

# Academic Affairs

## SUMMER INITIATIVES

As a faculty member, I typically thought of summer as the best time to catch up on some of the writing I needed to do. This was especially relevant when it came to new ideas that I wanted to formulate into grant proposals. Grant proposals, including those focused on addressing pedagogical issues, require a substantial amount of preparation prior to the actual writing of the proposal. Identifying a persistent pedagogical problem within the classroom, for example, is a good start. However, one has to research how substantial the problem is and whether it can be abstracted and presented within a comprehensive framework in order to have a broad impact. This is especially important for funding agencies since all are seeking to use their limited research dollars in the areas with the greatest impact.

To illustrate, as an electrical engineering faculty teaching an introductory programming class, it was clear that many of the students did not enjoy or appreciate the importance of programming for their career as engineers. It is not until later in their academic journey as juniors and seniors that they need many of the concepts that they should have mastered within the introductory course. This presented a challenge for many students as they tried to use concepts that they have either forgotten or never learned properly in the first place. Thus, the importance of the pedagogical problem in the introductory programming class can be expanded to reflect the broader impact on student success along various points in the academic journey. Further discussions with colleagues from mechanical engineering revealed that the problem of learning how to program is even more prevalent. This opened the door to find a solution for a common problem, not only for a single course, but across departments.

Identifying and recognizing a problem worthy of investigation is a critical first step towards creating a successful grant proposal. Understanding what others have done to address the same problem and the shortfalls of their approaches is an important next step. This needs to be followed by formulating a proposed solution that addresses the problem. The developed proposal needs to convince the peer reviewers that it is evidence based and has intellectual merit; has the potential to succeed where other approaches failed; can be developed within the proposed time frame and requested resources; and, if successful, will have a broad impact and can be easily replicated by others. Reviewers look critically at the qualifications of the proposing team and whether they collectively have the capacity to carry out the proposed effort.

In support for student success and academic excellence, Academic Affairs through the Office of Sponsored Programs and University Initiatives (SPUI) and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) will soon announce summer initiatives for 2017. One of these initiatives will be geared towards supporting the development of proposals for external funding, especially those focused on enhancing student success. Another will be focused on the redesign of courses with high failure rates in order to increase student success in these courses while maintaining academic rigor. This initiative will expand upon the ongoing efforts of the Gateways to Completion (G2C) program to remove barriers in courses with historically high DFWI rates. These initiatives will be released in early March 2017. I encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities, as we continue to work together as a university community toward increasing student success.

Mohamed Abdelrahman, Ph.D.



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## SAVE THE DATE

- Leadership Tech Nominee Application Deadline  
Friday, March 3
- Academic Accomplishments Submission Deadline  
Friday, March 3
- Midterm Grades Due  
Monday, March 6
- Summer Textbook Deadline  
Wednesday, March 8
- Fall Textbook Deadline  
Wednesday, March 15
- Board of Trustees Action on Promotion and Tenure Recommendations  
Thursday, March 16
- Faculty Excellence Portfolio Deadline  
Thursday, March 16
- Catalogs Posted  
Thursday, March 16

### Career Services' Spring 2017 Events

Networking: The Social Game  
Tuesday, February 28  
4:00 PM–5:00 PM  
Doc Bryan 242

Etiquette Dinner  
Tuesday, March 7  
5:00 PM–7:30 PM  
Williamson Dining Hall

Show Me the Money: Cost of Living & Salary Negotiation  
Wednesday, March 8  
5:30 PM–7:30 PM  
Doc Bryan 242

LinkedIn and Virtual Networking  
Wednesday, March 15  
4:00 PM–5:00 PM  
Doc Bryan 242

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”  
-Nelson Mandela*

### Praxis Core Workshops

#### Reading

Thursday, February 23  
4:00 PM–6:00 PM, RPL 220

Wednesday, March 8  
2:00 PM–4:00 PM, RPL 332

#### Writing

Monday, February 27  
2:00 PM–4:00 PM, RPL 220

Monday, March 13  
4:00 PM–6:00 PM, RPL 220

#### Math

Tuesday, February 21  
Wednesday, February 22  
Wednesday, March 1  
Thursday, March 2  
Monday, March 6  
Tuesday, March 7

5:00 PM–7:00 PM, RTH 213

# Student Success

## NORMAN CAREER SERVICES

Norman Career Services will host over 190 organizations during Career Fair Week, February 21–23. Faculty member attendance at the Faculty and Employer Lunch and career fairs is encouraged and appreciated. Following Career Fair Week, Camp War Eagle; ArcBest Technologies; J.B. Hunt; and the Girl Scouts–Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas will host information sessions on campus. In addition, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Dillard's IT, ArcBest, Transco Lines, Inc., OK Foods, J.B. Hunt, Promas Technology Works, Wal-Mart Security, and others will host on-campus interviews. For more information, contact Norman Career Services at [career.services@atu.edu](mailto:career.services@atu.edu) or by calling (479) 968-0278.

## BRIDGE TO EXCELLENCE

The Bridge to Excellence (B2E) Program is off to a great start for the semester! Please remember to keep meeting with your B2E mentees throughout the semester and to record those meetings on OneTech. Did you know there is a B2E Resource Guide on the Arkansas Tech website? It provides links to many important resources on campus. For more information, check out <http://www.atu.edu/b2e/topographic.php>.

## ELLUCIAN CRM ADVISE

The Office of Student Success and Academic Affairs are excited to be in the initial installation stages of the new Ellucian CRM Advise, which is planned to be live for use across campus for fall 2017. The Office of Information Systems is working with Ellucian to identify the appropriate technical needs of the software and to make sure the installation is a seamless process. On February 21–23, an Early Engagement Workshop will be held on campus as part of the pre-installation process for the new program. Invitations to be part of the workshop were sent to the departments across campus that the Ellucian consultant identified as stakeholders. The workshop will help to identify the processes used on campus that contribute to student success and to help configure the new software to be most effectively used at Arkansas Tech.

# IMSSO

## IMSSO CELEBRATES CHINESE NEW YEAR

The International and Multicultural Student Services Office (IMSSO) hosted a “Welcome Back: Skate Party” on Friday, January 20, at The Skate Station. It offered students the chance to make new friends and have fun. Free pizza and drinks were provided.

IMSSO also hosted a festival to celebrate the Chinese New Year on Friday, January 27, in the Young Ballroom. The event included Chinese food, a traditional dragon dance, dumpling making, and a photo booth.



## #YOUAREWELCOMEHERE

In collaboration with MARCOMM, IMSSO has produced a video entitled #YouAreWelcomeHere. The theme of the video is centered around the idea that every student is welcome and celebrated at ATU. The video was presented as an entry into a nationwide campaign put on by Study in the USA and was selected to appear on Study USA's social media channels the morning of Friday, February 17. IMSSO is proud of the ATU students and staff across campus that helped gain ATU this national exposure. To see the video, the YouTube link can be accessed [here](#).



# SPUI Connection

## OFFICE OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS AND UNIVERSITY INITIATIVES (SPUI)

### *Congratulations!*

The Office of Sponsored Programs and University Initiatives congratulates the following faculty member for securing external funding to support her program.



**Jessica Young, Assistant Professor of Physics**

Received \$1,996 from the Jonathan Reichert Foundation for lab equipment and \$14,300 from the Academy of Applied Science for the Arkansas Junior Science and Humanities Symposium.

### *SPUI Offers SPINPlus Trial*

Through the month of February, the Office of Sponsored Programs and University Initiatives (SPUI) has secured a one month trial of [SPINPlus](#), a database of funding opportunities, both public and private, from around the world. SPINPlus can be accessed anonymously, without creating an account, on any computer located on the Russellville or Ozark campus. However, in order to save searches, set up e-mail notifications, or access SPINPlus from a non-campus computer, users will need to create a username and password. SPINPlus can be accessed through the [InfoEd Global homepage](#). Please contact SPUI by [e-mail](#) or by phone at 880.4327 or 880.4329 with any questions.

### *Free Business Training*

On Tuesday, February 23, the Arkansas Tech Small Business and Technology Development Center (ASBTDC) will host a free training session at the Pope County Extension Service in Russellville to help entrepreneurs and businesses. The workshop, the final event of three hosted this month, is entitled *Starting a Small Farm Business* and will be held from 6:00—8:00 PM.

This event is open to the public but does require preregistration. To register, you may go [here](#) or call (479) 356-2067.

*“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character — that is the goal of true education.”  
- Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## Guest Lecture: *From IT to Pedagogy*

On Thursday, February 9, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) hosted a special guest lecture event, *From IT to Pedagogy*, for Apple product users. The event featured Dr. Charles Long, a Higher Education Development Executive with Apple, and provided a chance to see how an iPad or Mac can be used to create an engaging classroom experience for students. The Apple panel discussion answered questions and demonstrated how to make subtle changes to current curriculum that will stimulate creativity and increase student engagement.



## Revised 2017 Summer Course Schedule

At the December 2016 meeting, the Faculty Senate approved the addition of five minutes to the summer class periods in order to end Summer Session II on the Wednesday before graduation. This will allow candidates for the August graduation to fully participate in summer courses. Summer Session I will begin June 5, 2017, and end July 6, 2017. Likewise, Summer Session II will begin July 10, 2017, and end August 9, 2017. Grades for the graduates for the 2017 August ceremony will be due by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, August 9; all other grades will be due on Friday, August 11, by 5:00 PM. This pilot will be implemented during Summer 2017.

The proposed class meeting schedule is listed below:

- 7:30 AM—9:10 AM
- 9:20 AM—11:00 AM
- 11:10 AM—12:50 PM
- 1:00 PM—2:40 PM

### Tax Time Tip

Many people may consider emailing tax information (W2, 1099, completed tax forms) to their parents, spouse, or accountant. Please remember that emails and their attachments are sent in clear text and can be read by anyone who may intercept this email traffic. Never send personal information in an unencrypted email. If you must send personal information in an email, use the document encryption feature in Microsoft Word to encrypt the document before sending. Remember, never send the password with the document; always call the document recipient and tell him or her the password.

## Office of Information Systems

### STREAMLINED SECURITY ACCESS

The Office of Information Systems (OIS), in conjunction with Human Resources and Payroll, have completed the Position Security Schema Project. This project has created the new Position Controlled Access (POSN# Access), which has replaced the paper-based Security Access Request Form (SARF). The group has now successfully assigned access for new employees on their first day of work. This is an outstanding accomplishment that has improved efficiencies in multiple areas, security standards, and process flow that has long been a point of frustration. OIS would like to thank all employees of the various departments who assisted with the new security design, testing, and implementation. They will be working with supervisors on instructions for reviewing current access and requesting new access for the positions they oversee. For additional information, contact Kim Newman at 479-964-0583 ext 1507 or at [knewman@atu.edu](mailto:knewman@atu.edu).

### APPXTENDER SINGLE SIGN-ON FUNCTIONALITY

The Office of Information Systems (OIS) has implemented a new solution to provide single sign-on functionality from OneTech into AppXtender. The AppXtender Web Access links on the Advising and Employee pages within OneTech will now automatically authenticate the user into the AppXtender system. If the single sign-on functionality does not work for you, please contact the Campus Support Center at 479-968-0646 or email [campussupport@atu.edu](mailto:campussupport@atu.edu).

## Office of Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness (OAIE)

### INSIDE HIGHER EDUCATION SURVEY FINDINGS: ASSESSMENT

As I write this, I am participating in a webinar that reviews the data from *Inside Higher Education's* 2017 Survey of College and University Chief Academic Officers. One slide in particular has prompted me to bring the information regarding assessment perceptions to the attention of my ATU colleagues. The presenters compared the provost data with responses gathered from faculty members during an *Inside Higher Education* Summer 2016 Faculty Survey.

The slide detailed two points. The first finding shows that while 46% of public institution provosts (CAOs) believe that assessment has improved the quality of teaching and learning at their college, only 27% of the faculty agreed. Secondly, while it is sad enough that as many as 35% of public institution provosts agree that assessment is more about keeping accreditors/politicians happy than about teaching and learning, 65% of the faculty felt that this was the purpose of assessment.

This kind of data is very obviously troubling for someone who believes that the purpose and power of assessment is in the demonstration of student learning and the opportunity to improve teaching towards that end. According to the discussion in this webinar, many faculty members felt that assessment was being done "to" them. I truly hope that is not the impression of ATU faculty. I believe that assessment only works when individual faculty members and their departments decide together on the information to collect that will enable them to offer the best quality of education and instruction to their students. Why would a faculty member not wish to know how well their students are learning and how they might improve that process? If we can use assessment data to improve the quality of instruction and the level of student learning, it will have fulfilled its primary purpose, and the secondary purpose of demonstrating our effectiveness in the form of accreditation will naturally fall into place.

A program review is a perfect time to examine both the program curriculum and its student learning outcomes. The Office of Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness (479.880.4282 or [caustin@atu.edu](mailto:caustin@atu.edu)) is available to any department or faculty member to assist in determining how best to appropriately and effectively assess student learning and to use the resulting data in beneficial ways. We believe the most important use of assessment is always to improve teaching and, consequently, the learning of our student.

*Christine Austin, Ph.D.*



# College Highlights

## ARTS AND HUMANITIES

### *Faculty/Department Accomplishments*

Jason Ulsperger completed and submitted “Fifth Judicial District Juvenile Resources Report” for the Arkansas State Supreme Court Commission on Children, Youth and Families.

Jeffrey Pearson was one of a select few academics nationwide to be invited to participate in the Military History Instructor Course, United States Army, Combined Arms Center, Leavenworth, Kansas, 11-24 January 2017.

Tom DeBlack has published a new book about the history of ATU entitled *A Century Forward: The Centennial History of Arkansas Tech University* (Arkansas Tech University, 2017).

On January 24, the Music department sponsored, organized, and administered the All-State Choral Workshop. Approximately 200 students from some 17 area high schools attended workshops presented by Gary Morris and the ATU vocal faculty.

On January 30, Sean Reed administered Trombone Day, which featured guest artists David Garcia (principal trombonist for the Philharmonic Zurich, Switzerland) and Zachary Bond (principal bass trombonist with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra). The Festival Choir featured artists and students from at least 7 universities and high schools and welcomed dozens of visiting trombonists.

### *Student Accomplishments*

Students, along with the Alpha Kappa Delta Sociological Honor Society members, collected and donated 180 care packets for children in need for the 5th Judicial Probation Office.

Tech Debate and Forensics won ten awards at the spring John Brown University Tournament in Siloam Springs on January 13-15. Michael O’Brien picked up four individual awards, including a First Place in Team Tournament competition. Tech Debate picked up a Second Place in Overall Sweepstakes and a Second Place in Team Sweepstakes.

Tech Broadcast Journalism majors Caitlin Topps, Caleb Eubanks, and Kelsey McClure will be participating in Summer 2017 internships at KATV-TV (ABC) in Little Rock. Meredith James will be an intern at KTHV-TV (CBS) in Little Rock this summer.

Makenzie Smith, a student in the BFA program for Creative Writing, recently had her non-fiction piece, “[All Gold, All Light](#),” published in [The Grief Diaries](#).

### *Arkansas Radio Theatre*

February 25— *Cautionary Tales*

March 4— *Thumbelina*

March 11— *A Feline Romance*

March 18— *Poets’ Ponderings: Steve Gehrke*

Saturdays at 7:00 PM on KXRJ 91.9 FM

### *Works on Paper*

The Norman Art Gallery will host *Works on Paper: David & Eve Mudrinich*, which includes drawings and prints by both historic and contemporary artists, beginning on Friday, March 3, and running through Tuesday, March 14, from 8:00 AM—5:00 PM.

### *2nd International Film Festival @ Tech*

The English & World Languages Department and the Ross Pendergraft Library & Technology Center will host the 2nd International Film Festival @ Tech from Tuesday, February 28 through Thursday, March 16. All movies will be shown at 7:00 PM in RPL 300 North on the third floor. The festival is open to everyone and is free of charge. A full schedule can be found [here](#).

## EDUCATION

### *Faculty/Department Accomplishments*

Stephanie Pepper, V. Carole Smith, and Ellen Treadway presented at the Association of Teacher Educators Annual Conference in Orlando. Smith serves on the planning committee; Pepper was a delegate and served on the Council of Unit Presidents.

Rene Couture presented at the NACADA Region VII Conference in Tulsa on Advising Generation Z.

Alaric Williams presented professional development workshops for CSP students. He arranged for speakers for the CSPA, including Beth Giroir, who spoke about what it is like being in her shoes for a day.

Debra Murphy and Latasha Holt-Bocksnick presented at the Conference of Academic Research in Education (CARE) in Las Vegas.

Tiffany Bone has worked with Clinton Elementary and Junior High on discussions of the role standards play in curriculum and to vertically align the power/essential standards in previous Professional Learning Communities. She also serves as a Board member for Arkansas ASCD and has been participating in their planning for the 2017 conference.

### *2016-17 COE Ambassadors*

The students below were nominated by faculty and are leaders among their peers. They will serve as assistants to the Dean's Office and will meet monthly for leadership development.

Alexis Bullard, Senior, HPE

Cheyenne Moore, Sophomore, Elementary Education

Eddie Potts, Sophomore, HPE

Grant Hutson, Sophomore, Business Education

Jazz Grewal, Junior, HPE

Kassidy Simpson, Graduate, CSP

Kelsey Hubbard, Graduate, MTLL-NTL

Sarah Yates, Graduate, MTLL-NTL

## ENGINEERING & APPLIED SCIENCES

### *Faculty/Department Accomplishments*

Lucas Moody, Information Systems Analyst II for the Department of Computer & Information Science, is pursuing his doctorate in Information Technology from Capella University. While working for the department, Moody also serves as an adjunct for the department. Moody will be able to specialize in cybersecurity and information technology issues throughout his doctoral program.

Larry Morell will serve as the new program director for the department's graduate program. Morell will work diligently with those students enrolled in the graduate program. The department thanks him for his continued service.

After many years of service, which included two periods of service as department head, Ron Robison has retired. The department will forever be grateful for his service, leadership, wisdom, and friendship.

Roger Fang has chosen to move to Florida after having taught a multitude of courses at the undergraduate and graduate level since coming to Tech. He also served as the graduate program director for over a decade. He will be dearly missed.

Matt Young successfully defended his Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering at the University of Arkansas on February 13, 2017. Young will graduate in May. Young is a graduate of Arkansas Tech and rejoined Tech as a faculty member the fall of 2016.

### *Dean Meets with Legislators, Arkansas Farm Bureau Board of Directors*



Last week, Neal Barlow joined other Deans of Engineering from Arkansas in visiting the state's legislative delegation in Washington, D.C. Barlow received briefings on legislation that could affect higher education in the coming year and discussed ATU's activities with each legislator. The Dean presented a white paper to each legislator, which included research activities receiving federally supported funding. Barlow also joined Congressman Westerman for dinner, a longer discussion of higher education's needs, and a night tour of the capital building, which included the floors of the Senate and Congress.

This week, Barlow accompanied Mack Rainey, Professor and Head of the Agriculture Department, to brief the Board of Directors of Arkansas Farm Bureau. Rainey presented a briefing on current program activities, and then he and Barlow answered questions on current and future activities and program needs. In all, the two Tech leaders spent two hours with the Board. The Farm Bureau is a constant supporter of ATU programs, including our Annual Agriculture Golf Tournament Fund Raiser and scholarship activities.

## *Board Approves Cybersecurity Degrees*

On January 25, the ATU Board of Trustees approved program proposals for Bachelor of Science and Associate of Applied Science degrees in cybersecurity. The College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the Department of Computer and Information Science developed the programs. If approved by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the programs would become active in August 2017.

## *5<sup>th</sup> Annual Emergency Management & Homeland Security Conference*

The Department of Emergency Management is pleased to announce that they will be hosting their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Emergency Management and Homeland Security Conference. This year, speakers from across the nation will be joining them for a two-day conference on April 12-13, 2017. Registration information will be available by mid-February, and as always, ATU students, faculty, and staff will be eligible for special pricing. Speakers this year include:

**Steve Recca** is Executive Director of the Center for Human Security in the University of Colorado—Colorado Springs School of Public Affairs. He concurrently serves as the Co-Director of the University and Agency Partnership Initiative for the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Center for Homeland Defense and Security and as the Humanitarian Assistance Program Advisor with the Pacific Disaster Center. Recca's previous positions include security policy assignments with the Central Intelligence Agency, State Department, Department of Defense, and in academia.

**Erik Dahl** is Assistant Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, where he is on the faculty of both the National Security Affairs Department and the Center for Homeland Defense and Security. His research focuses on intelligence, terrorism, and international and homeland security. Dahl retired from the U.S. Navy in 2002 after serving 21 years as an intelligence officer.

**Lynda Peters** graduated from DePaul University College of Law and has been a practicing attorney since 1986. Peters began her career with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and, after 17 years, moved to the City of Chicago Law Department where she served as the chief prosecutor for the City.

## *Hospitality Students Attend AFEA Trade Show*

A group of ATU Hospitality Administration students recently attended the Arkansas Festivals and Events Association (AFEA) Annual Conference and Trade Show in Little Rock on January 25-26. The conference is designed "to enrich, educate, and advance the festivals and events community" in Arkansas "to reach its maximum potential." The conference included speakers and sessions from all areas of the industry, as well as vendors to meet and network with.



## *Agriculture Students, Faculty Attend IPP Expo*



Three students and two faculty members attended the International Production and Processing Expo (IPPE) in Atlanta, Georgia, from January 31–February 2. Hailed as the largest annual trade show for poultry, meat and feed industries, IPPE brought together more than 1,200 exhibitors and 30,000 visitors and focused on innovation, education, global reach, and networking. Students were able to interview for jobs and internships, as well as gain a better understanding of the animal protein industry.

## *Agriculture Department Raises Money for Special Olympics*

On February 4, the ATU Department of Agriculture participated in the 2017 Polar Plunge to raise money for Special Olympics Arkansas. Polar Plunge is a fundraiser in which individuals and teams "take the plunge" into various bodies of water; this year the event took place at Lake Dardanelle State Park. The Agriculture Department raised more than \$3,000 for the cause.





## GRADUATE COLLEGE

### *First Doctoral Dissertation Defenses in ATU History*

This month will mark the first time in Arkansas Tech University's history that students will defend their doctoral dissertations. Members of the inaugural Doctor of Education degree in School Leadership cohort began making their presentations at the Center for Leadership and Learning on February 15 and will continue throughout the month. Keith McGee and Ivy Pfeffer defended their dissertations earlier this month; the remaining presentations are scheduled for the following days and times:

Tiffany Bone—Tuesday, February 21 at 11:00 AM  
Cody Chatman—Tuesday, February 21 at 1:00 PM  
Christopher Johnson—Tuesday, February 21 at 2:00 PM  
Cynthia Rice—Thursday, February 23 at 4:00 PM  
Keri Rathburn—Friday, February 24 at 10:00 AM  
Mary Ann Spears—Monday, February 27 at 11:00 AM

Members of the university community are invited to attend.

### *Graduate Student Symposium Set*

The Graduate Student Symposium is set for April 5. This year, graduate students will have the option to present their scholarly work in either a poster session or an oral presentation. The Graduate Student Council is seeking abstracts for these presentations, with a deadline to apply of March 10. Faculty are asked to encourage their graduate students to participate in this professional development activity. Interested graduate students can apply to present by visiting the following link: <http://www.atu.edu/gradcollege/symposium.php>.

### *Graduate College Awards Funds to Students*

The Graduate College recently awarded over \$1,100 to graduate students from Fisheries and Wildlife Science, CSP, Emergency Management, and TESOL to help sponsor their professional development and scholarly research. The next deadlines for graduate students to submit applications for funds to support professional development/research will be March 1 and April 1. Applications can be found on the Graduate College [website](#).

## NATURAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

### *Faculty Accomplishments*



Rebecca Burris and Jeff Robertson received a check for a competitive grant award from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue & You Foundation for \$135,199 to purchase instrumentation and equipment associated with newly created high fidelity laboratory space for clinical simulation in the Nursing program.

### *Board Approves Online MS in Nursing Degree*

On January 25, the Board of Trustees approved a letter of notification stating the university's intention to begin offering its Master of Science in Nursing degree 100% online beginning in August 2017. The measure applies to both the nursing administration and emergency management concentrations within the degree.

### *Section 508 Presentation*

Weiwei Ji, instructional designer for the College of eTech at Arkansas Tech University, will offer a presentation on ensuring the accessibility of documents at Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center, Room 331 on Monday, March 13.

The presentation will last from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM. It will provide faculty with information on making documents Section 508 compliant and how doing so benefits all students.

*“Education is the key  
to unlock the golden  
door of freedom.”  
- George  
Washington  
Carver*





## AHECB Approves New Program Proposals

On Friday, January 27, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) approved several new additions to the Arkansas Tech curriculum:

- M.B.A. (online program), effective fall 2017
- C.P. in Professional Leadership, effective June 2017
- Graduate Certificate in Advising, effective fall 2017
- Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching, effective June 2017
- Added Child Development option in the BPS program, effective June 2017
- Added licensure endorsement in Special Education, Birth to K, effective spring 2017.
- Added licensure endorsement in Special Education, K-6, 7-12, effective spring 2017.

The Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree consists of 10 three-hour courses that will be delivered online through the Russellville campus of ATU.

The certificate in Professional Leadership offers a fifteen-hour stand-alone solution for individuals currently employed in professional, corporate, management, industrial, and nonprofit positions but whose formal academic background may not have emphasized this skillset. The certificate also offers an opportunity for individuals who have earned some college credit but who have not received a baccalaureate degree to enhance his or her leadership abilities. For these potential students, the certificate in Professional Leadership would serve as a gateway to the Bachelor of Professional Studies degree. Finally, a certificate in Professional Leadership provides current students with an opportunity to enhance their employability before graduation, regardless of their field of study.

The College Student Personnel department has been approved to offer a graduate certificate in Advising starting in the Fall, 2017 semester. This fifteen-hour program includes coursework in College Student Personnel, specifically advising, that prepares individuals who are entering the field of collegiate advising in order to expand their knowledge. This graduate certificate will also provide a benefit to experienced advisors who wish to enhance their knowledge. If you are interested in applying or learning more about this graduate certificate, please contact Chris Giroir at [cgiroir@atu.edu](mailto:cgiroir@atu.edu).

### *Upcoming Leadership Tech Information Sessions*

There will be three informational sessions offered for those who would like to learn more about the Leadership Tech program. These sessions will provide information and answer questions about the program, as well as provide information about the nominee application that must be submitted by March 3. The sessions will be held on the following dates:

Wednesday, February 22 at 2:00 PM in RPL 300B South

Wednesday, February 22 at 2:00 PM at the Ozark Campus

Thursday, February 23 at 10:30 AM in Doc Bryan 242

### *Bookstore Undergoes Transition*

The ATU Bookstore in Russellville will close at 2:00 PM on Friday, February 17, and will remain closed through Friday, February 24. The new bookstore on the ATU campus in Russellville will open on Monday, February 27, under the management of Barnes and Noble College.

## Modified Freshman Scholarship Renewal Requirements Increase Retention

A study by AACRAO consultants concluded that Arkansas Tech University's freshman first semester scholarship renewal requirement was too stringent compared to its peer institutions and by typical freshman performance standards. Due to the external assessment, and in accordance with ATU's strategic plan, a pilot program was devised in an effort to increase retention and graduation rates.

As a pilot for fall 2016, the traditional freshman academic scholarship renewal requirements for the Distinguished, Second Century, and Collegiate scholarship were modified, requiring freshmen to earn 12 hours and a 2.0 semester GPA for scholarship renewal (previously, a 3.0 GPA was required). The change had a positive impact on 111 students in the current freshman class. The Academic Advising Center is working with these students to provide support to increase academic performance for spring 2017. Statistically, 17 of these 111 students would have dropped out by the spring semester, but only 7 were not retained. The full impact of this pilot will be more evident in the fall 2017 semester.

ATU's first-to-second semester freshmen retention rate for 2015-16 was 83.2%. After the spring 2017 census date, we are proud to report an increase to 85.5% first semester retention for the Fall 2016 freshman class.



# Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL)

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) invites you to share your knowledge by proposing a session at the *2017 Teaching Innovation Conference*, which takes place on Thursday, May 11, 2017 in Rothwell Hall. The conference is designed to support faculty across the campus in teaching, research, and service. The conference features both submitted and invited sessions that address timely and relevant initiatives for the faculty community.

Proposals should identify one or more of the following topics:

- Ensuring continuous improvement and innovation in teaching
- Sharing strategies and tactics to enhance understanding of issues related to intersectionality, such as race, ability, gender, sexuality(ies), class background, relationship status, religion, age, etc.
- Experiential learning – How might students learn outside the classroom?
- International students – Might we have different expectations for students with another first language?
- Effective practices in online and hybrid teaching
- Designing or redesigning curriculum (online or face-to-face)
- Assessing learning and its associated challenges
- Initiating service learning and community engagement
- Seeking private and third-party funding
- Showcasing faculty research and creativity
- Any other theme addressing teaching, service, or research.

You may submit a 12, 30, or 75-minute interactive session that includes some combination of presentation, discussion, participant reflection and application, simulation, or another form of interactivity. Audience interaction is an essential component of all accepted submissions.

### Criteria for Acceptance

- Clarity of proposal narrative and session format
- Evidence of participant interaction
- Relevance to the intended audience
- Provision of useful takeaways for participants
- Interest to multiple disciplines

### Submission Guidelines

- Proposals must be submitted at the following website: <http://www.questionpro.com/t/ALoOmZYVIh>
- Proposals must be associated with one or more conference themes.
- Colleagues may submit a collaboration proposal of multiple presentations in a single 75-minute session.
- **The deadline for submissions is March 14, 2017, at 5:00 p.m. CST**
- Proposals will be reviewed by the CETL Teaching Innovation Conference ad hoc committee.



# Announcements

## FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS AWARDED

As part of ATU's commitment to the professional growth and development of faculty, opportunities for professional development and faculty research funds are available each year. Congratulations to the following faculty members who were granted awards from the categories indicated:

### Professional Development Grant Awards

Xiang Chen	Masanori Kuroki	Jeremy Schwehm
Erin Clair	Tennille Lasker-Scott	Sarah Stein
Rene Couture	Joshua Lockyer	Zhi Tao
Ernest Enchelmayer	Johnette Moody	Jordan Thibodeaux
Mohamed Ibrahim	Susan Poznar	Penny Willmering
Alexis Johnson	Regina St. John	

### Faculty Research Grant Awards

William Hoefler  
Thomas Nupp

## SCHOLAR ATHLETE PROGRAM

The Faculty Athletics Committee is starting a new program to recognize student athletes who are performing well in the classroom. Each month, they will select a Scholar Athlete to recognize. Faculty are asked to nominate student athletes who deserve recognition for their work in the classroom. To nominate a student athlete, send an email with the student athlete's name and why he or she deserves recognition to Robin Lasey ([rlasey@atu.edu](mailto:rlasey@atu.edu)). Nominations can be made at any time throughout the semester; however, the monthly award will be decided from nominations received before the 15th of each month.

## OUTSTANDING SENIOR AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Each year, the Arkansas Tech University community recognizes three outstanding graduating seniors with the Alfred J. Crabaugh Outstanding Senior Male, the Margaret Young Outstanding Senior Female, and the Jill Lestage Brown Service Leadership Award. To qualify, students must be scheduled to graduate at the May, August, or December 2017 ceremonies and have excellent academic credentials, along with a significant level of campus involvement through academic and/or co-curricular contributions. Nominees for the Jill Lestage Brown Service Leadership Award should also focus on students who seek to improve society through unselfish voluntary service to others.

Nominations should be emailed to [apennington@atu.edu](mailto:apennington@atu.edu) by 5:00 PM on Friday, March 3. Please include the student's name and a brief statement about why this student should be considered. Once nominated, students will be contacted and asked to provide additional information.

## ATU WELCOMES INTERIM HR DIRECTOR



Bruce Curl has been selected to serve as interim human resources director for Arkansas Tech University. Curl brings 37 years of human resources professional and administrative experience; he has served at five institutions of higher education, including institutions in Michigan, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Curl will provide leadership for the university's human resources department until the university completes the search for a permanent director.



**Midterm  
Grades  
Due**

**Monday,  
March 6**