Factors that influence the decision of a student to withdraw from school

As a student, you have the right to withdraw from school at any time during the semester. This decision may be made for various reasons, including personal or academic challenges. Withdrawal is a process that involves several steps and has specific procedures to follow. Understanding the factors that influence this decision can help you make an informed choice.

1. Personal Factors
   - Mental health concerns
   - Family issues
   - Relationship difficulties
   - Work or financial problems

2. Academic Factors
   - Difficulty understanding course material
   - Poor performance in exams or assignments
   - Feelings of frustration or anxiety
   - Lack of motivation

3. Social Factors
   - Feeling isolated or disconnected from classmates or instructors
   - Difficulty managing time and commitments
   - Feeling overwhelmed by social pressures

4. External Factors
   - Changes in living arrangements
   - Unexpected legal issues
   - Health emergencies

Understanding these factors can help you consider the implications of withdrawal and explore options that might help you continue your academic journey. If you are considering withdrawal, it is important to consult with your academic advisor and seek support from other resources on campus.
Tips to help stay safe after clocks roll back

With the time change this past weekend, it will get dark earlier in the evening. Thus, it is even more important to be aware of your surroundings.

2. Walk in well-lit areas. Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible. Don’t walk in alleys or other isolated locations.
3. Be alert. Always be aware of what is going on around you. Don’t wear headphones. Don’t engage in conversations with people you don’t know.
4. Trust your instincts. If something feels unsafe, it probably is. Move to a safe spot immediately and call for help.
5. If a thief confronts you, give them what they want. Don’t chase them. Report it to the police.

Always be aware of what is going on around you. Make sure you are in well-lit areas and stay with someone. If confronted by a thief, give them what they want and report it to the police.

Antarctica
More is known about Mars than this region from Page 1

surveys are targeted at understanding the origin of these dramatic mountains to provide crucial insights into ice sheet and climate models. The international team will address four fundamental questions: the role of topography in the formation of ice sheets; the formation of major high points from ice sheet contents, far away from the plate boundaries that cause these mountains; the geologic processes that control the formation of new discovered lakes beneath the ice sheet; and the location of the oldest ice record in the Antarctic ice sheet.

"There is more known about Mars than this part of our Earth," Wiens said. "The formation of the mountain ranges is particularly intriguing. Some process in the Earth must have caused these mountains to rise. The mountains were then the locus of the first continental ice sheet when the Earth was only 200 million years old."

Wiens said that plans equipped with ski wheels will use radar to see through the ice and map the topography of the mountains. "Right now, we do not even know if the high points are really there," Wiens said. "Seismic waves fired from the coast and around the world will allow us to see below the ice into the crust and the mantle. Because we can't find rock samples, we have to use seismic waves and radar."

The group will be approximately 100 miles from the South Pole in a newly constructed camp called AGAP South. Unlike the Arctic, where several nations, including Russia, are vying to control shipping and mineral rights, the Antarctic is not a contentious part of the world.

"The Antarctic shouldn't be a contested region as long as the Antarctic Treaty gets keeping renewed," Wiens said. "There are changes in the Chukotka region of Antarctica, but the United States has never had anyone recognize those that are out there. The treaty was signed in 1961, which stated that it should be free and open for scientific research. It's ironic that the treaty studies for the peak of the Cold War has been the basis for peace in this part of the world for decades."

Wiens and his colleagues will return to Antarctica at the end of 2009 to pick up the seismographs and begin analyzing data through 2011. "They hope to leave a few of the seismographs behind to form the basis of a permanent environmental observation network.

Gene
Approach can be used to treat other cancers — from Page 1

lung adenocarcinoma might include compounds that affect this pathway. One such group of compounds, the MEK inhibitors, has produced promising results in mouse models of lung cancer.

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Three voices examine Wounded Knee

In honor of Native Heritage Month, the Kathryn M. Buder Center for Academic and Applied Ethics at Washington University in St. Louis presents a performance in November. "Three Voices: Speaking From Wounded Knee" is a performance that describes the events leading up to the massacre at Wounded Knee from three different perspectives. Performances are at 6 p.m. Nov. 14 and 15 in the Village Ballroom. For more information, call 935-5304 or visit www.wustl.edu/whistle.

The "Three Voices" are Geraldine Goes in Center, Linda Kennedy and Lilib Penga, who examine the hopes, fears, beliefs and values of their Dakota, Euro-American and African American foremothers. The performance portrays three conflicting views of Wounded Knee. The characters begin to change during the performance as they interact with others through events and scenes throughout the 1890 period. Following the performance, the performers will be on hand to discuss healing and reconciliation, and answer questions from the audience.

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**Deprived of sense of smell, worms live longer**

**By Beth Miller**

*Chubfoot, one of the most common fourth defects, has long been thought to have a genetic component.* Now, School of Medicine researchers have found the first gene linked to chubfoot in humans.

Their research will be published in the Nov. 7 issue of the *American Journal of Human Genetics.*

By studying a multigeneration family with chubfoot, the scientists traced the condition to a mutation in a gene critical for early development of lower limbs called *PTX3.* While other researchers have found a region on chromosome 5 associated with chubfoot, this is the first time scientists have confirmed this association.

"To our knowledge, this is the first evidence for PTX3 mutation in human chubfoot disease," said Gurnett, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor of neurology, neurosurgery and orthopedic surgery and first author of the study. "This result provides confirmation of the presumed heritability of chubfoot, and also identifies a gene that, when mutated, produces this condition.

Dobbs, senior author of the study, said the finding is a step in developing a better understanding of the genetic factors involved in chubfoot, which affects about 1 in 2,156 newborns.

"Although chubfoot is a complex disorder, meaning that more than one gene well as environmental factors will be discovered to play a role in its etiology," Dobbs said. "Identifying the genes for chubfoot will allow for improved genetic counseling and may potentially lead to new and improved treatment and preventive strategies for this disease."

About 80 percent of chubfoot cases are sporadic, meaning the cause is unknown and the patient has no other birth defects. A familial link plays a role in about 25 percent of cases.

Gurnett said some clinical characteristics of the family members with the PTX3 mutation suggest that the genetic defect may be linked to lifelong chubfoot. First, the majority of the affected family members were males and affected individuals had more severe limb deformities.

Second, there were five females who carried the gene but did not have chubfoot, which supports the idea that the gene may be dominant in females. Third, Dobbs said the study confirms that mothers cannot transmit the disease to their children.

"It's our job to prove that this is going to be important for many kids with chubfoot," Gurnett said. "Until now, we didn't know whether chubfoot was a muscle, nerve, spinal cord or brain defect, but now, we have an idea that chubfoot may result from mutations of genes that are involved in early limb development."

**Morgan's Paralympic experience won't soon be forgotten**

**By Judy Martin**

Kerri Morgan's road to the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing, China, with the U.S. Track and Field team began when she was training for her first love — quad rugby. Morgan is one of a handful of American athletes who played the sport, which involves wheelchairs bungee jumping into one another.

While trying to improve her rugby game, Morgan, an instructor in occupational therapy, was introduced to paralympic track. Her first attempt was a 100-meter dash, in which she placed first among the 16 American women with a time of 40:82.

Later, Morgan was the first American quad rugby player to compete in a Paralympic Games. In 2008, she arrived back on U.S. soil. She was invited to a welcome home party for Morgan in the Program in Occupational Therapy.

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"My anything live longer when raised on low-calorie diets. Now School of Medicine researchers report they have identified compounds that delay aging and may potentially lead to new and improved treatment and preventive strategies for this disease."

Through the genome-wide association study, Gurnett and Dobbs visited the family members affected. First, they found a region on chromosome 5 associated with chubfoot, which was more severe in the right foot in three of them. Five others had lower limb abnormalities including flattened, underdeveloped patellas and hip dysplasia.

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Jazz at Holmes series continues with world-renowned musicians

By LAEM OTTEN

WASHINGTON University's Jazz at Holmes series will present two internationally known musicians in free concerts at 8 p.m. Nov. 6 and 14.

This Thursday, Nov. 6, Austrian pianist Elisabeth Harnick will perform in Holmes Lounge in Riddell Hall.

Harnick has appeared at major festivals and universities around the world and has a substantial discography. He is known for his improvisational skills and his ability to connect with audiences.

On Nov. 14, jazz at Holmes will welcome legendary New York saxophonist David Liebman and the David Liebman Quartet.

Liebman, born in Brooklyn, played with Miles Davis in the 1970s. He has collaborated with many other musicians including Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock.

Assembly Series tackles cultural history of Wailoo on race and disease in America

By MARY KASTENS

Wailoo, a world-renowned scholar and historian, will present his research on the history of race and disease in America at the University of Missouri.

On Monday, Nov. 11, Wailoo will speak on the origins of racial pathology and the construction of race in medical research.

On Tuesday, Nov. 12, Wailoo will discuss the impacts of slavery on the development of medical racism.

Exhibits

"Weekend at the Clothes Craft Art, Design and Culture at Missouri S&T"

Maitland Park, Missouri S&T, 935-4502

"Ch predsing. Games. "- Tony Frieden

"Designs of John Eul -" Through Nov. 22

Wednesday, Nov. 11

"Natural and Artificial Adventures"

Tuesday, Nov. 18

"The Lost and Found City of New York"

Tuesday, Nov. 25

Silences of the Palace • British Debate Team • K-12 Robotics

Film

Tuesday, Nov. 11

7 p.m. - Greenman Film Series. "NASA"

Talitha King, 935-4502

Wednesday, Nov. 12

7 p.m. - Jaycees Film Series. "Lust, Caution"

Thursday, Nov. 13

7 p.m. - Jaycees Film Series. "Lost and Found City of New York"

Thursday, Nov. 20

7 p.m. - Student Film Series. "Krishna"

Thursday, Nov. 27

8 p.m. - Student Film Series. "Solitary"

Thursday, Nov. 27

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Theatre

Thursday, Nov. 6


Thursday, Nov. 13

3 p.m. - Fall Ensemble. "The Lost City of New York"

"Emerging Women in the Arts: A New Era of Women's" by Catherine M. Shaffer. The event will be held in Wainwright Hall and is free to the public.

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Faculty recital to be held along with state music competitions

Eight faculty members from the departments of Music, Arts & Sciences will present a recital in conjunction with the Missouri Music Teachers Association (MMTA) annual instrument and vocal competitive auditions.

The program—which begins at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 5, in the 560 Music Center—will feature pianist Svetlana Stoyanova, assisted by pianist Constantinos Haloumis; violinists Julia Rasmussen and Anna Cornwall; trumpeters Michael Carnahan and William Lenihan, director of jazz performance; and cellist Elizabeth Macdonald, director of chamber music.

More than 600 students, ranging in age from kindergarten through college, will compete within their respective grade levels for top honors in piano, voice, all instruments and chamber ensembles.

Winners from the Missouri competition will proceed to the Western Music Teachers Association Competition Nov. 2 in Cedarville, Ohio.

It marked the fourth straight 2-1 victory for the Bears in conference play, and WUSTL also clinched an automated berth in the 2008 NCAA College Women's Basketball Tournament.

The No. 8 women's soccer team, which will travel to a networking dinner with representatives from regional agencies attending the Gephardt Institute, is part of the national Making the Difference campaign through college, will compete in the NCAA Division III women's soccer championship with a dramatic victory over Carnegie Mellon University Nov. 2 in Atlanta at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, hosted by the University of Chicago at 11 a.m.

The Bears will finish their regular season with a 22-6 overall record. Three student-athletes were named to the all-tournament team: junior midfielder Elin Albers, freshman midfielder Kari Kirkpatrick and junior midfielder Nikki Mirkovic.

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Magnet for excellence Camilla and Steven Brauer (from left) receive a special gift from Salvatore P. Sutera, Ph.D., dean of the School of Engineering & Applied Science, and Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton to commemorate the Oct. 29 groundbreaking of the Stephen F. and Camilla T. Brauer Hall. When Brauer Hall is completed in 2010, the 150,875-square-foot facility—which will connect to Union A. Whitney Hall on all three levels of its east facade—will be home to the engineering school’s Department of Energy, Environmental & Chemical Engineering, provide space for the International Center for Advanced Renewable Energy & Sustainability and share facilities with the Department of Biomedical Engineering. “Brauer Hall will be a magnet that will enable us to recruit and retain the very best faculty and students and also allow us to collaborate not only across disciplines but also across the world through the state-of-the-art distance-learning facility that it will house,” said Sutera during the groundbreaking ceremony.

Alumni

Representing outstanding commitment to WUSTL— from Page 6

(And another two years as an official trustee); a member of the William Loewentheil Eliot Executive Committee, serving as the National Patrons chair; and president of the Eliot Society.

Brown has been especially supportive of the School of Law. He is a founder of its National Council; co-chaired the Building Through Strength campaign to build Anheuser-Busch Hall; and on many of its committees, Brown is also a member of the San Diego Regional Cabinet.

Brown’s generosity of spirit and dedication are evident to anyone who knew him as a student. Before earning a degree in political science in Arts & Sciences in 1957, he was active in the Interfraternity Council, Thurtene Honorary and Omicron Delta Kappa honorary society.

He earned a juris doctorate from the School of Law in 1961, at which time he began a legal career in private practice. Brown was president and chief executive officer of ITT Commercial Finance company in 1995. He held the same positions for the bank’s financial services business until early this year.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in English in 1971. He then earned a master’s degree in Administration of Harvard University.

That same year, he began another long relationship, this time with Angela Corbi, the largest restaurant group in the United States. As a public relations executive, he served as executive vice president, then president and chief executive officer, and finally chairman.

With Loevenheil at the helm, Angelica was successful building and developing mixed-income residential housing in the New York City metropolitan area. Its 150-employee company has completed more than $2 billion in construction and development in more than 8,000 residential units, of which more than half have been constructed.

This dedication to investing in communities includes sponsoring scholarships for at-risk youth; this has led him to consider ways to involve his alma mater.

In 2007, he hosted a scholar- ship seminar in Harlem, where a group of high school principals, college advisors and New York City community leaders met with a continuing finance of the New York City Housing Authority. This led to the creation of the Loevenheil Scholarship, which has led to the creation of the Loevenheil Scholarship.

This benefit of WUSTL and the other WUSTL renovations and renovation efforts, make it possible for the many of its new building and renovation designs, most notably from the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Her work has received recognition, with a number of AIA Design awards, several AIA Honored Service Awards and the AIA Silver Medal in Architecture.

As a former professor and dean of the School of Architecture in the 1960s and 1970s, she has been a leader in many significant projects and initiatives. Her work has also been widely recognized with a number of prestigious awards and honors, including the AIA Silver Medal in Architecture.

For more information on the University Center, contact Tracy Trammel, director of application development. WUSTL Connect, a website that allows students and alumni to create a WUSTL account on the University Center. It provides better access to University resources and information.

Prior to that, she was a new Alumnae Award recipient from the Chicago Women in Architecture. She was also named a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects earlier this year.

At the same time, she was a member of the national AIA Women in Architecture Council and as vice president of the national AIA Women in Architecture Board.

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At the same time, she was a member of the national AIA Women in Architecture Council and as vice president of the national AIA Women in Architecture Board. The first female dean of the University School of Architecture, she also is a founder and member of Chicago Women in Architecture, chair of AIA Chicago and AIA Illinois, and a fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

During her tenure as dean, she initiated new programs that enhanced the university’s international studies, introduced new technology into the classroom and created new design courses.

In addition, she contributed to a number of committees, among them the Sam Fox Arts Center Executive Committee, the Campus Planning Committee and the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

WUSTL Connect debuts

By Jessica Daues

The office of Information Technology and Technology, in collaboration with the technology organization of each school and the offices of Student Records and Human Resources, launched WUSTL Connect last week.

WUSTL Connect is a University-wide login system that will allow WUSTL community members to use one user name and password to access many WUSTL Web applications. Previously, separate user names and passwords were required for each system.

WUSTL Connect is being launched in three phases: The first, which begins next week, primarily affects student Web applications. In late November, many administrative applications such as Research Gateway, HMRS and FIS will be accessible using WUSTL Connect. Early in 2009, library applications on the Danforth Campus and wireless networking services will be accessible using WUSTL Connect.

The benefit of WUSTL Connect is that it will allow the WUSTL community to have fewer user names and passwords to remember, and they will only have to log in once to access different applications. "With WUSTL Connect, faculty and staff at WUSTL will only have one user name and password, as will students," said Trammel, director of application development.

"With WUSTL Connect, faculty and staff will be able to select a user name and password combination, which will then have until the end of the calendar year to create a WUSTL account on the University Center. It provides better access to University resources and information.

Prior to that, she was a new Alumnae Award recipient from the Chicago Women in Architecture. She was also named a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects earlier this year.

At the same time, she was a member of the national AIA Women in Architecture Council and as vice president of the national AIA Women in Architecture Board. The first female dean of the University School of Architecture, she also is a founder and member of Chicago Women in Architecture, chair of AIA Chicago and AIA Illinois, and a fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

During her tenure as dean, she initiated new programs that enhanced the university’s international studies, introduced new technology into the classroom and created new design courses.

In addition, she contributed to a number of committees, among them the Sam Fox Arts Center Executive Committee, the Campus Planning Committee and the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

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Introducing new faculty members

The following are among the new faculty members at the University. Others will be introduced periodically in this space.

Bruce Carlson, Ph.D., joins the Department of Biology in Arts & Sciences as associate professor. He has earned bachelor's degrees in biology and marine sciences from the University of Miami and a doctorate in neurobiology and behavior from Cornell University. Carlson's research combines electrophysiology, neuroanatomy, computational modeling and behavioral analysis to study information processing by sensory systems. His work uses the electroencephalograms (EEG) of electric fish and African cichlids to monitor and quantify the characteristics of natural behavior.

Julia Driver, Ph.D., joins the Department of Sociology in Arts & Sciences as professor. Driver had been on the faculty of Dartmouth College since 1999, serving a department chair from 2002-04. Driver earned a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University in 1991. She specializes in ethics with particular interest in norms that shape and constrain ethical theory and moral psychology; and she is the author of "Moral Philosophy: Understanding Right and Wrong" (Cambridge 2003) and "Ethics: The Philosophy of Right and Wrong" (Cambridge 2006). She was editor of The Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy for the Innovus Group in 2004 and the Lawrence S. Rockefeller Fellowship at Princeton University's Center for Human Values in 1992.

**International expedition**

Gregory P. Magarian, J.D., professor of law, speaks to a group of 20 journalists from around the world Oct. 29 in Single Hall. The journalists were visiting Washington University as part of the U.S. Department of State Foreign Press Center's 2008 Midwest Election Tour. As the first presenter on the tour, Magarian gave an overview of the 2008 presidential campaign and discussed specific election issues, such as voting rights and voter fraud. "It was an experience I will never forget," Magarian said of meeting the foreign journalists. "To see that level of interest from every corner of the Earth was spectacular, and I am proud to have been a part of the tour."

Kieff named senior fellow at Hoover Institution

Scott Kieff, J.D., professor of law, has been named a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace. He joins an esteemed group of 25 faculty members and researchers who have been appointed senior fellows since the Hoover Institution was established in 1992.

Scott's appointment at the Hoover Institution recognizes his groundbreaking work at the intersection of legal, technological and humanitarian dimensions of the law. Kieff is known for his expertise in patent law and his research on the intersection of intellectual property and human rights. He has published extensively on these topics, including in The Journal of Law, Technology, and his forthcoming book "Intellectual Property and Human Rights: An Unlikely Alliance." Kieff's work has also been recognized with several awards for his contributions to the field of intellectual property law.

Kieff joined the Hoover Institution in 2001 after serving as a trial attorney in the Civil Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. He was appointed a senior fellow in 2005, and his appointment comes as he completes his term as a tenured professor at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law.

Kieff is a member of the American Bar Association and the American Society of International Law. He is a member of the American Law Institute and the National Academy of Sciences. He served on the board of directors of the Stanford University Press and is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Law, Technology, and Policy.

Kieff received his B.A. from Harvard University in 1984 and his J.D. from the University of Chicago in 1987. He also holds a master's degree in economics from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Ph.D. in law and economics from the New York University School of Law.

**Obituaries**

Janet Lee Rensing, longtime secretary in political science, 60

By Jessica Daues

Janet Lee Rensing, secretary in the Department of Political Science in Arts & Sciences for the past 20 years, died Oct. 14. She was 85.

Rensing worked as a salesperson at record.wustl.edu

**Residential life staff recognized for its work**

By Neil Schoenberr

The Missouri College Personnel Association recognized 14 members of the University's Community Engagement Model during its annual conference this fall. Among the honorees was Loretta S. Lempfert, who was given the 2008 Professional Award, while the Community Engagement Model won the Innovative Program of the Year award.

"I'm honored to receive this award," Lempfert said. "I am honored to be among the amazing individuals who have..."
understanding people

randy j. larsen

randy j. larsen, ph.d., chair of the department of psychology in arts & sciences, meets with third-year psychology doctoral student tim bono. bono credits larsen as a central force in his education. "not only is he one of the world's most brilliant minds in psychology, but he is also one of the most down-to-earth, supportive and relatable people i have ever met," bono says. "he is truly one of washington university's gems."

larsen studies the many aspects of the human personality

friends and development

"what do we know about how people find meaning and satisfaction in their work or emotion and personality?"

"what does psychology know about love and the challenges to developing loving relationships? these are the kinds of questions around which we designed the course."

larsen has spent much of his career exploring similar questions. a professor since 1986 and chair of psychology since 2004, larsen is an international reputation for his work on emotion and personality.

his research on human emotions — primarily in terms of differences between men and women — has yielded new understanding on such matters as jealousy, attraction, happiness and strategies for the self-regulation of happiness. he is currently interested in mood regulation and what people can do to get themselves out of unpleasant moods.

sparkling emotions

larsen has seen his share of unpleasant moods. he worked his way through college at loras by driving a bycar for a local funeral home. he graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology in 1976 and then spent a year working in a chicago residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed adolescents who were wards of the state.

after earning a master's degree in clinical psychology from duquesne university, he worked for a program that provided crisis intervention assistance to police officers responding to calls on several suburbs around pittsburgh.

larsen then pursued doctoral studies at the university of illinois at urbana-champaign, planning initially to specialize in social ecology. by chance, he began working with ed diener, ph.d., a prominent social psychologist, who shifted his interests to the study of personal well-being.

diener has taken a yearlong sabbatical to the virgin islands and came back culturally reinvigorated, with an interest in the way emotions make people happy. diener began a series of landmark studies on happiness, or, as it's known in the profession, "subjective well-being." larsen was happy to tag along on this adventure, and diener developed his own reputation as a promising young researcher on human emotions.

last year, larsen received a large national institute on aging grant for a five-year study of emotions in the elderly, which offers a nice connection between his interests and the strong 50-year emphasis on aging research within the psychology department and across the university.

larsen's research on emotions interact with cognition to change the way we think. his research has shown that emotions affect our memory, such as threats and fear, tend to capture our attention and hold longer than other stimuli, which makes sense, he says, in terms of survival value.

his study will explore whether this phenomenon allows older adults to stay attentive to emotional stimuli even as they age. "if you're hard wired to pay more attention to things that spark our emotions," he says.

larsen also recently obtained a training grant from the national institute of general medical sciences designed to encourage interdisciplinary training and interaction between psychology, neuroscience and genetics. "there's some really exciting research being done now at the intersection of these three fields," larsen says. "our psychology department is well positioned to lead that work because we're focused on close work relationships with many units around campus involved in neurogenetics and genetics research."

enthusiastic teacher

larsen says he's been training to serving as an administrator and considers his current start as departmental chair to be an "occupational hazard," something that some professors are called upon to do sooner or later.

he can back on teaching during his first year as chair but is now managing to spend more time in the classroom. he's teaching another undergraduate course this semester, "psychology of personality," which uses a textbook that he wrote — one that has been translated into several foreign languages and adopted at universities around the globe.

larsen also teaches a graduate course on research ethics for behavioral science and psychology. the course focuses on the ethical principles integrity issues in science, such as respecting the rights of research participants and the accurate reporting of scientific findings.

his freshman course on the psychology of college students, which his students now refer to as the "psych 101" class, is taught with jill straton, associate dean of students and director of residential academic programs, and two advanced graduate students.

"working closely with randy has revealed his commitment to creativity in the classroom and his dedication to student learning," straton says. "he goes above and beyond in the classroom to engage students with innovative, cutting-edge teaching and research. first-year students are fortunately have the chance to learn from an interna- tional leader in the field of positive psychology."

"lavrenty narumov and straton hope their course will help students explore what makes them tick as individuals and how to harness that knowledge to develop a plan for success in college and beyond. as part of that process, they're putting students through a battery of innovative personality assessment testing tools, such as measures of life satisfaction and happiness, then helping them understand how the results can be used to modify their approach to school and life."

larsen knows that college years can be a time of indecision and big shifts in career plans. he started college thinking he might become a veterinarian but changed majors after a great professor got him thinking.

"if you're interested in building, your study architecture, if you're interested in stats, you study astronomy," he says. "i realized i was very interested in people, so i studied psychology.

outside the classroom

larsen says some of his greatest lessons in understanding people have come through experiences outside the classroom, especially the year he spent as a clinical psychologist riding along with police officers responding to domestic violence calls, stand-off incidents and other altercations.

my year spent responding to police emergencies actually prepared me to be a department chair," larsen says. "many of those police calls, my job was to assess a volatile situation, help people think through their options and manage their emotions, and guide them to take some degree of action."

"these are part of the same skill set that i use everyday as chair," he says. "i spend a portion of my time helping faculty, staff or students solve problems, many times when they are under some sort of pressure or emotional stress."

larsen is quick to assert that he has been blessed in assuming the reins of an extremely well-functioning department, one that has been set up in an organized way, is filled with productive and collaborative colleagues and is successful in the missions of teaching, research, and contributions to the university.

"i would have been a fool to say no when they asked me to be chair," he says. "i came in at an ideal time. we have a remarkably collaborative team of interesting people here who are all working together, all rowing in the same direction. i inherited a great deal of momentum and it's my objective to keep the momentum moving forward."