Happenings In Education

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR. . .

As Ecclesiastes tells us, there is a season for all things, and change is inevitable. This is readily evident as we progress through every academic year at the Department of Education, but perhaps never more so than this year. There is no doubt that the 2014-2015 year has had its share of changes.

We said some good-byes with the departure of dear friends, as professors moved on to different adventures. And we will soon welcome two new faculty members next fall, and I look forward to introducing them to students.

As for our students, it is with mixed emotions that we send the current graduating class out into the world—great pride in their accomplishments and a touch of sadness to see them go. They have touched our hearts, and we hope to have touched theirs.

And yet, not everything changes. Our faculty and adjunct instructors remain committed in their service to Christ and to their students. They continue to deliver excellence in the classroom and humbly serve one another, and it is an honor to serve with them.

Until next fall . . .

Department of Education, Chair
On April 8, 2015, Mariah Kendrick, mentored by Dr. Carol Buckley, presented the results of her year-long Honors project and research entitled “Webcasts and the Retention of Mathematical Knowledge over Summer Break” to a standing-room only crowd. Mariah’s extensive literature review revealed a significant problem with “summer slide,” and she has taken a creative approach to address this academic need for students in the third and fourth grades. Applying the gradual-release method, Mariah created 22 videos on a variety of topics, such as problem-solving and alternative algorithms for multiplication, to help students develop conceptual understanding of third and fourth grade math content. Mariah hopes to use these videos in her own classroom someday soon, and she plans to continue this project and research during her graduate studies.

On April 9, 2015, senior Melissa Landis, mentored by Dr. Jan Dormer & Dr. Melinda Burchard, presented her honors project entitled, “The Effect of Non-Standard Dialect on the Development of Writing Skills” to a full house of fellow students and visitors. Her study highlighted the validity of non-standard English dialects and emphasized an approach to teaching academic English as a different dialect, rather than as “correct” English. Melissa created a series of lessons to develop an awareness of register and dialect choice in elementary school students, specifically addressing their developing writing skills. Melissa’s research and curriculum will no doubt serve her well as she embarks soon on her first teaching job in a richly diverse school in Louisiana!
Messiah College students and faculty have joined the Heart of Harrisburg Church to live out a biblical vision of service and love to others. We strive to follow the mandate to “execute justice for the fatherless and the widow, and love the sojourner, giving him food and clothing” (from Deuteronomy 10:18). Learning English is a significant challenge for immigrants living in the U.S. As a missionary kid who grew up in Brazil, Dr. Jan Dormer knows firsthand the difficulty of moving to a new country and the struggle of learning a new language. She and several of her students, from both graduate and undergraduate programs, have spent the last three months teaching English classes to a mixed-level class on Monday and Wednesday nights.

The students that have come to Heart of Harrisburg for English instruction come from diverse backgrounds and bring a humorous and enthusiastic perspective to learning English. P, an Ecuadorian woman married to an American man, enjoys talking about banking and her son. G and R, a couple from Ecuador, lovingly correct each other but still get competitive while playing Go Fish as a way to learn food vocabulary. L, an Argentinian student, spoke very little at the beginning of the course, even in Spanish, but is now one of the most confident and outspoken of the class. J, a student from Mexico, enjoys sharing her opinions on anything food-related. The students always greet the teachers with a hug and kiss or a firm handshake.

Dr. Dormer stresses the importance of giving students useful instruction at an appropriate level. One challenge she has noticed in many community and church-based ESL programs is the difficulty of meeting the needs of all the learners because of the wide variety of levels in a typical community ESL class. Therefore the class often spends the first half hour together, doing surveys, songs, chants, and games. Then beginner and more advanced students are separated. Robby Lyon, a freshman German and Spanish major at Messiah, has taught advanced lessons. Lilian Schultz, a TESOL graduate student, has taught the Monday night beginner classes, while Dr. Dormer and I have taught the Wednesday night beginners. Angelina Bartorelli, a Social Work major, has provided valuable assistance. We hope that this program will continue next year, and welcome your involvement!

—Sarah Murtagh ’15
Spanish with Teaching Certification and TESOL minor
A ONCE IN A LIFETIME PRESENTATION OPPORTUNITY

This past October, Dr. Carol Buckley had the opportunity to present at the Pennsylvania Educational Research Association (PERA). Not long afterward, she was notified that she had been selected as a finalist for the “distinguished paper award.”

Dr. Buckley submitted a paper for the presentation and all that was left to do was wait. After the papers were received and reviewed, our very own Dr. Buckley was ultimately honored with the “distinguished paper award.” This great honor included an agreement that Carol would represent PERA at the American Education Research Association (AERA) in Chicago later in the year.

Dr. Buckley ventured to Chicago on April 16, 2015 for her presentation, “Turning Wrong into Right,” that focused on diagnosing computational error patterns (addition and subtraction) and, more importantly, prescribing appropriate interventions to correct the conceptual misunderstanding.

Being selected to present at AERA is a noteworthy honor, and we are very proud to have one of our own professors invited to present at this impressive conference. A huge congratulations to Dr. Carol Buckley on this wonderful accomplishment.

CLASS OF 2015: FAREWELL AND COMMISSIONING

On May 6, 2015, the Department of Education hosted its annual Commissioning Service. The service is intended as a farewell to recognize education seniors who are being certified in Grades PreK-4; Grades PreK-4 and Special Education (PreK-8); or Grades 4-8.

Department of Education alumni, professors, students, their families and friends, and cooperating teachers were welcomed to Parmer Hall for this wonderful evening. The service included scripture reading, a commissioning litany, and the presentation of lapel pins which serve as a reminder that the seniors were trained to educate, care, and serve. These words appear on the pin and reflect the mission of the Department of Education.

Special music for the evening was provided by the Bermudian Springs Middle School 7th and 8th Grade Chorus under the direction of Sarah M. Throckmorton. Alumna Emily Dause served as the featured speaker, providing the graduating seniors with words of advice, “You Be You!” The seniors were further honored through a video retrospective that included pictures from all of their student teaching placements.

The Commissioning Service was an inspiring evening, as we celebrated God’s goodness and challenged this year’s Department of Education graduates to lead lives of purpose as they leave Messiah College.

A special thank you to everyone who helped make this event poss-
On April 23, six teachers received math intervention kits created by 29 Messiah College dual majors. Through project CAMP, Consultations in the Advancement of Math Proficiency, Messiah students created intervention kits that are tailored to address a specific standard and include a Student Learning Objective and five intervention activities, with manipulatives and lesson plans.

This year for the first time, Project CAMP served two Messiah alumni, Jena Moyer ’14, who teaches 7th grade math at Northern York Middle School, and Domenic Andolina ’14, who teaches elementary school in Memphis City Schools.

Above: Kristina Tjornhom ’16 consults with Chad McCartney, music teacher at Northern York Middle School. She created an intervention to support learning about the Fibonacci Sequence in music.

Right: Through Project CAMP, Hannah Carrington ’15 demonstrates a foldable with which Family and Consumer Science students can explore equivalence of fractions.
Dear Friends,

Here you are on the precipice of graduation. Did it sneak up on you or are you exasperated that it took so long? Time is a conundrum. Despite the fact that every minute is a minute, we find ourselves holding two opposing views on time: not enough or too much. Goldilock’s famous “just right” rarely describes our experience with time.

My time with you falls in the “not enough” part of that spectrum. My longing for “more, more, more” (as Vera B. Williams says in her lovely picture book) time with you is the impetus for this letter. Here are my final thoughts for the beautiful class of 2015. I appreciate when someone gives me a helpful tip, especially if that person has walked ahead of me on the path. With that in mind, I give you a handful (that magic number 5!!) of tips for your upcoming journey.

Tip #1: Be intentional and thoughtful about how you spend your time. You will have little “down time” so be mindful of what you do with the open time you have. As nice as you are (and you are SO nice), do not get bogged down in situations or committees or programs that are not feeding your energy. It’s OKAY to say “no”! Truly the ability to say “no” is underrated. What NO does is make YES more powerful. Choose well how you spend your time.

Tip #2: Some of the most wonderful people you will meet have different values and lifestyles than you. You are a most tolerant generation. (Do you remember my lecture on why you use the term “like”???) I get that there is comfort when you find a soulmate in your school, someone who believes as you do. But I urge you to stay open to those who are quite different from you. They may do more to inspire you than you ever dreamed possible. Yes, find a colleague (or two or three) who are mirrors but also engage with those that will provide windows to another world of thought.

Tip #3: No doubt about it, there will be terrible, horrible, no good, rotten days. Accept it. Do not dwell on it – just know it will happen. These days do not define you. They are just that: bad days. Is the famous line from Frozen singing in your head? (♫ “Let it go. Let it gooooo.” ♫)

Tip #4: Be confident of what you know. Humility is lovely but show what you know! You may be new. You may be young. You may be less experienced. BUT you know a lot! Let that shine, shine, shine!

Tip #5: We got your back! By “we” I mean all of the faculty and (more so!) that amazing God we all love. You just need to call out to us. We are here.

Sweet Friends! I will not have the joy of watching you process across campus in your graduation robes. I will not have the glory of hearing EACH and every name called out by our Dean. I will not be there to meet your families and celebrate with you on graduation weekend. But I will feel the glow. Thank you for allowing me to share a small part in your journey to graduation. I am beyond proud of you.

Be blessed, my friends. I love you more than you know. Serve Him well.

“It is good to have an end to a journey, but it is the journey that matters in the end.”

—Ursula K. LeGuin
ANITA’S FINAL WORDS OF ADVICE

The best thing to hold onto in this life is each other.

Audrey Hepburn (1929–1993)

HAVE A SAFE AND RELAXING SUMMER!