Shansi Extends Deadline for Winter Term Proposals to November 3

The Shansi Memorial Association has extended to November 3 the deadline by which it must receive proposals for Winter Term projects based at its sites in China, Japan, Indonesia, or India. The association is offering a $10,000 competitive grant that will underwrite the travel and other expenses of a faculty member and between seven and twelve students during three or four weeks in January. But so far it has seen no competitors.

“We welcome proposals in any discipline,” says Carl Jacobson, Shansi’s executive director. “We’re amazed that no one has yet submitted a proposal. It would be a shame if no one took advantage of this opportunity.”

To prime the pump Jacobson offers these suggestions:

- Someone from the Environmental Studies Program or Biology Department could take students to work with members of the zoology departments at the American and Lady Doak colleges in Madurai, India, on environmental issues. One professor there is an expert on the fresh-water ecology of the area, while another heads the Madurai Environmental Protection Council. A recent campaign involved noise pollution; another, clearing out the storm-water system, some of which was occupied by squatter communities.
- Students and a faculty member could work with a member of the Tamil Department of the American College on village life in India, looking at issues of villager identity and village dance forms.
- Members of the Oberlin University economics department, some of whom speak fluent English, have contacts with people in automobile manufacturing in the area of Japan between Tokyo and Yokohama. Labor, pollution controls, and the relationship of this kind of manufacturing to the environment are some topics that could be examined.
- Yunnan University is located in the midst of an astounding variety of Chinese subcultures, and its faculty is very strong in the anthropology, history, and religion of the region. Some of the faculty members have good English skills and would be willing to work with Oberlin faculty. Visits to the various regions could be arranged.
- Jacobson and Associate Vice President David Love will help interested faculty develop their proposals and budgets. Biology professor David Benzing, who took 10 students to China last Winter Term, will share his experiences with members who ask.

Last Winter Term these students explored a rain-forest preserve and nearby village in Xiawanghanna, south of Shansi’s site in Kuming, China. David Benzing, Danforth Professor of Biology, took them on a grant from the Minneapolis and乙烯 Ecosystems Research Program. This year the Shansi Association will help underwrite a similar Winter Term experience—if it receives faculty proposals by November 3.

Who Killed Steve Biko?

Ben Schiff and June Goodwin Tell the Story in a November Issue of the Nation Magazine

The November 13 issue of the Nation magazine will carry the first public revelation of a story well known in South African police circles. The story includes the name of the police officer who allegedly beat and killed antiapartheid activist Steve Biko 18 years ago while he was in South African police custody. The narrative about the Biko killing is only one of many that Ben Schiff, professor of politics, and award-winning journalist June Goodwin, his wife, collected for Heart of Whiteness: Afrikaners Face Black Rule in South Africa. The book’s publication date is November 6.

But readers won’t find the alleged murderer’s name in the book. The publisher, Scribner, would not publish it because—as Schiff says he understands—libel law in South Africa requires the publisher to give the murderer’s name and of his responsibility for the murder. Goodwin and Schiff’s book, based on more than 120 interviews, depicts white South Africa in a wide range of Afrikaner voices, from those who still believe in apartheid, to those who fought against that system from its inception.

“The book shows,” says Schiff, “why it’s wrong to be complacent about Afrikaner views of traits and the governmental-design plan.”

This year or early next year, the South African government will begin probing apartheid-era crimes.

“But the authors conclude their book optimistically.”

Continued on page 3

Continued on page 3
Norman Craig Wins ACS Undergraduate Research Award

What’s the Secret of His Success?

Like many visual artists, Norm Craig doesn’t talk long without sketching something. Like many poets he never discards a line of thought that doesn’t have immediate use. And like many politicians he makes and remembers connections with many people.

What has made Craig an outstanding chemistry professor—as noted not only by his peers at Oberlin but also by the American Chemical Society (ACS) and other national organizations—may be largely these personal qualities that he shares with other creative and effective people. The ACS 1996 Award for Research at an Undergraduate Institution, to be conferred in March at the ACS annual meeting, together with the ACS award, is the highest honor Craig can receive in the January issue of its journal, Chemical and Engineering News, will make more broadly known what his colleagues on and off campus have long acknowledged: The man has a real knack for doing significant research and for drawing students into doing it with him. In nominating Craig, Martin Ackermann, professor of chemis- try, and Robert Thompson, associate professor of chemistry and department chair, called Craig “the essence of a scholar-teacher.”

Since 1957, when Craig returned to his alma mater to begin his new, nearly 40-year teaching career (he’d graduated in 1953), he has supervised 107 undergraduate Oberlin students through chemistry research. Fifty-two (and counting) of those students have have authored publications with him.

One such student was David Evans ’63, now the Abbott and James Lawrence Professor of Chemistry and co-director of the Center for Regenerative Studies at the National Institute forStandards and Technology (NIST). Still working with the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Chemistry-in-Industry Program, Craig continues to “keep in mind what Craig did for him. ‘That he was so approachable and effective people. The man has a real knack for doing significant research and for drawing students into doing it with him. In nominating Craig, Martin Ackermann, professor of chemis- try, and Robert Thompson, associate professor of chemistry and department chair, called Craig “the essence of a scholar-teacher.”

Since 1957, when Craig returned to his alma mater to begin his new, nearly 40-year teaching career (he’d graduated in 1953), he has supervised 107 undergraduate Oberlin students through chemistry research. Fifty-two (and counting) of those students have have authored publications with him.

One such student was David Evans ’63, now the Abbott and James Lawrence Professor of Chemistry and co-director of the Center for Regenerative Studies at the National Institute forStandards and Technology (NIST). Still working with the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Chemistry-in-Industry Program, Craig continues to “keep in mind what Craig did for him. ‘That he was so approachable and effective people. The man has a real knack for doing significant research and for drawing students into doing it with him. In nominating Craig, Martin Ackermann, professor of chemis- try, and Robert Thompson, associate professor of chemistry and department chair, called Craig “the essence of a scholar-teacher.”

Since 1957, when Craig returned to his alma mater to begin his new, nearly 40-year teaching career (he’d graduated in 1953), he has supervised 107 undergraduate Oberlin students through chemistry research. Fifty-two (and counting) of those students have have authored publications with him.

One such student was David Evans ’63, now the Abbott and James Lawrence Professor of Chemistry and co-director of the Center for Regenerative Studies at the National Institute forStandards and Technology (NIST). Still working with the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Chemistry-in-Industry Program, Craig continues to “keep in mind what Craig did for him. ‘That he was so approachable
News Notes

Professor of Religion James Morris was one of the participants at the international symposium, Le Spiritual: Unité et Pluralité, sponsored by UNESCO, the French Ministry of Culture, and the Académie de Paris. Held September 22-24, the symposium focused on the role of spirituality in everyday life. At the assembly Morris gave a public lecture, “La pensée religieuse et le multiculturalisme,” a critical analysis of religious thought born in 1895 whose centennial the symposium commemorated. While in Paris Morris also gave lectures to France-Culture and France-Inter radio networks concerning his use of feature films to teach about religion and spirituality in his Oberlin classes and in recent workshops in Europe, India, and the Middle East. An English version of Morris’s lecture was read at the symposium’s London session, held at the University of London’s School of Oriental and African Studies September 13. Morris cooperated a related New York symposium sponsored by UNESCO, the New York University Department of Near Eastern Studies, and Metropolitan Life. There he gave the concluding address. I had heard of Bradshaw Teaching of Ostad Elahi.” A recent presentation by Orr and turning off the tap? Orr (and Meadows) floor. What’s the common remedy: mopping environment studies at Dartmouth. September Donella Meadows, an adjunct professor of have made an impression on syndicated writer , professor of environmental studies, must be sponsored by UNESCO, the New York University lecture was read at the symposium’s London commemoration. While in Paris Oberlin’s housekeeping department from 1963 until she resigned in 1982, died September 8 in Mendenhall, Mississippi, following a sudden illness. Six of her children—including Indiana Smith, a cook in Dascomb Residence Hall—survive. Donald Walden, visiting assistant professor of jazz studies and saxophone, performed August 27 at Detroit’s Chene Park Festival in conjunction with other jazz musicians to honor the 75th anniversary of the birth of Charlie Parker, one of the originators of modern Don Lake Forest, California, resident George Wals, emeritus professor of clarinet and music education, remembered how he began writing a column, “Woodwind Clinic,” for a institute magazine and the publication of August issue. His 40-year relationship with the journal, he wrote in his letter to the editor, “added inspiration” to his life. His columns are collected in Woodwind Anthology.

Faculty Meeting

Conservatory Takes a Vote on Noon Classes, Discusses the Place of the Con in Oberlin College

At the October 10 meeting of the Conservatory Faculty, members factuated a motion drawn from recommendations of our committee on faculty, policy, and administration. The committee took a year of a two-year schedule experiment that permits noon classes under certain conditions. President Nancy Dye spoke at the meeting about the committee’s work. “The conservatory is not a jewel,” she said in beginning her remarks. People who say it is, no doubt, intend the comment as a compliment, she said, but the message inappropriately suggests that the conservatory is a luxury, and separate from the rest of the College. Despite its specific mission, the conservatory is integral to the functioning of Oberlin College, Dye said. The president and faculty went on to discuss strategic planning, financial aid, financial reserves, and the double-degree program, among other topics.

Electronic Obie

Good Times: Not a Virus but a Hoax

By Linda K. Grashoff

A week or so ago a friend called from across campus with a worry in her voice. “Have you heard about this Good Times computer virus? It sounds really awful.”

It was a week or so after the virus was first reported. It supposedly is a virus that can wipe out your hard drive by placing the processor in an “nth-complexity infinite loop.” It’s a virus that has spread by floppy disks, not the Internet. Let your computer scan a floppy that has an application program—especially “software”—on it before you install the application. Commercial programs you receive on disks in sealed envelopes from reputable manufacturers are usually clean; make sure you virus-check any disk you receive from the Internet. While a faculty coordinator would tie it to other semesters, the course introduces students to the basic techniques and concepts used to work in interactive and multimedia environments such as video and digital imaging.

In the second half of the spring semester a new course on business ethics, being taught by a professor described in the October 12 Observer article.

Premed . . .

Continued from page 1

and Schiff November 4.

The Observer learned about some new courses being offered late for inclusion in the last issue’s article “New Courses Sparkle the Curriculum.” The departments of Art, Geology, and Neuroscience and Biophysics have these additions:

Both semesters, Assistant Professor of Art Lynn Lukkas is teaching a new course in the art department’s Visual Communication Processes series: Time-Based Media. The course introduces students to the basic techniques and concepts used to work in interactive and multimedia environments such as video and digital imaging.

In the second half of the spring semester a new course on business ethics, being taught by a professor described in the October 12 Observer article.

 premiered . . .

Continued from page 4

cal, and economic constraints on delivering health care to those who need it. Faculty and local practitioners would contribute a lecture or discussion of a topic of interest to them while a faculty coordinator would tie it to other semesters. Faculty and local practitioners would contribute a lecture or discussion of a topic of interest to them while a faculty coordinator would tie it to other semesters.

I also propose that one or more seminars for premedical students be offered by inter- ested faculty. The seminars would focus on medical and other relevant readings in the humanities along the lines developed by Lantos and Coles. The seminars could stand alone or be coupled with students engaging in real-world internships or volunteer work in hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes. By combining academic work and service, students would have the opportunity to reflect on their service experiences and put them into larger perspectives through discussions and reflection.

I am not proposing a new individual major or program. I am only proposing a solitary, multidisciplinary course on contemporary health care. It is an outgrowth of a seminar on or two and a suggested course of study that students could follow up with electives outside their major. Whether we have the resources and can sustain this modest proposal remains to be seen.

David Egloff is professor of biology. This article is adapted from a talk he gave at the October 6 Faculty and Administrative and Professional Staff Luncheon. He is preparing a formal proposal for the interdisciplinary course that he envisions in this piece.
Observations

Premedical Curricula at Oberlin: How to Make More Humane Physicians

By David Egloff

One of the things I did on my sabbatical leave last fall was audit a course in the humanities at Harvard. I did it to hear how Robert Coles answers the question: How does a child grow up to be a good doctor? He is Berlin’s premedical student advisers. I wanted to learn if his answers would help me answer a related question: How does a person grow up to be a good physician?

Physicians must be more than just good persons. In fact, the American Medical Association’s Working Group on Personal Qualities, Values and Attitudes of Physicians for the 21st Century concluded in 1984 that good doctors

...should possess stamina, moral sensitivity and integrity, curiosity and creativity, the ability to cope with intellectual and emotional demands that they will encounter both in and out of work. They should value intellectual growth, science and the scientific method, social responsibility, and altruism. They should be moral leaders, sensitive, compassionate toward their patients and other health professionals.

The evidence cited in the 1984 Association of American Medical Colleges report and elsewhere—shows that medical education either fails or inhibits the development of those traits.

Is the undergraduate premedical curriculum part of the problem or part of the solution? Unfortunately, the latter is the case. But before I do, I will review briefly the recent history of U.S. medical education.

Premed Requirements, Premed Majors

Admissions requirements for U.S. medical schools have changed little since the great medical-education reforms of the early 20th century replaced profit-proprietorial medical schools with schools in accredited research universities. Typically, one or two years of chemistry and one year each of biology, physics, mathematics, and English have been required for the past 70 years for entrance to medical school. Colleges and universities, however, have provided the necessary courses, although the topics selected for testing on the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) are not always the ones that a good professor of chemistry, biology, or physics includes in an introductory course.

Some undergraduate institutions established premedical majors during the first half of this century. Oberlin offered two premed majors from the 1930s through the 1950s, one called zoology-premed and the other chemistry-premed.

But by the mid-1950s medical schools and premed advisers recognized that changes in premedical education were necessary because emphasis on undergraduate scientific preparation had become excessive. Education relating to many other qualities and skills required to be a good physician was being neglected in the premedical curriculums.

Some medical educators advocated accepting students directly from high school so that medical schools could have full control of the undergraduate education. Thirty such programs in the country today accept 18-year-olds and grant them a B.S. and an M.D. degree after six to eight years of study.

The Observer

October 26, 1995

Page 4

Can we improve on the quantity and quality of such teaching at Oberlin? Perhaps.

Several Proposals

I propose that premed advisors publish a list of suggested courses for premeds outside the required science courses. By a judicious selection of introductory courses that premeds elect to meet distribution requirements, premeds will get a good introduction to fundamental concepts in the social sciences and humanities that will be valuable to them as physicians.

Advanced courses focused on health care are scarce at Oberlin, but there are a few, like Professor of Religion Gilbert Meierleander’s Medical Ethics course, and there could be more if we encouraged them. Advanced work not related directly to medicine—in religion, philosophy, history, English, and other disciplines—may, in the long run, prove just as valuable to future physicians.

Coles argues that stories—many of the great novels and poems—can be guides to how we live our lives. He assigns readings by some favorite authors—including Flannery O’Connor, James Agee, William Styron, George Eliot, Charles Dickens, and Walker Percy—in his courses and seminars.

Coles has frequently said that he considers it a privilege to be able to supply some of these books on others—and specifically on medical students. In a 1986 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association he followed that train of thought like this:

A medical or psychiatric “reductionism” does not quite explain how any given person comes to terms with his or her life, or illness, or final moments on this earth. . . . Novels and short stories or poems help us to understand such matters. . . .

In the same journal three years later he wrote:

[Students] need (and in my experience, almost hungrily crave) a chance to ask those haunting moral and philosophical questions a George Eliot, for instance, in Middlemarch, keeps posing: what is the meaning of the life we doctors so constantly try to protect, and how ought that life be lived—with what ideals and aspirations, with what accommodations, adjustments, compromises in the face of this world that is full of dominating opportunities, frustrations, and obstacles?

Are Undergraduates Ready?

Coles and others argue that our curriculum that undergraduate education is not ready to absorb these lessons. Undergraduates are young. Short of raising the minimum age for college to 21, we might encourage at least one interdisciplinary course that will put health care in a broad and meaningful context for them.

I envision a multidisciplinary, team-taught course that would give an overview of health care primarily from the perspectives of the social and natural sciences. The course would survey what is technically and scientifically feasible and identify the political, sociological,
Blocker's article described the implications of an ecological perspective in the elementary school setting. While this article does not describe a “program per se, it does describe in some detail a methodology for change. After discarding traditional student personnel perspectives (unenlightened, adjustment, and developmental), Banning and Kaiser push out the frontier with their concept of “ecosystems.” An ecosystem is one in which there is a true transaction between mutually dependent p 9 Ecological Models.

In planning an intervention using an ecological model, which level would you be addressing by focusing on attitudes, beliefs and knowledge? A. Intrapersonal B. interpersonal level C. institutional level D. community level. A. Intrapersonal. The underlying concept of ecological models is best reflected in which of the following: A. The more people change, the better the environment. B. The environment in which people live is the basis for behavior change. C. Nature is at the center of behavior change. D. Behavior results from an interplay between personal and environmental influences. Are you curious about the concept of ecological design? Are you interested in developing complex design models? Do you want to use scripting and programming as a creative aspect of design and engineering? If so, sign up for the Design Computation Symposium at AU 2011. The symposium is organized into two sessions around the subjects of “Ecologic Design Strategies in Architecture” and “Advanced Research.” These are broken down into a series of 20-minute TED-style presentations from: Architect Terri Peters, guest-editor of Architectural Design. Peter Busby, Perkins+Wills Canada... Robert Aish, director of software development for Autodesk Platform Solutions, chairs the symposium. Learn more about design computation from this 2009 interview with Robert Aish.