American Studies Program begins fall with revamped interdisciplinary curriculum

With course work as diverse as the land it covers, it will study, a restructured program in American studies enters a new frontier this fall at the University.

The newly configured American Studies Program will offer an undergraduate major. A master's program is the latest in interdisciplinary initiatives undertaken by the University.

Bringing together faculty from a variety of departments within the university's College of Arts and Sciences, the program will explore United States history and culture from three perspectives — regional, national and global. The program will combine American studies courses with those from other departments. Those courses will cover topics including the exploration and settlement, religion, government, literature, popular culture, archaeology, environmental history, and language of America. Among the departments and programs with participating faculty will be anthropology, black Americana studies, English, history, political science, comparative religion, communication, sociology and women's studies.

"Americanists' don't come from just one discipline," explains Katherine Joslin, director of the program. "Many, in fact, fields involve American issues. This program has grown out of the mutual interests, goodwill and energies of seemingly disparate people. It's an interweaving of those faculty members and their areas of expertise."

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(Continued on page four)

WMU cracks top 100 in best college listing

Making its 10th consecutive appearance on U.S. News and World Report's list of top national universities, Western Michigan University advanced in the listing this year and is now ranked among the top 100 public universities in the nation.

"This is wonderful news," said President Elson S. Floyd of the university's newest listings. "We're delighted to move up in the rankings, but we've set our sights even higher and will continue our efforts to see WMU recognized as one of the nation's top student-centered research universities."

The prestigious annual ranking of U.S. universities appears in the Aug. 30 issue of the magazine. The list includes 147 public universities and 81 private institutions. The top 50 universities are numerically ranked and the remaining universities are listed alphabetically in second, third and fourth tiers.

WMU first appeared on the list in 1991 and has been included each year since then. The 2000 listing places WMU for the first time in the third tier of national universities, putting it in the company of only 100 public universities.

Among other universities sharing the third tier ranking with WMU are Arizona State University, University of Illinois-Chicago, Northern Illinois University, St. John's University and the University of Cincinnati.

U.S. News & World Report categorizes national universities as those that offer a full range of undergraduate and graduate programs. WMU is one of those institutions that offer a full range of undergraduate programs as well as master's and doctoral degrees.

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"This is indeed an exciting agreement for the University and our students in the College of Aviation," said President Floyd at an Aug. 19 announcement of the accord. "The fact that Northwest and Mesaba have enough confidence in our training curriculum to create a unique set of requirements for our graduates is further testament to the world-class nature of our program."

Under the terms of the agreement, called a "bridge training and hiring program," WMU aviation graduates will have lower Mesaba flying time requirements than outside flight officer candidates. University officials said that after examining its aviation program and curriculum, Mesaba agreed to streamline its requirements for WMU graduates.

"We have found that WMU's aviation curriculum is such that it prepares its graduates exceedingly well for entering commercial aviation," said Richard Lawrence, Mesaba's director of flight operations.

"Western graduates are often well on their way to meeting our requirements, which is why we have modified our hiring guidelines for these students."

Founded in 1944, Mesaba currently offers more than 900 daily departures from 101 cities in 26 states and three Canadian provinces. The Minneapolis-based air carrier entered into an agreement in 1984 with Northwest Airlines to serve as Northwest's primary regional affiliate under the Northwest Airlink banner. In 1998, Mesaba was named Regional Airline of the Year by Air Transport World magazine.

College will manage Detroit-area airport

Members of the general aviation community in Southeast Michigan will have access to world class flight instruction and aircraft maintenance, thanks to a new partnership between the Michigan Department of Transportation and WMU.

The University's College of Aviation will take over management of the Romeo Airport, effective immediately, under terms of the new partnership between WMU and MDOT's Bureau of Aeronautics. The move will result in increased services at the airport, increased opportunities for WMU aviation students, and economical and efficient management of the facility, which has been under MDOT control since November 1998. The airport is in northwest Macomb County.

The agreement reached in July is a two-month interim contract effective through Sept. 30, the end of the state's current fiscal year. The University and MDOT will negotiate a two-year agreement to go into effect on Oct. 1, which will coincide with the state's fiscal year. Funding for the project was part of the state transportation budget signed in July by Gov. John Engler. The one-time state funding of $165,000 will be used for start-up costs, which include allocation of personnel to the Romeo site.

"This partnership is truly a win-win"
Health care economics is lecture series topic

The prognosis for the nation’s health care industry and the role governments, enterprises and consumers play in its economics will be debated on 35th annual public lecture series offered by the Department of Economics.

The series, titled “Emerging Scholars in Health Care,” will feature a number of noteworthy scholars who will examine critical issues in that industry that accounts for more than 15 percent of the United States’ gross national product.

“Health is an issue of growing importance,” says Huizhong Zhou, economics, who is director of the series. “If you look at health care as a consumption good, people are spending more and more on it when their income grows. At the same time, costs are increasing more and more expensive because medical technologies are now being used to treat more and more diseases. It comes down to a question of who should finance health care.

Jonathan Gruber, professor of economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will kick off the series by addressing the governmental role in health care economics at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 15, in 3500 Knauss Hall.

Gruber, who served as the deputy assistant secretary for economic policy for the U.S. Treasury Department, will speak on the topic of “Government Financing of Care for Low Income Population.”

The direction of the lecture series at the National Bureau of Economic Research, his research has focused on efficiency of the nation’s system of delivering health care to the indigent, the economics of employer-provided health care insurance and the effect of the Social Security program on the behavior of retirees.

Other speakers in this year’s series and the topics that will be addressed are:

• “Health Insurance and the Labor Market” with Brigitte C. Madrian, a professor of economics at the University of Chicago.

• “Health Care Consumer Choice: The Role of ‘Consumerism’” with Catherine G. McAlpine, professor of economic sciences at the University of Michigan, Nov. 10.

• “The Economics of Health Insurance,” with Robert B. Helms, resident scholar and director of health policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, Oct. 16.

• “What Has Managed Care Done in the Health Care Marketplace?” with Laurence H. Baker, Vauhxx Baker, professor of economics at Stanford University, April 5.

The lectures begin at 3 p.m. in 3500 Knauss Hall and are free and open to the public. Each scholar will also present a session for professional economists, faculty and graduate students. For more information, persons should contact Zhou by phone at 7-5550 or by email to zhoub@umich.edu.

The Department of Economics and the College of Arts and Sciences are sponsors of the series with the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Assisting Zhou in directing the lecture series this year are Donald L. Alexander and Bassam E. Harb, economics, and Allan Hunt of the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

WMU’s American studies scholars will be focus of fall presentations

A new lecture series that will examine a variety of issues in American studies and highlight the diverse nature of experts in that field will be launched at the University this fall.

This year’s series, “Emerging Scholars in American Studies” will feature WMU faculty members engaged in a variety of research and teaching efforts in the area of American studies.

Examining such issues as archaeology, history, religion, and popular culture in the United States, the lectures will be offered every other Friday during the fall semester from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Meader Rare Book Room, 5th floor, South Lib Library.

“So much meaningful research is being done at WMU by ‘Americanists’ and this series is meant to be representative of that research,” says Katherine Joslin, director of the American Studies Program and coordinator of the Fall Lecture Series.

Sponsored by the Office of the Provost, the American Studies Program and the College of Arts and Sciences, the series is free and open to the public. Students may earn an hour of credit by signing up for WMU for training in economic and statistical methods.

The first speakers in the series will be Michael Nassaney, associate professor of anthropology, and Kristin Svihla, history, who will discuss their research in a Sept. 10 presentation titled “Reﬂections on ‘First Contact’ and ‘First Contact Stories of Public History on the Great Lakes.’”

Chiarappa and Svihla will describe the research efforts of a team gathering information on the history of regulation and consumption of alcoholic beverages to be used in a traveling exhibit. “Fish For All: The Legacy of Lake Michigan,” which included input on more than 600 farmers adopt hybrid seeds for corn production and others do not.

As a result, we, and our graduate students, have been very specialized skills,” says Werner Sichel, visiting scholar, “You Make the Messiah, the Messiah Makes You,” Oct. 7; and “A Austic Migrations,” John Saillant, English, Nov. 19.

Ethiopian researchers spend seven weeks working with WMU economists to explore agricultural issues

Determining the impact technology has had on corn production in Ethiopia was the focus of an economic seven-weeks at WMU that ended this week when three agricultural economists from that country presented a report to be presented to researchers, development organizations and agricultural policy makers.

The economists, Tesfaye Zegeye, Alemu Haile and Shiferaw Tesfaye, are all researchers in the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization. They came to WMU to train in economic and statistical methods with the goal of developing a software program called “Agricultural Economics Research Program” will go to WMU for training in economic and statistical methods with the goal of developing a software program called “Agricultural Economics Research Program.”

Funded by a grant from the United States Agency for International Development, the training program provided a comprehensive program that not only benefited the trainees, but the WMU faculty members and graduate students that participated as well.

The program called upon the specialized expertise of the faculty members to train the economists in econometrics, which involved teaching and training the economists in econometrics, while Asea helped researchers in Ethiopia and other African countries work with former researchers to develop the Low with the International Food Policy Research Institute, Tesfaye is a policy economist in charge of that institution’s agricultural research.

In addition, two WMU doctoral students, Atkanna Hysenbogda and Besada Tadese, assisted in teaching the use of the software program. "This gave us a really nice opportunity for employment/Opportunity for Active Involvement action.

MWU’s Medieval Institute, “European History in Our Own Backyard” will be presented in conjunction with the American Studies Program; and “The Esoteric Millennium: Early Mormon Millennialism,” Nov. 11; and “A Christian Return to the World,” professor of comparative religion, “Walter Benjamin’s Apocalyptic Eschatology: Messtianic In the Era of the Historical Continuum of Force and Counter-Fore,” Dec. 2.

Contrary to popular belief, the millenium is not the same as Y2K, nor will it mean the end of the world.

The millennium is actually a prophetic event of religious origin that has shaped religions and culture for centuries and is the focus of a new lecture series offered this fall at WMU.

“The March to the Millennium” lecture series will offer free presentations by a variety of scholars who will examine the millennium has had on current religious theory and practice throughout history in contexts ranging from Mormon beliefs to contemporary Jewish messianism.

“The millennium is outlined in the last book of the New Testament to mean the thousand years of peace and prosperity that follow the second coming of Jesus and his battle to subdue evil,” explains Brian C. Higgins, comparative religion and coordinator of the series. “For believers, it’s not the end of the world because there’s actually going to be a 1,000 year reprise.”

The series is sponsored by the Department of Comparative Religion and the Office of the Provost and will include six presentations that are open to the public.

Wilson says that while the millennium is a Christian religious history, it has permeated all aspects of Western society and culture and has even “gone global.”

“Nor is it a Christian notion, yet we are finding it being discussed in places like East Asia and India,” he says. “Everyone knows about it because it has been fueled through media hype. As a result we’ve managed to export some of our core religious beliefs to other countries and cultures just like we’ve done with jeans.”

Well-known religious scholar Dr. Tho· mas A. Idalopulos will kick off the lecture series at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 9, in 3512 Knauss Hall with his presentation, “British Millenniumists and the Rediscovery of the Holy Land.” Idalopulos, a professor of religious studies at Miami University of Ohio, is an expert on religion in the state of Israel and has authored eight books, including his latest, “Weathered by Miracles: A History of Palestine from Bonaparte and Muhammad Ali to Ben Gurion and the Multi.” Idalopulos will discuss how European support for the founding of the state of Israel was partially motivated by millennial beliefs.

With the exception of the address on Sept. 24, all presentations will be presented on Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in 3512 Knauss. Other speakers in the series and their topics will be:

• Wilson and Michael Nassaney, anthropologist, “A World Religion in Our Own Backyard: The Historical Archaeology of Seventh-Day Adventism in Battle Creek,” 3 p.m. Friday, Sept. 24, Meader Rare Book Room, Waldo Library, presented in conjunction with the American Studies Program;

• Harris R. Lenowitz, professor of Hebrew at the University of Utah and WMU visiting scholar, “You Make the Messiah, the Messiah Makes You,” Oct. 7;

• Otto Grondler, director emeritus of WMU’s Medieval Institute, “European Apocalypse in the Year 1000,” Oct. 14;

• Nancy E. Falk, comparative religion, “The End of the World This Time Around: The Brahma Kumaris of India,” Oct. 28;


Michael Nassaney, anthropology, and Brian C. Wilson, comparative religion, Sept. 24;

• “Practicing Christianity in the American West,” Barbara I. Brotherton, art, and Catherine Julien, history, Oct. 8;

• "Wives, Women, Power and Management: Typically Than Their Male Brethren?”, Annlyn K. Kuenster, political science, Oct. 22;


"What we are finding is in accordance with our expectations," said Zegeye, one of the trainers and director of economics at EARO, "that the information will be used by policy makers to strengthen components of technological development and dissemination. For example, if the extension service help is good and more credit made available, then the adoption rate will increase.

Higgins explained that the Ethiopian government wants farmers to adopt the hybrid seed methods to improve their yields.
Kritzman named one of nation’s top 10 businesswomen by professional organization

A 15-year University veteran has been named one of the top-10 businesswomen in America for 1999 by the American Business Women’s Association.

Marilyn S. Kritzman, assistant manager of the residence life office of Residence Life, was selected for the honor by a nationwide field of 70,000 ABWA members.

She will be officially honored at the national convention in Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 6 through 10.

Leneway has twice served the association as its president and has been its newsletter editor. The National Association of Rehabilitation Programs in Computer Technology gave Leneway the award at a recent conference.

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Virtual instrumentation is seminar topic

An annual event in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering has grown into a campuswide academic seminar as the department and National Instruments present a day-long look Tuesday, Sept. 14, at "Computer-Based Tools for Scientists and Engineers." For reconfiguring the program, according to Joslin, was increasing interest by undergraduate students in interdisciplinary study. The program will offer two sections of its introductory course, AMS 200 "Introduction to American Studies," which will feature the work of foreign educators from 18 different countries. The structure and content of the institute will be presented and the United States Information Agency, laid the foundation for much of the course work of the American Studies Program," says Joslin. "The success of that institute showed us that there is an exciting opportunity to merge two of our highest priorities—airport preservation and aviation education. MDOT and WMU have a long history of innovative partnering for the advancement of aviation in the future. The College intends to provide a full-time aircraft mechanic to provide maintenance services for local pilots and has dedicated a Cessna 172 aircraft and a professional flight instructor to the facility as well. "There is a huge demand for flight instruction in the general public and it's been some time since it's been available at that facility," says Mark A. Serbenski, director, Aviation who will oversee the college's aviation program. "It's an exciting opportunity to merge two of our highest priorities—airport preservation and aviation education. MDOT and WMU have a long history of innovative partnering for the advancement of aviation in the state." The College intends to provide a full-time aircraft mechanic to provide maintenance services for local pilots and has dedicated a Cessna 172 aircraft and a professional flight instructor to the facility as well. "There is a huge demand for flight instruction in the general public and it's been some time since it's been available at that facility," says Mark A. Serbenski, director, Aviation who will oversee the college's aviation program.

Romeo Airport (Continued from page one)

development for MDOT, WMU and users of the new air transportation system," said William E. Gehman, deputy director for MDOT's Bureau of Aeronautics. "This is an exciting opportunity to merge two of our highest priorities—airport preservation and aviation education. MDOT and WMU have a long history of innovative partnering for the advancement of aviation in the state." The College intends to provide a full-time aircraft mechanic to provide maintenance services for local pilots and has dedicated a Cessna 172 aircraft and a professional flight instructor to the facility as well. "There is a huge demand for flight instruction in the general public and it's been some time since it's been available at that facility," says Mark A. Serbenski, director, Aviation who will oversee the college's aviation program. "It's an exciting opportunity to merge two of our highest priorities—airport preservation and aviation education. MDOT and WMU have a long history of innovative partnering for the advancement of aviation in the state." The College intends to provide a full-time aircraft mechanic to provide maintenance services for local pilots and has dedicated a Cessna 172 aircraft and a professional flight instructor to the facility as well. "There is a huge demand for flight instruction in the general public and it's been some time since it's been available at that facility," says Mark A. Serbenski, director, Aviation who will oversee the college's aviation program.

CommUniverCity organizers aim at Sept. 11 centerpiece of the week's activities at the Romeo site. "That's just one of the services that we're forwarding to provide to the public in Southeast Michigan." Another major event that will be offered to the public will be the lease and/or sale of hangar space, fuel and pilot supplies for local aviators and those passing through the area. The bureau and college anticipate that revenue from services offered at the airport will cover future building and expansion needs as well as operational expenses that will be covered for the first two years of the start-up funding that has been allocated. The bureau took over management of the Romeo airport following the state's purchase of the airport in November 1998. Shortly after purchasing the property, the bureau began examining ways to enhance operations at the facility and effectively provide for day-to-day management. Negotiations with WMU began more recently when it was determined that the partnership could provide both top-notch management and opportunities for students to get practical experience in the management of a small, regional, non-commercial airport, which is the first of its kind in the nation.

Saturday, Sept. 11
Guest artist recital, Randall Hawes, bass trombone, Datus Center Recital Hall, 3 p.m. CommUniverCity Night (see story above).

*Football vs. Youngstown State, Waldo Stadium, 6 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 12
*Mega Monster Movie Marathon, day-long classic horror film fest, Campus Cinema, Oak Oak Recital Hall, noon-11 p.m.

*Dalton Series recital, pianist Christopher Taylor, Dalton Center Recital Hall, 3 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 13
Art exhibition (through Oct. 5), "Major Works- Full Scale 1969-1999" by Kansas City Art Institute of Technology, 3508 Knauss Hall, 3 p.m. Exhibition (through Oct. 17), Photographs: The Andy Warhol, Ryan Flahau, Rotunda Gallery, East Hall; and Study Abroad South Manitou Exhibition, South Gallery, East Hall. Reception Friday, Sept. 17, 5-7 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 14
Virtual instrumentation seminar, "Computer-Based Tools for Scientists and Engineers," sponsored by Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and National Instruments, 3 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Fee charged by sending email to <cn.register@natinst.com> or online at <www.natinst.com>.

Wednesday, Sept. 15
The Economics of Health Care lecture series, "Government Financing of Care for Low Income Population," Jonathan Gruber, professor of economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 3508 Knauss Hall, 3 p.m.

*Football vs. Youngstown State, Waldo Stadium, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 16
Virtual Scholars and Artists Lecture, "Secret Sewers of Vice: Disguise, Bodies and the Law," Martha Nussbaum, the Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago, Putney Auditorium, 10:01 Room, 7:30 p.m.

*Admission charged