Let me start this by wishing you all a Happy Easter. No matter what you faith or beliefs, spring is a great time of the year. Our spring arrived a little early this year. I got my tomatoes planted by 15 March and even though everyone assured me that there would be a frost, the plants are doing great.

In this newsletter, I draw your attention to the ACS end of the year party this evening. There is a Department meeting on Monday (25 April). Grades are due on Tuesday (26 April) by 1:15 PM. I will also remind you of the ethics training (must be completed by 30 April) and the prevention of sexual harassment training (must be completed by 31 May).

I am spending two days this week (Thursday and Friday—21 and 22 April) at the BlackBoard Symposium on campus. I will get a preview of the next upgrade (only a minor upgrade to 9.1). I hope that I will learn how to do things more efficiently in BlackBoard. Right now, it seems to me to be very clunky and hard to use. I will tell you (after the first day of the symposium) that it seems rather ironic to have this symposium on distance learning software—but ALL the presenters have been flown in from across the US to give only face-to-face presentations. What is the phrase? Practice what you preach!

-- Lou

**Department News**

**Department Meeting**
There will be an end of the year Department meeting on Monday (25 April) in the Joint Conference Room at noon. We will have pizza and cokes. I want to discuss bookstore requests, the Institute of Research and Collaboration and Digital Measures. Feel free to bring up any issues that are near and dear to you.

**Grade Reminder**
Spring term 2011 grades are due Tuesday, 26 April by 1:15 PM. Due to the phantom grades that appeared in Banner, the Dean is also asking everyone to keep hard copies of student grades. If you print off student grades, Tracy will file them away.

**Faculty Awards Reception**
All faculty and administrators are invited to the Annual Faculty Awards Reception at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10 on the 11th Floor of the Houston Cole Library. I encourage all of you to attend.
Department Head Evaluations
You should be getting a request from the Dean concerning your evaluations of your Department Head. Please fill the evaluation out and return it by 13 May. Most of you let me know your thoughts (and I sincerely appreciate that). Share those thoughts with the Dean.

No College of Arts and Sciences Reception
The Dean, obviously frustrated, cancelled the end-of-the-year College Reception. He felt the price for the type of venue he wanted to be too dear. This probably marks the end of the receptions for a long time (if not, forever). This also means there will be no Dean’s awards to faculty and staff. Also, College Merit is suspended. (Merit has been non-functional for more than a decade—the Dean has finally officially closed the coffin.)

Faculty FAR’s due to Department Head by 6 May
Your FAR is due by 6 May. Please review your goals for this year and state how you met those goals or reasons that kept you from meeting any of the goals. Then formulate goals for next year. State your accomplishments, explicitly; however, I do not need to see the accomplishments. For instance, give me the complete reference to any papers published, but I do not need to see the actual publications.

University News

Gov. Robert Bentley to Delivery Spring Commencement Address
To those who volunteered to attend the graduation ceremony on Friday 29 April, you will get a chance to hear some thoughts for our governor. Also, you might get a chance to have a bit of a chat in the reception before the graduation ceremony.

Compliance Issues

JSU Faculty and Staff Required to Complete Statements of Economic Interest
The Office of Human Resources has received its annual notice from the Alabama Ethics Commission regarding the requirement to complete the Statement of Economic Interest form. The criteria for requiring completion of the form are numerous, but the most common are a salary of $50,000 or greater and/or responsibility for handling or investing public funds. This year you must also watch a video as part of the newly legislated “ethics training. This video is rather dry lecture that goes on for 55 minutes. Schedule some time and get this completed. The deadline is Saturday, 30 April.

Annual Preventing Employment Discrimination Training
The online program allows you to take the training at your leisure. You will need to allow up to 90 minutes to take the training program. You may locate the training on the HR website at http://training.newmedialearning.com/ped/jacksonvillestu/. If you are assigned to a search committee, you must take the Faculty or Supervisory module. This training module replaces the classroom training sessions for search committees. There will be a test at the end you are required to pass. When you pass the exam, HR will be notified of the successful completion. This is required training for administrators and supervisors and must be completed on an annual basis. Others are encouraged, but not required, to take this training. Please complete this program by May 31, 2011. By your participating in this training, it helps control our liability insurance rates.
Annual Training for Prevention of Sexual Harassment
The training program is available online and may be taken at a time that fits your schedule. It may be taken all in one session or you may bookmark and return at a later time. To access the training, go to the Office of Human Resources web site at http://www.jsu.edu/hr/ and select Preventing Sexual Harassment Training from the right hand side of the page. This annual training must be completed by May 31, 2011.

ACS News

American Chemical Society End of the Year Party
The ACS end of the year party is scheduled for Friday, 22 April (5:00 - 8:00 PM) at the Alumni House. The Faculty is encouraged to attend. We will be awarding certificates for the Richard J. Beschi Leadership Awards in Chemistry. This year Catrina Mize, Matthew Nichols, Brian Ogendi, Olivia Orr and Russell Price were selected for this honor. Please contact Samantha Gacasan if you have any questions about the party. Her email is: sgacasan@jsu.edu

Degenerate States

A stupid question deserves an answer
I was in Winn Dixie buying a large bag of Dog Chow for my Labrador retriever and was in line to check out. A woman behind me asked if I had a dog. On impulse, I told her that no, I was starting the Chow Diet again, although I probably shouldn’t because I’d ended up in the hospital last time, but that I’d lost 30 lbs. before I awakened in an intensive care ward with tubes coming out of most orifices and IVs in both arms. I told her that it was essentially a perfect diet and that the way that it works is to carry a small baggie of Dog Chow nuggets and simply eat one or two every time you feel hungry. I particularly like the darker nuggets, they have more flavor. Also, the food is nutritionally complete so I was going to try it again. At this point, practically everyone in the line was by now enthralled with my story. Horrified, she asked if I’d been poisoned and was that why I was in the hospital. I said no ... I’d been sitting in the street scratching fleas and a car hit me.

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.