a common Web reporting format. Such information includes Carnegie classification; data on gender, ethnicity, age and geographic origin of students; retention rates; cost of attendance and detail on financial aid packages; number of degrees awarded and most popular areas of study; details on faculty credentials and makeup as well as class size; information on campus safety and student housing; and the most current information on student satisfaction and perceptions.

The College Portrait template was finalized last fall after a two-year development and testing process. It was made available online at http://atis.wmich.edu. The College Portrait Web site gives prospective students and their parents a variety of helpful information. (Graphic by Tammy Boneburg)

Provost finalists ID’ed, to make on-campus presentations

Four final candidates have been identified for the post of provost and vice president for academic affairs—the University’s second-highest position. Each will make a public presentation and meet with a range of campus groups during formal visits set for the weeks of April 14 and 21. A detailed schedule with times, days and locations of the candidates’ presentations will be available soon on the provost search Web site.

The candidates are:

• Susan L. Carlson, associate provost for faculty advancement and diversity at Iowa State University;

• Robert Felner, dean, Distinguished University Scholar and professor in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Louisville;

• Timothy J. Green, dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and professor of industrial and manufacturing engineering at WMU; and

• Jeffrey P. Koep, Dean of the College of Fine Arts at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Go to www.wmich.edu/provostsearch to view all of the candidates’ vitae.
String theorist to give lecture

One of the nation’s top string theory experts will speak from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Friday, April 11, in the Fetzer Center’s Kirsh Auditorium. A question-and-answer period and reception will follow the presentation by renowned particle physicist Sylvester J. Gates Jr., director of the Center for String and Particle Theory at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Student choreography featured

Four upcoming concerts feature original works choreographed entirely by graduating dance students. The four students will present their graduation concerts, “AfterMotion,” in Dance Studio B, on the third floor of the Dalton Center at 8 p.m. Friday, April 11; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday, April 12; and 2 p.m. Sunday, April 13. Tickets are available at the door.

Christian groups plan event

The Voices of WMU Gospel Choir and Alpha Omega Co-Ed Christian Fraternity are sponsoring a free public concert and ball, titled “Fusion: It’s a God Thing,” from 7 p.m. to midnight Saturday, April 12, at the Fetzer Center.

TIAA-CREF advisors on campus

Financial advisors from TIAA-CREF will be on campus April 15-17. To schedule an appointment, go online to www.tiaa-cref.org and click “Meetings and Counseling” under “Services.” Reservations may be made for available dates in May, June and July.

Green retirement party set

Sue H. Green, program director for the University Relations, Walwood Hall, Western Michigan University, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5433, every other week during the fall and spring semesters.

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 WMU to host ‘Bigs’ rally

Big Brothers-Big Sisters of Greater Kalamazoo will hold its “Thinking Big for 50 Years at...” The Big Rally 2008” from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 19, in University Arena. The event will feature free food, activities and prizes for all ages. Green Bay Packers wide receiver Greg Jennings will be a special guest.

The organization would like to hear from former Bigs, Littles and others who have helped impact the lives of so many southwest Michigan children over the past 50 years. Contact Jodi Victor at jodivictor@bbbsmi.org or 382-6800 to relay your story.

Aviation slates open house

The College of Aviation will hold an open house for students across West Michigan from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, in the Aviation Education Building at the college’s headquarters at the WK Kellogg Airport in Battle Creek, Mich.

Prospective students may register for the event by going online to www.wmich.edu/ aviation/house.php or by calling the college’s Welcome Center at 964-6375.

Career fair set for teachers

The 20th annual Education Career Fair will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, April 14, in the Bernhard Center’s East Ballroom. A record-breaking 160 school districts from Michigan and 13 other states will participate. Go to www.wm.brncojobs.wmich.edu and click on the “Career Fairs” section for more information.

WMU to host ‘Bigs’ rally

Beginning with the fall semester, WMU will be the only university in Michigan to offer a minor in Arabic.

The new three-year program will consist of 23 credit hours of linguistics, culture and literature courses, with study abroad encouraged. Mughazy has been making presentations in the U.S. and Canada on WMU’s Arabic program and of its success and the innovative model for teaching beginning levels of Arabic that he has introduced.

A faculty member since 2003, Mughazy is a specialist in Arabic linguistics: semantics and applied linguistics. He organized the University’s popular summer study program in Alexandria, Egypt, as well as the academic year program there, and was elected in 2006 to head the Arabic Linguistic Society international organization.

Prof writes book on jazz singing

Diana R. Spradling, music, has written a groundbreaking book on jazz vocal pedagogy called “Jazz Singing: Developing Artistry and Authenticity” published by Sound Music Publications. To document her appraisal of what makes for insightful singing, Spradling spent four years doing acoustical research for the writing endeavor, in addition to tapping more than three decades of teaching expertise.

At WMU, she teaches graduate and undergraduate jazz voice and vocal pedagogy. Spradling is the founding director of the Applied Studio Technology Laboratory, is the co-founder of the International Association for Jazz Education’s Sisters in Jazz mentoring program, and has served three consecutive terms as the national chair for Jazz and Show Choirs for the American Choral Directors Association.

Staffers win international award

The cable television show “Bronco Review 2007” has won a bronze award in sports programming from the 29th annual Telly Awards national competition. The weekly sports program is co-produced and directed by Stephen Kettner, project lead in WMU’s Media Production IT, and fellow producer Robin Hook, “the voice of the Broncos,” who also serves as host.

The Telly Awards honor outstanding local, regional and cable TV commercials and programs, as well as the finest video and film productions from around the world.

Arabic program gaining notice

Mustafa Mughazy, foreign languages, continues to play a key role in the University’s expanding Arabic language offerings.

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Astronaut to keynote state hall of fame ceremony for College of Aviation

The College of Aviation will be inducted Saturday, April 19, into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame, which is housed at Kalamazoo’s Air Zoo.

Held at the Air Zoo, the ceremony will include a keynote address by astronaut Jack Lousma and presentation of the hall of fame’s 2008 Spirit of Flight Award to the College of Aviation. This annual award recognizes outstanding achievements made by aviation or space organizations.

WMU’s aviation program is being honored for its more than 60-year history of striving to “establish and maintain state-of-the-art, world-class professional aviation programs that are among the best in the world.”

Also during the ceremony, five individuals will be inducted for their contributions to aviation. These honorees are: Norman Appold, a World War II B-24 pilot and retired Lockheed executive; Richard Macon, a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen during World War II; John Sager, a Naval officer in charge of flight testing who invented high-altitude oxygen masks and equipment; George Skurla, a retired Grumman Aircraft president who supervised the final assembly and pre-launch check for the Apollo Lunar Module; and artist Philip Handelman, whose aviation photos have graced U.S. postage stamps and who initiated the legislative effort resulting in last year’s award of the Congressional Gold Medal to the Tuskegee Airmen.

WMU’s College of Aviation has educated aviation professionals since 1939 and offers complete academic degree programs leading to a bachelor’s degree in three areas—aviation flight science, aviation management and maintenance technology. The college enrolls some 800 students and is home to the Sky Broncos, a precision flight team that has been among the top three in national competition for 14 consecutive years.

Grant applications due soon

The deadline for submitting applications for WMU’s next round of Faculty Assessment Grants is Tuesday, April 15. The maximum level of the award is $5,000 each, and up to $30,000 in grants is awarded each year.

The Faculty Assessment Grants Program provides resources for conducting student-learning outcomes research. Submitted projects must lead to activities or program improvements that are directly related to student learning or achievement.

Go to www.wmich.edu/peapa/uac for more information.

Registration under way for WMU Day at the Capitol

Online registration is now available for WMU Day at the Capitol, a first-of-its-kind demonstration of WMU pride and achievement at the Michigan Capitol during a daylong event Wednesday, May 28.

Registration is under way at www.wmich.edu/wmuday for students, alumni, faculty, staff and friends of WMU who plan to participate in the unique showcase event. WMU T-shirts, optional bus transportation from Kalamazoo and box lunches will be available for participants who register to attend by May 9.

Members of the WMU community are planning to meet with lawmakers and have exhibits and displays on the front lawn of the capitol in Lansing. Organizers of WMU Day at the Capitol say the purpose of the event is to engage legislators and policymakers on the importance of WMU and the contributions the University makes in providing an educated workforce and advancing the state’s economic development.

The day’s activities are expected to run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will feature programs and groups from WMU’s main Kalamazoo campus and eight branch campuses. Representatives from alumni and student organizations will be meeting with legislators and the public.

Service

The following faculty and staff members are recognized for 40, 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10 and five years of service during April.

40 Years—Paul MacNelless, physical plant-landscape services.
35 Years—Darrel R. Drummond, information technology.
30 Years—Georgia Kerby Bryan, Registrar’s Office, and Jean Decker, physical plant-landscape services.
25 Years—Richard E. Burton, information technology, and Carol A. Edly, Sindecuse Health Center.
20 Years—Susan D. Coker, Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs; Ann M. McNees, accounts payable; James E. Nelson, Dining Services-Davis; and George Wilson, campus facility development.
15 Years—Marlene Bolt, WMU Bookstore, and Robin L. Harrison, accounts payable.
10 Years—Linda L. Ikes, Career and Student Employment Services, and Gregory Shannon, physical plant-building, custodial and support services.
Five Years—Ann Brown, sociology; Douglas J. Fairall, Sindecuse Health Center; and Cheryl M. Vyr, Sindecuse Health Center.

Obituary

Stanley K. Derby, emeritus in physics, died March 29. He was 87.

Derby joined the faculty in 1955 and retired with emeritus status in 1984. He developed teaching and research programs at the University in the then-emerging fields of spectroscopy, lasers and holography and received the WMU Alumni Association’s Teaching Excellence Award in 1978.

Alyce Lorraine Smith, emeritus coordinator of student services in health, physical education and recreation, died Nov. 8, 2007; it was recently learned. She was 77.

Smith came to WMU in 1968 and retired in 1990 after 22 years of service. Keenly interested in helping students, she served informally as a mentor to some, a shoulder to cry on for others and a problem solver for many.

Tibet uprising talk scheduled

Thomas Kostrova, a longtime observer of China’s interaction with its western minority regions, will provide his perspective on the recent Tibetan uprising and resulting Chinese crackdown in a talk at 12:30 p.m. Monday, April 14, in 3301 Friedmann.

Policies Web site back online

The University is in the process of restructuring its campuswide policies Web site at www.wmich.edu/policies.

To date, policies related to closure, non-discrimination and smoking have been updated as necessary and restated.

Members of the campus community should note that the Smoke Free Policy has been revised and, now states, among other changes, that “smoking is not permitted within 25 feet of all building entrances, air intakes and operable windows.”
New Web site offers Bronco license plate information

Do you think that “WMUROX!” Want to tell the world you’re an “84ALUM” of WMU?

Bronco fans have a new Web site that serves as a one-stop shop for information about how to add a WMU touch to their car by ordering a Michigan license plate with the University’s Bronco logo.

With a visit to www.wmich.edu/wmuplates, members of the WMU community can get complete information on how to order a Bronco plate through Michigan’s University License Plate Program.

The site details initial and recurring costs for a Bronco plate, how much WMU receives for each plate ordered and how to order a personalized Bronco plate. It also includes a downloadable form that can be used to purchase a plate by fax or mail, and a link to a site where you can check availability of personalized messages.

WMU first in state

Continued from page 1

to AACCU and NASULGC institutions. Feb. 15. Nationally, 226 colleges and universities have officially registered to become participants, but to date, a far smaller number has posted a College Portrait on the Web.

The initial goal is to have at least 50 percent of the AACCU and NASULGC member schools participate in VSA and use the College Portrait template. Together, the two organizations represent more than 600 public institutions that enroll 7.5 million students.

To find the WMU College Portrait, go to the WMU Web site at www.wmich.edu and look for the VSA College Portrait icon in the lower left corner.