

The COAS PERSPECTIVE

Message from Dean Mitchell



Dr. Thomas R. Mitchell, COAS Dean

It's my pleasure to use the medium of the maiden issue of *The COAS PERSPECTIVE* to welcome all of you back to our College and University. This newsletter is a welcome initiative by the Associate Dean, Dr. Peter Haruna, to promote both intra- and inter-college communication.

As the largest of the four academic

colleges, COAS plays a critical leadership role in our University. This news bulletin aims to highlight that role and to serve as a medium for dissemination of information and for the healthy exchange of ideas.

I wish to thank all our department chairs, faculty, staff, graduate assistants, and student workers for their dedication to the mission of our College. Finally, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new faculty and staff. I urge every one in the College to extend to them all the help and support that they will need to begin their tenure (and get their tenure) here.

Here are some Fall 2009 facts about COAS:

- 35 percent of total Semester Credit Hours (SCH) in COAS taken before 11 a.m. from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. = 65% of SCH.
- 15 percent Increase in undergraduate SCH for COAS courses over last fall (as of Sept. 7). COAS undergrads = +13%!
- 28 percent increase in COAS graduate students! For COAS graduate courses, SCH is up 22%!
- 359 = Number of Criminal Justice majors, followed closely by other "monster majors," Biology (352) and Psychology (307). Next are Math (118), English (116), Communication (107), Political Science (84), Music (72), History (69), Engineering (61), Art (57), Spanish (54), Social Studies (36), Sociology (34), Chemistry (24),

Brief Notes:

- COAS Qingwen Ni and Juan Hinojosa win University Scholar and Teacher of the Year. Congrats!
- COAS Welcomes 20 New Faculty! Full-time faculty in COAS now number 110 from 22 different native countries!
- PROF Center Offers Opportunities for Faculty Growth.
- 7th Annual A&M Pathways Student Research Symposium, Nov. 13-14, 2009 at TAMU.

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COAS Leads on Performance Indicators and Service

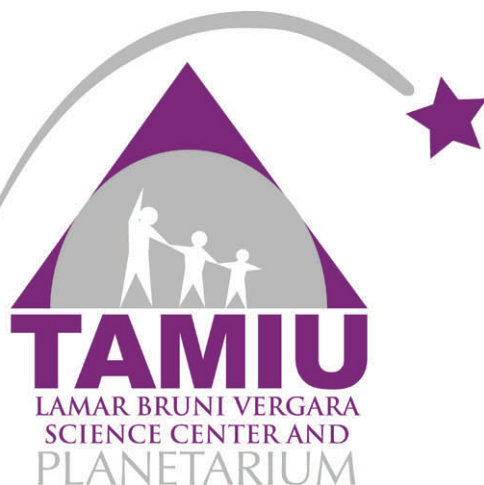
With dedicated faculty, hard-working staff, and attractive graduate and undergraduate degree programs, COAS continues to lead all colleges in terms of key performance indicators and service: enrolled majors, credit-hours, degrees awarded, funded-research, and community service.

For example, COAS claimed 53% of the total of 36 sponsored research awards recorded during the 2007-2008 submission cycle. The total dollar amount of \$2, 274, 500 was far more than any other college received in grants. Nevertheless, increasing sponsored research remains one of our college's major challenges!

In terms of credit-hours generated, COAS claimed roughly 56% of the TAMU total in Spring 2008. By Fall 2009 the COAS share had reached 62%! During the 2007-2008 academic year, COAS credit-hours production grew by 8% over the previous year. By Fall 2009 SCH had grown 15% over Fall 2008. However, COAS' greatest achievement lies in its commitment to civic engagement that inculcates the value orientation and norms of responsible citizenship in our students. This is manifested in activities that faculty and students engage in: tutoring, poetry recitals, judging in science fairs, volunteering, etc.

Fine & Performing Arts Events

- Popular Orchestral Gems, LPO: September 27.
- Man of La Mancha-October 14-18 in CFPA Theatre.
- Energy Unleashed, LPO-October 25, CFPA Recital Hall.
- Embracing Darkness and Loving Your Dreams-November 15-27.
- Sharkey Corrigan Organ Recital-November 1, CFPA Recital Hall.
- 4th Annual Band Extravaganza.
- Fall Piano Studio Recital-December 1, CFPA Hall.
- TAMIU Juried Student Art Exhibit-December 3-12, CFPA Art Gallery



Research Finding on the Effects of Media Violence

Media violence and its effect on viewers has been a subject of considerable attention across past decades and throughout history. In a recent article in the *Journal of Pediatrics*, The Department of Behavioral Sciences Drs. Chris Ferguson and John Kilburn examined whether the research on media violence was supportive of the concerns expressed by politicians, activists and some scientists. Conducting a meta-analysis of recent studies of media violence they found that poor methodology was a common problem, and that studies with poorer methods tended to be more likely to conclude that a relationship between media violence and aggression existed. Studies using higher-level controls and more detailed aggression measures were less likely to find real effects. Overall, the authors concluded that there was insufficient evidence to date to indicate that media violence exposure was associated with increased aggression.

COAS Breaking News Highlights

- Stephen Duffy, Associate Professor of History, published his first book, *The Integrity of Ireland* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press) this spring.
- Rafic Bachnak, Professor of Engineering and Chair of EMAP, received a Fulbright to Lebanon and Faculty Development Leave for 2009-2010.
- Three COAS faculty received one semester Faculty Development Leaves: Mehnaaz Momen, Associate Professor of Political Science, Jerry Thompson, Professor of History, and Judith Warner, Professor of Sociology.
- Peter Haruna published "Revising the Leadership Paradigm in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Study in Community-Based Leadership" in the journal *Public Administration Review* 69.5 (Sept./Oct. 2009): 941-50.
- Thomas Mitchell, Dean and Professor of English, became President-Elect of the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society for 2009-2011.

STEM Enrichment Grant Benefits Students

Under a U. S. Department of Education Grant, COAS Department of Engineering, Mathematics and Physics is implementing several projects aimed at recruiting and retaining Hispanics and other minority students into its programs. The grant enables the department to provide workshops, scholarships, internships, research experience, mentoring, tutoring, advising and career counseling, and experiential training, and faculty development. Since Fall 2008, 60 incoming TAMIU and current high school students have benefited from the STEM-REP workshop series. This project has helped students to make connections between mathematics and science and to develop a better understanding of their own study skills and learning communities of their peers. Workshops have been conducted by discipline specific instructors with emphasis on critical and problem-solving skills. Preliminary assessments indicate that participants have acquired basic critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities based on mathematics and science foundation. Students need such skills and tools to be able to face academic challenges and to be successful in college. For more information, contact Dr. Rafic Bachnak at: 326-2308 or rbachnak@tamiu.edu

COAS Alum wins Ph.D. Meritorious Fellowship

COAS alum Karina Moreno-Saldivar won a meritorious fellowship to study for the Ph.D. in Public Administration at the State University of New Jersey (Rutgers University), Newark Campus. Karina, a top MPA graduate, is the first Hispanic woman to be admitted to this well-recognized program.

The COAS PERSPECTIVE is published by the Office of the Dean of the College Arts & Sciences, once each in the Fall and Spring Semesters. Please send short newsworthy items, research notes, service learning activities, scholarships, comments, and/or suggestions to or contact us at: Peter Haruna: pharuna@tamiu.edu or 326-2613 or Juliana Medrano: jmedrano@tamiu.edu or 326-2462.