



# Undergrad Ed Updates

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OFFICE FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

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## Fall 2012 Commencement

Fall 2012 Commencement will be held on **Saturday, December 22, at 9:00 a.m.** in the Bryce Jordan Center. Visit <http://commencement.psu.edu/> for commencement details.

Our college student marshal for this fall's commencement ceremony is Animal Science Student, Leanna Sollenberger from New Enterprise, PA. After graduation, Leanna plans to attend veterinary school and become a food animal veterinarian.

Faculty are encouraged to attend and participate in the commencement ceremony to honor our College of Agricultural Sciences graduates.



Faculty participating in the ceremony can view directions at: <http://commencement.psu.edu/attending.html>

## Emerging Leaders Endowment—Call for Applicants

The Emerging Leaders Endowment will support select undergraduate and graduate students through a mentoring program with the College of Agricultural Sciences Deans. Those selected will be exposed to executive level training and decision-making skills through an internship with one of the college's executive leadership team.

The chosen student(s) for the program will undergo a brief rotation with each of the College Leadership Team then select a Dean "mentor" from the following:

- Interim Dean, Dr. Barbara Christ
- Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, Dr. Tracy Hoover
- Associate Dean and Director for Extension, Dr. Dennis Calvin
- Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education, Dr. Gary Thompson
- Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs, Dr. Patreese Ingram
- Assistant Dean for Strategic Initiatives, Dr. Ann Dodd

Along with their respective Dean, recipients

will select an academic credit-based project to complete during the mentorship period. Students will be provided a \$1500 scholarship if selected. Additional support is available for related travel and/or project-based expenses.

Interested students must submit the following by **December 14, 2012**, to Dr. Tracy Hoover, [tsh102@psu.edu](mailto:tsh102@psu.edu):

- Letter of interest
- Resume
- Contact information for three references

First preference will be given to a qualified student who demonstrates leadership qualities paralleling those exhibited by veterans of the US military, Ag Advocates, and officers of student clubs and organizations. Please contact Dr. Tracy Hoover, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education – with any additional questions.



## Changes to Placement Test Results

The “Summary of Academic Performance” has been revised to help advisers better use the document to assist students in making academic decisions. The revised document will be used for students admitted to the University for Spring 2013.

### Key changes

1. The document has been renamed “Academic Background & Placements” to more accurately reflect the information this document conveys.
2. “Academic Background” information is all at the top of the page now, facilitating conversation about the relationships among past academic performance, non-academic factors, and Penn State grades.
3. Placement notations for English, quantification, and chemistry have been edited to reflect the naming conventions used in the Degree Programs Bulletin and the Schedule of Courses. The roman numerals related to placement notations have been removed from display, since they do not convey information to the student.
4. Mathematics now has three notations regarding placement.
  - The first statement emphasizes appropriate use of the MATH 110 and MATH 140 placements. If students do not need calculus, then they should be guided toward other more appropriate GQ selections (MATH 17, 18, 35, or 36, STAT 100 or 200, etc.). MATH 21 and 22 should only be taken by students whose program specifically requires those courses or who need review before taking

calculus.

- The MATH 110 and MATH 140 placement notations now contain the words “choose to take” instead of “need or want.”

The back has been heavily edited to convey the most critical information students need to interpret this document. In particular, it emphasizes the importance of non-academic factors in student success. It also provides basic information regarding English, quantification, and chemistry placements.

As before, this document will have two versions: one version *with* raw scores for use by the adviser and one version *without* raw scores for distribution to the student. Also as before, this document and interpretation of it should be provided to students at FTCAP in January 2013 and New Student Orientation thereafter. eLion has been modified to match, and until January 2013 this information can be found under “FTCAP Summary.” After January, the Academic Background & Placements will be found in eLion under “Placement Tests.”

## Think Global Resources

Part of the University’s strategic plan is to ensure our graduates are prepared for professions within the global community. The Division of Undergraduate Studies has created a fantastic “Think Global” Website that provides tons of resources to help us all engage in global education and conversations at all levels. Please take some time to explore these resources at: <http://dus.psu.edu/global/index.php>.

## 2013 NEWBio Bioenergy Undergraduate Scholars Internship Opportunities



The Northeast Woody/Warm-season Biomass Consortium is offering exciting **9-week summer** research opportunities for undergraduate students who are interest-

ed in exploring bioenergy crops utilizing cutting-edge techniques. This is an opportunity to work with researchers from Penn State University, West Virginia University, Cornell, Rutgers, Delaware State University and other participating organizations. Stipend support is available.

If interested please apply before **December 31, 2012**.

For details see: (<http://www.newbio.psu.edu/education/bioenergyScholars.asp>)

## 2013 Agriscience Awards—Call for Nominations



The Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation, a Federal government agency, is now accepting nominations for the 2013 Agriscience Awards. The awards are presented by the Foundation in partnership with the American Farm Bureau Federation.

The mission of this partnership is to present the Fourth Annual Agriscience Awards to recognize, through four monetary awards, one scientist; one current high school educator; and two current high school students who are judged to exemplify excellence in the field of Agriscience and to highlight the importance of agriculture in the 21st century.

### \$10,000 Distinguished Agriscience Scientist Award

One \$10,000 Distinguished Agriscience Scientist Award will be presented to a scientist who is making or has recently made significant and positive contributions in the field of Agriscience.

### \$5,000 Agriscience Educator Award

One \$5,000 Agriscience Educator Award will be presented to a current high school educator, with at least five years of teaching experience, and who emphasizes concepts, principles and applications in their curriculum to promote the study of Agriscience to students.

### \$1,000 Agriscience Student Awards

Two \$1,000 Agriscience Student Awards will be presented to current high school students who are making or have recently made significant and positive contributions related to the study of Agriscience.

All Nominations are accepted online only at <http://www.agriscienceawards.com/home.php>. Please visit this website for information on the Competition Rules and Regulations. The deadline for 2013 Nominations is **Tuesday, January 29, 2013**. Any questions related to the competition may be directed to Judi Shellenberger, Executive Director of the Foundation at: [judithmscolumbus@cs.com](mailto:judithmscolumbus@cs.com).

## 2013 Research Opportunities for Undergraduates

### Summer Discovery Grants

*Open to undergraduate students at all Penn State campuses!*

Application deadline: **Friday, February 8**

### The Undergraduate Exhibition

Wednesday, April 10

Entry deadline Friday, March 1

One of the great advantages Penn State offers to undergraduate students is the opportunity to work with faculty who are on the cutting edge of research and creative endeavors. The Office of Undergraduate Education established the Undergraduate Discovery Summer Grants program to help students take advantage of Penn State's research environment. Supported by an endowment from the Penn State Alumni Association and funding from the Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education and several colleges, the purpose of these grants is to promote faculty/undergraduate collaboration as students engage in original research, scholarship, and creative work during the summer under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

Student-initiated projects in the sciences, engineering, social sciences, humanities, and arts are intended to provide experience in all facets of the research, scholarship, or creative processes. This includes conceptualization of a question or focus, proposal writing, identification and implementation of methods, and communication of results (reporting, exhibition, or performance). Projects should be primarily the student's own work; although the project may be related to the supervising faculty member's research or scholarly interests, it should not simply provide assistance to faculty work.



Each grant is in the amount of \$3,000 and may be used to cover living expenses and project costs (supplies, materials, books, specialized software, travel for the purpose of data collection, etc.). (Note: Funds will be deposited to student accounts and therefore may have an impact on student aid or be applied to outstanding charges.) Approximately 40 grants are available through the Office of Undergraduate Education for summer 2013. Additional Discovery Grants may be funded through college support. For more information, visit [www.undergradresearch.psu.edu](http://www.undergradresearch.psu.edu)



## Weather Events and Delays at University Park

In years past, weather events caused a delay in the start of activities and classes at University Park campus. When a delay is announced at University Park, classes and activities that begin before the announced time are canceled.

Those classes or activities beginning at or after the conclusion of the announced delay time will be held as originally scheduled. For example, a two-hour delay until 10 a.m. due to snow or ice would mean that all classes that begin before 10 a.m. are canceled and will not be held. Classes beginning at 10 a.m. or later will continue on their regular schedule.

At their discretion, faculty who teach classes that run across multiple periods may decide to hold their class starting at the end of the announced delay time and continuing through the end of the period. For example, if a two-hour delay is announced, a faculty member whose class normally runs from 9 a.m. to noon could elect to start class at 10 a.m. and continue through noon. Faculty who wish to do this need to inform their students of their decision in advance of bad weather, as this option will not be included in the delay announcement put out by the University. This information can be added to the class syllabus or communicated through ANGEL prior to a University cancellation.

Faculty are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety, and should review "Handling Weather Day Absences" (Human Resources Guideline 10) on the web at <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hrg10.html> for specific information on how time missed for weather situations is handled. For information on how the University deals with inclement weather and where information related to class and activity cancellations can be found, go to <http://live.psu.edu/story/61589> online.

**Dr. Jeremy Cohen**  
Associate Vice President and  
Senior Associate Dean  
Office of Undergraduate Education

## Recent Webinar Available Online

The webinar, *How to Create Successful Teaching Awards Nominations for the USDA Excellence in College and University Teaching in the Food and Agricultural Sciences* has been posted and can be found at <http://ufifas.adobeconnect.com/p7z5pqzaqq6/>.

## President's Award for Engagement with Students

### Letter from Undergraduate Education – 417 Old Main

Through the gift of a generous donor, the University again offers the “**President's Award for Engagement with Students.**”

The award will be given during the 2012-13 academic year to a tenured or tenure-track faculty member who goes well beyond the typical responsibilities of a professor by demonstrating exceptional involvement with students' learning and special efforts to engage and encourage students in academic endeavors. The honoree will have taken specific actions to be involved in student growth and learning—academic, social, and professional. Such professors typically make themselves available to, and interact with, students outside class, link students to opportunities, and help them build their confidence as learners and potential contributors to society.

The \$5,000 award consists of \$3,000 that goes directly to the recipient and \$2,000 that goes to the professor's department, to be managed by the recipient and used for extending the kinds of activities the award recognizes. These activities could include:

- Receptions, lunches, or picnics for students
- Field trips, museum visits, or performances for students in classes
- Purchasing books, software, personal computing assistants, compact discs, or access to portals and databases to enhance student involvement or to improve learning experiences for students
- Taking students to participate or present at research meetings, internships, performances and the like
- Networking with student organizations, for example, for materials that the professor might bring to a student club or association when serving as speaker or adviser
- Bringing speakers from other locations to meet with students
- Faculty travel to professional meetings for teaching/learning enhancements
- Involving students in research

### **Selection:**

Each college dean or chancellor may nominate one person, with the nomination including the name, the professorial title, vita, and a brief statement, not exceeding two pages, stating why the professor qualifies.

To assist with review of nominations, please include with your nomination a brief biography of the nominee and a 1-2 page document outlining the candidate's engagement in activities noted above.

Please send nomination materials to **Tracy Hoover**, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, College of Agricultural Sciences, 101 Ag Administration Building by **5:00 PM on Monday, December 17, 2012** for consideration.

## Attendance Policies

### FAQs

**Does Penn State have university-wide policies on student absence from courses?** Yes. The University Faculty Senate Policy is [42-27: Class Attendance](#). The policy recognizes that on occasion, students may opt to miss a class meeting in order to participate in a regularly scheduled university-approved curricular or extracurricular activity, or due to unavoidable or other legitimate circumstances such as illness, injury, family emergency, or religious observance.

The procedures for Senate Policy 42-27 are implemented as Academic Administrative Policy and Procedure [E-11: Class Attendance](#). E-11 expands on the brief summaries provided here.

**How much notice does a student have to provide for a foreseeable absence?** Whenever reasonable, a student should submit a [class absence form](#) a week in advance.



**Are religious observances considered legitimate reasons to miss class?** Yes, religious observance can be a legitimate reason for an absence. Academic Administrative Policy and Procedure [R-4, Religious Observances](#), provides further information and a link to an all inclusive list which provides both major and minor [religious holidays](#), maintained by the Center for Ethics and Religious Affairs.

**If a student is ill, must she or he provide a physician's verification?** Generally, no. As of Fall 2002, University Health Services (UHS) no longer provides verification of illness forms for minor illnesses or injuries. Verification will be provided only for serious illnesses for which UHS clinicians provided services, or when UHS has received such documentation from outside providers.

**What if a student misses a quiz, test, or homework assignment as a result of a legitimate absence?** Students should be provided with a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work. The University does recognize that this increases the burden on faculty. However, simply re-weighting other assessments used to determine the course grade or similar approaches are not consistent with giving opportunity to make up the work. As a matter of policy, the faculty's rule-making body—the Faculty Senate—and the administration through the Administrative Council on Undergraduate Education—are in agreement. A student burdened by an unavoidable absence should not be denied the full mosaic of learning opportunities, including tests and quizzes, enjoyed by her or his peers.

**What if the instructor believes that students' continued absences are causing harm to their academic achievement?** If an instructor believes a requested absence for regularly scheduled events will harm a student scholastically, the instructor should present evidence for necessary action to the head of the department in which the course is offered and inform the assistant/associate dean of the college in which the student is enrolled, or to the Division of Undergraduate Studies if the student is so enrolled.

Dr. Jeremy Cohen  
Associate Vice President and  
Senior Associate Dean  
Office of Undergraduate Education

## College of Agricultural Sciences Instruction & Curricular Affairs Committee Calendar 2012-2013

Proposals Due to College Administrator in CSCS system**	Send to ACUE Deans (if necessary) Post in ANGEL & notify committee for review	College Curricular Affairs Committee Meeting Dates and Location	Revisions Due back in CSCS and begin final approval process	*Proposals due to Faculty Senate	*Curriculum Report Publication Date (on Blue Sheets for 30 days)	*Senate Committee Curricular Affairs (SCCA) all day meeting
Friday Oct. 26, 2012	Oct. 29-30-31	Thurs. Nov. 15, 2012 1:30 -3:00 p.m. 244 Ag Eng. Bldg.	Nov. 30, 2012	Dec. 14, 2012	for the Jan. 15, 2013 Issue	Jan. 29, 2013
Friday Dec. 14, 2012	Dec. 17-18-19	Thurs. Jan. 17, 2013 1:30 -3:00 p.m. 244 Ag Eng. Bldg.	Jan. 25, 2013	Feb. 6, 2013	for the Feb. 19, 2013 Issue	March 12, 2013
Friday Feb. 8, 2013	Feb. 11-12-13	Thurs. Feb. 28, 2013 1:30 -3:00 p.m. Room TBD	March 8, 2013	March 22, 2013	for the April 9, 2013 Issue	April 23, 2013
Friday April 5, 2013	April 8-9-10	Thurs. April 25, 2013 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. Room TBD	May 13, 2013	May 24, 2013	for June 11, 2013 Issue	August 20, 2013

\* Dates posted by Faculty Senate.

\*\*Course proposals need to be completely through all CSCS consultation and ready to be sent to the college administrator (K. Pletcher) by this date to be reviewed at the college committee meeting. **Hard Copies are not required for the Course Proposals submitted via CSCS.** Once a course proposal has passed through the College's Instruction and Curricular Affairs Committee review process and been approved for submission to the Faculty Senate, the appropriate hard copies will be made by the college administrator and sent to the Senate for their review process. **A Hard Copy original and a PDF copy is required for all Program Proposals**—since they are NOT submitted via CSCS yet.

### Announcing Fall 2012 Undergraduate Program Coordinator Meeting Schedule

The last Fall 2012 Program Coordinator Meeting has been scheduled on Wednesday, **December 19, 1:30-3:00 PM**, in Room 504 ASI.

Meeting notices with tentative agenda items will be emailed to Program Coordinators before each meeting. We welcome your input and ideas for agenda items, so please feel free to contact us at any time to add an item for discussion.

Jim Dunn	AG BM, and 2 AGB
Dennis Decoteau	HORT
Stephanie Doores	FD SC
John Ewing	AEE and AG SC
Tarrah Geszvain	AGECO
Les Griel	VB SC
Leland Glenna	CED
Pamela Hankey	IID
Jude Liu	A S M
Ellen Manno	FORSC, W F S, and W P
Megan Marshall	B E
Robert Mikesell	ANSCI
Rob Shannon	E R M
Dan Stearns	LSCPE
Jack Vanden Heuvel	TOX
Andrew Mc Nitt	TURF

## 2013 NACTA National Conference— Call for Abstracts



**Call for NACTA/DOCE Abstracts for the 2013 Conference**  
**Submission deadline: March 20, 2013.**

The 2013 NACTA conference will be held June 25-29 at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. This conference will be a joint meeting with the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Division of Community and Education (DOCE). The theme for the 2013 NACTA Conference is "**Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries.**" Accepted abstracts that address the theme will be given first priority for oral presentations. Authors will be given the option to request an oral presentation, but it will be up to the host committee to make the final selection and timetabling of oral presentations. All other abstracts will be poster presentations.

The 2013 NACTA Conference will serve as a venue for faculty in agricultural, environmental, natural, and life sciences to share their information on the theme of "**Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries.**" as well as to share innovative teaching or advising ideas, scholarship of teaching, and other pertinent information. Abstracts are to fall within one of the three following topic areas: Innovative Teaching Approaches; Learning Outcomes; and, Scholarly Research Approaches.

View examples of poster/presentation titles from 2012 Conference at: <http://www.nactateachers.org/2012-58th-university-of-wisconsin-river-falls.html>.

As in the past, the Office for Undergraduate Education will continue to provide partial travel support for College of Ag Sciences' faculty/staff presenting papers (oral/poster) and/or participating in one of the NACTA Committees.

Additional information and link to submit abstract are available online at: <http://www.cpe.vt.edu/nacta/>

PENNSSTATE



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ThinkAgain

## FALL 2012 COLLEGE & ACADEMIC CALENDAR

December 14	Classes End
December 15 - 16	Study Days
December 17 - 21	Final Exams
December 22	Commencement

