



MERRIMACK COLLEGE



PROVOST BRIEFING

December 11, 2017

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Here are some of this week's top stories and a look ahead.

- The CETL Awards Two Faculty Fellowships
- Academic Calendar Reminder
- Gaudete Rejoice, December 18
- Celebrate the Christmas Season, December 21
- Blackboard Course Creation and Student Enrollment
- Merrimack Bookstore Christmas Discount
- Invitation to Recommend Students to the Honors Program
- Exhibitions in their Final Days
- Reading Days, December 12-13
- Open Office Hours with the Provost, every Wednesday
- Final Exams, December 14-19
- Mturk Workshop, January 12, 2018

The CETL Awards Two Faculty Fellowships

Dr. Sadegh Asgari, Assistant Professor, Civil Engineering and Dr. Brandy Benedict,

Associate Professor, Mathematics have been awarded Faculty Fellowships in the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Dr. Asgari's project, "Engineering Education through Innovative Computer-Mediated Learning Technologies" centers on exploring the pedagogical benefits and limitations of using technologies, specifically Building Information Models (BIM), to deliver course materials in a more interactive, collaborative, and experiential manner.

Advancing teaching and learning in a fully electronic classroom, Dr. Benedict's research project, "Beyond Paper and Pencil: Electronic Assessments for iPad Use," aims to design and implement electronic testing to ensure accessibility and provide multiple types of electronic assessment in order benefit more students.

Faculty Fellows are central to the CETL's mission to engage faculty in developing innovative and research-based pedagogies that enhance student learning and support academic success. **Please join the Office of the Provost and the CETL in congratulating Dr. Asgari and Dr. Benedict on their award.**

Academic Calendar Reminder: *Presidents' Day Federal Holiday*

The Calendar Advisory Committee, together with the Office of the Provost, would like to remind all faculty about a difference in the current academic calendar from those in prior years: **there is now a single, unified academic calendar for all undergraduate and graduate programs.**

Specifically, for Spring 2018, this means that all programs (undergraduate and graduate) will follow a Monday class schedule on Tuesday, February 20. As in Fall 2017, this calendar will also include a two-day weekday reading period as part of the instructional semester to serve as a bridge between the end of classes and the start of exams.

Due to the observance of holidays (often on Mondays), adjustments are necessary in order to ensure an even distribution of class weekdays (M-T-W-R-F) throughout the semester. If these adjustments are not performed, classes meeting on certain weekdays would have an insufficient number of meetings throughout the semester, potentially leading to issues with federal credit-hour and accreditation (NEASC) requirements. Typically, these adjustments are performed by substituting Merrimack's Monday class schedule on a Tuesday (usually Columbus Day in the fall and Presidents' Day in the spring).

Faculty teaching Monday courses in the spring are encouraged to clearly note in their syllabi that due to the *Presidents' Day Federal Holiday* class will be held on Tuesday, February 20, on a Monday schedule and at their discretion may be flexible regarding attendance for those with unavoidable conflicts due to the switch in class dates for that week.

Gaudete Rejoice

Monday, December 18

4:30 PM

St. Ambrose Friary, 196 Elm Street

The Augustinian community of the St. Ambrose Friary once again extends an invitation to all faculty and staff of Merrimack College to the annual Gaudete Party.

Donations (cash or checks only) will be collected in support of the Holiday Gift Card Drive. All proceeds to be given to at-risk teenagers through the Key Program.

Please RSVP by December 16 to Augustinians@merrimack.edu

Celebrate the Christmas Season

Join us for the Annual Merrimack College Employee Celebration and Mass
Thursday, December 21, 2017

12:30 PM Mass

Our Mother of Good Council Chapel, Austin Hall

1:30 PM Employee Christmas Celebration

Sparky's Place, Sakowich Campus Center

Blackboard Course Creation and Student Enrollment

As the fall semester winds down, the CETL and the Academic Technology Team would like to make you aware of some important Blackboard dates for the Winter Session and Spring Semester. If you have any questions or concerns please send an email to Karen Slaton (slatonk@merrimack.edu).

Winter Session:

DECEMBER 5 - Course shells were created and are available for editing. Contact Janet Syed (syedj@merrimack.edu) for assistance with setting up your course.

DECEMBER 19 - Student enrollments will begin feeding to Blackboard course shells.

Spring Semester:

DECEMBER 18TH - Full semester (R3) courses and courses that run in the first half of the semester (R1) will be created and made available for editing. *We are rolling these out a week earlier than usual to give faculty the opportunity to begin working on them before leaving for break.* Contact Janet Syed (syedj@merrimack.edu) for assistance with setting up your course.

JANUARY 8 - Student Enrollments will begin feeding to R1 and R3 Blackboard course shells.

FEBRUARY 19 - Courses that run the second half of the spring semester (R2) will be created.

MARCH 4 - Student enrollments will begin feeding to R2 Blackboard course shells.

Merrimack Bookstore Christmas Discount

The Merrimack College Bookstore will have a special Christmas discount for all Merrimack faculty and staff. Thursday, December 14 through Monday, December 18, the faculty and staff discount will be increased to 20% off.

Please have your Merrimack ID ready when making purchases.

Invitation to Recommend Students to the Honors Program

The Merrimack Honors Program is seeking nominations of current first-year students who would be a great fit for Merrimack Honors. Faculty are asked to nominate students who excel in the classroom and would benefit from, and contribute to, the growing Honors community. To nominate a student, please simply send the student's name to honors@merrimack.edu by **January 10th, 2018**. We'll do the rest!

Exhibitions in their Final Days

K. Min: From Here to There

This is the last month to view the artwork of K. Min. This McCoy gallery exhibit will be closing on Dec. 22nd. Don't miss out! Gallery exhibits are free and open to the public.

Three Faiths: The Jewish Tradition

Featuring the quilts of Iris Sonnenshein, this exhibit will be closing Dec. 22nd. See the beautiful works of art before they return to the congregation of Havurat Shalom. Gallery exhibits are free and open to the public.

Other Events this Week

December 12th-13th

Reading Days

A reminder that the instructional period of the semester consists of class meetings, followed by reading days, followed by final examinations. The reading period serves as a bridge between the end of classes and the beginning of final exams, allowing for active engagement between students and instructors for reviews, feedback, and consultation. Reading days may not be used to give examinations.

December 13th

Open Office Hours with the Provost

8:30 - 10:00 AM

Provost's Suite, Austin Hall

The Provost will have open office hours for faculty to drop in every Wednesday from 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM. Whether you have a specific topic or just want to say "hello," all faculty are welcome to visit.

December 14th - 19th

Final Exams

Future Events

Mturk Workshop

January 12, 2018

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Psychology Group Testing Room, Ground Floor of O'Reilly

The Psychology Department invites you to attend a workshop on the process of collecting data through mturk. You can learn more about mturk here: <https://www.mturk.com/mturk/welcome>. Mturk can be combined with Qualtrics (to which the College already subscribes) to collect data from a diverse pool of participants (both nationally and internationally). Please see the following link for a description of that process: <https://blog.mturk.com/tutorial-getting-great-survey-results-from-mturk-and-qualtrics-f5366f0bd880>. Adam Berinsky will conduct this workshop and cover the following topics:

1. The logistics of setting up data collection with Mturk
2. Who the participants are in these studies and how they are reimbursed
3. The ethics of using Mturk to collect data

4. Best practices in survey design and collection
5. Collecting panel data
6. Running experiments with incentives

Workshop participants will leave with an understanding of how to set up mturk data collection in an ethical manner as well as an understanding of the pros and cons to this way of collecting data. Members of Merrimack's IRB will also be in attendance.

If you are interested, please sign up here: <https://goo.gl/forms/vgoEW4P2xOjicG3D2>. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Christina Hardway at hardwayc@merrimack.edu. Readings will be disseminated prior to the workshop.

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