As I write this brief essay, we have entered the final week or so of the delicate dance that will bring to campus the freshman class of 2014 as well as new graduate and professional students eager to embark on the next stage of their respective careers. The choreography that this involved was quite elaborate. First, high school seniors had to choose Duquesne when they submitted their applications. In a majority of cases, we then reciprocated by choosing the students — that is, by offering them admission. Ultimately, though, they still had to choose us for a second time, accepting our offer and submitting their deposits. Since much was riding on the outcome for both parties, this process was somewhat stressful all around — T. S. Eliot may not have overstated things too far when he called April “the cruellest month.”

In watching the members of the Enrollment Management Group participate in this year’s Recruitment Rumba (often “leading,” sometimes “following,” but always attentive to their prospective student partners), I have been impressed by their mastery of the basic steps and by their ability to accommodate a sudden dip, lift or twirl whenever an applicant demanded a little added sophistication. Now, as Paul Cukanna and his colleagues move off the floor to catch their breath before picking up again with next year’s class, the rest of us must take over for the Freshman Foxtrot.

In decades past, universities sometimes prided themselves on providing high quality academic opportunities that students were invited — or challenged! — to take advantage of as best they could. This is the model some of us recall from the movie, The Paper Chase. Today, we understand the importance of approaching education as a collaborative enterprise. Faculty and staff bring to bear content-area knowledge and practiced skills, while students contribute their God-given talent, youthful enthusiasm and simple hard work. At their most effective, these partnerships produce magical
results: our undergraduates earn Goldwater Scholarships and present their work at national meetings of the Council on Undergraduate Research, while our professional and graduate students co-present or co-author with their faculty mentors. But even on a more routine basis – in classrooms, in laboratories and at externship sites; in the Michael P. Weber Learning Skills Center and in the Duquesne University Writing Center; in academic advisors’ offices and in Gumberg Library – cooperative effort lies at the heart of our shared educational mission.

As the semester draws to a close, I am grateful to all those in Academic Affairs who have partnered with our students throughout the year…and to those who will do so again this summer and after the incoming freshman make their appearance in August.

Reflections from the Associate Provost for Research and Technology

BY ALAN SEADLER
Associate Provost for Research and Technology

I was perusing the Council of Undergraduate Quarterly for the winter 2013 and noticed an article entitled How to Be a Successful Undergraduate Researcher: Tips to Maintain the Mind and Body by Lauren M. Dahlquist, a junior at the University of Nebraska Omaha. The title had a particular appeal, not as a training guide, but as a partial reflection of the goals of a Duquesne education. The article stimulated me to reflect on the importance of undergraduate research as supportive of the inquiry based education exemplified at our institution.

Faculty and graduate student scholarship is often the only visible research component of “tier one” research universities. Importantly, due to the federal support for science and engineering, undergraduate research experiences are often limited to those disciplines. This is evident in our annual Summer Research Program and the three Goldwater fellowships awarded to outstanding Bayer School students.

Focus on only the sciences, math and engineering, while typical for large institutions, does not fit Duquesne, where the research needs of all undergraduate students including the humanities, social sciences and professions are equally important. Undergraduate research has great value no matter what the course of study. Craney et al., (2011) make this point in their article and identify benefits from undergraduate research that extend into the social sciences and humanities, as well as supporting the scientific disciplines. Their work goes on to emphasize student learning objectives, including inquiry-based learning, critical thinking and communication skills, which were achieved through undergraduate research and presentation. Kaiser B et al. (2014) argue that the objectives of undergraduate research overlap those of a liberal arts education and can be used as a method to encourage critical thinking beyond science and math. To be sure, the participation of undergraduates in research has become embedded in the training of students in the sciences and math and is exemplified by the capstone project, which culminates engineering training. These same skills, including hands-on, inquiry based learning, can be just as important to the student in professional schools, humanities and the social sciences.

This academic year saw the first participation of students in the Undergraduate Research at the Capital (URC) event in Harrisburg, Pa., the National Council for Undergraduate Research (NCUR) annual meeting in Lexington, Ky., and the sixth year for our own Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Symposium. These events were in addition to the well-established Undergraduate Research Program (URP) conducted by the Bayer School. One striking observation this year was the number of participating students and their faculty mentors from many of the diverse disciplines represented at Duquesne, as well participation by the sciences and math. The external events, NCUR and URC, included outstanding students from Music, Computer Science, Biological Sciences and Nursing, reflecting the character of research across our campus. Importantly this year, the quality of the posters and presentations continued to improve, a credit to the faculty mentors who are supporting these student researchers.

Next year will bring new opportunities for our students. We hope that the new opportunities made available this year, as well as our established programs, will continue to enhance the learning opportunities for our undergraduates and support of our Mission. We also expect that our undergraduate researchers will continue to display the value of a Duquesne education on both the local and national stage.


Biomedical Engineering

Biomedical Engineering began as a University program on Sept. 1, 2013 in response to an initiative to consider bringing the academic field of engineering to Duquesne University. Since September, the Biomedical Engineering program has brought on a director and staff, recruited its first class of students, began construction of classrooms, labs and facilities, and initiated an NIH funded research program in cancer detection.

In September, Duquesne University recruited John A. Viator, Ph.D., as founding Director of the Biomedical Engineering Program. Shortly thereafter, the program hired Mary Jo Babinsack to head up business management and academic advising. In addition to the existing office suite, Biomedical Engineering is building laboratories and classrooms, in addition to lounge and office space in Libermann Hall. The current phase includes 2000 square feet of laboratory space, a student lounge, additional offices and a flagship 36-seat classroom.

The inaugural class of students will arrive in August 2014. The admissions process was selective, with the goal of enrolling 20 students from a pool of approximately 130 applicants. Of those students accepted into the program, the average grade point average was 3.8 and the average SAT score was 1280. In addition to recruiting students, the Biomedical Engineering curriculum was developed to provide an innovative learning experience designed to meet ABET accreditation requirements. The curriculum includes 52 engineering credits, 53 mathematics and sciences credits and the 28 credit Duquesne Core. First year Biomedical Engineering coursework has been developed and includes BMED 100 Introduction to Biomedical Engineering, which introduces the Arduino microcontroller, SolidWorks modeling software and LabView for computer control of instrumentation. These systems will be used in the context of designing medical devices and processes. BMED 101 Introduction to Programming for Engineers introduces the Matlab programming environment. Matlab will be used to solve problems and simulate systems applied to challenges in human health.

The Biomedical Engineering Program includes a research effort to bring about innovation in medicine and biology and to provide students experience in this realm. Dr. Viator was awarded $1,400,000 from the National Cancer Institute for photoacoustic detection and capture of circulating melanoma cells for early cancer diagnosis. This award involves Duquesne resources and personnel and brings in collaborators from the University of Pittsburgh and University of Missouri. The Biomedical Engineering Program is also bringing in researchers in orthopedic biomechanics and imaging to expand the research focus areas.

Center for African Studies

Established in July 2012, the Center for African Studies launched its courses and interdisciplinary minor in African Studies during the 2013-2014 academic year. With a total of 19 interdisciplinary courses from multiple schools on campus currently available to students, the Center has been able to register 126 students in its courses over this academic year and has an initial pre-registration number of 82 students for Fall 2014. The initial group of four minors has grown to seven over the school year and students appear to develop greater interest in African Studies, once they have taken a course in the area.

In addition to its academic programs, also launched was the Building Relationships with Africa series of informal seminars sought to bring together faculty, staff, administrators and students, who have undertaken or are interested in research, teaching and service in Africa and African Studies. These seminars looked at the challenges to building relationships with Africa and at strategies to overcome them. With presentations and participation over the year from undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, deans, administrators and President Dougherty, the seminars were able to present a range of engagement by members of the University community and to identify avenues for strengthening the University’s African initiative.

Professor Mary Getui of Nairobi, Kenya, who chairs the Kenyan government’s National AIDS Control Council, accepted the Center’s invitation to visit our campus community in March 2014. Her feature presentation on Women and HIV/AIDS: Cultural Challenges and Transformation in Contemporary East Africa gave a very clear statistical and cultural depiction of the effect of AIDS on women in East Africa and provided the basis for a response by Professor Esther Acolatse from Duke University. This presentation is available on the Center’s website at www.duq.edu/cas. Professor Getui also gave informal talks at a couple of African Studies classes and at a meeting of the World Issues Forum in Theology.

As part of incentives and initiatives to build its courses and publications in the area, Faculty Course Development Grants
and the Rev. Alphons Loogman, C.S.Sp., Faculty Research Grants are offered by the Center to encourage faculty input and participation in African Studies programs at the University. The Loogman research grant opportunity, named after a noted Spiritan scholar on Swahili grammar at Duquesne’s earlier Institute for African Affairs, and which is offered for the first time this year, will promote quality publications that reflect Duquesne’s mission focus on the continent of Africa.

Keeping in mind this mission focus on the continent of Africa, the Center, in collaboration with the Office of International Programs, the College of Liberal Arts and the Spiritan University College, Ejisu, Ghana, will be offering study abroad courses in May 2014 in Ghana. Following this, also in collaboration with the Office of International Programs and the Spiritan University College, Ejisu, planning is underway to have the popular Maymester for May 2015 held in Ghana.

Involving the whole campus community across academic and administrative lines, the Center for African Studies is helping to shape and fulfill the University’s mission focus on Africa and the African diaspora.
Center for Teaching Excellence

Celebration of Teaching Excellence

At the annual Celebration of Teaching Excellence on April 10, Provost Austin conferred the Graduate Student Awards for Excellence in Teaching and the Creative Teaching Awards. Also honored were approximately 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. Sixteen recipients received their certificates at the recent Celebration of Teaching Excellence. Erin Rentschler and Mike McGravey, CTE graduate assistants, organized three new sessions this year: Peer Review of CV and Cover Letters (with Dr. James Purdy, English); Developing Your Teaching Persona (with award winner, Ashley Kunska, English); and Elevator Talks for the Academic Interview (with Dr. Alexandra Gregory, Dr. Maureen O’Brien, Dr. Philip Reeder and Dr. Laurel Willingham-McLain). Steven Hansen and Erin Rentschler are part of a national team that has written competencies for future faculty. Their article, Lenses and Recommendations for Helping Graduate Students Assess and Improve Teaching in Community, is slated to appear in the 2014 special issue of Studies in Graduate & Professional Student Development.

In addition to the annual partnership with the English as a Second Language Program to provide an orientation to incoming international teaching assistants, CTE collaborated with the Office of International Programs to offer a workshop on teaching Chinese students. Out of this event, international graduate students from other nations stepped forward to coordinate and serve as panelists for the session, Understanding International Graduate Students’ Experiences and Perspectives.

At this year’s Discovering the Teacher-Scholar Nexus workshop, panelists explored ways in which they had made connections between teaching and research that informed and energized their work. They led participants in exploring the teacher-scholar nexus and planning their own next steps.

CTE partnered with Educational Technology to support faculty in online teaching. Together, they offered Creating a Powerful Online Learning Experience where faculty participants could experience both student and faculty roles in the online environment. They led a team of 10 faculty and staff in writing a Quality Online Course Rubric, which has been piloted in the School of Nursing. They conducted surveys on student technology expectations and uses, and out of that, created a workshop, Apps Students Are Using to Study. They offered the session, Maximizing Your Time and Deepening Student Learning by Flipping Your Class, to three groups.

Duquesne University Press

The Duquesne University Press has published nine new titles since last spring’s edition of Academic Affairs in Review:

- The Intersubjectivity of Time: Levinas and Infinite Responsibility by Yael Lin (Ben-Gurion University, Israel)
- A History of Political Ideas from Antiquity to the Middle Ages by Philippe Nemo (Ecole Superieure de Commerce, Paris) [translated from French]
- The Literary Invention of Margaret Cavendish by Lara Dodds (Mississippi State University)
- Levinas Studies: An Annual Review, Volume 8, edited by Jeffrey Bloechl (Boston College)
- Milton and the Poetics of Freedom by Susanne Woods (Wheaton College / University of Miami, Fla.)
- Levinas and Asian Thought, edited by Leah Kalmanson (Drake University), Frank Garrett (independent scholar) and Sarah Mattice (University of North Florida)
- Rethinking Shakespeare’s Skepticism: The Aesthetics of Doubt in the Sonnets and Plays by Suzanne Tartamella (Henderson State University)
- Ontology after Ontotheology: Plurality, Event, and Contingency in Contemporary Philosophy by Gert-Jan van der Heiden (Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands)
- Milton Studies 54, edited by Laura L. Knoppers (Pennsylvania State University)

The Nemo book, originally published in French and also translated into several other languages, was the recipient of the Koeningswarter Prize of the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, awarded for the best academic book on legal history during a five-year period. Following the publication of our English-language edition, Foreword magazine named it one of ten “Can’t Miss Gift Books” in their holiday issue.

Additionally, two Duquesne University Press titles have been chosen for breakout book sessions at this year’s North American Levinas Society meeting:

And a Japanese edition of *The Descriptive Phenomenological Method in Psychology* by Amedeo Giorgi, published by Duquesne University Press in 2009, was released in late fall 2013. A Korean version of the book is also under discussion.

**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 and student system implementations. Our focus remains constant: it 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.

In fall 2013, EMG staff members representing enrollment systems, graduate admissions, enrollment marketing and EMG operations, previously housed in three different campus locations, were joined together in one new space on the second floor of Libermann Hall. This allows for more collaboration and efficiency.

A key objective of the EMG is to implement advanced software tools to improve student services and maintain a competitive market position. Following is an update on two key initiatives that involve the use of technology to enhance operations:

**Banner Document Management (BDM)**

EMG led the implementation of Banner Document Management (BDM) system for Undergraduate Admissions, the Office of the University Registrar and Financial Aid. All three departments now have unique coding and indexing strategies for a paperless environment. The project not only involved determining how to store documents, but departments also needed to develop new business practices on how to make decisions in a paperless environment. Advisors have been trained and will be able to begin reviewing all admission documentation for incoming freshman, transfer and second degree students entering the University for the fall 2014 semester by viewing documents on the Banner system, rather than paper files.

**Ellucian Recruiter**

EMG is leading the implementation of Recruiter for Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions which will further enable a high-tech/high-touch approach in addition to continually meeting with prospective students in person and by phone. The implementation of Recruiter, a sophisticated relationship management tool, allows the creation of a new online application as well as enhanced communication capabilities for prospective students, applicants and other constituents. Metrics will also enable the EMG to better evaluate processes and find ways to be more efficient.

This new tool allows for the admission applications to be much more visually appealing than the current Banner application as well as simplifies the application process which will enhance the user experience. Planning is in place to go-live with a freshman, transfer and a second degree application that will service both domestic and international students for the Fall 2015 cycle, with graduate applications to follow shortly thereafter.

Recruiter enables EMG/Admissions to maximize current recruitment efforts by allowing counselors to better manage communications from the prospect through the student level. Counselors will also be able to personalize and increase communication with prospective students, map touch points, build custom reports and more.

**University Registrar**

In 2013, the Classroom Committee reached a milestone as the work to bring all University-Registrar-managed classrooms up to the University’s classroom technology standard was completed. Every classroom seating 18 or more students is now equipped with the University standard of technology, which includes a computer, video projector, DVD player, audio speakers, laptop inputs and internet access. Some rooms also contain a VCR, Blu-Ray player and/or HDMI input.

With technology efforts complete, College Hall was identified as the first building to be evaluated for physical improvements. During the 2013-2014 academic year, 12 of the 17 classrooms were furnished with new student and instructor seating, and the rooms were painted, including an “accent” wall. In the lecture halls, new instructor seating was purchased to make working at the computer/podium more accessible and comfortable.

Faculty and students teaching or attending class in one of the upgraded rooms during the fall 2013 semester were sent a
satisfaction survey. The survey results indicated that, overall, an improvement in these teaching and learning spaces was realized with the installation of new furniture and adding new paint/fresh colors to the rooms.

**Undergraduate Retention and Advisement**

Student retention continues to be a key initiative of the EMG. In July 2013, J.D. Douglas was appointed Director of Retention and Advisement, the first time there has been a dedicated retention position at the University. The retention effort is supported by the University Retention Committee, which is comprised of colleagues around campus who continue to seek ways to enhance retention.

In an effort to assist students in the registration process, the Retention Office collaborated with Student Accounts and CTS to create a new notification process so that any holds preventing registration are visible when a student logs into DORI. Quick links and contacts were provided to assist students in resolving the holds.

The President and Provost funded the creation of a new Retention Fund this year. We were able to retain academically talented, but financially at-risk, students through the use of these new funds.

Retention efforts continue to have a positive impact. The most recent fall 2012 to fall 2013 freshman retention rate of 88.7% was the second highest in University history and higher than the national average. Additionally, 97% of fall 2013 freshmen returned for the spring 2014 semester, the highest in University history. A strong retention rate is important because it can influence our financial profile, credit ratings, faculty recruitment, opinion surveys and how academically talented, prospective students and their parent(s) perceive the University. Our latest rate is also a re-affirmation that we are meeting both the Spiritan mission of service to our students as well as a core tenet of our strategic plan. It is our hope that we will be able to increase our freshman retention rate to 90% within the next several years.

Higher retention rates are also directly correlated to higher graduation rates. This past year, Duquesne saw its highest six-year graduation rate. The two point increase to 76% reflects a positive difference over the 65% six-year graduation rates for private, nonprofit universities.

Two years ago, a survey was developed by the Student Government Association, Undergraduate Advisement and the EMG to evaluate student expectations and level of service provided by the undergraduate advisors. Once again, this survey is being deployed to a random sample of undergraduate students at each level. With a good response rate again, we anticipate to receive valuable information.

Advisors continued to participate in the collection of information for the University Retention Committee on students who appear to be at-risk of leaving. As mentioned above, collective efforts have led to the second highest retention rate in University history.

Last year, advisors attended a seminar to assist them in using coaching techniques in their interactions with students. This year, advisors continued to hone their coaching skills by learning about coaching models used at other universities and how they help to improve student retention.

Advisors also participated in a webinar for measuring and improving academic grit in first-year students. In this session, they learned how to promote persistence and performance by helping first-year students apply assessment-based strategies to improve four key non-cognitive skills: self-efficacy, academic engagement, educational commitment and campus engagement.

**Financial Aid**

The Department of Education continues to add new requirements for the management of Financial Aid. The Financial Aid Office continues to identify ways to streamline and increase quality of service. Some examples of these efforts follow.

Beginning in the fall 2013 term, paper promissory notes were eliminated for Federal and Institutional Loan programs and all forms were completed through an electronic e-sign process. This is more efficient with a greater turnaround in the disbursement of funds.

In the spring 2014 term, the Pennsylvania State Grant Reconciliation Process was automated. This was previously an extensive manual effort and the automation has greatly reduced the time and effort in completing this process. The PA State Grant is a multimillion dollar grant that serves over 2,500 students with nearly $6 million dollars.

Award packages for prospective students for the 2014-15 academic year are being processed. The department began sending out the packages in late February 2014. The majority of institutions do not send out their packages until March.
Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions

Spring is always a crucial time of year for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions as we realize the collaborative efforts of colleagues across the campus in servicing our accepted applicant population. Our goal to recruit and enroll an exceptionally talented and diverse freshman class of 2014 will come to fruition on May 1, known nationally as “deposit day.”

We followed a record-breaking fall 2012 with a fall 2013 class that was the largest in the history of the University and one of the best academically prepared, based on selectivity, standardized test scores and high school grades. Another record-breaking freshman class enrollment for fall 2014 is not forecasted due to applicant count, competitive behavior and economic challenges. However, we continue to schedule daily campus visits for prospective students, applicants and their families; communicate with electronic and postal mailings, social media and phone calls; and just finished school specific weekend preview days.

This past year’s Graduate Admissions efforts included: continued recruitment at regional graduate college fairs in Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio and West Virginia; collaborating with Career Services to host the annual Graduate College Fair on campus in September; implementation of a veteran’s tuition calculator for SLPA, which was recognized with the 2013 Team Award; full implementation of a new graduate student survey; and GRE name purchase with targeted program and University recruitment pulses.

Current projects and upcoming goals include: school-specific consulting regarding the management of the applicant to student pipeline and associated staffing; implementation of a graduate student exit survey beginning with the Graduate School of Liberal Arts, and a goal of campus wide implementation in 2015; development and enhancement of school and program communications in conjunction with Recruiter; development of a financial aid brochure targeted specifically for prospective graduate students; and improve communications related to GRE name purchases.

Gumberg Library

From June 23 through August 2, Gumberg Library will host a traveling exhibit, *Everyday Miracles: Medical Imagery in Ex-Votos*, from The National Library of Medicine (NLM). This exhibit presents examples of the ex-votos tradition of devotional art created in times of illness and despair. These paintings are a response of gratitude to the heavens for a miraculous healing. This interdisciplinary exhibit, *Everyday Miracles*, examines the intriguing intersection of medicine, art and theology. It has value for students, faculty and staff in the health sciences, theology and art history, and also potentially for others in English, history and modern languages. The display will be available to view on the fifth floor of Duquesne’s Gumberg Library.

A redesigned Printing Zone at Gumberg Library makes it easier than ever for users to get the documents they need quickly and efficiently. On the fourth floor, three printers separated by document sorting stations now face the main study area. New furniture has streamlined the printer setup and maximized space—reducing lines and clutter; while an additional printer has been added near the fifth floor music center. Less visible updates have accompanied the physical redesign. Now, each computer is assigned to a specific printer, indicated by corresponding labels. This ensures that users know where to pick up their documents. Computing and Technology Services also introduced wireless printing, which allows users to print from their own laptops.

The library collaborated with Residence Life to provide “Research to Go” to students at Towers and St. Ann’s Living Learning Centers for mid-terms and finals. This new service offered students the opportunity to use the library’s recently purchased iPads for individual research consultations.

The library is pleased to announce access to JoVE—The Journal of Visualized Experiments. This peer-reviewed journal is devoted to publishing biological, medical, chemical and physical research in video format. JoVE creates and edits videos of researchers performing new experimental techniques at top universities, allowing students and scientists to learn them much more quickly. Learn more about JoVE at [http://guides.library.duq.edu/JOVE](http://guides.library.duq.edu/JOVE). Although the library’s subscription covers only the general section, videos older than two years are freely available through PubMed.

The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center held its 32nd annual symposium, *Phenomenology and the African & Africana Worlds*, in February. The symposium was designed to offer phenomenological reflections on the challenges, possibilities and insights present in African and Diaspora thought. Phenomenology was examined as an approach to understanding and illuminating different dimensions of African and Africana experience, and conversely, African and Africana experience were examined in light of how they might challenge or illuminate traditional understandings and applications of phenomenology. Dr. Tsenay Serequeberhan (Morgan State University) presented a paper titled,
Continental and African Philosophy: A Thematic Encounter, that addressed the themes present in African experience. Dr. Elias K. Bongmba’s (Rice University) paper, titled Phenomenology of the Face: African Perspectives, spoke to the significance of the face and the gaze in the African tradition. Dr. Kathryn T. Gines’ (Pennsylvania State University) paper, Black Looks: Objectification, Subjectivity, and ‘Looking Back,’ examined the experience of being black in the life world. Finally, Dr. Valentin Y. Mudimbe’s (Duke University) paper, Phenomenology and an African Practice: A Testimony, highlighted the linguistic capacities and challenges present in the African tradition. The symposium was well attended and attracted a variety of guests, including a few out-of-state attendees.

International Programs

For the first time in 13 years, Duquesne University added to our international footprint as we opened Duquesne in Dublin. The Irish Spiritans generously offered us their historic St. Michael’s House, an 1860 Italian Romanesque mansion on the prestigious Ailesbury Road. Ailesbury Road, the “Park Avenue” of Dublin, lies only one mile away from Ireland’s top university, the University College Dublin (UCD). About 20 students can live in this special house each semester and walk easily to UCD and to a wide range of cultural and historic sites in the friendly city of Dublin. During this first year of operation, 53 students, in the fall and spring semesters, wisely jumped at the opportunity to stay in this house and study abroad in Ireland. Students in liberal arts, natural science, business and health professions took advantage of the rich array of course offerings at UCD while finding time to travel around Ireland and to Paris, Rome and distant destinations. Some of our student teachers also stayed at the house while student teaching at the Spiritan schools in Dublin.

Media Services and Distribution Center (MSDC)

For the past two years, MSDC has been reporting directly to Dr. Jeff Miller and have focused on expanding and exploring classroom technologies. As of this academic year, 96% of all registrar controlled classrooms have been outfitted with a standardized base of technology. A consistent experience of a classroom computer, LCD projector and associated AV system is available in all registrar classrooms with a capacity greater than 16.

MSDC has also been tasked with finding ways to provide an environment of “irreplaceable” experiences in the brick and mortar classrooms. This task not only involves supplementing existing equipment, but also exploring emerging technologies and trends. One major trend in today’s world of classroom design is the creation of collaborative spaces. Working with external contractors, the MSDC was involved in the design and development of the first FlexTech collaborative space on campus.
308 Rockwell Hall is a classroom designed for group work that contains a 70” interactive touchscreen monitor (the Mondopad), and moveable furniture configured for groups of five students, each with its own 55” flat panel monitor. The room provides connectivity for student laptops, the ability to send group displays anywhere around the room and also features video conferencing capabilities.

The MSDC is currently working on a second FlexTech classroom, totally designed and installed in-house like most other classrooms that will be unveiled fall 2014. 442 Fisher Hall will provide somewhat similar functionality to 308 Rockwell. Although this room will not provide video conferencing capabilities, it will include a computer at each group table, a focal point for instructors and the ability to display split screens across the flat panels and throughout the room.

In addition to classroom design, other projects that are a focus of their work include: moving classrooms into the digital world for mobile connectivity; installing interactive touch screen monitors; computers with solid-state disk drives and interactive projectors; and exploring desktop and classroom lecture capture options.
Pre-Medical and Health Professions Program

Under the new leadership of Dr. Paula Sammarone Turocy, Director, and Associate Director, Amy Whittington, the Pre-Medical and Health Professions Programs (PMHPP) is taking on an expanded initiative – to provide comprehensive advisement and professional preparation for not only pre-medical, dental, optometric, chiropractic and podiatric students, but now also offering these same services for students interested in pre-health professional (eg, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant) preparation. The PMHPP currently has over 200 undergraduate students in its undergraduate programs, representing academic majors from all but two schools at the University. In addition to completing the requirements for their academic majors, these undergraduate students also must pursue the pre-requisites needed for entrance into medical, dental and other professional schools upon completion of their degrees at Duquesne. As part of their retention requirements for the program, the students also will be required to participate in basic pre-medical learning activities, gain basic clinical skills and certifications, become involved in professional and interprofessional educational opportunities, become familiar with evidence-based practice medicine and participate in both mandatory and volunteer/observation experiences.

Undergraduate students must be enrolled in an academic major at the University; the PMHPP designation is only assigned to those students who make formal application to the program and who meet the entrance and retention standards which will be in effect with the class entering in fall 2014. There is also a post-baccalaureate certificate program available for those students who have completed their undergraduate degrees, but who have not yet met all of the pre-requisite requirements for medical and other professional schools. These graduate students, classified as either career changers (new line of study) or enhancers (have some but not all requirements), often combine their post-baccalaureate certificate work with an advanced Master’s degree in any School at the University.

Currently, the PMHPP has linkage programs with Temple University Medical School (Duquesne University-Temple University Bachelor/MD Program) and the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) (Duquesne University-LECOM 4+4 Linkage Program). These linkage programs accept undergraduate students at the freshman level, allowing a very elite group of students to secure their seats for admission into medical school after graduation from Duquesne if they meet the more rigorous entrance requirements of both Duquesne and the medical school, meet all retention standards for Duquesne and meet all entrance requirements for the appropriate medical school including MCAT scores. There also are early assurance programs available through both Schools that allow rising Duquesne junior students to be considered earlier than traditional medical school applicants for seats in the medical schools.

Finally, there are two post-graduate linkage programs. The first with LECOM that allows Duquesne post-baccalaureate certificate students to be considered uniquely as compared to students from other universities. The second is with Temple, for students in the career changer track only. There are plans in the near future to pursue more such linkage agreements. For more information about the PMHPP programs, please refer to the website www.duq.edu/pmhp.

The Spiritan Division

The Robert and Patricia Gussin Spiritan Division hosted its 17th annual Spiritan Division Celebration on Feb. 21, 2014. The evening began with a Mass celebrated by Fr. Daniel Walsh, Director of Spiritan Campus Ministry. Mr. Paul-James Cukanna delivered the welcome address, and Rev. Bill Christy presented the Spiritan Congregation message.

The recipients of this year’s Michael P. Weber Memorial Scholarship, awarded annually to high performing Division freshmen, were Colby Simpson, Mason Cook, Maximillian Heinauer and Taren Peoples. 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 39 students who qualified to compete. To contend, students submit an application that 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 Students of the Year for 2013-2014 are John Foster and Hannah Scipio.

Division freshman enrollment for 2013-2014 totaled 60 students, representing 10 different states. The fall term grades of these students reveal that the trend of exemplary academic performance continues: 43% earned 3.0 or higher; 76% earned between 2.5 and above; and 91% earned at least a 2.0 QPA. Six students of the Division’s entering freshman class attained Dean’s List. It is also noteworthy that students who begin their education at Duquesne as Spiritan Division students continue to do well once they have transferred to the College or one of the Colleges as demonstrated by the fact that of the 201 undergraduate students
enrolled throughout the University in 2013-2014, 12% achieved Dean’s list. As of December 2013, 340 students who began their educations as Spiritan Division students have received undergraduate degrees—160 from McAnulty College, 122 from the School of Business, 32 from the School of Education, 10 from the School of Nursing, four from the School of Music, four from the School of Leadership, three from the School of Pharmacy, one from the School of Natural and Environmental Sciences and four from the School of Health Sciences. Nineteen students have earned Master’s degrees; and, currently, an additional seven students are pursuing graduate degrees—one in the Law School and one in the School of Pharmacy.

The Michael P. Weber Learning Skills Center

The Learning Skills Center offers a wide-range of services to the University and Pittsburgh community. On Jan. 22, 2014, the Weber Learning Skills Center and Gussin Spiritan Division became the first recipients of the Whole Child, Whole Community Partner Award by the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education “for demonstrating a strong commitment to public education and the success of Pittsburgh Public Schools students.” 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 are engaged in a service learning experience and are tutoring and mentoring 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. During 2012-2013, 30 tutors provided services for our on-campus PACT Program, as well as for our community partners. This year’s 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 are serving 25 students through our on-campus phase of PACT this year.

The Jerome Bettis Bus Stops Here Foundation partnership will begin its sixth year of operation this summer. The purpose of the partnership is to advance the mission of the Foundation to improve the overall quality of life for troubled and underprivileged inner-city youth by increasing participants’ computer knowledge and access to technology for the students and their families. To earn ownership of a computer, each year students complete an eight-week program on Duquesne’s campus Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. To date, 152 students have completed the program and 16 students were enrolled for the fall 2013 session, which served high school students for the first time.

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 167 students have completed the Summer Institute.

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 Center’s Act 101 service population had a cumulative QPA at the end of fall 2013 for the 2013-2014 academic year of 3.01. In the 2013-2014 academic year, 150 students were reported as Act 101 eligible and ten students earned their degrees.

Tutoring is available in course subjects, 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. Between summer 2013 and spring 2014, requests reached nearly 1,050. As usual, science courses were the most requested. 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 2.00. During academic year, 2013-2014, 1,854 contacts were made with University students regarding low performance of which 117 students responded. At end of fall 2013, 72% of 47 students who received D or F improved their grades. For academic year 2012-2013, 31% of students tutored and/or counseled received 3.0 or higher QPA.

Strategies for Academic Success, Introduction to University Success, Pathways to Success experienced success, high performance and retention. During 2013-2014, students enrolled in Strategies for Academic Success earned an end of fall 2013 semester average QPA of 3.36 and 96% retention fall to spring. Introduction to University Success students performed well with an average QPA of 3.43 and 97.4% retention fall to spring. And, students enrolled in its counterpart, Seminar for New International Students, ended the term with an average QPA of 3.71 and a fall to spring retention rate of 100%. Pathways to Success is a required course for second semester freshmen who earned QPAs below 2.00 their first term. Thirty-seven students are currently enrolled in this course for spring 2014.