Message from the Provost

BY DR. RALPH PEARSON
Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs

The focus of this issue of Academic Affairs in Review is upon our professional colleagues in support services who work collaboratively with the faculty in guiding our students in pursuit of their educational goals. We are more familiar with the responsibilities of some of them than we are of others. The support they provide students enables us on the faculty to focus on our teaching and research. Together, they and the faculty are a team who make Duquesne a strong academic institution that students want to attend.

In this, my valedictory to you as provost, it is hard to express fully the gratitude I feel for the opportunity President Dougherty and you gave me to serve for 12 years in that role. My gratitude extends to every member of the Duquesne community. In addition to all of my colleagues in academic affairs, the community for me has also included student life and institutional advancement professionals, all who serve with responsibilities reporting to the chief financial officer, and campus ministry. Whether you are hourly or exempt staff, I shall always remember the kindness and patience you extended to me. This is truly a learning community that lives its mission to serve God by serving students. I wish you continued great success in your professional lives, and in your personal lives the joy of giving and receiving love.

The deadline for submission to the fall issue of Academic Affairs in Review is July 31, 2013. All items should be submitted via email to Renee Stockey at stockeyr@duq.edu.
Reflections from the Associate Provost/AAVP – Enrollment and Admissions

BY PAUL-JAMES CUKANNA

When I think, I often “doodle.” There is probably a paternal link to this behavior – my father dabbled in drawing and painting for most of his life. My “doodles” are usually subject specific. When my thoughts are focused on Duquesne, the gothic ‘D’ is usually my doodle of preference. I default to the gothic D because, to me, it is the symbol that most reflects the mission, history and brand of our University. To our prospective students and their parents – it is the icon that represents the hopes, dreams and promises of their future. It is a visual and emotional representation of the physical place where they can attain an education for the mind, heart and spirit. A safe space where generations of undergraduate, graduate and professional students from all backgrounds have, and will continue to, experience our academic traditions and achieve successes. I was one of those students.

In regard to brand symbols and physical spaces, when I commute to the Bluff from my home in the east end section of the city, I often travel the Fifth Avenue corridor that intersects the perimeters of the Chatham, Carnegie Mellon, Pitt and Carlow university campuses. I’ve come to realize that each institution is different. Despite what the public may think or say – none is more important than the other. Each school plays a specific role in the higher education marketplace, the region and society.

From my professional experiences I’ve learned there are many things that can define a great university – location, age, mission, architecture, faculty, research, athletics, alumni and, of course, its students. Students are the priority of our University – institutional leaders such as Dougherty, Hogan and Pearson would have it no other way. Students are the fabric of our mission (the reason for our existence) and the financial vitality of the University is largely dependent upon their enrollment.

I’ve had my fair share of chats with President Dougherty and Provost Pearson since they formed the Enrollment Management Group (EMG) almost five years ago. During this time, the EMG has evolved from the initial concept of merging admissions and financial aid to an integrated and complex group of some 60 employees with a portfolio of services ranging from the recruitment of students, management of financial aid, registration, classroom management, retention, graduation, internal consultations on enrollment issues, research and analysis, student system implementations to student resource advocacy.

I am a first generation college student who had the good fortune of access and choice in higher education. The concepts of access and choice are largely based on a belief that funds will be available to assist those academically qualified prospective students who could not afford the cost of attendance. As the enrollment manager at this selective private institution, it is my advocacy for both access and choice that has always driven me and has sometimes placed me at odds with others seeking additional funding for their responsibility areas. It is my personal belief that if economic access were not a barrier, then more private, selective institutions would be as socioeconomically diverse as Duquesne.

Investments in student financial aid have dramatically outpaced all other University expenditures during the Dougherty administration. While we still have a ways to go to be competitive with certain other wealthier, private institutions, my EMG colleagues and I are grateful. This support allows us to attract, retain and graduate an academically qualified and diverse population of students each academic year.

Some of my more technologically advanced (read: younger) colleagues think I would be a more sophisticated doodler if I were to use my iPad...
EMG oversees the University Retention Committee, which is comprised of several colleagues around campus. The most recent freshman retention rate of 88.8% was the second highest in University history and much higher than the national average. 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, with the implementation of additional enrollment management tools, campus community education and the creation of a ”centralized” retention fund to address special circumstances, we will be able to increase our freshman retention rate to 90% within the next several years.

Following are updates from several EMG departments.

**Enrollment Research and Systems (ERS)**

ERS has been busy over the past year implementing a variety of Banner enhancements and engaging and supporting enrollment research and technology efforts. We oversaw the successful completion of three new Banner releases in the past six months. We participated in and co-facilitated the review of various customer relationship management (CRM) products, along with CTS and Admissions, leading to the successful determination to purchase Recruiter, the Ellucian CRM product which integrates seamlessly with Banner.

ERS continues to manage the complete build of curriculum requirements from the University Catalog into Banner for two remaining graduate schools: Pharmaceutical Sciences and Music. We continue to evaluate and update the current curriculum builds as necessary. Additionally, ERS worked collaboratively with Graduate Admissions and CTS to implement the Graduate and Law enrollment deposit protocols.

JD Douglas, the Director of ERS, is leading a team of individuals from various offices on campus in implementing an Early Alert System (Starfish) which will be integrated with Banner. The tool will assist in retention efforts by providing information at a point prior to midterms to assist advisors in reaching out to students and making appropriate referrals for tutoring and other student services intervention.

**Banner Document Management (BDM) System — a combined effort within the Enrollment Management Group**

The Office of Enrollment Research and Systems lead the implementation of the Banner Document Management (BDM) system for the three largest departments in the Enrollment Management Group. Undergraduate Admissions, The Office of the University Registrar and Financial Aid have all designed unique coding and indexing strategies to move to 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. This is a time consuming but necessary project and will eventually lead to reducing the number of files that we carry in our offices. Advisors will be able to review all student
information by viewing documents on the Banner system rather than retrieving hard files.

The goal of the project is to have the entering Undergraduate class’ Admissions and Financial Aid material scanned into the Banner system by the end of the summer. This fall, the Office of the University Registrar will begin scanning all documents related to matriculated students.

University Registrar

Most students can now apply for graduation online using the Banner Self-Service system. The use of the system eliminated paper and also eliminated data entry that was done both at the school level and by the Office of the University Registrar. In addition, it allows for “cleaner” data, as the students select from the system the program for which they’re applying, eliminating the need to double-check programs of study if they were mislabeled on the paper degree application. The use of this online system has been very successful – with more than 85% average use since the program began in May 2012.

The 2012-2013 academic year saw the addition of new classroom space to the campus as we extended our footprint on Fifth Avenue. Five new classrooms in Libermann Hall were scheduled for the first time, and one is a state-of-the-art lecture hall that seats 128 people. These rooms are also equipped with educational technology, including projectors, computers, DVD/VCR combos and two have symposium monitors.

A campus-wide project team implemented 25Live, a new online scheduling and event management system. This new system gives faculty, staff and students the opportunity to view available space and to book events, schedule classes and reserve space online. Over 150 shared spaces can now be reserved through the use of the new system, and event confirmations are sent by email. The Office of the University Registrar, along with Student Involvement, University Events, Conference Services, the Power Center and CTS, as well as Business and JMA computer lab owners, completed the implementation in the summer of 2012, and training for campus users began in January 2013. Visit the website at www.duq.edu/25live.

The classroom committee, chaired by University Registrar Kimberly Hoeritz, will have reached a milestone at the end of this fiscal year. For a number of years, the committee has been working toward getting all of the shared classrooms up to the University technology standards. All classrooms that seat 20 or more students will have a computer, projector, DVD/VCR player and screen. The committee will be working on a technology solution for the smaller classrooms as well. Lauren Turin, manager of media services and distribution, oversees technology in the classrooms.

Undergraduate Advisement

The undergraduate advisement group continued to collect data for the first and second cohorts on learning assessment of the advisement process. This will be the last year of data collection for the first cohort. Four years of information will have been collected for this group. This data will be analyzed and shared with the entire group at the end of the academic year. The group will then begin to utilize the data to make informed decisions regarding our media based information and programming to ensure that the students can meet learning outcome targets.

Starfish online appointment system continues to work well for our students. The added early warning features of this tool are used by the Schools of Business and Nursing and added for students in the School of Leadership and Professional Advancement. Advisors met with representatives of Starfish to discuss the features that work well for our student population and the next steps for the future development of the tool.

Advisors continued to participate in the collection of information for the University Retention Committee on students who decide to leave the University. The group participated in training during the semester as the process was changed to ensure FERPA compliance.

The survey developed by the SGA, Undergraduate Advisement and the EMG to evaluate student expectations and level of service provided by the undergraduate advisors was completed. The survey was distributed to 6,276 undergraduate students via Student Voice. The undergraduate student response was 1,217. Results were analyzed over the summer and aggregate results were shared with several groups on campus including the undergraduate advisement group. Presentations of each individual school’s results were developed and meetings were held with each school’s advisors to discuss the results. Best practices and areas for improvement were examined.

As a result of the survey data, a two-session coaching seminar was developed to encourage advisors to utilize coaching techniques in their interactions with students. Faculty of the professional coaching program, offered by the School of Leadership and Professional Advancement,
developed the seminar utilizing data collected during the expectations survey. Advisors learned and developed skills to provide opportunities for intentional conversations and strengthen relationships with their student advisees. Participant evaluations were positive and encouraging.

Advisement notecards were developed with the purpose to remind students of important resources available to them on campus and to note any action steps the student was directed to take as a result of their advisement appointment. A point of service survey was also conducted during the spring 2012 pre-registration for fall 2013 semester.

Financial Aid

It has been another busy year in the Financial Aid Office. The Department of Education continues to add new disclosure requirements. The University Net Price Calculator, found on the University’s Consumer Information for Students website, has been updated as required. Prospective students have the opportunity to input their personal information to receive an estimated academic year net price after grants and scholarships (gift aid) is calculated to assist them in preparing to attend Duquesne. We are ready to update the Net Price Calculator with current figures as soon as the Department of Education releases the new template.

The Financial Aid Office staff continues to work very hard on supporting student retention. With the assistance of other departments on campus, we reached out to students that had financial difficulties and possible holds on their future registration status with early intervention and financial advice. We continue to monitor these situations prior to pre-registration periods so our students can prepare for future terms without delays.

We are in the final stages of converting our Federal and Institutional loan promissory notes from a paper process to an electronic e-sign process. Students will be able to submit these documents online effective in the fall 2013 term.

Award packages for prospective students for the 2013-14 academic year are being processed. We began sending out the packages in late February 2013, the second earliest date in history. Approximately 2,700 packages have been sent to prospective students.

Admissions/Graduate Admissions

Springtime brings excitement to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions as the staff begins to realize the collaborative efforts of colleagues across the campus in servicing our accepted student population. We continue to schedule daily campus visits for students and their families; communicate with electronic and postal mailings, social media and phone calls; and assist with school specific weekend preview days. Our goal to recruit and enroll an exceptionally talented and diverse freshman class of 2013 will come to fruition in just a few weeks.

The fall 2012 class 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. The fall 2013 outlook continues to show strong demand for our academic programs, especially in the Health Sciences.

We also recently implemented Banner Document Management (BDM), a tool which allows us to transition to a paperless admissions model. We will be completely paperless as we recruit, evaluate and accept applicants for the fall 2014 cycle.

A centralized Graduate Admissions effort, directed by Todd Eicker, is now in its second year. Over the past year, efforts have included: enhanced recruitment by visiting 17 graduate college fairs in PA, eastern Ohio and WV; hosting the annual Graduate College Fair on campus in September where over 80 colleges and universities were in attendance (an increase from only 35 attending the year before); implementation of a graduate enrollment deposit for accepted graduate students; and participation as a co-advisor in the Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC).

Current projects and upcoming goals include: developing a conditional graduate admissions policy for international students; full implementation of new University graduate student survey; implementation of a veteran’s calculator for SLPA; and the development of an online supplemental orientation and new graduation student transition process.

Online Campus

Offering students high quality, academically rigorous and engaging courses beyond the walls of the physical classroom using teaching and learning technologies is not new. Indeed, Duquesne University has been offering online programs in Nursing and Leadership since the late 1990s, with Pharmacy, Education and Music also providing e-learning opportunities to graduate students as well during the last decade. Did you know, in fall 2013, Duquesne had a combined total of 724 graduate and undergraduate students who took at least one online course, and that Duquesne offers 14 online programs,
with 3-4 more new programs to launch online for 2014.

As teaching and learning technologies become easier to use, pervasive and targeted toward delivering engaging content and learning activities, more institutions such as Duquesne are exploring more formally the opportunities e-learning has for extending a Duquesne education. Thus, in November 2012, Provost Pearson initiated an Online Campus and appointed as its Director, Dr. Ruth Newberry, formerly Director of Educational Technology. Under the guidance of Dr. Alexandra Gregory, Associate Provost / Associate Academic Vice President Academic Affairs and working closely with the Enrollment Management Group and Paul-James Cukan, Associate Provost / Associate Academic Vice President Enrollment Management, the Online Campus has been busy this current spring 2013 semester with collaborative outreach.

The primary goals of the Online Campus are (1) to assist the University’s academic units to explore and develop strategically aligned new online and hybrid programs or revitalize and renew existing programs and (2) to identify and help establish a student and faculty support structure to ensure both student and faculty success in e-learning. The overall aim is to create and deliver quality e-learning programs that equal or exceed the experiences of students and
faculty teaching in the classroom. By taking a student-centric approach to e-learning, Duquesne University continues to further its mission and tradition of serving God by serving students through the delivery of academically rigorous and engaging learning experiences for its students.

The primary focus of this first semester of the Online Campus has been to establish a collaborative means by which to assess “Where are we?” and “Where do we want to be?”, or to conduct what those in the business and IT world call a “gap analysis.” Initiatives begun this spring that will continue are:

- Building a web presence – see www.duq.edu/onlinecampus. Coming soon with the help of Public Affairs will be testimonials from current online students.
- Establishing Online Committees in the ten Schools – almost there with eight committees started!
- Reaching out to academic and student support units, such as Advisors, Center for Teaching Excellence, Gumberg Library, Educational Technology, Learning Skills Center, Writing Center, Registrar, DU Card Center, Counselling and Testing, Special Student Services, CTS Help Desk and others – just beginning!
- Establishing processes, guidelines and recommendations – underway with credit hour equivalencies, coding students and programs and more to come!
- Creating an Online Graduate Student Orientation – in the planning stages with Graduate Admissions Director Todd Eicker, Graduate and Professional Student Council, Graduate Advisors and School Orientation groups.
- Building a market presence – thanks to Enrollment Management’s Kelley Maloney!
- Creating surveys – gathering information from current online students and faculty, alumni and current campus students.
- Bringing online five School of Business courses (three undergraduate and two graduate) for summer 2013 – enrollment is well ahead of last year!

The “buzz” about online and hybrid learning opportunities is being heard on campus already! Spring 2013 has been busy and the summer might be even busier! Duquesne University is on its way. Success will come from the collaborative efforts of the campus community and using Duquesne’s mission, student experience and academic values at the core of our efforts.

Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)

Celebration of Teaching Excellence: At the annual celebration on April 3, Provost Pearson conferred these awards:

- Creative Teaching Awards to Faculty
  Jeffrey Evanseck, Chemistry & Biochemistry
  Bayer Marcia Raphak & Ava Cipri, Gumberg Library & English Department
  Jamie McConaha & Holly Lassila, Pharmacy
  Cynthia Walters & Yvonne Weideman, Nursing

- Graduate Student Awards for Excellence in Teaching
  Julie Futrell, Psychology
  Emily Rutter, English
  Kimberly Rosmus, Chemistry
  Akshata Nevekar, Pharmacy

We also honored over 100 Duquesne faculty, graduate students and staff who have volunteered through CTE to help with orientation, offer workshops, act as near-peer mentors, and serve on advisory groups and award committees.

Since it began in fall 2010, over 100 graduate students from liberal arts, sciences, pharmacy and education have enrolled in the Certificate of University Teaching. It is a voluntary, non-credit program that prepares graduate students for future faculty careers. Dr. Alexandra Gregory honored the recipients at the Celebration of Teaching Excellence.

Mentoring Faculty and Graduate Students

CTE and Jason Margolis (Education) piloted a year-long, near-peer mentoring initiative bringing together new faculty with faculty who had just passed third-year review. 12 faculty participated. To help faculty understand the teacher-scholar model, we invited six faculty to serve as panelists at the Teacher-Scholar Nexus workshop. This event featured the work-in-progress of faculty who are integrating teaching into research and research into teaching.

In the fall, nine faculty members – recommended by their graduate students as strong mentors – participated in a roundtable with graduate students on models and mutual benefits of mentoring relationships.

Mentoring is at the center of CTE work, and so it was not surprising that four “generations” of mentors/mentees found themselves sitting together at the Celebration of Teaching
Excellent: Dorothy Frayer (retired), Laurel Willingham-McLain (CTE), Sarah Wallace (Speech-Language Pathology) and Lucia Osa-Melero (Modern Languages).

Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SOTL)
Provost Pearson has noted the increase of SOTL peer-reviewed publications and presentations in promotion and tenure dossiers. To help meet the growing need for SOTL guidance, Gumberg Library and CTE created online resources for faculty conducting scholarship of teaching and learning. This site includes materials from Joseph Kush’s spring 2013 CTE workshop on Conducting Research on Student Learning at Duquesne: IRB How To’s.

CTE oversees travel funding for faculty who make peer-reviewed presentations at conferences on multicultural learning at Duquesne. This year’s recipients for Faculty Funding for Presentations on Multicultural College Teaching and Learning are Anne Marie Witchger Hansen, Occupational Therapy; Marco Gemignani, Psychology; Daniel Scheid, Theology; and Jason Ritter, Education.

CTE seeks to support faculty as whole persons. To that end, we offered two new workshops: Mindfulness: A Practice that Deepens Learning, and Having it All! The Struggle for Worklife Balance. We will hold our third faculty retreat in May at the Spiritan Center on the theme of Teaching as Whole Persons. This two-day retreat is sponsored and paid for by the Center for Teaching Excellence through the Frayer Faculty Instructional Fund.

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

- Milton’s Rival Hermeneutics: “Reason is But Choosing” edited by Richard J. DuRocher (St. Olaf College) and Margaret Olofson Thickstun (Hamilton College)
- To Repair the Ruins: Reading Milton edited by Mary C. Fenton (Western Carolina University) and Louis Schwartz (University of Richmond)
- Levinas Studies: An Annual Review, Volume 7, edited by John Drabinski (Amherst College)
- Reexamining Deconstruction and Determinate Religion edited by J. Aaron Simmons (Furman University) and Stephen Minister (Augustana College)
- Satan’s Poetry: Fallenness and Poetic Tradition in “Paradise Lost” by Danielle A. St. Hilaire (Duquesne University)
- Levinas’s Philosophy of Time: Gift, Responsibility, Diachrony, Hope by Eric Severson (Eastern Nazarene College)
- A Theology of Alterity: Levinas, von Balthasar, and Trinitarian Praxis by Glenn Morrison (University of Notre Dame Australia)
- Milton Studies 53, edited by Laura L. Knoppers (Pennsylvania State University)

A volume published in 2011, A Variorum Commentary on the Poems of John Milton: Volume 5, Part 4 by Cheryl Fresch, was awarded the Milton Society of America’s Shawcross Award in January 2013, given for the best reference work on Milton published during 2011.

Additionally, Duquesne University Press joined with other presses in the Association of American University Presses to celebrate the first national University Press Week in November 2012, sponsoring a book sale, various exhibits and highlighting our annual “Publish or Perish: Finding and Approaching Academic Publishers” workshop for junior faculty and graduate students.

Gumberg Library
With the strategic goal of enhancing our users’ experience, the library made a number of changes in the past year. Again, we revised library hours to be open six more hours on weekends, resulting in a total of 111 service hours each week during the academic year. We maintained the 24-hour study periods during finals and we hosted SGA study breaks. We launched an alumni library card with swipe access to the building, collaborating with Alumni Relations and the ID Center.

Specific ideas for improvements in services, collections, technology and facilities came out of the LibQUAL+ survey conducted in February 2012. The SGA Library Committee and the University Library Committee advise us on library issues. We also organized a focus group of humanities faculty regarding collections. To promote library resources, we developed library web pages and campus guides tailored to specific user groups. In addition, we communicated with users through campus and social media, newsletters, displays and a variety of workshops and classes. In the fall, we participated in two events to showcase our eBook collections and how to access using iPads and various readers. Nearly every month librarians offer valuable workshops with the schedule listed at www.duq.edu/library.
Use of digital collections continues to far outpace print now that we offer more than 100,000 electronic journals and 80,000 eBooks. The Duquesne Duke and forerunners to the Duquesne Magazine are online. We completed Pittsburgh Catholic digitization to 1957, digitized a number of classic Dukes basketball and football games, and continue to build the digital Spiritan library. In the first year of using RapidILL, we obtained more than 5,000 articles with an average delivery time of 11.7 hours and supplied nearly 3,900 articles to other libraries.

Each spring, scholars come for the annual Silverman Symposium which took place April 29-30, 2013 and focused on Merleau-Ponty Into the Future. In March, we hosted local book groups and students for a special event featuring Dr. Aaron Mackler, Theology, who spoke about the The Passover Seder and the Haggadah. This program was co-sponsored by the Allegheny County Library Association’s One Book, One Community initiative to promote the 2013 title People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks. On April 18, the library showcased new books and films on Muslim Journeys themes and featured faculty, student and librarian presentations. These resources were awarded as a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association.

Projects to improve the library’s physical environment are ongoing. We have expanded student study space on the fourth and fifth floors by moving print collections to the stacks and compact shelving. Last summer, we “refreshed” the fourth floor by replacing tile and carpet and redesigning the circulation and reference service desks. Plans are underway to replace more carpet and furniture and expand security features in the coming summer. Throughout this academic year, users and staff have been patient as each of the three building elevators was being replaced.

Gumberg Library has a presence outside the building as librarians and staff contributes to the work of university committees and participates in campus events. We also host many campus partners who have information tables or events inside the building. Queries about workshops should go to Reference (x5346) and other events to Library Administration (x6136).

University Core Curriculum

In 2002, Provost Ralph Pearson charged the University Core Curriculum Committee with the task of revising the Core Curriculum, which had been implemented in 1984 and had undergone minor changes during the 1990s. The revision was brought to the faculty in 2004 for consideration and approved in 2006 with an affirmative vote of 90%. Implementation of the new Core Curriculum began fall semester of 2007.

The Duquesne University Core Curriculum (UCOR), is entering its seventh year of implementation. The UCOR structure was designed to provide: (1) an enduring foundation reflecting education in the Catholic tradition, with requirements in philosophy, theology and other selected areas; (2) distinctiveness reflecting the Spiritan charism; and (3) sufficient flexibility to provide an opportunity for participation in the UCOR from all disciplines in the liberal arts and the various professional schools. The theme areas of creative arts, faith and reason, global diversity and social justice, representing courses from across the university’s academic community, are currently represented by 149 courses fulfilling learning objectives tied to these four areas (34 in creative arts, 22 in faith and reason, 45 in global diversity and 48 in social justice). Requirements in ethics, information literacy and service-learning join the discipline-specific courses and theme area courses to constitute the ground of a Catholic Spiritan education.

Assessment of the UCOR, begun with an initial assessment plan generated in 2009, continues with the support and participation of the many instructors offering courses in the UCOR discipline-specific areas and in the four theme areas. Direct evidence based on learning outcomes tied to the various courses and indirect evidence from alumni surveys assure us that graduates of Duquesne University are going out into the world equipped with the skills and knowledge the University has promised to instill by means of its Core, the heart of Duquesne University’s education for the mind, heart and spirit.

This year, in an initiative designed to increase faculty awareness of the availability of documents by and about the Spiritans, the Director of the University Core Curriculum, Janie Harden Fritz, Ph.D., in collaboration with the Center for Spiritan Studies and Rob Behary of Gumberg Library, hosted two orientations to the growing digitized collection of Spiritan materials. This resource is available to faculty for integration into all relevant courses, particularly courses in the theme areas of global diversity, social justice, and faith and reason and discipline-specific courses in the Core. Additional orientations can be scheduled as needed by contacting Dr. Fritz at harden@duq.edu.
The Office of International Programs

While any semester in Rome is a special one, sometimes events coincide to offer our Duquesne students a historic moment. Such was the spring 2013 semester when our 57 students in the Duquesne University Italian Campus witnessed the first Papal resignation in over 600 years followed quickly by the Convocation and selection of Pope Francis I. Duquesne students and faculty, in both their academic classes as well as in their independent time, mined the historic events for a semester of extraordinary learning and memories that will last a lifetime.

As part of the Intercultural Communication class studying ceremonial speeches, students attended and analyzed Pope Benedict’s last Papal Audience on Feb. 27. As the excitement rose and pilgrims and travelers began to overrun the city of Rome, students raced to St. Peter’s Square to watch the white smoke rise from the Sistine Chapel. Papal Scholar and Duquesne University Italian Campus Baroque and Christian Art Professor, Elizabeth Lev, guided the students in class while also acting as MSNBC correspondent during the Conclave.

Students, faculty and staff watched in awe as Jorge Bergoglio of Argentina emerged onto the balcony of St. Peter’s to greet the crowds as the new Pope Francis I. In the following weeks, students were able to attend his first Papal Audience, Angelus and Holy Week celebrations, including Stations of the Cross at the Coliseum and Easter Sunday Mass in St. Peter’s Square. Not since the spring 2005 semester when Pope John Paul passed and Pope Benedict became Pope have the Duquesne University Italian Campus students witnessed history in the making. As Sandi Communale, 19, commented: “It is humbling to be at the epicenter of such a global and historic event.”
The Spiritan Division

The Robert and Patricia Gussin Spiritan Division freshman enrollment for 2012-13 totaled 60 students, representing eight different states. The fall term grades of these students reveal that the trend of exemplary academic performance continues: 44% earned 3.0 or higher; 75% earned between 2.5 and above; and 88% earned at least a 2.0 QPA. 12 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 schools as demonstrated by the fact that of the 156 students enrolled throughout the University in 2012-13, 13% achieved Dean's list. As of December 2012, 290 Division students have received undergraduate degrees, 15 students have earned Master's Degrees; and, currently, an additional nine students are pursuing graduate degrees.

On Feb. 22, 2013, the Division hosted its 16th annual Spiritan Division Celebration which began with a Mass. The Division's chaplain, Rev. Vincent Stegman, C.S.Sp., served as presider. Mr. Paul-James Cukanna delivered the welcome address and Fr. Lazarus Langbiir presented the Spiritan Congregation message.

The recipients of this year's Michael P. Weber Memorial Scholarship, awarded annually to high performing Division freshmen, was John Foster. 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 47 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 2013-14 is Michael Hast.

Learning Skills Center

The Michael P. Weber Learning Skills Center (SC) offers a wide-range of services to the University and Pittsburgh community. 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 the 2011-12 academic year of 2.80. In the 2011-12 academic year, 310 students were reported as Act 101 eligible and 75 (24%) graduated and earned their degrees. In fall 2010, 240 students were enrolled at Duquesne, of which 184 were retained in fall 2011 (77%) with an average GPA of 2.80.

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. As usual, the subjects requested the most were science and mathematics 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.

The 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. Last academic year, 1,745 contacts were made with University students regarding low performance. Fifty percent of students who responded to the Center’s overtures improved their grades, and all students who sought the Center’s help passed their courses: 20% earned averages between 3.0 and 4.0 and the overall average GPA was 2.45.

The Center continues its 22-year history of providing service to the community through the Project for Academic Coaching through Tutoring (PACT) and the Jerome Bettis Bus Stops Here Foundation/Duquesne University – Learning Skills Center partnerships. 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. Some of the tutorial sites include Hill House Association, Wesley Center, St. Rosalia Academy and Mt. Ararat Baptist Church.

The Jerome Bettis Bus Stops Here Foundation partnership will begin its fifth 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. Students complete the eight-week program offered on Duquesne’s campus Saturdays and earn ownership of a computer.