Well another semester is ready to "bite the dust." I am being swamped with a handful of students who are attempting to do the entire semester's worth of studying in the last week (maybe two) of the semester. Some of the students are the top students who really want to hone their skills in physics. Others, unfortunately, are students who suddenly decided they needed to study to pass the course now that the semester is 90% over.

I am also trying to get our Department Assessment Plan into PRISM. In addition to a regular and documented review of our courses and the way we teach them, we also have goals for the retention of our student (at least 75% of second year and higher students are retained each year) and that 50% of our graduates would have been involved in research projects and presented their work. We have the goal that 50% of our graduates will have jobs or positions in graduate or professional schools before they graduate. We also have the goal to graduate at least 20 students (10 majoring in Chemistry and 10 majoring in Geography) each year. These are some of the goals we need to work towards. These "goals" are some simple quantifiable ways to demonstrate to others (e.g., SACS) that we take our responsibilities as instructors, teachers, mentors and university professors seriously and we strive to educate our students to the very best our ability. I firmly believe that we all take our teaching responsibilities very seriously, so I am confident that the "assessment goals" will be met and exceeded. Each of your efforts are recognized and sincerely appreciated.

-- Lou

**Department News**

**Christmas Lunch on Monday 6 December**
Sign-ups are on the door to the Joint Conference Room. Please sign-up and bring something to share. The book reps will be providing Turkey, Stuffing and Gravy. Anything goes at this luncheon - so be creative and daring!

**Planetarium to Present Star of Bethlehem Program Dec. 11**
Travel through space and explore planet Earth during the JSU Planetarium’s Second Saturday Space Safari! On December 11, 2010, the program will explore the Star of Bethlehem. The event will be from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. in the JSU Planetarium on the third floor of Martin Hall. Admission is $5 per person, and groups are encouraged to please call (256) 782-5697 or e-mail fieldschool@jsu.edu to pre-register.
Geographers Present Research Findings at SEDAAG

The South Eastern Division of the Association of American Geographers (SEDAAG) held its annual conference in Birmingham on November 19-23. Geography Faculty and Students of the Physical and Earth Science were well represented by posters and presentations. Kelly Gregg, Jonathan Herbert, Doug Clark, Faculty and Andy Hug, a JSU Graduate Student Collaborated on a poster presentation Little River Canyon entitled "Using Digital Images for the Geologic Mapping Of Little River Canyon National Preserve".

Dr. Herbert and Jeff Caudill, a geography major, presented a poster session on "Assessing Climate Change in Alabama using Climate Normals"

Holly Park, A new Student in geography and Dr. Joe Morgan presented a poster on crime migration around Gated Public Housing (GPH) areas, resulting for different policing efforts by the Gadsden Police Department. This assessed crime data for burglaries from the year 2008 - 2010.
Dr. Morgan Chaired a paper session on the "Classification of Social and Natural Landscapes". Participants were from Jacksonville State University, Appalachian State University and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Dr. Morgan's paper was Gated Communities: Institutionalizing Social Stratification. [The caption on the cartoon is: I suppose technically you're right. But we still prefer not to think of it as a gated community.]

All Hail Queen Karen!
Karen Gregg, in addition to being Queen of First Floor Martin Hall, further enhanced her SuperStar status last Saturday by finishing second in her age group in a Half Marathon (13.1 mile) race held at Gulf Shores State park. She probably could have finished first if she hadn’t had to tow/push/carry Kelly for most of the way. Great job, Queen Karen!

[Note: This is documented proof that our geographers have the ability to walk on air.]

On-line Open Lectures
Office of Distance Education invited faculty to participate in the JSU Open Lecture Project, which is designed to exhibit the knowledge and expertise of JSU’s faculty. Their goal is to facilitate the free distribution of knowledge via iTunes U and support
the lifelong learning of our students, staff, faculty, alumni and the greater learning community. About 20 videos were selected for this effort. Physical and Earth Sciences, only rivaled by the Library, will create the lion's share of these videos. **David Steffy** is doing a video on Environmental Issues Facing East Alabama Communities. **Miriam Hill** has two initial videos: Rock Identification and Weather and Weather Maps, with the possibility of creating two more. **Lou Reinisch** has two videos: Science Entrepreneurship and Public Understanding of Physics. Good luck to all involved.

**New Bed for Students Wanting to Nap in PHS201**

Physics students in Lou's PHS201 course were given the opportunity to nap in class—on a bed of nails. Several students were willing to give the bed a try. One student responded: “This really hammers home the finer points of physics.”

![Students napping on nails](image)

**University News**

**ONE CAN-Make a Difference**

JSU faculty and staff are invited to bring nonperishable food items to your departmental office. On December 6, 2010, volunteers will collect the items and take them to the Jacksonville Christian Outreach Center (JCOC), a non-denominational volunteer organization, which will distribute the goods. If each faculty and staff member contributes just ONE CAN, it will place more than 850 cans of food into the hands of those who need it. [Lou notes: Sorry for the short notice, this was not posted until after the last newsletter went out. 😒 ]

**JSU MUSIC presents A Family Holiday Concert**

Join the students, faculty and special friends of the JSU Department of Music on Sunday afternoon, December 5th at 3:00 pm in Leone Cole Auditorium on the JSU campus as they share the very special gift of music with the entire community. Featured will be many of the outstanding instrumental and vocal ensembles from JSU MUSIC as well as soloists from the Music faculty. The program will present holiday music for the entire family. There will be old favorites, familiar carols, jazz arrangements, popular classics and even the opportunity for the audience to join in and sing as well. Admission is free. So, bring your family and join friends and neighbors to enjoy beautiful music of the holiday season.

**History Club, Phi Alpha Theta Collecting for Guatemala Children Shoe Box Program**

The Jacksonville State University History Club and Phi Alpha Theta are sponsoring a drive to collect Christmas shoe boxes for delivery to needy kids in Guatemala. If you would like to participate in this charitable program you can make up a shoe box filled
with some of the following suggested items:

- **Toys**: such as small cars, balls, dolls, jacks, stuffed animals, kazooos, harmonicas, yo-yos, small etch a sketch, slinky, etc.

- **School Supplies**: pens, pencils & sharpeners, stamps and ink pad sets, solar calculators, colored pencils, chalk, crayons, coloring books, writing pads, etc.

- **Hygiene products**: toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, comb, washcloth, etc.

- **Other**: sunglasses, ball caps, socks, underwear, costume jewelry, hair clips, small picture books.

**Please do not include the following**: used items, toy guns, knives or other toy weapons, perishable foods, liquids such as shampoo, medicines of any kind and breakable items (china and glass). Mark the box on the top with the appropriate sex and age of the child you would like to have your gift delivered to as follows: Boy (5-9, 10-13, 14-16) Girl (5-9, 10-13, 14-16). The box may be delivered to Dr. George Lauderbaugh in the History Department, room 309 Stone Center. Boxes will be collected until December 15.

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**Grant News**

**Important message for investigators considering submission to the NSF**

Effective January 2011, ALL proposals submitted to the National Science Foundation (NSF) are **REQUIRED** to contain a Data Management Plan (DMP). This document, no more than two pages in length, is to be submitted as a Supplementary Document and should describe how the PI plans to manage data generated by the proposed research. Proposals submitted without a DMP will be returned automatically, without review, by the NSF Fastlane system.

> Investigators are expected to share with other researchers, at no more than incremental cost and within a reasonable time, the primary data ... created or gathered in the course of work under NSF grants.

**Student News**

**JSU Symposium**

The online abstract submission form is available now for the 2011 Symposium on the Arts and Sciences website. Students may submit abstracts at any time up to the January 28, 2011 deadline.

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**Degenerate States**

**You know you’re addicted to coffee when:**

- you’re employee of the month at the local coffee house and you don’t even work there
- your eyes stay open when you sneeze
- you chew on other people’s fingernails
- you can type sixty words per minute with your feet
- you can jump-start your car without cables
- you don’t sweat, you percolate
- you’ve worn out the handle on your favorite coffee mug
- you walk twenty miles on your treadmill before you realize it’s not hooked up
- you’ve worn the finish off your coffee table
- you’re so wired, you pick up radio signals
- your birthday is a national holiday in Columbia
- you’d be willing to spend time in a Turkish prison
- you go to sleep just so you can wake up and smell the coffee
- you name your cats ‘Cream’ and ‘Sugar’
- your lips are permanently stuck in the sipping position
- you have a picture of your coffee mug on your coffee mug
- you don’t tan, you roast
- you don’t get mad, you get steamed
- your coffee mug is insured by Lloyd’s of London
- you introduce your spouse as your coffee mate
- you think CPR stands for “coffee provides resuscitation"
- you ski uphill - sometimes without skis
- you get a speeding ticket even when you’re parked
- you haven’t blinked since the last lunar eclipse
- you just completed another sweater and you don’t even know how to knit.

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: tscasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.