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Informational Report

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Students will be able to earn both a bachelor's degree and a law degree in six years through a new partnership announced today by Oakland University and Wayne State University Law School. Traditionally, earning a bachelor's degree followed by a law degree would total seven years. With this agreement, students will transfer 30 credits from courses at the law school back to Oakland to meet bachelor's degree requirements. "We are thrilled to work with Oakland University to offer their students this unique opportunity," said Wayne Law Dean Jocelyn Benson. "Being able to complete their undergraduate and legal education in a shorter timeframe will allow these students to get a jumpstart on their careers and begin making a difference as legal professionals even sooner."

The first anniversary of the opening of the WSU Schoolcraft Center was celebrated with an open house and an opportunity for students to meet with academic advisors and representatives from WSU Admissions. Schoolcraft is one of six extension centers managed by Educational Outreach, and enrollment at the center is up 37 percent this fall. WSU is a founding member of the Schoolcraft to U partnership and offers coursework in Business and Engineering Technology at the Jeffress Center building on 7 Mile at Haggerty in Livonia. Beginning in January, classes will be expanded to include Social Work.

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Faculty and administrators at the Wayne State School of Business have good reason to smile. At 855 students, the school's fall 2015 graduate enrollment is its highest since 2011 and a 41 percent increase over last year. This year's class includes 325 students enrolling for the first-time and the largest class of new graduate business students WSU has seen in over a decade. Dean Robert Forsythe attributes the turnaround to implementation of an accelerated 11-week/4-week course format, waiving the GMAT for qualified applicants and partnering with the WSU Graduate School and selected employers, such as GM and Lear Corporation, to provide matching tuition grants.

Wayne State School of Social Work researchers presented Michigan policymakers, youth advocates, religious leaders and educators with the results of a new study which suggests that the state's five-year old anti-bullying law may be ineffective. The study was based on a survey of more than 200 Michigan high school students. It reveals that 50% of respondents felt bullying is a problem in their schools and nearly three-quarters are aware of or have witnessed bullying at school. Moreover, roughly 60% said they feel the prevalence of bullying at their schools has not changed during the past 12 months.

FACULTY

While commuting to work in 2014, Wayne State Assistant Professor of Chemical Engineering and Material Sciences Da Deng heard news reports about the harmful algae bloom that poisoned Toledo's water system and left nearly 500,000 people without drinking water. During one of those drives, Deng daydreamed about turning the algae from trash into treasure. Since then, Deng has published research detailing his research team's work collecting algae directly from Lake Erie and baking it in a furnace with argon gas to turn it into a hard carbon, which can be used as an electrode to reversibly store sodium ions. Deng's hope is that cheap sodium ion batteries will one day replace the lithium ion batteries that power smartphones.

In 2015, the online referral business is booming. Companies like Yelp and Angie's List have created an entire industry based on people's desire to do their due diligence. As part of this trend, more people are turning to technology to even help make romantic decisions. Stephanie Tong, assistant professor of communication studies, has been studying the association between romantic dating and computer-mediated communication for more than a year. She and her team recently received a three-year grant from the National Science Foundation in September to continue her research. The \$851,462 grant is the largest in the Department of Communication's history.

STUDENTS

Degree Works is a new online advising tool that provides students a roadmap for academic success and timely graduation. "This changes the way we work with students. The academic plan is interactive," said Christopher Wolfs, assistant registrar for curricular services. "Everything is easier and, at the same time, more robust." Degree Works produces an easy-to-read academic evaluation to help students and advisors monitor progress. The software provides the university with a degree worksheet, academic plan and transfer equivalency self-service to assist students and advisors as they work toward graduation. Ultimately, students save time and money by providing a better understanding of degree requirements.

The popularity of Wayne State's annual Undergraduate Research Conference continues to grow. This November, 125 students presented their research and creative projects across all majors including the arts and humanities, sciences, social sciences, mathematics, and engineering. In 2013, 64 students presented, representing a 95% increase in only two years. The conference was moved from the McGregor Center to the newly renovated Student Center to accommodate additional participants. The Academy of Scholars judged both the oral and poster presentations, and provided awards during a luncheon ceremony at the end of the conference for student presenters, faculty mentors and guests.