This has been a very busy week in the department. Over the last five days, I must have signed ten, maybe eleven, pieces of paper.

My "Geography of Food" class took its first field trip on Thursday. We went to the Chinese restaurant on the Square, where students spent an hour taking notes on ingredients, methods of preparation and authentic vs. Americanized menu items. Unfortunately, we caused a small stampede of customers out of the place. A group of little old ladies, seeing all the students with clip boards in hand taking notes around the buffet table, assumed that we were the Board of Health raiding the kitchens.

Don’t miss our very own Graduate Teaching Assistant Jason Wright who is appearing in the play "Eurydice" next week. He plays the father of Orpheus, who must spend eternity in Hell. He says his experiences teaching introductory geography and geology labs prepared him well for the part.

-Kelly

Head of Department
Lou is in New Zealand for an Erskine Teaching Fellowship at the University of Canterbury. Kelly Gregg will be acting Head.

Distance Message from Lou
While I am enjoying New Zealand, I am also overwhelmed with plenty of teaching. There was a retreat for the Department Heads that I unfortunately missed at JSU. It was originally scheduled for April and was delayed until May (when it was too late to change my travel plans). I did ask to receive the material distributed at the retreat. Listed below are ten characteristics of the typical JSU student (you can probably identify with most of these):

1. They are losing interest in teams and many are somewhat isolated. Some "hang" with buddies of either gender, but more tend to not function well in a group. They often eat alone, study alone and prefer to work alone. Technology is their satisfier.
2. They are digital natives while we are digital immigrants.
3. They are almost physically attached to their cell phone and text messages.
4. They like to portray themselves as confident and cool.
5. They are risk averse.
6. They are very focused on their education leading to a job, and highly nervous that it may not.
7. They are socially conscious and yet materialistic.
8. They want the "killer" life, but not the "killer" class or job.
9. The adult student numbers have increased in order to search for new work opportunities.
10. Family fiscal affairs have made paying the tuition and buying the books problematic for many.

**StudyMate Available for Distance Learning**
In our most recent student survey of distance education services, the inclusion of flash-based study aids, such as flash cards and challenge games, was the most commonly identified tool for potential impact on student learning. Fortunately, our new campus wide license of StudyMate Class makes it easy for JSU faculty to include these types of study aids in their course offerings. Want to learn more, attend one of the training sessions. To register, send an email to DLHelp@jsu.edu by 12:00 pm CT the business day prior to the training session. The registration email should include the attendee’s name and the name, date, and time of the training session.

**Session are:**
- Monday, May 10 from 2-3:30 PM
- Friday, May 14 from 9-10:30 AM
- Wednesday, May 26 from 2-3:30 PM

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**University News**

**Faculty Awards Reception Will Be May 11**
The Annual Faculty Awards Reception will be held May 11 at 5:00 on the 11th Floor of Houston Cole Library. All faculty are invited to attend.

**College of Arts and Science Reception**
The Annual College of Arts and Science Reception will be held in the Gamecock Room from 3:00-4:00 pm on Thursday, May 13. Remember to park in front of Stephenson Gym or Kennamer Hall since Cole Drive is temporarily closed.

**Dr. Frank Romano Wins Meritorious Teaching Award**
Dr. Frank A. Romano, head of Jacksonville State University’s Biology Department, was honored recently with the Association of Southeastern Biologists’ 2010 Meritorious Teaching Award, the organization’s most prestigious designation. The award was presented at the ASB’s 71st annual meeting, April 7-10 in Asheville, N.C.

**Celebrate Cinco de Mayo at the Little River Canyon Center**
Jacksonville State University will host its first annual Cinco de Mayo event at the Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne this Saturday, May 8, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Featured will be:

- Noon - Live Caribbean music by Jacksonville, Alabama’s dynamic steel drum band JAXPAN
- 1 p.m. - Traditional Central American folk dancing from Ballet Folklorico

Also featured will be activities for children including parachute games, soccer ball competitions, live animal presentations, candy-filled piñatas, door prizes, outdoor walking trails and FREE food provided by Mi Casita. Also featured will be comments and presentations by Canyon Center Director Pete Conroy, Field School Coordinator Renee Morrison and prayer by Sister Laura from Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church. This family friendly event is free to everyone and ALL are encouraged to attend.

**JSU Drama to Present Eurydice**
The Jacksonville State University Drama Department will present Sarah Ruhl’s adaptation of the classic story Eurydice on May 13-16 on the mainstage of the Ernest Stone Performing Arts Center. Brief Synopsis: In a contemporary retelling of the classic myth, we see the story through the eyes of the young heroine. Eurydice dies too young, and on her wedding day. She is forced to travel to the underworld where she meets her father and attempts to remember her lost love. Performances are at 7 p.m. on May 13, 14 and 15. The May 16 performance will be a 2 p.m. matinee. Tickets are $10 for adults; $8 for senior citizens and JSU personnel; and $5 for students, military and youth.

**Degenerate States**

**Local Rules**
A high-flying Atlanta lawyer went duck hunting in rural Calhoun County. He shot a bird, but it fell into a field on the other side of a fence. As the lawyer climbed the fence, an elderly farmer drove up on his tractor and asked him what he was doing. The lawyer responded, "I shot a duck and it fell into this field, and now I’m going to retrieve it." The old farmer replied, "This is my property, and you are not coming over here." The indignant lawyer said, "I am one of the best lawyers in Dixie. If you don’t let me get that duck, I’ll sue you and take everything you own!" The old farmer smiled and said, "You don’t know how we do things in Calhoun County. We settle small disagreements like this with the Mark Ingram three-kick rule." The lawyer asked, "What is the Mark Ingram three-kick rule?" The farmer replied, "Well, first I kick you three times and then you kick me three times and so on back and forth until someone gives up." The lawyer thought about the proposed contest and, deciding that he could easily take the old codger, agreed to abide by the local custom. The old farmer slowly climbed down from the tractor and walked up to the lawyer. His first kick planted the toe of his work boot into the lawyer’s groin and dropped him to his knees. His second kick was to the midriff; and the lawyer was on all fours when the farmer’s third kick to his rear end sent him face-first into a fresh cow pat. The lawyer summoned his will and struggled to his feet. Wiping his face with the arm of his silk suit jacket, he said, "Okay, you old coot. Now it’s my turn." The old farmer smiled and said, "Nah, I give up. You can have the duck."
Contact Details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences newsletter, then contact Tracy Casey before noon on Thursdays at: tcasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.