The College of Liberal Arts (CLA) prepares students for the future. One growing field, topic of study and way of life is sustainability. “Since we are building a green economy, nationally, we have to prepare students,” says Dean Susan Maher. “Students need to know these concepts and know about green issues.” Inside and outside the walls of UMD, CLA is reaching into the community’s interest in sustainability and developing projects that impact students and Duluth residents alike. We have a responsibility in the liberal arts to foster a crucial understanding about the environment and its use and value,” says Associate Dean Olaf Kuhlke. Dr. Randel Hanson, of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, is the director of UMD’s Sustainable Agriculture Project (SAP). SAP is concentrated on introducing sustainable food systems by engaging students and the community. Their green work can be surveyed on 10 acres of farmland and 5 acres of orchard.
Welcome to the first issue of CLARION, an annual newsletter to mark the accomplishments of students, faculty, and staff in the College of Liberal Arts and to feature stories on our talented alumni the world over.

Having now completed my first year as CLA dean, I can fully understand how lucky I was to be selected to lead this distinguished college during the second decade of the 21st century. There is much to celebrate in the college this year, from the scores of student internships, Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), Sustainable Development Research Opportunity Program (SDROP), and scholarships to the book and article publications of our enormously talented faculty. CLA staff members have won significant national and university honors this year in recognition of their stellar professional work.

We have had our challenges this year, with state budget cuts, some unexpected resignations, and growing student numbers. Moreover, the college is preparing to welcome incoming students into the new liberal education program, the core set of courses that all UMD students must complete for their degree programs. CLA is offering well over 50% of these courses. Some CLA departments have not seen their faculty numbers increase since the 1990s, while the undergraduate student population at UMD has grown by leaps and bounds. Still, thirteen faculty members received tenure and promotion this year, and seven new tenure-track faculty have entered the college this fall.

I am impressed with how CLA departments have been adjusting strategically to pressures, but I also know that a perpetual state of coping is not the best long-term dynamic for sustaining CLA’s excellence. Students as well have seen tuition rise in response to the state’s reduced investment in higher education. Friends and alumni of CLA have helped tremendously—thank you!—with their support of department and college scholarships, the Dean’s Excellence Fund, and other funds that underwrite college activities. With CLA Development Officer Adam Meyer, I have met with many generous alumni who understand that a strong liberal arts training gives value to all UMD degree programs and prepares students for the demands of a global, interconnected economy and the needs of multicultural, international societies.

As another fall semester draws to a close, I feel enthusiastic about CLA’s future and the intellectual training that our major and minor programs offer. A liberal arts training, as our CLA motto states, cultivates tomorrow’s leaders, problem solvers, caregivers, and creative minds. Every fall, we welcome the future into our doors at UMD, and the portal into CLA is one of the best that students can enter.

Susan N. Maher
Dean
The UMD College of Liberal Arts provides undergraduates a truly unique opportunity, one that highlights the importance of research to the education experience. Unfortunately, faculty research is sometimes seen as a practice that takes away from teaching and thus from the undergraduate educational experience. In CLA the reality is much different - faculty research contributes greatly to undergraduate education. In the Department of Communication, for example, this important synergy between research and undergraduate education continues to enrich curricula and student experiences.

Our communication faculty are actively involved in research and regularly teach courses organized around their areas of research expertise. Faculty research also informs the content of Senior Seminar courses. These courses provide a capstone experience for every senior, culminating in a research project completed under the direct supervision of a faculty member conducting research in that area. As such, every communication student tops off their undergraduate experience working closely with communication faculty to conduct their own research project. This high intensity contact with researchers and the resulting research project often constitute one of the most challenging and rewarding educational moments for students.

“Such things did not exist when I went to school,” says College of Liberal Arts Dean Susan Maher. “Often you were assigned a project but you never worked closely with a professor. It lived, breathed and died for a short amount of time.”

Several UMD Communication undergraduates also work with faculty members on research outside the classroom. Recently several communication faculty have even published research with their undergraduates (see citations below). Many of the highest caliber students also work with faculty to advance the students’ own research ideas. These out-of-class research collaborations between faculty and student are often catalyzed and supported by the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP).

“The UROP allows students, under the guidance of faculty, to pursue research projects they are interested in,” says Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Gerald Pepper.

Dean Maher agrees, “UROP provides opportunities that you wouldn’t have otherwise.”

One such collaborative opportunity is being enacted by Dr. Rebecca deSouza. Dr. deSouza has assembled a research team of five undergraduates to tackle the topic of prescription stimulant drug abuse among college students. The students have worked carefully with Dr. deSouza on several steps of the planning and development of the project. Team members are actively engaged in research design as well as scheduling, conducting, transcribing and coding interviews.

While the immediate goal of the study is to enhance our knowledge of student prescription stimulant abuse,
Hybridity in Spanish Culture
By Maria P. Tajes, Emily Knudson-Vilaseca and Maureen Tobin Stanley
Edited by Emily Knudson-Vilaseca, professor of Humanities and Classics

This book explores the hybridity of a variety of texts through the history of Spain up to the present. These texts blur the lines between two categories, previously thought to be exclusive, to create an original.

Women and the Animal Rights Movement
By Emily Gaarder, professor of Sociology

The impact of gender on the animal rights movement is explored in this text as Professor Gaarder tackles stereotypes of women activists by looking at how and why they are advocating for animal rights. Gaarder is calling attention to more than just the rights of animals.

The Dance Boots
By Linda LeGarde Grover, professor of American Indian Studies

Awarded the Flannery O’Connor Award for Short Fiction, Professor LeGarde Grover takes readers to the history of Ojibwe tribes in Minnesota and their Western schooling. The collection of short stories includes the narrator Artense’s Aunt Shirley who recalls how her culture was broken by the education of young Ojibwe children in Western traditions.

Splendor and Pageantry: Textile Treasures from the Armenian Orthodox Churches of Istanbul
By Marlene Breu and Ronald Marchese, professor of Humanities and Classics

The sacred textiles found in the treasury of the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul are presented in this book in great detail, including 175 colored photographs that feature the artifacts. It also includes the histories of the Armenian Orthodox community.

From Sun Cities to the Villages: A History of Active Adult, Age-Restricted Communities
By Judith Ann Trolander, professor of History

Professor Ann Trolander has written a book that takes a look at what the life of an “active adult” and the communities made to fit the needs of retirees. Trolander looks at the challenges these communities face, the expectations of them and how they will change as the baby boomer population ages.

Theology and Science in the thought of Francis Bacon
By Steven Matthews, professor of History

This work by Professor Matthews explores the underlying question of Bacon’s theological beliefs and the role they played in the development of his program for the reform of learning and the natural sciences, the Great Instauration. It offers a look into Bacon as well as the understanding of the religious context of empirical science in early modern England.

Dr. deSouza believes the process of creating and discovering knowledge is profoundly rewarding educationally. “These research experiences are valuable for all students enabling them to learn how to bring order and organization to complex and messy situations and to build problem solving skills, which will be useful not only in their careers but also to the communities in which they live and work.”

Her students agree.

Kaitlin Paulsen found her work on the team an invaluable supplement to the traditional classroom, providing her a greater degree of “freedom,” as well as more “choice and control” over the process, that gave her the opportunity to be “actively involved in creating knowledge.” Nicole Polkowski, another member of the team argues, “… being part of a research team allows you to put into action the concepts and theories you have been learning about. It transforms your learning experience from a somewhat passive student to an active contributor; it expands your knowledge of what it means to be a Communication major.”

“UROP projects are special because they are the kinds of projects that never leave you. You’re illuminating something that hasn’t been illuminated before,” says Dean Maher.
For students, the experience of attempting to produce knowledge via research is like no other educational experience. According to Dr. Pepper, these experiences can afford the opportunity to participate in a national conference where their work is reviewed and commented on by researchers across the nation. Moreover, this is not only an opportunity for students to display their hard work, but also a chance for them to make valuable connections that will help their academic and professional futures. “Students nowadays need to capitalize on every option available to them to make them stand out.”

In CLA the Communication program provides an example, one of many, of the unique pedagogical synergy that results from the meeting of research active faculty and quality undergraduate students at UMD. Research collaborations between students and faculty like those in the Communication Department help to make the undergraduate learning experience at the University of Minnesota Duluth both rare and extremely rewarding.*

Recent Faculty-Student Collaborative Publications in Communication


Millennium Scholar
By Manda Lillie

Mike Montano, a third-year Political Science major, has been awarded the Gates Millennium Scholarship. Every year 1,000 students from minority groups nationwide are awarded this full-ride scholarship.

“Mike Montano, Gates Millennium Scholarship recipient

“...the music scene in Duluth is pretty decent. Music is a big part of my life. Political Science has always interested me. Politics have played a part in most notable events in history, whether it be local, national or world, so to truly understand our past, we must be aware of politics.”

The college is excited and honored that the first UMD Gates Millennium Scholar is majoring in Political Science, says Dean Susan Maher. “I hope we will have the opportunity to mentor other Gates scholars in the years to come,” Maher says. *

Mike Montano, a third-year Political Science major, has been awarded the Gates Millennium Scholarship. Every year 1,000 students from minority groups nationwide are awarded this full-ride scholarship.

Mike Montano, scholarship winner

“...I hope we will have the opportunity to mentor other Gates scholars in the years to come,” Maher says. *
Charter member of CLA’s Advisory Board Frank MCray Jr. passed away earlier this year, leaving behind UMD and friends who remember his generosity.

Judy McCray, Frank’s wife, shared his story in an interview with Cheryl Rietan.

The 1967 graduate (he earned his master’s in 1971) loved to read as a child. This passion pushed him to pursue higher education. Although he was born in Gainesville, Fla., he turned to Minnesota for education and chose UMD because of its small size.

Frank earned high marks as well as friends throughout his college career. He was also involved on campus as a residential advisor.

The Florida native had a difficult time adjusting to the cold, and walking to UMD from his home in town he would feel the “blood freezing in [his] legs.” English Professor Bob Owens would drive by and give Frank a ride.

After graduation, Frank worked in Duluth Mayor Ben Boo’s office as well as in two public schools. Professor Owens and his wife eventually helped Frank earn a job teaching in Uganda. He learned Swahili, sold his possessions and spent two years in a school near the city of Entebbe. However, Uganda began to face political struggles and Frank had to leave the country.

Once home, Frank taught ninth grade in Roseville, Minn. Shortly after, he met his soon-to-be wife, Judy. They married in 1974, their daughter was born in 1976, and their son Christopher was adopted a few years later.

To support his growing family, Frank became a part-time instructor of human relations at Anoka-Ramsey and Normandale Community College. While the school districts were undergoing reorganization and Frank was waiting for a teaching assignment, he sold insurance and found he loved it. It allowed him to help others and make life-long friends.

The McCray family would forever be a part of UMD’s family because of the connections Frank McCray made while he was here.

“Visiting Duluth always felt like going home,” said Judy McCray. Bob Owens, along with his wife, always let the McCrays stay with them while they visited for events at UMD.

Adversity brought Frank to UMD; because of his race he was not allowed to read in the library as a child. Now, his family wants to help those struggling at UMD with a memorial scholarship.

“I’m very honored and grateful to have known Frank,” said Adam Meyer, director of development for CLA. “This is a piece of Frank that can live forever. Which, to me, is one of the reasons that I do what I do, to have that opportunity.”

Some of the qualifications of the scholarship include: the credits of a sophomore, good academic standing and a preference of a student who is of African American descent. Also, the money is specified for tuition.

For further information about this scholarship you may contact Adam Meyer at ameyer@d.umn.edu or 218-726-6708.
As an institution we are looking to become more sustainable,” says Hanson.

Produce from the farm is making its way into kitchens on campus and businesses such as the Duluth Grill and Mount Royal Fine Foods. With everything from herbs to pumpkins, the variety of crops demonstrates the potential for the local food market while helping institutions learn how to integrate local foods into their systems. They are working with UMD’s Dining Services in hopes that it will lead to the use of more local produce.

“It’s often difficult to figure out where you get your food,” says Ryan Ritter, an Environmental Studies major who interned at the farm over the summer.

Other projects stemming out of CLA are innovative ways to have the environment do all the work.

Aquaculture is a unique system developed by Michael Mageau, an assistant professor of Geography on campus and director of the Environmental Studies program as well as the Center for Sustainable Community Development.

Aquaculture is a closed system involving the growth of fish, plants and biofuel. The fish grow in water that is fed to the plants through troughs. The plants and algae provide a natural treatment for the water before it is returned to the fish and are able to sustain themselves through the fish’s waste in the water. The algae that grow with the plants are then harvested for biofuel as well as food for the fish.

“This system is currently under construction in Silver Bay, Minn., and will serve as a research and educational facility for UMD faculty and students as well as other small communities like Silver Bay interested in creating local jobs producing their own healthy food and clean energy,” says Mageau.

Another food-based project was research conducted by UMD’s Adam Pine, also an assistant professor of Geography. Pine’s project is based on how people purchase food in the Lincoln Park/West End neighborhood of Duluth, where a grocery store is not available.

“It’s about making people’s lives better,” says Pine.

According to Pine, many of the residents have to borrow cars in order to go grocery shopping and “that’s not sustainable.” Pine wants the information from the research to persuade community leaders and entrepreneurs to start a market in the area.

“The economics of it are really good, if someone wants to develop a grocery store we’ve developed a plan for them,” says Pine.

Stacey Stark’s work with the Geographic Information Sciences (GIS) lab has overlapped with some of Pine’s research. The lab helps compile documents and information about regions to develop maps and plans for the communities.

Stark says, “The major projects in the GIS lab are almost all community-based projects, and a lot of what people are doing in the community is about sustainability.”

For example, the lab mapped locations of food banks and what parts of the community those banks reached, looking for potential gaps. Stark also takes data given to her by counties and develops a flooding model to demonstrate how a flood would impact the county economically.

“These are all a part of community sustainability,” says Stark. “I think that the university has a responsibility to instill in students that community and regional sustainability is what we’re looking at in our future.”
The New Associate Dean: Introducing Dr. Olaf Kuhlke
By Manda Lillie

The new associate dean, Dr. Olaf Kuhlke, will be joining the administrative staff with years of experience at UMD already behind him.

Dr. Kuhlke has been with UMD since 2002. He began as a faculty member in the Geography department from 2002 until 2008, and then served as the department head for one year. After this he was interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts for one year.

Dr. Kuhlke was born and raised in Germany, where he studied and completed his Diplom in Geography in 1997. He completed his Ph.D. in Geography in 2001 at Kent State University located in Ohio. He spent a year at the University of Wyoming, Laramie before he came to UMD.

Dr. Kuhlke is a cultural geographer and has studied the geographies of religion, the spatial representation of national identity and, recently, the ways in which dance utilizes space and place.

In regards to religion, Dr. Kuhlke focuses on the design and use of sacred space, particularly the design of Masonic ritual and lodge buildings. His most recent publication was a book entitled “Geographies of Freemasonry: Ritual, Lodge and Spatial Context,” which won the Duane Anderson Excellence in Masonic Education Award by the Grand Lodge of Minnesota in 2008.

His interest in national identity stems from his heritage. Being born in Germany, Dr. Kuhlke watched the country unite in 1989 and was fascinated by the challenges his home country faced and the impact on the German national identity. In 2004, he published “Representing German Identity in the New Berlin Republic” as a result.

Dr. Kuhlke’s current work is on a two-volume edited collection on “Geographies of Dance.” He is working with Adam Pine, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography, to bring together the work of 20 scholars in this set of volumes.

Dr. Kuhlke’s time away from his work is spent with his wife, Kari, and children, Kiel and Anja. An avid outdoorsman, he enjoys running and biking as well as archery. He hopes to try cross-country skiing this winter.

“I am looking forward to the many challenges that this new position will provide. It will be exciting to work on new initiatives in CLA, and to lead the Student Affairs Office.”

~Dr. Olaf Kulke, Associate Dean

CLA FACT

The American Indian Studies program was founded in 1972. Robert E. Powless, the renowned first Director, built a strong academic program that will celebrate 40 years in 2012.
Gustaf Nordin Scholarship
By Fatima Jawaid and Manda Lillie

Gus Nordin never went to UMD, but thanks to his memorial scholarship, his name is known to journalism students and professors.

Sherry Hall, Nordin’s stepdaughter, said that though he was not able to go to college due to economic circumstances caused by the Depression, Nordin knew the importance of higher education. Later in his career, he pressed the Minnesota state legislature for funds for the University of Minnesota Duluth.

“He was a journalist his entire life, from the time he took his first writing assignments for local weeklies, while a high school student,” said Hall. “He believed in journalism. Believed in informing people as a critical part of the society we live in. That an important element of maintaining freedom in our country is a healthy journalism community. His leadership and integrity as a journalist were reasons why the idea of the scholarship came together for us.”

Nordin was born in Duluth in 1911; his parents and siblings were Swedish immigrants. He graduated from Denfeld High School in 1930, and right away began reporting for the combined Duluth Herald and News Tribune, where eventually he would become the managing editor and then executive editor in the 1950s. He was an active civic leader, father, and husband.

From 1944 through 1950, Nordin was White House correspondent for Northwest Publications, which included a number of Midwest dailies. During the period, he covered many fascinating political stories, including the death of FDR. From the nation’s capital, he also sent weekly political columns and hosted a radio show, interviewing national political leaders for outlets in Minneapolis and Duluth.

In 1958, Nordin became general manager of the Pasadena, California, Independent-Star News. In 1964 he married Mary Nordin, who would later established the journalism scholarship at UMD and who resides in Duluth. In 1970, he was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for a series he wrote based on interviews with American Army deserters living in Scandinavia. In 1977, Nordin retired from the newspaper business, eventually returning to Duluth to consult for KDAL-TV three years before he died at the age of 77.

“Good journalism is critically important,” said Edwin Hall, Sherry’s husband. “We were very much in awe and admiration of Gus. We are carrying on for Mary, but also UMD and the journalism scholarship are endeavors we strongly believe in ourselves.”

“Though he never went to college, Gus shared his talent and mentored young college-educated journalists throughout his career. If he could come back today and meet these Nordin scholars, he would love it. He absolutely would adore these kids,” said Sherry Hall. ✯
UMD journalism instructors Chris Julin and Catherine Winter were involved in a radio series that earned a Peabody Award earlier this year.

The award went to a new public radio program called “The Promised Land,” a series of profiles on “leaders and visionaries who are transforming lives and communities.”

Winter and Julin produced one of the hours in the program’s first season. The program profiled Winona LaDuke, a member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe known for her work trying to recover land taken from Native American people.

LaDuke is an environmental advocate who was named “Woman of the Year” by Ms. Magazine in 1998 because of her work with Honor the Earth. Honor the Earth is an advocacy group that helps fund and support Native American environmental groups on a national level.

“It was a fascinating program to work on,” Winter says. “It was near that it focused on issues from northern Minnesota.”

Both Winter and Julin have many years of experience reporting on Minnesota issues, mostly for Minnesota Public Radio. Both have done reporting from reservations in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

“We’re both admirers of Winona LaDuke,” says Winter.

Winter and Julin agree that although they helped with the production, they were a small part of the program’s success.

The journalism program at UMD gains from having staff that are dedicated not only to their teaching, but also to their passions.

“Journalism connects to the real world in ways that students desire,” Winter says. “The skills that employers say they want these days are critical thinking and communication, and that’s what journalism is all about.”

Julin adds that there is a need for capable writers out there.

“We have more information available to us than ever before through the Internet, but so much of it is dreadfully written,” he says. “Being a good writer gives you a key to the realm.”

Julin originally attended Gustavus Adolphus College and graduated with a bachelor’s in psychology in 1983. Later, he went back to school and earned his degree in education in 1995 from Bemidji State University. At UMD, he earned his master’s in English with an emphasis on publishing and print culture. He started as an instructor at UMD in 2005.

Winter started teaching at UMD in 1999. She earned a bachelor’s degree in literature from Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, Calif., in 1985, and went on to earn a master’s in journalism from the University of California, Berkeley in 1989.

FACT

The College of Liberal Arts began as the College of Letters and Social Science (CLS) in 1984. Originally it was under the College of Science and Letters, which encompassed both the Social Sciences and Engineering.

George Rapp, the dean of the College of Letters, said the division happened because of the growing interest in CLS.
The German Studies program at UMD offers students unique opportunities outside of education.

Nathan Paul, a double major in Political Science and Communication with a minor in German Studies, studied in Sweden and Germany. Because of his experience abroad he entered an essay for a contest sponsored by the Goethe Institute, a German cultural institution. He won the contest in March of 2011, which gave him the opportunity to attend an international relations conference in Berlin.

“I decided to study at UMD because of its unique programs, outstanding records and beautiful location,” says Paul. “Thanks to the university’s excellent staff and helpful study abroad services I was able to study in Växjö, Sweden and Lüneburg, Germany.”

During the conference, Paul was able to see his roommate from Sweden.

“It was an absolutely amazing time,” he says.

Another student, Jonathan Kresha, was an intern in an English-language classroom at a Berlin elementary school because of the Center for German and European Studies Department’s annual Minnesota Goes to Berlin Program.

Kresha was placed at Schule am Zwickauer Damm (the School on Zwickauer Road), and visited grades one through six during their English lessons. He also performed research on current pedagogy and best practices in world language instruction in Germany, and participated in cultural events.

Currently, Kresha is working on receiving his license to teach German as well as Spanish. He is also working at East High School in Duluth as a student teacher for both Spanish and German.

“I feel like I can really inform my high school students about what life and school are like for German kids their age,” Kresha says. “I was also able to establish some valuable contacts that will help me keep connected to Germany in the future.”

Finally, another program in German Studies that has gone well beyond the classroom is German Studies Instructor Michael Mullins and his study abroad program that brought German students into the community. In Potsdam, Germany, Polish, German and U.S. students came together and created an audio podcast describing historical and contemporary aspects of Potsdam. The podcasts were sent to the City of Potsdam, which used them for tourism.

Mullins saw the cooperation of the students as a great way for them to get into the community and learn from each other.

The German Studies program brings together students and faculty with the common goal of exploring and celebrating cultural diversity. ♠
The College of Liberal Arts is the core of the University, and plays a vital role in the education of every UMD student. The College upholds UMD’s commitment to promoting excellence in teaching, research and public service by emphasizing the foundations of knowledge and the techniques of analysis and expression essential for lifelong learning. CLA provides its graduates with the skills to do the work they love.

All the programs mentioned in the CLARION - and hundreds more - can benefit from your support. Contact Adam Meyer for more information. A proud product of the Liberal Arts (Ph.D., English) Adam combines over a decade of undergraduate teaching with an equal amount of fundraising experience. His passion for the former led him to the later - empowering student dreams through increased financial support.