NOVA’s Focus on Student Learning Outcomes

As a part of the College’s preparation for reaffirmation of accreditation by the Commission on Colleges (COC) of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), NOVA is focusing on student learning outcomes (SLOs). SLOs are the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that students gain from a learning experience. Such outcomes are at the heart of SACS’ focus on institutional effectiveness. By identifying SLOs, academic programs make explicit what students completing a program should know, be able to do and value. Defining SLOs is the first step in measuring if students are meeting program expectations and in determining how and where student learning can be improved. By defining, assessing and utilizing the results from measuring student performance on SLOs, NOVA is able to take the necessary steps to meet the various accrediting standards and requirements SACS has laid out in its handbook “Principles of Accreditation.”

Under Vice President George Gabriel's leadership, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR), Planning and Assessment is collaborating with academic programs in order to ensure that these critical activities – identification, assessment and utilization – are accomplished and documented. All degree-awarding programs and select career certificates have designated a faculty member to be the SLO lead faculty. The lead faculty will oversee the SLOs and assessment practices for a given program. Because it is essential that the assessment of SLOs is a faculty-driven process, it is important that all

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**NOVA’s Focus on Student Learning Outcomes**

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Faculty within a program and across the Campuses are involved. To further assist faculty, OIR has organized a series of workshops on SLOs and assessment. Jennifer Roberts, the coordinator for academic assessment, is currently meeting with faculty at each campus to provide an overview of SLOs and the assessment process. In April, workshop sessions will be devoted to the writing and mapping of SLOs. While SLO lead faculty have been the main audience for the first workshop, all faculty members are encouraged to take part in future workshops. In addition to the April sessions, beginning this summer, OIR will offer workshops on other topics, such as classroom assessment techniques, developing assessment tools, rubrics and using results from assessment activities.

Reaffirmation of accreditation is a critical activity for the College. Success requires significant faculty participation in the process. As a result of college-wide efforts, NOVA should not only reaffirm compliance with SACS standards, but also significantly advance the quality of its educational programs.

If you have any questions about student learning outcomes and assessment, please contact Roberts at jeroberts@nvcc.edu.

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**Don’t Forget the Service Awards**

Please remember to send your edits for NOVA Service Awards. Please see the “Hot Topics” section for instructions and the attachment section online at [http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/Mar27-09_attachment.pdf](http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/Mar27-09_attachment.pdf) to see the listing in its entirety. The deadline for corrections is April 17.
Medical Education Campus Hosts Senator Warner and Virginia Education Wizard Roll-Out Event

On March 13, the Medical Education Campus (MEC) hosted an event showcasing the new Virginia Education Wizard Web site. Developed by Virginia’s Community Colleges, the Virginia Education Wizard is a one-stop, online resource that brings together information about careers, curriculum and financial assistance.

Present for the unveiling of the Web site were Senator Mark Warner, Virginia Community College System (VCCS) Chancellor Glenn DuBois, President Robert G. Templin, Jr. and local government officials. Also in attendance were 14 students from Yorktown and Washington Lee High Schools, who were there to test the new Web site.

“The Wizard brings together all the information prospective students and families need today to make smart choices about their future. Everything is available with a simple keystroke, whenever and wherever users are in their journey,” said Du Bois.

For more information on the Wizard, please go online to http://www.vawizard.org.

Senator Mark Warner, President Robert G. Templin, Jr. and VCCS Chancellor Glenn DuBois take a moment to discuss the Wizard and how beneficial the Web site will be for Virginia residents.

Photo by Kevin Mattingly
Governor Kaine Visits Mission of Mercy Project at the Medical Education Campus

Governor Tim Kaine recently visited the Mission of Mercy (M.O.M.) project at the Medical Education Campus (MEC) where nearly 800 low-income residents of Northern Virginia received free dental services over a two-day period.

With nearly a quarter of a million dollars donated for supplies and services, volunteers were able to provide services that ranged from dental cleanings to filling cavities. Kaine expressed his admiration about the project and commended the volunteers who made the dental services possible.

In its seventh year, M.O.M. continues to be a collaborative effort between the Northern Virginia Dental Society, NOVA, Northern Virginia Dental Hygienist Association, Virginia Commonwealth University’s Dental School, Northern Virginia Health Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, dental supply and dental service corporations, community volunteers and many other concerned health and community organizations.
The Loudoun Leadership Lecture Series, a program created specifically to foster an atmosphere of engagement and service within the community, hosted its first series on February 23. Special guest speaker Dominique Dawes, Olympic Gold Medalist, spoke on “ENVISION, Reaching your Full Potential.” This was a unique opportunity for students, faculty and staff.

The next lecture series event is scheduled for March 30. Political strategist and CNN contributor Donna Brazile will be the guest speaker.
Annandale Campus Culinary Students Attend the Fort Lee Culinary Competition

On March 11, a group of four NOVA culinary students attended the 34th Annual U.S. Army Culinary Arts Competition in Fort Lee, Virginia. Students Ryan, Jessica, Rebekah and Alex, along with Chef Mike Herbert (AN) observed some of the finest culinary displays in the area. These included cold food displays, sugar work, chocolate work, the hot food competition and cooking demonstrations. The students also spoke to some of the chefs about their careers, experiences and how best to start their culinary careers. Everyone agreed this was a rewarding experience, and look forward to next year’s culinary competition.

ITSS Computer Screen Saver Lockout Implementation

On April 2, Information Technology Support Services (ITSS) will be implementing a new security measure on all faculty/staff computers on the NOVA network required by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Beginning that day, all faculty/staff computers will automatically switch to a screen saver after 30 minutes of inactivity. Once the screen saver appears, the user will have to log back on to return to what they had been working on. The screen saver will only appear after 30 minutes of inactivity. Simply moving the mouse or tapping the keyboard will restart the 30 minute clock and prevent the screen saver from appearing. This security step will not be implemented on classroom or student domain computers.

The new security measure will not change your screen saver, it just sets it to come on automatically after 30 minutes of inactivity. Individuals who deal with sensitive or confidential information should seriously consider having their time setting changed to no more than 15 minutes of inactivity. In order to have this change implemented please contact the IT Help Desk requesting this change be made to your account.

The Commonwealth requires this security step to protect unauthorized users from gaining access to confidential or sensitive information through an unattended computer that was left connected to the network.
Loudoun Professor Designs Mobile Application

With great pride and excitement, Loudoun’s Communication Design Program would like to announce the public launch of the ConnectDots game for the iPhone and iPod Touch. It is now available at the iTunes App Store and is a must-have game for kids ages 3 to 103.

Julia Turner (LO), assistant dean and associate professor, has done her homework. Turner has the distinction of joining a pioneering group of interactive designers who are changing the way we interact with software and the technology landscape. Her new iTunes App, as Apple calls it, is among the growing number of iPhone and iPod applications that are plugging into a new techno-savvy generation and expanding the world of mobile devices.

It took months of hard work and late nights to bring it to life, but it is here and ready for everyone. Most importantly, ConnectDots is a fun, interactive game that helps children recognize animal shapes in their habitats. Plus, this entertaining and user-friendly application allows adults to experience their childhood again with good old “connect the dots.”

Turner is excited to share her user interface design experience with her Communication Design students since this is an emerging area in the field. ConnectDots visual interface is an example of how designers are now integrating their talents into the hi-tech field of mobile design. To check out ConnectDots, go to iTunes and search by the name or by “Julia Turner.”

Phi Theta Kappa Honors Annandale Advisor

NOVA’s Alpha Beta Rho Chapter Phi Theta Kappa Advisor Professor Richard Wilan and Professor Robin Rich-Coates from Alpha Pi Chi Chapter of the Eastern Shore Community College receive the Distinguished Advisor Award for 2009 at the Virginia Regional Phi Theta Kappa Awards presented at the annual Regional Convention in Virginia Beach on March 6.

The Alpha Beta Rho Chapter also received awards for Distinguished Chapter, Distinguished Chapter Member and Fifth Place Leadership Hallmark. The Beta Nu Psi Chapter of NOVA’s Medical Education Campus also was awarded Most Improved Chapter.

Congratulations to Wilan for this great honor.

Alpha Beta Rho Chapter Phi Theta Kappa Advisor and Professor Richard Wilan.
Photo by Student Lisa Borges, PTK public relations officer
Woodbridge Faculty’s Artwork Published

Professor of Photography Gail Rebhan’s (WO) artwork is discussed in the new book by Andrea Liss titled "Feminist Art and the Maternal," published by the University of Minnesota Press. Two of Rebhan’s 1997 untitled photographs were reproduced in the book.

*Photos by Gail Rebhan*

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Submit to the *Intercom*!

**Deadline:** Submissions must be received (via e-mail) by 5:00 p.m. on Fridays for the following week’s edition.

**Submission Guidelines:** Submissions should be e-mailed to intercom@nvcc.edu. Unformatted text should be sent in an MSWord document or may be put into the body of the e-mail. All photos should be attached as jpeg, bmp, tiff or eps files; photo captions should also be included with your text. For guidelines go online to: [http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/guidelines.htm](http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/guidelines.htm).

*Please remember all news submissions should highlight NOVA faculty and/or staff.*
Annandale Campus and PTK Highlight Relay for Life

On February 27, Margaret Reed, past president of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) of the Annandale Campus’ Alpha Beta Rho Chapter and co-chairperson of Relay For Life of NOVA, informed the 118 new PTK members about Relay For Life at the Ernst Community Cultural Center. PTK officers, Phi Theta Kappa Advisor Richard Wilan, Joann Credle, Provost Barbara Saperstone and Acting Dean of Students Christine Holt also listened.

Relay For Life is a 12-hour event where NOVA faculty, staff and students from all campuses help to raise awareness about cancer and money to support the American Cancer Society. Last year, NOVA Relay For Life raised $48,000. They are still looking for new teams and participants. All are welcome. This year's event is scheduled for April 18 and 19 on the Annandale Campus. For more information, please see the Web site at http://www.nvccrelay.org.

Author and Historian Michael Twitty Visited the MEC

Michael Twitty, culinary historian and author of “Fighting Old Nep: the Foodways of Enslaved Afro-Marylanders 1634 - 1864,” recently took the Medical Education Campus (MEC) staff and students on a journey of cultural discovery through what he calls our ancestral "foodscape."

Through speech, photos and props, Twitty explained how African Americans view food: “Our plates are a place where we meld our past with our present and future. Food at its best is about the African American relationship with spirit, time, space, ancestors, the earth and each other. It bridges cultures and connects continents. It embodies our spirits, and tells us about ourselves. Food is also about our unique gift to the world's gastronomic heritage — our own edible jazz."

Twitty has lectured at the African American Museum of History in Alexandria, Virginia and has had an exhibition displayed at the mall with all his native grown vegetables and cotton plants for the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. While at the MEC, Twitty was kind enough to give out cotton blossoms to participants, many of whom had never seen a real cotton plant. As an added treat, a catered lunch from Caterings From the Soul restaurant brought his tales of fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, collard greens, peach cobbler and other traditional African American dishes to life.
Leslie Sinn (LO), head of the veterinary technology program at the Loudoun Campus, recently received the 2009 Veterinary Service Award from the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association. The award recognizes outstanding service to the veterinary profession and the association.

Sinn shared credit for the award with her colleagues. “At the awards dinner, one of the things they spoke about was the quality of our graduates and the outstanding veterinary technology program that we have,” she said. “As I told everyone at the meeting, it is a group effort on our part and the recognition should be for the team and not an individual.”

Accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association, NOVA’s veterinary technology program prepares students for a post-graduate national exam which leads to licensure as a veterinary technician. In addition to the traditional on-campus instruction, an innovative online program is available to students across the state.

“I believe this award proves that our work has not gone unnoticed and that the practitioners acknowledge that Virginia is ahead of other states in placing a professional value on veterinary technicians,” Sinn said. Congratulations!
Student Learning Outcomes in NOVA Programs and Classrooms Workshop

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) and Academic Assessment are offering a workshop session on student learning outcomes for interested faculty. This workshop will take place on March 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on the Alexandria Campus, Room AA291.

The workshop will provide an overview of student learning outcomes and the assessment cycle, and will include information about why we need to assess student learning outcomes, student learning outcomes at the program level, major steps in the assessment loop, components of an assessment plan, types of assessment tools and improving teaching and learning using student learning outcomes. This presentation will lay the foundation for later workshops, including those on writing student learning outcomes and curriculum mapping, classroom assessment techniques and using assessment results in the process of continual improvement.

Because of limited space, registration is limited to 25 people. To register, go online to http://survey.vccs.edu/wsb.dll/s/41g6c5.

If you have questions, contact Coordinator of Academic Assessment Jennifer Roberts at jeroberts@nvcc.edu or 703-323-3086.

Loudoun Leadership Lecture Series & NOVA Honors Program Welcomes Donna Brazile and Jim Kiemba

On March 30 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., the Loudoun Leadership Lecture Series and NOVA Honors Program will take place in the Waddell Theatre on the Loudoun Campus. The Campus will host author, educator and political pundit Donna Brazile and author and NOVA student Jim Kiemba. To learn more about this amazing leadership opportunity, see the flyer in the attachment section at http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/Mar27-09_attachment.pdf.
NOVA Community Chorus and Others Perform Duruflé Requiem

Mark Whitmire (AL) will conduct two performances of the “Duruflé Requiem,” one of the most magical, transcendent pieces in the choral repertoire. The performances feature the Washington Philharmonic Orchestra and the NOVA Community Chorus, with the soloists mezzo-soprano Grace Gori and baritone Aurelius Gori. **No tickets are required.**

Performances will be **March 29 at 3:00 p.m. at the Church of the Epiphany** located at 1317 G Street N.W., Washington, District of Columbia and **April 5 at 3:00 p.m. at Bishop Ireton High School** at 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria, Virginia.

For information contact Whitmire at mwhitmire@nvcc.edu or 703-845-6097.

NOVA /Alexandria Renowned Music Faculty Perform in Concert

Professors **James Jelasic**, International Steinway Artist-In-Residence at NOVA, and **Jon Lackey**, professor of voice will perform Johannes Brahms’ song cycle “Die Schöne Magelone,” one of the most exciting and beautiful pieces in the romantic music repertoire. This recital duo, with numerous recordings, has performed internationally to great critical acclaim.

The performance, also a benefit for the Alexandria Music Department, will be on **April 6 at 8:00 p.m. in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center** located on the Alexandria Campus. Tickets will be sold at the door for $25 General Admission and $10 for NOVA students with ID. Paid adjacent tiered-parking will be available.

For more information, contact **Barbara Ryland Wells** at bwells@nvcc.edu or 703-845-6026. Please see the flyer in the new attachment section at [http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/Mar27-09_attachment.pdf](http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/Mar27-09_attachment.pdf).

TIAA-CREF Retirement Sessions

Wondering how you will be able to achieve your financial goals for retirement? TIAA-CREF representatives will be visiting NOVA to help with some of your retirement decisions. If you are interested in having a private consultation, TIAA-CREF will be available between **9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on April 9 and 10 at the Annandale Campus in the Provost Conference Room**. Please call TIAA-CREF directly at 703-460-7100 ext. 257116 to make an appointment or visit their Web site at [http://www.tiaa-cref.org/moc](http://www.tiaa-cref.org/moc) to plan your consultation meeting.
Catherine Clinton Presents on the Life of Mrs. Lincoln


Educated at Harvard, Sussex and Princeton, Clinton is a professor of history at Queen's University in Belfast.

The program will be held on **April 16 at 12:30 p.m. in the CE Forum** on the Annandale Campus. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing after the speech.

Lyceum Program on Earth Day

Sam Love, a co-founder of the first Earth Day (1970), will speak on “Ecology: The Key to a Sustainable Future” at **12:30 p.m. on April 22 in the CE Forum on the Annandale Campus.** You do not want to miss this great, eye-opening event.

CETL Workshops and Events Available for Faculty

- **Guidelines for Fair Use in Media.** Claudia Holland, head of GMU’s Copyright Resources Office clarifies ways to use (or not to use) media in our teaching - **March 27 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., Large Board Room, Brault Building (AN).** Register at CETL@nvcc.edu.

- **Classroom Management Workshop.** Pat Lunt and Nan Peck will explore strategies for handling difficult students and situations in the classroom - **April 10 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the CE Seminar Rooms C & D (AN).** Register at CETL@nvcc.edu.

- **The Hidden Cost of War: Working with Students with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.** Dean of Student Development Michael Turner will facilitate this discussion on **April 17 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 a.m., CE Seminar Rooms A & B (AN).** Register at CETL@nvcc.edu.

- **Facebook: Understanding Online Social Interaction in Today’s World.** Professor of Communication Studies Libby Vick will help you set up a Facebook page in this workshop - **April 24 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., CT 335 (AN).** This is co-sponsored by the Technology Applications Center (TAC). Register at http://tac.nvcc.edu/tactraining/sp09. Spaces are limited so register today.
2009 Service Awards Luncheon

The NOVA Service Awards Luncheon honoring employees completing 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of service with the Commonwealth of Virginia will be held on March 30 at the Waterford at Springfield located at 6715 Commerce Street, Springfield, Virginia. Social time (cash bar) will begin at 11:30 a.m. with lunch served at 12:00 p.m.

A revised list of those being honored is attached to this Intercom at http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/Mar27-09_attachment.pdf. The employment cut off date for the awards is for service through June 30. Please check the list for the appropriate spelling of your name as well as years of service. Certificates will be made based on this list. Changes or corrections to your 2009 Certificates must be submitted before April 17.

Contact Human Resources, 703-323-3788, to verify your years of service or the correct spelling of your name.

Participate in a Faculty Learning Community

All NOVA faculty are invited to apply to participate in a faculty learning community this coming academic year. Faculty work independently and collaboratively throughout the year. There are four lunch meetings. This is a great opportunity to interact with colleagues from around the College and from different disciplines.

One faculty learning community will concentrate on best practices for teaching and learning for STEM faculty. The other faculty learning community will focus on best practices for integrating information literacy into our teaching and learning.

All NOVA faculty are welcome to apply online at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=4GiB6rR90VQ_2fYcVoiEl8Cg_3d_3d. The deadline for applications is April 1.

For more information, consult the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) Web site at http://www.nvcc.edu/CETL or e-mail CETL@nvcc.edu.

Paul Lee Professional Development and Workshop Mini-grants

The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) Paul Lee Professional Development and Workshop Mini-grants for fall 2009 are due by the close of business on April 15.

For more information on these grants go online to http://www.vccs.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=386. Do not wait until the last minute to write your application or obtain the necessary signatures. You must go through the Office of Grant Development prior to submitting the grant application cover page and your online application. Please contract Deborah Rosen at drosen@nvcc.edu or 703-323-3154 for assistance. Also, feel free to contact your Professional Development Committee representative Nan Peck at npeck@nvcc.edu. Peck is a member of the Grants Committee and will be presenting at the New Horizons Conference as well on April 2 for those attending. She will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Please note that the attachment section of the Intercom, which includes important NOVA announcements, can now be accessed via a new link: http://www.nvcc.edu/pip/Mar27-09_attachment.pdf.