



RICHMOND matters

A Newsletter for the University of Richmond Community
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Richmond students rate educational experience in national survey

IN BRIEF

- The National Survey of Student Engagement found that Richmond students are generally very satisfied with their educational experiences at the University.
- Richmond students rate their level of academic challenge higher than their counterparts from other institutions.
- Seniors favorably rate their interaction with faculty members, while first-year students report dissatisfaction with their level of faculty interaction. Also, both first-year students and seniors believe the University is not supportive in areas concerning diversity.
- A copy of the full NSSE report is on file in the office of each dean as well as in the president's office. Excerpts from the report can be found at www.indiana.edu/~nsse/.

The National Survey of Student Engagement is a new study designed to examine the quality of undergraduate education at colleges and universities throughout the country. The results of the survey show that Richmond students are generally very satisfied with their educational experiences, but believe the University is not supportive in areas concerning diversity. Additionally, while seniors favorably rate their interactions with faculty members, first-year students report dissatisfaction with faculty interaction.

The NSSE was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and administered by Indiana University. Co-sponsors were the Foundation for Advancement of Teaching and the Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning.

"While most student surveys measure outcomes, attitudes and demographics, this is the only comparative survey we know of that actually attempts to measure learning among several dimensions," says Daniel Palazzolo, associate professor of political science and special assistant to the president for academic affairs. "It is also a very good survey," Palazzolo adds. "It asks reliable and valid questions related to student engagement."

According to Angela Detlev, research analyst in the president's office, 276 institutions participated in the study. They were grouped into six categories based on the Carnegie 2000 Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Richmond was in the category of master's degree-granting colleges and universities.

Each participating institution submitted the names and addresses of all first-year and senior students, Detlev says. From this pool, NSSE randomly selected a sample. Richmond elected to participate by Web only. The University's overall response rate was 48 percent, which was higher than the national response rate of 42 percent.

The survey was broken into five categories: level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student interactions with faculty members, enriching educational experiences and supportive campus environment.

Richmond's strongest area was the level of academic challenge, Detlev says. "For both first-year and senior students, Richmond outperformed its counterparts in master's institutions and many institutions nationally," she adds. Richmond's score placed it in the 90th percentile which means the University's score was better than 90 percent of the participating institutions. "Richmond's strength in this area was singled out in the national report released by NSSE," Detlev says.

Seniors, in particular, expressed satisfaction with their educational experience. Nearly 60 percent said their educational experiences were excellent, compared to an average of 36 percent of the seniors at other institutions. However, "both first-year and senior students felt that the University was not very supportive in areas concerning diversity," she says. "Both groups felt that Richmond offered minimal encouragement for contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds. This is significantly different from what their counterparts reported at other institutions."

Detlev adds that other responses need further examination. For example, first-year students reported dissatisfaction with the level of interaction with faculty members. "There should be an increased emphasis on bringing first-year students into faculty research endeavors," she says. "Furthermore, they ought to be encouraged to get involved in committees and student-life activities where they can collaborate with faculty on activities other than coursework."

"I was not surprised that we compared favorably to other schools among seniors with respect to student interactions with faculty, enriching educational experiences and supportive campus environment," Palazzolo says. "This is a tribute to our faculty, and to the deliberate steps taken through the strategic plan."

"On the other hand, we need to look carefully at the first-year experience," Palazzolo adds. "Why do we rank below average in terms of interaction with faculty and supportive campus environment? Since we pride ourselves on having a 'supportive campus environment,' it is very surprising to see that first-year students at other institutions feel better about their experience."

President Cooper comments that we should be proud that our students rated the level of academic challenge and enriching educational experiences higher than students from other institutions. "The fact that students are feeling academically challenged is a great statement for our mission," he says.

However, "we must think creatively about how we can shore up our weaknesses in the survey, particularly with respect to first-year students, in the areas of student interactions with faculty members and supportive campus environment," Cooper adds.

A copy of the full NSSE report is on file in the office of each dean as well as in the president's office. Excerpts from the report can be found at www.indiana.edu/~nsse/.

Opportunity fund awards are made to three programs

IN BRIEF

- Three proposals have been approved to receive money from the Opportunity Fund. The proposals, totaling approximately \$532,000, will establish a technology knowledge center, an online resource for gathering and distributing research, and an alumni profiling project.
- The fund was established about a year ago with budgeted money that was unspent in fiscal year 1999. Proposals from faculty and staff are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Three proposals have been approved to receive money from the Opportunity Fund, a program that was created about a year ago to support compelling and innovative proposals from faculty and staff. The proposals total approximately \$532,000.

Ellen Waite-Franzen, vice president for information services; James Rettig, University librarian; and Pat Schoknecht, director of teaching, learning and technology received \$464,592 for their proposal to establish a technology knowledge center. This center will provide students with the skills needed to select appropriate information and technology. Additionally, a collaborative projects initiative will facilitate partnerships among faculty, libraries and academic technology support personnel. University funds for the center and collaborative projects initiative will be contingent on external matching funds.

Nancy Stutts, co-director of LINC, received \$55,000 for Connect Richmond, an online resource to engage students and faculty in gathering, organizing and distributing important research on social indicators for organizations and governing officials in the Richmond community. This program will also receive matching external funds.

Andrew Ferguson, director of the Career Development Center, received \$12,000 to establish a program profiling alumni. This program will contribute to ongoing efforts to engage Richmond alumni in the

lives of current students and will enable students to ascertain useful information about potential career paths.

The Opportunity Fund was designed to support projects that fall into one of three categories:

- Unique ideas that will galvanize the University community in a short period of time and are not easy to anticipate in advance of the annual budget process;
- Opportunities to study significant long-range planning and programming ideas; or
- Seed money for innovative projects that involve several departments, schoolwide initiatives or interschool collaborations that show promise for additional funding, either through the continuing budget or through external granting agencies and foundations.

The fund, which was recommended by the resources task force for the strategic plan, was established from budgeted money that was unspent in fiscal year 1999. One million dollars was set aside for the fund for fiscal year 2000, says Julie Tea, director of special projects for the president's office. The University can spend any or all of the balance in one year. Unspent funds will be rolled over to the Opportunity Fund for the next year. Proposals are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Committee formed to guide development of University Web site

IN BRIEF

- A steering committee of six faculty and staff members has been formed to guide development of the University's Web site.
- The first town hall meeting was held on Feb. 12 to discuss questions and concerns regarding the Web site. The next meeting is scheduled at 7 p.m. on Feb. 22 in the auditorium of the Gottwald Science Center.

Approximately 15,000 visits are made daily to the University's Web site, and the majority come from off campus, says Bill Flowers, director of Web development. Flowers made those comments during the first town hall meeting sponsored by the University's Web steering committee. About 20 faculty and staff members and one law student attended the meeting to share their thoughts and concerns about the University's Web site.

Flowers says the majority of visitors are prospective students and their parents, followed by current students and their parents. "The University administration understands how important the Web site is, and we're trying to show everyone else [on campus] how important it is," Flowers said. "We want it to be one of the best out there."

At the suggestion of Flowers and Ellen Waite-Franzen, vice president for information services, the Web steering committee was established to guide future Web development at Richmond. Waite-Franzen chairs the committee and other committee members are Flowers;

Dan Kalmanson, director of communications; Carolyn Martin, executive assistant to the president; Daniel Palazzolo, associate professor of political science and special assistant to the president for academic affairs; and Pamela Spence, dean of admission.

"For many visitors, our Web pages are their first introduction to Richmond and the programs we offer," says President William Cooper. "For current students and faculty, the Web is used to access information that they use on a regular basis. For our alumni and University friends, our Web pages keep them connected."

"Because of these important roles as the University's official electronic communication tool," President Cooper adds, "it is essential that our site present accurate and up-to-date information in a uniform manner across all official University sites."

The committee's goals are to set overall priorities for the University's Web site; identify primary and secondary audiences and guide future development based on this information; approve and affirm top-level

Web design decisions; give direction on priorities to information services and the director of Web development; identify important gaps in the current site; identify future priorities for development and funding; and ensure continued quality by reviewing all new official University sites prior to launch and existing sites whenever substantial revisions occur.

The committee will meet regularly with various University groups to discuss current directions in Web development. The next town hall forum will be held at 7 p.m. on Feb. 22 in the auditorium of the Gottwald Science Center. All students, faculty and staff are invited to attend.

“This is an important opportunity to take part in conversations about our Web design and development,” Waite-Franzen says. “The Internet has become an integral part of our day-to-day lives, and the steering committee believes that the University’s Web site will benefit from an open, inclusive and ongoing process of communication. We look forward to engaging the campus community in this important topic.”

Comments and questions can be directed to Waite-Franzen at ewaite@richmond.edu or ext. 8771.

University purchases land in Goochland

The University purchased 115 acres of land in eastern Goochland County, according to Herbert C. Peterson, vice president for business and finance. The land, which is located on the west line of Pagebrook Drive between Patterson Avenue and River Road, will be used for biology research. In the future, it may be used for intramural or athletic fields, Peterson says. The sales price was approximately \$1.8 million.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LECTURE ON EGYPTIAN EXPERIENCES

Debbie Govoruhk

Gary A. Rendsburg, visiting professor of Jewish studies, will speak on "Egypt: A Trip Up the Nile" at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 21, in Jepson Hall 118. Rendsburg will examine the major accomplishments of ancient Egypt, its relationship with ancient Israel and its role in Western civilization. He will also show slides from his 1997 tour of Egypt.

Rendsburg, the Paul and Berthe Hendrix Memorial Professor of Jewish Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Cornell University, has traveled to all major archaeological sites in Israel, Egypt and Jordan. He also conducts seminars for the Biblical Archaeology Society. His lecture is free and open to the public and is sponsored by the Cornell Club of Central Virginia.

FAMILY TRENDS LECTURE

Joseph E. Obi

Steven Nock, R'72, author of *Marriage In Men's Lives*, will speak on "Changes and Trends in the American Family" at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 27, in Jepson Hall 118. Nock teaches at the University of Virginia, where he is director of the Marriage Matters Project and co-director of the Center for Children, Families and the Law. He has published numerous books and articles on marriage and the family, and he received the William J. Goode Book Award in 1999 from the family section of the American Sociological Association. The lecture is free and open to the public and is sponsored by the sociology and anthropology department.

QUEST PROGRAM LECTURE

Erik Craft

David Buss, noted evolutionary psychologist, will present a lecture entitled "Dangerous Passions: Infidelity, Jealousy and Why Men and Women Torture Each Other" at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 22, in the North Court Reception Room. Buss, a member of the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin, is the author of *The Dangerous Passion: Why Jealousy is as Necessary as Love and Sex*; *Evolution of Desire: Strategies of Human Mating*; *Evolutionary Psychology: The New Science of the Mind*; and *Sex, Power, and Conflict: Evolutionary and Feminist Perspectives*. The visit by Buss is sponsored by the Quest program, the biology department and the psychology department in conjunction with the Quest course "Truths about Courtship, Sex, and Behavior." For additional information, contact Erik Craft at ext. 6573.

COLLABORATIVE FELLOWSHIPS

Rafael de Sá

The deadline for submissions for faculty-student collaborative research fellowships is 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 28. The fellowships will be awarded during spring semester and will support projects promoting significant, creative and productive student involvement in faculty summer research activities. They provide a \$5,620 faculty stipend and a \$3,250 student stipend. Students will also receive a \$500 housing allowance, and \$1,500 for joint travel and presentation of collaborative research with the faculty mentor to national or international meetings.

Faculty who have already received an award for Summer 2001 are not eligible. Please direct questions and proposals to Rafael de Sá in the biology department at rdesa@richmond.edu or ext. 8542. Contact Mary Ann Stewart at mstewar2@richmond.edu or ext. 8228 for forms.

FACULTY PROPOSALS FOR GRANTS

Rafael de Sá

The Faculty Research Committee is accepting proposals for spring and summer research and travel grants. Forms may be obtained from Mary Ann Stewart at mstewar2@richmond.edu or ext. 8228. The submission deadline is Wednesday, Feb. 28. Questions and proposals should be directed to Rafael de Sá, chair of the faculty research committee, at rdesa@richmond.edu or ext. 8542.

Applicants are encouraged to review their proposals with the Foundation and Government Grants Office prior to submission. For current policies and procedures, visit the following Web site: www.chemweb.richmond.edu/~rubin/service/frc/frchome.html.

LUNCHTIME FORUM

David Leary

The fifth 2000-2001 Lunchtime Forum, co-sponsored by the School of Arts & Sciences and the University Club, will be held on Friday, March 2. Penny Reynolds in the biology department will be the speaker and will give a presentation on "Conflict and Cooperation in the Arabian Babbler: How 'Cooperative' are Cooperatively Breeding Birds?"

All faculty and staff, including retired members, are invited to pick up a free lunch in the University Club between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and take it to the Richmond Room. At 12:30 p.m., Penny will be introduced and will speak for 20 minutes about her scholarly work. A half-hour of questions, comments and discussion will follow. To reserve a free lunch, sign up in advance at the University Club or contact Betsy Flynn in dining services at eflynn@richmond.edu or ext. 8511, by noon on Thursday, March 1.

LEADERSHIP FORUM: ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.

Sue Robinson Sain

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. will speak on "Protecting Urban Waterways" at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, in Cannon Memorial Chapel, as part of the Jepson Leadership Forum. An environmental leader, attorney, author and professor of law at Pace University, Kennedy is president of the Water Keeper Alliance and chief prosecuting attorney for fishermen on the Hudson River. He is also senior attorney for the National Resources Defense Council. He co-authored *Rivers Keepers*, which details the growing movement to protect waterways. A book signing will follow the lecture. Due to the popularity of the forum, the Modlin Center box office (ext. 8980) is issuing free tickets to make it easier for members of the University community to attend. In addition, a small number of "patron" seats (located in a roped-off section) will be sold.

PETE STIPENDS

Pat Schoknecht

Applications for Program for Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness (PETE) summer stipends are being accepted until March 19. The purpose of the stipends is to encourage faculty members to pursue special projects or activities during the summer that invigorate their teaching or advance the teaching mission of the University. Those eligible to apply are faculty members who are tenured, on tenure track or in a full-time, continuing, annually renewable (non-term) appointment. For more details, contact Pat Schoknecht at pschokne@richmond.edu or ext. 6689 or visit www.richmond.edu/pete.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MERIT-BASED SCHOLARSHIP FINALISTS VISITING CAMPUS

Dolores MacNeilly

The University of Richmond will host approximately 165 merit-based scholarship finalists on March 5 - 9 and March 19 - 22. During that time, talented high school seniors will interview with selection committees, explore campus facilities and visit classes in session. Many of these students are choosing between the University of Richmond and some of the finest schools in the nation. Their visit to campus is our chance to encourage them to select Richmond. If you have the occasion to meet or assist them, your gracious hospitality will be appreciated. If class meetings on any of these days might be less than optimal for visitors (e.g., examinations in progress, field trips), please notify the Scholars Office before Feb. 26 at sconrad@richmond.edu or by calling ext. 8443. Provide subject, number, course title, day, date and time of affected class meetings. This information will be passed on to visiting finalists.

UR LIBRARIES SPONSORING BUS TRIP

Lucretia McCulley

The UR Libraries are sponsoring a bus trip on Saturday, March 3, for students who need to complete research at the Library of Congress, National Archives or other museum libraries in Washington, D.C. The bus will depart from campus at 8 a.m. and depart from D.C. at 5 p.m. Advance registration and a returnable deposit fee of \$5 are required. Reservations should be made at the Boatwright Reference Desk by Friday, Feb. 24. For more information, contact Lucretia McCulley at lmcculle@richmond.edu or ext. 8670.

FRIENDS OF BOATWRIGHT MEMORIAL LIBRARY LECTURE

Corinne Schneider

The Friends of Boatwright Memorial Library are pleased to host an afternoon lecture by Richard Waller, executive director of University Museums, at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 4, in the Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature. The topic is "History and Highlights: The Museum at the University." A reception will follow in the Lora Robins Gallery. This event is free and open to the public.

Use this as an opportunity to view the permanent installations and see two current exhibitions: "Birthstone Legends: Gemstones from the Collection for January, February and March" and "Land, Sea & Air: Works by Andrea V. Uravitch." For additional information, please call the Library Administration Office at ext. 8454.

ARTS & SCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM

Dona Hickey

Grants to support research and creative endeavors are available to students in the Arts & Sciences. The application deadline for Summer 2001 fellowships is Monday, Feb. 26. All applications for Fall 2001 projects are due Monday, March 26. Applications for funds for travel to professional meetings to present research may be submitted at any time and will be acted on at the committee's earliest convenience. Application materials for grants from the Undergraduate Research Program are available in the Arts & Sciences Graduate School Office, Boatwright Administrative Wing, Room 23. For application forms, visit the Arts & Sciences Web site at www.richmond.edu/academics/a&s/s_research/researchinfo.html.

JAMES W. JACKSON AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

Corinne Schneider

The Libraries' Faculty Advisory Committee is pleased to announce the Eighteenth Annual James W. Jackson Award for Excellence in Library Research. Members of the faculty in economics, education, health and sport science, history, leadership studies, political science, psychology and sociology are encouraged to nominate students for this award.

The purpose of the award is to recognize and encourage excellence in the use of library research skills in the social sciences. Upper division students enrolled in one of the course fields listed above are eligible, based on a research project completed during the spring of 2001 or during the calendar year 2000. Papers previously submitted are ineligible. The winning paper should demonstrate a depth and breadth of materials consulted and clear evidence of thoughtful command of these resources. Excellent research projects that do not make significant use of library research materials (e.g. experimental projects) unfortunately cannot be considered.

Students must be nominated by a faculty member in one of the listed departments. Each faculty member may nominate one or two students by submitting the research paper(s) by noon on Friday, March 9. Please send papers to Jackson Award Subcommittee, University Librarian's Office, Boatwright Memorial Library.

The award consists of a commemorative certificate and a check for \$250. In case of a tie, the award will be shared and each winner will receive a check for \$125. The awardee's name will be inscribed on a plaque in Boatwright Memorial Library and he/she will be acknowledged in the Commencement Program.

THE GEORGE M. MODLIN BOOK AWARD

James R. Rettig

The Modlin Book Award was established by the faculty in 1971 to honor George M. Modlin upon his retirement as president of the University and to promote a scholarly interest in books and the development of personal libraries, encouraging undergraduate students to accumulate collections of volumes pertaining to some particular area of interest. Collections are eligible for the award only during the student's senior year.

Students should submit to the University Librarian by Monday, March 19, a list of not more than 50 entries from the collection. This should include a full bibliographical citation for each entry and a one-to-two page rationale for the collection's theme. The award will be a check for \$250. In case of a tie, the award will be shared and each winner will receive a check for \$125. The winner's name will be inscribed on a plaque in Boatwright Memorial Library and will be acknowledged in the Commencement Program. A display from the winning collection will be shown in the Boatwright Memorial Library. An award may not be made each year if not merited.



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**Deadlines for submitting announcements and
calendar items to *Richmond Matters*:**

- Information submitted by February 22 will be published in the March 7 issue
- Information submitted by March 8 will be published in the March 21 issue

Send your announcements and calendar items by e-mail to rmatters@richmond.edu.