Greetings from Dean Comer

The Mission of the College of Arts and Sciences is to pursue academic excellence by providing unique educational experiences through integration of the liberal arts, graduate study, and professional training with international and interdisciplinary emphases.

In this newsletter you will see evidence of faculty, students, and staff meeting this mission every day. From tools that allow innovative geoscience research to poetry that casts a new light on Missoula, we have profiled numerous examples of our excellence.

The Dean's Office has been busy supporting our mission as well. We added personnel in both development and advising. The College considers good academic advising to be a key ingredient in student satisfaction and academic success and we want it to be easily accessible to every student. CAS encourages and supports teaching and research that integrate across the traditional disciplines in collaborative and interdisciplinary ways, both within the college and across the University, and development helps make this possible.

To ensure that we are equipped to continue to meet this standard of excellence, we have also had technology upgrades in the Liberal Arts building. Liberal Arts 104 is now a state-of-the-art language lab equipped with wireless laptop computers and an LCD touch screen. Students can be paired up with headphones and microphones and record conversations for playback. The next upgrade will enable interactive video conferences and lectures.

To receive this newsletter and more, visit our website at www.cas.umt.edu for College news and events. Please like us on Facebook (College of Arts and Sciences, University of Montana) and share your stories of CAS excellence. Thank you for staying connected and for your support of the College.

Cheers,
Chris Comer

Advising News

The CAS Comprehensive Academic Advising Model

One of the strengths that Christopher Comer brought to us when he began his tenure as Dean in January, 2009 is an absolute commitment to the undergraduate student college experience. He believes that student academic achievement and success is enhanced by a good advising and mentoring system. The Dean supports both professional advising and faculty mentoring, noting that students need different kinds of attention at different times in their college careers.

Within several months of Dean Comer’s arrival, the CAS Dean’s Office included a centralized Director of Advising. In this position, Melanie Hoell contributes to the overall College advising efforts by working directly with students, being available to answer faculty and staff advising questions, providing periodic advising workshops and being available to problem-solve student situations involving academic appeals, reinstatements and other petitions.

In autumn 2010, the College creatively reimagined a vacant staff line to develop the first of hopefully several, multiple-department professional advisor positions. Jana O’Connor now serves as the Humanities Advisor, a professional advisor to work with first and second year students in the History and Philosophy Departments and the Liberal Studies Program. In this role, she coordinates advising for her students, provides academic support and guidance, and introduces students to the faculty and courses available in the Humanities.

Advising News cont. page 4
Student Experiences

Luke Anderson – Economics

Luke Anderson started at UM in the fall semester of 2011, and is finishing his Masters of Arts in Economics. Luke’s thesis topic is looking at the factors that affect bicycle commuter accident rates. He is specifically interested in what happens with the rate of bicycle/automobile collisions in cities with higher levels of bicycle commuting. “When I moved from Chicago where less than .5% of the population commutes by bicycle to Missoula where about 6% does, I felt safer when riding around town, but I wanted to see if that was backed up empirically in the data.”

In addition to finishing his thesis, Luke has been working remotely as a data analyst for a marketing firm located in Chicago and as a teacher’s assistant in the Economics department. The work and school balance has kept Luke busy, but he still manages to find time to indulge in the fantastic outdoor opportunities that Missoula has to offer. The proximity of major wilderness areas and mountain towns has made Luke realize what a special place Missoula is.

Luke’s professors have been incredibly supportive and helpful in the thesis process. Doug Dalenberg has offered advice in every step of the process. Helen Naughton, his thesis advisor, has been instrumental in making sure Luke stays on task, and has been extremely helpful in organizing and planning the literature review. “Luke is a person of great confidence and persistence. Even when external factors force him to abandon his research topic, he keeps his head high and moves into a new project with new fervor. In the process he is learning about different approaches to analyzing economic problems.”

“Luke looks forward to giving back to UM through his love of the outdoors.”

While he currently isn’t sure what he’ll be doing after graduation, Luke definitely wants to stay in Missoula. A job in the outdoor industry would be fantastic, but he’s prepared to keep working as a data analyst until he finds the right opportunity. Luke looks forward to giving back to UM through his love of the outdoors.

“I plan on working with the Friends of the M trail on their trail days on Mt. Sentinel next spring and summer. I will also be volunteering with the Bitteroot Backcountry Cyclists to help clear trails of dead fall in the Bitteroot in the spring, as well as any trail work days that the Forest Service has in the Rattlesnake.”

Lauren Morey - Mathematical Sciences

Lauren Morey was born and raised in Missoula and began her studies at UM in 2009. She entered her college career convinced that she wanted to study mathematics. However, after taking multiple math classes, she realized how much she enjoyed them. Her decision to pursue a degree in math was almost entirely due to the support and encouragement she received from professors like Jennifer Halfpap. “Professor Halfpap was always there to encourage me and give me advice when I needed it. It is so nice to have professors you can count on to always be there for you, pushing you to do the best you can.”

For her senior thesis, Lauren has been working with Professor Mark Kayll researching topics in graph theory. “Lauren Morey is one of those rare students who combine a solid work ethic with an aptitude for their chosen field, in this case mathematics. Any time we see this sort of synergy, exciting things happen. It’s been a delight to work with Lauren on her senior thesis this fall.”

Working with Dr. Kayll has taught Lauren a lot about the process of mathematical research. “I enjoy being in an environment with people who are excited about math and its applications. The problems I encounter get me excited about what I am doing, and I love having the opportunity to learn new material from instructors who are excited about teaching.”

After graduation Lauren plans to go to graduate school to study mathematics; she is thankful for the professors who have made an effort to equip her with the skills necessary to succeed in the field. “The more I have observed my professors and the work they do, the greater is my desire to make mathematics my life’s work. I am aware that there is a lot that I don’t know, but that is what makes this subject so much fun. I want to commit myself to an area in which I will constantly be learning.”

“I hope that someday I will be able to impact the lives of others the way the professors here have impacted mine.”

She plans on giving back to the University by continuing to tutor, and also hopes to be an alumna of the University of Montana who succeeds in the field of mathematics. “When coming into the University as a freshman, I had no idea that I would be getting the chance to interact and form relationships with professors who would change my life. It is without question that I would not be where I am today without them. I hope that someday I will be able to impact the lives of others the way the professors here have impacted mine.”
Brandon Stewart – Psychology

Brandon Stewart started at UM in the autumn semester of 2008. He is finishing his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Anthropology and will graduate with University Scholar distinction. As a student, Brandon has garnered either Dean's List or 4.0 GPA List honors for every semester he has spent here. Over the course of his studies he has been inducted into five honor societies, including Alpha Lambda Delta, Golden Key, Psi Chi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Mortar Board. In addition, he has been the recipient of various scholarships, including the Vaughn Scholarship, Washington Foundation Scholarship, Kain/McKay Scholarship, and a research grant from the Davidson Honors College, where he is a student member.

Brandon has been doing undergraduate research for almost three years. He has been a primary investigator in multiple research projects which he presented at the UM Conference on Undergraduate Research in 2011 and 2012. Bryan Cochran has worked closely with Brandon in his lab for over two years on a study investigating the benefits of attending a school with a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students. “One of the true benefits of being on faculty at UM is the opportunity to work with exceptional students like Brandon. Brandon has been a key part of this study, led by my graduate student Nicholas Heck, at all phases—study design, data collection, analysis, and write-up. The study adds to the growing body of literature demonstrating the positive impact of GSAs on LGBT students’ mental health, school experiences, and substance use.”

Brandon attributes his successes as a student in large part to the support he has received from professors and faculty in the psychology department. “My mentors, Bryan Cochran and Nick Heck, have helped me in every step of my undergraduate studies. Not only have they immersed me in the research process, but they have helped me by being advisors for my classes, writing letters of recommendation, answering my pestering questions about the graduate school application process, and even by giving me the opportunity to be a co-author on a manuscript under review for publication.

“I consider it a great opportunity and privilege to work with [my mentors], I could not have gotten this far without them”.

After graduation, Brandon is planning to apply to graduate school in either clinical psychology or neuropsychology, to eventually attain a Ph.D. Brandon would like to give back to the University by creating a graduate school seminar that meets regularly to help students early on with the graduate school application process. “There were some things I wish I had known earlier about applying to graduate school that would have helped me greatly. By providing others with that information, they can be more prepared and confident that they will get where they want to go.” Brandon would also like to volunteer his time through tutoring psychology for students in need of assistance.

CAS Picture Trivia

Guess where this picture was taken. Answer on Page 5.

Student Newsbrief

Student groups are also very active on and off campus, from the ROTC students who recently participated in field training at Fort Harrison near Helena to the Computer Science students who hosted their first ever “hack-a-thon,” tackling challenges deemed both simple and complex to the Public Anthropology Award Winners in Professor Kerr's ANTY 101 course. We applaud the many accomplishments of our students!

To help support student experiences like these please visit www.cas.umt.edu and note CAS Student Experiences in your gift.
Jana joins several other professional advisors in the College: Kerry Bright in the Division of Biological Sciences; Maria Mangold in the English Department; and Salena Hill in Native American Studies. As funding becomes available, the Dean envisions several more multiple-department professional advisors for departments in the social sciences. The combination of professional advisors helping new students navigate the scheduling and registration system and faculty mentoring students as they flesh out their major completion and career goals is win-win for the College's undergraduate students.

Pre-Med Advising a Success

The Pre-Medical Program has recently been restructured into an outstanding model for student success. One of the key components of this restructure is advising; students receive both an academic advisor as well as a Pre-Med advisor. The success of the program is evidenced by a comparison of student data between 2008 and 2012 (before and after restructuring). In 2008, only 35% of UM Pre-Med student applicants who received advising were admitted to medical school. In 2012, that number increased to 68%, well above the national average of 45%.

The program's Director, Dr. Diana Lurie (College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences), the many Pre-Med advisors in all Colleges across campus, and of course the students deserve credit for the phenomenal success of this program. The University of Montana is clearly an outstanding regional leader in preparing undergraduate students for admission into medical school.

CHECK IT OUT!!

THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES HAS A NEW AREAS OF INTEREST WEBPAGE.

http://cas.umt.edu/casweb/areasofinterest/

Featured Alumnus Jim Murray

Jim Murray, UM class of '76 and now a partner at Dickstein Shapiro in Washington, D.C., is a nationally-recognized trial lawyer with more than 25 years of courtroom experience. His work in high-profile and exceptionally challenging cases across the country has earned him consistent praise from clients and opposing counsel alike. His trial experience has ranged from environmental contribution cases to bank fraud, trademark infringement, securities fraud, and professional liability.

Beyond his professional experience and success, Jim conscientiously gives back to the University of Montana and currently serves on the advisory board for the College of Arts and Sciences. He considers himself fortunate to have had a very rewarding and diverse higher education. Jim's educational career began with his four years of study at UM as a major in Philosophy. As a UM Rhodes scholar, he then spent three years at Oxford University, earning two law degrees mostly by one-on-one tutoring instruction. He completed his formal education with two years of advanced standing at Harvard Law School.

Jim had the opportunity to work with some of the most acclaimed thinkers and academics in their field at both Oxford and Harvard Law and he indicates "All of these were wonderful experiences in their own way." But, as Jim reflects about all his rich academic and career experiences, he keeps turning his attention back to his time spent at the University of Montana. "One thing, looking back, is very clear to me. Far and away the best teachers I ever had were at the University of Montana. From them I learned to succeed at places like Oxford and Harvard and in the practice of law."

Jim reports that his professors here at UM showed a strong dedication to students and old-fashioned hard work. They sought and nurtured excellence in their students. Jim recalls, "On more than one occasion I had the uneasy feeling that the professor had spent almost as much time reading and commenting on my papers as I did writing them. They showed a genuine enthusiasm about the topic and informed not just by quality but by excitement, intentionally treating the lecture or material as new in their own minds – such that an excitement would necessarily infect the student."

Jim still holds on to material reminders of his valued UM professors. "We had a family house fire in the late 1970's that took many of my UM materials. However, I had carried with me to Oxford, and now have on my office bookshelf, a compilation of numerous papers I had written at the University of Montana. (I had kept them) not for my work, but for the insightful, time-consuming and often entertaining comments of professors."

Jim's story, like other UM graduate's, is filled with remembrance of the quality of his education here and the valuable time spent with professors. "All (professors) were very different, with few shared personality traits, except these: hard work, dedication to students and a sincere love of teaching."

[Some of Jim's professors include Thomas Huff and Dick Walton (still teaching Philosophy at UM), Harry Fritz (still teaching History at UM) and Jules Karlin, Cythina Shuster, and Walter King.]
Don Molloy

Don Molloy served as one of five U.S. District Court judges in Montana from 1996 to 2011, when he assumed senior status. In 2001, he became chief judge for the District of Montana. Judge Molloy is credited with many important decisions and is widely respected in legal circles. As a federal judge, he presided over some of the most closely watched cases in state history. He punctuated his illustrious career with a slew of famous decisions during his final year on the bench, including his ruling that Yellowstone grizzly bears should not be taken off the endangered species list and his finding that the federal government violated the Endangered Species Act when it used the Wyoming state line to determine which wolves are endangered and which are not. In addition to his dedication to the law, Judge Molloy is committed to educating the next generation of judicial leaders. He is the founder of the Judicial Institute with the Federal Court—a three-day intensive training session that gives Montana high school government teachers hands-on exposure to the judicial branch. At UM, he has served on the President's Advisory Council and the Law School Board of Visitors. For more than 10 years, he has volunteered his time to co-teach the Philosophy of Law course at the UM School of Law. Prior to his career as a federal judge, he was a partner in a highly successful law firm as a civil litigator in Billings for more than 20 years. In 1993, he was named Montana Trial Lawyer of the Year by the Montana Trial Lawyers Association. While majoring in Political Science as an undergraduate, Judge Molloy was a running back on the Grizzly Football team. Following graduation, and before law school, he served in the United States Navy in Fighter Squadron 32 as a Naval Flight Officer, and was deployed on board the USS John F. Kennedy (CV-67).

Joe Valacich

Joe Valacich is an Eller Professor of management information systems at the University of Arizona. He previously was a distinguished professor in the MIS department at Washington State University, and he has held visiting faculty appointments at universities throughout Europe and Asia. He built a world-class MIS program at WSU that currently is ranked as one of the top 20 research programs in the world. Mr. Valacich is a leader in his academic discipline, chairing international efforts on model curriculum design and accreditation standards. He has led executive development programs for several large companies, including AT&T, Boeing, Dow Chemical, Electronic Data Systems, Exxon, FedEx, General Motors, Microsoft and Xerox. His work has earned him numerous honors along the way, including recognition as one of the top 20 information systems researchers in the world. As a researcher, his primary interests include technology-mediated collaboration, human-computer interaction, cyber security, deception detection and mobile technologies. His scholarly work has had a tremendous effect not only on the field of information systems, but also on a number of other disciplines, including computer science, cognitive and social psychology, marketing and management. A prolific writer and scholar with more than 200 conference and journal articles, he currently is a senior editor at MIS Quarterly. He also has coauthored several leading textbooks, including Information Systems Today: Managing in the Digital World and Modern Systems Analysis and Design.

CAS PICTURE TRIVIA

Rising to 11,166’, Lone Peak is one of eight 11,000 feet and higher summits in Montana’s second highest mountain range, the Madison Range of southwestern Montana.

Lee Metcalf Wilderness that makes up much of the Madison Range. The Madison segment stretches for 60 miles south of the mountain and the Spanish Peaks portion runs north for 20 miles.

This beautiful pinnacle is best known as the site of one of North America’s finest resorts, Big Sky Montana, often termed the “Biggest Skiing in America.”
The University of Montana is fortunate to have many scientists who have published, some multiple times, in these two important journals as well as many others who have published in discipline-specific journals. A sampling of recent articles from Science and Nature is included below; UM faculty authors appear in bold type. The topics of these articles span a tremendous range, from the detailed mechanisms of human diseases, to the process of how glaciers store and release meltwater, to what bird alarm calls can tell us, to genetic evidence that Neandertals and ancient humans interbred. Interested readers can read more about these articles by viewing our on-line newsletter which contains links to each.

**Biological Sciences**

**Re-Wilding North America** by J. Donlan, H. W. Greene, J. Berger, et. al. Nature 2005. The authors suggest the radical idea that 21st-century conservation efforts in North America not stop at preserving the species present when Columbus arrived, but should turn the clock back 13,000 years to a time when the Midwestern plains rivaled Africa in the diversity of its large animals.

**Soil Biota and Exotic Plant Invasion** by R. M. Callaway, G. C. Thelen, A. Rodriguez, W. E. Holben. Nature 2005. Why are some plant species well-behaved members of their communities at home, but become dominant weeds in new locales? This team of UM authors argues that the answer may often lie in how these plants interact with soil microbes in the two situations.

**A Mechanism of Extreme Growth and Reliable Signaling in Sexually Selected Ornamentals and Weapons** by D. J. Emlen et. al. Science 2012. Males in many species grow large and expensive structures (horns, antlers, complex feather displays) to impress females and intimidate rivals. What limits the size of these structures? Dr. Emlen provides a novel answer.

**Centromere–Associated Female Meiotic Drive Entails Male Fitness Costs in Monkeyflowers** by L. Fishman and A. Saunders. Science 2008. Dr. Fishman provides a real-life example of a ‘selfish gene’ and explains both why it persists and why it does not drive other gene variants extinct.

**A Draft Sequence of the Neandertal Genome** by R. E. Green et. al, including J.M. Good. Science 2010. Newly-revealed genetic material from Neandertals suggests both how humans diverged from them and how much the two species interbred before Neandertals went extinct.


**Sequential Interactions with Sec23 Control the Direction of Vesicle Traffic** by C. Lord et. al. including J. Hay. Nature 2011. Vesicles inside cells package and transport many biologically important molecules, including the transmitters that enable all animal behavior. The authors reveal how particular chemicals help to guide vesicles to their destinations.

**Transferrin Receptor 1 Is a Cellular Receptor for New World Haemorrhagic Fever Arenaviruses** by S. Radoshitzky et. al. including J. H. Nunberg. Nature 2007. Dr. Nunberg and colleagues report on exactly how several species of New World viruses enter human cells, offering an avenue for developing drug therapies.

**A Virus Reveals Population Structure and Recent Demographic History of Its Carnivore Host** by R. Biek, A. J. Drummond, M. Poss. Science 2006. Dr. Poss and colleagues find that genetic variation in the wild cat analogue of HIV reveals some unexpected features about puma populations, including a history of recent extinctions.

**Introduced Predators Transform Subarctic Islands from Grassland to Tundra** by D. A. Croll, J. L. Maron, J. A. Estes, E. M. Danner, G. V. Byrd Science 2005. Dr. Maron and colleagues document and explain the remarkable change in an entire community of plants and animals caused by the introduction of one predator species (arctic fox).


**Geosciences**


**Physics**

The poetry of Spanish professor Eduardo Chirinos has become widely available in English over the last three years. English readers owe a debt of gratitude to the outstanding translations of three collections of UM’s internationally acclaimed native Peruvian poet: 

- Reasons for Writing Poetry,
- Written in Missoula
- The Smoke of Distant Fires.

One of the newly translated collections, Written in Missoula, which appeared in Spanish in 2003, describes Chirinos’ experiences after moving to Montana with his wife in 2000. In the interview that serves as prologue to the English edition, Chirinos explains: “[For us] Missoula was the film A River Runs Through It that we watched in Lima, never imagining we would someday call its rural landscape our own.”

When the book was first published in Spain, many readers believed that Missoula was a place invented by Chirinos in the vein of Gabriel García Márquez’s Macondo. In Montana, the reaction has been the opposite, since people are invited to see familiar places with new eyes.

A specialist in Latin American Literature, Modernism, Avant-Garde, and Spanish and Latin American Contemporary Poetry, Professor Chirinos has authored sixteen poetry collections, as well as works of literary criticism, children’s books and numerous essays. His works include El equilibrista de Bayard Street (1998), Breve historia de la música (2001), Mientras el lobo está (2009), and Escrito en Missoula (2003). These collections have made him well known in the Spanish-speaking world, earning him the prestigious Premio de poesía americana in 2001 and Premio Generación del 27 in 2009.

The oldest of five siblings growing up in Lima in a house with no books, Chirinos has said: “Poetry is a fate that one either accepts or does not.” He wrote his first poems at the age of 17 and three years later published his first collection Cuadernos de Horacio Morell.

 Asked if he ever writes in English, Chirinos answers: “for me the world’s music is in Spanish. As any student of a foreign language in the US knows, other languages are not ‘English with a different set of words’. To learn a foreign language means to learn to think and interpret reality in a different way, to change the way your brain functions. I am happy to say that my translator does an excellent job in translating my poetry into English.” An early reviewer of Reasons for Writing Poetry seconds this appraisal: “The translated anthology reads as if it were originally written in contemporary American English, but it does not resemble most contemporary American poetry at all. It is distinctly modern, but clearly from elsewhere. This is quite a feat for the translator, and, in our view, speaks well for the poet.”

At UM, Professor Chirinos’ classes range from intermediate Spanish to advanced seminars on Spanish and Latin American poetry. His language classes are known for his sense of humor and use of cartoons to illustrate Spanish concepts and structures. In upper-division classes, Chirinos leads students into the internal workings of poetic language. Students speak glowingly of their study with the poet/professor and the rewards of accepting his invitation to explore.

Two works of Chirinos’ academic criticism, Nueva Miscelánea Antártica and Abrir en prosa, are slated to appear in 2013. He is currently at work on two poetry collections; Seven Visions explores the relationship between the poetic gaze and fine arts, whereas Thirty-one Biology Lessons engages in dialogue with the discourse of biology.

Look for Professor Chirinos’ poetry at a bookstore near you!
- Written in Missoula (Missoula: UP of Montana, 2011)
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We are happy to provide you with information about our giving programs including the Dean's Opportunity Fund, annual gifts, the President's Club, setting up a scholarship, endowments, or including the College of Arts and Sciences in your will or estate plans.

Coming to Campus?
The College and The University of Montana have various events, lectures, programs and classes going on all the time.
Please contact us if you would like to visit the College, get a tour of the new buildings on campus,
attend a class, meet the Dean, or chat about your time here.