GSU Earns Reaccreditation Recommendation

By Sarah Koehler
Editor

It's a term that's often used in education: Accredited. Colleges and universities across the nation (and around the world) often advertise themselves as such when looking to recruit new students. But few people understand either the process or the importance of earning such a status.

But this is not the case at GSU, where a team of staff and faculty are now all too familiar with the term and what it entails.

At the end of 2009, Governors State University (GSU) underwent the process to earn its accredited status for another 10 years. Following a visit from a team of consultant-evaluators in November, GSU was recommended to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to be recognized as an accredited university until 2020.

According to Dr. Eric Martin, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, "The team's recommendation for ten years is a highly significant achievement because it is the maximum number of years that the HLC will reaffirm an accreditation. It is the highest form of external validation that the university can earn, and it affords us ample time to continue to sustain current and to build new high-quality academic programs for servicing the region."

Dr. Martin also helped to explain what being accredited actually means.

"At the basest level, this accreditation means that the university may continue to offer federal financial aid, which is as essential to a university as its students," he said. "More broadly, this accreditation is a validation of all university operations including academics, student support, library services, budget and planning, advancement, facilities, alumni relations, etc."

He further explained that while it is not required for a school to be accredited, those that don't will often struggle to attract and retain students due to the lack of financial aid they can offer. Further, students who graduate from schools which are not accredited will often have trouble being accepted into graduate or professional programs and can also face difficulties in securing employment in some fields.

Over the next 10 years, GSU must adhere to a few "stipulations" in order to maintain their status as an accredited university. Dr. Martin explained that one of the biggest challenges is to find ways to show what students have learned by the time they graduate.

"The challenge of documenting what students know (or don't know) and they can do (or can't do) by the time graduate, as well as documenting program changes to enhance learning in the future is significant," he explained.

"[Therefore, the GSU team] recommended to the HLC commission that GSU have a 'focused visit' on this particular item in three years and that the HLC provide [GSU] with a solid roadmap for moving us forward."

GSU will work toward a number of goals over the next 10 years, including assessing students' general education competencies and the use of technology in the classrooms. The team will also be collecting student-performance data so they can see which areas of learning need improvement and which seems to be doing well.

Dr. Martin says that while this task can be challenging, he is sure that the team will be ready and willing to take on the process, just as they have done over the past few years as they prepared for the reaccreditation process.

This particular HLC process at GSU initially began in 2007, when the co-chairs of the project were determined and a committee was put together to guide the school through the steps toward reaccreditation. All total, more than 100 GSU faculty, staff, students and administrators comprised these committees and sub-committees and participated in numerous meetings and training sessions over the two-year period.

The team was required to submit a report to the HLC about GSU activities from 1999 to 2009. The final report, just over 200 pages in length, included seven chapters about GSU's budget, planning, student body, community outreach and other inner workings.

The final phase of the process took place in November 2009, when the eight-person HLC team came to visit the campus for three days. Nearly 300 electronic files and hundreds of paper copies were available for the team to review.

According to Dr. Martin, the GSU library became a sort of headquarters for this phase of the process.

"The materials were expertly collected and organized by staff members in the University Library so that the HLC team members lost no time finding the items for which they were looking," he said.

See 'Reaccreditation' page 5
Working to Eliminate E-Waste

By Sarah Koehler
Editor

There's no doubt about it: we live in a technology-driven world. New inventions and innovations come about every day, each striving to make life better or easier in some way. We all love the convenience of email, the instant gratification of our cellphones (wait until you get home to check messages? Are you kidding?) and the fun that many of us get from social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook. But is there a downside to all these technological wonders that we aren’t recognizing? According to Carol Johnson, writer for Buzzle.com, a website dedicated to online tech-talk, “the faster those new products emerge, the faster the outdated ones are ending up discarded in trash heaps.”

Recently, industry leaders have joined forces with governmental and environmental organizations to find solutions to the problems caused by technology waste. These efforts have been labeled the Rethink Initiative. According to Johnson, “the problem of throwing away outdated equipment is no small matter; hundreds of millions of computers, cell phones, video and stereo equipment, and other electronics either sit on shelves or end up in the garbage all across America every year. The Rethink Initiative hopes to educate and inspire consumers to make smart choices about how to dispose of their outdated equipment responsibly.”

According to Buzzle, the Rethink Initiative is a combined effort between a host of corporate giants, including computer manufacturers such as Apple, IBM, Dell, HP, and Gateway; electronics manufacturers such as Toshiba and Motorola; cellular manufacturers such as Nokia and Verizon; and even retail giants such as Best Buy.

With American consumers and businesses constantly upgrading and replacing to keep up with the endless new advances in productivity, learning, and entertainment, these companies are banding together to provide information, tools, and solutions to make it easy and even profitable for people to find new homes for outdated equipment by responsibly recycling unwanted products.

Some of the organizations involved with the Rethink Initiative offer their own recycling programs. The National Cristina Foundation (www.cristina.org) will match you with groups that need old hardware to provide job training for disabled people, and you get a tax write-off as a result of your donation. CollectiveGood(www.collectivegood.org) will take an old wireless cell phone and in return make a donation to the charity of your choice, from a list of over 300 charities.

The Basel Action Network (www.ban.org) can provide a list of responsible electronics recyclers near you, so you can give old TVs and other electronics to someone who can harvest them for recyclable materials. Apple Computers offers free recycling of old PCs—regardless of their manufacturer—for customers who purchase a new Mac. The company has been named a "Forward Green Leader" by the Sierra Club, being recognized as one of the top ten environmentally progressive companies.

The issue of discarded computers and other electronics is not a trivial matter. As we continue, especially here at GSU, in our quest to treat our environment with love and respect, consider looking into these technology recycling programs when disposing of your old computers, cellphones and hardware. Working together, we really can make a difference!

Attitude is Everything After a Layoff

By Tanille Day-Walker
Contributing Writer

When I read the letter informing me of my lay off, I was devastated. Although not completely unexpected, nothing could have prepared me for the shock of being told my employer of five years, would no longer be my employer. Walking the few feet from my manager's office to my cubicle, my feeling of devastation turned to anger, humiliation and then panic. What would I do?

I had listened to countless stories of unemployed acquaintances with job searches lasting well over a year. Having had my salary reduced by nearly fifty-percent 6 months prior to being laid off, my savings were nearly depleted. It seemed, every time I turned on the television, there was talk of increasing foreclosures, job loss, and bankruptcy filings. I began to feel sorry for myself. Here I was a single parent, with insufficient funds and a minuscule chance of landing a new job. Soon, would I too sing the songs of foreclosure and bankruptcy?

For days I was innumerable. I could not say the words, “I was laid off” without bursting into tears. I wanted to crawl under the covers and stay there. Then it hit me and my inner strength started to return. I would have a “fifty party” no more.

I had been laid off from a job in which I no longer enjoyed. The environment which had once supported learning and development no longer existed. Employee cohesion had been replaced by chaos triggered by imminent monthly layoffs. Many of my closest co-workers had faced the company chopping block months prior to my being let go. In retrospect, I was relieved to escape the diminishing morale and mounting lunacy. Getting laid off actually opened my eyes to new options.

Things would be difficult financially, especially with a 9-year-old daughter to raise. But I also realized this was an opportunity to become creative with my finances and outlook toward the future. I cut back on expensive outings but increased time spent with family and friends by incorporating game and movie nights at home.

I tapped into resources that would help me avoid foreclosure and lessen financial hardship. I networked. I returned to school to pursue my passion in media and will finish my master’s degree in a year. I produced a documentary. As of this publication, I published my first article. I am working on a business plan. What will I do now that I am laid off? Everything. Anything. As I am empowered. And you are too.

We know many GSU students are struggling with layoffs, wage cuts or hiring freezes these days. If you have money saving tips or resources you know of that can help those in need of such valuable information e-mail it to us at phoenix@govst.edu. We'll print as many as we can. Thanks.
Governors State University recognizes outstanding academic performance of undergraduate degree-seeking students by giving special attention to those students who achieve excellence in their work.

At the end of each trimester, degree-seeking students who have completed at least six hours of graded course work without any incomplete grades, with a grade point average of 3.70 or better, will be included on the Dean’s List.

"Congratulations to all those who have worked hard and met high standards of performance!" says Dr. Maimon, GSU President.
New Class of Sculpture Park Docents Begins

GSU Public Relations Department

Volunteer docents at the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park (NMSP) on the campus of Governors State University help park visitors to the park understand its 26 pieces of art, and the meaning and motivations behind the art and the artists. Training for the 2010 class of docents begins February 4. Volunteers interested in learning about art and sharing their knowledge are encouraged to join.

“Docents lead tours, host programs and receptions, and act as ambassadors of the park,” explained Geoff Bates, Director and Curator of the NMSP. “This is a great way to get involved, to learn about contemporary sculpture, and meet lots of interesting people.”

Docent orientation consists of seven evening sessions spread over a 12-week period and a morning tour of the sculpture park. Session topics include park history, an introduction to the history of sculpture, presentations on each piece in the collection, and pointers on how to conduct tours.

Docent training sessions are conducted on Thursdays, beginning February 4 and continuing through April 15, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The final session is a tour of the park on Saturday, April 17, from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Light refreshments and materials are provided. Advance registration and a $30 fee are required.

For more information on the park docent program and other volunteer opportunities, call (708) 534-4486, email sculpture@govst.edu, or visit the park website at www.govst.edu/sculpture.

Winter Commencement Speaker Chosen

Boender will also serve as the voice of the Class of 2009. As a student commencement speaker, she will share her observations on the day, the work it took to earn her degree, and her hopes for the future.

Boender was chosen to give the speech based on her excellent academic record and her service to the university and the community. As a full time graduate student in marriage and family counseling, Boender also worked as a graduate assistant, managed to have a baby, take care of him, and maintain a perfect 4.0 grade point average during her three years at GSU.

Governors State University Winter Commencement will take place on Saturday, February 6, at 11 a.m. at the Tinley Park Holiday Inn Select and Convention Center, Tinley Park, Illinois.
Honorary Degree Recipient to Speak at GSU

commitment to his education and about earning his bachelor’s degree before beginning his Major League Baseball career. He will also discuss the high and low points of his professional athletic career and reflect on the current state of pro baseball.

On Saturday, Feb. 6, Glanville will be the honorary degree recipient at Governors State University’s 2010 Winter Commencement. Commencement will be held at 11 a.m., at the Tinley Park Holiday Inn Select and Convention Center. More than 625 graduates will participate in GSU’s Winter Commencement.

Glanville currently writes “Heading Home,” an op-ed column for the New York Times, and is the author of the soon-to-be-released book based on his column, “The Game from Where I Stand.” He is also a contributor to XM Radio’s “MLB Home Plate - Power Alley” and Comcast SportsNet Chicago and founder of GK Alliance, LLC, a green-friendly real estate development company in the western suburbs.

Honorary degree recipient Doug Glanville to speak at GSU.

GSU Public Relations Department

Doug Glanville, former outfielder for the Chicago Cubs and the Philadelphia Phillies, will play a double header at Governors State University on Feb. 5 and 6.

GSU will host a “Conversation with Doug Glanville,” on Friday, Feb. 5, at 3:30 p.m., in Engbrest Hall. Glanville will speak about his

An Introduction to Meditation will be hosted by Dr. Mariestela Zell, Associate Professor of Social Work here at GSU, at Engbrest Hall on Wednesday, January 27th from 5 to 7pm. Dr. Zell has been practicing meditation for nearly 33 years, and is the author of the soon-to-be-released book based on his column, “The Game from Where I Stand.” He is also a contributor to XM Radio’s “MLB Home Plate - Power Alley” and Comcast SportsNet Chicago and founder of GK Alliance, LLC, a green-friendly real estate development company in the western suburbs.

If you have any questions about meditation you can contact Dr. Zell, her office phone number is (708) 235-2235 and her email address is m-zell@govst.edu, or you can visit the Mayo Clinic’s page on meditation at: http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/meditation/HQ01070.

‘Reaccreditation’ cont. from page 1

During the visit from the HLC team, more than 40 meetings took place, all of which led to a recommendation that GSU be reaccredited for another 10 years.

Dr. Elaine Maimon, GSU President, commented on the importance of being reaccredited.

“The reaccreditation visit was highly successful and another important step toward establishing GSU as an educational leader,” she said. “We learned a great deal from the visiting team and they acknowledged that they learned a great deal from us. That kind of productive dialogue is a major purpose of the peer review system of reaccreditation.”

Dr. Martin says that like Dr. Maimon, he is also incredibly pleased with the results, and as co-chair of the process (alongside Dr. Ann Vendrely), was seeing “how positively the GSU community responded to the challenge.”

He explained that no matter what time of day or how busy people were, people were ready and willing to help with the reaccreditation process.

“Imagine this scene,” Dr. Martin said. “It’s late July and I am knee-deep in writing a section of a chapter when I write my way into the need for some additional data...I shoot an email to whoever may be able to shed light on the issue...Almost without fail, I would hear back from the person within 10 minutes. Whenever people saw a message come in with the subject of ‘HLC Query’, they stopped what they were doing and got back to us. I’ll always be appreciative of such efforts.”

Dr. Maimon also saw this kind of teamwork and offers her thanks to the team.

Special thanks go to Drs. Eric Martin and Ann Vendrely, the HLC Self-Study co-chairs; Dr. David Curtis, Interim Provost; Dr. Sandra Mayfield, HLC Self-Study Coordinator for the Provost’s Office; and Jill Stanley, the support person who managed the travel, meals, and schedules of the team visitors. Dr. Maimon wrote in a statement. “Additional thanks go to the many members of the university community who contributed time and effort on various self-study committees over the past two years. For more information about the process, the commission’s five core components and the chapters from the final report, visit http://www.govst.edu/hlc/default.aspx?id24978 or contact Dr. Martin at e-martin@govst.edu.

GSU Business Students Excel in Corporate Simulation

But would meet online each Sunday to make decisions before filing their assigned work.

Early in the competition, Avolio said she spent as much as eight hours a week on the competition. By the end, she was a member of two or three hours a week.

“Going through all the numbers was time-consuming, but it was important to understand how they were being used,” said Avolio, who graduated in January. “I’m an accounting major and I actually thought this was a lot of fun.”

The competition takes students through eight years of managing a company that manufactures electronic sensors. Each week represents one fiscal year and participants must make decisions that effect the viability and profitability of the company.

Students must answer practical questions, such as whether they should invest in more workers or in automation. They must manage money wisely, act competitively, and take effective steps to position their product in the marketplace.

Barsuk said he reviews the weekly results of each team with his students, but doesn’t give them any management tips while they’re taking part in the competition.

“I just tell them to come up with a strategy, and to work that strategy,” he said. “Obviously (with Team Baldwin), the strategy worked.”

Six students in Sidney Barsuk’s Management 469 - Business Policy course recently finished in the top three percent of all participants in an online competition testing business skills in finance, marketing, production, and research and development.

The eight-week Capstone Challenge tests business students’ ability to succeed in the 21st century corporate environment. Thousands of undergraduate and graduate business students across the United States and in foreign countries participate in the online learning exercise.

Team Baldwin, one of five squads Baldwin’s class this fall, finished in the 97th percentile among 1,538 teams taking part in the competition. The team had top 10 finishes in profitability and stock price. It registered as high as second, in some categories, among all teams following two weekly rounds.

“It says something for our college that they are rated so high,” Barsuk said. “It shows that we are turning out top graduates who are making an impact on the job world.”

Team Baldwin has six members: Meaghan Avolio of Orland Hills, Vesna Metevska of Countryside, Gary Throw Jr. of Mimoos, and Kil Yan of Orland Park.

This fall’s section of Management 469 was exclusively an online class.

Avolio said she and her fellow team members never got together in person but would meet online each Sunday to make decisions before filing their assigned work.

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Meet the Employers

2010 Education Career Fair Thursday February 18 3 to 6 p.m.

Hall of Governors

Open to students, alumni, and interested community members

Dress professionally, bring resumes, prepare to succeed

For information www.govst.edu/careerservices 708.235.3974

Governors State University University Park, IL

Crossword & Sodoku found on page 8.
Lovely Bones: a Stunning Journey

By Michelle Hulett
Contributing Writer

Alice Sebold's The Lovely Bones is a stunning journey through the interworkings of love and tragedy. At just 14 years old, Susie Salmon was raped and murdered by a neighbor, a serial killer who moves from town to town after each of his crimes.

With Susie's death begins a ripple effect as her family and community try to cope with the tragedy. Narrating the story from her personalized heaven, Susie watches her friends, family, and killer move on with their lives.

For Susie's family, the event is akin to an explosion. It quickly shatters the bonds of her once happy family. Her father, devastated by his daughter's death, goes into a kind of trance and becomes obsessed with finding her killer. Susie's mother begins to distance herself from her family, using the tragedy as a means to escape the prison of her life. Susie's young brother crafts a streak of anger. Her sister internalizes the tragedy, molding her life around it.

Looking down from her heaven, Susie describes Mr. Harvey, the school. We never had to go inside except for art class. . . . The boys did not pinch our backsides or tell us we smelled; our textbooks given, in our heavens, our simplest dreams. There were no teachers in school. We never had to go inside except for art class. . . . The

Sebold creates a remarkable portrait of family dynamics, illuminating the destruction shatters the bonds of her once happy family. Her father, devastated by his daughter's death, goes into a kind of trance and becomes obsessed with finding her killer. Susie's mother begins to distance herself from her family, using the tragedy as a means to escape the prison of her life. Susie's young brother crafts a streak of anger. Her sister internalizes the tragedy, molding her life around it.

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Susie paints her heaven with her desires and sits in a gazebo dreaming of attending, with her own creative input: Gothic dollhouses, and making small talk with her parents. She also watches her family deal with the pain, her parents becoming increasingly distant as time goes on. Sebold creates a remarkable portrait of family dynamics, illuminating the destruction shatters the bonds of her once happy family. Her father, devastated by his daughter's death, goes into a kind of trance and becomes obsessed with finding her killer. Susie's mother begins to distance herself from her family, using the tragedy as a means to escape the prison of her life. Susie's young brother crafts a streak of anger. Her sister internalizes the tragedy, molding her life around it.

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Don't give germs a free ride.

Prevent infection - Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer.

To avoid catching or spreading infections such as swine flu, the CDC advises:

- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Practice good health habits.

www.cdc.gov/swineflu

ATTENTION

Students, Faculty, and Staff

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends four key ways to help protect you from getting the flu:

1. Wash your hands often with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand cleaners.

2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder—not into your hands.

3. Know the symptoms of flu. Do not go to class or work if you have symptoms. Symptoms include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting. Stay home if you are sick for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever. If flu conditions become MORE severe, stay home for at least seven days, even if you feel better sooner.

4. Talk to your healthcare provider if you have questions and to find out if you should be vaccinated for seasonal flu and/or 2009 H1N1 flu.

5. Persons with either suspected or confirmed H1N1 Flu are asked to report their condition in a message on a confidential GSU hotline at 708.235.2827 or ext. 2827.

Information about seasonal flu vaccine can be found at www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm.

For more information, visit www.flu.gov.
Crossword & Sudoku: solutions on page 7

ACROSS
1. Acquire
2. Foe
3. Square root of one hundred
4. Impersonate
5. Having a strong healthy body
6. Pasteure
7. Traditional story accepted as history
8. Redden
9. Lubricant
10. Subdivisions of a play
11. Father
12. Results from costs exceeding revenue
15. Make lacework by knotting or looping
20. Novel
22. Consumed
25. Tennis stroke
27. Conclusion
29. Workplace in short, for scientific research
30. Follow as a result
31. Garment that covers the head and face
32. Fish traps
33. Garment that covers
34. Proper alignment
35. Transmitt
36. Monetary value
37. Charge per unit
38. A great distance
39. Skin condition
40. Feel
41. Large body of water
42. Idiomatic expression
43. Aromatic herb
44. Aromatic herb
45. Operate
46. Male red deer
47. Traditional story accepted as history
48. Convention
49. Definite
50. Understand
51. Large body of water
52. Commonplace
53. Idiomatic expression
54. Idiomatic expression
55. Area near
56. Small hard fruit
57. Atlantic bird
58. Large African antelope
59. Large African antelope
60. Definite
61. Possesses
62. Consumed
63. Fashion
64. Fashion
65. Fashion
66. Fashion
67. Indicating the norm
68. Percipient
69. Objective
70. Parish
71. Cutting
72. A quantity of paper
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99. A narrow way
100. A narrow way

Down
1. Complete extent or range
2. Foe
3. Square root of one hundred
4. Impersonate
5. Having a strong healthy body
6. Pasteure
7. Traditional story accepted as history
8. Redden
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Happenings
What's Going on at GSU?
Compiled by Sarah Koehler

TODAY
Blood Drive!
Thursday, Feb. 4
3-7 p.m.,
Engbretson Hall

Governors State University Master's in Occupational Therapy student organization and Heartland Blood Centers are co-hosting a blood drive.
Students, staff, faculty, and community members are encouraged to donate blood.
No appointment is required.
Walk-ins are always welcome.
Donors are reminded to eat a healthy meal and drink plenty of water prior to donating.
Donors must be at least 17 years old,
weigh at least 110 lbs,
and be in good health.
Sixteen year olds may donate with parental consent.
A photo ID is required.

Education Career Fair
Thursday, Feb. 18
3-6 p.m.,
Hall of Governors

Calling all teachers and teaching assistants!
The Office of Career Services is sponsoring a career fair for educators.
Current students, alumni, and community members interested in finding employment in schools are invited to attend.
Potential employers will be on hand from both public and private institutions and representing all grade levels.
For more information about the career fair, call (708) 235-3974.

Communication Workshop
Thursday, Feb. 11
12-1 p.m.,
B1241

Relationship problems often stem from communication difficulties.
So join this free, one-hour workshop on Communication and Relationships.
The GSU Academic Resource Center sponsors the workshop, which is free and open to the public.
Refreshments will be served.
For more information, call (708) 235-2228.

If you wish to advertise in the Phoenix, please call 708-534-3068, or e-mail at phoenixad@govst.edu