Forum to examine university’s Core Curriculum

By Allan Miller

A special university forum sponsored by the Provost’s Office and the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT) will initiate a new focus on the role and function of Virginia Tech’s Core Curriculum. The forum is open to all members of the university community and will be held on Friday, March 28, from 1:30 to 5 p.m. in 2150 Torgersen Hall. Advance registration is requested, and is available at the CEUT web site (www.ceut.vt.edu).

The goal of the forum is to identify and discuss major areas of concern relating to programs of general and liberal studies—generally known in academia as the “arena of common learning.” These common-learning requirements are embodied in Tech’s Core Curriculum, which comprises nearly one-third of an undergraduate student’s total curricular load and profoundly impacts the total learning experience.

The basic charge for this examination of the Core Curriculum and undergraduate education can be found in the university’s Strategic Plan, which mandates that the university “Maintain a current, relevant, and comprehensive undergraduate curriculum, and develop a plan to improve the Core Curriculum and better connect it with the discipline-based curricula.”

Featured speakers at the March 28 event will include both President Charles Steger and Provost Mark McNamee, and Professor Gary Fenstermacher, a former Tech faculty member who is now a philosopher of education at the University of Michigan.

Ronald Daniel, associate provost for undergraduate education, is coordinating the event. Daniel said, “This forum will provide an opportunity for the entire university community to come together to hear the vision and challenges in general education articulated by our lead administrators and a distinguished guest. Their initial comments, as well as questions brought to the forum by the participants, should generate a spirited dialogue about how our institution will lead, implement, and reward faculty members’ and departments’ participation.”

Forum participants are being asked to (See CORE on 4)

Science, technology think-tank head to speak

By Clara B. Cox

Joseph D. Ben-Dak, a former advisor on science and technology to the United Nations (U.N.) and now chairman of Knowledge Planning Corporation, a strategic think-tank that provides advice on science and technology to banks, corporations, and governments, will be on campus on Monday, March 24, to discuss “Globalization: Why It Fails and How It Can Be a Key for a Brave New World.”

The event, which is open to the public, will be held 5 to 6:30 p.m. in 1045 Pamplin and will be preceded by a reception for the speaker from 4:30 to 5 p.m. in the Pamplin atrium.

According to Ben-Dak, his talk will review globalization trends from three perspectives: the least-developed countries, where globalization has yet to ease poverty; the planning ministries in industrial countries, where globalization is a tool and a prophecy that does not deliver the goods; and the U.S. corporate world, “where glittering opportunities of globalization seem to be older than the paper on which they were recorded first.”

Ben-Dak, who holds a Ph.D. in mathematical sociology, conflict resolution, and management from the University of Michigan, has financially engineered and established successful technology and science businesses in some 60 countries. Since 1984, he has owned the Tri-Alpha Group of Corporations, a high-end business strategy planning and services consortium. Until recently, he was executive vice president and chief scientist of Xybernaut, a pioneering wearable-computers company in Fairfax. He has also been vice-chair of research for the AstroView Management Team.

In six years of working with the U.N., Ben-Dak was principal advisor of science and technology for the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP), founder and director of (See SCIENCE on 4)

Building Dedication, Black Alumni Reunion Highlight Campus Celebration

By Clara B. Cox

The dedication of the first building on campus named for African Americans and a two-day reunion of black alumni March 28 through 30 will highlight the university’s celebration of black students on campus.

The university bidled the dedication of Peddrew-Yates Residence Hall at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 29, as the highlight of its year-long celebration. The Board of Visitors passed a resolution in June, 2002, renaming New Residence Hall West in honor of the first black student to attend Virginia Tech and the first black student to graduate from Virginia Tech.

Irving L. Peddrew III enrolled in the university, then called Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI), in 1953 and was the only African American in a student body of 3,322 mostly white males during his first year as an electrical-engineering student. Three more black men joined him in 1954, and one of them, Charlie L. Yates, went on four years later to become the first black to graduate. Both men are expected to speak briefly during the dedication ceremony.

Registration for the black reunion will get under way at 4 p.m. on Friday, March 28. Among the events planned for the alumni, who will include several of the first black men and women to enroll—six black women enrolled in 1966—will be a Community Showcase, opportunities for the alumni to share their (See DEDICATION on 4)

O’Neil to keynote Graduate Education Week

By Julie Kane

Robert O’Neil, the founding director of the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression, will speak on “Academic Freedom in a Time of Crisis” as part of Graduate Education Week. The event will be held Wednesday, March 26, in Owens Banquet Hall from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The speech will be followed by a reception. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Before his current position, O’Neil served five years as president of the University of Virginia. The center is affiliated with the university, where he continues to teach law school courses in the First Amendment field, including a new seminar on “Free Expression in Cyberspace.” Besides addressing academic issues in troubled times, he is an expert on security-driven restriction of research, threats to tenure, how national security affects First Amendment rights, Homeland Security and the USA Patriot Act, and the SEVIS program which monitors most international students in the U.S.

His two decades of administrative service include a term as vice president of Indiana University at Bloomington and as president of the University of Wisconsin before coming to Virginia. He is a director of the Commonwealth Fund and a trustee of the National Coalition Against Censorship. He recently chaired the boards of WVPT public television and the Virginia Coalition for Open Government. In the 1990s, he chaired the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and for seven years, Committee A (Academic Freedom and Tenure) of the American Association of University Professors. O’Neil has authored several books, most recently The First Amendment and Civil Liability published late in 2001, and he has written many law-review articles.

Graduate Education Week (GEW) activities (Monday, March 24 through 26) are listed below:

On Monday, from noon until 4 p.m., the Graduate School will hold an open house. The kick-off event will feature the reading of the official proclamation issued by Blacksburg Mayor Roger E. Hedgepeth. Afterwards, a discussion of the week’s events will be held. Graduate students will receive a free graduate movie ticket to see “About Schmidt” at the Lyric. Tickets and free popcorn are available at Sandy Hall.

From 4:30 until 5:30 p.m. in 113 McBryde Hall, Vice-Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School Karen DePauw will present the “State of the Graduate School.” Free GEW T-shirts will be distributed among the audience.

At 7 p.m. or 9:15 p.m. on Monday night, graduate students are invited to the Lyric on at no charge. Pick up a free graduate movie ticket from the Graduate School in Sandy (See O’NEIL on 4)
Math Awareness Month event scheduled

Helaman and Claire Ferguson will present “Mathematics in Stone and Bronze” on Thursday, April 17, at 7 p.m. in the auditorium of Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center. This presentation is sponsored by the Department of Mathematics in celebration of Math Awareness Month at Virginia Tech.

Helaman Ferguson’s sculptures in stone and bronze celebrate ancient and modern mathematical discoveries, melding the universal languages of sculpture and mathematics. Using slides and video, Helaman and Claire Ferguson trace Helaman’s creations from initial conception through mathematical design and computer graphics to their final form. The Ferguson’s will discuss their innovative computer technology used to create toiri and doubl toiri, trefol knots, wild and tame spheres, Moebius strips and Klein bottles.

Helaman and Claire Ferguson received the 2002 Joint Policy Board for Mathematics (JPBM) Communications Award, which was established in 1988 to reward and encourage journalism and communications in support of the universal languages of mathematics, the philosophy, sciences, and engineering.

The Ferguson’s will present a special demonstration on how dogs are trained to help the physically-challenged.

Additional events for Math Awareness Month include a special presentation by the JPBM on Tuesday, March 25 from 2 until 3 p.m. in 100 Hancock and the Math Awareness Month Panel of Talks on Friday, March 28 at 11 a.m. in 1003 Warfield.

The annual Omega Tau Sigma Service Dog of the Year Award will be presented at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 29 in 1003 Warfield.

By Sally Harris

“Big Brother Technologies,” a Choices and Challenges Forum, will take place March 27 at the Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center. The event features experts in subjects such as surveillance technologies, legal traditions and genetic technology, data collection, databases to the literary origins of “Big Brother,” and dealing with terrorism.

By Sarah Newhill

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning is sponsoring a visit by Kim Rossmo, director of research with the Police Foundation Planning is sponsoring a visit by Kim Rossmo, director of research with the Police Foundation, for a special presentation on geographic profiling and its applications in solving crimes.

By Sally Harris

“As Americans, we value our privacy and cherish the freedom to live our lives without intrusion or interference from others,” said Doris Zallen, director of the Choices and Challenges forums at Virginia Tech. “Yet technology is providing a variety of new tools that can alter our sense of privacy.”

The forum is free and open to the public.

By Jeffrey S. Douglas

Activities at this year’s Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine’s annual Open House will include a guided tour of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, working dogs helping to protect the nation from agri-terrorism, and an equine-acupuncture demonstration.

The Open House is scheduled for Saturday, April 5 from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. At 10 a.m., veterinary students will begin conducting guided tours of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and other college facilities. Tours last approximately 60 minutes and will depart at 30-minute intervals throughout the day.

Children are invited to bring their stuffed animals to a “Teddy Bear Repair Clinic” and the St. Francis of Assisi Service Dog Foundation will present a special demonstration on how dogs are trained to help the physically-challenged.

A variety of presentations concerning the complex classroom: Alex Niemiera.

Tuesday, 25
Clothesline Project Workshop, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Women’s Center.

Wednesday, 26
Clothesline Project Workshop, Display, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Women’s Center.

Women’s Month Event, 7 p.m., Women’s Center conference room.

YMCA Mornings, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Luther Memorial Church.

YMCA Slide Show, noon, Cranwell Center.

Women’s Month Event, 12:15 p.m., Women’s Center conference room.

Women’s Month Event, 4 p.m., Squires Williamsburg Room.

“With Good Reason,” 7:30 p.m., WVTIF.

Thursday, 27
Crowdsourcing: the Geographical Profiling of Serial Predators at the 2003 Conference of the Association for the Study of Human Rights, University of Virginia, who will be participating in, and commenting on, the discussion-intensive sessions.

The workshop will consist of three main sessions beginning Friday evening in 219 Squires. The sessions Saturday will be held in 341/345 Squires and will begin at 9 a.m. The workshop will also feature an original play entitled, “Me and My Google,” which will be performed Friday night at 7 p.m. (see web site for location). The workshop will close Saturday night with a plenary session, featuring talks by Feenberg, Johnson, and Martin, from 5 to 7 p.m. in Squires Haymarket Theater.

Admission to the workshop is free and open to everyone. For more information and a more detailed schedule, visit web site http://www.cis.vt.edu/sts/workshop2003/.

The workshop's theme revolves around the intersections (or dual tracks) of morality and technology, and what people can do about them.

In addition to local participants, the workshop features scholars in the field, including Andrew Feenberg (philosophy of technology, UCSD), Brian Martin (sociology of science, University of Wollongong), and Deborah Johnson (applied ethics, University of Virginia), who will be participating in, and commenting on, the discussion-intensive sessions.

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HFEC driving simulator will enhance UVA biomedical research

By Liz Crumbley

A driving simulator developed in the Virginia Tech Human Factors Engineering Center is so realistic that you can hear squealing tires and the impact of a crash and even feel vibrations as you cruise the streets of Charlottesville and I-64.

But this isn’t a computer game—the simulator is now being used by the University of Virginia (UVA) Behavioral Medicine Research Center to conduct clinical trials of the effects of certain medications and illnesses on driving performance.

“The simulator is designed to create the illusion of driving in a variety of settings, including urban, rural, and interstate highways,” said John Casali, the Grado professor of industrial and systems engineering (ISE) at Virginia Tech and the principal investigator on the project.

Peripheral vision cues give the simulator driver the illusion of speed. The driver can hear the engine and feel vibrations, such as the rumble strip along the shoulder of the road. If there’s an accident, the simulator makes the sounds of a crash and the action stops.

Funded by the Carilion Biomedical Institute under the direction of Sam English, manager of research projects, the project is a collaboration among researchers and students at three universities.

Professor Ron Mourant and students at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachussets, shot video of streets in Charlottesville and of I-64 outside the city and then developed software that displays simulated scenes of the roadways. The scenario begins at the Charlottesville Division of Motor Vehicles office and runs through suburban areas and onto the interstate highway.

The Virginia Tech research team—Casali, ISE research associate professor Gary Robinson and two graduate students—took the software and developed the simulator, complete with a fully operational driving console, a virtual-reality head-mounted display and an alternative 40-inch plasma-screen display. A unique feature developed by the ISE researchers is a measurement package including software that can calculate several indicators of driver-vehicle performance.

Casali said the project cost about $13,000 for research development, fabrication, and conduct of two experiments. However, now that a prototype has been developed and refined, the simulator can be reproduced for about $50,000.

The ISE group designed and developed the simulator with the primary goal of delivering it to Daniel Cox, professor of psychiatric medicine and internal medicine at UVA, for use as a research tool. For several years, medical researchers at UVA have been using an older and less-sophisticated simulator to study the ways drivers are affected by medications and by conditions such as diabetes, aging and attention-deficit disorder.

In February, the new simulator was moved to Charlottesville to enhance the continuing medical studies. Ultimately, Casali said, it will be shared by UVA and Tech in a cooperative arrangement.

“There’s a potential for the simulator to be modified for use by the DMV in conducting tests of certain categories of drivers, such as novice drivers or those needing on-the-road proficiency testing in high-traffic areas,” Casali said. “It’s useful as a driver training tool because it’s safe and errors in driving behavior can be ‘played back’ so that the driver can witness and understand his own mistakes.”

The simulator also could potentially be used as a training device for those who require some rehabilitation following injury, Casali said. In that case, the simulator can be modified to accommodate certain disabilities for less expense than testing controls in an actual car.

The following classified positions are currently available. Position details, specific application procedures/position-closing dates may be found on Personnel Services website at http://www.ps.vt.edu. Positions are also listed on the Job Line, a 24-hour recorded message service. For information on all job listings, call 1-5300. Some positions include state benefits. Positions with numbers beginning with “W” are hourly and do not include state benefits. Individuals with disabilities desiring assistance or accommodation in the application process should call by the application deadline. Closing date for advertised positions is 1 p.m. Monday. An EEO/AA employer committed to diversity.

CLASSIFIED POSITIONS

FULL TIME

One full-time food-service position available.

Accountant, 004522F, PB 3, Controller’s Office.

Assistant Director, 007490J, PB 3, ADS. Administrative/Financial Services Associate, 007981Y, PB 4, IRED.

Associate Director of Culinary Services, 002947H, PB 5, RDP.

Boiler Operator, 000268F, PB 3, Power Plant.

Communications Manager, 007549J, PB 4, VTTI.

Development Associate, 008069S, PB 3, University Development.

Electrician, 001691F, PB 3, Physical Plant. Electrician Supervisor, 002038F, PB 4, VTH.

Event Coordinator for Student Organizations, 006525J, PB 3, UUSA. Fiscal Technician, 008071M, PB 3, APS. Housekeeping Lead Worker, 000902J, PB 1, USA.

Housekeeping Leader Senior, 000550H, PB 1, RDP.

Housekeeping Worker, 007262J, PB 1, Recreational Sports.

Marketing Associate, 008072S, PB 4, University Development.

Medical Technologist, 006771M, PB 4, VTH.

Medical Technologist, 002666M, PB 4, Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise Department. Powerline Assistant, 006523F, PB 3, FES. Program Support Technician Senior, 000951B, PB 3, Foreign Languages. Service Leader, 000560H, PB 1, RDP. Sous Chef, 002946H, PB 3, RDP. Unit Manager, 007961H, PB 5, RDP.

PART TIME

Administrative Assistant, W023527K, PB 2, VBI.

Gel Electrophoresis Lab Technician, W023528K, PB 3, VBI. ICU Veterinary Technician Large Animal, W022181M, PB 2, VTH.


Off Campus Nursing Shift Supervisor, 002996M, PB 2, EMC.

EMPLOYMENT
Eyre honored by state VMA

By Jeffrey Douglas

Peter Eyre, dean of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, was named the Paul F. Landis Virginia Veterinarian of the Year by the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association during the organization’s annual meeting.

The honor recognizes veterinarians for their activities as a veterinarian, exceptional contributions to organizational activities at the national, state and local levels and community involvement.

Eyre was named dean of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in 1985. As dean, he is responsible for the administration of a two-state, three-campus professional school that is jointly operated by the land-grant universities of Virginia Tech and the University of Maryland at College Park.

Eyre has led a series of initiatives that have consolidated and strengthened the partnership between Virginia and Maryland and fortified its political and economic foundations.

He is currently president-elect of the Association of American Veterinary Colleges, and will assume the presidency in July, 2003. He has served on the board of directors of the American Veterinary Medical Colleges, on the American Veterinary Medical Association’s Council on Government Relations, and has provided leadership for many other professional associations.

He has been honored for outstanding leadership by the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association, the Maryland Veterinary Medical Association, and the Blue Ridge Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

Eyre is a recipient of the Norden Award for Distinguished Teaching and the Sigma Psi Award for Excellence in Research.

Before assuming the deanship of the VMRCVM, Eyre served as chairman of the Department of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Guelph’s Ontario Veterinary College in Ontario Canada, where he also served as associate director of the Canadian Centre for Toxicology.

As a biomedical researcher, Eyre has been responsible for the acquisition and completion of over $1.2 million in sponsored grants and contracts, and has authored 350 scientific publications, including more than 200 in refereed journals.

BOV approves name of new building-construction addition

By Sarah Newhill

Bishop-Favaro Hall will be the official name of the newest addition to the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, approved by the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors at its recent meeting. Bishop-Favaro Hall will be the future home for the university’s College of Architecture and Urban Studies.

Eyre was also named after Richard Bishop, 1967 graduate of Virginia Tech and the University of Maryland at College Park. Bishop was the recipient of the William E. Wine Award, the university’s top honor for teaching, and in 1974, was inducted into the Academy of Teaching Excellence.

Bishop’s lead gift for the building will be added to a $2.5 million state bond package, which was approved by Virginia voters on the ballot in November. The remaining $1.5 million in funding will be secured through alumni and friends of the department for this $7.5 million total project.

The proposed building will house the Department of Building Construction’s administrative and faculty offices, and provide classroom space, seminar rooms, and studios, as well as student enrollment that has doubled over the past five years. The new facility will also provide state-of-the-art laboratory spaces, including testing labs, wet labs, material handling, tool and welding labs, and workshops for assembly of construction systems. The department has been a part of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies since 1964 and is currently located in Burruss Hall.

O’NEIL Continued from 1

Hall. Free babysitting will be provided. Details are available at 4558. Check the Graduate School Web site for more information.

On Tuesday, March 25, a talk on “Preparing the Future Professional—Academic Track” will be held in the Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center (DBHCC) from 9 a.m. until noon. Preparing the Future Professional Business/ Professional Track will take place at the DBHCC from 1 until 4 p.m. For more information, contact mnhughes@vt.edu or call 1-2494.

On Wednesday, March 26, the 19th Annual Research Symposium will be held in Owens Banquet Hall from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Poster presentations and discussions by graduate and undergraduate researchers will be evaluated by faculty members representing all of the colleges. Included are the categories of agricultural and animal science, natural and biological sciences, physical sciences and engineering, social sciences and humanities, undergraduate research, and virtual reality.

Also on Wednesday, the Graduate Education Week Keynote Speech and reception will be held from 1:30 until 2:30 p.m., in the Virginia Tech Student Center. Free Graduate Education Week T-shirts will be distributed among the audience.

On Thursday, March 27, “Food for Thought,” a luncheon, will be held in the Virginia Tech Student Center from noon until 1:15 p.m. Free Graduate Education Week T-shirts will be distributed among the audience.

From 4 until 8 p.m., the Graduate Education Week Cook-Out will be held at the Ag Quad behind Sandy Hall. Graduate students and their families are invited to an outdoor cookout dinner that will include music and games for socializing.

For more information on these events, call Jocelyn Navarro at 1-9549 or Pat Goodrich at 1-4558. Check the Graduate School Web site for GEW Week.

How can the pedagogy and design of the core reflect contemporary knowledge of student learning and development?

To what extent should the entire university be expected to participate?

Does and/or should Virginia Tech’s approach to general education reflect a particular brand or special quality?

How might the university better connect accrediting, other external requirements, and assessment demands with the general education programs?

Following initial presentations from each of the principal speakers, forum participants will meet in small groups to discuss the issues raised, followed by an exchange of dialogue between participants and the three principal presenters.

Daniel said, “This event is not envisioned as a one-time occurrence, but rather the lead event in a series of consultative conversations. It is expected that at least one more town-hall style meeting will occur in mid-April. The results of these and other smaller group discussions will contribute to a vision for the university that its general education governance body—the University Core Curriculum Committee—will need to focus their efforts. It is also anticipated that such discussions will lead to a more clear vision of the role of leadership and governance, such as a possible consortium, needed to implement possible change.”

Antonio Garcia, 46

By Jeffrey Douglas

Antonio Garcia, 46, an associate professor in the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences, died March 14.

Garcia, a specialist in animal reproduction, joined the faculty of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in July, 2001. In the college, he had teaching responsibilities in both the DVM professional and graduate-education programs. He also served on the college’s Production Management Medicine team.

Garcia earned his DVM from the University of Mexico and his Ph.D. from the University of British Columbia. He then conducted a post-DVM internship at the University of Florida and a residency at the University of Saskatchewan, where he earned his M.S. degree. Before joining the college he served as Embryo Transfer Research Manager at the PIC Group in Franklin, Kentucky.

A memorial service was held for Garcia on March 15.