

December 2006							1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
31	1	2	3	4	5	6		

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 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.

Festive Alert

The department Christmas luncheon is Wednesday, December 13th this week at the Brooks classroom. Thanks to Angie and others for organizing. Bring some food and cheer. Join us!



News From Paul Winistorfer

- We are preparing a major recruiting mailing targeted at Virginia high schools and all Virginia Community Colleges. Our high school list comes from the report we issued last summer on enrollment fall 2006 at Virginia Tech, with data from the admissions office. All community colleges will receive a package – targeting pre-engineering, technology, business, etc. programs. Amanda Mink and Angie are preparing the mailing. It will contain our new printed program materials that Will Pfeil has finished up; we are awaiting materials from the printer. These new materials will also be distributed to University Studies Advisors.
- We enrolled a new undergraduate student again this week in our program; Jonathan Diamond comes to us from University Studies. We are 1 student shy of 50 undergraduates and climbing! (Two years ago we were at 29 students and falling). We should see some interest from WOOD 1234 taught this semester; and hopefully will make headway all spring semester. We graduate 8 students in May 2007; we graduate our largest senior class in over six years in May 2008 so there is work to do.
- Thanks to Tom Hammett, Bob Bush, Arlice Banks and others for the great job in promoting the department and college last week through the seminars, lectures, class participation, and many other venues by our guest John Perlin, author of “A Forest Journey”. Over 90 people attended the lecture last Wednesday in the Fralin Auditorium.
- I will be visiting with Randy Bush of the Virginia Forest Products Association this week regarding Building Our Future campaign, offering to host an upcoming VFPA meeting in Blacksburg, VFPA support of WoodLINKS and other topics of interest for us.
- A SPECIAL THANKS to Phil Araman for teaching WOOD 1234 this semester. Phil changed the course venue a bit and incorporated many field trips in place of the extensive lab project. Rumor has it Phil wants to teach this again next fall. Offering WOOD 1234 both semesters has clear advantages for us in recruiting. Thanks Phil we appreciate your effort!
- Dan Hindman and the Student Policy and Affairs Committee prepared curriculum materials and successfully moved these through the College committee. Notable is our Wood minor going up through university governance. Once

approved we will have two stand alone minors in the department available to the university community: packaging science and wood. Thanks Dan, Bob Bush and Brian Bond for taking charge with these curriculum issues.

- The survey of Student Impressions of our program are in. We ramped up response rate by offering a VT Wood hat. We had 28 responses for a 62% response rate. Amanda Mink is beginning analysis of survey data and we will report back to you soon.
- We will showcase student Daniel Roethle and his chair nationwide to the nearly 100 WoodLINKS school programs in 18 states as a recruiting strategy. Daniel is a freshman from Rubicon, Wisconsin and was a WoodLINKS student at Hartford High School. We are preparing a professional one page bio on Dan and the chair he designed and made while in the WoodLINKS program at Hartford High School as a way to encourage other WoodLINKS students to consider Virginia Tech for future study. Thanks to Dan for his willingness to participate in our WoodLINKS-Wood Science recruiting poster. Heads up – Dan was selected as the student of the month by Wood Digest Magazine and will be featured in that nationwide publication in January.
- We will begin the process of reassessing our assigned faculty advisors for our undergraduate students. There is interest to move to a system whereby faculty with interests in the degree options would advise those students declaring the option. We would also have a ‘general advisor’ for those students coming into our program and who have not yet declared an option. We are targeting January for this transition, with discussion coming up at our faculty curriculum work day on December 19th.
- Dr. Ken Ball, head of Mechanical Engineering, and I will meet before the holiday to discuss ways to engage the Woodworking Machinery Manufacturers of America (WMMA) in their very strong scholarship program on the VT campus. WMMA likes to do this in association with mechanical engineering programs. Our new WOOD minor might play a role in this. The ME department at VT has 1200 undergraduate students. We have been in discussion with the WMMA Education and Scholarship Committee.



Daniel Roethle's Chair Design

Exciting New Course Offered!

WOOD 2984 – Special Studies: Wood Enterprise Institute Summer I and II, 2007

The Wood Enterprise Institute (WEI) is seeking students who are interested in running and leading a wood products manufacturing business.

WEI introduces an actual wood product “concept-to-market” business project during the Summer Semester 2007. Students will be presented various product options to focus on for the project. Learning experiences include how to design, make, and market a wood product, organize a business to make and sell it, measure and assess key performance areas, and manage the quality of the processes necessary to sustain a profitable and timely business. Sponsoring industry representatives will interact with students throughout the project for business models, technology, and practical advice that would be necessary to sustain a competitive business venture. Various faculty from Engineering, Business, and Architecture as well as manufacturing industry experts will.

WEI is designed for all students in the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products. This study is offered as a 6 credit full summer semester course that can be applied to the students’ restricted electives for their professional emphasis area. There are no prerequisites to enroll in this course.

A group of students will be identified early in the spring semester 2007 to meet regularly to begin planning the “enterprise”. Please contact Dr. Earl Kline (kline@vt.edu) for more information on the Wood Enterprise Institute.



Tom Hammett, Professor in the Department and Coordinator of International Programs for the College discusses incorporating John Perlin's book A Forest Journey: The Story of Wood and Civilization into his course on world forest products with the author and Carol Kinsey, Executive Director of SeedTree, in Stockton Springs, Maine.



John Perlin, visiting author, discusses his book at a book signing following his seminar at the Science Museum of Western Virginia in Roanoke with Brenda Brown Associate Director of the Museum and Bob Bush, Professor in the Department and Associate Dean for the College.

Wood Science and Forest Products student Steve Martin samples the exhibit "A Forest Journey" at the Science Museum of Western Virginia in Roanoke following the Department organized seminar by the author John Perlin.



Wood Science and Forest Products student Steve Haring visits the exhibit following John Perlin's lecture at the Science Museum of Western Virginia in Roanoke. Steve is signed up in the Department's new Packaging Option. Steve took part in the Department's seminar and reception in honor of Mr. Perlin.



Following the College of Natural Resources Seminar "A Forest Journey: The Story of Wood and Civilization" on December 6th, Tom Hammett organized a panel of discussants. They responded to John Perlin (pictured center) and his coverage of the history of wood use through the ages. The panel included (Left to right) Dr. Bill Green (Architecture), Robert Kenney (OIRE), pictured to the left of Mr. Perlin, and Dr. Jim Chamberlain, USDA Forest Service, at the Brooks Lab, and Jim Minnick author and faculty member at Radford University pictured to the right of Mr. Perlin.



Tom Hammett and Paul Winistorfer present best selling author John Perlin with a "VT Wood" hat from the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products, and a mug and pen from the College of Natural Resources in appreciation for his presenting the Fall 2006 College of Natural Resources Seminar. Mr. Perlin's talk attracted a standing room only crowd of over 100 people, many of whom remained for a panel discussion and reception organized by the Department and College. Mr. Perlin also held book signings at the VT Volume Two Bookstore, and at the Science Museum of Western Virginia in Roanoke.

Wood Products Operations Management Class Visits Local Industry



Students in Dr. Kline's Wood Products Operations Management class visited Coffman Stairs in Marion, Virginia to see the application and results of various operations management techniques studied in class. The class final project involved a case study based on continuous improvement techniques utilized in Coffman.

Dan Cumbo, Manufacturing Systems Engineer from Coffman Stairs, shows students in Wood Products Operation Management (WOOD 4624) successful applications of Lean Manufacturing in his company's operations.

Allegheny Kiln Club to Provide \$500 in Scholarship

The Allegheny Kiln Club, which is made up of kiln operators, managers, and support companies of hardwood drying operations (<http://www.woodscience.vt.edu/about/extension/adkc.asp>), voted to provide a \$500.00 scholarship to Keith M. Horn a junior in our department. The scholarship is to be used to financially assist Keith in achieving his goal of earning a Bachelor's Degree in Wood Science and Forest Products. The scholarship was awarded based on academic performance and interest in working in the hardwood lumber manufacturing industry. The scholarship was presented by Stephen Slocket, president of the AKC, in care of Dr. Bond at the Fall meeting held in Fayetteville, West Virginia. This is the second year that the scholarship has been awarded to a Virginia Tech student.

Local Industry Supports Lumber Manufacturing and Drying Class with Tour

All sixteen students taking Dr. Bond's WOOD 3534 Lumber Manufacturing and Drying braved the cold weather this Monday to tour Musser Lumber Sales located in Rural Retreat, VA. Larry Carlton and Dave Anders described the lumber sorting, stacking, and drying operations while giving a walking tour of the facilities. The tour was used to help students see class concepts applied in the industry. Musser Lumber Sales dries large quantities of hard maple and cherry along with smaller quantities of walnut, oak, hickory and soft maple. They also provide planing and sizing services. The weather was in the low 30's with high winds, which helped to explain why students were so interested in the boiler room functions. Also of great interest were the two steaming chambers used to steam walnut lumber. We would like to thank Larry, Dave and all the folks at Musser Lumber Sales for hosting our class!

Dr. Loferski Presented The Safety of Residential Decks

Dr. Joseph Loferski presented a paper at the Southern Forest Products Association annual meeting held at the Homestead Resort in Hot Springs Virginia. The paper title was The Safety of Residential Decks. Loferski presented the results of research he has conducted over the past 6 years to develop engineered connections to eliminate deck collapses and deck guardrail failures. He spoke to 100+ attendees about the issues surrounding deck failures and how to avoid them. He focused on deck to house connections and guardrail post to deck attachments. As a result of the research, the SFPA is producing a new publication incorporating Loferski's research findings as a guide to deck builders. Loferski's results have also been adopted by the Virginia Statewide Building Code, and in October they were adopted by the International Building Code that is used by communities across the USA.

U. Penn Invites Dr. Loferski as Visiting Scientist and Guest Lecturer

Dr. Joseph Loferski was an invited visiting scientist and guest lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, in Philadelphia PA. He participated in a special course on the conservation of wood in historic buildings. He lectured to graduate student classes on wood science topics such as wood properties, wood deterioration and wood species identification in historic buildings. U. Penn has the premier program on historic preservation in the USA.

Dr. Bob Smith Travels to Europe as Fulbright Senior Fellow

Bob Smith will be participating as a Fulbright Senior Fellow at the Salzburg University of Applied Sciences in Salzburg Austria for the month of January 2007. The Fulbright Programs goals include: To increase the participation of leading U.S. scholars and professionals in Fulbright academic exchange and to promote increased connections between U.S. and non-U.S. post-secondary academic institutions. The Fulbright Senior Specialists Program is designed to provide short-term academic opportunities (two to six weeks) for U.S. faculty and professionals.

Bob will be teaching a 4 week course in Strategic Management as it relates to the wood products industry to senior level students at the University. Bob will also be reviewing changes in their curriculum to their program during this period. He will also be visiting the United Nations FAO in Rome, Italy in early February to discuss possible research areas for collaboration.

The Bridges of Brooks



Instructor Bob Wright and students in WOOD 3315 pose for a group photo in the Brooks Wood Engineering Lab on December 1 before testing the design load of their student bridge projects, built as part of the laboratory experience in Wood Mechanics I. Students built their bridges to 'design load', meaning they targeted a load they designed the structures to, and then evaluated how close they came to design load at failure. This was a fun and engaging learning opportunity for this group of students. Who won? Seek them out for the answer. Wood 3316 - Wood Mechanics II is being taught spring semester by Dr. Dan Hindman as the second course in this sequence.

Workshop to Help Managers Improve Operations

Mississippi State, Sloan Foundation Forest Industries Center at Virginia Tech, and WERC cosponsored a workshop for helping managers implement continuous improvement in manufacturing operations. Computer simulation technology is used in this workshop to allow managers and engineers test results of lean transformation within furniture and cabinet manufacturing operations. Dr. Earl Kline is working with Colleagues from Mississippi State University to develop industry case studies utilizing this technology in furniture manufacturing. The workshop was held December 5-6, 2006 at the WERC training facility in Princeton, WV.

Pfeil and Dr. Kline Develop Web-Based Database for WOOD 4154

With database technologies becoming the driving engine behind many industry operations management systems, Will Pfeil has worked with Dr. Earl Kline's WOOD 4154 (Computer Applications in Forest Products) students to develop a web-based lumber inventory management database. Based on students' interest in this database application and the many computer innovations illustrated by the system — the system helped developed by Will — will be integrated into future WOOD 4154 courses as a major teaching component.

General Announcements

Web link to new policy: Student Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programs

I have learned that attachments cannot go to the DDD e-mail list, so Dr. Steven Duke has helped get the word out by putting the policy statement on the faculty page of the Education Abroad web site.

The Faculty page is: <http://www.oired.vt.edu/Education/Faculty/faculty.htm> and the direct URL for the policy is: http://www.oired.vt.edu/Education/Faculty/Policy_Student_Responsibilities.pdf

On 2 November 2006 the University Council on International Affairs, on the recommendation of Internal Audit and the Office of International Research, Education and Development, approved a policy statement on "Student Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programs."

A copy of this policy statement is available at the above web site. The policy governs not only students who participate in overseas programs led by Virginia Tech faculty, but also Virginia Tech students who participate in student exchanges and non-VT programs for credit. It does not affect volunteer programs or internships in which Virginia Tech students voluntarily participate.

Presidential Policy Memorandum 225 requires Virginia Tech faculty who are leading academic programs abroad to gather specific forms and information from students who participate in those programs. A copy of that memo can be found online at <http://www.policies.vt.edu/policymemos/ppm225.pdf>. The new statement on "Student Responsibilities for Education Abroad Programs" requires students to submit a form to the sponsoring department, college or office that has previously not been used: an "Allergy and Dietary Needs" form. Faculty should collect the latter form only after an academic acceptance decision has been made.

If you have questions or concerns about this new policy statement, please contact Steven Duke in Education Abroad/OIRED, at 231-8205 or stduke@vt.edu.

Andrew S. Becker

Chair, University Council for International Affairs Co-Director, Virginia Tech's Spring Semester in Switzerland
Center for European Studies and Architecture

Riva San Vitale, Switzerland (www.oired.vt.edu/cesa)

Associate Chair, Dept of Foreign Langs & Lits (www.fll.vt.edu) (www.fll.vt.edu/Riva)

Associate Professor of Latin, Ancient Greek, & Classical Studies (www.fll.vt.edu/classics/classicshome.html)

The NASA Undergraduate Student Research Program (USRP) is offering undergraduate junior and seniors an opportunity to apply to a 10-week summer or 15-week fall research assignment at NASA facilities across the country. Students selected to participate in USRP will receive a \$500/week stipend plus round trip travel costs.

Interested students should visit the USRP website for program information and applications; www.education.nasa.gov/usrp.

I am the co-chair of the volunteer committee for Virginia LifeSmarts and we are looking for volunteers for our state competition to be held in Richmond on March 2, 2007. Previous experience is not required. There will be more information to follow for those who volunteer, as well as a training the morning of the competition.

LifeSmarts is a consumer competition for high school students that includes topics such as health and safety, technology, the environment, financial management, and consumer rights and responsibilities. If you would like more information about LifeSmarts, please check out the Virginia website: <http://www.ext.vt.edu/lifesmarts/>

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me. I'll be happy to explain more about the roles that we need volunteers for in March.

Thank you for considering volunteering for this important event!

Cristin L. Sprenger

Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences

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Many individuals at Tech share an interest in Africa - be it in terms of teaching, research, or activism - but too often we are isolated from one another. As such, several of us recently gathered to discuss the founding of the African Studies Group. We are interested in scholarly activities (sharing works-in-progress, presenting papers, inviting in outside speakers) as well raising awareness of the continent in the Tech and Blacksburg communities (on issues such as Darfur, the HIV/AIDS crisis, and problems of access to clean water).

The ASG is open to all faculty, staff and graduate students (and perhaps undergraduates?) across the university. We hope to have another organizational meeting at the beginning of the spring semester. If you are interested, please contact me at shadle@vt.edu.

Brett L. Shadle
Department of History

Monthly Memo from the Graduate School

November/December 2006

The December 2006 Commencement is rapidly approaching and I encourage each of you to attend and bring other faculty members with you. Commencement is a very special time for our graduates and their families, and I hope you will join your colleagues in recognizing our graduates and celebrating their accomplishments. A new musical composition for graduate commencement will be played for the first time. See you there!

Announcements & Deadlines:

Call for Nominations for Graduate Student Awards

Nominations for the 2006-07 graduate student awards (outstanding dissertation, service, teaching, college, etc) are due January 26, 2007. Please review the list of awards, nomination criteria and further details on submission requirements at http://www.grads.vt.edu/academics/honors_awards/graduate_awards/06_07_GEW_call.pdf

Graduate Preview Weekend nominations are being accepted at [/www.grads.vt.edu/preview_weekend](http://www.grads.vt.edu/preview_weekend)

The nominated individual should have submitted an application for graduate study and be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident residing in the United States. Graduate Preview Weekend is February 15-18, 2007. For more information, contact Marilyn Kershaw, Director of Graduate Student Recruiting at 1-2494 or at mkershaw@vt.edu.

VT National Capital Region Orientation: 1/13/07, Northern Virginia Center

Temporary Expedited Admissions Status 1/8/07-1/22/07

Occasionally, students learn about a course that they'd like to pursue at the last minute. This paper application can only be used for students who wish to apply within one week before classes begin and up to the last day to add courses. It is a one-time status and allows registration for no more than 6 credits in the semester when the student applies for this status. For more information contact GSSO gssso@nvc.vt.edu, 703-538-8327 in the National Capital Region or Jacqueline Nottingham ntngm@vt.edu, 540-231-3092 in Blacksburg.

New Fellowship

The David W. Francis and Lillian Francis Scholarship Fund was established to provide graduate fellowships in research emphasizing longer, safer and healthier lives. The disciplines designated in the endowment include

agriculture, engineering, bioinformatics, plant pathology, wood science and forest products, veterinary medicine and biotechnology. The Francis Research Fellowship includes a stipend of \$18,000 plus tuition for one academic year. One research fellowship will be awarded each academic year. PhD students whose research emphasizes “longer, safer and healthier lives” and are in their final year of research are eligible for the Francis Research Fellowship. Doctoral students should be nominated by their department. The nomination packet should include a letter of support from the academic unit, a letter from the faculty advisor(s), a description of the student’s academic work, and a synopsis of the student’s research and its relevance to promoting “longer, safer and healthier lives”. Nominations are due by February 1 and should be submitted to Karen P. DePauw, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies & Dean of the Graduate School.

http://www.grads.vt.edu/financial/for_departments/gs_funding.html

Policies & Procedures Reminders/Updates

Enrollment

Academic units are encouraged to remind students that they should enroll in courses prior to the start of the semester and adhere to the drop/add deadlines set by the university. Departments should refrain from enrolling students so that we can avoid unnecessary drops/withdraws. Only under unusual circumstances will graduate students be allowed to add a class after the add deadline.

Instructors of record for graduate courses

Graduate School policy requires that graduate courses (4xxx, 5xxx, 6xxx) be taught by faculty members holding the appropriate terminal academic degree (e.g., PhD). Graduate students (including staff working for graduate degrees) can teach undergraduate courses but are not authorized to teach graduate courses. Please note this requirement in planning course offerings in the future.

Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies

The commission approved a revision to the Applications and Admissions Statement, as follows:

Applications and all related materials for admission should reach the Graduate School Office at least eight weeks before the beginning of the semester in which enrollment is requested. Consideration for admission to the Graduate School is contingent upon receipt of:

- 1) An official academic transcript showing courses taken and degree(s) earned.
- 2) Evidence of a Bachelor’s degree from a four year or equivalent (e.g., see Bologna Process) accredited college or university.

Documentation of at least a 3.0 Grade Point Average (on a 4.0 scale) for the last half of the credits earned for the undergraduate degree; or, the completion of 12 graduate course credits with at least a 3.0 Grade Point Average

New degrees

The commission forwarded the new degree proposal, Doctor of Philosophy in STEM Education: Engineering Education, to the University Council. Currently, the commission is in the final stages of review for the degree proposal, Master of Arts in Foreign Language, Culture, and Literature.