Celebrating 20 Years of Online Education

In the first, fledgling semester of online education in the fall of 1997, enrollment was 162 in 21 courses offered. By fall 1998 the numbers had exploded to 1,119. Twenty years later online enrollments have climbed to 17,467 for fall of 2017.

What makes a course successful? It’s no secret, explained Andrea Jensen, executive director of Digital Learning and Design. It’s the same formula that makes Weber State great in person or online.

“It really comes down to demonstrating that faculty care,” Jensen said. “It’s not always warm and fuzzy. It’s taking an interest, such as sending a note saying, ‘Hey, I see you had trouble on this exam. If you’d like to come in for office hours, these are the best times.’ Faculty who personalize instruction and help students apply content, report the most success in online courses.”

That’s a formula Medical Laboratory Sciences (MLS) has perfected.

“It’s really great,” said Julie Kakazu, MLS program coordinator. “We are flexible. We customize each student’s plan based on their experience and education.”

ONLINE Open House Celebration
April 3, 2-4 p.m.

11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Shepherd Union Atrium
All welcome.
Light Refreshments & Cake

1-2:30 p.m.
Shepherd Union #404
Online Faculty & Staff / Remarks 2 p.m.

continued on page 2
MLS offers online education to more than 400 students per year. Since 2000, when MLS began the online degree option, it has educated students from all 50 states and several different countries.

“The program we offer is unique in a couple of ways,” explained Matthew Nicolaou, MLS chair. “We offer an open enrollment. Students can apply fall, spring or summer, and our online staff can get them started on track to graduation.”

Online students have to be affiliated with a laboratory or a hospital while they are in the program. They attend lectures and programs online, and MLS coordinates with a mentor at the facility to review lab competencies.

“We have an intricate relationship and legal agreements with all the facilities,” Nicholaou said. “But what we provide is unique training for their employees to become more advanced and progress rapidly in their careers.”

MLS faculty and staff dedicated an extraordinary amount of work developing and refining the online degree, but now have the structure in place to handle a recent explosion of growth. MLS program coordinator Cindi Kranek, said they are particularly proud of reaching rural areas where higher education is less accessible.

“What’s cool is now that we’ve been around for a while, we have lab managers, who were our students, get in touch,” Kranek said. “They tell us, ‘Hey I am now managing this lab, we need employees to go through your program, get a degree and get certified.”

WSU students can earn a fully online bachelor’s degree in MLS, health information management, health administrative services, radiologic sciences, professional sales or Bachelor of Integrated Studies. Criminal justice offers an online master’s degree, and four associate’s degrees are also available online. Most students, however, find it convenient to take a few of their classes online. Weber State currently offers 544 courses in 44 departments.

“I think one of the great pieces of online education is that it helps our students reach their educational goals a little faster, providing flexibility in their schedules,” said Brian Stecklein Continuing Education associate dean. “A lot of our students work and have families, and they are trying to fit all that in their busy schedules. Online education has been a great factor for them graduating from Weber State.”
Faculty & Staff Accomplishments


Electra Gamón Fielding, assistant professor of Spanish, published the article “Memoria, paisaje y mito: Resistencia performativa en la poesía de Salvador Esprú” in Confluencia, Fall 2017.

Weber State University’s 2016-17 Annual Report, titled Dreams Happen Here, was awarded a Silver Award in the CASE District VII Awards of Excellence program. CASE is the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. The report, produced by WSU’s Office of Marketing & Communications team, in collaboration with the President’s Office and Provost’s Office, was honored in the President’s Reports and Annual Reports category. Amy Hendricks, senior writer/editor, and Hillary Wallace, creative director, managed the project.


Gavin Roberts, assistant economics professor, co-authored “Quantitative analysis shows natural gas projects benefits outweigh costs” in the industry publication Oil & Gas Journal.

Shane Schvaneveldt, Presidential Distinguished Professor of Supply Chain Management, received the 2017 Instructional Innovation Award from the Decision Sciences Institute for his paper on “Mistake-Proofing the Miss Universe Pageant and Academy Awards: An Active Learning Exercise.”

A collaborative effort between the Marketing & Communications web team (Jen Wright, Jaime Winston, Ana Reyes, Dave Brogan, Matt Gerrish, Stevie Emerson and Ivonne Dabb) and the IT web development team (Ben Barraza, Christian Goodrich, Clay Hymas and Levi Slade) was recognized with a gold award in the CASE District VII Awards of Excellence Individual Sub-Sites category. The project to upgrade weber.edu/majors, also known as the “majors pages,” required collaboration from many areas within Enrollment Services, as well as academic colleges and departments across the university.
WELCOME to WSU

Roger Allred, Bursar and Collection Services
Sarah Anderson, Political Science and Philosophy
Jeffrey Brown, Administrative Services
Katie Byrd, College of Science
Brittney Chamberlain, Registrar’s Office
Amanda Gibson, Admissions Office
Erich Goekeritz, Admissions Office
Kayla Goldberg, Campus Recreation
Amber Hansen, Developmental Math
Corie Holmes, Athletics Admin and Support
Shawnette Horton, Developmental Math
Corey Lamb, Browning Center
Timothy McPhie, Infrastructure Services
Robin Osterhoudt, Zoology
Eyrnn Pontius, Veterans Upward Bound

Jonathan Rivera, Campus Recreation
Kathleen Sanders, Child and Family Studies
David Schramm, Athletics Admin and Support
Sherri Vasas, Respiratory Therapy
Jennifer Vesper, Automotive Technology

On the Move/Promoted

Adrienne Andrews, Diversity
Troy Bell, Facilities Management
Colby Black, Financial Aid Office
Nicolle Brown, Bursar and Collection Services
Jennifer Brustad, Student Affairs
Larry Collinwood, Facilities Management
Lindsay Crowton, Facilities Management
Aaron Garza, Affirmative Action
Roxanne Jorgensen, Dee Events Center

Monica Linford, College of Science
Adriana Perez Mares, Financial Aid Office
James Maughan, Student Affairs Maintenance
Alexander Muller, Goddard School of Business & Economics
Francisco Ruiz, Radiologic Sciences
Courtney Thornock, Facilities Management
Sarah Webber, Bursar and Collection Services
Brady Yamashita, Facilities Management

Retired

Debra Russell, Infrastructure Services
Scott Thompson, Student Affairs Maintenance

Reasons to Brag:

College Risk-Reward Indicator named Weber State No. 89 “Best Risk-Reward College” in the country. The ranking considered the average student loan debt per borrower and the average early career pay, or the median salary for alumni with 0-5 years’ experience. Included on the list were Princeton, Yale and Duke universities.

WSU’s School of Nursing was honored by Match College as one of the top 35 “Best 4-Year Nursing Schools” in America. According to the award citation, Weber State’s dedication to professionalism, curricular design and student feedback helped lift it above others around the nation.

For its work creating a dating violence prevention curriculum specific to the LGBTQ+ community, Weber State University’s Safe@Weber Violence Prevention Team was honored by NASPA (student affairs administrators in higher education), as the “2018 Best Practice in Prevention Activities” award winner.

Best College Reviews ranked Weber State No. 5 in the nation for “Best Value Bachelors Business Economics Programs.” The ranking looked at schools with tuition under $20,000 per year and then combined tuition information from College Navigator with data from the U.S. News & World Report’s ranking of best bachelor’s business programs. They also considered program information from each school’s website to apply the rating and ranking methodology.
Earlier this month, *Inside Higher Ed* published an opinion piece by Michael Bugeja titled “Poorly defined roles of provosts and deans can lead to problems at major universities.” Bugeja observed that most people don’t know what provosts do, which strikes me as true. This lack of familiarity arises most likely because, as provosts, we don’t inform others about what happens in our offices. So here’s a look at some of the major roles my team and I have undertaken this spring:

1. Supporting student success initiatives. Whether through oversight of Admissions, Advising, Financial Aid & Scholarships or through faculty and staff development opportunities, the Provost’s Office devotes much of its time and energy to initiatives that promote enhanced recruiting, retention and graduation of students.

2. Rewarding faculty success in teaching, scholarship/creative activities, and service through evaluation processes (tenure, promotion, post-tenure review, merit consideration, performance compensation all occur in spring); offering help becoming a successful faculty member through the Teaching Learning Forum (governed by Faculty Senate, financed by the Provost’s Office) and faculty awards. Stay tuned for details about new Teaching Awards and Innovative Teaching funds to be announced soon.

3. Consulting with faculty on curricular proposals and, as appropriate, carrying those proposals to President’s Council, the Utah State Office of Higher Education, Board of Trustees or Regents. In addition, the Provost’s Office participates actively in program-review processes, ensuring Weber State engages periodically in meaningful analysis and evaluation of program accomplishments.

4. Leading discussions about where WSU should be headed academically. What programs should we offer? How should we make such decisions? Again, stay tuned for a new template (out soon) that will encourage programs to engage in self-reflection and analysis — analysis that then will be used to chart our course.

5. Hiring deans, reviewing deans, contributing to the College Town Coalition and OgdenCAN initiatives, defining high-impact teaching and experiences, encouraging more concurrent enrollment math options, experimenting with co-requisite courses in place of developmental courses, responding to lawsuits, arguing for financial resources for numerous exciting initiatives as well as additional faculty, enhancing as possible the salaries of administrative assistants and college advisors, etc.

Should Bugeja ask, I’d enjoy talking with him about these varied roles; they are at the heart of Weber State University’s Provost’s office.

---

the program in collaboration with their advisory committees comprised of representatives from government and industry.

The mechanical engineering program will build on the current pre-engineering program and add upper-division course work. However, WSU’s pre-engineering collaboration will continue. Students who wish to earn a degree in civil, chemical, biomedical or other engineering fields will be able to begin their education at Weber State and transfer credits to another Utah school.

“We are going to repeat the success we had with our electrical engineering program,” said David Ferro, dean of the College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology. “We will have the full complement of theory, science and math needed for an engineer, combined with extensive labs and hands-on experience. Our students will be able to hit the ground running in industry and at Hill Air Force Base. No surprise. That’s our reputation. Our interns and grads are ready out of the gate.”
Presidential Outstanding Staff Awards

Four Weber State employees, nominated by their peers and chosen by committee, were presented with this year’s Presidential Outstanding Staff awards. The employees each received $2,000 cash, a plaque, reserved parking for one year and performing arts tickets.

Geosciences faculty say Marianne Bischoff is the counselor and friend who helps foster the spirit of community — even family — that makes the department a wonderful place to work and learn.

In addition to welcoming students, answering phones and maintaining budgets, Bischoff effectively promotes the department’s image, managing the geosciences website and Facebook page, producing a weekly e-newsletter, and creating flyers for guest faculty and events.

When the department relocated to the Tracy Hall Science Center, Bischoff helped make the transition seamless, discarding old equipment and updating the filing system, so it’s easy for everyone to use.

Marianne Bischoff has developed information packets and a seven-step checklist for new majors to ensure every student is welcomed, inducted and connected to the resources needed for academic and personal success.

Experience Weber! That’s Daniel Turner’s motto and mission. He’s passionate about giving the campus community opportunities to enjoy the beauty and excitement of the local mountains and waterways.

As the assistant director and coordinator of the Outdoor Program, Turner has greatly enhanced participation in the Outdoor Adventure program, the challenge course, climbing wall and rental center. He’s helped organize and promote the Ogden Climbing Festival and Tube the Ogden.

Turner spearheaded the professional development scholarship fund to assist employees who want to train and certify as ski technicians, wilderness first responders and swift water rescuers. He is on a number of local, regional and national committees.

Those who work with Daniel Turner call him hard-working and humble, a combination that makes them want to follow whatever path his adventures lead.

Assistant police chief Seth Cawley’s steady leadership was demonstrated during the recent fire in Uintah that forced community members to flee. When Weber County asked to use the Dee Events Center as a reunification location, Cawley helped oversee the three-day event.

The process was so well managed that Weber State received special commendation from the Standard-Examiner in a subsequent editorial.

Cawley meets regularly with area police agencies and has forged inter-local cooperation agreements to help each other in emergencies. He was instrumental in implementing Code Purple to alert the campus to emergencies. Cawley also employs a great deal of creativity in solving campus crime.

Seth Cawley’s engaging personality and superior interpersonal skills make him an exceptional police officer who embodies Weber State’s police motto: education first, enforcement second.

Jen Wright is the Marketing & Communications web content manager. She leads a team of writers and developers. Wright helped steer the redesign of weber.edu. That effort led to the creation of the Web Collaboration Group. There, web specialists from various university departments share ideas and best practices to keep Weber State’s web presence professional, user focused and federally compliant.

She and her team recently updated websites for 29 colleges, departments, offices or programs. They also created 112 majors pages to make it easier for students to find consistent, relevant information.

Wright has also made significant contributions to the Student Success and Strategic Enrollment Planning initiatives.

Jen Wright is someone who brings confidence to a team. As her colleagues know, any job she tackles will be well done.