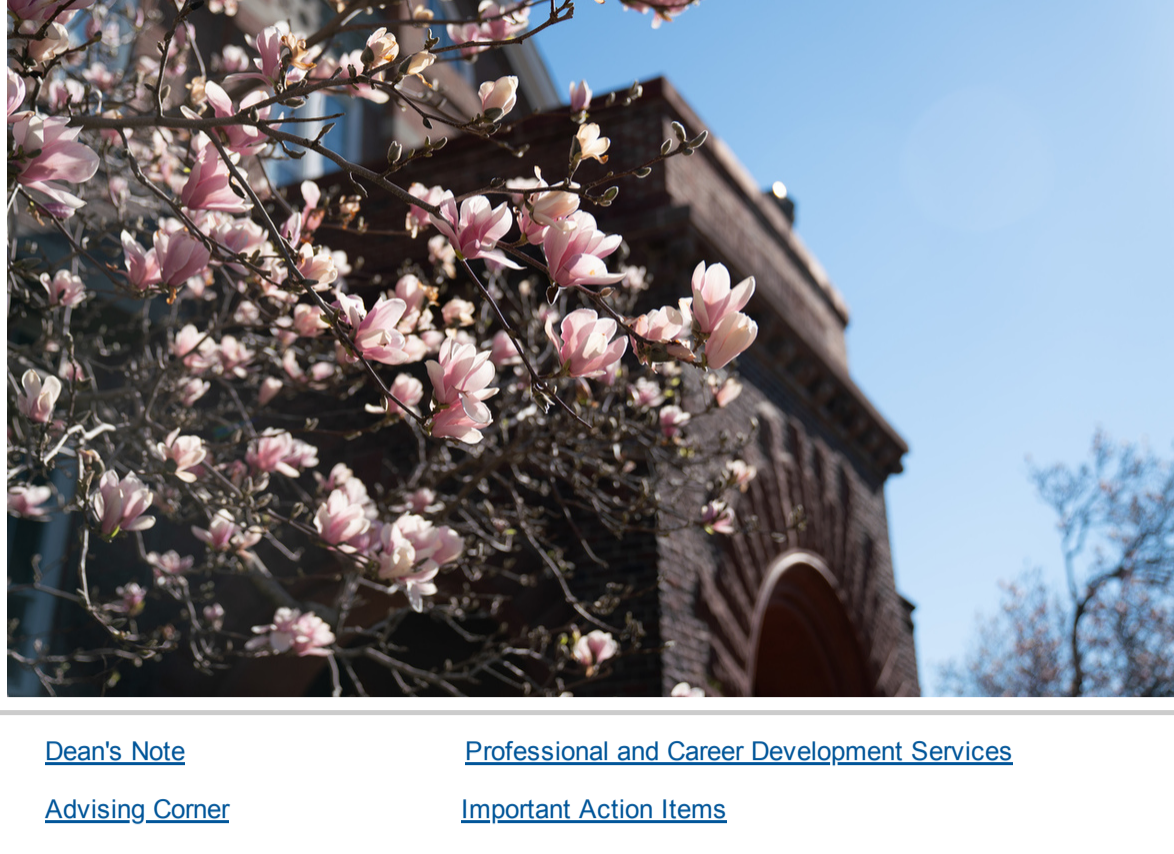


A&S Newsletter

March 8, 2021


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Dean's Note

Dear all,

This has been a busy week (I am writing this note on a Friday afternoon). I know you all feel the same, and are longing for that spring break that we took in January when it was negative 20 degrees outside. Oh well! I'd like to share a few updates with you. The week began with very sad news. We learned that Oleg Zatsarinny, our colleague in the Physics department, had died. Oleg had been working at Drake since 2003, and his untimely death is a huge loss for all of us. Our condolences go to Oleg's family, his friends and colleagues. Please find a link to his [obituary here](#).

On a more happy note, last week saw the successful completion of yet another faculty search in the college. Offer letters to nine new faculty have been sent out, and another hire is in the final stages of negotiations. Fingers crossed! Thank you to all the search committee chairs and members for their great work! We submitted critical needs requests, year-to-end budget projections, had champion meetings with the marketing firm 160/90, and had a major virtual academic spotlight event. More than 60 prospective students attended the Pre-Law event, a beautifully orchestrated program that we expect will yield greatly. Thank you to all of you who participated and continue to participate in these events. Speaking of recruitment: we ended the week again with a great number of new TD's, and dare I brag to say that A&S is carrying the university's narrow advantage over last year on its shoulders. 169 students have made tuition deposits to become Bulldogs in fall 2021 with a major in A&S, compared to 140 students on March 5, 2020 when we were still pre-Covid (or pre-virtual admission events!). The university as a whole is at 316 confirmed first year students compared to 315 last year, so still on track to make the targeted 760-790 EFR. Great work, everyone, but too early to slow down!

There are two more data points to share. Chrystal Stanley released the accomplishment rate for 2020 graduates. Our overall accomplishment rate for Drake graduates (employed or in graduate school six months after graduation) is 95.5%. Arts & Sciences graduates top that number and log in at 96.2%. That means that A&S has a higher accomplishment rate than the university as a whole—a rare occurrence nationally! And finally, you might recall that we were worried last fall that some students might not come back in the spring semester. You all stepped up with extra outreach to your students, J-Term classes for first year students and Front Row episodes. It worked!! Our fall to spring retention rate landed at 93%, very similar to last year's rate. Kudos to all of you!

Thank you all for submitting your course schedules and course modality for next fall. As rooms are being assigned, there are good reasons for hope and optimism that things will get better as vaccinations levels increase. We have started thinking about what teaching and learning will look like after the pandemic, weighing what will stay, what has worked, and what the new normal will be. I look forward to having these discussion with all of you, and I am curious to hear what ideas come out of your department's conversations.

Have a great week!

Gesine

Dean's Open Office Hours

The Dean will be available [via Zoom](#) for open office hours on Tuesday, March 9 from 4-5pm.

Advising Corner

Flexible Study Spaces

As was the case last fall, Flex Study Spaces are available for students who need space on campus for synchronous online classes, study space between classes, etc. Students must use [this form](#) to **check into** the flex study space. This is **not** a reservation form. If the space is at capacity, students will need to seek out another Flex Study Space. This form must be completed each time a student utilizes a flex space on campus. Students are expected to abide by the start and end times of the space, wipe down spaces before and after use, and adhere to all university social distancing guidelines.

Advising Students to Register for an Appropriate Course Modality in the Fall

As you are having pre-registration conversations with your advisees, please urge them to pay special attention to the modality (in-person or remote) of the Fall classes and make registration choices accordingly. In most cases the student experience will be best served by finding a class taught in the preferred modality from the outset. Students should note that in-person courses for the Fall 2021 semester were specifically designed to have an in-person component. Students who are able to attend in-person class sessions should do so in order to have an optimized experience. For students who are in an in-person and then become ill and/or need to temporarily quarantine, the instructor will work with the student to identify an appropriate way to make up the missed classes.

If a student is unable to attend in-person classes (due to health accommodations, health concerns related to a member of the student's household, concerns related to someone the student has responsibility to care for, travel restrictions, etc.) for the semester or for an extended period of time, the student should request remote instruction for all of their classes via the [remote delivery request form](#), following the guidelines and the deadlines established by the Registrar.

Responding to Students of Concern

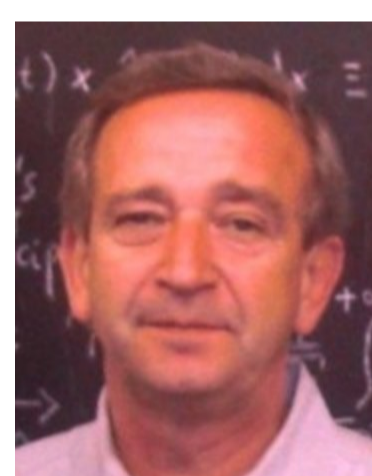
We hear that stress, burnout, and fatigue are increasingly taking toll on students, affecting their attendance, response to outreach, and submission of work. If you are concerned about a student in your course, please raise a flag in Starfish. Depending on the type of the flag, students will either be able to see your comments or receive a follow-up from the appropriate office. Another option is to complete an [early alert form](#). The form feeds directly to the dean's office and facilitates our proactive outreach to students who need assistance and connections to key college and university resources.

Forecasting Midterm Grade Entry

Midterm grades are due before 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Mar 24. The entry of midterm grades helps students to make informed decisions on whether or not to remain in a spring course(s). If working with advisees enrolled in 12 credits, please note that dropping a course(s) with a W will not take a student to part-time standing. Students who wish to drop a course with a W have through 4:30 p.m. on Wed, Mar 31 to take action by submitting the [add/drop form](#) to ask.as@drake.edu.

In Memoriam: Oleg Zatsarinny

Oleg Zatsarinny, senior researcher and lecture of Physics, passed away on Monday, March 1st. He joined Drake as a researcher in 2003 and has been the principal investigator or Co-PI on NSF grants totalling over \$1,000,000. He was a world re-nowned researcher and was awarded the Fellowship in the American Physical Society in 2008. He was a prolific writer and has published more than 200 papers in peer-reviewed journals. His contributions to Drake as a teacher, scholar and colleague will always be remembered and he will be dearly missed. [Find his obituary here](#).




**VIRTUAL EXHIBITION
OPENING & AWARDS
CEREMONY**

**50TH ANNUAL
JURIED STUDENT
EXHIBITION**

**Sunday, March 7
2-3pm CST
Live-streamed on YouTube**

Drake University

50th Annual Juried Student Exhibition

Watch the recording of the virtual opening and awards ceremony for the 50th Annual Juried Student Exhibition, which aired on Sunday, March 7.

President Martin shared remarks, and we heard comments from our juror and Drake Alum, Nikki Renee Anderson. See the virtual tour of the online exhibition, and Provost Mattison and Dean Gerhard announce the award winners.

Access it by going to <https://linktr.ee/theandersongallery>.

Thanks for helping us honor and celebrate the artistry of Drake's students!

Faculty Spotlight

Professor David Skidmore and former Des Moines Register columnist Kyle Podcast have launched a podcast titled "US-China: Searching for Common Ground." The podcast, which can be located at www.anchor.fm/uschina and other podcast platforms, features interviews with top American and Chinese scholars, diplomats, businesspeople and journalists. Among the guests are former US Ambassador to China Terry Branstad and New York Times reporter Austin Ramzy. The podcast is integrated with Skidmore's spring 2021 course on US-China Relations. Flyer is [located here](#).

Student Spotlight

Lauren Carroll, senior voice performance major, was first place at the National 2021-2021 Young Artist Voice Competition held by the Music Teachers National Association. There will be a concert for the winners on Tuesday, March 16 from 3:30-5pm.

Meeting Free Days

The day off from meetings that was scheduled this past November 3rd was a welcome break, and enhanced the mental and emotional well-being of students, staff, and faculty. This spring, there will be one day each month designated as meeting-free. Note—only three of these days occur during the spring academic semester. Faculty are encouraged to lighten the load for students on these days, and may choose to cancel class as appropriate and at their discretion.

Upcoming meeting-free dates:

- **Tuesday 16 March**
- Wednesday 14 April
- Tuesday 27 May
- Wednesday 23 June

E.A. Sheslow Prize for Distinguished Leadership

The Sheslow Prize recognizes the achievements of students in the College of Arts and Sciences who:

- are in their junior year, (graduating the following fall or spring semester—students graduating this May are not eligible);
- are working toward a B.S., B.F.A., B.M., B.M.E. or B.A. degree to be awarded by the College of Arts and Sciences;
- have demonstrated leadership
- have a record of performance in student life activities or on- and off-campus employment.

Eligible nominees will be invited to submit a resume, an essay on leadership, and three supporting letters of recommendation. **To nominate a student**, email ask.as@drake.edu by **March 12th** with either just a name (the student will be contacted for materials) or if you would like to provide one of the 3 required recommendation letters, you may do so at that time!

Important Action Items:

Recycle Your Phones

Just a reminder: Please recycle your old phone handsets now that we've switched to Teams. There's a box marked E-waste in each building by the mailboxes. We're extending the deadline to **March 12**. Please put your old handset there, or ask a colleague who's on campus to help you out if you're still working remotely. Thank you!!

Budget Requests

To request funds for presenting at virtual professional conferences and for materials for teaching blended and/or virtual classes, please fill out the [following form](#) and return to [Ashley Rasmussen](#). Full-time faculty are eligible for up to \$500 in funds for registration to virtual conferences for which they are presenters. Requests for teaching materials will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The dean's office will submit requests to the provost's office for final approval.

[COVID-19: University Updates Page](#)

Reading Corner

[One year into the pandemic, what are you most sick of?](#)

A&S Important Dates

The full fall calendar is located [here](#).

- March 12
Midpoint of semester

[Submit News](#)