I suppose I should first point out that sign-ups have started for the 6th Annual Chili Cook-off. There are a few more slots left open. Sign up before the list is filled. Kelly and Tracy both feel confident that they have first place, in the pot, so to speak. Let’s give them some real competition!

I also want to congratulate Drs. Vasumathi, Sewastynowicz and Nichols on their success with the University Travel and Self-Improvement Grants. Each of you are to be congratulated for your work.

The last bit of news regards Dr. Frank Romano, Head of Department and Professor of Biology. Frank has announced that he will retire 1 June. Frank says that he wants to keep up his Gulf of Mexico research efforts post-retirement. So, he is not leaving JSU, just adjusting his job to fit better with his personal life at this time. We wish Frank well.

Kelly Gregg says that the musical RENT is worth seeing. I have tickets for this weekend (the last week-end). If you have some spare time this weekend, you might want to venture over to the Stone Center for a real treat. Whatever you decide to do, enjoy this weekend. The weather is supposed to be a bit cooler, but nice.

-- Lou

Department News

**Textbook Adoption Due Dates**

It’s time to submit to Tracy your summer and fall textbook orders. Tracy will forward the orders to the bookstore.

Due dates:
- **For Summer 2012 Terms:** March 2
- **For Fall 2012 Semester:** March 9

**Call for Faculty Research Grants 2012-2013**

Requests for the 2012-13 Faculty Research Grants are to be submitted to the Dean’s office no later than Monday, March 19, 2012 (this is before the University deadline to give the Dean a chance to review the requests). Refer to [Faculty Research Grants](#) on the Academic Affairs website for guidelines and proposal submission form.
Faculty Awards
Nominations Sought
The Faculty Senate is pleased to announce that nominations are sought for the following faculty awards:

• Faculty Scholar Lecturer Award
• Outstanding Teacher Award
• Ringer Faculty Development Award
• Thomas Award for Outstanding Community Education/Service
• Faculty Research Activity

All full-time faculty members are eligible. Nominations by self, students, colleagues or department heads are encouraged. Please refer to Faculty Awards for guidelines. The recipients will be recognized at the Faculty Awards Reception on May 8, 2012. The Senate has not stated the due-date for the nominations for 2012, but I would guess it will be 23 March (just before Spring Break).

Digital Measures Training
Below is a list of training sessions for Digital Measures. Sessions typically do not last longer than 45 minutes. Lastly, the deadline for inputting your faculty activity (starting with Fall 2008) is May 1, 2012.

- Friday, February 24
  8 a.m. - 9 a.m. in Ayers 361 and 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. in Ayers 361
- Monday, February 27
  2 p.m. - 3 p.m. in Ayers 361
- Friday, March 2  
  12 noon - 1 p.m. in Ayers 361  
- Monday, March 5  
  2 p.m. - 3 p.m. in Ayers 361  
- Friday, March 9  
  8 a.m. - 9 a.m. in Ayers 361  and  2 p.m. - 3 p.m. in Ayers 361  
- Friday, March 16  
  8 a.m. - 9 a.m. in Ayers 361  and  12 noon - 1 p.m. in Ayers 361  

To sign up, please go to:  
http://www.doodle.com/e6c3mmetap7xrmbt  

Be sure to bring a copy of your curriculum vita with you to training. Any questions please contact Dr. David Thornton, thornton@jsu.edu.

Classroom Comes to JSU  
If you would like to attend this, please let Lou know so that he can RSVP. . .
ALL Seminars are on Mondays at 12:30 PM in Room 202 Martin Hall
Everyone is ENCOURAGED to attend. Students are more than welcome. If you want to present, please contact Dr. Jan Gryko.

27 February: Metal Concentrations in Free Floating Sea Urchins in Northern Gulf of Mexico, presented by Joi Jacobs.
And Efficiency of Extraction and Separation of Petroleum Compounds from Crude Oil Mixtures, presented by Calvin Scott.

5 March: Modeling Laser Treatment of Onychomycosis, presented by Lou Reinisch.

Student News

Advising Open for Summer - Fall 2012 Registration
All JSU students (excluding first-time freshmen) need to schedule an advising appointment with your academic advisor based on your major. Students must be cleared by their academic advisor prior to registration. The registration information link http://www.jsu.edu/registrar/registration.html will give students access to schedule offerings by term and under additional registration information, trial schedules are also available. Priority registration begins March 12, 2012. http://www.jsu.edu/registrar/priority_prereg.html.

STAT Club Sponsoring Student Business Etiquette Dinner
The JSU Alumni Association/STAT Club will sponsor a student business etiquette dinner on Wednesday, March 7 in Leone Cole Auditorium at 6:30 p.m. Cost to attend is $10 and it is open to all JSU students. Reservations must be paid in advance through the Alumni Relations Office located in the Alumni House across the street from the Theron Montgomery Building. Deadline for reservations is February 29. Professional attire is preferred. All attendees will be eligible for grand prize dinner for two at Effinas restaurant.
Student Travel Grants
We have funding from Sam Kinsaul to support student travel to present research work at
conferences. Applications are due by 29 February 2012. See Lou or Tracy if you need an
application. Requests up to $500 can be made.

My name is Taylor Stults. I am the Director of Academics at ScorePlus Academics. ScorePlus
Academics is a company committed to providing academic enhancement programs such as ACT
test preparation, subject tutoring, and school services in both face-to-face and online
formats. We are looking to hire instructors to teach test preparation courses, and we have
several positions open for students in the Jacksonville/Gadsden area. The positions are part-
time with flexible hours. I ask that you let your students know that there are positions
available with us. If any students are interested in working with us, they simply need to email
info@scoreplusacademics.com or call 256-740-9536.

MATCH Teacher Residency
I’m the Admissions Director of the most selective teacher prep program in the nation. The
program is called MATCH Teacher Residency, in Boston. Basically, we give recent college
graduates one year of incredibly intense training designed to make them unusually effective
rookie teachers. We then help them find positions in high-need schools, and continue to
support them as they begin their careers in the classroom. All the info is here:
http://www.matchschool.org/matchcorps/teacher.htm
As you looking to find just the “right” opportunity upon graduation? Do you want to teach in
the inner-city and have demonstrated unusual grit and determination? If so, please send me
your email address.
Julia Zweig julia.zweig@matchschool.org

University News

JSU Drama Presents RENT February 16-26
The Jacksonville State University Drama
Department will bring the groundbreaking rock
opera RENT to the main stage of the Ernest Stone
Performing Arts Center on February 16-19 and 23-
26. Based loosely on Puccini’s La Boheme, RENT
was called “exhilarating” by the New York Times.
With “a glittering, inventive score, the work finds a
transfixing brightness in characters living in the
shadow of AIDS.” Show times are February 16-18
and 23-25 at 7 p.m. and February 19 and 26 at 2 p.m. Ticket prices are $15 for adults, $12
for Seniors, and $10 for JSU students. For tickets and info call (256) 782-5648.
Social media didn’t spur Arab Spring

The protests and uprisings that began in December 2010 collectively known as the Arab Spring were characterized as Twitter and Facebook revolutions, but new research suggests that social media platforms had a mixed effect in driving political change. An analysis of 10 months of news, information and social media use in 18 Arab Spring countries found that the number of Facebook users did swell during that time. But the pattern of increased use of social media didn’t cleanly match up with the pattern of protests. Social media sites told people where to find information, not to revolt, Kathleen Carley of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh reported February 18. Concerns over human rights and international relations issues such as troop movements were more predictive of who protested where, and when. —Rachel Ehrenberg

Video games improve vision

Violent video games get a bad rap, but the gory games may have a benefit for people with vision problems, psychologist Daphne Maurer of McMaster University in Canada reported February 17. Playing the game Medal of Honor, in which the user sees scenes from the perspective of a soldier, for 40 hours over a month improved a host of visual abilities in adults who were born with cataracts. Even though the participants had their cataracts removed when they were young, vision deficits persisted. But 40 hours of gaming that requires users to survey a wide field and react quickly to threats improved multiple visual abilities. “It’s like reading one to two lines farther on the eye chart,” Maurer said. She and her colleagues are developing a less gory version of a video game that can do the same job without all the bloodshed. —Laura Sanders

Bird flu studies should be published in full, WHO says

A study describing deadly lab-engineered mutations to H5N1, the virus that causes bird flu, will be published in full in the journal Science. Bruce Alberts, editor in chief of the journal, announced the decision February 17 after the World Health Organization recommended the complete, uncensored publication of the study and another submitted to appear in Nature. The studies describe the creation of strains of the virus that can spread among mammals as normal flu does, presenting the potential for a worldwide pandemic. Though the naturally occurring form of the virus rarely infects humans, it kills about half of the people who get infected with it. The decision to publish the full results, announced at the meeting, runs contrary to that of recommendation of the U.S. National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity, which in December called for redacted publication of the studies. The advisory board cited such concerns as the possible use of the studies’ methods to make a bioweapon. Alberts said that he will follow the WHO recommendations instead of proceeding with an initial plan to publish a redacted version in mid-March. “The aim is to publish a full version of the paper without redaction,” Alberts said. At this point, though, it’s unclear how the recommendation will affect the timing of publication. —Nadia Drake
Fracking isn't tainting groundwater, study finds
Several communities have reported groundwater contamination associated with natural gas produced from deep shale deposits by hydraulic fracturing, sometimes called fracking. A new study by researchers at the University of Texas at Austin concludes that such pollution results not from liquids pumped down to the shale deposits to fracture the deep rock — as often claimed — but instead from poor management of wastes or bore wells thousands of feet above the shale. Funded by the university with no industry contributions, the study doesn't downplay drinking-water pollution associated with shale-gas production. But those risks “are very similar, if not exactly the same, as the impacts that we see from conventional gas development,” said Charles “Chip” Groat, who led the study. Groat reported his team's findings February 16. — Janet Raloff

Source:

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.