During five years of teaching in the Information Technology department at West Kentucky Community and Technical College in Paducah, I worked with many wonderful people. They were my colleagues, my mentors, and my friends. I enjoyed teaching my IT classes, and I had been at WKCTC long enough to know where to go and whom to see to get things accomplished. I loved my job, and I was comfortable in it.

My mother and grandmother, however, were six hours away in Beattyville and not in good health. I was trying to manage their care long distance and that was not working. So, when I was offered a faculty position in the Computer and Information Technologies department at BCTC in June 2007, I accepted it. Quite honestly, I did that with some hesitation. Even though the move would put me much closer to my family, I wasn’t entirely sure that I wanted to start over at a new college.

I knew several Bluegrass folks from system committee and grant program work, and I had been teaching IT workshops on the Cooper Campus for several summers, so BCTC was not entirely unfamiliar territory. But, BCTC is bigger than WKCTC, and I think that the proximity to UK makes Bluegrass feel even bigger. There were some surprises and challenges during my first weeks on campus. (A parking tag costs how much?) And, although both WKCTC and BCTC are part of KCTCS, not everything works exactly the same way here, and I’ve had to learn some new ways of doing things.

Thanks to both the New Faculty Orientation that I attended before classes started last August and the ongoing series of New Faculty Seminars led by Greg Feeney and Molly Frisbie, I am finding my way at BCTC. I’ve not only learned many things that I needed to know about the college, but our group of new faculty has grown comfortable enough with each other through the seminars to share both our successes and our challenges in our weekly meetings. Although we are all “new” to Bluegrass, many members of our group have taught on other campuses, and the common willingness to share experiences and offer suggestions has made it easier, I think, for all of us to make the transition to Bluegrass.

There is a strong sense of community at BCTC, and I’ve discovered that the people here—faculty, staff and administration—are very welcoming. My colleagues in the CIT department have been tremendously helpful and supportive. They have patiently answered my endless questions, and they’ve also made me feel at home. Although I’ve only been here six months, I know that I’d walk through fire for my Assistant Dean, and she’d do the same for me. The support and trust that I’ve found here are priceless and have helped to make me comfortable with my decision to come to Bluegrass.
Academic Notes by Dave Hellmich

Welcome to the inaugural edition of BCTC’s Academic Voice. With BCTC being such a complex and diverse institution, faculty leaders like Greg Feeney, Charles James, and Debbie Holt recommended the creation of a newsletter to provide another opportunity for the college’s academic voice to be shared with faculty and staff across the college. Each issue of this newsletter will feature an article written by a member of Academic Affairs; other standard sections planned are found within this issue. Beginning with the next issue, a SACS update will be included.

This newsletter will be successful if faculty and staff take the time to read it and if the format and content evolve to meet the needs of the readers. Thus, please let me know any suggestions for improving this newsletter and email me any text you want considered for inclusion. The next issue is planned for April.

Finally, I spent 18 years at community and technical colleges in Florida and Minnesota. While teaching part time and then full time, while working in research and planning and then in academic affairs, I got to know many talented and dedicated faculty and staff at these colleges. Even so, nowhere have I known as many talented and dedicated faculty and staff with as much potential to affect a college’s future as I have gotten to know at BCTC. The hope is that this newsletter can reinforce, just a bit, positive contributions we are making toward creating this future.

“...nowhere have I known as many talented and dedicated faculty and staff with as much potential to affect a college’s future as I have gotten to know at BCTC.”

Faculty Council Report by Mike Binzer

This year in Faculty Council we are finally in a position to begin to standardize how curriculum should flow in the college. The KCTCS System is now experienced and initial precedents have been established. This coupled with the exceptional leadership of Kathy Swango on the College CRC, will allow us to establish and enforce our own protocols. The following are issues we are stressing this year:

- Faculty wishing to change or create new curriculum are highly encouraged to contact Kathy Swango while planning the changes. Depending on the kind of change, it may be necessary or easier to work through a system curriculum committee.
- It will be expected that faculty bringing proposals to the College CRC, Faculty Council, and all System level committees will be present for the meetings. If the faculty are not present, consideration of the proposals may be postponed until a future meeting.
- Faculty proposing curriculum changes should be contacted when their curriculum is assigned for review by the college CRC or FC.
- Faculty Council has an ad-hoc committee to develop language to describe the curriculum review process in “plain language.”
- Several principle issues have come up in the system that we are working on changing. One issue regarding curriculum is to allow CIT 105 to be added to the Computer Literacy List even though an existing KCTCS class covers many of the same topics.

- We have piloted the use of the Curriculum Tracking web pages to help keep faculty informed on where curriculum is in the process.

To view tracking pages go to: http://www.bluegrass.kctcs.edu/employees/faculty_council/curriculum/

Up-coming Meetings:
All meetings at 3:00 pm unless otherwise noted.
February 1, 2008 - Leestown Campus
March 7, 2008 - Cooper Campus
April 4, 2008 - Leestown Campus
May 5, 2008 - Time & Site TBD

Contact information: mike.binzer@kctcs.edu
Division News & Reports

The Allied Health Division (Greg Zoll, Assistant Dean) is happy to announce the appointment of Patricia Miller as the new Assistant Dean starting in 2008-2009. Our division has grown to ten programs with the addition of the new Polysomnography Program. Of those programs, eight are externally accredited, which further demonstrates that they all adhere to very high standards within their respective medical fields.

The Surgical Technology Program for the second year in row has achieved the recognition of being in the “PAE Elite Twenty Programs,” actually ranked 7th out of 435 accredited programs. This ranking is determined by the Accreditation Review Committee on Education in Surgical Technology, the accrediting body for Surgical Technology Programs Nationwide.

The faculty of the Business Division (Lynn Madison, Assistant Dean) are happy to announce that Jenny Jones will be our new Assistant Dean beginning in 2008-2009. The Business Marketing and Management folks are working hard to incorporate online classes into their technical curriculum. Their goal is to have the marketing and management options offered both face-to-face and totally online by Fall 2009. They have established 2 + 2 agreements with several universities, including Morehead State and Kentucky State, and have recently introduced a popular new business ethics course.

The Accounting and Economics group stays busy keeping up with all the demands of our students. Their courses are very popular; enrollees include students who plan to transfer to UK. We wish Sarah Maggard well; she retired December 31 after many very good years of service and dedication to our college. She is missed.

The Office Systems Technology and Medical Information Technology faculty offer both a face-to-face option and a totally online option of their associate degree. Curriculum changes keep these faculty busy. The programs being spread among three campuses and serve the needs of multiple communities, which is a great thing.

Our division has worked together excellently these past three years. We have fun, and I have witnessed many new friendships developing. We like to socialize and eat; that’s always a priority for us. Guest speakers have often commented that our division definitely has the best food at our meetings.

The computer techies in the Computer Science and Information Systems Division (Debbie Holt, Assistant Dean) have been busy sharing their knowledge and expertise with others as well as keeping up with the latest technological changes: Dana Brown, a new faculty member in the CIT department, has been busy coming up to speed with the recent changes in Microsoft’s operating system and server technology software. In June 2007, she served as a Technical Learning Guide in the Hands-on-Lab area at TechEd 2007, Microsoft’s biggest international IT conference (just imagine—19,000 geeks in one building!). She also presented an Instructor Led Lab (ILL) Session on Microsoft Server 2008 Server Core at this conference. In October 2007, Dana spent two weeks in Redmond, WA serving as a Subject Matter Expert and Technical Contributor on new versions of three Microsoft Technical Specialist certification exams. These exams are now being offered worldwide. In December 2007, Dana was called on again to spend a week in Montreal as a Subject Matter Expert, to refresh the content of an existing Microsoft Certified Professional exam (writing new exam questions to reflect changes in the technology since the exam was originally released).

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Division News & Reports continued

Melanie Williamson has joined the Faculty Advocate program with Pearson/Prentice Hall publishers. As a regional Faculty Advocate, Melanie attended specialized training in Boston in December 2007 and is scheduled for more training in February in Florida. Melanie now serves as a point of contact for questions/concerns about MyITLab, Prentice-Hall’s new training and testing program. She is the contact/support person for BCTC, as well as other college and universities in Kentucky/Indiana/Ohio/Tennessee and assists in setting up accounts, answers questions from faculty from other colleges considering adopting MyITLab, and provides training for current/future users how to use the many features of MyITLab.

Cindy Tucker, another new CIT faculty member this year, has been working with high school teachers and counselors at Scott County High School to increase the Computer Science course offerings at SCHS in the Dual Credit program through BCTC’s Opportunity College.

The Humanities Division (Ben Worth, Assistant Dean) is developing a new focus area in film studies and has begun offering a new course, English 282, International Film Studies. The English Area is interested in offering sections of Introduction to Literature that would include readings relevant to students in technical programs; contact Michael Benton.

Bluegrass Film Society:
http://bluegrassfilmsociety.blogspot.com

The Natural Sciences Division (Tammy Liles, Assistant Dean) is happy to announce the appointment of Chad Mueller as the new Assistant Dean starting in 2008-2009. Our division is focusing on expanding course offerings (especially labs) at extended campuses while working with three architectural firms to build laboratory facilities in Winchester, Georgetown, and somewhere in Lexington. Faculty are actively pursuing grants and implementing grant-related projects. The Science Outreach Committee has been extremely busy with organizing and presenting programs at local schools and public library branches, and we are currently negotiating with Lexington Public Library to provide science programs during Fayette County Schools’ Spring Break.

Committee Reports

Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (Melanie Williamson, chair) – investigated transcript evaluation and strongly recommended that assistance be given with incoming and backlogged transcripts; discussed the pros and cons of mandatory advising and GED requirements for entering students; approved proposals for policies on instructor consent and complete withdrawal from the college and graduation policies for students attaining a degree with multiple focus areas.

Advisory Committee on Promotion (Marcia Freyman, chair) – has met and formed a calendar for the consideration of 26 faculty promotion packages this year.

Arts on Campus Committee (Teresa Tope, committee coordinator) – in conjunction with the Humanities Division, the Theatre Department, and the Learning Resource Center has sponsored the following events: the Visual and Performing Arts Festival, the LRC Leestown Campus Guest Lecturer Series, the Kentucky Theatre Association Festival and Competition, the BCTC theatrical production of The Night Thou Spent in Jail, the LRC Scholars on Campus, Arts DVine, the BCTC Choir Winter Concert, the BCTC Filmmaking Certificate Program’s Short Films Premier, and the Bluegrass Literary Discussion Group. For more details see www.bluegrass.kctcs.edu/arts_on_campus/.

Rules Committee (Chad Mueller, chair) – created a new local Rule-Change Form with signature sheet, clarified the membership on the College Advisory Committee on Promotion, changed the BCTC Rules of the Faculty so that the faculty automatically grant the authority to the Registrar to allow students to withdraw from all BCTC courses without obtaining signatures from the individual BCTC faculty involved, voted against adding alternates to the Curriculum Review Committee (or other standing committees), and are continuing discussion about adding rank or experience requirements to the Curriculum Review Committee and perhaps other standing committees.

BCTC Safety Committee (Rae Ann Gill, chair) – is reviewing BCTC safety procedures with focus on training for faculty and staff to ensure that they are aware of the things they need to do in case of an emergency and is planning various mock training sessions that would go through the entire process of an emergency situation.
Teaching & Learning Notebook Conference Presentations

James Goode delivered a paper at the national Community College Humanities Association Conference in San Antonio, Texas (October 2007). His presentation focused on an examination of internationally famous Kentucky writer Wendell Berry’s four-decade-old canon of literary work (including 72 works of poetry, fiction, and essays) as it relates to his fictional “Port William Membership” and the “river” as a critical motif. Goode demonstrated that Berry’s neighborly characters live in faithful relation to each other and have common patterns of thinking and doing; they are united in friendship, work, loyalty, memories of the past, hope for the future, responsibility for each other, and love of a concrete place. James demonstrated how Berry’s “Port William Membership” symbolizes another “river” cascading along the banks of the literal “river” and how this speaks to the interconnectedness of all humans who find themselves a part of the stream.

Karen Mayo, Palisa Williams Rushin, and Catherine Penfold presented Building the Bridge: Creating a Transfer Center funded by a Title III Grant at the National Noel-Levitz Title III and Title V Symposium in Denver (November 2007). They argued that unique faculty participation, strong ties with four-year institutions, and successful use of technology made the Transfer Center at BCTC an early success - with more than 1,000 students visiting the Transfer Center within the first two years of the grant. Innovative strategies include a minority peer mentoring program (PRIDE) which pairs prospective transfer students with students who have successfully transferred to four-year institutions. Building a bridge is never easy, however, and the creation of the Transfer Center has not been without challenges.

Greg Rickert presented Disappearing Students: Drop-out in Distance Education at the Annual International Convention of the Association for Educational Communications & Technology in Anaheim, CA (October 2007), which was a review of literature from peer reviewed journals focusing on attrition in distance learning in higher education, summarizing conclusions of published research, and identifying future paths of research.

Steve Stone, Tiana French, and Patrick Davison (Hazard Community and Technical College) presented Getting the Faculty to Web 2.0 and 3.0 at the League for Innovation in the Community College’s Conference on Information Technology (CIT) in Nashville, Tennessee (November 2007). They discussed that as the web evolves, there are more interactive and immersive environments. Kentucky faculty members are becoming interested in these new technologies, but the killer application has not yet arrived. Those attending this session found out how Kentucky faculty members have presented Facebook, Flickr, del.icio.us, and RSS feeds and explored Second Life. They learned how today’s faculty members can reach the networked students of tomorrow and how to build a support network that helps them make their faculty more aware of the virtual landscape.

Roy Tapp presented Opening the Door for Everyone: Experiences Surrounding the Hispanic Enclosed Student at the 3rd Annual Access and Opportunity Summit in Lexington (November 2007). Roy presented that, as the 21st century unfolds, the boundaries of academics are being explored and altered to meet ever increasing opportunities for groups from unique corners of the educational structure. One such corner involves the Hispanic enclosed student (or inmate) who seeks the same educational experiences as others, yet often meets unfamiliar barriers in obtaining one’s secondary or post-secondary credential, inside or outside of the correctional environment. Roy delivered an overview of the current academic delivering systems as well as the present barriers and possible solutions for incarcerated Hispanic men and women.

Submit us your ideas for future issues!

Send ideas, photos and/or submissions to
Dave Hellmich
david.hellmich@kctcs.edu
or
Barbara Hoskins
barbara.hoskins@kctcs.edu
Terri Anderson and David Wachtel are working with the Kentucky Institute for International Studies (KIIS) this summer. Terri is teaching in Prague, and David is directing the program in China. We have a long history with the organization and Terri and David are glad to be part of it. If you are interested in teaching with the program, contact Ninfa Floyd.

Kevin Craycraft was appointed to the Association of Surgical Technologist Professional Standards and Education Committee, which has been in charge of writing the first edition of the Surgical Technology Standards of Practice to be used by practicing Surgical Technologist across the United States and Worldwide. Kevin also presented two speeches to a national audience at the Association of Surgical Technologist’s National Conference.

Robin Gornto and Laura Justice are serving as Curriculum Consultants to the American Dental Association’s Commission on Dental Accreditation. The Commission on Dental Accreditation evaluates the educational quality of dental and dental-related programs in the United States; the external accreditation procedure can be likened to a “mini-SACS” process.

Laura Justice is continuing as Principal Investigator for a second La Sonrisa Brillante grant. This grant is an outreach community service project for the Hispanic community in the Bluegrass service area.

Debbie Kelly, Larry Chiswell, and Laura Justice have been invited for a third time to provide a continuing education course at the International Zürich Study Club. The course will be offered in Zürich and Genève, Switzerland.

Clovis Perry was selected as the KCTCS faculty member to serve as the KY Council on Postsecondary Education Faculty Research Fellowship this semester. He will conduct research on the Adult Learner Initiative for CPE and serve as a Recorder for the Kentucky Adult Learner Summit to be held in Lexington on February 4-5.

Janelle Spencer published two articles on breast cancer in dental hygiene journals during the month of October and also presented breast cancer presentations to several community groups.

BCTC is an equal opportunity employer and education institution.