Since the last issue of this newsletter reached you, we have celebrated Christmas, welcomed a new year (and a new grandbaby), and completed two sessions of graduate courses. We had a great winter season, and now we are ready for spring.

In this issue we include a feature article that highlights some of the men of the Graduate Program in Education, both students and faculty.

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics using information from 2013, 81 percent of elementary and middle school teachers are female (80 percent for Special Education). The numbers are more even in secondary education, but men are still the minority. In our program, men made up only 8 percent of the students registered for classes last session, while our grad faculty is 44 percent male. In a field dominated by women, we are pleased to take this opportunity to introduce the men of our program.

For those of you who teach, it is difficult to imagine that the end of another academic year is just around the corner. With its end comes summer, which means Summer Intensives on campus.

This is always a highlight for our program, as it is an exciting time when we can meet face-to-face with some of our students in a physical classroom. It is also an opportunity for you to meet each other and connect in ways that can impact your later online interaction. We look forward to seeing you.

However you decide to spend your summer months, enjoy the time off and be well.

Peace,

Dr. Nancy Patrick
Director of the Graduate Program in Education

Dr. Obed Mfum-Mensah teaching EDME 502, Advanced Socio-Cultural Perspectives on Education, a Summer Intensive course.
The Students:

Christopher Wenger
I am taking two classes in the EDME program to fulfill requirements for my Instructional II certificate, and I plan to continue teaching as an elementary instrumental music specialist at the Central Dauphin School District, where I teach beginning band and string instruments to fourth and fifth graders.

What led you to this field?
I did my undergrad B.A. in music, having dropped out of the B.S. Music Ed. Program because I felt I wouldn’t do a very good job as a music teacher, and that job is too important to do poorly. Following graduation, I was offered a long-term substitute position in MS/HS Orchestra which I ended up loving. I started teaching in the private schools, eventually finishing my Post-Baccalaureate Certification and obtaining a position in the public schools.

What do you view as your “arrival point” in your career?
I can’t imagine I’ll ever feel as if I’ve “arrived.” There’s too much to learn, too many ways to improve. I suppose, however, that time is now for me – I’m in a job that I love, and have been in it for several years. And I am now completing the remaining courses I need to make it permanent.

The Students:

Tyler Herman
I am currently enrolled in the track for certification for special education grades 7-12. I plan to use this to solidify my temporary teaching certificate in special education so that I will have special education certification in addition to my secondary social science certification.

How are you currently employed?
I am employed full-time as an emotional support teacher at a private school that contracts with public school districts. I also work as a part-time adjunct online instructor. I teach students grades 9-12 for both of these positions.

What do you view as your “arrival point” in your career?
I have been interested in education since high school. However, I became specifically interested in special education once I began working in behavioral health rehabilitation services. Through that position, I observed and collected data on students predominately in special education classroom placements.

What makes you get up in the morning to do what you do?
One of the best things about special education is the infinite ways to improve. I suppose, “arrived.” There’s too much to learn, and it is amazing to be a part of that.

The Students:

Eric Fleming
I plan to enroll in the Curriculum and Instruction masters track. I believe that this degree will help me be more successful today as a teacher and could possibly open the doors for other leadership roles in the future.

How are you currently employed?
I teach Upper School Spanish at York Country Day School in York.

What do you view as your “arrival point” in your career?
That’s probably the most difficult question to answer, because honestly, I am very pleased with where I am now. At some point in the future, I could see myself stepping into a leadership role at a school and I am trying to gain experience and education to make that a possibility. If I were to spend the remainder of my career as a teacher and be happy doing it, I would see no problem with that.

The Students:

We recently asked the male STUDENTS and FACULTY of the Graduate Program in Education a series of questions about why they chose to be EDUCATORS. Here is what they had to say:
I really can't say enough about how much I love my career. Every day is great, usually for different reasons. The kids are fascinating, and they continue to teach me that my expectations are what hold them back – all I need to do is find out exactly how to motivate them to succeed and then get out of their way.

—Christopher Wenger

I think I am designed to be a teacher. That is, I cannot see myself in any other career.

—Tyler Herman

I love working with people, especially young people who are still figuring out who they are, who they want to be, what they want to do, and what they value. I appreciate the fresh start of a new school year; very few jobs offer that kind of clean slate every year.

—Eric Fleming

Most days I wake up knowing today I am going to help a kid with ASD solve a problem and gain a bit more control over his own behavior and therefore his future...

—Curt Byers
How are you currently employed?
I am currently a tenured associate professor with the Department of Education, where I teach courses in foundations of education, sociocultural perspectives on education, and comparative and international education, as well as a general education course.

What led you to the field of education?
My transition to the field of education was by accident rather than on purpose. As a former pastor and an energetic young man who was willing to take risks, my church sent me to a remote area to open a church in Ghana to work with the community and schools there. When I left Ghana, the school had increased in enrollment to about 100 students. Currently, the school has an enrollment of approximately 1,000 students.

What was anyone who inspired you in this field?
I was born into a family of teachers. My older brother is a high school science teacher. My Father was a teacher and my uncle is a principal and service teachers about pedagogy and international education, as well as academic and psychology and statistics. Administrators. I found working together as a team to be a wonderful experience and an ideal way to carry out research projects.

What do you view as your “arrival point” in your career?
Being an emeritus faculty member means, I suppose, that I have arrived at a certain point in my career. Although I have had more than 40 years teaching and research experience, I still find myself energized by both activities. Currently I am conducting research for a global research project on 24 Anabaptist denominations throughout the world. Although I am now enjoying a bit of a slower pace, I still find teaching and research activities that I want to continue.

Has there been a student or students who, in a single moment, has made you feel that you are doing what you were created to do? What was the moment?
I am blessed to say that there have been many of these moments. It happens when I get an indication that students have caught on to what it is that we are studying. It often is revealed in thoughtful statements either in the context of class or in their writing.

Dr. Ron Burwell

What do you view as your “arrival point” in your career?
I love interacting with students and guiding them as they encounter linguistic concepts for the first time. Our language abilities are so fundamental to our humanity, and yet so much of our linguistic knowledge is beneath the surface. Students are constantly astounded as they discover the complexity of the system they’ve mastered, and it gives them an appreciation for the task faced by second language learners.

What makes you get up in the morning to do what you do?
I have a passion for education. It is a pleasure and joy to wake up in the morning and do what I do. I feel that you are doing what you were created to do? What was the moment?

Dr. Gene Rohrbaugh

What do you view as your “arrival point” in your career?
Personally, I viewed the opportunity to pursue education as a way to advocate for the educational needs of marginalized groups. So I will say that my arrival point was when I became hugely invested in starting this high school in this remote rural community in Ghana. My research, field work with marginalized pastoral communities in Northern Ghana, and student teaching supervision in urban communities in Canada and Pennsylvania reinforced my commitment to use my research and teaching to advocate for the educational needs of groups at the margins of societies.

What makes you get up in the morning to do what you do?
I have a passion for education. It is a pleasure and joy to wake up in the morning and do what I do. Students’ sparks of insights during class discussions, their unique (and diverging) perspectives to issues that are important to all, and their commitments to fostering democratic spaces make me feel so elated about the vocation.
Things really do happen for a reason.

I have a very unique position at Messiah College. I teach for both graduate and undergraduate programs. I serve as a member on both graduate and undergraduate committees. Double meetings are time consuming, and varying expectations can be tough to navigate.

At one of my first Teacher Education Committee (TEC) meetings, I met Dr. Angela Hare. Dr. Hare is a professor of mathematics, whose passion for education is personified in her work with future teachers and her service to students and teachers in Burkina Faso. After meeting her, for months I tried to figure out a way I could help students and teachers in Burkina Faso. Do I go there? Do I go with or without my family? I talked with Angela, talked with my colleagues, but nothing viable materialized.

Do I give up? Last semester, Angela sent me an email. One of our students, a student she had taught in a math course and a student I had taught in an education course, was going to go to Burkina Faso. Angela referred the student to me to help the student gain an understanding of writing IEP’s and IEP goals for school children in Burkina Faso. This was the way for me to help.

Sometimes we seek, but others find—find for us.

Be thankful for those who know your passion, because it is theirs too.

Dr. Nancy J. Patrick:

~graduate program director, educator, advocate~

Dr. Patrick has assumed many roles throughout her career, including social worker, special educator, behavior specialist, infant development specialist, school psychologist, autism specialist, and lecturer. In the fall of 2012 she was invited to China to deliver sessions on the educational advances available to those with ASD.

In addition to her academic credentials, one of her three adult children has an autism spectrum disorder, so Dr. Patrick is particularly invested in helping those with disabilities to retain their dignity. A new study released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that research conducted in 11 states during 2010 showed one in 68 children to have a form of ASD. As this population rises, due to better detection and a widening definition, Nancy feels the urgency to prepare teachers to meet the educational needs of their students.

Dr. Patrick crafted the framework of the GPE, and her philosophy is echoed in the program’s mission of “developing leaders, practitioners, and collaborators whose growing commitment to reconciliation, justice, and the dignity of all people compels them to pursue excellence in their professional understanding and practice.”

The program’s three main disciplines, Special Education, TESOL, and Curriculum and Instruction fit naturally within this mission, as they are structured to build the tools each educator needs to be more effective in helping those under their tutelage reach a greater understanding of the world around them.

Y Blog.

By Dr. Maude Yacapsin

Thank you, Dr. Hare.

I have a very unique position at Messiah College. I teach for both graduate and undergraduate programs. I serve as a member on both graduate and undergraduate committees. Double meetings are time consuming, and varying expectations can be tough to navigate.

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Congratulations to Dr. Maude Yacapsin for her recent promotion to Associate Professor of Education.

Download Maude’s article on Differentiating for Faith in the Classroom today!
A STUDENT PRESENTATION:

On February 8, 2014, West Shore Christian Academy in Shiremanstown hosted a conference on Teaching English Language Learners. Dr. Jan Dormer served as the plenary speaker, and the Graduate Program in Education was further well-represented by graduate student Cindy Mowery, who participated in the conference.

This past February I was blessed with the opportunity to present at my first TESOL Conference at the West Shore Christian Academy event. My topic, “Inclusive Practices in Social Studies Classes: Learning Language Through Content,” centered on sharing specific strategies with social studies educators to support English Language Learners in their academic content area. These strategies aim to provide authentic, meaningful learning opportunities that will make the academic content of social studies accessible to ELLs across all proficiency levels through active engagement exercises and through tapping into the English Language Learners’ prior knowledge and experiences.

Working with ELLs and supporting them specifically in the content area of social studies is my passion. When Dr. Dormer invited me to present at the TESOL conference, I felt this was a unique opportunity afforded to me through which I could make a difference for others. I believe the presentation of strategies and the resources I provided were well received by the educators who attended the session. The strategies, techniques, and information discussed can be tailored and made applicable to the specific needs of different content areas with differentiation for all students.

I was very impressed by the administrators and educators who hosted and attended the conference. We were warmly welcomed and shown true Christian kindness. Each of the educators in attendance possessed Christian love, dedication, and a desire to guide all of their students to attain academic success. This was a wonderful experience, and I was blessed to have been a part of it and it is one in which I would gladly participate again.

-Cynthia Mowery

The Oxford Seminars website recently posted 10 Steps to Teaching English Abroad, a helpful “checklist” for TESOL graduate students who are seeking ESL jobs abroad.

Step 1: Picking Your Certification Course
Oxford strongly recommends that you have formal TESOL/TESL/TEFL certification, due to an increase in the competition for ESL teaching jobs.

Step 2: Getting TESOL/TESL/TEFL Certified
Once you have chosen your certification course, it is necessary that you complete all of the requirements for that course.

Step 3: Choosing Your Country
Research various countries in which you might like to teach; this will help you to better understand which countries need English teachers the most and where your certification might best be utilized.

Step 4: Creating Your ESL-Specific Résumé
This is critical when applying to schools overseas. Your résumé is your “first impression”; therefore, it should successfully highlight your qualifications in a way that will be desirable to potential employers.

Step 5: Preparing for Your Interview
Since you are applying for a job overseas, your interview will most likely be conducted over the phone or via Skype. This interview will allow you to demonstrate that you are a native English speaker. Oxford recommends that you practice prior to the interview.

Step 6: Negotiating and Signing Your Contract
Once you receive a job offer, it is vital that you take time to carefully review the contract. Do not be afraid to ask as many questions as necessary; it is important that you are clear on every aspect of the contract before you accept a job.

Step 7: Obtaining Your Passport and Visa
Receiving a passport and a work visa is a process that may take some time, depending on where you are traveling. Do not save this for the last minute! Start this process as soon as possible.

Step 8: Preparing to Travel Abroad
Oxford offers a Preparing to Go Checklist that you should review as you are planning to leave.

Step 9: Arriving in Your Destination Country
Make sure that you have arranged to be picked up by a representative when you arrive.

Step 10: Starting Your First Day of Class
Congratulations! This is the moment that all your years of education and preparation have been leading up to: You are now an ESL teacher.
Courses

2014 Summer Class Schedule

Early summer: May 18 - July 12 - online
EDME 525 - Curriculum and Learning
EDME 545 - Educational Research

All Summer: May 18 - August 17 - online
EDME 530 - Special Education Internship and Seminar
EDME 531 - Special Education Thesis/Project and Seminar
EDME 532 - TESOL Internship and Seminar
EDME 533 - TESOL Thesis/Project and Seminar

Late Summer: Intensive July 28 - August 1 - on campus
EDME 502 - Advanced Socio-Cultural Perspectives on Education
EDME 504 - Family and Community Partnerships

2014 Fall Online Class Schedule

Early Fall: August 25 - October 19
EDME 521 - TESOL Methods and Assessment with Field Experience
EDME 522 - Autism Spectrum Disorders
EDME 528 - Infants, Toddlers, and Families with Field Experience
EDME 551 - Effective Practices for Every Learner

All Fall: August 25 - December 21
EDME 530 - Special Education Internship and Seminar
EDME 533 - TESOL Thesis/Project and Seminar

Late Fall: October 27 - December 21
EDME 502 - Adv. Socio-Cultural Perspect. on Education
EDME 504 - Family and Community Partnerships
EDME 525 - Curriculum and Learning
EDME 526 - Low Incidence Pop. with Field Experience
EDME 580 - Educational Research

Be sure to consult your degree audit on Banner and meet with your advisor before registering!
Upcoming Events

Pennsylvania Council for Exceptional Children’s (P ACEC) Convention Expo
April 9-12, 2014
Click here for more information

Christians in English Language Teaching (CEL T)
International Conference: Taipei, Taiwan
May 23-25, 2014
Click here for more information

TESOL Academy 2014: The Ohio State University
June 20-21, 2014
Click here for more information

2014 National Autism Conference
August 4-7, 2014
Click here for more information

Pennsylvania Council for Exceptional Children (PAC EC) Conference
November 21, 2014
Click here for more information

International Christian Educators Conference, Asia
Daejeon, Korea, November 26-29, 2014
Click here for more information

Dr. Jan Dormer kindly offers her assistance with conference proposals or with any other questions/concerns you may have regarding TESOL conferences.
jdormer@messiah.edu

Students—please consider presenting at (or attending) one of these conferences on Leadership, Education, or Secondary Transition

So many of you have wonderful ideas—Dr. Yacapsin can collaborate with you and provide you with some helpful information for getting started.

Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators
PA Community on Secondary Transition
PA School Boards Association School Leadership Conference
Coming soon: PA Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

As a student, consider joining a professional organization.
Here are just a few that we suggest:
Penn TESOL East: http://www.penntesoleast.org/
TESOL: http://tesol.org/
Christian English Language Educators Association (CELEA): http://www.celea.net/