

October/November 2007						
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# INSIDE VT WOOD

## Reminder...

Remember to submit department news items by Friday 3 p.m. of each week to Will Pfeil at [wpfeil@vt.edu](mailto:wpfeil@vt.edu) for inclusion in Inside VT WOOD each Monday morning. All past issues of Inside VT Wood reside on our department website under the publications link.

## News From Paul Winistorfer

- Dr. David Damery, Assoc. Professor and Director of Building Materials and Wood Technology at the University of Massachusetts is visiting the department this week (Monday-Wednesday). If you would like to schedule time with Dr. Damery please let me know. His seminar is schedule for Wednesday at 2:30 pm in the Brooks classroom.
- With the help of Suzie Leslie in the Academic Affairs office, our two department minors (Wood and Packaging Science) have been added to the check sheet for the Agricultural Sciences major (<http://www.aee.vt.edu/Undergraduate/agsciences.htm>). Thanks Suzie for your help in bringing additional exposure to our minors on the campus.
- November 7 the Graduate Seminar class will be hosted in the Kitchen Design Center [http://www.ahrm.vt.edu/Dept/center\\_intro.html](http://www.ahrm.vt.edu/Dept/center_intro.html) on campus. Please let me know if you would like to join the group for this tour as we look at additional interactions for our department on campus. I will need to turn in a count of those attending before we visit the Center. The Center is in the department of Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management and is located in Wallace Hall.  
[http://www.ahrm.vt.edu/Dept/center\\_intro.html](http://www.ahrm.vt.edu/Dept/center_intro.html)
- Our discussion with the departments of Architecture, Building Construction, Interior Design, Industrial Design and Art about creating a 'Wood Design Initiative' on the Virginia Tech campus continue to gain momentum. A recent meeting of these partners confirms there is interest in moving this discussion and future planning forward.

## Professor and Department Head, Department of Forestry – Position Available

The position of Professor and Department Head of the Department of Forestry is available and the search has begun. Please see the web resource site established for this important leadership search in our college <http://www.forestry.vt.edu/searchresources>

## Department Curriculum Committee Meets

The department curriculum committee meets Tuesday, October 30. Please bring any curriculum issues to the attention of the committee, Drs. Bond (chair), Bush, and Frazier.

## **Training, Testing and Certifying Your Manufacturing Employees Webinar Broadcast**

The Woodworking Machinery Industry Association (WMIA) is hosting a webinar on November 6 titled "Training, Testing and Certifying Your Manufacturing Employees". The program speaker is Chris Hallam of American Woodmark Corporation. Paul Winistorfer will moderate the broadcast. The broadcast is free, but you must register. You can register at <http://www.iiian.ibeam.com/events/watt001/23803/>

## **Alum Whitney Laruffa Visits Department**

Whitney Laruffa (BS 2000) visited campus this week to enjoy the VT-BC football game. Whitney is a lumber trader for North Pacific in Portland, Oregon and can be reached at [wlaruffa@northpacific.com](mailto:wlaruffa@northpacific.com). Whitney has been honing his fishing skills since living in the Northwest and enjoys salmon, tuna, halibut and ling cod fishing. Dr. Tom Hammett visited with Whitney when he stopped by the office on Friday afternoon.





A delegation from Covington, Clifton Forge, Alleghany County, Roanoke and Abington visited our department last week to learn of programming in the department, the Sloan Forest Industries Center and

the Center for Unit Load Design. Laura Lee, Deputy Chief of Staff for Congressman Rick Boucher arranged the tour. The group was exploring business incubators and research centers for



possible adoption of programming in the Covington area. Paul Winistorfer, Earl Kline, Ralph Rupert and Bob Smith hosted the group and provided tours of the Brooks Center.





**Graduate Seminar Announcement**  
**Wednesday October 31, 2007**  
**2:30 – 3:20 pm Brooks Classroom**



***Dr. David Damery***

Department of Natural Resources Conservation  
 University of Massachusetts, Amherst

***“Wood Science Education in a Changing World”***

**ABSTRACT**

Dr. Damery will discuss the historical and current day need for education in the area of building materials and wood technology as it relates to the economy of Massachusetts. A case study of the Building Materials and Wood Technology (BMATWT) Program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst will be given. The history of the program and economic and other forces affecting curriculum change are presented. The potential for this approach to be used in expanding the educational and training offerings for forest products and related industries will be discussed. A customer-focused approach to curriculum development focusing on students as customers and members of the business community as clients is described. The development of an industry advisory board, student recruitment initiatives, industry relations and interdisciplinary teaching and research are outlined. A core understanding of wood science, building technology, business, and emerging technologies such as engineered wood products contribute to graduate success in the BMATWT and other programs. Historic challenges of student recruitment and revenue generation will continue to be issues of importance in the future, but the role of construction in the US economy presents a continuing opportunity.

**BIOSKETCH**

Dave Damery received the BS from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1980), and the MS in Industrial Administration from Carnegie Mellon University (1988) and PhD in Resource Economics from the University of Massachusetts (2006). His dissertation covered factors influencing forest management planning by private forest landowners. He has worked in engineering, management, business consulting, secondary manufacturing and retailing of lumber and building materials. He was hired as a lecturer in the Univ. of Massachusetts, Building Materials and Wood Technology program in 1997. Dr. Damery is currently Assoc. Professor and Director of the Building Materials and Wood Technology program. He teaches and conducts research in forest products and building materials management, marketing and economics. He serves as Regional Board member, Northeast Region, for the Forest Products Society.

## General Announcements

### Faculty Leadership Development Academy (FLDA) Fall seminar: Ethics and Responsible Conduct of Research

By Karen DePauw (kpdepauw@vt.edu), Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School

The first FLDA '07 seminar, Ethics and Responsible Conduct of Research, is scheduled for November 6 4:00-5:30 in the room F of the Graduate Life Center. The panelists include Tom Inzana (Office of Research), Doris Zallen (STS), and Karen DePauw (Graduate School). The panel will be facilitated by Anne McNabb. This will be a joint session for graduate students and faculty. Please join us in a discussion of a timely and important topic facing research universities.

### Oak Ridge National Lab (ORNL) and Oak Ridge Associated Universities ORAU

By Terry Herdman (terry.herdman@vt.edu), VT Liaison for ORNL, 231-7667

#### Virginia Tech presentation:

John C. Nemeth, Ph.D.

Vice President

Oak Ridge Associated Universities

Presentation: 9-10 am Monday 19 November

Room to be announced later

Individual or group meetings available 11:10am - 2pm

John Nemeth, Vice president, Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU), will visit Virginia Tech on 19 November. He will provide an overview of the opportunities for Virginia Tech to interact with Oak Ridge National Lab., Oak Ridge Center for Advance Studies and Oak Ridge Associated Universities on joint research projects, fellowships for students, internships, joint faculty appointments, etc. John will make a presentation 9-10am, Monday 19 November. I will also schedule one on one or group meetings with him during the time period 11:10- 2 pm (later if necessary).

#### Ralph E. Powe Junior Faculty Enhancement Awards:

The Ralph E. Powe Junior Faculty Enhancement Awards provide seed money for research by junior faculty at Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU) member institutions. These awards are intended to enrich the research and professional growth of young faculty and result in new funding opportunities. In 2007, ORAU received 93 applications and awarded 30 grants.

For additional information on the award, including instructions for 2008 application see

<https://www.ornl.gov/consortium/programs/powe/powe-awards.htm>

ORAU Connect:

Ann Farler

Partnership Development Office

Oak Ridge Associated Universities

(865) 576-1898

(865) 576-3816

[ann.farler@ornl.gov](mailto:ann.farler@ornl.gov)

#### Visiting Industrial Scholars Program:

The Visiting Industrial Scholar Program helps support visits by senior industrial scientists to ORAU member institutions. The primary goal of the program is to foster interactions between faculty and students at member institutions and industrial scientists. The form of the interaction is left to the individual institution: seminars,

lectures, cooperative project development, etc. Funding is provided exclusively from non-federal monies by ORAU and as such is limited only by the terms of the agreement between ORAU and the recipient.

For additional information on the program, including instructions for on line application see <https://www.orau.org/consortium/programs/visp.htm>

ORAU contact:

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**The Energy Idea to Product® (I2P®) Competition: Applications are due February 7, 2008.**

<http://www.globalventurechallenge.com>

ORNL has committed to host another student business plan competition in April 2008 to follow on the success of the Nano Nexus 2007 event. The title of the 2008 event is “Global Venture Challenge,” and it will be held April 2 - 4, 2008, at ORNL. The new website will be launched at the end within the next week or so. I will send that to you, but wished to give you the early heads up, so your faculty and students can be prepared to apply and compete.

The competition will once again use the “idea to product competition” format, but this year the focus will be on energy applications. At the end of this note is a list of ideas that would qualify for the competition.

The 2008 program has been expanded to provide an opportunity for participating students to learn more about ORNL and spend time with key people in their particular areas of research and business. Students will also have more time to interact with the venture capitalists and entrepreneurs in attendance. ORNL management will be inviting leaders at key energy companies to participate as judges at the competition, so students will be able to network with potential employers in the energy industry.

The Energy Applications ideas that would qualify for the competition include:

- New types of fuels
- Nuclear energy
- Fuel processing or production improvements
- Materials innovations (e.g., new nanocatalyst for fuel cells, lighter materials)
- Sensors for monitoring systems
- Power supplies
- Lighting innovations
- Building products designed to increase energy savings
- Energy control and reporting systems
- Energy generation sources (e.g., photovoltaics, fuel cells, water, wind, gas turbines, etc.)
- Energy efficiency improvements or conservation technology (including recycling breakthroughs)
- Distributed energy load balancing (hardware, software and services)
- Emission controls
- Energy storage
- Energy transmission
- Energy distribution
- Energy services

## Forest Landowners Association Members Participate in Biomass Forum

The Georgia State Alliance of 25x'25, along with the 25x'25 National Steering Committee, hosted a roundtable forum in Atlanta, Georgia focused on the opportunities, challenges, and impacts associated with the use of forest and agricultural woody biomass in the production of energy. Atlanta was an opportune location for the forum because the South, with 214 million acres of forest land, has a particularly strong role to play in providing biomass to meet the nation's energy needs. The region provides 60% of the nation's and 18% of the world's timber supply.

The half-day session brought Georgia's state forestry and agriculture officials, researchers from the university setting and private enterprise, and the state congressional sponsors of the Georgia House and Senate 25x'25 resolutions together with 25x'25 national leaders. The group discussed the status of the state's and the southern region's woody biomass resources, learned about new and developing technologies, and identified challenges to achieving success.

Prior to the forum, Forest Landowners Association (FLA) President Phil Hardin and Governmental Affairs Chairman Blake Sullivan hosted a meeting of FLA members and strategic partners to discuss landowner priorities associated with the advancement of wood biomass markets and initiatives. In attendance were Forest Investment Associates, Arborgen, Cellfor, Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association, 25x'25 Steering Committee Member and FLA Past President Harry Haney, and FLA Executive Vice President Scott Jones.

FLA is proud to report that many of our priority issues for the development of bioenergy markets for forest products were included in the summary of priority issues identified during this forum.

Roundtable participants identified the following issues as needs to be further addressed in order to achieve success:

- Maintain flexibility in markets so that landowners can make the best decisions regarding land utilization
- Express the economic positioning and viability of bioenergy feedstocks; quantify the real economic values
- Solve the low-value feedstock collection issue
- Provide training on new conversion technologies/processes to maintain a reliable human work force
- Free markets vs. assured markets; (consumer choice vs. mandates); solve challenges associated with creating more market access for bioenergy
- Pursue regional dialogue among stakeholders, universities, state leaders, etc.; more collaboration needed among state and regional research institutions; need for consistent policies state-by-state
- Educate elected leaders and lending institutions on bioenergy values, attributes, and sustainability
- Address public's misconceptions of timber harvests and biomass utilization for bioenergy and other products
- Slow urban sprawl to keep productive lands in agricultural and forestry production
- Provide landowner education on short rotation biomass management and other land management techniques to sustainably maximize feedstock production
- Fair land taxation (agricultural land vs. forest land vs. urban development) to encourage feedstock production

Forest Landowners Association will continue to work with and support all efforts to further this emerging market for private forest landowners. At this meeting, FLA passed out Wood for Energy Position Briefing brochures. If you would like copies of this brochure to distribute, please contact Forest Landowners Association at (800) 325-2954 or [info@forestlandowners.com](mailto:info@forestlandowners.com). For our position statement and more information on biomass, please visit our website at <http://www.forestlandowners.com>.

## October Monthly Memo from the Graduate School

### Announcements & Deadlines:

The Graduate Student Services Office (GSSO) in the National Capital Region encourages faculty staff and students to place suggestions in the drop box outside the room 200 at the Northern Virginia Center or to send an email to the [gssso@nvc.vt.edu](mailto:gssso@nvc.vt.edu).

The Graduate Student Services Office in the National Capital Region will hold a monthly open house for current graduate students on the last Thursday of the month between the hours of 6:00-7:00 at the Northern Virginia Center. For more information, please contact 703-538-8327 or email us at [gssso@nvc.vt.edu](mailto:gssso@nvc.vt.edu).

### **Call for Nominations for 2007-08 Graduate Student Awards**

The Graduate School is requesting nominations for the following graduate student awards:

- Outstanding Dissertation in (1) sciences and engineering (2) social sciences
- Graduate Student Service Excellence
- Graduate Student Teaching Excellence
- Graduate Man and Woman of the Year
- Outstanding Graduate Student by college at the (1) master's and (2) doctoral level

Eligibility and nomination requirements vary for each award; please see attached table for details. Nominations must be submitted by February 1, 2008, unless otherwise stated. Award winners will be notified by letter. All awards include a monetary prize and a plaque or certificate. Winners and their advisors will be recognized at the awards banquet during Graduate Education Week in March 2008.

### **Change to Requirement to Pay Tuition for Students on Assistantship**

Due to the fact that graduate tuition increased at a greater rate than stipends, it is necessary to update the tuition payment requirement. Accordingly, for students who are paid at Step 20 or below, departments must pay an in-state tuition, academic fee and engineering fee (if applicable) scholarship in an amount that is at least proportional to the assistantship appointment. Students who are paid at Step 21 or above may need to pay their tuition from their assistantship stipends. Departments are asked to apply these new rates for contracts issued for all future appointments. Departments must specify on the assistantship agreement whether or not tuition will be paid by the department or the student. Please contact Monika Gibson in the Graduate School ([gibsonm@vt.edu](mailto:gibsonm@vt.edu)) if you have any questions or concerns about this change.

### **New Graduate School Forms**

On November 1, 2007, the Graduate School will release a new suite of forms. These forms will replace any older versions previously used by the Graduate School or revised by departments for their own personal use. While we understand that there will be older forms in the pipeline for a while, no old forms will be accepted as of January 14, 2008 which is the beginning of the spring 2008 semester. If you have websites that direct students to our forms, please make sure that you check to ensure that the URL link is still accessible. In addition, no departmental modifications will be allowed or accepted to the new version forms.

### **Application submission and decision deadlines**

In an effort to help streamline the processes for departments, the Graduate School is establishing specific deadlines by which students can apply and when departments must make a final determination on an applicant. For spring 2008, the online application will no longer be available after December 15, 2007. Departments must make final decisions on all their applicants by Friday, December 28, 2007. Term changes will be accepted for students who do not complete their application packets within established departmental deadlines. Please contact the Graduate School directly if you would like to recommend a term change for application consideration.

### **Nominations for Cunningham Doctoral Scholars**

As an integral part of our recruitment efforts to attract outstanding doctoral students to Virginia Tech, I am pleased to open the competition for the 2007 Cunningham Doctoral Scholars Program. Please review the guidelines and timelines available on the Graduate School web site, [http://www.grads.vt.edu/financial/for\\_departments/gs\\_funding.html](http://www.grads.vt.edu/financial/for_departments/gs_funding.html)



## **Clare Boothe Luce Fellowship:**

### **Graduate Catalog**

Graduate Course Listings

As a first step in rolling out the new Graduate Catalog you can now find an improved version of the graduate course listings. <http://www.grads.vt.edu/academics/programs>

### **Graduate Catalog**

College Deans will receive a note from the Graduate School next week with information on how we will begin populating information for each Graduate Program. Look for more information within your College as Deans delegate update abilities. As the updates begin we will offer some technical information sessions for those that may have difficulties adding content.

### **Enrollments**

Graduate enrollments for fall 2007 reached an all time high of 6,496 university-wide. This includes full-time and part time enrollments in Blacksburg, extended campuses, and beyond. In fall 2007 the university also achieved its goal of getting 900 new PhD students, three years ahead of the targeted year, 2010. Today Doctoral students comprise 42% of graduate enrollments, compared to 30% in fall 1998, and 28% in fall 2002.

### **Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD) – Call for Proposals**

The Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD) provides the overview of our academic plans for graduate education at Virginia Tech. The IPGD is updated annually and in this regard, I've included the call for proposals below.

### **CGS&P activities**

Mr. John Kane's appointment as the 2007-2008 Chief Justice of the Graduate Honor System was ratified by the commission on September 19, 2007.

At the October 3rd meeting, the Graduate Student Assembly announced that there is a new, updated website for the GSA. Information and deadlines on the Travel Fund (TFP) and Graduate Research and Development (GRDP) programs that provide money for graduate students to travel to conference and conduct research can be found on the website.

This past year the GSA, working with the commission, has acquired free statistical consulting for graduate students through the Statistics Department effective January 2008.

## **Policies & Procedures Reminders/Updates**

**Enrollment of graduate students working on their thesis/dissertation:** graduate students who have been out of residence and return to work with their Advisor during their thesis/dissertation writing should be enrolled for a minimum of 3 credits of research (this presumes that all other coursework on the student's Plan of Study has been completed). Faculty advisors and committee members should not agree to work with students who are not enrolled, i.e., a student who wishes to return to defend a thesis/dissertation needs to have a period of research enrollment for working with his/her advisor and committee prior to the defense.

**Titles of departmental graduate personnel:** The Graduate School has adopted the following terminology on our new forms and in the Policies and Procedures document. Graduate Program Director refers to the designated faculty member in the department who plays an academic supervisory role in directing the graduate program. If the Department Head wishes, the Graduate Program Director may sign graduate forms on behalf of the Head. Graduate Coordinator refers to the staff member in the department who plays a managerial role in the handling of the graduate program. We are requesting that the Graduate Coordinator receive copies of all official paperwork for students prior to them being sent to the Graduate School. This should insure that if anything is lost in transition between units, that a copy of such paperwork is available.

**Students defending before they are ready:** We need the help of Graduate Program Directors to insure that students aren't being allowed to defend before they are ready to submit an ETD within two weeks following the defense. In the future, all members of a student's Advisory Committee will be required to sign the request form for scheduling a defense. Their signature will verify that they have seen the thesis/dissertation and agree that it is ready for defense. This new procedure is necessary because of the number of delays in filing of ETDs, some of which extend to months or years.

**Defending Student Status:** The 1 credit DSS Status was designed for students who had a completed thesis/dissertation ready for defense in one semester but could not arrange to schedule that defense until the beginning of the next semester (typically because of faculty schedules that are beyond the student's control). However, many of the DSS requests that come to the Graduate School are from students who are still working on their thesis/dissertation, so they do not fit within either the intent of the policy or the time at the beginning of the semester for scheduling a defense with only the 1 cr of DSS enrollment. If extenuating circumstances result in the Graduate Program Director and/or the student's Advisor requesting an exception that allows DSS after the usual time, that request and the formal scheduling of the defense must be completed during the designated DSS period.

**Defenses or Preliminary Exams are not valid if they have not been formally scheduled.** For both adherence to policy and for everyone's protection, formal scheduling of these examinations by the Graduate School is required before an examination should be held. Thus, the Advisor should have the examination card in hand before the exam. Examinations held without prior scheduling will need to be rescheduled and conducted a second time.

## **Annual Call for Proposals Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD)**

The Graduate School issues its annual call for new degree proposal for inclusion on the Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD). The current IPGD is comprised of a list of degree programs that are "approved for development" (pre-approved) and a wish list of degrees not yet pre approved. Submissions will be considered for "pre-approval" of degrees to be implemented no later than fall 2011.

We anticipate that colleges will review and select from proposals generated by their academic units. We would like to receive the college-approved proposals by February 1st so that we can finalize the 08-09 update to the IPGD by the end of the spring, 2008 semester.

Please provide the following information (in two pages or less) for degree programs you wish to have considered for inclusion on the plan:

- Need and Demand for the degree
- Target audience
- Faculty resources to be utilized
- Graduate courses (existing and proposed) underpinning the degree
- Conformity with the VT Strategic Plan particularly with regard to research emphasis and interdisciplinary nature
- Source of financial support
- Anticipated implementation date

The proposed degrees currently listed on the wish list will be considered for pre-approval in this review cycle. Please review the current "wish list" and indicate those proposals that should be removed from consideration. The current IPGD is attached.

Please send proposals to Karen P. DePauw in the Graduate School by February 1, 2008.

Karen P. DePauw, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Graduate Studies &  
Dean of the Graduate School  
Graduate School (MC 0325)  
GLC @ Donaldson Brown