DegreeWorks helps track academic progress

By Mel Moraes, University Relations/News

A new online degree audit system allows undergraduates to access information on their progress toward graduation from their home computer.

DegreeWorks is a Web-based tool to help students and advisors monitor academic progress. The system brings WVU’s degree requirements and a student’s completed course work together to provide a complete view.

Students can see progress toward their degree, determine how current courses apply to graduation requirements, plan their four-year schedules, and understand how changing a major can affect their graduation date.

The program lists completed courses, courses in-progress, transfer credits, incomplete requirements, and more. Once the next semester’s course schedule is released, the course listings on DegreeWorks will link to the University’s schedule to make it easier for students to plan their schedules.

WVU Registrar Steve Robinson hopes students and faculty use DegreeWorks.

“With a few exceptions, this is almost entirely a pencil-paper process at the moment, so DegreeWorks gives us the ability to automate much of that,” Robinson said. “I’m excited, since I think it is a great program. Students and academic advisors have given us some positive feedback.”

The system is designed to aid and facilitate academic advising, but is not intended to replace face-to-face advising sessions. “There is a human dimension that, as good as DegreeWorks is, it could never provide,” Robinson said. “It is a supplement to the academic advising process.”

DegreeWorks also features a GPA advice calculator, as well as a “What If?” section where general education students or those looking to change their major can compare different majors’ requirements to the courses they have already taken. Students can choose a degree and the semester they will be making the change, and the program will show how much longer that student will need to be in school to complete the requirements.

“Degree requirements are complex, and we are in an environment where students want to review this information at any time. This automated tool puts information in the students’ hands when they want it. It doesn’t get much more important in higher education than getting a student ready to graduate.”

Students can access their accounts by logging on at http://mix.wvu.edu and clicking the “STAR” tab.

For more information, contact the Office of University Registrar at 304-293-5355 or Registrar@mail.wvu.edu. Tutorials are available at http://registrar.wvu.edu/dw.

Commencement exercises scheduled for May 13-15

The University will host a series of individual, personalized ceremonies at venues on the Evansdale campus and around Morgantown, including the WVU Coliseum, Creative Arts Center, and Morgantown Events Center.

New this year, students will not be required to pay a graduation fee. Also, candidates for graduation should visit the new graduation event portal at http://graduation.wvu.edu for event updates, lodging information, and other details. Select “May Commencement” for specific information.

Candidates for graduation should RSVP for their ceremony/reception if required by the school or college. RSVP instructions will be provided on the Commencement website as they are made available.

Each ceremony will also be webcast to allow friends and family to watch from around the globe.

Limited on-campus lodging will be available at Lincoln Hall, one of WVU’s newest residence halls, from Friday, May 13 through Monday, May 16, 2011. For reservations, please call 304-293-2790 or request via e-mail at Conferences@mail.wvu.edu. Rooms are $66.36 per night, (tax included). Payment is required upon arrival.

Questions about disability-related accommodations (including event seating) should be directed to WVU’s Office of Disability Services at 304-293-6700.

General inquiries can be e-mailed to CommencementQuestions@mail.wvu.edu. If your student has questions about academic status, he or she should contact their academic advisor or their school/college record manager.
Dear Mountaineer Parents Club Members,

During this time of the year I often hear families say, “I wish I had known that,” or “I had no idea that WVU offered that.” We can always do more to make sure that parents are aware of all the ways WVU can help their students succeed.

Here are a few helpful tips:

1. **Be an active Mountaineer Parents Club member.** Joining is great, but be sure to go to a local club event! You will be able to network and share ideas with other WVU families.  
   [http://www.wvu.edu/~parentsclub/join/](http://www.wvu.edu/~parentsclub/join/)

2. **Visit the Mountaineer Parents Club website** to find up-to-date news about what is happening on and off campus.  
   [http://parentsclub.wvu.edu/](http://parentsclub.wvu.edu/)

3. **Read the Parent Electronic News messages** sent to you by our Parent Advocate Office. These messages contain important information for you to discuss with your student.  

4. **Become a fan of the Mountaineer Parents Club on Facebook.** It’s easy to do and will keep you connected.  

5. **Frequently visit WVU Today** for the latest news on campus.  
   [http://wvutoday.wvu.edu/](http://wvutoday.wvu.edu/)

6. **Visit campus.** You are welcome anytime, but we strongly encourage you to visit during Spring Family Weekend, April 8-10, 2011, and during Fall Family Weekend, October 14-16, 2011. These are wonderful times for you to explore your student’s new home away from home.  
   [http://parentsclub.wvu.edu/spring_weekend](http://parentsclub.wvu.edu/spring_weekend)

7. **Read the Daily Athenaeum,** our daily college newspaper.  

8. **Call the Mountaineer Parents Club helpline** at **800-988-0096.** This toll-free service provides assistance for parents who have questions or concerns that do not appear to fall within the typical categories of frequently called WVU numbers.

9. **Read the Mountaineer Parents Club newsletter.** It is mailed to your home twice a year, in addition to one online only edition. These newsletters contain valuable information.  

10. **Have your students call the Student Advocate** at **304-293-5555;** the Advocacy Center simplifies procedures and helps students find answers. The Center specializes in problem-solving and helping students be better informed about making important decisions.  
    [http://www.studentlife.wvu.edu/advocacy.html](http://www.studentlife.wvu.edu/advocacy.html)

You play an important role in your student’s success. I encourage you to heed the above advice and feel free to offer me feedback on how we can help you support your student. Please e-mail me any suggestions at parentsclub@mail.wvu.edu

Let's Go Mountaineers!

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Spring 2011
The Mountaineer Parents Club newsletter is a free publication for Mountaineer Parents Club members. It is a joint project of WVU Foundation, Enrollment Services, University Relations, and Mountaineer Parents Club. Letters and suggestions are welcome. Send mail to: Editor, Mountaineer Parents Club newsletter, PO Box 6240, Morgantown, WV 26506 or parentsclub@mail.wvu.edu.

Funding for this newsletter was provided in part by the Susan B. Hardesty Parents Club Endowment. West Virginia University is governed by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and the WVU Board of Governors.
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WVU draws from global pool of professors eager to make a difference  By Diana Mazzella

Brazil, Romania, India, Italy, Pennsylvania.

Our faculty make their way to Morgantown from countries all over the world and from nearby towns because they see a chance for their own development and a way to improve life for others. WVU welcomes faculty from diverse places and different fields with the same goal in mind: making the largest difference they can.

• Karissa Skiba, a US Air Force lieutenant from Greensburg, Pennsylvania, wanted to teach, so she put WVU on her list of requests for assignment.

• Kaushlendra Singh, educated in his native India and at the University of Georgia, came to start a new energy program and conduct biofuels research.

• Gianfranco Doreto came from the University of California, Los Angeles, after leaving his native Italy. He has found a strong group of researchers in his field of artificial intelligence.

• Tonya Payerchin, from Dunbar, Pennsylvania, wanted to teach. The nursing instructor wanted to work somewhere with a teaching hospital and where she could have a chance to conduct research.

• Faculty members know the benefits of working in a land-grant institution that has the missions of research, education and outreach.

• Last year Eros Chaves, who is from Brazil, came to teach periodontics, and Cerasela-Zoica Dinu, of Romania, came here to propel students into biomedical engineering.

• Chaves, a University of Michigan graduate, had worked in Brazil, Texas, Alabama, Pittsburgh, and Florida before being toggled to the mountains by a network of West Virginians and WVU graduates. He sees WVU as a winning team. “I want to make a difference and to be part of a winning attitude, not just for the sake of winning, but to be able to accomplish my professional goals and contribute to WVU and periodontics.”

• And he found that you don’t have to be from Morgantown to appreciate the region. “It is a beautiful area with mountains and lakes. Anybody from anywhere in the world would see that it’s beautiful.”

• Cerasela-Zoica Dinu was most excited about being on the ground floor of the emerging field of biomedical engineering.

• After studying in Romania and Germany and doing postdoctoral work at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, Dinu joined WVU’s Department of Chemical Engineering and WVNano. “I believe that I can make a difference,” Dinu said. Proving it, she brought in two National Science Foundation grants in her first year.

WVU earns Carnegie Foundation’s Community Engagement Classification

By Diana Mazzella

In January, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching selected WVU for the 2010 Community Engagement Classification, putting the University in the six percent of higher education institutions so recognized. It is the only institution in West Virginia the foundation recognized for its community engagement.

“WVU’s level of outreach and service to our state is truly exceptional,” said WVU President Jim Clements.

“From providing free dental care for those in need to building homes for underserved families, community engagement is the hallmark of our land-grant University. I’ve often said that ‘no university means more to its state than WVU means to West Virginia,’ and I believe this classification underscores that belief.”

From 2008-2009, WVU used more than $21 million in its grants and awards toward public service, and the Health Sciences Center provides $34 million in uncompensated care annually.

Behind these big-dollar examples are individuals who will have a better life because students, faculty, and staff use their knowledge to benefit the public.

• Extension provides faculty agents in each West Virginia county.

• The Center for Civic Engagement coordinates service learning activities, and places more than 8,000 students annually into service learning opportunities.

• In the 2009 academic year, 632 credit service-learning courses, and almost 5,000 students took service-learning courses.
Creating a more **sustainable campus**

West Virginia University is educating students about the efficient use of resources and encouraging them to contribute to a healthy planet.

- WVU is investing more than $98 million and the efforts of 100 faculty members in **energy-related research**.
- The University is expected to invest $50 million in making campus buildings **energy efficient** by 2016. This should make our carbon emissions a third less than a typical university our size.
- Efforts in **alternative transportation** include the Personal Rapid Transit system and approximately $900,000 a year in contributions toward the Mountain Line bus service.
- WVU has an **in-house recycling** program that recycles paper, aluminum, #1 plastic, and cardboard. We send electronics, fluorescent bulbs, scrap metal, and toner cartridges to a contractor for recycling.
- Residence halls and campus buildings take part in a sustainability competition called **Ecolympics**. In 2009, half of the halls reduced energy consumption by ten percent, and ten halls reduced consumption by at least 20 percent.
- WVU and the community **saved 60 tons of material from the landfill** last year in the annual Blue and Gold Mine yard sale and raised thousands of dollars for charity. This year’s sale will be held on May 21 inside the football stadium.
- WVU’s dining halls donate excess food to area charities and send used cooking oil to a **biodiesel processor**. Four of the dining halls have gone trayless, which has cut down on waste.
- Brooks Hall has a variety of **sustainable improvements**, including a green roof, natural lighting through energy-efficient windows, and an optimal energy-efficient heating ventilation and air-conditioning system.
- WVU launched the **One-Shirt campaign**, which collects clothing and donates it to the homeless; any unused clothing is sent to be recycled.
- Students are encouraged to use **reusable water containers** and can easily refill them at a filtered water station in the Mountainlair.
- **Engineers Without Borders**, the **Biodiesel Club**, and **WECAN** are just a few of the campus organizations that work toward sustainability.

To see more on WVU’s sustainability efforts, visit [http://wecan.wvu.edu/](http://wecan.wvu.edu/). ♥

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**MOUNTAINEER CONNECTION**

The online community for Alumni and Friends of WVU

Mountaineer Connection is a fantastic way to stay connected with WVU and connect with fellow Mountaineers,” said Jen Thomas, Mountaineer Connection manager. “We look forward to introducing more features to enhance the way our users see and share information.”

Plans for enhancement include the introduction of personalized home pages, which will offer unique views of news and information based on specific connections to colleges and organizations.

Mountaineer Connection allows users to read the latest news from WVU, keep personal contact information current, connect with fellow Mountaineers using the alumni directory, and search for a job, post a job opening, or sign up to become a WVU career mentor through WVU Career Services’ MountaineerTRAK.

To become part of this dynamic online community, visit [www.mountaineerconnection.com](http://www.mountaineerconnection.com). ♥
Renew WVU library materials via smartphone

Now students who remember that they have an overdue library book don’t need to rush to a computer or the library. If they have a smartphone, renewing a book is just a few thumb clicks away.

The WVU Libraries’ Mobile Web enables users to renew books via a Web-enabled phone.

“We surveyed students about what services they’d like us to add to the mobile Web, and they overwhelmingly asked for the ability to renew books,” said Penny Pugh, head of reference for the Downtown Campus Library.

The WVU Libraries launched their mobile website last summer. Available at m.lib.wvu.edu, or through the link on the WVU Mobile Web page, the site provides access to the WVU Libraries’ online catalog, MountainLynx.

The site also enables smartphone users to perform library research, find a book, locate an available computer at the Downtown campus or Evansdale library, and ask a librarian a question.

Texting is available on all phones with texting capabilities. Simply text a message to 304-220-0919.

Wheeling couple makes major contribution to cancer research

Cancer research at West Virginia University’s Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center will receive a boost from a significant gift from Frederick and Joan Stamp of Wheeling.

The donation provides additional support to a cancer research endowment established by the Stamps in 2008, and qualifies for matching funds from the state Research Trust Fund. The Stamps requested that the amount of the gift not be disclosed.

The endowment provides funds to support advances in biological, biotechnological, and biomedical sciences.

“The Cancer Center is enormously grateful for the continued generosity of Joan and Judge Stamp,” said Scot Remick, MD, director of the WVU Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center. “Their most recent gift will enhance the endowment for our Clinical Trials Research Unit. This support will enable our center to provide access to state-of-the-art cancer therapies through innovative and life-saving clinical trials.”

The Stamps have been dedicated supporters of the state and WVU for many years.

Judge Stamp has been a US District Court Judge serving the Northern District of West Virginia since 1990. His outreach work has taken him beyond the bench to serve in the state Legislature and as a past president of the former state Board of Regents. He has served on the WVU College of Law Visiting Committee. Judge Stamp holds degrees from Washington & Lee University and the University of Richmond Law School.

Mrs. Stamp, who owns a jewelry design business, is a 1973 graduate of WVU, earning her degree in marketing. She serves on the WVU Foundation Board of Directors, and is a member of several corporate and charitable boards, as well as a lifetime member of the WVU Alumni Association. She is a former member of the Rosenbaum Family House Board of Advisors, and twice chaired the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Gala. Last year, the couple was honored as Most Loyal West Virginians during Mountaineer Week.

Mrs. Stamp’s father, the late Louis Corson, is still revered for writing the WVU Alma Mater.
By Katie Utterback Gallagher

As the spring term comes to an end, many students are focused on summer break. However, as they leave Morgantown, find a summer job, pick up a summer school class, or take a trip, they should do so with an eye on their college career.

Summers provide a chance to further enhance their resume. It is important to try to take a job in the field your student is studying.

Even an unpaid internship may allow a student to see this is not what they want to continue to study or further solidify a decision, which can save you money eventually! Encourage students to seek jobs that allow them to enhance their skill set. Public speaking skills, computer literacy, leadership skills, and teamwork can be found in a host of summer jobs.

If a trip or summer vacation is planned, these too can be educational. Study abroad opportunities are a likely thought when considering travel. Students need to plan ahead for these options, starting at least a semester before they plan to go abroad, but study abroad can result in earning several credits as well as gaining an invaluable global experience.

If a stateside road trip is in the works, encourage students to make the destination or a stop along the way a place they may consider working after graduation. This is a great chance to check on potential job markets or even network if they have friends already in those destinations. Getting used to the idea of job seeking early and starting small can make the process less overwhelming when graduation is around the corner.

Perhaps your student doesn’t really have plans for summer? With classes that run from 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, or 12 weeks long and start at variable points throughout the summer (Summer Session begins on May 18 and ends August 6), students can have a break and still get a class or two out of the way. Maybe it is a hard class that they need to focus on, one needed to get back on track, or one they would like to pick up online: the options are endless.

At WVU there are also a number of summer school classes offered through the Southern Regional Electronic Campus (SREC) for which all students are assessed in-state tuition and fees. Summer financial aid is also available (students must apply with the Financial Aid Office), and West Virginia residents who have a PROMISE scholarship can even choose to use one semester of their eligibility during a summer term to perhaps help graduate early.

Summer school provides some great, flexible options for four-year plans, and as the Summer@WVU campaign states, “Same classes, less traffic”: see http://summer.wvu.edu/.

Whether through a summer job, a road trip, or time spent in the classroom, encourage your students to continue learning and make the most of their upcoming break!
Did you know?

**Mountaineer Mark Class Gift**

The Mountaineer Mark Class Gift is a great way to honor your son’s or daughter’s accomplishments. Seniors and final-year professional students are encouraged to make their first gift to WVU. Money raised this year will be used to construct an archway entrance to the Mountaineer Heritage Park along the Monongahela, or can be put toward academic programs. All student donors will have their names placed on a plaque. To be included, your student can donate $30 or more to [https://www.mountaineerconnection.com/SSLPage.aspx?pid=224](https://www.mountaineerconnection.com/SSLPage.aspx?pid=224).

**Official transcripts available through online system**

The Office of the University Registrar has gone paperless with an online transcript request and payment system. Customers can choose various options of delivery, including overnight shipping. After the order is processed, the system will automatically send an e-mail or text message to notify the person that their order is ready. To access the transcript request system, visit [http://registrar.wvu.edu/transcripts](http://registrar.wvu.edu/transcripts).

**WVU infostations and text alerts enhance safety**

The University has more than 70 information screens on all campuses and in residence halls and other key spaces. The screens are designed to get students’ attention during emergency situations. The system works in conjunction with WVU Alert, a text messaging system that sends emergency notifications to mobile phones and e-mail. All students and parents are encouraged to sign up at [http://emergency.wvu.edu/alert/](http://emergency.wvu.edu/alert/).

**WVU plans to start a School of Public Health**

West Virginia has historically been ranked at the bottom of the lists that measure health: obesity, heart disease, diabetes, tobacco and drug abuse, and other indicators. WVU is planning to establish a new School of Public Health to help solve the state’s health problems. The establishment of the school is part of the University’s Strategic Plan; a summary of these goals can be found at [http://strategicplan.wvu.edu/draft_plan](http://strategicplan.wvu.edu/draft_plan).

**WVU helps veterans succeed**

WVU is a veterans-friendly school that supports veterans in many ways. The student organization Veterans of WVU gives vets, and those still serving in the military, a venue to connect and socialize. WVU offers partial tuition waivers to veterans coming off of full-time active duty or those who have not participated in the Montgomery G.I. Bill. WVU also offers a class, Veterans Transitional Course, to help soldiers become students. For more information on these programs and other WVU veteran programs and support, visit [http://wwuveterans.wvu.edu/](http://wwuveterans.wvu.edu/).

**New Advising Website**

The Undergraduate Advising Services Center (UASC) has a new website designed to help students create an academic plan, register for an advising session, ask questions, or find campus resources. There is even information for parents! Be sure to visit the site and learn more (http://advising.wvu.edu/).

You are invited to join **Mountaineer Connection**, the online community supporting WVU. Just visit [www.mountaineerconnection.com](http://www.mountaineerconnection.com). You do not need to be a WVU alum to join. Benefits of membership include receiving news and information, the ability to update your profile, manage memberships, send an e-card, use the online career network and make an online donation.

**2011 Calendar of Events**

- **April 8 - 10, 2011**, Spring Family Weekend
- **April 9, 2011**, Parents Club University
- **April 10, 2011**, Spring Ring Day ceremony
- **April 22, 2011**, Spring Holiday – WVU Closed
- **April 27, 2011**, Senior Send-off
- **April 28, 2011**, Sophomore Celebration
- **May 2 - 7, 2011**, Final Exam Week
- **May 7, 2011**, Residence Halls close at 5:00 pm
- **May 14 - 15, 2011**, Commencement
- **May 16, 2011**, Summer Classes begin
- **August 22, 2011**, Fall Semester begins
Each year the WVU Alumni Association recognizes its most successful graduates by honoring them as members of the WVU Academy of Distinguished Alumni. This year the Association celebrated a year of firsts with the induction of our first family and international alumni, the Al Zamil Family — Zamil, Fahad, Waleed and Tawfiq — as well as our youngest inductee, Dr. Kimberly Weaver. The Academy also was pleased to recognize Ben Statler, entrepreneur, philanthropist and retired coal executive. For more information about these outstanding alumni, including a “sights and sounds piece” visit: http://alumni.wvu.edu/awards/academy.

Tawfiq A. Al Zamil, Kimberly Weaver and Ben Statler