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BESS Newsletter

Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science
Publications and Other Works

10-5-2010

BESS 10/5/10

Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Sciences

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TOP STORIES:

Welcome to the latest BESS News.

Be sure to check out the current Funding & Fellowship Opportunities by using the links to the right!

[BESS Funding Opportunities](#)

[BESS Fellowship Opportunities](#)

Dr.Ludwig Joins BESS

Dr. Andrea Ludwig has joined the faculty of the Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science (BESS) at the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture.

Dr. Ludwig is an ecological engineer who will be working in the areas of stream restoration and watershed management. She will be conducting research into effective practices for decreasing non-point source pollution in the state's watersheds. "Water quality and quantity issues are relevant to everyone, whether they include ensuring clean drinking water and recreational areas, or the changing regulations in stormwater," said Dr. Ludwig.

Originally from Texas, she found an appreciation of the environment and outdoors at an early age. This led to undergraduate and master's coursework at the University of Arkansas, where she studied ecological engineering and her research included the effects of nutrient levels in streams on algae.

Dr. Ludwig completed her Ph.D. in Biological Systems Engineering at Virginia Tech before joining the faculty at the UT Institute of Agriculture. "I have greatly enjoyed my move to Tennessee and becoming a member of the BESS team," she said.

"She only been with us a short time, but is already making contacts and developing an Extension program in watershed management, said Dr. Eric Drumm, Professor and Department Head of BESS.

Despite her short time in Tennessee, Dr. Ludwig has been impressed with her new surroundings. "I have been fortunate to find a wealth of opportunity for research and outreach work in water resources and applications amongst a faculty committed to the future of clean and abundant water in the state of Tennessee, surrounding regions, and internationally," she said.

Be sure to check out the currently available:

[BESS Funding Opportunities](#) – Click here to view full details of the current funding opportunities.

[BESS Fellowship Opportunities](#) - Click here to view full details of the current funding opportunities.



Dr. Ludwig has a joint Extension/research appointment in her new position. She says she is looking forward to creating outreach programs to keep the population informed and ensuring a sustainable water future.

Written by: Doug Edlund

BESS research contracts for August 2010

Amy Johnson and Shawn Hawkins, TN Department of Environment and Conservation, \$6,086.00

Brian Leib, Cotton Inc., \$12,000.000

Philip Ye, Smithbucklin, \$106,510.00

BESS Students who received CASNR Scholarships

Engineering Students

Thomas Bone
Brianna Cooper
Mary Denman
Brett Denton
Christopher Drinnon
Erick Foster
Joseph Freeman
Gavin Henry
Ryan Hodges
Chanci King
Katherine Peay
Ronald Massingill
Matthew Sewell
Kayla Stone
Timothy Vaugh
Andrew Whisler
James White
Emily Wrinn

Soil & Environmental Science

Jonathan Allen
James Bickel
Andrew Carrier
Lauren Colby
Alexandria DeSantis
Bryan Dickey
Matthew Jones
Carrie Morgan
Joseph Owle
John Petty
Timothy Stanfield
Phillip Stephenson
Casey Sullivan
Jacob Watson

How to Avoid Being a Jerk in the Classroom

By Billie Hara

The full article can be found at http://chronicle.com/blogPost/How-to-Avoid-Being-a-Jerk-in/26427/?sid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en

Classes start this week for many universities and colleges across the country. We are materially ready: we have written syllabi and assignments, created lesson plans, written lectures or podcasts, and psyched ourselves up (or out) to start teaching again. We are ready for any potential student-produced shenanigans: we have read all the ProfHacker posts on the "disruptive student" (all six of them are available). And we have readied our technology for the term: Doodle or Tungle, iPad, or Blog as CMS. We are ready to start the academic year.

Or are we? Have we tweaked and modified our own professorial professionalism? Do we know which behaviors we exhibit that confound and anger students? **Do we know how to avoid being "Professor Jerk" in the classroom?** What constitutes professional behavior in a university or college classroom is, of course, dependent upon context: geographic location, professor's age or gender, the discipline, and the campus culture. And of course, there are exceptions to every rule, but we typically know jerky behavior when we see it. It's just that sometimes we don't see it in ourselves. To others, though, the jerky behavior is blatant. It's mean spirited. It's meant to demean students (in the examples that follow).

For fun, I conducted a very informal poll of my Facebook pals: "How do you avoid being a jerk in the classroom." Here are some responses plus a few more that are legendary "Professor Jerk" behaviors:

1. **Having a bad day?** Car didn't start this morning? You spilled your Starbucks on the way to work? Your spouse is divorcing you? Your dog died? Your life is not your students' problem. Don't be a jerk and take your frustrations out on them.
2. **Do you have course policies for your students (attendance, tardiness)?** Then abide by the same rules. Don't be a jerk and saunter into class at five minutes after the hour (when classes start on the hour) because, after all, "they will wait for you."
3. **Do you have a policy that you don't accept late work from students?** Don't ask students to do anything you can't do, then get mad at them for being unable to do what you asked. "The worst are professors who go nuts about due dates but who themselves are continually asking for extensions from editors and colleagues," via Doug Hesse.
4. **Do you have a Ph.D. (or other terminal degree)?** It probably got you the job you now hold, but it's not something to wield over innocent undergrads (or graduate students, for that matter). The Ph.D. means that you know things. OK, move along. Don't be an insufferable jerk and tell students that your degree allows you to treat them any way you wish.
5. **Remember when you were a student?** You haven't always had that Ph.D.; try to remember what it was like not to know something. (via Seth Kahn)

Continued....

6. **Do you have a rockin' personal life?** ("Member of the glitterati" is what your friends call you!) Then keep it to yourself. Sharing a little of our personal lives can be a good thing in the classroom. Over sharing, on the other hand, breeds resentment. Do students really need to know that you are late with your car payment, that you need a medical procedure (again), or that at the club last night you hooked-up with Ms./Mr. Right Now? Don't be a jerk.
7. **Do you use humor in your classes?** Great! (Check out this post [and comments] if you do, or think you do.) Don't let your students be the butt of your jokes. Ever. (via Annie Bullock)
8. **Do you ever make mistakes in your classes?** Admit it, apologize (especially if the mistake was aimed at students), and move on graciously. Don't be a jerk; learn to laugh at yourself. (via Risa Gorelick-Odom)
9. **Do you assign work for students to do outside of class?** Then return it in a reasonable amount of time. Students work hard (usually) and they want to know how they did. Don't be a jerk and make them wait weeks and weeks for feedback because you "just can't bear to read that crap," via Barbara L'Eplattenier.
10. **Do you say things like "I can't bear to read that crap" about student effort?** Maybe another line of work would suit you better? "Don't talk shit about your students outside of the classroom. That attitude is harder to switch off than some teachers seem to think. And the rest of us don't want to hear it anyhow," via Mike Garcia.

So, how do you avoid being a jerk in the classroom? It's really quite simple, and it's something we all learned in grade school: the golden rule, or the ethic of reciprocity. Remembering the four tenets of the ethic of reciprocity (kindness, compassion, understanding, and respect) go a long, long way in keeping us from exhibiting jerky behaviors. Treat students with kindness. Understand that they are often young and inexperienced in your discipline. Know that they will make mistakes and that's how they will learn. Remember what it was like when you were a student. Did your professors make you suffer through boorish behaviors? There's no reason to continue that tradition. Respect what the students bring to the classroom, as it's rich and interesting. Remember, they are looking to you to be the model of professional behavior. Or, to put it simply: students look to you to be the grownup.

What are some other jerky behaviors we want to avoid in the classroom? Clearly, there are more than the 10 ill-advised behaviors listed above. Please leave your suggestions of jerk-like behaviors from faculty in comments below. Additionally, let us know how we might avoid those potential problems.

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOPS – FALL TERM

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Success in sponsored research is a delicate matter of matching scholarly strength with practical skills in writing grant proposals and searching for funds. To assist our faculty in this increasingly important endeavor, the UTK Office Research offers grant writing workshops each semester. Topics scheduled for fall term include:

WRITING SUCCESSFUL GRANTS (Parts 1 & 2)

FINDING FUNDING

BUILDING THE NSF GRANT PROPOSAL

BUILDING THE NIH GRANT PROPOSAL

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN SPONSORED RESEARCH

CAREER DEVELOPMENT GRANTS FOR PRE- AND POSTDOCS

Each topic will be offered multiple times on different days of the week; all faculty and graduate students are encouraged to attend. For the complete schedule and registration information, go to:

<http://research.utk.edu/training/cal-gw.shtml#wsg1>

Customized Workshops: Our workshops can be tailored to specific issues and core research themes of particular academic disciplines or interdisciplinary research groups. Formats and scheduling can be adapted to your department's needs, and the workshop(s) can be held at a location convenient for you and your colleagues. For further information, contact Bob Porter, reporter@utk.edu, 974-3053.

Workshop Leader:

Robert Porter, Ph. D., has presented grant writing workshops at leading universities and medical schools nationally. Currently Director of Research Development at the University of Tennessee, Dr. Porter has thirty years' experience as a tenured professor, private consultant and research administrator. His proposals have won more than \$8 million in awards from government agencies and private foundations. He has presented papers and workshops on grant writing at national conferences and has published prize-winning articles in the Journal of Research Administration and the Research Management Review. Dr. Porter has previously taught at Virginia Tech, Swarthmore College, Susquehanna University and Eastern Washington University. He holds graduate degrees in Speech Communications from the University of Michigan.

Watershed Management Conference

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Registration is now open for the “TMDL 2010: Watershed Management to Improve Water Quality” specialty conference in Baltimore, November 14-17, 2010. A draft conference program and details about how to register for the TMDL 2010 conference and hotel accommodations can be found at www.asabe.org/meetings/TMDL2010. The conference is being held at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore on the Inner Harbor.

This is the fifth in a series of highly successful conferences sponsored by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) focusing on water quality, watershed management, and TMDLs.

To complement an excellent technical program which includes more than 5 dozen presentations, the conference will also feature a 3-hour boat tour of Baltimore’s Inner Harbor on Tuesday, November 16. This tour will highlight sites relevant to the conference theme and is included with the conference registration.

Two optional technical tours will be offered on Wednesday afternoon (November 17) – a tour of the OP3 Agricultural Research Service (ARS) research watershed near Beltsville Maryland, or a tour of the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute (a short walk from the conference hotel). A third option for Wednesday afternoon is a cultural tour of the National Aquarium (<http://www.aqua.org/>), also within walking distance of the conference hotel.

The conference officially begins on Monday (November 15) with three keynote addresses focused on the opportunities and challenges associated with developing the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Invited speakers include:

- James Edwards, Interim Head Chesapeake Bay Program
- Dr. Bob Summers, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Environment
- Dr. Leslie Shoemaker, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Tetra Tech

Once again, a draft conference program and details about how to register for the TMDL 2010 can be found at www.asabe.org/meetings/TMDL2010.

Student Information

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As you may know, the National Research Council of the National Academies sponsors a number of awards for graduate, postdoctoral and senior researchers at federal laboratories and affiliated institutions. These awards include generous stipends ranging from \$42,000 - \$75,000 per year for recent Ph.D. recipients, and higher for additional experience and graduate entry level stipends beginning at \$30,000 and higher for additional experience. The awards provide the opportunity for recipients to do independent research in some of the best-equipped and staffed laboratories in the U.S. Research opportunities are open to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and for some of the laboratories, foreign nationals.

We ask your assistance in informing students and faculty in your department of these opportunities by copying this message to each one.

Detailed program information, including instructions on how to apply online and a list of participating laboratories, is available on the NRC Research Associateship Programs Web site at:

www.national-academies.org/rap

Questions should be directed to the NRC at 202-334-2760 (phone) or rap@nas.edu.

There are four review cycles annually. The remaining deadline for 2010 is November 1. Deadlines for 2011 are:

February 1

May 1

August 1

November 1

Applicants should contact prospective Advisers at the lab(s) prior to the application deadline to discuss their research interests and funding opportunities.

Back by popular demand, the **Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center** is providing three faculty inquiry groups led by Fellows of the TENN TLC. Two we ran last year and they proved very popular so we're continuing to offer them. Everyone who participated said they received so many ideas from these groups that they could employ immediately. These two are

Acting Principles Applied to Teaching with Jed Diamond, UT Director of Acting, TENN TLC Faculty Fellow (Time and Place TBD)

Using Reflective Practice Techniques to Enhance your Teaching and Research with Dr. John Peters, Director of the Institute for Reflective Practice, TENN TLC Faculty Fellow (Time and Place TBD)

We are offering a newly revised faculty inquiry group as well:

Designing and Implementing a Meaningful Service Learning Experience For Your Students with Dr. Sherry Cable, TENN TLC Faculty Fellow (Time and Place TBD).

If you have interest in participating in a faculty inquiry group this semester, please RSVP to tenntlc@utk.edu or call 974.3807.

GRANTSMANSHIP WORKSHOPS

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GRANTSMANSHIP WORKSHOPS ANNOUNCEMENT

<http://www.cpe.vt.edu/usdagrant/index.html>

NIFA Competitive Grantsmanship Workshops and Writing Winning Grants Workshops

Grantsmanship workshops will be held again this winter to highlight the competitive programs in USDA-NIFA and to help grant writers improve their overall success. These workshops will be offered in Washington, DC on November 30 – December 1 (Session 1) or January 25-26, 2011 (Session 2).

During the NIFA Competitive Grantsmanship Workshop an excellent group of program directors will provide an overview of the competitive funding opportunities at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture; present tools and tips to write outstanding grant applications to NIFA; and to develop a better understanding of the level of coordination, planning and management needed to deliver high impact outcomes to US agriculture. A major focus of the workshops will be on developing large multidisciplinary and multi-institutional grants.

Travel grants will be available for participants from minority serving institutions, including 1890s, 1994s and other tribal colleges as well as Pacific Islander, Native Hawaii and Hispanic serving institutions. The travel grant application forms for each workshop session are available on the web site below. The application deadline is September 30 for the Session 1 and November 10 for Session 2.

Please visit the workshop website for information on registration, hotels, program agenda, and travel grant applications:

<http://www.cpe.vt.edu/usdagrant/index.html>

CUR - Posters on the Hill Application Announcement

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Nothing more effectively demonstrates the value of undergraduate research than the words and stories of the student participants themselves. In the Spring of 2011 the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) will host its 15th annual undergraduate poster session on Capitol Hill. This event will help members of Congress understand the importance of undergraduate research by talking directly with the students whom these programs impact.

CUR is calling for students of member institutions to submit an abstract of their research that represents any of CUR's disciplinary divisions (Arts and Humanities, Biology, Chemistry, Geosciences, Health Sciences, Mathematics/Computer Science, Physics/Astronomy, Psychology, and Social Sciences). In order to ensure proper review of applications, the above are the only disciplines that may apply. Should your research be inter-disciplinary, please select the division that most closely describes your research.

Abstract submissions will only be accepted by using our on-line submission form. Prior to submitting the form, students should gather the contact information for all co-authors, advisors and sponsors (if applicable), prepare a short vitae/resume, and poster abstract. A document listing the information required for submission can be found by visiting: <http://www.cur.org/pdf/poh%20application%20information.pdf>

For more information, and the link to submit an application, please visit: <http://www.cur.org/pohcall.html> Please note that CUR membership is required to submit an application. Either the student's home institution must have an institutional membership, or the faculty mentor or student must have an individual membership.

We will not review incomplete applications. Please be sure that both portions (the electronic application and the electronic recommendation letter) are submitted by November 15, 2010.

Please encourage your students to submit. This is a highly competitive program, which makes for a very exciting experience for the students and their faculty advisors alike.

For more information about the Posters on the Hill program, please visit <http://www.cur.org/postersession.html>