We have some good news, which is that our efforts as leaders in undergraduate education have not gone unnoticed: this August, US News & World Report ranked Pitt 19th among the top 50 public Universities. Four years ago Pitt was tied but for 39th place. What a stellar rise it has been! You and your families have helped establish Pitt as an educator for our leaders of tomorrow - thank you. As another mark of achievement, Arts and Sciences undergraduate students distinguished themselves this spring from over 14 million U.S. undergraduate students by winning prestigious national scholarships. Congratulations to these students and their proud families: Daniel Armanios, 2005 Truman Scholar; Marion Sikoira, 2005 Udall Scholar; and Justin Chalker and Anna Quider, 2005 Goldwater Scholars. We are so pleased for you!

Behind every good student are dedicated families, mentors, peers, and certainly teachers. This issue of Pitt Pride is devoted to teaching. Have you wondered what makes a University professor different from a high school teacher? One considerable difference is that a professor actively engages in research. Research serves important functions in helping us understand our past, advancing knowledge, and improving humanity. From Shakespeare to the Space Shuttle, liberal arts professors deal with all the great subjects of human wonderment. It is the professor who, through research, breaks new ground and invents new subjects such as nanoscience - new subjects to then be integrated into tomorrow's high school curriculum.

Ask any professor at a University and they will readily tell you about the close interaction between research and teaching. Most researchers find that they perform at their best by trying to explain difficult subject matters in a discourse with experts and their students. When teaching others new ideas, the many facets of new thoughts and findings come into clear focus, as do the new arguments that will defend groundbreaking and potentially unaccepted hypotheses. And, teaching a well known subject may also inspire faculty to pursue new lines of thinking as they confront the next generation of scholars. As our German Professor Beverly Harris-Schenz will tell you, teaching is fun - visit her and more of our outstanding professors at www.cas.pitt.edu/pitt/index.php, "Classic Clips."

We continue the theme of research and teaching in our new program entitled “First Experiences in Teaching.” By apprenticing with a professor, students will gain firsthand knowledge of how research translates into teaching and how teaching inspires new lines of inquiry. Another new program that we are launching is “Pitt Sciences.” We will be taking our A&S undergraduates and professors into Pittsburgh’s vibrant scientific and industrial communities this fall.

Best wishes for a successful Autumn.

Dr. Regina Schulte-Ladbeck, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, School of Arts and Sciences
THE NEW ADVISING CENTER

Over the summer, the Arts and Sciences Advising Center got a facelift. Stop by the Advising Center in 252 Thackeray Hall and see what’s new!

Classes for Undergraduates: They’re not just about taking notes anymore.

This fall, sixteen Arts and Sciences undergraduates will learn about the inner workings of teaching in First Experiences in Teaching. The goal of First Experiences in Teaching is to provide students with an understanding of the teaching mission as part of Arts and Sciences’ tri-fold mission of teaching, research and service, and to provide faculty mentorship for students. By learning how to teach, these students reinforce their own learning, achieve a greater understanding of the topic at hand and learn directly from an expert in a particular field.

Each student in First Experiences in Teaching will work with an Arts and Sciences faculty member for 5 or 10 hours per week on a teaching project related to a class that the faculty member is teaching, and one that the student has successfully completed. These juniors or seniors will earn academic credit for their class-related projects, such as developing pertinent class materials, facilitating a study group outside of class, helping with the Course Web site or assisting a class session. The student working with Professor Cecelia Green in the Department of Sociology, for example, will pre-screen films to identify specific information related to historical and conceptual background for topics in Sociology 1365, Race, Gender and Development. Another student working with Professor Jonathan Rubin in the Department of Mathematics will design computer laboratory exercises that illustrate applications of material for Math 0280, Introduction to Matrices and Linear Algebra.

As part of First Experiences in Teaching, participating students meet every other week as a group, where faculty members lead seminar topics such as how teaching varies across the disciplines and how pedagogical research impacts teaching. Students will also hear from a panel of teachers from elementary through university levels about how they chose to be in the teaching profession.

Educator Profile: American Sign Language Expert

Exceptional teachers go a step beyond mere instruction to change how students view the world. One such instructor is Alan Majocha. Mr. Majocha teaches American Sign Language (ASL) for the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. What makes him an exceptional teacher? Perhaps his personal stake in the subject - Mr. Majocha himself is hearing impaired, and one of his three children is also hearing impaired. According to one of his students, Mr. Majocha “cares more than anyone…. He combines enthusiasm, humor, technology, caring and intelligence.”

A graduate of the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf in Edgewood, Mr. Majocha earned an Associate degree in Electrical and Mechanical Technology from the National Technology Institution for the Deaf (Rochester, New York) and a Bachelor of Science in Communication Media from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. In his spare time, Mr. Majocha participates in activities sponsored by the Pittsburgh Association for the Deaf, a club in which he holds a membership, and actively works with the Parent and Staff Organization for the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. He enjoys camping, disc golf, playing flag football on a Pittsburgh Deaf Flag Football Club team, remodeling homes and general handiwork.
Freshman Lectures

Each fall, Arts and Sciences Freshman Programs organizes a series of free lectures that introduces freshmen to some of our engaging faculty in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. The goal of Freshman Lectures is to show our first year students firsthand the interests and research taking place across the Arts and Sciences, helping them to gain a greater understanding of the nature and function of the liberal arts.

For instance, Dr. Dennis Looney, from the Department of French and Italian Languages and Literatures, examines the use of medieval Christian poet Dante Alighieri’s *Inferno* in African American filmmaker Spencer Williams’s *Go Down, Death!* to illustrate the world of Black Americans before the 1950’s.

This fall, Freshman Lectures take place on Friday afternoons at 4:30. The scheduled lecture topics include:

- **Dr. Peter Machamer, History and Philosophy of Science**  
  *Freud on Women: Is His Theory Really So Bad?*  
  Frick Fine Arts Auditorium, September 30

- **Dr. Rose Mary Capo, Geology and Planetary Science**  
  *From Desert to Dirty Rivers: Adventures of a Field-based GeoChemist*  
  Clapp Hall L9 Auditorium, October 7

- **Dr. Dennis Looney, Italian Language and Literature**  
  *Freedom Readers: The African American Reception of Dante and the Divine Comedy*  
  Clapp Hall L9 Auditorium, October 28

- **Dr. Tony Bledsoe, Biological Sciences**  
  *Rarity in Birding and Biology: The “Trill” of the Unexpected*  
  David Lawrence Hall 120, November 11

New Minors

Arts and Sciences undergraduate students choose their major field of study generally at the end of their sophomore year at Pitt. Students may also choose a minor, consisting of 15 - 18 credits, that supplements their chosen major or simply allows them to investigate another area of interest. Arts and Sciences recently added two new minors to the list of over 20 minors from which to choose.

The new Arts and Sciences **Computer Science** minor allows students to more intensely explore computer programming, computer organization, structures and software. Arts and Sciences strongly advises students who do not have prior programming experience to take an Introduction to Computer Programming course to prepare for this minor. The courses required for this minor provide 16 credits toward graduation.

The new Arts and Sciences **Portuguese Language and Luso-Brazilian Culture** minor includes both language and culture courses, including the opportunity to study abroad in a Portuguese-speaking country. Portuguese language and Luso-Brazilian cultural courses taken while studying abroad can fulfill up to 6 of the 17 credits needed to complete this minor.

Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

In recognition of the outstanding efforts of our undergraduate instructors, each year we bestow the Tina and David Bellet Arts and Sciences Teaching Excellence Award to some of our outstanding teachers. The award, given by the Bellets, includes a grant to support the faculty member’s professional development in teaching. This year’s Bellet Award finalist was Dr. Carl Bodenschatz, Department of Statistics (left) and the Bellet Award recipients were Sharon F. McDermott, MFA (middle) and Dr. H. David Brumble, (right) both from the Department of English. To nominate an instructor for this prestigious award, students may send a letter to Associate Dean Regina Schulte-Ladbeck, 140 Thackeray Hall, no later than Thursday, December 1, 2005.
Free Study Skills Workshops

To help our students strengthen their academic skills, the Arts and Science Academic Resource Center (ARC) offers free Study Skills Workshops every semester. Students may call the ARC at (412) 648-7920 or stop by G-1 Gardner Steel Conference Center to register for the workshops that best fit their schedules.

### Time Management
- Tuesday, October 4 7:00 pm
- Friday, October 21 11:00 am

### Taking Notes
- Wednesday, October 12 6:00 pm
- Tuesday, October 25 11:00 am

### Reading Textbooks
- Wednesday, October 5 11:00 am
- Monday, October 24 4:00 pm

### Memory
- Thursday, October 13 noon
- Wednesday, October 26 6:00 pm

### Finals Prep
- Monday, November 28 1:00 pm
- Tuesday, November 29 1:00 pm
- Wednesday, November 30 5:00 pm
- Thursday, December 1 5:00 pm

Student Records

When we think of Student Records, we might think of a repository - a sort of vault or roomful of files, maybe with a desk and a phone. In fact, it is much more. Picture eight staff members working on any one of the following: meeting with a student about graduation, evaluating credits for transfer eligibility, or interfacing with an advisor about a particular student’s folder. Folders for each of our approximate 10,000 Arts and Sciences students are updated regularly with new academic status reports, notes from deans, or other materials that show a student’s progress while at the University.

Whether talking with a dean, student, faculty, or parent, the Student Records staff provide the information people need, and in doing so, upholds the integrity of the school’s policies and procedures regarding graduation, transfer credit, reinstatement, internal and external transfers, and the Dean’s Honors list. Students may also seek out Student Records to assist them with questions about general education requirements, withdrawing from courses or school, and grade options.

From the cookies right down to the bulletin board decorations, Student Records is a friendly bunch ready to assist students, each day. Says Sue Crain, Director of Student Records and recipient of the 2005 Chancellor’s Award for Staff Excellence: “What we enjoy most about this job is the people we serve. Undergraduates are a pleasure to deal with.”

Located in 140 Thackeray Hall, Student Records is: Sue Crain, Barbara Donahue, Andrea Fitzgerald, David Graham, James Kostra, Lisa Machi, Karen Madia, Jolene Broži, and our faithful student workers.

And then there were two...

When she took her first steps, you ran to find the camera. When she fell off her first bicycle, you kissed away the tears and doctored the skinned knees. The next thing you knew, a beautiful young woman stood before you in her prom gown; you considered locking her in her room. Just a few months ago, she and her friends tossed their hats into the air, tassels fluttering as the caps fell back to earth.

Now the time has come for the next step... letting her stretch her wings without you there to catch her if she stumbles or falls. Eventually, every parent faces the time when the kids are gone and they’re left without the pattering of feet, the shrieks of laughter, and the booming bass of so-called music rattling the windows. Fear not! Books offering advice on dealing with “empty nest syndrome” abound; below are a few titles recommended by our staff, with many more available at your public library or favorite bookstore. This list is by no means comprehensive, nor does it suggest that the items mentioned are endorsed by the University of Pittsburgh. Pitt’s resource page for parents is at www.pitt.edu/parents.html.

- When Your Kid Goes to College; A Parent’s Survival Guide, by Carol Barkin, ISBN 0380798409
- Don’t Tell Me What to Do, Just Send Money: The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years, by Helen E. Johnson, Christine Schelhas-Miller, ISBN 0312263740
Peer Tutor Andrew Dexter Plans to Become an Educator

I first heard about the Academic Resource Center (ARC) two and a half years ago during my sophomore year. I decided to investigate [a tutoring] position since I’ve always had an interest in aiding people with their academic struggles. It didn’t take long to attain the position of Student Academic Counselor/Tutor, and years later I can say that working at the ARC has been one of the best decisions that I have made.

I have had a great amount of fun helping students recognize the hidden patterns that lie underneath many of the concepts in mathematics and statistics, understand the relationships between the formulae of physics and real life, and be cognizant of the rigid rules that guide the development of logic. I have also enjoyed befriending other tutors. The fun I’ve had working here, though, doesn’t compare to the sense of accomplishment that I’ve felt after an effective tutoring session or after the completion of a semester-long standing appointment. I once ran into a student who I had helped with statistics, and she thanked me several times for helping her to pass “the dreaded math class.” After our chance meeting, I remember feeling highly accomplished and proud that I was able to help somebody. I imagine that this same sentiment would be echoed by others who work at the ARC, and this type of positive reinforcement has kept me working hard not only at the center, but also in my personal studies.

After graduating, I plan to pursue a Masters Degree in Mathematics Education with the hopes of becoming an inspirational high school math teacher, like the one I had in high school. I will be able to transfer the knowledge I have gained about tutoring and educating others into solid support for acceptance into a Masters program. Eventually it will help me become a more effective teacher.

Many people in our society look down upon teachers and believe that educating people is a simple task, but I believe that this mindset is incorrect. Teaching is a very difficult task that often needs to be done in different ways for different individuals. Working here, I have come to appreciate the subtle intricacies that separate good tutors from poor tutors and have gathered much appreciation for the education profession. All of this will certainly be a great aid in my future endeavors. If I had not decided to take this job two and a half years ago I definitely would not have such a clear and vibrant path for my future.

Summer Research Symposium

July 29, 2005 - At the Sixth Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium at Duquesne University, over 80 participants from the University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University and institutions such as John Hopkins University and Columbia University gathered to present findings from their summer research experiences. In addition to some 48 poster presentations by Pitt student-faculty teams, three Pitt students presented their findings as highlighted oral presentations during the symposium’s Plenary Session. Congratulations to these students for a great answer to the question, “What did you do on your summer vacation?”

Dates to Remember

October 21-23
Mark your calendars for Freshman Family Weekend! We look forward to seeing you and your family at the annual Arts and Sciences Family Reception, Friday, October 21 from 2 - 5 p.m. in the Academic Resource Center lounge in G-1 Gardner Steel Conference Center. The Arts and Sciences Family Reception provides an opportunity for you to enjoy refreshments with the Arts and Sciences Deans and Directors, get your questions answered firsthand and find out more about our programs and services. For more information and to RSVP, please write to Laura Dice at freshmen@pitt.edu. Look for your Pitt invitation in the mail.

October 27
Spring term Registration and Add/Drop begin; first two days reserved for seniors

October 28
Deadline for students to submit Monitored Withdrawal forms to the Dean’s office

November 23-27
Thanksgiving Recess for students (no classes)

December 9
Last day for undergraduate classes; Spring term deadline for continuing students to register without incurring a penalty fee

December 10-17
Evening classes will continue to meet; final examinations should be held during the last scheduled class meeting

December 12-17
Final Examination Period for undergraduate day classes

December 17
Fall term ends; Official date for degrees awarded in the Fall term; Arts and Sciences graduation ceremony for winter graduates

December 18
Residence halls close

Academic Calendar
www.pitt.edu/~registrar/cal0506AcdCal.htm

Parents of Freshmen:
Check with your child after November 7th to find out about their mid-term progress reports, which will be posted online for students through PeopleSoft self-service. A list of courses that receive midterm grades is at www.cas.pitt.edu.
Pitt Sciences: Opening the Sciences to Our Undergraduates

As part of being a premiere research university, Arts and Sciences recognizes the critical role that exposure to the sciences performs in encouraging students to pursue degrees in scientific fields such as Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Neuroscience, Psychology or Anthropology to name a few. Our new program, Pitt Sciences, strives to familiarize undergraduates with the latest developments in industry and research by exposing them to science through socio-educational programs and direct interaction with leading minds in science. By offering an engaging experience as part of students’ education, Pitt Sciences utilizes the University of Pittsburgh’s urban location and access to researchers, facilities and science-oriented organizations. The program aims to captivate students with hands-on experience and demonstrations, provides contact with experts and firsthand views of scientific issues of the day, and offers an opportunity for undergraduates to become more familiar with the faculty members who teach science-related courses. Pitt Sciences targets students interested in the sciences but is open to students who have not yet declared a major.

Highlights of Pitt Sciences for the 2005-2006 academic year include:

> A day-long trip to the Challenger Learning Center at Wheeling Jesuit University, where students participate in a simulated voyage to Mars, complete with crew training
> Visits to the Allegheny Observatory, where students tour the historic facility and view the stars
> A Friday night outing to the Carnegie Science Center, including access to the Buhl Planetarium, UPMC Sportsworks, and Rangos Omnimax Theater
> A hike at Beechwood Farms, home of the Western Pennsylvania Audubon Society, including a 4-hour guided tour focusing on ornithology with a special observation of birds of prey
> Three lectures sponsored by the Drue Heinz Lecture Series, featuring: Dava Sobel, renowned author and science journalist; Robert Sapolsky, Professor of Neuroscience at Stanford; and, Andrew Weil, MD, Director of the Program in Interactive Medicine, University of Arizona

For more information about Pitt Sciences, students can e-mail Jen Saffron, Arts and Sciences Assistant Dean and Director of Public Outreach at jsaffron@fcas.pitt.edu.