An unmistakable excitement filled the air in the Ceddia Union Building. It was April 23rd – not only William Shakespeare’s birthday but also the date of the Celebration of Student Research Conference at Shippensburg University. Approximately 400 students, mentored by approximately 88 faculty members exhibited their work. Poster sessions, oral presentations, panel discussions, and creative displays were all proudly presented to the public.

The opportunity to participate in undergraduate research is a hallmark of the academic opportunities available to SU students. For the student researchers, the process itself is a valuable experience. KayeLani DePaolo, social work major, commented on how rewarding it was to conduct a research project from start to finish. Senior early education majors Megan Lontz and Lynne Dettra both commented on the personal growth and professional development they experienced by participating in research programs. They were also both very pleased with the positive changes they saw in their understanding of children’s learning that stemmed from their research.

Several participants were grateful for the new skill sets they learned in conducting the research, be it data collection and analysis, presentation skills, or collaboration. In fact, collaboration with faculty members was described by several researchers as particularly rewarding. Nathan Oster, psychology major, spoke in glowing terms of his collaboration with his faculty mentor, Dr. Steven Haase, associate professor of Psychology. “The relationship went beyond just the technical aspects of the research, it was also fun on a personal level, too. I was able to make some really good memories.” Oster as well as Benjamin Martin, also a
psychology major, who worked with
Dr. Jenny Pitts, assistant professor of
psychology, commented on the
mentors’ encouragement of their
professional development. “It went
beyond the research to include
guidance in grant writing, which is a
part of research, too,” said Martin.
With the guidance of their mentors,
both Oster and Martin presented their
research at a regional conference.
Alison Barry, social work major,
credited her faculty mentor, Dr.
Samuel Benbow, assistant professor of
social work/gerontology, for helping
her set research goals and then guiding
her step-by-step as she strove to meet
those goals.

Many student researchers were also
thrilled to have the opportunity to
apply classroom knowledge to the
world at large. Milton Webber, social
work major, was very excited not only
with the chance to apply his skills, but
also to share his work with Hoffman
Homes for Troubled Youth, the agency
that was the focus of his research, and
have it positively impact the youth
living there. Rasheeda Wright, also a
social work major, echoed Webber’s
sentiments. She is positive that her
research on the impact of a day
program on caregiver stress will help
her better understand the needs of her
future clients.

The conference also showed the wide
variety of research experiences
available to students. For example,
there were several research projects
that came out of a study abroad trip to
Curacao led by Dr. Sean Cornell,
associate professor of geography/earth
science. These projects ranged from
Morgan Crider’s Educating U.S. High
School Students on the Importance of
Clean Energy: Teaching the Impact of
U.S. Energy Consumption on Curacao
to Matthew Hockenberry’s Historic
Preservation in the Caribbean Spurs
Tourism and Challenges. Both
students enjoyed collaboration with
faculty and fellow students and
exploration of practical applications for
their research. Creative endeavors,
including panel discussions, musical
performances, and artwork, were also
part of the conference program.

A wonderful effect of the Celebration of
Student Research is the encouragement
it gives students to take advantage of
research opportunities. Freshman
researchers Nick McClure and Diane
Klapatch presented posters based on
research conducted during their
Honors world history course and both
expressed an interest in conducting

Dr. Sean Cornell and his students took advantage of several research opportunities in Curacao. Their work was featured during the Celebration of Student Research Conference in April.

Shannon Lee and Luke Perry collaborate on their research.

Student researchers Matthew Hockenberry (L); Morgan Crider (R)

Shippensburg University students measuring the wind speed on Mt. Christoffel, Curacao.
Celebration of Student Research, continued

research in their respective fields, criminal justice and business, in the years to come. Samantha Brong, freshman criminal justice major, attended the conference as an observer this year. Once there, she found inspiration to try her hand at research – she realized that it was something greatly within her reach, even as an undergraduate student at Shippensburg University.

Well done, student researchers faculty sponsors! Kudos are also due to the Shippensburg University Institute for Public Service, the Dean of Arts and Sciences’ Advisory Council for Undergraduate Research Committee, and the Graduate Research Grant Advisory Committee for their efforts making the 2013 conference another amazing success.

The very popular interdisciplinary minor in International Studies (IS) has now been elevated to a bachelor of arts degree. The minor had been one of the fastest growing academic programs at SU, clearly indicating student interest in the program. Additionally, nearly 70 faculty members have international teaching or research expertise and are eager participants in the program. This combination of student and faculty interests were the driving forces behind the change.

The requirements of the BA degree, including area studies, global studies, foreign language, and study abroad/ internship, will produce graduates who are well prepared for success in the global society. As the world seems to shrink, the demand for professionals with global vision and understanding increases.

The new degree is also an example of good stewardship of Shippensburg University’s resources. It builds upon an existing program and uses existing faculty and facility resources. IS students will also have the opportunity to study additional languages, such as Chinese and Arabic, at the PASSHE sister institutions of East Stroudsburg and California University of PA, or face-to-face right here at Shippensburg University when this fall 2013 a course in beginning Chinese will be taught for the first time.

“The new major will allow the university to showcase its wealth of faculty with international expertise who offer over 120 courses on international topics,” said Dr. Jonathan Skaff, professor of history/philosophy and director of international studies. “Students have already expressed a great deal of interest in the major since it was approved in mid-April. Six students declared the major prior to its official launch in August. Most of these students plan on double majoring. Advisors should encourage students with international interests to visit our office in the Global Education Center (CUB 221) to explore the possibility of a major or minor.”

“The new International Studies degree is a testament to the quality and expertise of the faculty recruited by the various academic departments at Shippensburg University, commented Dr. Barbara Lyman, Provost and Senior VP for Academic Affairs. “That expertise in international issues had already contributed to a very successful minor. However, faculty academic backgrounds and scholarly pursuits related to international issues were so deep that Shippensburg University was perfectly positioned to develop and offer this new and very robustly designed bachelor’s degree in International Studies. I applaud Dr. Jonathan Skaff for his academic leadership in making the program a reality, drawing on the impressive credentials of the faculty with regard to international issues.”

BA in International Studies Now at SU!
Communication/Journalism Program Earns Accreditation

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) has recognized the communication/journalism program at Shippensburg University as one of only 111 such programs worldwide to meet their high standards for accreditation. Shippensburg University’s program is now the only accredited program in the PASSHE system and one of only a handful in the Mid-Atlantic region.

The accreditation is the result of years of dedicated work by faculty, staff, and administrators. All aspects of the program were carefully assessed and were found to meet the high standards in the nine program areas set by ACEJMC (mission, curriculum, diversity, faculty, scholarships, student services, facilities and equipment, professional and public service, and assessment of learning outcomes).

“We are proud to be the only accredited media and public relations program in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education,” commented Dr. Joe Borrell, department chair and associate professor of communication/journalism. “The personalized education provided, the professional qualifications of the faculty, and our program’s active involvement in student media all set our program apart from other programs in the region.”

“ACEJMC status not only affirms the quality of our Communication/Journalism program but underscores the importance of associated out-of-class high impact practices, in this case, around student media,” said Dr. Barbara Lyman, Provost & Senior VP for Academic Affairs. “Here at Shippensburg students can participate in, manage, and lead the various student media groups including the campus radio station, television station, and newspaper as well as yearbook, gaining high impact experiences that prepare students very competitively for their futures. Thanks to an expert and dedicated faculty skilled in the latest forms of communication/journalism, including social media, Shippensburg University has a standout academic program as validated by ACEJMC.”

Anyone interested in learning more about Shippensburg University’s communication/journalism program is encouraged to contact the department office in Rowland Hall 108 or email commjour@ship.edu.

“We are proud to be the only accredited media and public relations program in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.”

- Dr. Joe Borrell, department chair & associate professor

Students have the opportunity to participate in various student media groups, including the campus television station (SUTV) and radio station (WSYC), pictured here.
Disability Studies Minor Offered at SU

A new minor in Disability Studies (DS) is now offered at Shippensburg University. An interdisciplinary program, the minor looks at the meaning and impact of disability in different times, places and amongst different groups of people.

The 18 credit curriculum includes an introductory course, a capstone course, and four elective courses that include approved offerings from all three academic colleges. The flexibility and interdisciplinary nature of the minor allow students to tailor their coursework to meet their own interests and career goals. Students with DS minors find themselves well-prepared for the growing number of disability-specific careers as well as many positions that must serve diverse populations and/or consider matters of accommodation, inclusion, and accessibility.

“The interdisciplinary minor in Disability Studies builds upon the impressive pre-existing capacity at Shippensburg University, bringing together a range of classes related to disability across the three colleges,” said Dr. Allison Carey, associate professor of sociology and director of the Disability Studies minor. “It promises to be a terrific asset for students. Disability-related jobs are increasing, and disability expertise is increasingly considered an essential component in almost any field. For example, computer engineers must consider accessibility, criminal justice professionals must be able to consider how disability affects crime and inmate populations, and human resource managers must be familiar with disability law and programs. Our students seem very excited about the minor. Thirty five students declared the minor in Spring 2013, although the official launch is this fall 2013.”

“We are very proud of the work of Shippensburg University faculty in developing our cutting edge interdisciplinary minor in Disability Studies,” commented Dr. Barbara Lyman, Provost & Senior VP for Academic Affairs. “We have among our faculty nationally recognized expertise in the area. Students along with their future employers, the graduate programs where students will pursue related studies, and the individuals our graduates will serve through professional and community work will all be the beneficiaries of this highly relevant interdisciplinary minor in Disability Studies.”

NSF Grant to Fund the USE Math Project

The National Science Foundation has awarded a $184,948 grant to Shippensburg University to support the Undergraduate Sustainability Experiences in Mathematics (USE Math) project. Directed by Dr. Benjamin Galluzzo, assistant professor of mathematics, the project will create teaching materials which highlight the role of mathematics in sustainability. The materials will be student-focused and include projects that can be completed in a single class period which will put math in context, thereby enabling students to see the connection between math in the classroom and math in the world at large. Once created, which faculty members will do working collaboratively during workshops held in the summers of 2013 and 2014, the materials will be piloted in courses offered at institutions participating in the project which include Shippensburg University, Wellesley College, and Harrisburg Area Community College.

The project does not end there, however. The effectiveness of the new materials will be assessed to see if they not only improved student knowledge and skills, but also if they impacted student attitudes towards the usefulness of mathematics. Information about the USE Math project, the materials it creates, and their effectiveness will be disseminated in a number of ways, including websites, journal articles, society newsletters, and conference presentations.
This year, the John L. Grove College of Business can boast of two different champion student competition teams. Human Resource Management students, advised by Dr. Vicki Fairbanks Taylor, associate professor of management/marketing, won the 2013 SHRM Northeast Regional Case Competition. Held at the University of Delaware in March, teams of undergraduate and graduate students competed in both oral and written presentations. Presentations were evaluated for analytical ability and effective communication. As winners of the competition, the SU SHRM chapter received $2500 cash as well as complementary team registration to the 2013 SHRM Annual Conference & Exposition held in Chicago.

The Shippensburg University Enactus team, advised by Dr. John Kooti, dean of the John L. Grove College of Business, won the Baltimore 2013 Enactus Regional Competition in March. Competing team members worked to create economic opportunities in their local communities and these projects were then judged at the competition. They were evaluated on creativity, innovation, and effectiveness. As this year’s winners, the SU team received $1000 cash and advanced to the national competition held in Kansas City, MO.

Congratulations to all of our student competitors!

Sommer Joins Shippensburg University as AVP for Enrollment Management

On July 1, 2013, William Sommers joined the SU family as the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management. In this position, Sommers will oversee the areas of admissions, financial aid, registrar’s office, and retention as well as provide strategic leadership in those areas.

Sommers has had more than twenty years of leadership and management experience in higher education, most recently as assistant vice president of enrollment services at Colorado Mountain College in Glenwood Springs.

“I am looking forward to working with the many stakeholders throughout the university in the strategic enrollment planning process,” said Sommers. “Keeping the student at the center of the conversation will be critical to our success. Strategic enrollment planning is a complex process that requires a common foundation of understanding among all stakeholders and must align with the university’s strategic plan.”

“Bill Sommers brings to Shippensburg University superb experience and accomplishments both in annual and multi-year strategic enrollment planning and management,” said Dr. Barbara Lyman, Provost and Senior VP for Academic Affairs. “As scholars of the field such as Dolence have pointed out, strategic enrollment management actually encompasses any and all factors that influence a student’s decision to attend and stay or leave an institution. Experiences both large and small can represent tipping points. Thus, with Bill’s arrival, we look forward not only to benefitting from his expertise and leadership but also to amplifying our own various contributions to strategic enrollment management wherever we serve in the institution.”

Welcome aboard, Bill!
In this edition of the newsletter, a clear theme emerges: collaboration. The ability to collaborate with others is an invaluable capacity necessary for success in a range of endeavors. In a recent national survey of employers conducted on behalf of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), employers ranked at number one out of ten areas of competence in college graduates, the ability of students to work effectively in diverse teams (Hart, 2007). That we value collaboration is seen in the Academic Master Plan (AMP) under the multiple Goal 2 objectives that “Academic Affairs will ...

- Encourage and facilitate collaborative learning opportunities.
- Increase coordination and collaboration within Academic Affairs.
- Increase coordination and collaboration between Academic Affairs, other divisions within the University, and the SU Foundation to enhance student learning.

As these AMP objectives demonstrate, students at Shippensburg University have and will be provided numerous and ever-expanding opportunities to learn and practice the skills associated with effective collaboration. These can most obviously be seen in the Celebration of Student Research Conference where in late spring student researchers presented the findings of the work they achieved in collaboration with faculty mentors and in many cases with fellow student researchers. That faculty dedicate themselves to this form of collaboration is seen in the sustained numbers of students participating, which have risen from 120 students in 2009 to above 400 each year for the last three years. Successful collaboration at an institutional level is also evident at Shippensburg University. In the spirit of shared governance, representatives from all campus constituencies work together to shape the future of the university and to advance the institution’s effectiveness. Collaboration can also be seen in the various accreditation processes the university undergoes, such as the recent accreditation of the Communication/Journalism program. This successful endeavor putting Shippensburg University’s Communication/Journalism program in company with Penn State and Temple actually represented collaboration between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs as well as among faculty, administration, and students! Faculty members from Shippensburg University and other participating institutions will be working collaboratively on the USE Math project, supported by an NSF grant. I am especially proud of the collaboration reflected in the new International Studies BA and the Disability Studies minor. Both programs are interdisciplinary in nature and are made possible through collaborative effort and resources from the faculty in all three academic colleges.

As we look just ahead to the beginning of the academic year, faculty members will be designing new learning experiences promoting collaboration both in and out of the classroom. Whether faculty members require students to work on formal team projects or simply encourage students to join or create student-led out-of-class study groups meeting in the library to tackle challenging material, of course, following instructor protocols about lines of demarcation between individual and group work, faculty who promote collaboration contribute mightily to student engagement that increases retention, persistence, and completion. Such efforts will go a long way to having our students develop a stronger sense of belonging, a greater sense of self-efficacy, and critical skills that will insure success not only while at Shippensburg but also in life after graduation.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

“As alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”
~ Helen Keller

“We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny.”
~ Martin Luther King, Jr.