Stewarding Excellence @ Illinois begins ‘next step’
By Anna K. Herkamp
Assistant Editor

Campus administrators have responded to recommendations submitted by five project review teams in the Stewarding Excellence @ Illinois campus initiative—Aviation, Campus Programs Supporting Teaching, the Graduate College, Information Technology at Illinois, and Refocusing Scholarships.

Letters from Robert Easter, interim chancellor, and Richard Wheeler, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs, outlining the next steps to be taken for each project and implementation timelines are available online.

UI officials say Stewarding Excellence is about ensuring that the university remains a pre-eminent research institution and that the level of excellence that the university is known for is sustained. The initiative is not simply about streamlining operations or cutting funding. There is no specific savings goal for the program.

The goal is to help position the institution for success in the years to come,” said Robin Kaler, associate chancellor for public affairs. “It isn’t simply about trying to save money.”

“Stewarding Excellence is an example where many thoughts and ideas were generated to improve what we do at Illinois—now is the time to choose those actions which will position Illinois better to respond to future challenges and opportunities,” Easter said.

“All the activities and programs we have are good and important; however, we can’t continue to do everything,” Easter said. “We must shrink our footprint by making strategic choices about how we will spend our limited resources to ensure that Illinois will remain a premier public institution.”

“I have been encouraged and heartened by the responses received during the serious review of many different areas on campus because they speak volumes about people really caring about the future of Illinois. In a time of great fiscal strain we have imagined how we can keep Illinois strong while going about our business in new ways.”

Institute of Aviation

The team reviewing the Institute of Aviation recommended that all of the institute’s academic curricula be discontinued or transferred to other academic units. The campus allocates $875,000 in general revenue funds to support the institute’s degree and non-degree programs. Removing the human factors degrees and the professional pilot curriculum would eliminate administration.

Hogan outlines plan for ‘strong leadership team’

UI president Michael J. Hogan outlined administrative changes that he said will unify the university’s leadership team, reduce overhead and strengthen its missions of teaching, research and clinical health care.

Hogan, who took office July 1, said the administrative leadership of the university has grown “fragmented, with each campus focusing primarily on its interests.”

“The key to a successful future for the University of Illinois is a strong leadership team with a unified vision for the entire university,” Hogan said at the Sept. 23 meeting of the UI Board of Trustees on the Urbana campus.

“This vision would respect the traditional identity of each campus, while empowering academic leaders to streamline operations, eliminate unnecessary duplications and enhance cross-campus collaborations.”

Hogan presented several key changes:

■ Adding the title of “vice president of the University of Illinois” to that of “campus chancellor” for the three campus leaders, reaffirming their role in helping the president set a universitywide agenda and making it clear that the president of the university is also president of each campus, Hogan said.

“The current organization and reporting lines are not always obvious to our external and internal stakeholders, and create confusion regarding the voice of the university in key areas like fundraising, communications and legislative priorities,” Hogan said.

■ Creating a new position of vice president for health affairs that reports directly to the president, with a dotted-line reporting relationship to the UIC vice president-chancellor.

“The clinical work of our health science colleges and units, including our hospital and faculty practice plans, represents a distinctive and increasingly complex element of the university’s operations,” Hogan said.

“Our clinical enterprise is universitywide, with health science departments on our Chicago and Urbana campuses, College of Medicine sites in Chicago, Urbana, Rockford and Peoria, and faculty practicing in sites across the state.”

■ Expanding the duties of the vice president for technology and economic development to include university research. The vice president would encourage collaborative research among faculty members across the campuses and streamlining.
Trustees discuss rankings; budget at Sept. 23 meeting

By Anna K. Herkamp

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The 2012 operating budget request to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the first step in the annual budget request process. The 2012 operating budget request is a $65.2 million increase (4.6 percent) from the 2011 budget. The increase includes funding for faculty and staff pay raises. Faculty and staff have not had raises in two years. The increase also would fund facilities opera-

tion and meet inflationary cost increases. The budget request also includes a $15.5 million increase (6.3 percent) from the Illinois Bill of Health to support the UI College of Medicine and other health-relat-
ed educational programs. Because of the approved the university’s 2012 capital budget request of $506.7 million, which includes $60 million for repairs and renovation. The UI approved the award to awards. In addition, President Michael J. Hogan out-
tined his vision for the university and sounded a warning about the university’s national rankings in remarks at the meeting of the UI Board of Trustees on Sept. 23 in Urbana. According to the latest U.S. News & World Report rankings, Hogan discussed possible reasons for the UI Urbana cam-
pus’s decline for the first time in 12 years. The UI dropped to 47th from 49th overall, and from ninth to 15th among public uni-

versities. “(The Urbana campus) generally does well in these rankings,” he said, in opening remarks to board members and others at the meeting.

But reputational ranking – a ranking forma-

tion that includes reputation among peers and

high school counselors were surveyed for

good public image. He also pointed out that

would aid in the UI’s efforts to maintain a

state’s financial crisis coupled with the gu-

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World Report rankings, Hogan discussed

Trustees on Sept. 23 in Urbana.

The committee also found that the or-

council.

large percentage of funded ACLGF projects

ment to rigorous intellectual inquiry or to

logical mission. I want to be clear that the

tional autonomy or institutional neutrality.

asked senators to let the governing body

to an ideological advocacy mission on the

A
eafter extensive debate during an extended meeting Oct. 4, mem-

bers of the Urbana-Champaign council extended meeting Oct. 4, mem-

b targeted in the budget request. The senate document.

in a 73-29 vote, called for dis-

mune operations, social sciences

, social sciences

Academy on Capitalism and Lim-

sion calling into question the UI’s affiliation

organization’s mission of promoting capi-

Foundation toward the purpose of funding

The senate also accepted a set of guidelines for the expenditure of ALCGF money, which stated that the foundation could expend funds only in re-

sponse to faculty-initiated proposals and

est on each of the three campuses.

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Berman has been UIS provost since 2005.

Designated Richard D. Ringeisen

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Scott Wallach, who has served as director of the Division of Inter-

college Athletics at Urbana since July 1, 1992. He will be paid his current annual

State appropriation to the current fiscal year

The direct state appropriation is $700.3 mil-

year 2011, which began July 1, is nearly

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On the Job Terri Bingaman

Terri Bingaman is a customer support specialist at Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services. She’s been helping students and employees reset their CITES passwords for 14 years.

Tell me what you do at work.

I sit at the Help Desk, which is at the front of our office in Room 1211 of the Digital Computer Lab building. As people walk in, I greet them and ask them what they need help with. The way the Help Desk is set up, there’s a monitor so I can see who’s available to help with walk-ins. We accept walk-ins from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Phone support is available weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and from noon to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays.

Do you assist with any computer questions?

I can answer some questions. I can’t do anything on the really technical side of things. I started working here as an extra help employee 14 years ago. I was brought in to do password resets. Now I’ve been doing that for 14 years and I think I’m pretty good at it. (laughs) Over the years, I’ve learned to do a lot of other things too. Essentially, if it’s a CITES service, I’ll have knowledge of how it works and how to help people.

What else are you responsible for?

Another way clients contact the Help Desk is through e-mail: we use a ticketing system. E-mails come in and sit in the queue. I evenly distribute the tickets to the students in the room. The tickets are similar to work orders and our students help customers solve each issue.

Do you assign specific people to certain tasks?

Most times, I read them first to make sure it’s a problem we can help with. Nine times out of 10, I'll randomly choose who’s available to help. But if someone comes in and has a specific problem and I know someone in the room who has expertise in that area, I’ll let that person assist. The students sit at work stations in the Help Desk office. The students come and go throughout the day and we try to schedule a maximum of 10 students per shift during the day. There also are two other full timers at the Help Desk during the day working as Supervisors on Duty. The supervisors and I work closely together to monitor the students’ attendance, help answer questions and keep them on task with the workflow – answer phones, log onto chat, accept cases from our ticketing system and assist walk-ins. I also have a supervisor shift but continue to sit up front during that shift.

What are some of the common things people will contact you about?

It’s always passwords. That’s the No. 1 issue we are contacted for. Resetting passwords and helping people understand what the different passwords do. For the most part, you can create one CITES password for all the different programs. It is confusing to some people because there was a time when your passwords had to be different.

What other issues does the Help Desk help with?

We get a lot of people asking for help with viruses. We provide free antivirus software, which is usually passed out at my desk. I talk to a lot of people about that. We also do a lot of laptop support and I help set up appointments for that. We also can help clients establish wireless access. If it’s a hardware issue, that’s not something we can help with.

How many people are in your office?

Right now we schedule up to 10 people to be on the Help Desk at one time. I’m one of eight full-time staff. At any time there are 11 staff members, including supervisors.

How many student workers are there?

Right now we have 40 students. That’s another thing I do. I schedule and conduct interviews and hire students.

Do you like working here?

I do. I’m a people person. I like the interaction with the people. The coolest part of the job is when someone walks in and they’re frustrated and need help and I can turn around to a whole section of people who can help solve their problem. I understand I’m more like a receptionist, but I don’t have any issues with that. I sometimes joke around about being a Walmart greeter. When we moved to where we are now, people would walk in and see my face and know they’re in the right place.

HOGAN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

line research-related processes and policies to eliminate redundancies. The person also would be responsible for helping to communicate the university’s research vision to internal and external constituencies, such as governmental funding agencies.

These changes will require amendments to university statutes and general rules, requiring consultation with faculty through the University Senate Conference and campus senates. Trustees asked the senators to report back at the board’s Nov. 18 meet-

Chicago.

Oct. 7, 2010

Tell me what you do at work.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

with co-workers; Ribeye with Ken.

Favorite restaurants:

Dos Reales

Red Cross training.

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NRC releases third report on U.S. doctoral programs

By Robert Kisting
News Bureau Intern

The National Research Council has released its latest assessment of U.S. doctoral programs. The study collected data from more than 5,000 doctoral programs in 62 fields at 212 universities. The assessment will enable faculty members and administrators to compare, evaluate and improve their programs and assist potential students in identifying programs best suited to their needs.

“Overall, Illinois programs fared very well in the NRC assessment,” said Deba Dutta, the dean of the UI Graduate College. “Of our 58 programs that were assessed, about two-thirds are in the top 25 percent of all programs in their respective fields. However, as NRC notes, the assessment is not intended to be used as a definitive ranking of ‘best programs’.”

Among those Urbana programs that performed exceptionally well are animal sciences, chemistry, electrical and computer engineering, entomology, and materials science and engineering.

Also, because the study uses a different methodology, the NRC rankings cannot be compared with two previous NRC studies (1982 and 1995) or other national rankings, such as those compiled by U.S. News and World Report or Washington Monthly. The large collection of quantitative data is tied to 20 characteristics of doctoral programs, including information on time-to-degree, faculty research productivity, institutional support for students, and the diversity of faculty and students.

Fifty-eight of Urbana’s 95 doctoral programs were included in the assessment, which had several criteria for inclusion. For example, doctoral programs that awarded fewer than five Ph.D.s over a five-year span or others that are considered emerging fields (not enough institutions offer them nationwide) were not included in the survey. In addition, many programs fall outside the scope of the study, including business, education and social work.

The NRC study does not assign a specific numeric rank to doctoral programs, but rather assigns each program two ranges, referred to as the S ranking (survey-based) and R ranking (regression-based). Both rankings provide information about where a program stands in relation to others in the same field.

For example, if a program scores “14, 28,” (in either category) that means the program is ranked between 14th and 28th overall among all the included programs of that kind in the country, with 90 percent certainty. (In other words, there is only a 10 percent probability that the program rank is outside that range.)

The S rankings are based on a survey that asked faculty members to rate the importance of the 20 different program characteristics in determining the quality of the program. Based on their answers, each characteristic was assigned a weight; these weights varied by field. The weights were then applied to the data for each program in the field, resulting in a range of rankings for each program.

The R rankings are based on an indirect way of determining the importance faculty members place on various characteristics. First, groups of randomly selected faculty members were asked to rate the quality of a sample of representative programs in their field. Based on the sample program ratings, weights were assigned to each of the 20 characteristics using statistical techniques. Again, the weights varied by field. These weights were applied to the data about each program resulting in a second range of rankings.

The report also offers illustrative ranges of rankings for each program on three separate dimensions of doctoral education – research activity, student support and outcomes, and diversity. These assessments are based on the S ranking approach, but only characteristics relevant to each category were included in the calculation.

One possible drawback to the survey is the age of the data; the current rankings are based on information collected from 2005-2006. In spite of that, many feel the rankings to be an invaluable tool for doctoral programs on the UI campus.

“While many programs may have changed since the data were collected, the assessment is to date the most comprehensive study of its kind,” Dutta said. “It provides the opportunity for programs to reflect and consider what changes they have made since the data were collected.”

Dutta noted that people need to take care when addressing the rankings. “The purpose of the study was to help programs and prospective students look at various characteristics that matter most to them and then make comparisons,” he said. “Therefore, it can be an important resource for programs to identify areas where they can improve compared to peers and to set benchmarks. This is the real value (of the study) for programs.”

The report also examines overall trends in U.S. doctoral education since the last assessment was released and offers general findings on graduate education in the U.S.

Richard Wheeler, vice chancellor for academic affairs (interim) and vice provost, served on the NRC Committee on Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs that undertook the project.

An Excel spreadsheet of the results and a report describing the methodology of the assessment and general findings about U.S. doctoral education are online.

**ON THE WEB**
www.nap.edu/rdp
NEW faces 2010

Romana Autrey
assistant professor of accountancy, College of Business

Education: Ph.D. (accounting), University of Texas at Austin; B.S. (business administration), California State University, Hayward.

Research Interests: Autrey’s research spans such areas as performance evaluation, managerial incentives, optimizing supply chain and distribution channels, and fraud prevention and detection. She has employed mathematical modeling as her preferred research approach although she is open to empirical research on this range of topics.

“At Illinois, we take a holistic view of accountability rather than the stove-piped view traditionally taken in education and practice,” said Ira Solomon, the head of the department of accounting. “Consequently, we do not have courses in financial accounting, managerial accounting, etc., but instead rely on more granular organizing principles such as measurement and disclosure, information and decision making. To be successful in this type of educational program, an instructor must have a broad mastery of accountancy that cuts across traditional boundaries. While such knowledge and perspectives are relatively rare, especially in recent Ph.D.’s, professor Autrey is just such an individual. In addition, we expect to be able to benefit from her work experience at the Harvard Business School with the case method as she brings perspectives from that experience to enhance our efforts at active learning.”

Why Illinois? “The accountability faculty at the UI exemplifies excellence both in research and in teaching,” Autrey said. “I especially value the diversity of interests and expertise of my colleagues, but even more important to me is the incredible collegiality of the faculty. Having motivated and bright students is just icing on the cake.”


Barrett E. Kirwan
assistant professor of economics in the department of agricultural and consumer economics, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

Education: Ph.D. (economics), Massachusetts Institute of Technology; B.A. (economics), Brigham Young University

Research Interests: Kirwan’s primary field of research is U.S. agricultural policy. His research ranges from investigating the effect of agricultural subsidies on farmland rental markets to determining the influence of U.S. subsidies on income and inequality in developing countries. His research seeks to identify the ultimate beneficiaries of farm policy and to explore the effects of agricultural policy on producers and consumers.

“Agricultural policy is extremely important to the economic vitality of southern Illinois,” said Paul Ellinger, the head of the department of agricultural and consumer economics. “Barrett will be a valuable contributor in the national discussions related to the upcoming U.S. Farm Bill and other relevant policies related to food and agriculture. His intellectual curiosity is contagious with his students. Illinois students will truly benefit from his energy, enthusiasm and intellect.”

Why Illinois? "As an agricultural economist, I cannot think of a better place to do research than Illinois, where agriculture plays such a prominent role," Kirwan said. “My colleagues in the department are interesting, energetic and intelligent, and they foster an environment in which ideas flourish. Although other agricultural economics departments struggle to maintain their identity, Illinois has positioned itself to remain relevant far into the future.”


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Researchers have found an association between physical fitness and the brain in 9- and 10-year-old children: those who are more fit tend to have a bigger hippocampus and perform better on a test of memory than their less-fit peers.

The new study, which used magnetic resonance imaging to measure the relative size of specific structures in the brains of 49 child subjects, appears in the journal Brain Research.

“This is the first study I know of that has used MRI measures to look at differences in brain between kids who are fit and kids who aren’t fit,” said UI psychology professor and Beckman Institute director Art Kramer, who led the study with doctoral student Laura Chaddock and kinesiology and community health professor Charles Hillman.

“Beyond that, it relates those measures of brain structure to cognition.”

The study focused on the hippocampus, a structure tucked deep in the brain, because it is known to be important in learning and memory. Previous studies in older adults and in animals have shown that exercise can increase the size of the hippocampus. A bigger hippocampus is associated with better performance on spatial reasoning and other cognitive tasks.

“In animal studies, exercise has been shown to specifically affect the hippocampus, significantly increasing the growth of new neurons and cell survival, enhancing memory and learning, and increasing molecules that are involved in the plasticity of the brain,” Chaddock said.

When they analyzed the MRI data, the researchers found that the physically fit tended to have bigger hippocampal volume – about 12 percent bigger relative to total brain size – than their out-of-shape peers.

“The children who were in better physical condition also did better on tests of relational memory – the ability to remember and integrate various types of information – than their less-fit peers.

“Higher fit children had higher performance on the relational memory task, higher fit children had larger hippocampal volumes, and in general, children with larger hippocampal volumes had better relational memory,” Chaddock said.

Further analyses indicated that a bigger hippocampus boosted performance on the relational memory task.

“If you remove hippocampal volume from the equation,” Chaddock said, “the relationship between fitness and memory decreases.”

The new findings suggest that interventions to increase childhood physical activity could have an important effect on brain development, Kramer said.

“We knew that experience and environmental factors and socioeconomic status all impact brain development,” he said.

“If you get some lousy genes from your parents, you can’t really fix that, and it’s not easy to do something about your economic status. But here’s something that we can do something about,” Kramer said.
Cancer-associated non-coding RNA regulates pre-mRNA splicing

By Diana Yates
Life Sciences Editor

Researchers report this month that MALAT1, a long non-coding RNA that is implicated in certain cancers, regulates pre-mRNA splicing — a critical step in the earliest stage of protein production. Their study appears in the journal Molecular Cell.

Nearly 5 percent of the human genome codes for proteins, and scientists are only beginning to understand the role of the rest of the “non-coding” genome. Among the least studied non-coding genes — which are transcribed from DNA to RNA but generally are not translated into proteins — are the long non-coding RNAs (lncRNAs).

Before the human genome was fully sequenced, it was a “protein-centric world,” said UI cell and developmental biology professor Kannanganattu Prasanth, who led the study. With the sequencing of the genome it became clear, however, that a majority of genes code for RNAs that are not translated into proteins.

In recent years, research on non-coding RNAs has blossomed, but most studies have focused only on small non-coding RNAs, which play critical roles in several aspects of cellular function. There have been comparatively fewer studies on IncRNAs, Prasanth said. As a result, researchers are only beginning to understand the functions of a few IncRNAs.

Prasanth’s laboratory focuses on understanding the role of IncRNAs, such as MALAT1, which normally are distributed in the nucleus of mammalian cells. Preliminary studies suggest that IncRNAs carry out vital regulatory functions in cells. When those functions go awry, preliminary studies suggest that IncRNAs carry out vital regulatory functions in cells. When those functions go awry, abnormal expression of the MALAT1 gene, for example, is implicated in many cancers, including breast, lung and liver cancers, “so the scientific world was interested in what this RNA could be doing in normal cells, and how changes in its expression correlate with cancer,” he said.

Prasanth was also the co-first-author of another study, recently published in The EMBO Journal, that found that MALAT1 latches onto the splicing factors to which it can bind led to the same results. Abnormal expression of the MALAT1 gene, for example, is implicated in many cancers, including breast, lung and liver cancers, “so the scientific world was interested in what this RNA could be doing in normal cells, and how changes in its expression correlate with cancer,” he said.

The researchers found that the MALAT1 protein production

**Flash Index is highest since May 2009**

Illinois continues to show steady recovery from its worst economic doldrums since the early 1980s, but the progress remains slow, according to a leading measure of the state’s economic activity.

The UI Flash Index climbed to 93.5 in September, up from 92.0 in August. The index remains below the 100 level, a threshold that divides decline from growth, but the 1.5-point jump is the largest one-month increase in six years.

“The increase is good news because it suggests that the economy is not weakening as feared several weeks ago and that a double dip recession is less likely,” said economist J. Fred Giertz, who compiles the index for the UI Institute of Government and Public Affairs. “This is reinforced by the continued decline in the Illinois unemployment rate, which fell from 10.3 to 10.1 in August. The recovery is still painfully slow, but at least it is continuing,” Giertz said.

The recent increase is the largest jump in the index since it climbed from 100.5 to 102.2 between August and September 2004.

In real terms, corporate and sales tax collections increased in September from the same month last year while individual income tax receipts were down slightly.

The index is a weighted average of Illinois growth rates in corporate earnings, consumer spending and personal income. Tax receipts from corporate income, personal income and retail sales are adjusted for inflation before growth rates are calculated.

The growth rate for each component is then calculated for the 12-month period using data through Sept. 30, 2010. ◆

“All of the data strongly suggest that MALAT1 is acting as a regulator of splicing by modulating the levels of the splicing factors in the cell,” Prasanth said.

This study verifies that MALAT1 plays a key role in pre-mRNA processing, with broad implications for human health, Prasanth said.

“Numerous studies have shown that aberrant splicing of pre-mRNA is a major issue associated with several diseases, including cancer,” he said. “Some of the factors we know interact with MALAT1 have been shown to be oncogenes. If you over-express these genes you can make a cell cancerous.”

“Similarly, some of the genes whose pre-mRNA splicing is controlled by MALAT1 are members of the cancer ‘signature genes,’” Prasanth said. “This means that their abnormal expression is directly correlated with several cancers.”

Postdoctoral researcher Vidysha Tripathi led this work, with assistance from undergraduate student David Song. Supriya Prasanth, a professor of cell and developmental biology at Illinois, and her graduate student, Zhen Shen, also contributed to the study. The research team also included scientists from the University of Toronto; Eisai Pharmaceuticals, Carlsbad, Calif.; and Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio. ◆
Savagery in colonial Japanese literary works examined

By Sharita Forrest

Sometimes depicted as “noble savages” to be revered, other times as murderous brutes to be subdued or eradicated, indigenous peoples were the foils against which colonial powers defined modern, civilized society, and which they used to legitimate military conquest, political control and financial exploitation during periods of imperial expansion.

In a new book, “Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame” (University of California Press), Robert Tierney, a professor of East Asian languages and cultures at the UI, explores the theme of savagery in Japanese literary works during Japan’s colonial period (1895-1945). Focusing primarily on South Seas territories such as Taiwan and Micronesia, Tierney examines Japan’s expansionist discourse and the ways in which literary depictions of savagery changed over time in relation to Japan’s rise as an imperial power throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries and after the empire’s cataclysmic end in World War II.

In many ways, Japan mimicked Western powers in the tactics that it used to become an imperial power. Japanese writers were influenced by Western imperialist literature such as “Robinson Crusoe,” one of the first English novels translated into Japanese, and by the novels of Robert Louis Stevenson and Pierre Loti.

However, because Japan colonized geographically contiguous territories inhabited by people who were close to themselves culturally and racially and because Japan was itself a semi-colonized nation in the late 19th century, there were some distinct differences between Japanese and Western colonial discourse.

Unlike Westerners, Japanese authors claimed to identify with their colonized people and voiced feelings of ambivalence or anxiety about their roles as colonizers. The Japanese also employed “a rhetoric of likeness or similarity,” Tierney said. “The rhetoric of Japanese empire was, ‘We are close to the people we colonized (unlike Western colonial powers), so we want to make them like us.’ ”

When Japan ended 250 years of isolationism by reopening its borders and aggressively striving to acquire nearby Taiwan in the mid- to late-19th century, images of exotic South Seas islands and native “savages” captured Japanese writers’ imaginations. Depictions of Taiwanese aborigines were ubiquitous in colonial novels, ethnographies, travelogues and other literature, but the natives often were stereotyped as savage “headhunters” in need of subjugation and the civilized influence of Japanese colonizers. While a few of the Taiwanese aboriginal tribes did engage in headhunting, that was not true of the majority of the tribes, Tierney said.

To encourage Japanese people to leave their homeland and colonize the new territories, folk stories such as “Momotarô” (“The Peach Boy”), a centuries-old legend about a tiny boy born from a peach who grows up and conquers an island of ogres, were engaged as political propaganda to whet people’s appetites for imperial conquest and cultural assimilation.

“Momotarô” is probably the single most famous Japanese folk tale, Tierney said. “It was interpreted as an allegory of the Japanese colonization of the South Seas. Scholars refer to it as the Japanese model for the creation of a culture of colonialism – that the Japanese had it in their genes even though Japan had no early history of colonialism.”

However, as writers became critical of Japan’s expansionist policies and discourse during the country’s colonial period, they developed new interpretations of “Momotarô” that transformed the protagonist from a conquering hero to a villainous ruler and invader – and likewise recast the ogres as peace-loving islanders.

After the colonies were liberated and the Japanese empire disappeared at the end of World War II, Japanese writers struggled to come to terms with the empire’s history of aggression. Somehow this shrinking of Japanese expansion and this rethinking of what is Japanese, Tierney wrote, “Japan was devastated after World War II, and the borders got redefined to just Taiwan, Korea, great parts of China, parts of south-east Asia, Taiwan and Micronesia.” Tierney said “Japan was devastated after World War II, and the borders got redefined to just Taiwan, Korea, great parts of China, parts of south-east Asia, Taiwan and Micronesia.”

Postcolonial studies often overlook Japan as a colonial power, although it was the paramount imperial force in East Asia during the early 20th century and provided a template for other late-developing imperial nations, Tierney wrote.

If you look at pre-World War II maps of the Japanese empire, it encompasses all of Korea, great parts of China, parts of south-east Asia, Taiwan and Micronesia, Tierney wrote. “Japan was devastated after World War II, and the borders got redefined to just Taiwan, Korea, great parts of China, parts of south-east Asia, Taiwan and Micronesia.”

For decades, Japan’s rich vein of literary works from its colonial period were repressed, disowned by the writers and largely forgotten by scholars as the Japanese sought to dissociate themselves from what they perceived as a shameful past and focused on rebuilding their country after the war.
Brilliant Futures campaign passes $2 billion

A s of Sept. 15, the UI’s Brilliant Futures Campaign, passed the $2 billion fundraising goal. The campaign, the largest in the university’s 143-year history, was at 99 percent of its $2.25 billion fundraising goal. The campaign update was announced during the UI Foundation’s 75th annual meeting, held last week on the Urbana campus. The campaign, which began July 1, 2003, will conclude Dec. 31, 2011. The campaign counts outright gifts, grants and pledges to the university as well as deferred commitments. Of the $2 billion raised to date, $1.345 billion is in outright commitments and $655.1 million is in deferred gift arrangements. A total of $1.199 billion has been designated for current use and $801.1 million is designated for endowments.

“I think the campaign progress we have made is a testament to all alumni and friends of the university in addition to all the university and foundation administration,” said Sidney S. Micek, the president of the foundation. “Everybody associated with the university has a real passion for this institution. We still have a lot of work ahead of us to finish the campaign strong, but we have great momentum.”

As of Sept. 15, $1.406 billion had been designated by donors for the Urbana campus, $23.8 million for UIUC, $25 million for the UI and $43.6 million for the foundation and university administration purposes. The funds are used to support many areas, including student scholarships and fellowships, faculty support, academic programs, facilities and research.

Nearly 38 percent of the total raised has come from alumni of the university, with another 13 percent from non-alumni. Corporations and businesses have contributed 20 percent; 18 percent is from foundations and family foundations; 11 percent is from special groups and other private sources.

UI, UI Foundation pass $200 million for third straight year

T he UI and the UI Foundation had another banner year in private gifts received for the fiscal year that ended June 30, raising $211.8 million, according to Walter Knorr, UI chief financial officer and treasurer of the foundation. Fiscal year 2010 was the third consecutive year – and only the fourth year ever – that the university and foundation eclipsed the $200 million mark in gifts received.

A total of $54.3 million was designated to the UI directly and $157.5 million was contributed through the foundation. More than 150,000 gifts from 85,000 donors were recorded during FY10.

Knorr made the announcement at the foundation’s 75th annual meeting Oct. 1 to about 500 elected foundation members and members of the Presidents Council and Chancellor’s Circle.

“This has been another very good year for the university and the foundation in terms of fundraising,” Knorr said. “Despite a shaky economy, we continue to make strides toward enhancing the future of the university through private support.”

The $211.8 million in gifts received provided support for a number of initiatives across the campuses at Urbana, Chicago and Springfield. This past year $97.2 million was raised for academic programs, $22.3 million for student support, $7.7 million for faculty support, $42.5 million for research and $36.4 million for other purposes.

Of those funds raised last year, 71 percent ($150.3 million) was designated for current use funds. These funds are intended to be used during the current fiscal year. Also, $53.5 million was designated for the endowment. The UIF endowment produced a 12 percent return during FY10.

The active endowment of both the university and the foundation represents $1.289 billion as of June 30, or 62 percent of the total endowment of $2.096 billion. Deferred gift commitments to the UI and the foundation total $806.1 million. This deferred amount combined with the active endowment creates a total of $2.096 billion.

The foundation, established 75 years ago, is dedicated to securing and administering private gifts for the UI and its three campuses.

UI MAJOR FUNDRAISING

Campaign for Illinois (1979-1985) exceeded its $100 million goal by raising $134 million.

Campaign Illinois (1991-2000) surpassed its goal of $1 billion with gifts totaling $1.53 billion, making it one of the largest fundraising efforts conducted by a public university at that time.

Brilliant Futures (2003-2011) has a campaign goal of $2.25 billion.

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“For what I’m really drawn to are individuals who are courageous enough to stand up against the prevailing attitudes,” Rosenstein said. “Vashti clearly was a really tough woman. … I think once this started, there was no way that she was not going to see this thing through.”

McCollum was in her early 90s when Rosenstein interviewed her for the film. She died in 2006.

As told in the documentary, the suit arose from a common practice at the time, not only in Champaign schools but nationwide, in which public schools made class time and rooms available for a voluntary religion service. The will premiere will be at 7 p.m. on Oct. 7, the station will broadcast the documentary again at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 15. Following the second broadcast will be a discussion on WILL hosted by David Inge, an actor, and Dan McCollum as guests. McCollum is the second of Vashti’s three sons and a former mayor of Champaign.

The successful case that preceded McCollum’s suit was brought in Champaign during the waning months of World War II, that Vashti McCollum, a young mother, filed a lawsuit against the Champaign board of education in connection with a policy allowing religious instruction on school time and in school classrooms.

“The Lord Is Not on Trial” also is scheduled to be broadcast nationwide on PBS in March next year.

“The story’s local angle had obvious attraction for Rosenstein, who teaches documentary filmmaking. “It’s one of the few local stories that have a really significant impact on American history,” he said.

But he also was drawn in by the nature of the mother and by the individual at the center of it.

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“Lots of people rely on quantum dots to develop a nanoneedle that also served as a surgical tool that allows us to ‘operate’ inside the cell,” Yu said. “It’s almost like a surgical probe. They then loaded the needle with a standard fluorescent microscope.

“This technique allows us to physically access the internal environment inside a cell,” Yu said. “It’s almost like a surgical tool that allows us to ‘operate’ inside the cell.”

The group coated a single nanotube, only 50 nanometers wide, with a very thin layer of gold, creating a nanoscale electrode probe. They then loaded the needle with quantum dots. A small electrical charge releases the quantum dots from the needle. This provides a level of control not achievable by other molecular delivery methods, which involve gradual diffusion throughout the cell and into the nucleus.

“Now we can use electrical potential to control the release of the molecules attaching to the probe,” Yu said. “We can insert the nanonoodle in a specific location and wait for a specific point in a biologic process, and then release the quantum dots. Previous technologies cannot do that.”

Because the needle is so small, it can Pierce a cell with minimal disruption, while other injection techniques can be very damaging to a cell. Researchers also can use this technique to accurately deliver the quantum dots to a very specific target to study activity in certain regions of the nucleus, or potentially other cellular organelles.

“One thing that we really like about this technique is its specificity,” Wang said. “Using the nanoneedle, we can direct quantum dots to specific locations in the cell.”

Researchers have been exploring a class of nanoparticles called quantum dots, tiny specks of semiconductor material only a few molecules big that can be used to monitor microscopic processes and cellular conditions. Quantum dots offer the advantages of small size, bright fluorescence for easy tracking, and excellent stability in light.

“Lots of people rely on quantum dots to monitor biological processes and gain information about the cellular environment. But getting quantum dots into a cell for advanced applications is a problem,” said professor Min-Feng Yu, a professor of mechanical science and engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

“Getting any type of molecule into the nucleus is even trickier, because it’s surrounded by membranes that prevent most molecules in the cell from entering. Researchers also can use this technique to control the release of the molecules attaching to the probe,” Yu said. “We can insert the nanonoodle in a specific location and wait for a specific point in a biologic process, and then release the quantum dots. Previous technologies cannot do that.”

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Small sciences could benefit from better data-sharing methods

By Phil Ciclora
News Editor

The proliferation of scientific research data is creating an urgent situation as scientists charged with data handling and stewardship, indicating that the demand for data management and preservation services will be quite high, especially for those scientists working in areas traditionally considered to be “small science” disciplines, according to newly published research by a UI expert in information science.

Melissa Cragin, a professor of library and information science, says that although scientists exchanged data with trusted collaborators regularly, sharing with anyone outside their inner circle, sometimes including other agents to help younger teams, usually took place through “just in time” negotiations—that is, at the moment of need. However, data management at the small science-level tends to be very idiosyncratic, with practices often varying from lab to lab. In addition, scientists rarely have the resources to prepare data for public sharing. The focus on disciplines that produce very large data can often obscure the possible value in small data sets.

“Other particular concerns lie in the high level of variation and complexity in research data and data-sharing practices among scientists. For most of the participants in this study, ‘there were no field-wide norms for sharing, and none of the scientists routinely deposited data into any shared repositori-".

Information, please

The proliferation of scientific research data is creating an urgent situation for organizations and professionals charged with data handling and stewardship, according to new research published by Melissa Cragin, a UI expert in information science.

The national Institutes of Health has awarded a $712,000 grant to a UI researcher who is developing a program to help people with alcohol issues continue treatment.

By Sharita Forrest
News Editor

The National Institutes of Health has awarded a $712,000 grant to a UI researcher who is developing a program to help people with alcohol problems stay in treatment and recover with help from their friends.

Douglas C. Smith, a professor in the school of Social Work and a licensed social worker, is developing a cognitive behavioral treatment called the Peer-Enhanced Community Reinforcement Approach. It is an adaptation of CRA, a treatment shown to be effective with adolescents and older adults that strives to make a sober lifestyle more appealing than continued substance abuse by including clients’ family members in the treatment process to provide social support and positive reinforcement for sober behaviors.

Positive peers

Douglas C. Smith, a professor in the UI School of Social Work and a licensed social worker, is developing a cognitive behavioral treatment called the Peer-Enhanced Community Reinforcement Approach.

A program to help people with alcohol issues continue treatment

By Sharita Forrest
News Editor

The National Institutes of Health has awarded a $712,000 grant to a UI researcher who is developing a program to help people with alcohol problems stay in treatment and recover with help from their friends.

Douglas C. Smith, a professor in the School of Social Work and a licensed social worker, is developing a cognitive behavioral treatment called the Peer-Enhanced Community Reinforcement Approach. It is an adaptation of CRA, a treatment shown to be effective with adolescents and older adults that strives to make a sober lifestyle more appealing than continued substance abuse by including clients’ family members in the treatment process to provide social support and positive reinforcement for sober behaviors.

Rarely do clinical researchers integrate friends in alcohol treatment, despite evidence that social support is critical to curbing problem drinking, Smith wrote. The peer-enhanced CRA study will be among the first to investigate the efficacy of including friends in clients’ treatment to support non-using behaviors, participate in non-alcohol-related activities with them and intervene if the client relapses or discontinues treatment. Alcohol misuse often peaks in emerging adulthood, defined as the 18-25 year age range, yet few treatments are geared to the needs of this population. Emerging adults account for about a fifth of all publicly funded outpatient admissions, and tend to have poorer treatment retention and post-treatment outcomes than younger adolescents or older adults receiving the same treatment. Accordingly, most studies on emerging adults with alcohol problems have focused on middle class college students—although the majority (53 percent) of alcohol abusers in that age group are not students.

“Treatments that are developed specifically for college students may not be applicable to those emerging adults found in publicly funded treatment centers,” who tend to be from lower income families, exhibit less academic and social competence, experience greater transition to adulthood, and have higher rates of psychiatric illnesses and familial histories of alcohol abuse than college students, Smith wrote.

“Young adults have the highest alcohol and drug use, but it tapers off as they get older,” typically after they take on adult roles as spouses and parents, Smith said. “It is really hard to tell which young adults will continue on to have chronic alcohol problems and which will not, so using a treatment approach that does not assume that all alcohol-dependent individuals will always be alcoholics may be attractive to young adults.” Studies indicate that young adults with alcohol dependence face some difficult challenges: They are more likely to live with people and have peers that abuse alcohol.

Program to help people with alcohol issues continue treatment

By Sharita Forrest
News Editor

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Positive peers

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alcohol or drugs, and are more likely to engage in social activities that encourage drinking. While some are able to find social support in self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, many choose not to go AA’s 12-step route, perhaps because they find few peers their age to identify with at meetings or because they disagree with the group’s philosophy of lifelong abstinence, Smith said.

Emerging adults may need specialized treatment that takes into account their unique social milieu and offers alternate forms of support. Ongoing support from same-age, non-using peers whom they already know may be more effective at retaining people in treatment and teaching them to find alternatives to drinking than programs that require them to cultivate new relationships, Smith said.

Sixty clients for the study are being selected from young adults ages 18-25 who seek publicly funded treatment for alcohol-use disorders or binge drinking through Prairie Center Health Systems’ outpatient clinic in Champaign, Ill. Those who meet the study’s criteria and agree to participate will be asked to identify a same-sex friend in their age group with whom they have contact at least weekly, who they believe is supportive of their recovery and may be willing to participate in three individual or joint counseling sessions.

The clients will be asked to commit to abstinence for the duration of treatment, which will be delivered in 12 sessions over a three-month period. The peers may be light or moderate alcohol users, which, for the purpose of the study, are defined as not having used alcohol or other drugs more than 12 days during the prior 90 days. If the peer is found to meet the diagnostic criteria for a substance abuse disorder during the assessment process, they may still be able to participate in a support role for the client, but only if they agree to complete treatment themselves.

The friends’ counseling sessions comprise an initial assessment of their and the clients’ motivations and readiness for change, an examination of the client’s alcohol use patterns, techniques for reinforcing clients’ pro-social and help-seeking behaviors, and an optional session about relapse prevention and re-engaging the client in treatment if he resumes drinking or drops out. Clients’ treatment will include identifying the reasons for sobriety, practicing refusal skills, identifying and engaging in pleasurable activities that compete with alcohol use and job skills training.

“We’re going to encourage the peer to hang out with the client a lot, but only when they’re not drinking or using drugs,” Smith said. “We want to work with the peer to understand that they can play an important role in whether their friend reduces their use by rewarding abstinence.”

As an incentive for the partners to engage in pro-social recreation and attend all counseling sessions, they have opportunities to earn recreation vouchers, in addition to incentives for completing individual components of the study.

The clients and their friends will be interviewed at three months and six months after treatment to assess retention rates, participants’ and peers’ alcohol and drug use over time, their participation in alcohol- and drug-free social activities, clients’ perceptions of treatment appropriateness, peer behaviors that supported sobriety or discouraged drinking and whether peers were beneficial or detrimental to the treatment process.

The team’s findings appeared in the Oct. 7, 2010 online version of the journal *Small*. The National Science Foundation supported this work.

**NANONEEDLE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10**

**Ad removed for online version**
Small firms need more access to credit during financial woes

By Phil Ciciora
News Editor

T en the economy sours, small firms seeking credit tend to face higher costs of financing, leading them to reinvest their profits before they pay off creditors, according to research published by a UI finance expert.

Small firms, especially those considered financially constrained as a result of their size, low dividend payment or lack of bond rating, often become bogged down in debt because “they ‘get hooked on cheap money, when they can find it’” says UI finance professor Murillo Campello.

“Since small firms are usually financially constrained, they try to grab all the cash they can get their hands on, whether it’s internal or external,” he said.

As long as the economy is doing well, life is good for small firms. But when there’s an economic slowdown or a financial crisis, creditors want their money back, Campello says.

“Big firms are usually unconstrained by outside financing costs, and are able to weather the slowdown by paying back their creditors,” Campello said. “Small firms will not necessarily pay off the debt like the big firms would, but will instead re-invest in their business until it becomes highly profitable. This is where small, financially constrained firms get into trouble, because then they owe a lot of money.”

The study, co-written by UI finance professor Heitor Almeida and published in the Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis, seeks to answer what Campello calls the “holy grail” of corporate finance: how firms finance themselves.

“We discovered that when you look at how firms finance themselves, they’re thinking: ‘How should I finance this idea? Should we raise equity, issue debt or use general cash?’ Since external financing is always expensive, these are huge questions for firms. The idea is that firms reach first for internal funds, and then if that’s not enough, they look outside for external funds.”

Large firms are less likely to face high costs of external financing, while small firms with fewer financial resources will invariably face higher costs.

“When financial markets tighten, the big firms are usually able to pay off their debt,” Campello said. “In corporate finance, this paradigm is called the pecking-order theory. Big firms tend not to accumulate too much cash; they pay back what they owe to creditors before the money gets too expensive.”

But as small firms invest, if they have profitable returns on their investments, they tend keep the cash in-house and buy more tangible assets.

“If they are allowed, small firms usually don’t pay back their creditors, they just keep on investing,” Campello said. “Those assets can then be used as collateral, and with that collateral there is more credit, hence more funds to invest. So many times they don’t necessarily pay back their creditors, they just invest more. But in the process, they may become more leveraged, and owe more money to outsiders.”

For policy-makers, Campello says it’s imperative to create new instruments for how small firms handle external funds during a financial slowdown.
Stem Cell Research

A Minute With ...™ UI biologist Fei Wang

Editor’s note: The on-again, off-again status of federal embryonic stem cell funding puts researchers in a difficult bind. UI cell and developmental biology professor Fei Wang and his colleagues, for example, reported in August that they found a simple method for converting human embryonic stem cells into neural progenitor cells, which can develop into neurons or other brain cells. Now the federal funds that support such studies are on hold until the legal and political issues relating to the use of these cells is resolved. Wang discussed the status of embryonic stem cell research with News Bureau Life Sciences Editor Diana Yates.

Why use embryonic stem cells at all when other types of stem cells are available for research?

The biggest difference between human embryonic stem cells and adult stem cells is that human embryonic stem cells are able to differentiate into nearly all types of cells in the human body. This feature is known as pluripotency, which makes these cells an invaluable model for studying early human development in culture dishes, as it is impossible to do so in intact human embryos. Also, because human embryonic stem cells are pluripotent, they can serve as a theoretically inexhaustible source for the production of specific cell types in the body for the treatment of various diseases and injuries. In contrast, adult stem cells have very limited differentiation potential; they can only become cell types (often one or two) of their tissue of origin and may not be found in all tissues or organs.

Recently, researchers discovered that adult cells can be “reprogrammed” into human embryonic-stem-cell-like pluripotent stem cells (named as induced pluripotent stem cells or iPS cells). While this discovery is very exciting, these iPS cells cannot yet replace human embryonic stem cells.

The first reason is that the iPS cells generated from adult cells show a wide range of qualities, and even the best ones are still not as good as human embryonic stem cells in terms of the ability to differentiate. The other reason is that in most cases viruses are used to make iPS cells from adult cells, and this treatment may cause genetic defects in the cells and predispose them to cancer. Therefore, these cells need to be further improved before they can be used in patients.

What are the potential applications of your research using embryonic stem cells?

We are trying to understand what mechanisms make human embryonic stem cells pluripotent and how we can turn these cells into particular types of cells such as neurons, cardiac cells and pancreatic cells. We have worked on this for more than four years and recently discovered a chemical compound that we can use to convert human embryonic stem cells pluripotent and how we can turn these cells into particular types of cells such as neurons, cardiac cells and pancreatic cells. We have worked on this for more than four years and recently discovered a chemical compound that we can use to convert human embryonic stem cells pluripotent and how we can turn these cells into particular types of cells such as neurons, cardiac cells and pancreatic cells.

Currently there are no cells that can replace human embryonic stem cells. In fact, I believe that research should be conducted on all types of stem cells, including not only human embryonic stem cells but also adult stem cells and iPS cells. This unbiased comprehensive approach in my opinion is probably the best approach to study stem cells.

What other advances might result from this field of research?

It is widely accepted that human embryonic stem cell research can help us to understand early human development, develop better technologies for drug testing, and open new avenues for cell-based therapies. In addition, this line of research could serve as an engine that drives technological advances in areas way beyond stem cell biology. Chemical screening, large-scale genomic analysis and cell imaging are a few of the many technologies that have been improved during our studies on human embryonic stem cells. In fact, the iPS cells I mentioned earlier were generated based on knowledge gained from earlier studies of embryonic stem cells.

Can’t these goals be achieved by other means?

There are no cells that can replace human embryonic stem cells. In fact, I believe that research should be conducted on all types of stem cells, including not only human embryonic stem cells but also adult stem cells and iPS cells. This unbiased comprehensive approach in my opinion is probably the best approach to study stem cells.

SMALL FIRMS, FROM PAGE 13

nancial crisis, including mechanisms to lower interest rates or help banks extend additional lines of credit.

“It’s important for policy-making in that, during a financial crisis, you need to think about avoiding unemployment, factories closing down and jobs moving abroad,” he said. “But we also need policies that target those firms that are addicted to external fi-

nancing as well as laws to help creditors feel like they can lend more at lower costs.”

But putting in too much regulation makes lending expensive.

“Later on, what happens is that crises become more acute, and potentially, even productive firms would be punished the most by the high costs of external financing,” Campello said.
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STEWARDING EXCELLENCE. From Page 1

The university will save between $500,000 and $750,000 by discontinuing the Institute of Aviation degree programs and the Professional Pilot Program, Kaler said.

The Senate’s stemming support programs determined that all groups that provide services – the College of Teaching Excellence, Campus Programs on Teaching and Learning, CITES/Research and Learning Technology Services and the Office of Continuing Education – should be consolidated into one group.

The team identified several factors related to the programs’ services, including exploring whether teaching services – which include technology education, teaching retreats and workshops, and other classroom training – should be centralized. Discipline-specific student outcomes assessment; the use and availability of technology; distance learning and addressing the accessibility of services and resources to instructors.

Easter and Wheeler have asked that a working group of campus representatives, nominated by deans, study these and other issues and provide recommendations by the end of the current academic year. In the spring semester, the group will host a series of campus-wide discussions on best practices and implementation of the programs’ restructuring will take place during the 2011-12 academic year.

The project team also recommended considering alternatives to the Compass course-management system. Sally Jackson, the chief information officer, has been asked to conduct a cost study of the existing course-management systems and present a general plan for managing the overall cost. The plan should be finished by the end of the current academic year.

Graduate College

The Graduate College project team concluded that most functions of the college will be handled at the university. Specifics, such as alumni relations, fundraising and career services will be evaluated at the campus level or at the current level. The group also identified several other areas for which further deliberation or action is required. One area was graduate student record-keeping. According to the report, the college and the Office of the Registrar have had some difficulty in coordinating academic services. The group came up with some solutions to help streamline and make the processes involved more efficient. One solution was moving the registration and records functions from the registrar to the Graduate College.

Another area under review was the petitioning process for graduate students. Petitions are required for situations that include transferring courses from one institution to another, transferring courses from one institution to another, or for reenrollment. A group is charged with reviewing this process.

The group also determined more fellowship support is needed for graduate students. Fellowships are stipends given to students that can contribute to the academic mission of the campus. The team also had concerns about whether the. The team also had concerns about whether metrics can be used to measure the impact of the programs. The project team also recommended that additional resources be devoted to the creation of shared service centers, making the acquisition of IT-related services more streamlined and creating innovative online business processes that can more efficiently work with the campus.

The Unified Communications program will put voice communications, email, voicemail, instant messaging and teleconferencing on a single program. The transition is under way.

The project team determined that consolidating servers and decommissioning small server rooms would generate $8.4 million in savings over five years. In consultation with the data centers, the project team identified 150 rooms totaling 75,000 square feet of space dedicated to servers that could be consolidated or eliminated.

The team also recommended that desktop and web management be put into a shared service model, eliminating the need for separate support groups. The College of Engineering is involved in the creation of a shared service and called Engineering IT. As of July 1, all college IT staff, except those doing work for specific research groups, are a part of the new center – which encompasses all administrative, institutional and research-related IT.

A group made up of IT professionals, faculty and staff members and business managers will make suggestions about cost savings and service improvements regarding the acquisition of IT-related services. One thing the advisory group will evaluate is whether there are certain products or services that the campus should purchase centrally as opposed to faculty members or units making separate purchases – in order to save money. The most common IT practices on campus are network services, the project team also noted that some units are handling their own IT services.

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The team also noted that individual units develop their own IT solutions to “business processes,” which include student admissions, record grading, reporting vacation and sick leave, requesting reimbursements for expenses, scheduling meeting rooms and other routine tasks.

Instead of each unit creating its own software to meet the specifications for these tasks, the project team suggested the campus come up with common computer programs that all units can use – which would reduce costs and increase efficiency. The project team also asked that a group study the issue of data storage and management.

Refocusing Scholarships

Easter and Wheeler have directed the campus to begin work on several of the recommendations made by the team that evaluated waivers and scholarships.

Specifically, the campus has begun a fundraising initiative to support financial aid availability and recruiting efforts. In addition to this initiative, in the current year the campus increased its institutional support for financial aid by $4 million, which makes up in part for $25 million in centrally controlled funds available for financial aid.

Adopting the team’s recommendations, Easter and Wheeler asked the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics to prepare a plan to replace tuition waivers provided to student athletes with alternative sources of financial support, such as scholarships. Tuition waivers waive a student’s obligation to pay tuition – meaning the campus receives no funding for tuition. Scholarships, on the other hand, are backed by specific dollar amounts.

In response, DIA has developed a five-year plan for reducing tuition waivers for student athletes. The campus will reduce its allotment of tuition waivers, to $50,000 over a period of five years beginning in 2011-12.

At the end of five years, the campus will consider DIA’s findings on the impact of these reductions and assess the need for further waiver reductions. The money from the tuition waivers will be redirected to support the general student population.

“Tuition waivers will be restructured to support the general student population,” Kaler said. “The campus and DIA are committed to meeting the financial needs of student athletes and all students.”

Overall campus scholarship policies, the team has recommended creating campus policy with guidelines for waiver and scholarship granting and improving processes. The plan should be finished by the end of the current academic year.

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Honor good academic professionals
CAPE nominations sought

Academic Human Resources is accepting nominations for the 2010-2011 Chancellor’s Academic Professional Excellence award. This offers an opportunity to honor academic professionals who contribute to the excellence of the campus.

The CAPE award’s purpose, criteria, eligibility requirements and nomination procedures are online at www.sura.uiuc.edu/cape.html. Nominees from across campus and various disciplines are encouraged.

The deadline for submitting nominations is 5 p.m. Oct. 29.

Illini Union

Gallery features local photographer

Work by Midwest photographer Larry Kanfer will be featured at the Illini Union Art Gallery. “Larry Kanfer: A Retrospective” will be on display through Nov. 1.

Kanfer, who has a gallery and photography studio in Champaign, is best known for his “Prairiescapes” series.

The Illini Union Art Gallery, located on the main floor, showcases works of students, faculty and staff members, as well as local artists and traveling exhibits.

State Universities Annuitants Association

Fall chapter meeting is Oct. 17

William E. Mabe, the executive director of the State Universities Retirement System, will speak Oct. 17 at the fall meeting of the Urbana-Champaign chapter of the State Universities Annuitants Association.

The meeting, at the I Hotel and Conference Center, begins at 1:30 p.m. All SURS participants, including current employees and annuitants, are welcome. More information is available at www.suau-ui.org.

Human resources

All Employee Expo is Oct. 19

All UI employees are invited to attend the All Employee Expo on Oct. 19. Representatives from campus, community and affiliated organizations will provide information about benefits, services, programs and other related topics.

The event is hosted by Academic Human Resources, the Staff Advisory Council and Staff Human Resources. Employees must bring their i-card to be admitted to the free event, which will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Illini Union Rooms A, B and C.

This is an approved event for civil service employees, who may take up to one hour to attend, operations permitting and with prior supervisory approval. For more information go to http://go.illinois.edu/Expo.

Translation Studies Center Conference is on translation, humanities

About 50 students are enrolled in the certificate program in translation that has been developed is approved and offers undergraduate and graduate certificate programs that prepare students for careers as translators or language and cross-cultural communications specialists.

About 50 students are enrolled in the certificate programs. Lowe expects enrollment to “really take off” during the 2010-2011 academic year if the master’s degree program in translation that has been developed is approved and begins enrolling students for next fall.

The conference will focus on the nexus of theory, practice and institutional settings where translation takes place, including literary translations, medical texts, psychoanalysis, politics and popular culture.

“The fact that we’re getting such an impressive array of important thought-leaders in the translation field as speakers at the conference is a testimony to the fact that translation is becoming of great interest to scholars in the humanities and people who design curricula for humanities disciplines,” Lowe said. “We think it’s a very timely moment to introduce this topic and a wonderful way to raise awareness among students and faculty members.”
Article: The School of Art + Design is opening an exhibition space called Figure One in downtown Champaign that will link creative activity on campus with the surrounding community.

The new exhibition space is funded in part by a gift from alumnus James Avery as a tribute to former art and design faculty member James Ross Shipleys. Avery said Shipley had a significant influence on his life and career. Jimmy Lau, a professor of graphic design in the school, which is a unit of the College of Fine and Applied Arts, is coordinator of the space. An advisory board composed of four faculty members, a graduate student and an undergraduate student from FAA recommends policy and programming for the space.

The name Figure One was chosen from suggestions submitted by art and design students at the board’s request.

Figure One’s first two exhibitions, one featuring designs by alumni and one featuring student compositions, will open simultaneously.

“20/20,” one of the inaugural exhibitions at Figure One, features work by alumni of School of Art + Design’s metals program. The dress form displays epaulets and hip decorations called “My lovely lady lumps,” by artist Jennifer Ramirez. Rings, necklaces and jewelry by other alumni artists also are on display.

“20/20” will exhibit pieces by alumni of the school’s metals program. The 21 alumni in the show represent more than a half-century of the program’s history and accomplishments as well as the breadth of innovative approaches the artists have to materials and craft. Noted jeweler and artist Alice Fisch, who graduated from the school in 1954, is among the alumni artists whose work will be included. “10 to Watch” is a yearlong series of one-person shows that will introduce the public to intriguing student work that has caught the curatorial team’s eye.

Both exhibitions will be on view through Oct. 30. An opening reception will be held 6-8 p.m. on Oct. 8 at Figure One. The new exhibition space is at 116 N. Walnut St. in Champaign.
BRIEFS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

The lectures begin at 3:30 p.m. in Room 5602 of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology. More information, including abstracts for the lectures, is available at www.beckman.illinois.edu/strategic/climateandsociety.aspx.

SDEP is a campuswide initiative of the department of geography; School of Earth, Society and the Environment; and the Beckman Institute.

Celebrate history of homecoming where it all began

Illinois Homecoming activities kick off Oct. 16 with the iHelp volunteer project. Faculty and staff members can join students and alumni from around the world in giving back to the local community. The event is combined with UI student service day on the same date. Volunteers are urged to pledge service time online and send photos and videos of their activities.

This year’s theme, “A Century of Spirit” celebrates the history of Homecoming at Illinois. It is the longest continuously running such collegiate event at Illinois, beginning in 1910 and marking its 100th anniversary in 2010. The occasion has taken place in each of those 100 years, with the exception of 1918, when the event was canceled because of the exigencies of World War I.

Homecoming’s original concept – designed by two UI students, Clarence Foss Williams, Class of 1910, and W. Elmer Ekblaw, Classes of 1910 and 1912 – was to offer an annual event geared specifically to alumni and centered around a football game. Its inaugural event was an unqualified success, drawing more than 10,000 participants.

While in some ways Illinois has maintained certain Homecoming traditions, it has also found new ways to celebrate and new causes for pride in the institution, its students and its alumni.

Innovations that have sprung up over the years include the parade, pep rally, Homecoming Court, tent parties and many additional campus activities. The latest Homecoming tradition to evolve is iHelp, a volunteer event begun in 2006 by the Student Alumni Ambassadors of the UI Alumni Association.

Scheduled events this year: Illinois Spirit Day (wear your orange on Oct. 20), Grand Opening of Student Dining and Residential Programs Building and Timothy J. Nugent Hall (Oct. 22), Homecoming parade and pep rally (6-8 p.m. Oct. 22), and the Illinois vs. Indiana Homecoming football game (11 a.m. Oct. 23). Many other activities are included on the Homecoming website.

On the web

http://admin.illinois.edu/homecoming/
Pledge service time:
www.uiaa.org/ihelp
Afro-Cuban music: The “dean of Latin jazz” (The New York Times) returns to the United States after a seven-year absence when Chucho Valdés performs with The Afro-Cuban Messengers at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 9 at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. A six-time Grammy winner, Valdés brought Afro-Cuban music to the forefront with Arturo Sandoval and Paquito D’Rivera in 1972 when they formed the band Irakere. The Afro-Cuban Messengers add the zest of tenor sax and trumpet to drums, percussion and bass, to complement the talents of Valdés as bandleader, composer and master of jazz languages.
One of the first to visit the “Science at the Market” tent at Urbana’s Market at the Square on Sept. 25, was a girl who asked Nobel laureate Tony Leggett, “How was the moon made?” Leggett and other scientists from the UI physics department staffed the table as part of the department’s ongoing efforts to “make science accessible to the general public and to get kids excited about science,” said Inga Karliner, organizer of the event. The department plans to participate in the Oct. 9 Market at the Square, in the Lincoln Square Village parking lot at the corner of Vine and Illinois streets on Saturday mornings.