



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

TO: University Senate

FROM: Robert L. McGrath,
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: November 6, 2006

REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

CONSORTIUM ON INTEGRATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH (CIER) INITIATIVE

On October 18, 2006 the Provost announced a new initiative in Environmental Research.

The announcement to faculty on this initiative follows:

Colleagues,

I am very pleased to announce an initiative to integrate and strengthen what we do in environmental studies. Conflicts between the resource needs of an expanding human population and the natural environment are accelerating rapidly on local, regional, and global scales. Solving many of the most important environmental problems requires multidimensional and interdisciplinary approaches.

I convened a task force of faculty drawn from across the university to assess our extant strengths and to recommend how best to coordinate and foster new interdisciplinary approaches to the big environmental issues. The task force report recommended establishing a center (Named in the report Center for Environmental Science Education and Research) to help integrate and unite environmental research and education activities that already exist in many of our departments, the Marine Sciences Research Center, and at Brookhaven National Laboratory. The report is available on the web at: <http://ws.cc.stonybrook.edu/provost/Reports/Reports.htm>.

By combining all the strengths of Stony Brook (including SB Southampton in the future) we can attract large, interdisciplinary grants and contracts that focus on both the causes and consequences of environmental change as they relate to human health and well being. Clearly the social sciences and humanities in such fields as environmental economics, public policy, environmental history, and

globalization all come into play in finding solutions. Better coordination can also be expected to lead to development of attractive interdisciplinary degree and certificate programs

My memo of September 21 announced an initiative in Computational Science. That memo described how funds made available through the SUNY Empire Innovation Program (EIP) would be used in this first year of the program to support cluster faculty hiring in seven areas including environmental sciences. I'm happy to report the initiative in Computational Science and the cluster recruiting process is already underway.

A portion of the EIP funds are available for a cluster hiring initiative in integrative environmental research and education. I am pleased that Distinguished Professor Nicholas Fisher, a well known marine biogeochemist in MSRC with connections to environmental research projects throughout the campus and beyond, has agreed to be the founding director for this initiative. He will begin a program of seminars and workshops designed to attract faculty who already work on problems of environmental interest and to foster interdisciplinary interactions. He is also responsible for developing a search committee to identify and recruit the best and brightest young faculty in any of a number of fields that will multiply our strengths in environmental sciences education and research. The cluster recruiting rules will be the same as those announced for computational science... host departments or units will provide funds for 0.5 FTE, so that up to six new faculty can be hired. Fisher plans to reconvene the "CESER" task force for purposes of reviewing and discussing areas where this hiring initiative can have maximum leverage. He will also announce a time and place for a town meeting where interested department chairs and other faculty can discuss this exciting initiative. I hope many will attend.

FAHSS Awards

The Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Initiative has completed a third round of awards to faculty fostering interdisciplinary projects. This round's winners are as follows:

Professor Stephanie Dinkins, Art Department
Professor Daniela Flesler, Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature
Professor Paul Gootenberg, Department of History
Professors Bonnie Gordon, Arthur Hass and David Lawton, Music Department
Professor Shirley Lim, Department of History
Professor Frederick Moehn, Music Department
Professor Eileen Otis, Department of Sociology
Professor Gabriela Polit, Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature
Professor Nancy Tomes, Department of History

RECENT GRANTS/FACULTY AWARDS

Distinguished Professor Robert Aller of the Marine Sciences Research Center was awarded the 2007 American Chemical Society Geochemistry Division Medal. Professor Aller will also deliver the F. Earl Ingerson Lecture of the Geochemistry Society at the upcoming Geological Society of America meeting.

Professor Grady Gerbracht in the Art Department has been awarded an substantial grant from the Danish Arts Council, to encourage collaboration between Danish and American Artists.

Professor Howardena Pindell also in the Art Department has been awarded an Anonymous Was a Woman Award for her painting. These prestigious awards are granted by nomination only.

SIEMENS SCIENCE COMPETITION

The Siemens Science Competition in Math, Science and Technology announced this year's regional finalists on Monday, October 30, 2006. Of the 89 regional finalists selected nationwide, more than a dozen high school student researchers were mentored by Stony Brook faculty. It is worth noting that over ten percent of the regional finalists worked in the Garcia Center for Polymers at Engineered Interfaces.

Congratulations to Professors Benjamin Chu, Iwao Ojima, Mirjana Maletic-Savatic, Miriam Rafailovich, and Carlos Simmerling who mentored Stony Brook's regional finalists.

PROVOST LECTURE SERIES

On Wednesday, November 8, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. in the Student Activities Center, Stony Brook alumnus and Chancellor and Professor of Foreign Languages at the University of Michigan-Flint, Dr. Juan Mestas, will give a talk entitled *Somos Stony Brook! Celebrating the Latino Experience at Stony Brook University*.

Dr. Mestas is the author of two books, *El Pensamiento Social de José Martí: Ideología y Cuestión Obrera* and *Centro de Gravedad*, and of numerous articles published in scholarly, educational, and literary journals. He is a former editor of several periodicals. Mestas' poetry and short stories have been published in literary magazines and anthologies in Latin America and the United States. This lecture is given in association with Hispanic Heritage Month.

On Thursday, November 16, 2006 at 4:00 PM in the Student Activities Center Auditorium renown author Alice Walker will give a talk entitled *The World Is Burning—A Meditation* for the Provost's Lecture Series/Eighth Annual George Goodman Memorial Symposium.

An activist and social visionary, Alice Walker won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award for her novel *The Color Purple*, which was made into an internationally popular film by Stephen Spielberg and is now a Broadway musical. Her other novels include *Now is the Time to Open Your Heart*, *By the Light of My Father's Smile*, and *Possessing the Secret of Joy*. Her new collection of essays is *We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For: Inner Light in a Time of Darkness*. Book signing to follow with Ms. Walker. Amy Goodman will also be present to sign her new book, *Static*:

Government Liars, Media Cheerleaders, and the People Who Fight Back.

On Thursday, November 30, 2006 at 4:00 PM in Harriman Hall, Room 137, Dr. Les Paldy will give a talk for the Provost Lecture/Templeton Foundation Lecture Series entitled *Trust–But Verify: Negotiating A Cold War Nuclear Agreement*.

Dr. Paldy is a Distinguished Service Professor of Technology and Science at Stony Brook, where he has taught since 1967. Dr. Paldy's awards include the Distinguished Service Citation of the American Association of Physics Teachers and Stony Brook's Distinguished Alumnus Award. His interest in East Asian nuclear issues stems from his service as a Marine Corps officer in Korea. He will discuss how lessons learned during difficult Cold War exchanges with the Soviet Union might help solve the seemingly intractable issues over North Korea's recent nuclear weapons test.

RESPONDING TO DISTRESSED AND DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

Faculty, especially new faculty and teaching assistants are often unsure where to go for assistance when students are in distress or are being disruptive in/outside of class. The Counseling Center, Provost's Office and Student Affairs Office has compiled the following recommendations which are also available on the Provost's website at: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/provost/facultyinfo/index.shtml>

As faculty members, teaching assistants (TAs), and University staff members, you need to know what to do when a student is distressed or disruptive. Do not attempt to address a student's distress or disruptive behavior without consultation and assistance. When a student's behavior continues to disrupt others—despite a request to stop—or creates a direct threat to themselves or others, you must notify the University's trained professionals as soon as possible. All students have a right to learn in an environment free of disruption.

Delays in responding may result in serious consequences.

Procedures:

Emotional Distress

Contact the University Counseling Center, as soon as possible at 632-6720, to refer an emotionally distressed student. If you believe the situation is urgent, make that clear to the Counselor on Call. The Counseling Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and is located on the second floor of the Student Health Services, Stadium Road, West Campus. For urgent situations after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends, call University Police at 911 from campus phones, or 632-3333 from a cell phone or from off campus. Examples of distress include expressed hopelessness, anxiety, or grief.

Disruptions

Contact the Director of Judicial Affairs (Student Judiciary), Office of Student Affairs, as soon as possible, at 632-6705, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. when a student disrupts a class or other University activity. You may be asked to describe the student's behavior in writing. Judicial Affairs will contact the student directly to arrange an interview and referral for further assessment and assistance as needed.

Assessing Potential Danger and Risk

Contact the University Counseling Center, at 632-6720, Monday through Friday, 8:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A professional counselor must see students whose physical or verbal behavior suggests potential danger to themselves or others, as soon as possible, to assess the degree of risk. After 5:00 p.m. and on weekends, call the University Police at 911 or 632-3333, or the Psychiatry Emergency Room, Stony Brook University Medical Center, at 444-6050. Examples include verbal or written references to suicide, angry outbursts, and agitation or hyperactivity.

Emergencies and Direct Threats:

If the student or others appear to be in imminent danger, or you have an emergency of any kind, call University Police immediately at 911 from campus phones or 632-3333 from a cell phone (or from off campus) at any time of the day or night. Examples include direct threats of suicide, assault, or other injury. State clearly: "This is an emergency."

REMINDER: DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AND TEACHING PROFESSOR NOMINATIONS

The call for nominations for this year's Distinguished Service and Teaching Professor Awards was announced on September 1st. Nomination forms and complete guidelines for the awards can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/provost/index.html>.

The Provost's Office site also includes information on the Chancellor's/President's Awards for: Excellence in Teaching, Excellence in Faculty Service, Excellence in Librarianship, Excellence in Professional Service, and Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities.

The nominations for Distinguished Professor are distinct from the recent call described above and are handled through a committee of Distinguished Professors. For additional information in nominating a colleague as a Distinguished Professor, please see the website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/provost/form/index.shtml>