Budget concerns discussed at senate meeting

By Sharita Forrest
Assistant Editor

The Urbana campus faces significant short-term and long-term financial challenges, which will be greatly compounded if the state doesn’t take action soon to rectify its budgetary problems, Michael Andrechak, associate provost for budgets and resource planning told the Urbana-Champaign Senate. Andrechak discussed the UI’s financial planning at the senate’s Dec. 7 meeting.

With a backlog of billions of dollars in unpaid bills – on top of a structural deficit of $3 billion to $4 billion – the state will enter 2010 “with an $11 billion budget problem unless legislatures take action soon to dramatically reduce costs or increase revenue,” Andrechak said. “Without a tax increase, the state has a real hurdle in filling the shortfall of funds.”

The state is currently 150 days behind in appropriated payments to the Urbana campus.

“The cash-management staff members in university administration are doing an excellent job to make sure we meet our bills and are slowing down payments where they can. But if the state doesn’t start to pay, we’re at risk of being unable to pay basic operating costs by early spring,” Andrechak said.

Month-by-month revenue projection for the state indicates that tax revenue continues to decline; “and we have not bottomed-out yet,” Andrechak said.

The university’s Fiscal Year 2009 state appropriation includes $45.5 million in federal economic stimulus funds. However, that funding won’t recur in FY11 unless the state finds a revenue source to replace the stimulus funds.

The UI also is at risk of losing indirect appropriations that support activities in a number of units. The UI is supposed to receive the federal stimulus payment by early 2010. However, it has not received $249.5 million in capital funding that Andrechak said.

“Investments,” Andrechak told the Urbana-Champaign Senate. “We’re still in a state of recession for budgets and resource planning told the Urbana-Champaign Senate. Andrechak discussed the UI’s financial planning at the senate’s Dec. 7 meeting.

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Emotions an overlooked key to whistle-blowing, study says

By Jan Dennis
Business & Law Editor

A gut-level connection with workers may be the key to encouraging whistle-blowing that could chip away at an estimated $652 billion lost to fraud annually by U.S. businesses, an ongoing UI study suggests. Though largely overlooked, tapping into employees’ emotions and personal values can produce powerful triggers for calling out wrongdoing in the workplace, UI researchers say.

“If I care deeply about my company, I’m more inclined to defend it and blow the whistle on wrongdoing,” said Ruth V. Aguilera, professor of business. “If my job is just a paycheck, I’m more inclined to just say ‘whatever’ if I see something wrong.”

In the survey, 40 percent of respondents said they witnessed wrongdoing on the job. Half failed to report it, citing reasons such as doubt that management would act or fear of retaliation, including losing their jobs.

But for the half who blew the whistle, emotions trumped even the possible loss of income, said Vadera, who interviewed workers at the 1,500-employee cement manufacturing plant.

“When I interviewed whistle-blowers, almost all of them cried during the interview,” Vadera said. “The survey showed that people mostly blow the whistle because they are absolutely angry over something that they feel is unfair or unjust.”

Aguilera says companies can help breed a moral compass and emotional response to wrongdoing through regular, extensive training sessions that detail right vs. wrong – from stealing pens to misappropriating funds – and the consequences.

“Employees need to explain that wrongdoing can cause an Enron-type scandal that could sink the company, or eat into the revenue that covers payroll and raises,” she said. “Knowing the implications can bring their moral identity and emotions to the forefront, making them more likely to blow the whistle.”

Those training sessions also build a connection between workers and the company.

Inside Illinois

Emotions an overlooked key to whistle-blowing, study says

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Those training sessions also build a connection between workers and the company.
Forum participants comment on search for next president

By Sharrina Forrest
Assistant Editor

 Approximately 50 members of the campus community attended a Dec. 3 forum at Spurlock Museum to offer input about the qualities and skills they would like to see in the university’s future president.

The event was organized by the committee charged with searching for the UI’s 17th president, who will succeed Richard C. Edwards when he steps down in two weeks.

About 20 people – most of them students and campus faculty – voiced opinions about the kind of leadership, campus climate and priorities that they believe the university must embrace to thrive in the years ahead.

A consensus emerged on the need for aggressive rethinking of the university’s missions and erect firewalls to guard against undue influence from political and economic interests in the private sector.

“… even the finest candidate would find it very difficult to provide the needed leadership and vision unless the university system allows undue influence on university governance,” Kaufman said.

He also urged members of the campus community to support a bill sponsored by Rep. Naomi Jakobsen and endorsed by the Urbana-Champaign Senate that would put greater control over the use of the Facilities Maintenance Fund Assessment, which is intended to helping Illinois governors on selecting members for the UI Board of Trustees.

Some speakers expressed concern about the erosion of public funding for higher education and called for a leader who would advocate for reversing that downward trend and put the university on a firmer financial footing.

Zach Poppel, a graduate student in history, said, “We have to rally around the likelihood that the next president might obtain an increase in public funding.”

Trustee Pamela Strobel, who chairs the presidential search committee and led the forum, responded that the committee was emphasizing the importance of good communication skills and experience with university funding – but cautioned that Illinois’ struggling economy made it “unrealistic” to expect that the state would increase significantly its financial support for UI. However, Strobel urged members of the campus community to advocate on behalf of the university with elected officials, and to engage with politicians about the policy opportunities, including at polling places.

“We are really jeopardizing the quality of our education in this state if we don’t get it,” Strobel said, and added that the UI needs a president who will develop a strategy for dealing with the university’s funding shortcomings.

History professor Diane Koenker said, “We recognize in these difficult economic times a president needs to not only think about the core mission of knowledge production in budget and economic issues, but we wish to strongly advocate that without defending those core missions the university won’t command respect nor deserve support.”

Koerner and other speakers objected to the university’s current direction, and Strobel acknowledged that the UI needs a president who is an educator, not a chief executive officer, and who is supportive of shared governance and will engage with students and faculty members.

Several speakers talked about the need for establishing an inclusive campus planning and recruitment team for minority students and faculty members.

The forum participants were seated at the Chicago campus on Dec. 2 and at Springfield on Dec. 8. The input provided by students and faculty and staff members will be included in a “white paper” profile of the ideal candidate that will be shared with Isaccson-Miller, the executive search firm assisting the campus in recruiting a successor to White. The committee hopes to have the next president in place before the fall semester of 2010. ◆
Seven Illinois faculty awarded Fulbright Scholar Grants

Seven members of the UI faculty have been awarded 2009-2010 Fulbright Scholar grants.

Readers respond to Inside Illinois survey

By Doris K. Dahl Editor

Printed surveys were distributed in a spring issue of Inside Illinois with the option to fill out the paper survey or do the survey online. Surveys were completed by 440 Inside Illinois readers (144 online and 296 printed). Highlights of the survey are below: a complete summary of answers for each question and comments in the paper (184 online and 299 printed). The Web vs. Printed issue was the most heated part of the survey. As far as current reading habits, only 2.4 percent said they Always or Usually read Inside Illinois online. 22.4 percent said Sometimes. However, a whopping 75 percent said Never, because they didn’t know there was an online version (50.3 percent) or because they didn’t like to read news on the Web (24.9 percent).

Calendar readers were split between the preferring the printed Inside Illinois calendar (47.3 percent) and the UI homepage or department calendar (38.3 percent). On the Job

Angela Reggans, labor relations specialist for Staff Human Resources, has worked at the UI since 2001. Reggans grew up in Chicago, the fifth of eight children. She attended Whitney Young High School before earning a bachelor’s degree in speech communication from Illinois in 1995.

What do you do on the job? My job applies specifically to civil service employees. I coordinate the Performance Partnership Program, which is a performance-management system that emphasizes good performance and helps employees continue improving attendance, conduct or other problems.

In addition to my work with the program, I advise and assist departments and employees with questions about university policy and the collective bargaining agreements. I also conduct labor-related training programs on campus, oversee disciplinary hearings, hear grievances from employees and also serve as a chief negotiator for the university.

I coordinate a few other programs, including the civil service elections.

What’s your typical day like? There’s really not a typical day in the life for a labor relations person, simply because you never know what you’re going to get or what kind of situation will arise in your particular workplace. We’re available 24 hours a day to answer phone calls and respond to e-mails about labor-related situations for civil service employees.

What do you like most about your job? I get to meet so many people all across the campus – that’s the aspect of my job that’s the most fun. I also really enjoy my co-workers at Staff Human Resources as well as labor and employee relations (within SHU). But most importantly, we get to help people. That’s definitely the best part of the job.

What’s the most challenging aspect of your job? The hardest part is that it can become intense at times. I love my job, and I don’t hear a lot of people say that, because I deal in problems all day, but I feel very lucky to be where I am.

How do you deal with the stress of your job? I enjoy spending time with my son, and I have a large extended family, so I love traveling to Chicago to visit them. I have a group of friends who are like my second family. We always try to get together to do fun things.

What do you like to do off the job? I’m an avid solver of Sudoku puzzles. I keep them up at night. I always keep saying to myself, “One more puzzle!” And then 10 puzzles later... (Laughs.) I love seeing movies on the big screen. I also like to write. Reading and writing are two of my favorite things to do. I keep a journal where I like to write down my thoughts.

I also love traveling. I’ve been to Florida, Texas, Las Vegas and I just want to keep adding to that list. I have to see the Eiffel Tower. That’s my ultimate dream.

What’s been your favorite place to visit so far? I went to Hong Kong World in Orlando, I cried. (Laughs.) Coming in the gates, seeing everything, including the castle, I was smiling and laughing because I couldn’t believe I was there. It was a fulfilling of a lifelong dream.

You mentioned that you like to write. What do you write about? I’m into personal development. I do a lot of reading in that genre, and one day I hope to publish a book of my own. I aspire to inspire people. Growing up poor in Chicago, one of eight children, and overcoming it to be where I am today – I’d like to share that part of my life with other people.

– Interview by Phil Ciciora, News Editor

Readers respond to Inside Illinois survey

SURVEY TAKERS

Most receive Inside Illinois regularly (about 94.7 percent) and most receive it in their mailbox (97 percent). However, a few indicated they do not receive it at all (5.3 percent). They are asked how often they read some or all of Inside Illinois, most say “They would Not want to miss it” (63.7 percent) or read it occasionally (27.1 percent).

Most feel the publication is Very Important (55.3 percent) or Important (44.5 percent) to learning about what is happening at the UI. And most felt the length of the articles felt about “Just right” (87.8 percent). Most keep their issue one week or less (63.9 percent), but a few keep it all year (2.8 percent). About half take it home and about a third said an additional person reads their copy at home (usually a spouse).

Most readers do not mind the advertisement messages in the paper, but 43.3 percent frequent an advertiser because of their support of the publication.

2.7 percent of the content was up-to-date (87.2 percent), interesting (86.2 percent) and the layout is easy to read (86.5 percent). Regarding coverage of different areas, most readers felt “Excellent” or “Good” about the coverage of arts and entertainment, the most popular stories are faculty/staff features (19.4 percent), news about administrative policies and employee benefits (17.6 percent) and research stories (17 percent). In retrospect, “What’s the first thing you read in the paper?” seems like a silly question (184 said the front page), however, 43 percent said they jump straight to the “On the Job” staff member interview.

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ON THE WEB

news.illinois.edu/ii/0 readersurvey.html

Jeffrey R. Roessler, a professor of civil and environmental engineering, has been researching and lecturing on advances in concrete pavement design, analysis and materials, as well as on design, modeling and material requirements for thin concrete pavements at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile in Santiago, since August. He will continue through December.

Lawrence B. Schook, a professor of biochemistry, will hold a distinguished lectureship at the University of Salzburg in Austria, from March to July and lecture on the evolutionary and developmental genetics of host responsiveness and regeneration.

SURVEY TAkers

Facility (22.1 percent); Academic Professional (45.6 percent), Civil Service (27.4 percent); Academic Hourly (2.4 percent), Extra Help (.7 percent) and Grad Student (1.7 percent).

They have worked at the UI: Less than One Year (21.2 percent), 1.5 Years (18.6 percent), 2.5-10 Years (18.8 percent), 10-20 years (19.8 percent), More than 20 (22.4 percent) and retired (18.4 percent).

They were 38.7 percent male and 61.3 percent female.

Ages: 18-25 (0.7 percent), 26 to 35 (15.5 percent), 36 to 45 (17.4 percent), 46 to 55 (26.7 percent) and 56 or older (39.7 percent).
Professor ‘dances for Darfur’ during Ireland bike trek

By Sharita Forrest
Assistant Editor

The crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan – where thousands of people have died from disease, starvation and violence, and millions of displaced people languish in refugee camps – may seem like a situation to inspire anyone to dance. But Philip Johnston, a faculty member in the department of dance, is using his passion for dance to heighten awareness about the conditions in Darfur and raise money for a relief organization that assists Darfuran refugees and other people in need.

Johnston’s Irish journey began two years ago when he became engaged in a conversation with someone who didn’t know where Darfur was.

“I was somewhat shocked,” Johnston said. “I thought that everyone had heard of Darfur, but whether they knew what was going on there. That provoked me into thinking what I could do to raise awareness about Darfur. I wasn’t quite sure what I wanted to do, then I came up with the idea of doing improvisational solo performances throughout Ireland while I was there for the summer.”

A native of Ireland, Johnston spends his summers there teaching dance.

NSF award to fund data-curation research and education

The Center for Informatics Research in Science and Scholarship in the UI’s Graduate School of Library and Information Science will receive about $2.9 million as a partner in the Data Conservation program, a new initiative under the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) DataNet program, will build infrastructure and social sciences, developing a framework to more fully understand data practices in use, and arrive at a model for curation that allows ease of access within and across disciplines.

The Illinois team will contribute to multiple aspects of the project, conducting studies of scientists’ data practices and needs, and analyzing how best to represent complex units of data in the repository. “We will be conducting a systematic analysis of the data curation requirements across the disciplines served by the Data Conservancy,” Palmer said. “Our primary interest is in the ‘long tail of small science,’ and how to support collecting and sharing of the highly variable types of data produced by individual scientists and small research groups. Our results will determine data-curation and preservation requirements but also policies to guide the Data Conservancy and other large, cross-disciplinary data repositories are developed and used.”

The research led by Renear will develop formal terminology and identity conditions for fundamental data concepts. “Many of the key cross-cutting concepts of scientific data organization remain poorly defined,” Renear said. “Our work will provide the foundation for standardizing how Data Conservancy datasets are identified, described, related and organized.”

The CIRSS research activities and other Data Conservancy efforts will feed directly into two professional training programs at GLLIS, the Data Curation specialization in the master’s of library and information science, and the Biological Information Specialist master’s in the campuswide bioinformatics program. The award also will support professional development in data-curation principles, processes and technologies.
Synthetic protein mimics structure, function of metalloprotein

By James E. Kloepel

Scientists have designed a synthetic protein that is both a structural model and a functional model of a native protein, nitric-oxide reductase.

The designed protein “provides an excellent model system for studying nitric-oxide reductase, and for creating biocatalysts for biotechnological, environmental and pharmaceutical applications,” said UI chemistry professor Yi Lu, who directed the work.

“Through rational design, we can better understand native proteins, and maybe make one that is more efficient, more stable or more functional,” Lu said.

While considerable progress has been made in designing proteins that mimic the structure of native proteins, the goal of reproducing both the structure and the function of native proteins—especially metal-containing proteins called metalloproteins—has been elusive.

Lu’s research group, including lead author Natasha Yeung, and collaborators at the UI and at Brookhaven National Laboratory, are among the first to design a protein that mimics both the structure and the function of a metalloprotein. The researchers described their work in the journal Nature, published online on Nov. 25.

Nitric-oxide reductase is a key enzyme in the nitrogen cycle that is critical for life. Nitric oxide plays a key role in cell signaling and host-pathogen responses. Therefore, study of nitric-oxide reductase is an important step toward understanding these physiological and pathological processes.

It has been difficult to study nitric-oxide reductase, however, as it is a membrane protein that is not water soluble.

To mimic the structure and function of nitric-oxide reductase, the researchers began with myoglobin, a small muscle protein. Although smaller than nitric-oxide reductase and water soluble, myoglobin can reproduce key features of the native system.

Into this scaffold protein the researchers engineered a new iron binding site consisting of three histidines and one glutamate. In addition to their structural roles, the histidines and glutamate in the active site may also provide the two protons required for nitric oxide reduction.

“The designed protein models both the structure and the function of nitric-oxide reductase, and offers additional insight that the active site glutamate is required for both iron binding and reduction activity,” Lu said.

“The designed protein also serves as an excellent model for further mechanistic studies of nitric-oxide reductase.”

Lu is affiliated with the university’s Beckman Institute, the departments of biochemistry, bioengineering, and materials science and engineering, the Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory, and the Center of Biophysics and Computational Biology.

The National Institutes of Health funded the work.

Robert Rumbelow
director of bands, College of Fine and Applied Arts

Education: B.A. (music performance), M.A. (music education), M.A. (music conducting) Texas Tech University, Ph.D. (musical arts, conducting) University of Rochester

Research Interests: Rumbelow has interests in the fields of conducting for wind band, chamber, contemporary, orchestra and opera, as well as music education, and composition and arranging music for band, chamber, orchestral, jazz, choir and studio orchestra.

“Robert Rumbelow brings great energy and outstanding musicianship to his new role,” said Robert Graves, dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts. “The band program at Illinois has enjoyed a storied history, and we are fortunate to have attracted Dr. Rumbelow to lead and advance that sterling tradition.”

Why Illinois? “The UI Bands program is legendary in the band profession,” Rumbelow said. “Not only was it the first band program integrated as part of the music curriculum, it has been influential in the band world, and the world of music education for over a century. To provide vision and leadership toward the future for such a historic band program is an amazing opportunity, and to provide mentoring to such a large number of students (music performance, music education, and majors from practically every discipline on the UI campus) is a responsibility that I’m thrilled to undertake with my new colleagues.”

Fataneh Taghaboni-Dutta
clinical professor, College of Business and School of Labor and Employment Relations

Education: B.S. (industrial engineering), M.S. (industrial engineering), Ph.D. (industrial engineering) Purdue University

Research Interests: Her research integrates technology with management, including studying the impact of Radio Frequency Identification technology and other supply-chain matters as advancing knowledge in important ways at the intersection of social and technical systems.

Why Illinois? “Well, there is really one real reason: UI is a world-class university and with a joint appointment in the department of business administration and the School of Labor and Employment Relations, Illinois has given me an opportunity to work in an interdisciplinary environment,” said Taghaboni-Dutta.

“Leaving a long tenure at Michigan was not an easy decision, but at the end, the opportunity offered was too exciting to pass up – the UI had more to offer in terms of students, collaborators and research opportunities, all of which will further my professional development.”

Synthetic protein mimics structure, function of metalloprotein

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Oliver ups the tempo with new book and dance collage

By Melissa Mitchell

K

Orchestrating dance with words, Cynthia Oliver is always in the spotlight.

By Jan Dennis

The UI dance professor experienced the queen culture first-hand when she was crowned queen of Miss St. Dunstan’s High School in 1976. As a result of her experience—which she described as “highly competitive, contentious and uncomfortable” —she said she had always hoped to revisit the subject at some point, when she possessed “the right tools to examine it.”

“I wanted to understand why people would subject themselves to that,” Oliver said.

To do so, she sifted through, studied and analyzed historical and performative material, and also considered issues, concerns and values central to the culture throughout its history.

“The fact that we had had pageantry as a highly valued part of our expression of culture from the beginning until this point was important,” she said.

It is often devalued as this kind of clueless or empty concern of women who just want to look good and parade in front of people,” she said. But, in fact, “it has a much more complicated history and present than that related to how people negotiate who they are in terms of gender, sexuality, race, class and the contributions of women to that history.”

By L. Brian Stauffer

Ruthless Calypso

“Ruptured Calypso” dancers, from left, Nehassaiu deGannes, Caryn Hodge, Rosamond S. King, Ithalia Forel, Lisa Green and A’Keitha Carey rehearse during the summer.

“Ruptured Calypso”

The piece is tied together through these dance moments, visual moments and what we call “deconstruction of the vine”—these moments in which we talk about the movement (of calypso dancing),” Oliver said.

“That is the comic relief. It is also instructive—information that we give to the audience a kind of question mark on the practice (of calypso dancing), because historically, any kind of practice of black bodies moving from the waist down has been deemed unacceptable.”

In between the cracks of creating her book, Oliver also was applying a final coat of trim De Bamba De: Ruptured Calypso” that tell a story through dance, music, video and theater. The title of the piece, she said, derives from a traditional Caribbean phrase that signals “a call to party to come together and fete.”

Also taking center stage in the production— with the all-female cast—is the expressive, highly rhythmic lifeblood of the region: calypso music and dance.

“Pageantry and Black Womanhood in the Caribbean.” It was published in August by University Press of Mississippi.

In producing the piece, Oliver worked closely with her husband, Jason Finkelman, who served as the project’s sound designer and composer. Together, they collaborated with lighting designer Amanda Ringer, also from St. Croix, and German filmmaker Marcus Behrens, who traveled with the team on location in London and Toronto as they were developing the piece. He also shot footage of the dancers on location, incorporating his material into a film, which is projected during the live performances.

Business Instructional Facility achieves top ‘green’ standard

The University’s state-of-the-art Business Instructional Facility has earned the world’s highest honor for sustainable, environmentally friendly construction and design.

The year-old building is the first business facility at a public university anywhere in the world to earn platinum certification through LEED, a U.S. Green Building Council rating system that has become the recognized standard for measuring sustainability in construction.

More than 140 buildings have been certified through the council’s four-tier scale since the nonprofit coalition of building industry leaders was formed in 1998, but fewer than 300 buildings worldwide have achieved the top LEED standard.

“It was no mistake the College of Business took action to build the first ‘green’ building on our campus,” said Larry DelRocco, the dean of the College of Business. “The LEED Platinum designation reflects the importance of social and professional responsibility to our students, staff, faculty, friends, and alumni. We are proud of our continuing efforts to push the college and the campus to be leaders in a sustainable world for everyone.”

The $60 million-plus facility, which opened in August 2008, is among a dozen platinum-certified projects at any university, and is the first at any university or college in Illinois, where only 14 other buildings have been certified platinum.

Though LEED standards are now synonymous with sustainability design, the green council’s efforts to promote earth-friendly construction have been gaining traction as well. When planning for the building began in 2003, said Avijit Ghosh, who was the dean of the College of Business when the project took root.

“We simply wanted the design and construction of this building to reflect the values of social and professional responsibilities that we teach our students,” said Ghosh, now the university’s vice president for technology and economic development.

The facility was designed to ease the mounting load on the environment, with energy-saving initiatives that include a solar panel to help power the building, roof plantings that provide insulation and reduce water runoff, and a state-of-the-art heating and cooling system. A towering atrium maximizes natural light.

Combined, the measures could trim energy use by nearly 50 percent, officials estimate, cutting utility costs by up to $300,000 a year compared with traditional classroom buildings on the Urbana-Champaign campus.

“This is the green standard by which we measure all future building construction and renovation on our three campuses,” said Stanley O. Ikenberg, who will become interim university president Jan. 1.

The LEED system awards points against a specific set of standards in a half-dozen categories, including energy and water efficiency, indoor environmental quality and innovation in design. The UI’s 14 buildings, who was named one of the nation’s 10 most influential architects by the American Institute of Architects, designed the four-story, 160,000-square-foot facility.

The building was funded through a mortgage secured by the College of Business and gifts from alumni and corporate partners. No state money was used for construction. ◆
Entomology department marks a century of discovery

By Diana Yates
Life Sciences Editor

The UI department of entomology celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2009 and marked the milestone with a symposium Dec. 11.

Lectures included “Thinking Like a Mosquito,” “The Status of the Status Quo Hormone,” “The Hungry Caterpillar,” and—the last lecture of the day, by department head May Berenbaum—“A Termite Walked Into A Bar: A Century of Entomological Humor.”

In 1909, the UI Board of Trustees approved the establishment of an independent department of entomology on the Urbana campus. Although entomology as a subject had been taught since 1876, initially under the auspices of the department of zoology and entomology, the creation of a separate entomology department allowed entomologists on the campus to chart their own course. For the next century, Illinois entomologists have helped to set the standard for the discipline nationwide.

Each session of the symposium was organized around a distinguished past faculty member who has made a lasting contribution in an area of insect science, and will feature an invited alumni speaker working in that area. Each session was introduced and chaired by a UI entomologist, who presented a brief biography of the honoree and a brief overview of his or her own work as it relates to the faculty pioneer.

The lunch-hour lecture, “The Entangled History of Darwin, Lincoln and Illinois Entomology,” given by Gene Kritsky (who earned his doctorate in entomology at Illinois in 1977), included the presentation of the newly established Centennial Award to David Stone (who earned his master’s degree in entomology at Illinois in 1982) for distinguished achievement in entomology teaching at the K-12 level.

An archival photo shows an entomology laboratory at Illinois in 1889. Although entomology as a subject had been taught since 1876, initially under the auspices of the department of zoology and entomology, the creation of a separate entomology department in 1909 allowed entomologists on the campus to chart their own course.

The first entomology department graduates in 1916 included two women.

Images courtesy UI entomology department

Entomology professor Gene E. Robinson led the effort to sequence the genome of the honey bee, a feat accomplished in 2006.

In 1984, entomology department head May Berenbaum began the Insect Film Fear Festival.
Editor’s note: Rod Blagojevich made Illinois an embarrassing poster child for government corruption a year ago when as governor he was arrested on charges that included trying to sell the appointment to a U.S. Senate seat. Largely as a result, the state’s General Assembly passed several pieces of reform legislation, including the state’s first bill placing real limits on campaign donations, which was signed into law Dec. 9, the anniversary of the former governor’s arrest. (An earlier version was vetoed after criticism it was too weak.) Brian Gaines is a professor of political science who studies polling and public opinion, and also closely follows Illinois politics. Gaines was interviewed by News Bureau social sciences editor Craig Chamberlain.

Even before Rod Blagojevich, state government in Illinois had a strong reputation for corruption. Does this bill hold as much promise for change? Maybe a little, but I’m not holding my breath. First, this bill deals only with campaign finance. It does not address wrongdoing with politics in the state has nothing to do with campaign finance. New laws guiding redistricting would matter more. Second, even though many prominent reform groups endorsed the version of the bill that Gov. Pat Quinn signed into law, it does not address the real problems of party leaders over ordinary “backbench” legislators. Legislative leaders didn’t want them, no governor chose to make a crusade of the matter, and the press and, especially, the general public have not been sufficiently interested in this kind of nitty-gritty to generate serious pressure from below for change. While many reform groups have been agitating for limits for years, some analysts have always been skeptical about the significance of limits, itself included. But this division in the ranks of experts, reformers and pundits was a very minor ingredient in the delay.

Why are Illinois politics seemingly more susceptible to corruption? I think Illinois has gradually developed a dangerous and hard-to-reverse culture of cynicism about government and tolerance for corruption. In 2006, Rod Blagojevich was easily re-elected with support from a general public made watered-down, lacklustre campaigns. Texting and tweeting could be a dangerous and hard-to-reverse culture of cynicism about government and tolerance for corruption. In 2006, Rod Blagojevich was easily re-elected with support from a general public made watered-down, lacklustre campaigns. Texting and tweeting could be a dangerous and hard-to-reverse culture of cynicism about government and tolerance for corruption. In 2006, Rod Blagojevich was easily re-elected with support from a general public made watered-down, lacklustre campaigns.

By Phil Ciciora

Texting and tweeting ought to be viewed as gr8 teaching tools

By Phil Ciciora

The impact of text messaging on the decline of formal writing among teens has recently been debated in pedagogical circles ever since cell-phone ownership became an adolescent right of passage in the mid-2000s. But according to a UI expert in media literacy, not only are critics who argue that texting is synonymous with literary degradation wrong, they also often overlook the bigger role that texting and its dominant cousin, “tweeting,” could play in education and research. Carol L. Tilley, a professor of library and information science at Illinois, says that libraries and librarians should consider embracing texting and tweeting as a means of engagement rather than simply outlawing it.

“I think if you’re an educator or librarian, an easy way to reach out to teens and tweens, then texting is one possibility,” Tilley said. “Over 70 percent of teens intended to make disclosure of donations more complete and prompt. Illinois has never had limits for state races (unlike most other states and federal offices), so this is real change. But campaign-finance reformers very often do not achieve the goals their sponsors announce, so it would be prudent to wait for an election cycle or two to play out before evaluating what changes these new rules actually bring about. There may be legal challenges, and there are probably loopholes.

What’s missing and why? There are no limits on general-election fundraising of candidates by the parties. If you peruse data on General Assembly contests, you see that about 50 percent of them are uncontested, only a handful are close, and that most of the money in those rare, close races comes from funds controlled by party leaders. In turn, control of those purse strings gives party leaders like House Speaker Michael Madigan extremely tight control of their caucuses. This new law does not change that fact, and may even exaggerate the power of leaders over ordinary “backbench” legislators.

You noted that Illinois had been one of the few states with no real limits on campaign donations. What took so long? Legislative leaders didn’t want them, no governor chose to make a crusade of the matter, and the press and, especially, the general public have not been sufficiently interested in this kind of nitty-gritty to generate serious pressure from below for change. While many reform groups have been agitating for limits for years, some analysts have always been skeptical about the significance of limits, itself included. But this division in the ranks of experts, reformers and pundits was a very minor ingredient in the delay.

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Progress grading major projects by text or by tweet. Tilley said, “If they’re away at a conference or need to use a sub for a day, they could use Twitter to stay in contact with their class without having to physically be there.” Students could text reference messages that can’t run longer than 140 characters, is actually easier to integrate into instruction than text messaging because “you can broadcast tweets to a wider audience than texts.

In terms of strategies for creative or critical writing, having a limited number of characters to work with opens up all sorts of cool ways to play with the medium,” she said.

For example, an English teacher could take a famous character from a novel and ask students to tweet from that character’s perspective.

“It’s a good way to get into the psychology of the character,” she said.

Teachers could also challenge students to craft micro-stories. See TEXTING, Page 11.

A Minute With ...™ is provided by the UI News Bureau. To view archived interviews, go to http://illinois.edu/go/annualseewth.
**Free holiday e-cards available**

Can’t seem to keep those reindeer antlers on Fluffy and Fido long enough to snap a photo for your holiday card? Now, thanks to the UI Veterinary Teaching Hospital, you can create a free holiday e-card featuring your pet’s photo.

To create a custom e-card, go to illinoisvetmed.com. Just upload a photo, add holiday accessories and then e-mail, tweet or post to Facebook.

To help keep your animal companions safe and healthy this holiday season, check out the online Pet Columns for tips on pet safety and avoiding hazardous substances. To get regular animal health and wellness updates, become a fan of the UI Veterinary Teaching Hospital on Facebook or follow it on Twitter.

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**Journalism Web site focuses on local low-income issues**

By Craig Chamberlain

Newspaper

Poverty always gets added attention during the holiday season, and may be more so this year in an economy struggling with high unemployment.

Thanks to a new Web site, however, which went live Dec. 15, Champaign County residents now have a place to focus on poverty and related issues year-round.

Called CU-Citizen Access, the site is overseen by UI journalism Professors Brant Houston and Rich Martin. The News-Gazette is a collaborator on the project, along with the UI’s Office of Poverty and Related Issues.

The site is designed to offer a place for citizens, journalists and UI students to share news, raise and discuss issues, find assistance and suggest solutions.

“It is intended to bring together all parts of the community to do and deal with the issues associated with citizens living in poverty or on low wages,” according to the About Us page on the Web site.

The project also is intended to create as many avenues as possible for citizens to address these issues, whether through this Web site, in-person, or through e-mail, social networks such as Twitter, cell phones, photos and news stories.

Funding for the project comes from the MacArthur Foundation. The Web site is overseen by UI journalism Professors Brant Houston and Rich Martin. The News-Gazette is a collaborator on the project, along with the UI’s Office of Poverty and Related Issues.

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CALENDAR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

more calendar

Dec. 17, 2009

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405 Illini Union. More info: 244-2571.
French Department: Pause Café
6 p.m. Thursdays, Espresso Royale, 1117 W. Oregon St., Urbana.

illinois.edu/food/dancesociety/ItalianTable
Italian conversation Mondays at noon, Intermezzo Café, KCPA.

Lifelines Fitness Program
Structured group activities and individual training programs.
Kinesiology and Community Health, 244-6253.
http://ckch.illinois.edu/outreach/lifetime.htm
PC User Group
www.uic.edu/~pcug
Secretariat
11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. third Wednesday of each month.
The Deutsche Konversationssuppe
1-3 p.m. Wednesday, The Bread Company, 706 S. Goodwin Ave., Urbana.

germanic.illinois.edu/TheIllinoisClub
The Illinois Club
Open to all faculty and staff members and spouses.

VOICE
Poetry and fiction reading. 7:30 p.m. third Thursday of each month.
Location varies. http://creativewriting/english.illinois.edu

Yoga at Krannert Art Museum
Fridays at noon.

organizations
Association of Academic Professionals
For events:
www.aae.uiuc.edu/voice

Balancing Mind and Body: An Exercise Fun Run
8:30 a.m.-10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 19, 1 Illini Union.

Forty-Eighters Meeting
8 a.m. first Friday of each month, Room 345 Ewing. www/secretariat,The/Forty-EightersMeeting.htm

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 18, 217 Illini Union.
www/secretariat,The/ForumOnTheEnvironment.htm

Kam.illinois.edu/KrannertCenter
Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

Intermezzo Café: Open 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on non-performance weekdays. 7:30 a.m.
through weekday performances, weekends from 90 minutes before until after performances.

Promenade gift shop: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday, one hour before until 30 minutes after performances.

Stage 5 Bar: Open at 5 p.m. most Thursday afternoons. Close at 7 p.m. on non-performance nights and until after the performance on show nights.

Ticket Office: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily, and 10 a.m. through first intermission on performance days.

Tours: 3 p.m. daily; meet in main lobby.

kcrcenter.com

Library
Main Library hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m.-11 p.m.; Friday 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday 1-5 p.m. Check online for hours for individual libraries.

Tours: Self-guided of main and some graduate libraries go to Information Desk (second floor, main library) or Information Services Desk (undergraduate library).

library.illinois.edu/MeatSalesroom
Meat Salesroom
102 Meat Sciences Lab, 1503 S. Maryland Ave., Urbana. 1:53 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday. For price list and specials 333-3404. Open usual hours through Dec. 18, then closed. Reopens Jan. 5.

Russell stal – Russian table
Thursdays, 4:30 p.m. Espresso Royale on Goodwin and Oregon, Urbana.

spurs.illinois.edu/RussianTable

Secretary of State’s Office Mobile Services
9-30 a.m.-3 p.m. 314 Illini Union. Jan. 27, Feb. 24, March 31 and April 24.

http://creativewriting.english.illinois.edu/srovekas
texting is also dependent on context, interpersonal dynamics and how you construct your messages, rather than the actual content, in some cases.

In their efforts to turn cell phones into contraband, Tilley said that teachers and librarians might be fighting a losing battle.

“Texting can be a lot more surreptitious than an actual phone call, where you have to hold the phone up and speak into the receiver,” Tilley said. “So just because you can’t have cell phones in a lot of schools and libraries doesn’t mean students won’t try to text on the sly.”

Despite the pervasiveness of cell phones among teens, Tilley said the statistics are mixed as to whether adolescents are actually using Twitter. One of the reasons could be a lack of access to a computer.

“I see an increase in the number of teachers who expect word processed assignments even though they may not provide in-class time for students to use a computer,” she said. “If a student doesn’t own a computer, where are they going to go? They may be able to go to the public library, but there’s often a wait and then a time limit for computer usage.”

Although teachers and librarians have to be aware of the varying levels of access that students have to technology, Tilley said educators should also proactively seek new avenues of access for those vulnerable populations.

“If teachers and librarians can help students be a part of that social context, students will benefit because it keeps the digital divide from widening even further.”

But there’s also the “cool” factor to consider. By the time teachers get around to bringing something new into the classroom, it’s already passé.

“There’s always that danger when embracing something in a school setting that you kill it for the students,” Tilley said. “But helping kids understand the social and contextual role that texting plays in their lives I think is one possible justification. If there are ways educators can incorporate it in providing home-work support or building dialogue out of school hours, then I think it could be a useful communications tool.”

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Human, chimpanzee brain differences tied to transcription factors

David H. Baker, 70, died Dec. 2. Baker began as an assistant professor of nutrition in the department of animal sciences in 1967. He became a professor of nutrition in 1974 and held joint appointments as a professor of comparative nutrition in the Division of Nutritional Sciences and the College of Medicine. He retired in 1999 but continued to teach the course for 20 years. Memorials: The David H. and Norma A. Baker Fellowship Fund in Animal Sciences at the UI or the Meadowbrook Community Church Building Fund.

Barbara Jean Cain, 61, died Dec. 13 at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana. Cain previously had worked at the Child Development Lab. Memorials: St. Matthew Catholic Church or School.

Dr. James Edwin Keasling, 83, died Nov. 28 at his home in Urbana. Keasling was an associate clinical instructor in the School of Basic Science at the UI College of Medicine from 1976 to 1980. Memorials: The Arab Baptist Theology Seminary, Beirut, Lebanon, c/o Middle East Bible Outreach, Suite 600 PMB 374, Alpharetta, GA 30004 or First Baptist Church of Savoy, 1602 S. Prospect Ave., Savoy, IL 61874, or Empty Tomb, 301 N. Fourth St., Champaign, IL 61820.

Cynthia S. McKinney, 49, died Nov. 28 at the Dr. John Warner Hospital in Clinton. McKinney had worked for the UI for a building service foreman for Facilities and Services for 29 years. Memorials: the Cynthia S. “Little Cindy” McKinney Memorial Fund, c/o Busey Bank, Mahomet, Saburo Muroga, 84, died Dec. 9. Muroga was a member of the computer science faculty for 38 years, retiring in 2002. Memorials: Saburo Muroga Endowed Fellowship in Computer Science, UI Foundation, 1305 W. Green St., Urbana, IL 61801, MC-386. Robert Lane Niccollette, 81, died Dec. 6 at the Champaign Urbana Regional Rehab Center in Savoy. Niccollette was the head trainer of athletics at the UI from 1954 to 1990. Memorials: National Parkinson Foundation Inc., Office of Development, 1501 NW Ninth Ave., Miami, FL 33136 or to Carle Hospice, 206-A W. Anthony Drive, Champaign IL 61822.

Ruth M. Warren, 91, died Dec. 8 at Meadowbrook Healthcare Center, Urbana. Warren worked at the UI for more than 20 years, retiring in 1986 as a secretary IV with Extramural Classes. Memorials: University Place Christian Church, 403 S. Wright St., Champaign, IL 61820.

Mary Jane Watkins, 78, died Dec. 6 at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana. Watkins worked at the UI for 14 years, retiring in 1988 as a building service worker for the Division of Operation and Maintenance (now Facilities and Services).

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