Staying the Course

Thanks to diligence and innovation in nursing, counseling, educational leadership and school psychology, Minnesota State Mankato is about to offer DNP, Ed.D. and Psy.D. degrees.
FROM PRESIDENT DAVENPORT

Longtime Leadership

In 2005, the Minnesota State Legislature passed a law allowing members of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System to offer doctoral degrees. By the time that bill was signed by Governor Tim Pawlenty, Minnesota State University, Mankato was ready to take action. By the fall of 2007, we will be offering two doctoral programs, one in nursing and the other in counseling and student personnel.

It is a great honor to be one of a few fine institutions within the System to take the lead in offering these new terminal degrees. We at Minnesota State Mankato have long prided ourselves on being prepared to take our educational offerings to the next level when the opportunity arises. We pride ourselves on being able to design degrees that will fill needs within our community and within the larger educational universe. We believe that these new doctoral programs, including a third in school psychology and a fourth in educational leadership to be launched later, will help this University serve our students and our state better than ever before.

This isn’t the first time we’ve taken the lead on offering terminal degrees. We were, for example, the first institution in the System to offer a master of fine arts in creative writing; more than a decade later, that program has grown into a thriving writer’s community that attracts students and faculty from across the country. Both the faculty and the students have produced an amazing quantity of published work and won an impressive number of national awards. The success of our MFA program has been a great source of pride to this institution. And it’s not just within our graduate programs that we take a leadership role. Faculty in several undergraduate departments have also found new and innovative ways to engage their students and enrich their educational experiences with innovative teaching methods and collaborative projects. In this issue you’ll read about two such teachers: Susan Freeman in Women’s Studies and Ann Goebel in Automotive and Manufacturing Engineering Technology.

There are many other reasons to be proud of what’s happening here at Minnesota State Mankato. I hope that as you read through this issue of TOMORROW, you’ll gain a greater understanding of how this University is actively leading the way.
Undergraduate students in Susan Freeman’s gender and culture class get firsthand experience gathering oral histories.

By Rachael Hanel ’97, MA ’04

For Susan Freeman, an assistant professor of Women’s Studies at Minnesota State University, Mankato, it’s not enough to have students read history books and write reports. It’s not enough to have them conduct online research and pull together papers. It’s not enough to stand in front of her class and lecture for an hour straight.

Instead, in her “Coming of Age: Gender & Culture” class, Freeman oversees immense, time-consuming and technically challenging oral history group projects that ensure her students will come away with firsthand knowledge of women’s history.

“One of the pleasures that comes from learning is that it’s not always about poking your nose in a book or holding up in a library or your office or at the computer,” Freeman says.

In the class, students form groups of five or six and pick a woman to interview for the “Coming of Age in the Twentieth Century” project. Students videotape and edit the interviews, and place excerpts on a web site.

The project grew out of Freeman’s own personal and research interests in oral histories. “Giving students the opportunity to do this type of research is a way of sharing with them something that’s really exciting to me,” she says. And her interest in the subject is contagious, students say.

“She really values oral history,” says Brad Freihoefer, who took the class in the fall of 2005. “I think she conveyed the importance of what this really means.”

NEW PERSPECTIVES

Freihoefer says the project helped him get an understanding of women’s lives that might have been difficult to gain through books or lectures.

“We talk about theories. You can talk about theories until my head hurts. But what’s the real story? What is the actual portrayal? What occurred in women’s lives and what was important? That story may be vastly different than what society says or even what some popular theories say,” he says.

Freihoefer’s eyes light up when he talks about Phyllis, the woman his group interviewed. Phyllis, who’s in her late 60s and lives by herself near Windom, invited the students to her farm. She showed them how old farm machinery worked, pointed out the traps used to snare animals and engaged them with a story of how she once beat a fox to death. Freihoefer says Phyllis instantly showed them a different version of a woman than what society or media often portray.

“She broke all those boundaries,” he says.

Ashley Hopp’s group interviewed her sister, who attends law school in Des Moines, Iowa. “Laura was a lot different than the women on the Web site,” Hopp says. “I thought it would be nice to have a younger woman on there so people can see that some girls still do have morals and standards and values.”

More recently, Hopp let herself be interviewed for another group’s project. “For the younger girls, I think it’s important to see there are still women out there who respect themselves, respect their bodies,” she says.

BIGGER BENEFITS

The interviews also challenge students to become technically adept. Freeman secured a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning grant to procure video cameras and audio recorders for the project. In the end, students not only experience living history, but they also learn the technical skills that are becoming more common in today’s competitive job market. That was part of Freeman’s rationale for the project. She says that too often, students, especially women, may not have experience with technology or the confidence to play around with it.

Julie Mortensen entered college at age 45. “I didn’t even know how to turn on a computer,” she admits. During her group project—in which the group interviewed sociology professor Leah Rogne—Mortensen reports that although she didn’t do a lot of the hands-on technical work, she was able to get some experience.

She says the class gave her confidence to use technology, and since then, she’s put together PowerPoint presentations for other classes.

One of Freeman’s goals with this project is to make sure students get out of the classroom and experience human interaction. Often, she says, human contact is lost in the way students do research today, especially when they primarily use online resources.

Another benefit is that students get practice working and thinking like historians. And they become curious about the women around them every day. Their projects usually spark conversations with relatives or friends.

“They realize they’re taken for granted or been unaware of the lives of people really close to them,” Freeman says. Freihoefer says the project inspired more conversations with his mother.

“I’ve asked my mother questions I don’t think I would have asked her before. It’s important. I want to know now. I don’t know if I would have done that or known how to do that before this course,” he says.

SHARING THE STORIES

Freeman says the Web site is one tool for people to learn about how girls grow up and the realities they face. But, she says, there’s still a dearth of information on the topic.

“It still find myself astonished at how little feminist information these students have encountered,” Freeman says. “[The Web site] is a chance for people in the class or people beyond the class to try to think about some of these feminist perspectives and locate information…that gets lost in the mainstream of education and mainstream media.”

Mortensen says she hopes young women view the site and realize what women have done to give them the rights they have today. “A lot take it for granted and they need to understand we’ve come so far, but there’s still a ways to go,” she says.

Freeman says the significance of the project is that these stories are permanently recorded.

“The bigger picture is that these are connections people are making and documentation that people are doing that otherwise might not get done.”

Rachael Hanel is a Madison Lake-based freelance writer and a regular contributor to both TOMORROW and TODAY, the magazine for alumni and friends of Minnesota State Mankato.
Two University programs are ready to take the historic step of offering doctorate degrees by the fall of 2007. They got there the old fashioned way – by doing their homework.

by Joe Tougas ’86

Staying the Course

COUNSELING AND STUDENT PERSONNEL PROFESSORS JOHN SEYMOUR AND JACKIE LEWIS USE VIDEOCONFERENCING TO TALK WITH PROFESSOR DIANE COURSOL AS THEY CONDUCT RESEARCH ON ONLINE COUNSELING AND SUPERVISION. THE RESEARCH IS IN COLLABORATION WITH APPLE COMPUTERS, AND IS SUPPORTED BY THE MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY AND THE MINNESOTA BOARD OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY. ALL THREE PROFESSORS WILL TEACH IN THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN COUNSELING AND STUDENT PERSONNEL (ED.D.).

They weren’t jockeying for a doctorate. Faculty in the School of Nursing and the Department of Counseling and Student Personnel at Minnesota State University, Mankato were just doing what they’ve always done – embarking on dynamic research that advanced the disciplines and bolstered the programs’ reputations.

So when the doctorate degree finally came to town, both were well poised to embrace the challenge and, in doing so, accompany the University into a new era.

In 2005, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System won legislative approval to offer six applied doctorate degrees. Prior to that, the only state institution permitted to grant doctorates was the University of Minnesota. The new law allows the System to offer applied doctorates in nursing, audiology, psychology, education, physical therapy and business.

Minnesota State Mankato will offer four doctorates in three of those programs – nursing, psychology and education. The first two out the door, scheduled to be offered in fall of 2007, are the DNP (Doctorate of Nursing Practice) and the Ed.D. (Doctorate of Education).

THE NEXT LEVEL IN NURSING

When the opportunity arose for the DNP, Minnesota State Mankato’s nursing faculty – who were already offering a master’s degree – ultimately felt well-suited to take the step, particularly as part of a consortium that includes Minnesota State Mankato, Winona State University, Metropolitan State University in St. Paul and Minnesota State University Moorhead. The DNP looked to be, at the time, the one degree for which all four schools had the resources if they collaborated, says Dr. Sonja Meiers, graduate coordinator for the University’s nursing program.

“These schools have been talking for years,” Meiers says. “When our schools were really first able to offer the nurse practitioner program, there was a collaboration. And that was legislatively supported, so when this became possible legislatively, here was another opportunity.”

Meiers praised the deans and directors of the schools in the consortium for having a progressive eye on how this new degree, the DNP, will eventually replace the master’s as the entry-level requirement for advanced-practice nursing. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing recommends that conversion by 2015.

To be approved as doctorate-granting bodies, schools need to demonstrate a high level of active scholarship by faculty. This is where Minnesota State Mankato’s School of Nursing is particularly well-prepared.

The Family Nursing Research Team, which includes Dr. Mary Bliesmer (chair of the Nursing department), Dr. Patricia Earle, Dr. Sandra Egggenberger, Dr. Norma Krumwiede and Meiers, has coauthored several journal articles, book chapters and presentations while continually integrating family concepts, theory and nursing into both graduate and undergraduate curricula. The team also undertook a project linking aesthetic expression and nursing practice, and presented the 2005 Douglas Moore Faculty Research Lecture on how families deal with chronic illness.
track of state and federal policy practice could confuse patients and Medical Association, for instance, exponentially,” Meiers says. “The amount of science to inform specialty already equipped with an advanced degree. But advances in time and the universities have to be approved not to prepare to offer doctorate discipline,” Meiers says. “It’s really committed to advancing the community health nursing, and Dr. Karen Willette-Murphy’s sleep research. “We do it because we’re FILLING A VOID The Counseling and Student Personnel department in the University's College of Education has faculty whose work makes waves – and news. Work such as that of Dr. Walter Roberts, the author of “Bullying from Both Sides,” a popular book for school counselors. “One of the reasons we’re in this position is because we do have a record of solid scholarship and solid research production,” says Dr. Rick Auger, the department chair. He has plenty to point to. There’s Dr. John Seymour, whose research into play therapy, medical family therapy and professional ethics has him presenting at conferences internationally. There’s Dr. Jennifer Pepperell, who for the past two years has been studying the social and emotional development of girls when they transition from elementary school to junior high. “A lot of existing research talks about how difficult it is,” Pepperell says. “I’m finding when girls have a solid connection to family or friends, even if it’s a small connection, the transition can be smoother than originally thought.” There’s Dr. Diane Courso’s research which includes technology in counseling, workplace bullying, trauma and the counseling process; and Dr. Jacqueline Lewis’ research, which includes technology in student affairs in counseling, career development, workplace bullying and diversity. Dr. Lewis has received several grants for research about online counseling including one from the North Central Association of Counselor Education and Supervision. Drs. Courso and Lewis have collaborated on several publications on technology in higher education and counseling, a cutting-edge topic in the field, for the American Counseling Association’s seminal series Cybercounseling and Cyberlearning. And Drs. Lewis, Courso, and Seymour have expanded online counseling research to include an investigation of online supervision – they’re currently involved in an online supervision project funded by the Minnesota Association of Marriage and Family Therapy and authorized by the Minnesota Board of Marriage and Family Therapy. For the past six years, Auger and former counseling chair Dr. Anne Blackhurst have been researching career development through the eyes of developing children. They began by asking children in first, third and fifth grades what they wanted to be when they grew up. The idea is to follow them into their careers. “And hopefully develop some insight into how kids develop their ideas about career, whether it’s intentional or happenstance,” Auger says. The group they’re tracking is now in seventh, ninth and eleventh grade. Overall, research permeates the program. “The benefit to our students is that when they’re in class with faculty members in our department we can talk both about what the literature says but also about some of the research we’re doing as faculty,” Auger says. “And I think that adds interest and relevance to what we say. It also teaches students about the value of research, and we’re expecting that’s going to be a very fundamental part of the doctoral program.” For decades, the program has offered a master’s program and enjoyed a solid reputation as one of the University’s signatories. In 1986, it became the first nationally accredited counseling program in the five-state area offering Counselor Education and Supervision – the title of Minnesota State Mankato’s doctoral degree – and no such degree available in Minnesota. “This is what makes us different.” Auger says. “So we see a need and interest in the part of prospective students for an Ed.D degree in Counselor Education and Supervision. There are mental health needs in the region that are not well served, where people who are counselor-educators could at least have an indirect impact.” Auger says there are also benefits for master’s students, who will be supervised by the doctoral students — who are professional counselors themselves. “I think that’s going to be beneficial to both groups,” Auger says. “What we anticipate is people who come into this doctoral program will be practitioners who have been out there working in the field for a number of years. They’ll have that practical experience and they’ll be able to add a layer of supervision that will benefit our students.” Auger says there are also benefits for master’s students, who will be supervised by the doctoral students — who are professional counselors themselves. “I think that’s going to be beneficial to both groups,” Auger says. “What we anticipate is people who come into this doctoral program will be practitioners who have been out there working in the field for a number of years. They’ll have that practical experience and they’ll be able to add a layer of supervision that will benefit our students.” Those who seek a doctorate do so for a variety of reasons. Auger says. Some are at the point where they’re interested in teaching at the university level. Some may be eligible for enhanced positions in their field, including those working on a college campus who want to elevate academically. “There are also some people who are just interested in professional development,” Auger says. “They’ve been out of school for a while, trends as they pertain to the field, says Blesser, who chairs the department. Contrary to AMA’s concerns, Meiers says the DNP will just enhance the collaborative process between nurses and physicians. “Medicine and nursing complement each other very well in that the kinds of and illnesses, injuries that become diagnosed by physicians and advanced practice nurses can be managed by nurses,” Meiers says. “Symptom management is really a priority. Dealing with the responses that occur in the body and psyche related to the health experience really is our context for healing.”
they feel they’ve lost touch with professional literature and just feel a need to re-tool, re-train.”

NEXT UP

Elsewhere in the College of Education, Dr. Jerry Robicheau has been in the Educational Leadership department since 2004. Robicheau’s previous position was superintendent of schools in Inver Grove Heights – the type of job a person gets with an Ed.D. in educational leadership. And Minnesota State Mankato’s aim is to have that Ed.D. available in the 2008 school year.

Robicheau says his department is ready for the opportunity, as is the market. He and a colleague recently embarked on a study that predicts a drastic turnover in public school administration within the next six years. Fifty-two percent of Minnesota school administrators and school leaders, he predicts, will have vacated their jobs through either retirement or career switches. The educational leadership doctorate will have two strands of focus that overlap: K-12 school leadership and experiential education. Core classes taken by all would include organizational structures, ethics and internships.

“And then they’ll focus in on their particular strand of what they want to do,” Robicheau says, “but the whole emphasis will be on leadership development — the knowledge, skills and dispositions that leaders need in today’s world.” The department put together its proposal a year ago, so when the administration approached this year and encouraged a 2008 launch, Robicheau said all systems were go. “We just needed to do some restructuring, but we felt we were well down the path to get this set up and get it done in time. Work yet to be done includes enhancing the research component of the curriculum itself so students can become involved further in projects like studying the effects of public policy. Also to be launched in 2008 is the University’s third doctorate, the Psy.D. in School Psychology.

“Everything’s lining up,” says Dr. Kevin Filter, who’s coordinating the psychology department’s doctoral planning process. The formal proposals have not yet been submitted, but will be later this spring, Filter says. The Psy.D at Minnesota State Mankato will accept not only working practitioners, but students straight from undergraduate studies. The intention, Filter says, is to have students working side by side with practitioners.

Joe Tougas is a Mankato-based freelance writer and a regular contributor to both TOMORROW and TODAY, the magazine for alumni and friends of Minnesota State Mankato.
Robbins says faculty are constantly working on their own writing as well as teaching. The University doesn’t build research and writing time into the job description, so it’s up to the professor to write whenever he or she can. “We write anyway and we publish anyway and maybe that tells our students that whatever circumstances they find themselves in, you have to make a place for writing,” Robbins says.

Faculty also try to stretch themselves and work across genres. Black has published a book of poems but now writes nonfiction. Joseph, who published a collection of short stories in 2003, has just submitted a manuscript for a nonfiction essay collection, which will be published in January 2009. “Even the established faculty are trying new things and stretching themselves and I think that sets a good example for students, too,” Robbins says.

**FACULTY PHILOSOPHY**

The faculty take a decidedly hands-on approach when instructing students. “Some people prefer our program over others because they know there’s going to be that faculty-student contact. Our faculty aren’t going to be hiding in some office someplace,” Robbins says. “When we’ve had people come who’ve started at another program, it’s often been the case that they … never had much faculty contact or they didn’t feel there was a writing community there.”

In addition to writing workshops, students can choose to learn practical applications, such as teaching, technical writing and pedagogy. But the core mission of the program is to take a student’s writing to another level.

Joseph says she’s training students to be their own readers and editors when they leave the program. She’s not there, she says, to be the teacher who knows it all and says, “This is wrong and this is how you fix it.” “I can’t fix their writing,” she says. “I have enough trouble trying to fix my own writing.”

Instead, she considers herself a passionate reader who pays close attention to how a student writes and treats the work like a piece of literature. “It’s that attention to detail that drew Catherine Hooper to the program. Hooper attended Mesa State College in Colorado, where Joseph taught previously, as an undergrad. When Joseph accepted a position in Mankato, she was so impressed with the town and the program that she encouraged Hooper to apply for the program here.

“Our instructors pour over our work, helping us improve,” Hooper says. “Our faculty members give a remarkable amount of time and energy toward student successes, as writers, as teachers, as people.”

**OUTSIDE THE MARGINS**

The programs strength filters into the core curriculum as well. For example, the Good Thunder Reading Series, which started in 1981, brings nationally known authors into Mankato for writing workshops, craft talks and readings that draw non-students as well as students. The series functions apart from the MFA program and exposes the entire campus community and the larger region to well-known writers. The program also benefits undergraduate creative writing students, as MFA students also teach undergraduates.

**SCHOLARLY WORKS**

The following pages list examples of the scholarly work completed by faculty at Minnesota State University, Mankato during the 2006 calendar year. Every attempt has been made to include all publications and performances. Names of Minnesota State Mankato faculty are in bold.

**COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH AND NURSING**


**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES**

**PUBLICATIONS**


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On October 14, 2006, the College of Business showcased cutting-edge research by business scholars by co-sponsoring a national Conference on Conflict Resolution and Negotiation in Dallas. Dean Scott Johnson and Chair Mary Rolles were involved in planning. Minnesota State Mankato faculty Drs. Georgia Holmes, Vicki Luoma and Penny Herickhoff presented papers.

Research projects submitted by five student scholars were also accepted: Kathryn Meyer, Melissa C. Anderson, Adnan M. Awow, Jacob Dahlstrom and Ryan R. Thompson. Best papers will be published in the Conflict Resolution and Negotiation Journal, Volume 1, 2007.


In Step and Online

Manufacturing Engineering Technology’s Ann Goebel has converted the department’s 400-level courses into online environments.

by Joe Toogoo ’86

Being online allows Goebel to be more efficient in how she presents the content, she says, and at the same time it gives many students an opportunity for clarity. “If we have an international student and English is not their first language, they can watch the content over and over and over again,” she says. “If I were an international student and English is not my first language, I could catch what I said, now they can repeat the video 100 times if they need. One of the three graduate assistants funded by the grant helped review several courses for ease of learning by students whose first language isn’t English.”

Dr. Patricia Lipetzky, dean of Extended Learning, through which all departments coordinate online courses, worked with Goebel in applying for the grant. Dr. Kent Kalm of Extended Learning helped implement the technology which will help create benchmarks for other departments. Extended Learning also helps evaluate Minnesota State Mankato’s online courses based on standards used by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System and MN Online, the two bodies that provided Goebel the grant. Goebel hopes to get all of the courses reviewed in the spring.

Overall, Goebel says, online courses help any number of students in any number of situations, from personal to professional. There are the students who want to come back to the program and retake their skills, and those who might not be able to physically be on campus.

Goebel’s online courses will improve constantly, she says. “They’ll keep growing like any course would. Continuous improvement is what we teach in industry, so we use it in our courses.”

S
eniors in Minnesota State Mankato’s manufacturing and engineering technology courses are well aware of the term “lean manufacturing.” It’s one of the technologies in the industry, and something recruits are expected to understand: keep costs at a minimum, use shorter time frames and produce superior products.

Changing nearly all of the senior-level courses in the department into asynchronous classes does much the same thing, by immersing students in real-world industry projects without tethering them to the classroom chair.

ToMoRR oW

John Cross

Grant and Sabbatical Committee and as a participant in the selection process for the Douglas Moore Lectureship. Inevitably, I came away from such experiences feeling impressed with the range of interesting and creative ideas pursued by our faculty and the obvious passion that fueled these pursuits. But I couldn’t have predicted how impressed — no, how inspired — I would be by the cumulative impact of all of our faculty’s commitment to excellence in scholarly and creative endeavors.

This commitment to excellence is evident in the hundreds of IRB proposals submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and Research each semester, as well as in the theses and capstone projects produced by graduate students under the tutelage of their faculty mentors. It was also apparent in the Teaching Scholar presentations I attended in November, which showcased the creativity and innovation of ten exceptional (and yet, I suspect, fairly typical) Minnesota State Mankato faculty members. The passion for excellence is obvious in the dozens of grant proposals reviewed by the faculty under my tutelage each year, and it’s visible in the proposals for external funding I sign nearly every day — proposals that have resulted in dollars from the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Institutes of Health, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Departments of Education and Housing and Urban Development. Finally, the mark of excellence is unmistakable in the projects featured in this issue of TOMORROW, including the list of scholarly and creative accomplishments, as exhibited during the past year.

In short, the evidence is clear: Individually and collectively, faculty members at Minnesota State Mankato are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in scholarship and research. For its part, the University has endeavored to create an environment in which that excellence can both flourish and be sustained.

The most recent example is the creation of a center specifically designed to nurture and support excellence in scholarship and creative activity. Having been appointed as Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, O’Connor anticipated the meetings and the paperwork. I would need to familiarize myself with policies and procedures to which I’d given only cursory attention as a faculty member; I understood I would need a crash course in the day-to-day operations of the Graduate Studies office. And I was prepared to trade my independent faculty lifestyle for the more structured schedule of an administrator.

Something quite unexpected, however, has turned out to be the most rewarding aspect of my new role: the opportunity to gain an institutional perspective on the quantity and quality of faculty research conducted on our campus. As a faculty member, I enjoyed occasional glimpses of this quality in my role as chair of the Faculty Improvement

Sustaining Excellence

Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and Research Anne Blackhurst reflects on how Minnesota State University, Mankato is creating an environment where scholarly excellence thrives.

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Street Scene

Vendors bustle near Kariakoo Market in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Photo courtesy of Dr. Susan Schalge, professor of Anthropology and 2006 Presidential Teaching Scholar Fellow, who spent time in Tanzania last summer researching the impact of economic aid.