Message from the Provost

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Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs

The British poet Percy Shelley famously asked, “If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?” This year, I suspect, there were days in February and even March when many of us found ourselves uncertain how to answer that question. As the mercury dropped and the “wintry mix” did its best to slow our commute to and from campus, we saw no end in sight. Since the break, though, as I have driven to work through North Park, I have watched the ice on its lakes shrink and disappear, and the early signs emerge of the season of new growth that lies ahead.

This may serve as a metaphor of sorts for the way in which we need to look beyond our immediate challenges when we think about the future of higher education in this country and of our own academic community in particular. Politicians in Washington and pundits in the media seem never to tire of pointing to the rising cost of a college education, to the pain caused by alcohol abuse and sexual assault on campus, and to demographic trends that reveal a shrinking pool of eligible high school graduates in the coming decade – especially in the northeast. And other topics less commonly mentioned in the headlines are equally important: the reluctance of our government to invest in basic science research, for example, or to assist students from less affluent backgrounds to access the education they deserve. All in all, it’s easy to find reasons to feel gloomy.

But it pays to take a second look, especially here on our campus, because a different mindset reveals signs of expansion and creativity all around – some of
them highlighted elsewhere in this issue of Academic Affairs in Review.

Consider, for example, the number of submissions received by the Office of Research for this year’s Undergraduate Research & Scholarship Symposium: 147 in comparison to the previous all-time record of 107. The extensive involvement of students in independent, mentored scholarly research has emerged over the past decade or so as a hallmark of excellence in undergraduate education — and Duquesne faculty and students have evidently heard that message loud and clear.

Consider too the progress that has been made toward completing construction of the new black box theatre between College Hall and the Mary Pappert School of Music. While we will have to wait until early fall to see what lies inside, the mere promise of a well-equipped purpose-built theatre on campus is enough to raise the spirits of theatre goers as well as actors and “techies.”

Or consider some of the “numbers” by which others judge our success (whether rightly or not). The School of Law rose in this year’s rankings in U.S. News & World Report, despite an environment for legal education nationally that is beyond challenging. The School of Nursing rose, if anything, even more dramatically. The hard work of the Enrollment Management Group has resulted in a healthy rebound in the number of undergraduate applications for fall admission. And generous gifts have underwritten “named” faculty positions in the School of Business.

We all know that sustaining the recent forward progress in each of these areas will take effort and commitment – in most cases, the combined and concerted effort and commitment of faculty, staff and administrators from all areas of Academic Affairs. But it’s easier to dig deep and find that extra spurt of energy if (to quote one of my childhood mentors) one “focuses on the crocuses” at the end of a long winter.

Reflections from the Associate Provost — Enrollment Management Group

BY PAUL-JAMES CUKANNA
Associate Provost — Enrollment Management Group

INTERSECTIONS....

I grew up on a small farm and, as an undergraduate, studied the life sciences. I’m acutely aware of the intersection between winter and spring and its transformative impact on the weather, land, plant and animal life, the human spirit and even the colors I use in my abstract paintings. While the seasonal intersection this year might have appeared to be more arbitrary or random when compared to recent years, it is always reflective of the activities of an intelligent and ordered universe.

In regard to intersections, I have a wonderful group of colleagues within the EMG with whom I have the privilege of working. Order, discipline, collaboration, consistency, efficiency, fairness and the use of sophisticated tools are key parts of our culture because our work is largely about establishing and maintaining relationships throughout a student’s life cycle. This cycle of engagement can last for decades and includes descriptor words such as prospect, applicant, accepted, enrolled, graduated, alum and donor to describe the phases. Since a college education is a driver of personal economic improvement and key to the Spiritan mission, we strive to provide value to students by establishing, building, tracking and managing these relationships throughout the entire student life cycle. In an economic environment where student loyalty is often tenuous and competition for new undergraduate, graduate and professional students is intense, we are expected to better understand and value these relationships.

Factors like increased competition, decreased funding, higher student and parent expectations, and smaller applicant pools create challenges for most colleges and universities. On the student side, rising costs, tight job markets, and shifting demographic trends make the prospect of higher education equally formidable. Students have more choices than ever and also have access to more sources of information to inform their decisions. My colleagues and I often reflect on how we can accommodate the needs and preferences of a more sophisticated and broadly diverse student body.

You can read more about what my colleagues have been up to below and how the intersections of their efforts – from advisement, recruitment, retention, marketing, financing, to system implementations – add value to the student experience and help to improve institutional efficiency and effectiveness.
Media Services and Distribution Center (MSDC)

The success of the first Duquesne-built FlexTech classroom generated a level of excitement and enthusiasm that has been unparalleled for a campus classroom. Courses in business, chemistry, computer science, English, ESL, graduate psychology, math, modern languages and sociology have used the space since August 2014. Not your typical looking classroom, Room 442 in Fisher Hall boasts a lively atmosphere bolstered by writeable, aqua glass top tables, multicolored chairs, vivid flat panel monitors and vibrant LED blade lighting. The room’s technology permits the sharing of information among the seven flat panels and room’s LCD projector. Students and faculty alike have embraced the space and the new approach to learning this room provides.

The acceptance and endorsement of 442 Fisher Hall by faculty and the Board of Directors Executive Committee have generated approval for additional FlexTech spaces on campus. Another space was added in January 2015: 551 College Hall – same concept and functionality, smaller classroom.

Two additional FlexTech rooms will be implemented this summer: 310 Canvin and 600 Fisher.

In working to promote collaborative teaching, the MSDC and Center for Teaching Excellence have teamed up to organize faculty learning groups to provide outlets for faculty to share collaborative concepts, ideas and activities. The MSDC is also working with various departments to implement collaborative concepts into their learning spaces.
Gumberg Library

Gumberg Library underwent many changes over the past year, including new acquisitions, technology and facility updates, and retirements. These transformations speak to the library’s dynamic nature and the broader reinvention underway.

In 2014, the Gumberg Library and the Law Library jointly purchased an integrated library system (ILS) that has simplified access to library resources and will allow for significant savings for the University over the next few years. An implementation team of librarians from both libraries selected Sierra, a next-generation system from Innovative Interfaces. The team chose Sierra, in part, because it provides a search interface that combines functionality similar to Google with elements of a traditional library catalog, such as the ability to view real-time circulation status of items.

More than 150 years’ worth of America’s oldest Catholic newspaper, the Pittsburgh Catholic, is now available online as part of a digitization project recently completed by Gumberg Library. The project began in 2008 after microfilm reels of the newspaper showed signs of deterioration. The digital archive provides access to issues published between 1844 and 2001. Issues from 2001 to present day are available through the Pittsburgh Catholic’s online archives. As a premier chronicile of Roman Catholic life in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Catholic collection represents a significant contribution to the growing body of primary documents covering the Roman Catholic Church in the 19th and 20th centuries. Library funds, a Library Services and Technology Act grant, and a capstone gift from the Cahouet Foundation supported the project. University archived issues can be accessed at http://digital.library.duq.edu.

A rare 1611 folio edition of Edmund Spenser’s The Faerie Queene and The Shepheardes Calendar was donated to Gumberg. The book is the first collected edition of Spenser’s works, printed in London by Matthew Lownes soon after Spenser’s death. Thanks to poet and alumnus Robert Giannetti, the folio is available in the University Archives.

Gumberg Library hosted an art exhibition commemorating the 2014 centenary of the extinction of the passenger pigeon. The exhibition, Moving Targets, opened to the public on Nov. 10 and continued through Dec. 6. In artist Ann Rosenthal’s words, “The exhibition parallel[ed] the plight of the passenger pigeon with that of the artists’ maternal lineage, piecing together the fragmented stories and forced migrations of both pigeons and Jews.” The exhibition corresponded to the common text selected for the McAnulty College of Liberal Arts learning communities, Joel Greenberg’s A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon’s Flight to Extinction.

The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center at Gumberg Library acquired the personal papers and artifacts of prominent Montreal psychiatrist Karl Stern. The archive was officially opened and dedicated on Oct. 10, 2014. Karl Stern, who was deeply influenced by existential phenomenology, maintained a wide-ranging correspondence with Catholic intellectuals. These correspondences include exchanges with Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Graham Greene, Clare Boothe Luce, fellow psychiatrist Gregory Zilboorg and John M. Ostereicher, a Catholic theologian and leading advocate of Jewish-Catholic reconciliation. These discussions will be included along with other notable correspondences with Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain, who was Stern’s mentor, C.S. Lewis, Reinhold Niebuhr and one letter each from Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.

The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center hosted its 33rd Annual Symposium, Experiencing Disaster, on March 30-31, 2015. The SSPC welcomed Professor Debra Bergoffen, the Bishop Hamilton Lecturer in Philosophy at American University, Professor Jane Anna Gordon, Associate Professor of Political Science and African-American Studies at the University of Connecticut at Storrs, Professor Kevin Hart, the Edwin B. Kyle Professor of Christian Studies at the University of Virginia, and Professor David Loy, an independent scholar, writer, and Zen teacher in the Sanbo Kyodan Tradition of Japanese Zen Buddhism as keynote speakers. The symposium addressed difficult aspects of human experience and paid particular attention to the experience of disaster. The symposium was well attended and opened up a discursive space for the discussion of all aspects, and particularly the difficult aspects, of human experience.

The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center also welcomed two visiting scholars during the 2014-2015 academic year. Dr. Habip Turker has been in residency since the beginning of the academic year and will remain through the end of the academic year. Dr. Turker is a post-doctoral research fellow working with the Department of Philosophy. Dr. Guilherme Messas has been in residency since the
beginning of the spring 2015 semester and will remain through the end of the semester. Dr. Messas serves as the Coordinator of the Postgraduate Program on Phenomenological Psychopathology at the Santa Casa de São Paulo School of Medical Sciences. He is actively working to promote the study and recognition of scholarly research in phenomenology and phenomenological psychopathology both in Brazil and on the South American continent.

The first floor of the Gumbe rg Library has been transformed with the installation of new high-efficiency LED lighting. The lighting, designed to be a soft, more natural light, has improved the study environment and lowered energy costs. The lighting on floors two through five will also be updated progressively over the next few years.

Dr. Laverna Saunders has retired after serving as University Librarian for 12 years. Dr. Saunders made many significant contributions to Gumbe rg Library over the years, including the digitization of the Duke and the historical archive of the Pittsburgh Catholic; extended library hours and 24-hour access during finals; and renovations that improved study and collection space. Dr. Saunders has been a champion for the library and Duquesne University. As the search for a new University Librarian begins, Maureen Diana Sasso has assumed the role of Acting University Librarian. She has served as Director of Information Services at Gumbe rg Library since 1991. A new University Librarian is expected to be in place before the start of the next academic year.

Center for Teaching Excellence

At the annual Celebration of Teaching Excellence on March 26, the Center for Teaching Excellence commemorated its 25th anniversary. Provost Austin conferred the Graduate Student Awards for Excellence in Teaching and the Creative Teaching Awards. Also honored were over 100 colleagues who have contributed to CTE’s work this year through workshops, committees and near-peer mentoring. CTE continues to serve graduate student teaching assistants and those preparing to be faculty through the Certificate of University Teaching. Eleven recipients received their certificates at the recent Celebration of Teaching Excellence. Also recognized at the celebration were three colleagues who have embodied the Spirit of CTE by helping us foster an environment where teaching is considered an art that grows through scholarship, practice, reflection and collaboration.

CTE has seen a lot of changes this year. Erin Rentschler began as the Center’s Program Manager. Rachel Luckenbill, CTE’s new graduate assistant, created The Flourishing Academic, a blog that explores how teacher-scholars thrive in academia. The blog has hosted 13 guest writers from the Duquesne teaching community and one post from Sue Hines, who visited Duquesne and facilitated a workshop on adult learners. Writers have covered the scholarship of teaching and learning, student motivation, classroom management, race and diversity, work-life balance and more. At the start of the spring semester, the Center piloted an online orientation program for adjunct faculty in December. CTE staff led participants through modules focused on engaging students in learning, creating a narrative of effective teaching and course design.

CTE staff traveled to Dallas, Texas for the annual POD Network conference, where Steve Hansen and Leslie Lewis (Gumbe rg Library) offered a full-day pre-conference workshop on Leveraging Whole Person Faculty Development through a Center Sponsored Retreat. Laurel Willingham-McLain co-led a session in which early and mid-career educational developers discussed issues they faced with experienced colleagues.

We offered several of our most popular workshops and added some new twists. At this year’s Discovering the Teacher-Scholar Nexus workshop, Laurel Willingham-McLain and Jason Margolis (Education) facilitated a discussion of ways in which panelists and participants had made connections between teaching and research through a Spiritan prism. Mike McGrawe collaborated with Christine Pollock (Office of Research) to offer a new session for graduate students on Grant Opportunities in the Humanities. Steve Hansen collaborated with Military Programs to offer The Face of the Student Veteran (Don Accamando, Ann Martin, Rod Dobish, Roger Brooke, Theo Collins, Laura Howell). Erin Rentschler co-led a session, Exploring Race at our Predominantly White University, with Emad Mirmotahiri (English). CTE also partnered with Gumbe rg Library to caution about the dangers of predatory publishing and with Media Services to present a session on the new FlexTech classrooms. Two informal groups of faculty are meeting regularly to share strategies for using the FlexTech classrooms to deepen student learning.
International Programs

This March, 125 Duquesne students enrolled in six courses that traveled to Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria and Poland, and Costa Rica as part of the Spring Breakaway courses offered every year. These classes provided a unique on-site academic experience, with each location serving as a “learning laboratory.” Since 2008, Spring Breakaway courses, which are managed by the Office of International Programs and taught by faculty members in various academic departments, have been a significant part of the study abroad offerings at Duquesne, and are a wonderful opportunity for students who may not have the ability to study abroad for an extended period of time.

One course in particular, Exploring Intercultural Communication taught by Dr. Joe DeCrosta, provided 13 Duquesne students the opportunity to flex their “intercultural muscles” while traveling abroad to Rome, Italy. Students not only had the opportunity to discover the classic ancient attractions that are significant to Western history, philosophy and art, and to spend time at the Vatican to understand the influence of the Catholic Church throughout the world, but also were able to learn about Italian culinary culture, to spend a full day with their Italian counterparts in Italian schools, and to experience contemporary Italian social issues through understanding modern street art and the work of lay communities. The course was carefully designed to integrate relevant academic material with the cultural grandeur of Rome, framed in a practical and enjoyable format. The students’ journal entries and reflection papers eloquently expressed how even such a short experience abroad, within the context of an academic course, could shift their worldviews in ways they would have never imagined.

St. Augustine once said, “The world is a book, and those
who do not travel read only one page.” As Duquesne students in every discipline prepare to become global citizens, Spring Breakaway courses can serve as one port of entry to help students discover the diverse world around them in substantive ways.

**Enrollment Management Group (EMG)**

EMG provides many services including the recruitment of students, management of financial aid, registration, classroom management, retention, graduation, internal consultations on enrollment issues, research and analysis, marketing and student system implementations. Our focus is to collaboratively and consistently enroll, service, retain and graduate the correct number, academic quality and diversity of students that will help to provide the University with the human and financial resources which are required to be competitive in the educational marketplace and to meet its mission.

An important objective of the EMG is to implement advanced software tools to improve student services and maintain a competitive market position. Members of the EMG, along with colleagues from CTS, began implementation of Ellucian Recruiter – an application and constituent relationship management (CRM) system designed specifically for use in the higher education marketplace – in September 2013. As of August 2014, we’ve moved the majority of our online admission applications (undergraduate and graduate) from Banner – our student information system – to Recruiter to better service our clients.

We are also beginning to communicate with prospective undergraduate students and their parents through Recruiter CRM, utilizing both native functionality, as well as the ExactTarget Marketing Cloud – a third-party digital marketing platform.

To date, Recruiter has allowed us to develop admission applications that meet our unique needs, create a more personalized, welcoming web presence for applicants, and automate outreach for several steps in the application process, track marketing email open rates and responses and increase marketing email deliverability with integrated whitelisting capabilities.

Our goal for the next recruitment cycle is to develop and launch more sophisticated, automated marketing campaigns using Recruiter CRM.

**University Registrar**

The Classroom Committee continued its work updating the furnishings in the University’s shared classroom space. The remaining two shared classrooms in College Hall were furnished as were 11 of the 12 classrooms in Canevin Hall.

After having completed its implementation of Banner Document Management within the Office of the University Registrar, staff members are now assisting the Schools and the College with their efforts to go paperless with student records.

Recent modifications to Federal Government regulations have changed the institution’s reporting requirements for enrolled students. The Office of the University Registrar worked with Financial Aid and is now reporting each degree-seeking student’s progress-to-degree as part of the National Student Clearinghouse dataset.

**Undergraduate Retention and Advisement**

The freshman-to-sophomore year retention rate for our fall 2013 entering class was 89.8%. This rate is the highest in the documented history of the University and is a strong increase over the rate of 88.7% for the fall 2012 entering freshman class. Prior to this year, the fall 2004 freshman class had the highest first-year retention rate, 89.2%.

The Retention Committee is especially grateful for the retention funds established by President Dougherty and Provost Austin. Since inception in fall 2013, 42 students have benefited from this program. While we have a strong commitment to use the funds in support of our official fall-to-fall retention rate, we also anticipate an increase in our time-to-degree-completion statistics. This past year, Duquesne’s six-year graduation rate held steady at 76%, which reflects a significant difference over the 65% six-year graduation rate for private, nonprofit universities.

Another accomplishment over the past year has been the successful integration of the early-alert system (Starfish) with Banner. The Director of Retention and Advisement lead a team with representation from Educational Technology Services (ETS), CTS and the Office of the University Registrar which now reduces numerous manual processes required of ETS. Focus can shift from labor intensive maintenance of the tool to the more retention oriented functions within Starfish. Faculty will be able to make advisors aware of at-risk students.
through a variety of methods which will allow proactive intervention anticipating increased successful resolution of academic challenges.

In addition to supporting retention efforts, the Advising Team continued in their professional development efforts, specifically those sponsored by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Three members of the group attended the national conference in October. They attended sessions on a variety of topics ranging from: advising for success, STEM students, working with transfer students and retention strategies. Upon returning to campus, content learned was shared with the whole group. Members of the Advising Team also participated in two NACADA sponsored webinars: Academic Advising for Military Students and Academic Strategies for Students on Academic Probation.

**Financial Aid**

The Financial Aid Office continues to review and revise processes within the office to better serve our students.

The Duquesne University Financial Aid application was eliminated for full-time undergraduate students as well as for law students. Priority filing deadline dates and necessary information required for processing is now gathered through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This eliminates one extra step that the student had to complete in order to receive an aid package.

We have improved the verification process by eliminating hardcopy mailings. Students who are selected for verification by the Federal Processor are now notified to submit specific documentation to our office via email. Students can now access the required forms from our website, complete and submit the forms to our office. This has greatly reduced the response time in this important area and students are packaged earlier in the cycle.

The awarding process in the Tuition Remission program has been automated. With the recent algorithmic process, Tuition Remission is automatically calculated based on the number of credits in which the student is enrolled. An extensive program for the many rules within the program was created and this greatly simplifies the manual process.

The Title IV Refund process was revised. In the past, we used the Department of Education site to process refunds. This is now calculated through the Banner system. All student information is updated immediately and refunds submitted to appropriate federal programs.

In collaboration with the Admissions Office, the entry of initial academic scholarships has been improved. Admissions' staff, upon scholarship determination, now enters the awards in a specific screen. The Financial Aid Office can then review and upload the awards to the student package. This reduces time involved in processing as well as assists in the renewal of the awards in subsequent years.

In the fall 2014 semester, the Financial Aid Office participated in the inaugural Ready To Succeed Scholarship Program, administered through Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA). This provides additional funding to qualifying middle income families to receive State Grant assistance up to a maximum of $2,000 for full-time students and $1,000 to part-time students.

In the fall 2014 semester, our office participated in the initial Addison Gibson Foundation Award program. Duquesne University received a $100,000 Grant to be used over a two year period (2014-2015 and 2015-2016 academic years). The Retention Committee will assist students with the most need by awarding $25,000 per term beginning with the fall 2014 semester.

We began sending out packages for accepted students for the fall 2015 term the week of Feb. 24, our earliest release date in history and among the top 8% of schools in the nation that send out packages at such an early date. This is to assist our Admissions colleagues in recruiting a strong new freshman class.

**Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions**

It’s been a busy year in Undergraduate Admissions and spring is no exception. This is an important time for seniors and families as they make their final decision for higher education. Undergraduate Admissions partners with our colleagues across campus to assist in making their accepted student day events successful and fruitful.

While we continue to work with seniors, we know from our research that many high school juniors and their families begin the college search in their junior year. We are purchasing more junior leads, where available, and are targeting more communication to this audience. Spring recruitment travel to meet juniors is underway.

We’ve also participated in many initiatives…

- We worked with Public Affairs to create a redesigned viewbook, which is much more engaging for prospective students. Feedback has been great. We’ve also enhanced our messaging to match the look and feel of the new viewbook and to emphasize value. We know from our primary and secondary research that value is a key factor for students when choosing a college. We appreciate the assistance of our
colleagues around the University in helping to provide information about how Duquesne is different and provides that extra value.

On Nov. 11 we were invited by Global Pittsburgh to meet with the delegates from Ukraine’s Open World Program for Higher Education-Ukrainian External Testing Initiative Alliance. The group was interested in a discussion as to why the University chose to make standardized admission test scores optional for the McAnulty College of Liberal Arts. Debbie Zugates, Kelley Maloney, J.D. Douglas, Anthony Cappa and Jason Broadwater represented the University in the discussion.

Once again, Undergraduate Admissions assisted with hosting the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) Regional Competition in February. This is a great opportunity to showcase the University.

On Dec. 18, Duquesne hosted the Western PA Round Table College Success screening of the film First Generation. After the film there was a panel of local first generation college students from University of Pittsburgh, Slippery Rock University, Duquesne University and Rosedale Technical School. There were approximately 150 high school students from surrounding counties including some from Pittsburgh Public Schools. Feedback was very positive.

In November, representatives from the College Board visited campus to inform us of ongoing changes within Advanced Placement (AP) courses and testing and how those changes might impact campus policies. We invited a broad group of our faculty and academic colleagues across campus disciplines to discuss changes in the AP program overall.

Graduate Admissions’ efforts this past year included focusing on recruitment by continuing to represent Duquesne University at regional graduate college fairs in Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio and West Virginia. Duquesne also hosted its annual Graduate College Fair on campus in September. In addition, Graduate Admissions continued to purchase GRE names and expanded efforts with Masterstudies, which focuses on international student lead development.

Beyond recruitment efforts, Graduate Admissions collaborated with the Graduate School of Liberal Arts to implement and analyze a graduate student exit survey which was administered to graduating students. The survey was designed to assess students’ program experience and opinions related to Duquesne University. Graduate Admissions plans to extend this survey to all graduate students earning degrees in May 2015 and beyond.
Center for Adult Learners

This new center, which evolved out of the closure of the School of Leadership, manages recruitment, admissions and initial advising for all part-time, adult undergraduate students on campus – including students enrolling in accelerated, online programs (one exception: these aspects of the RN-to-BSN program will continue to be managed by the School of Nursing.) The Center also houses the Office for Military and Veteran Students, which provides outreach, serves as a central point of contact and ensures quality service for all veterans, active service members, reservists and guard members and others using military/veteran education benefits at Duquesne University.

Community-Engaged Teaching and Research (www.duq.edu/cetr)

In August, Provost Austin named a new Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research. Working with an advisory committee of faculty, community partners and administrators, the Center for CETR quickly expanded existing community engagement programs within Academic Affairs and created new opportunities for faculty and students to collaborate with community partners.

The impetus for creating the Center came from a number of assessment and reflection processes conducted in the 2013-2014 year. In fall 2013, the University released the findings of a student learning outcomes assessment conducted across all service-learning classes. The outcomes showed that students in service-learning classes had high degrees of academic performance but did not have demonstrable gains in civic learning or social responsibility. In a series of forums with faculty and community partners throughout 2013-2014, faculty expressed an interest to have greater opportunities to apply their research to community issues and felt that service-learning was too narrow a vehicle for the range of community-engaged scholarship they might like to undertake. Community partners expressed an interest in leveraging the University’s research and evaluation capacities in addition to hosting students working on projects. Community partners also asked for a centralized unit through which they could access a range of collaborators at the University. Finally, in spring 2014, the University conducted an external review of its service-learning program and the reviewers report suggested retooling the service-learning graduation requirement, creating an engagement center to champion a myriad of student and faculty engagement in the community and increasing the logistic support available to faculty and students.

At the same time as the creation of the Center for CETR, the Provost announced a three-year moratorium on the service-learning graduation requirement citing the need to pause and re-think the curricular form of community engagement that would be best used at Duquesne. A committee of faculty (largely sourced from the Center’s advisory committee and expanded to include additional faculty who had taught service-learning classes) was charged with developing a proposal for curricular community engagement moving forward. That committee began by reviewing extant literature about civic learning, public scholarship and community-based pedagogies. The committee consulted with Dr. Barbara Holland, an international community-campus engagement expert. Their work led them to develop a model in which students encounter civic issues or public problems through the disciplines and develop competence in working collaboratively with others to address such issues in a developmental and scaffolded way. Their proposal for community-engaged learning is distinct from service-learning in two ways: 1. community-engaged learning can occur in a variety of learning experiences in addition to traditional credit-bearing classes (e.g. internships, field studies, undergraduate research); and 2. Community-engaged learning may or may not include direct service and often involves community stakeholders as co-educators on civic or social issues. The committee held forums in every school, at faculty senate, with the core curriculum revision committee, with community partners, and with students to vet the proposal and to garner revisions. Pending final adjustments, the committee will forward its proposal to the Provost as a recommendation before the end of April. The proposal can be found at www.duq.edu/academics/community-engaged-teaching-and-research/community-engaged-learning/proposal-for-community-engaged-learning.

In collaboration with the Provost’s Office, the Center for CETR launched one new grant program and revised an existing program for faculty. The Community-Engaged Research grant dedicates up to $10,000 of seed money for two years to coalitions of faculty and community partners who are initiating a community-engaged research agenda or moving into a new phase of an existing project. Up to three coalitions may be funded in any given year. The Gaultier Fellowship was revised to focus more closely on community-
engaged teaching and will now award $4,000 grants to four Master Community-Engaged Teaching Fellows who demonstrate expertise in a particular teaching theme that changes from year to year. This coming year’s theme is Aligned Course Design: those selected will be faculty who have developed innovative and effective alignment between the student learning objectives of their course, the community-engaged work they ask of their students and effective assessment of student learning.

The Center also offered a robust schedule of programming for faculty as part of a concerted effort to reinvigorate faculty development on community engagement (another recommendation of the external review). The year began with the Campus to Community Excursion, an annual event now in its seventh year, which invites faculty to take a trip led by various community leaders to learn about the Hill District and to meet a variety of potential community partners. Over the year, two working sessions were held, the first on alignment between learning objectives, community learning experiences, and student learning assessment and the second on describing community-engaged teaching and research in promotion and tenure materials. The Center initiated monthly open houses under the banner of Community Uncorked, at which faculty and community partners mingled while enjoying a specially selected wine and cheese pairing. Some of the Uncorked events had themes such as working with Latino communities or conducting Youth-Based Participatory Research. The year will conclude with a community-engaged learning Design Day on Tuesday, May 19 and a two-day writing retreat for community-engaged scholars on Monday, June 1 and Tuesday, June 2.

Along with these recurring programs, Dr. Eva Simms (Psychology), this year’s Gaultier Fellow, hosted a series of conversations about community-engaged research at Duquesne. Dr. Simms’ Share the Knowledge project is an example of a participatory research process designed to develop a set of best practices for reconnecting African-American children and adults to places of nature within their communities. Share the Knowledge was used as a primary case study to explore and expand upon the following questions throughout the year: How do we cultivate funding for community-engaged research? How do we build an institutional language and nomenclature for community-engaged research? What are the ethical implications of producing knowledge in and with communities? How do we appropriately reward and recognize community-engaged research as part of the faculty workload? The proceedings from these conversations will be compiled in a Community-Engaged Research Wiki along with content on methods currently being used by faculty and community partners at Duquesne.

The Center for CETR is best viewed as a civic incubator. Faculty and students who want to nurture a civic commitment can come to the Center for support and thought partnership. In its inaugural year, the Center incubated a range of projects including the Gaultier Symposium on Incarceration, the Day for Learning and Speaking Out, the Minadeo Everyday Democracy Project and PureThirst.

In October, Dr. Norman Conti, 2013-2014 Gaultier Fellow and Sociology faculty, convened a series of panels and discussions around the topic of incarceration policy and the implications of current practices for black men in America under the title of the Gaultier Symposium. In March, the first Day for Learning and Speaking Out explored the link between police brutality and racial inequality and the pedagogical implications of exploring such current events within our teaching. Initiated by Dr. Daniel Burston (English) and organized by a group of faculty, staff and students and co-sponsored by six University centers, it offered panel discussions, pedagogical workshops, dialogues and student action. Throughout the spring, the Center has worked with a coalition of Minadeo Elementary School leadership, teachers, Duquesne faculty and students, Minadeo parents and community stakeholders from Hazelwood, Squirrel Hill and Homewood to explore the role of democratic dialogue in resolving the racial achievement gap and behavior management practices at Minadeo elementary. Lastly, the Center became the institutional home for the PureThirst project, a multi-disciplinary student-led initiative that seeks to address the world’s water crisis. In May, PureThirst leaders Matt Burnett (senior, Supply Chain Management) and Lauren Drumm (senior, Environmental Science) will travel to Tanzania to initiate a multi-year relationship with the communities of Moshi and Arusha so that the feasibility of future water projects can be determined. PureThirst is an initiative that enlists student leaders and faculty coaches from Sociology, Journalism, Multimedia, Nursing, Business and Environmental Science.

For more information about any of the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research’s work, please contact Dr. Lina Dostilio, Center Director, at dostiliol@duq.edu.
Biomedical Engineering (BME) 2014-2015

The Biomedical Engineering program began its first year of instruction by welcoming its freshman class on Aug. 22, 2014. The incoming class comprised 23 students from Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, West Virginia and Rwanda. Captain Richard Lewis Coleman, USN, was the keynote speaker to induct the inaugural class, providing motivational and leadership techniques important to their academic success. In honor of Captain Coleman, the BME program instituted the Richard Lewis and Mary Ruth Coleman Challenge, initiated by a gift from the Colemans. The Coleman Challenge is a series of contests open to BME students that test their ability to overcome difficulties and solve problems in an engineering context.

In September 2014, the BME program established its first research laboratory. This lab specializes in biomedical optics with a National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded program in melanoma detection and analysis. BME received additional funding from Acousys Biodevices Inc. to support this melanoma research. The Acousys grant was used to hire a Research Assistant Professor in Biomedical Engineering. Three graduate students, eleven undergraduate students and one high school student conduct research in the lab under various projects covering oncology, ophthalmology, dermatology and critical care. Additionally, the lab has working collaborations with the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Missouri and Thomas Jefferson University.

The BME program appointed six courtesy faculty members who will add to the program in areas of curriculum development, research infrastructure, ABET accreditation, entrepreneurship and outreach to local technology industries. These appointments also contribute expertise to expand the research program to include whole body biomechanics, with specific studies in elbow and shoulder injury and repair. This research is to be performed in the growing research wing of Libermann Hall, which is undergoing its second phase of instruction. This research wing will also house a new tenure-track Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering. The program is currently hiring tenure-track faculty to fully
populate the program in line with the growing student population.

A partnership between the BME program and the School of Nursing has resulted in a five year, dual degree program that results in a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. This dual degree program is the first of its kind in the nation. This program educates Nurse Engineers to create innovative solutions to clinically relevant problems, since they have clinical expertise in addition to knowledge of engineering and design principles. Three of the 23 freshmen have opted for this program, as have a significant number of new applicants. The first students will graduate from this program in 2019.

**Center for African Studies**

The Center for African Studies expanded its programs and was relocated to 104 Rockwell Hall this academic year. This new space has offices for the director and an administrative assistant, as well as a meeting room that is used for Advisory Board meetings and a space for African Studies minors and interested students to gather. The Center offered in 2014 for the first time the Rev. Alphonso Loogman, C.S.Sp., Faculty Research Grant and received 12 proposals from seven different schools and the library. Four grants were awarded and we look forward to the next round in 2015.

Continuing the *Building Relationships with Africa* series, the Center hosted *Akwaaba! Engaging Ghana: Experiences & Opportunities*, and *Habariya Afiya: Building Relationships for Collaborations with Tanzania* in fall 2014. Both sessions featured students who studied abroad in Ghana and Tanzania, with special focus on Maymester Tanzania 2015. In collaboration with the Office of International Programs, 20 students made deposits to attend Maymester Tanzania 2015. In collaboration with the Office of International Programs, 20 students made deposits to attend Maymester Tanzania where they will stay in the Spritian guest house in Arusha and visit the site of early Spritian missionary activity in Zanzibar and Bagamoyo. Students will fulfill two university core theme areas of their study, Faith and Reason and Social Justice or Creative Arts.

Some of the Center’s co-sponsored events during the year were the *Winds of the Sahel: Music Inspired by Africa and its Diaspora* held by talented faculty and students of the Mary Pappert School of Music; the 3rd Annual Cultural Dinner: A Rhythm Through Time, a dinner that educated students on the beauty and sophistication of Caribbean culture through dance, song, food, music and lecture; and the Modern Day Saints on the Battlefield: The Power and Resilience of Sudanese Women; and the Union of African Students: African Fashion Show.

Based on initiatives by faculty, the Center sponsored two African film events during the month of February, *Border Farm* by Thenjiwe Niki Nkosil and *Waiting for Happiness* by Abderrahme Sissako. This was in concert with a psychology course on African film. Also as a faculty initiative, there was an *Exploring Africa Through Literature* book group, which discussed the book *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. These faculty led initiatives underscore individual faculty interest and involvement in the University’s strategic engagement with Africa. In March, our visiting speaker, Dr. Emmanuel Katongole spoke on *The Sacrifice of Africa: Perspectives on Conflict, Violence and Peace* and was responded to by two of our colleagues.

As the minor in African Studies continues to develop and grow, the Center had its first meet and greet for African Studies minors, now totaling 15, and interested students. At this event, minors were awarded a few small tokens of our appreciation for committing to educating themselves and others on ways to understand and engage sub-Saharan Africa. Wrapping up our year of activities was the *21st Commemoration of the Genocide in Rwanda*, in consultation with the two students we have on campus from Rwanda, the Union of African Students and Campus Ministry. This event, which will be a recurring, will serve as our recognition of the victims of the 1994 Genocide and our commitment to do what we can to prevent this from occurring again.

In its third year of establishment, the Center is meaningfully engaging campus culture and building healthy relationships with individual students, faculty, staff and administrators, and the many constituent units on campus.

**University Press**

The last few months have seen the publication of several new titles from Duquesne University Press:

- *Preaching the Gospel of Black Revolt: Appropriating Milton in Early African American Literature* by Reginald A. Wilburn (University of New Hampshire)
- *Stages of Engagement: Drama and Religion in Post-Reformation England*, edited by James D. Mardock (University of Nevada) and Kathryn R. McPherson (Utah Valley University)
■ The King James Bible across Borders and Centuries edited by Angelica Duran (Purdue University)
■ Levinas Studies: An Annual Review, Volume 9, edited by Jeffrey Bloechl (Boston College)
■ Lived Experience from the Inside Out: Social and Political Philosophy in Edith Stein by Antonio Calcagno (King’s University College, University of Western Ontario)
■ Levinas and Asian Thought, edited by Leah Kalmanson (Drake University), Frank Garrett (independent scholar) and Sarah Mattice (University of North Florida)
■ Milton on Film by Eric C. Brown (University of Maine)
■ Psychotherapy for the Other: Levinas and the Face-to-Face Relationship edited by Kevin C. Krycka (Seattle University), George Kunz (Seattle University) and George G. Sayre (University of Washington)
■ Milton Studies 55, edited by Laura L. Knoppers (University of Notre Dame)

A new book series for Duquesne, Philosophy/Communication: Studies in Hermeneutics, Ethics, and Critical Theory, co-edited by Ramsey Eric Ramsey (Arizona State University) and Amit Pinchevski (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) will see three titles published in the next few months. Previously published by Purdue University Press, its relaunching through Duquesne features both a new design and expanded outlook, including a more global focus.
The Michael P. Weber Learning Skills Center

The Robert and Patricia Gussin Spiritan Division hosted its 18th annual Spiritan Division Celebration on Feb. 20, 2015. The evening began with a Mass celebrated by Fr. Stegman, former Gussin Spiritan Division chaplain. Dr. Timothy Austin, provost and vice president for academic affairs, delivered the welcome address, and Daniel Walsh, director of Spiritan Campus Ministry presented the Spiritan Congregation message.

The recipients of this year’s Michael P. Weber Memorial Scholarship, awarded annually to high performing Division freshmen, were Don Crawford, Jamie Bird and Ellen Sanin. Another position of honor for which current and past Division students compete is the Gussin Spiritan Division Student of the Year, established in 1998. There were nine students who qualified to compete. To contend, students submit an application which includes a detailed description of and a timeline for their proposed projects, and have an interview with the selection committee. Students’ academic achievements, leadership skills, service to the University and/or community at large and their service and participation in the Gussin Spiritan Division are all measured during the selection process. The Student of the Year for 2014-15 is Maximillian Heinauer.

As of December 2015, 378 students who began their educations as Spiritan Division students have received undergraduate degrees. The four-year graduation rate is 63.3%.

The Spiritan Division is the proud recipient of a second endowment from Robert and Patricia Gussin, who established a $1,500,000 endowment in 2004. The new award is in the amount $1,750,000 in support of the Division’s new program with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Sarasota. The program calls for the enrollment of one-to-two students each academic year in the Spiritan Division. The students selected have had a long-term relationship with the Boys and Girls Club and meet the admission requirements of the University.

The Michael P. Weber Learning Skills Center (LSC) offers a wide-range of services to the University and Pittsburgh community. Over a 25 year period, the Center has administered five different community programs, three of which are still in existence—the Project for Academic Coaching through Tutoring (PACT), the Jerome Bettis Bus Stops Here Foundation/Duquesne University—Learning Skills Center partnership and the Summer Institute.

Through PACT this spring semester, Spiritan Division students were engaged in a service learning experience and tutored and mentored elementary, middle and high school students in on-campus Saturday and after school tutorials two evenings a week as well as within schools, churches, and agencies in the Pittsburgh area. Partnerships included St. Rosalia School and four community agencies: the Wesley Center: The Center that Cares in the Hill District, Mt. Ararat Baptist Church in the East End of Pittsburgh and the Ammon Center. We served 30 students through our on-campus phase of PACT this year.

The Jerome Bettis Bus Stops Here Foundation partnership is scheduled to begin its seventh year in September after having taken a break in service this academic year.

The Summer Institute is a one-week residential enrichment program designed to expose high school students to Duquesne University and the world of higher education. A total of 245 students have completed the Summer Institute. This past summer the Institute enrolled its largest group of 25. The students hailed from 20 different schools, the majority (5 of 25) attending Canon McMillan High School followed by 2 from CAPA High School.

The Center’s Act 101 Program is a higher education access initiative that has been in existence at the University since 1977, serving students who meet academic and economic criteria established by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The program served 171 Pennsylvania residents this past academic year.

Tutoring is available in course subject areas, as well as in subject areas in which students anticipate enrollment but need additional preparation before taking the courses. Tutoring is the Center’s most frequently requested service. Requests during 2014-2015 totaled 2,134. As usual, the subjects requested the most were science courses. Language Arts and computer science courses came in second and third respectively in both fall and spring terms. Business and foreign languages were also requested on a regular basis.

Outreach Opportunity Program (for Marginally Performing Students) (OOPS) is a retention effort that has been in existence since 1989. This program offers services to students each semester who receive deficiencies at mid-term and who have semester and/or overall QPAs below 2.0. During academic year 2014-2015, 1,764 contacts were made with University students regarding low performance, of which 161 students responded. At end of fall 2014, 88% of 49 students who received D or F improved their grades. For academic year 2013-2014, 28% of students tutored and/or counseled received 3.0 or higher QPA.

Students enrolled in Strategies for Academic Success and Introduction to University Success, experienced high performance and retention, which are the focal points of these courses. During 2014-2015, students enrolled in Strategies for Academic Success earned an average QPA of 3.36 and 94.3% retention. Introduction to University Success students performed well with an average QPA of 3.43 and 96.4% retention. And students enrolled in its counterpart, Seminar for New International Students, earned an average QPA of 3.71 and a retention rate of 75%.