

Mansfield University

Graduate Newsletter

Spring 2011



this issue

Welcome Message
 Graduate Admissions Mission
 Graduate Faculty Spotlight
 Ph.d Information
 Outstanding Graduate Student
 Graduate Council Background
 Library Resources and Tools

Greetings and welcome from the author

Greetings graduate students!
 Welcome back to all of you who are returning graduate students and welcome aboard those of you who are new to the graduate programs offered at Mansfield University. This newsletter is released each semester and highlights aspects of graduate admissions and also tools and resources for graduate students. Enjoy! And as always, if you have any suggestions or comments please feel free to contact me by email at lewisj@mounties.mansfield.edu. Enjoy!



Jennifer Lewis
 Graduate Assistant
 Graduate Admissions
 Mansfield University

Our Mission

The purpose of Graduate Studies at Mansfield University is to provide post baccalaureate educational services and to serve as a positive change agent in the twin tiers region. The programs offered are designed to provide advanced study in professional and scientific aspects of selected academic disciplines



Graduate Admissions
 Ground Floor, South Hall
 71 South Academy Street
 Mansfield PA, 16933
 570-662-4818 office
 570-662-4121 fax

Online Graduate Programs and Graduate
 Graduate Admissions
 Judi Brayer
 G-24 South Hall
 (570) 662-4818
jbrayer@mansfield.edu

Graduate Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Kathleen Carico Education and Special Education Department

With the start of the Fall, 2010 semester Dr. Kathleen Carico began her 8th year at Mansfield University in the Education and Special Education Department. She came “back home” to Tioga County after 12 years in K-12 teaching and middle school administration, followed by Ph.D. studies and then 9 years as Assistant, then Associate Professor at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia.

AT VT: Graduate Teaching and The WebPal Project. Dr. Carico’s experience teaching graduate students began at VT when she became Director of the English Education Program, a master’s level certification program. Her graduate teaching assignments included regular coursework at the Blacksburg campus with occasional summer and weekend trips to the Northern Virginia campus to teach in various cohorts of public school teachers from area schools. In addition to her primary graduate duties teaching English Education methods and Teacher Research, she also taught advanced curriculum courses, multicultural literature, independent studies for doctoral students, and service on numerous doctoral committees. Dr. Carico’s research at VT focused on a collaboration with English Language Arts teachers and Instructional Technology staff to develop the WebPal Project, an online literature project between Dr. Carico’s pre-service teachers at VT and public school students. Dr. Carico obtained grants to fund this research on the effectiveness of the online format in teaching young adult literature. In her articles and papers, she and her colleagues focused primarily on the student outcomes, but also the technology used and the appropriateness of the literature choices for the adolescents involved. By the time she left VT, the WebPals were functioning in Northern Virginia Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, and VT, connected by TeacherBridge, a network created by two VT doctoral students.

AT MU: An Online Master’s In Teaching Children’s Literature K-12. At Mansfield University since 2003, the majority of Dr. Carico’s teaching assignments have been in the undergraduate certification program; however, they also included teaching the graduate curriculum course ED 5554, which she has taught every year since her arrival, and several graduate independent studies in multicultural literature, teacher research, and integration of the arts in classroom teaching. In 2004 she began teaching summer offerings in the Children’s Literature master’s track, which had as the major feature an online concentration in Children’s Literature. Then in 2008, she and Dr. Craig Cleland began working with the Education and Special Education faculty to

deliver the entire Master’s in Teaching Children’s Literature K-12 online. Granted approval by the MU Curriculum Committees, the program is now available totally online. Dr. Carico and Dr. Cleland are also currently pursuing avenues to ensure regular, multiple course offerings for students interested in obtaining an online graduate degree in Teaching Children’s Literature.

IN EDSPE: Teaching Young Adult Literature. Currently, Dr. Carico is teaching one of the concentration courses: ED/ELE 5568 Teaching Young Adult Literature, which focuses on classic and currently popular and/or acclaimed young adult books. The course gives in-service as well as pre-service teachers an opportunity to examine the literature that their students are reading in their free time (e.g. the popular *Twilight* series or Phillip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* trilogy) and to consider if/how they could be used in the school English language arts curriculum. Students are also acquainted with award-winning young adult books such as *Tears of a Tiger*, a multi-genre novel about teenage drinking and a winner of numerous awards, among them 1995 American Library Association/Coretta Scott King Genesis Award; or *New York Times* bestselling and National Book Award finalist *Speak*, a novel that describes a teen’s inability to communicate verbally the trauma she suffers following a rape no one knows about. Accompanying the novel readings are articles about teaching books such as these in the secondary classroom, some written by Dr. Carico from journals such as *Language Arts*, *the ALAN Review*, and the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. Woven in this online course are readings that examine the effectiveness of studying literature online in the K-12 classroom.



Dr. Kathleen Carico
Education and Special Education



Interested in earning your Ph.d?

Is doctoral work the next step for you? Many students go on to receive their doctoral degree. Doctoral degrees can be received in various fields. Therefore, it is very important to do research to find the appropriate program and field for you. To choose the best doctoral program for yourself, take the time to research the graduate school option thoroughly.

To investigate specific programs there are a lot of steps to take. Speak to graduate students at your own and other institutions; they can help you think about questions to ask and they probably know about other programs. It is very, very helpful to visit the campus and department and develop your own opinions. While you are there, speak to faculty and staff at those programs. Talk to students who are enrolled there. Visit classes and labs if you can.

When communicating with faculty, remember that time is of the essence. Make the most of the time they can give you. Most faculty members do not respond to email messages that seem to be sent to numerous people. ("Dear Professor X, I am interested in being your advisee. ..."). Do your research in advance. Ask educated questions about the program itself or the professor themselves. If you are in a field in which it is the norm for faculty and students to match prior to and during admissions, find out who students typically meet faculty members.

Here is a helpful site that provides advice and direction when looking into various fields of study <http://www.phd-survey.org/advice/advice.htm>.

The Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is a governing body at Mansfield University that focuses on graduate studies, programs, and assistantships. The Council meets approximately once a month to make important decisions that affect Graduate Studies, and, therefore, also affects Graduate Students. This may sound scary, and you may be thinking "do I have any say in what happens in regards to my Graduate life?" The answer is yes, you do have a voice through the Graduate Council! Graduate Assistant, Abby VanGorden, works closely with the Council and serves as a liaison between the Council and graduate students.

If you have any questions or concerns that you would like the Council to be aware of, please email Abby at gradcouncil@mansfield.edu

Graduate Student Spotlight

In the fall of 2010, the Graduate Admissions Office acknowledged graduate students who had demonstrated outstanding dedication, personal and professional growth, and academic achievement within their field of study. Graduates were nominated by staff and professors of Mansfield University. The graduate student selected for this honor, was Catherine Burns.



I've recently graduated from SUNY Brockport in Spring 2010 with a Bachelor's Degree in Health Sciences and certification in Education. I'm currently enrolled in the Master's of Special Education program, seeking certification, and graduating in Summer 2011. I'm a graduate assistant under the Middle States team. My graduate assistantship has been everything challenging and awarding, as it has helped me grow as a professional and individual.



Got Suggestions?

We are always looking for information pertaining to graduate student's education and lives. If there is anything you would like to see or would find helpful to include in graduate student newsletter please feel free to contact Judi Brayer, Assistant Director of Enrollment Services, Coordinator of New Student Orientation/Student Success/Graduate Admissions at jbrayer@mansfield.edu

Library Online – Journals, Books, Music, & Film

By Frances Garrison, North Hall Library, Coordinator of Public Services

When you hear the word “library” you may think of shelves full of books, quiet study spaces or group meeting rooms. While the North Hall Library does offer all these things, increasingly the library is coming directly to you through numerous online offerings. As an MU student you have journals, books, recorded music, and educational films at your fingertips, and all you need to access them is your 18 digit ID number. Not sure what that is? It's on the back of your ID card, but if you don't have an ID card, you can still find your number. On the library homepage--

<http://lib.mansfield.edu/> --, look at the menu bar at the bottom of the header. Click on either “Online Ed” or “FAQs” and look for the 18-digit barcode lookup. If all else fails, contact the library information desk—you can use the chat box on the website, call 570-662-4671, or email libref@mansfield.edu.

The library provides over 100 databases. Many of these include journal articles, but there are also a number of other very interesting choices. From the library homepage, if you select “Databases and Electronic Resources” you will see a list of database options—general databases in the center of the page and specific subjects on the left hand side. If you select Music from the left side of the page, you'll find music you can listen to online—classical, jazz, world music, and more. If you select “Videos” you find *Films on Demand* where you will be able to search for & watch streaming video on a variety of educational subjects—there are over 5,500 titles there. *Biography in Context* includes biographies (usually several pages long) from a number of reference books. *Teaching Books* includes a mix of articles, websites, and videos showcasing children's book authors and illustrators. There are entire books online too. Choose “Books” from the left side of the databases page to link to *NetLibrary* or *Gale Virtual Reference Library*.

As graduate students you often need to find journal articles. Whether you choose a general database like *Academic Search Complete* that covers material from all disciplines or a more in-depth subject specific database like *ERIC* for Education, *CINAHL* for Nursing, or *Library Literature* for Library Science, be sure to break your topic into keywords and to then connect the keywords with AND (both concepts in the same article) or OR (when you have synonyms like teenagers or adolescents). Putting your search words in quotation marks will search for the words right next to each other, like “learning disabilities”. If you are not finding what you want, try to think if your topic might be called anything else. If you do find a good article, look at what subject headings or descriptors were assigned to it & then search using those terms. In many instances the entire article will be in the database and you can just follow the links to it. If you don't see the article or a link to it, click on “Check MU Availability”. That will link you to the fulltext if it is available online in another database, tell you if we have it physically in the library, and provide a link to the InterLibrary Loan request form (and fill it out for you) if we don't have it. If you're not finding what you think you should, contact the Library Information Desk (chat, email, or phone—see above), or if you want more in-depth assistance, contact your liaison librarian. Each department is assigned a librarian who works closely with that department. To find your liaison librarian and his/her contact information, look on the library website. The liaison librarian will be listed on the subject research guides or you could look under “Library Info” at the “Staff Directory” and then click on “Librarians by Subject.” The Library is here to support you, and the library faculty and staff will be happy to help you in any way we can.