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THE UNIVERSITY

# Reporter

NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

Volume 1  
Number 7  
March 1997

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## High-Tech Program Serves Expanding Industry

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a well-produced geographic map is worth even more, according to Professor Zong-Guo Xia, Director of the Program in Geographic Information Technologies. A poster adorning the wall of his laboratory makes the point beautifully. It shows satellite images of Beijing, China, taken by the Landsat Satellite in 1976 and in 1991. From outer space, there is no mistaking the growth of the urban area of Beijing and other changes in the topography and vegetation of the surrounding area over just fifteen years.

The pictures are good examples of the tools and applications of geographic information systems (GIS), an expanding field of technology which is expected to be a \$6 billion industry in this country by the year 2000. In 1990, a survey of 110 federal agencies reported that 95 were using geographic information systems programs to assist them in analysis and evaluation of data pertaining to their work.

In all fifty states, major agencies now use GIS and related technologies for regional development planning, environmental monitoring and planning, and facilities and resource management. In the past three to five years, GIS applications are being acquired and used by cities, towns and counties for their planning needs.

"There are so many problems and so few dollars," says Xia, "By assessing the variables—water and soil quality, soil and land-use information, industry pollution in the area, and demographic variables, GIS can help a town determine which parcel of land to preserve, or where to put their dollars for environmental restoration."

The key is the integration of all these factors. "GIS helps to rank the issues. It takes numerous spatial variables and converts them into meaningful decision-making information," says Xia. Data is gathered by such means as aerial photography, global positioning systems, satellite imaging, and computer processing.

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# IRS Program Provides Help, Experience

## The University Reporter

External Relations  
Third Floor  
Quinn Administration Bldg  
100 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125-3393  
(617)287-5300

E-mail address:  
univ\_report@umb.edu

Annemarie Lewis  
*Editor*

Annette Fernie  
*Staff Reporter and  
Production Director*

Stacey Carter  
*Staff Reporter*

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Send your news items to: The *University Reporter* at the above mailing or e-mail address.

1040EZ. Yeah, right. Nothing easy about it, you say. The mere mention of the words "income taxes" makes you want to turn the page. And to think the deadline is fast approaching. Fortunately, so is assistance — it's right on campus.

This year, eight undergraduates in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistors (VITA) program will help all interested students, faculty and staff members with their income taxes. Volunteers will provide the forms, and, if the taxes are simple enough, will prepare them for you. "It's a nice service to offer," said Peter Westort, Assistant Professor of Accounting and VITA campus coordinator.

Not only does the UMass Boston community benefit, volunteers reap personal rewards as well. "The program is beneficial to the students, because it actually lets us put into practice what we have learned. We get actual real-life experience," said senior Shirley Jones. An accounting major and second-year UMass Boston VITA volunteer, she plans to become a CPA and an attorney who specializes in taxation. "We get a chance to give back to the students we are helping. It's helping them, it's helping the students who volunteer, and it's helping the university," Jones said.

John Coleman, lecturer in the Accounting and Finance Department and former VITA coordinator, agrees. "They get first-hand knowledge of helping people actually prepare tax returns," he said. They practically apply

classwork (most volunteers have taken AF 450, "Federal Taxation," or an equivalent course), give back to the UMass Boston community, and interact with students of other disciplines, Coleman said.

The IRS has run VITA nationwide for 27 years. The program has been at UMass Boston for approximately 10 years, according to Coleman, and has served up to 50 people annually, generally with a staff of six to eight volunteers.

This year, nine students attended the IRS one-day training session in January, where they learned to deal with common problems the IRS sees, such as confusion surrounding earned income credit. After training, participants were required to take an exam administered by the IRS.

On Feb. 14, the first day of the program, six people received tax help. Westort expects the number of participants to increase as the tax deadline approaches. Jones said word of the program has spread quickly. "They're even sending more friends," she said of the students. "We have people stopping us in the corridors."

Tax assistance will be available through April 16 from 2:30 to 4 p.m. on Mon., Wed. and Thurs. in the McCormack Building, first floor, room 421.

Check out what's happening at UMass Boston on our world wide web site at <http://www.umb.edu>

# The Dean's Corner: Woodruff Smith

For tasty cuisine, a chef blends a variety of foods with distinct tastes. A zookeeper appreciates the natural differences among a plethora of species. Mall owners depend on various competing stores for common survival.

Likewise, the head of a liberal arts faculty must respect individuality while bringing intellectuals together to meet the mission of the institution.

At UMass Boston, that leader is the Dean of Liberal Arts Faculty, Woodruff D. Smith, one of three deans of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Upon his arrival in 1994, Smith saw "the need to reduce the level of fragmentation, and to some extent dissatisfaction" of faculty members. To chip away at fragmentation, Smith said he had to convince some faculty that their individual work connects with the "big picture," the mission of the University. The liberal arts colloquium series, initiated last spring, is one program that has brought faculty together.

During Smith's first year, the University was mandated to revise the General Education plan. Smith had prior experience in education reform and saw the process as a vehicle to engage faculty, student and staff in institutional change. "The real benefit of curricular reform came from the engagement of interest of the people involved," he said.

Smith recognizes that restructuring is an unsettling concept for many, but defends his push for change. "A unit of a university has to continually reexamine itself," Smith said. This process

should include continual interaction, rethinking, questioning of canon, and interrogation, he said. "That's part of the life of the university," he said. "It's essential to our health."

At UMass Boston, restructuring is manifest through programs such as the Division of Communications and Theater Arts and the Division of Global Studies. Smith is trustee dean of both divisions. "One of the things that I have supported ... was the establishment of the new inter-collegiate divisions," he said.

The Division of Communications and Theater Arts established a framework to create innovative ways to offer programs, a developmental plan, and support for the General Education project, he said. The division also cut across colleges, particularly the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Management. The Division of Global Studies brings together area studies certificate programs into a loose, cooperative organization that looks at wholly new approaches to internal and global studies.

In addition to restructuring, Smith wants to change the way languages are taught. He spearheaded an effort at another university to implement a strong language requirement in its curriculum. He says the United States is the only country to graduate students who lack a substantial knowledge of a second language. "This is a problem that is important to solve and is solvable," he said.

Language training should begin in primary schools, Smith said,

but universities can do several things to facilitate this training: serve as resources, make research available, and organize universities and schools to review language priorities. Universities can also train fully bilingual teachers, he said. According to the dean, Massachusetts is on the verge of replacing many retiring educators, and the demand for minority and bilingual teachers will increase. "We are the best place in all of New England to fill that demand," he said.

Smith said the state has established language training as a goal, but has yet to define what reform should occur, a leadership opportunity for UMass Boston. "I think we're in a good position to define what the reform should be," he said.

Overall teacher preparation is another major focus for Smith, who believes preparing teachers is an important function of higher education institutions.

Among Smith's academic specialties are modern German history and European imperialism. He earned his B.A. from Harvard College and his master's and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. From 1973 to 1994, he rose from assistant professor to associate vice president for academic affairs at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Smith also taught at Roosevelt University in Chicago. He has written four books and numerous articles and chapters.

# Study Helps Adolescents Adjust to Middle School

The transition from elementary school to middle school involves a multitude of changes that can create stress and both short-term and long-term problems for adolescents.

“Moving to Middle School Project,” a longitudinal study being conducted by the Center for Social Development and Education, is exploring the factors that contribute to adjustment in middle school. The study is in its third year and is funded by an annual \$180,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Through the study, co-principal investigators Melodie Wenz-Gross and Gary Siperstein, along with research assistant Robin Parker, hope to find ways to make the transition from elementary school to middle school easier for students who are at risk. “We try to take it from basic research to something tangible,” Wenz-Gross said. “We do workshops for teachers. We give reports to schools. We give reports to parents about our findings,” she said.

In the spring of 1995, the Center began surveying 850 students from four suburban Boston school systems. “We started with them in fifth grade. They’re now

in the seventh grade,” Wenz-Gross said. As fifth-graders, the students shed light on the nature of stress both at home and in school.

The study found that more than half of the fifth-graders pinpointed the following stressors: forgetting to bring materials to class, getting into fights with students, being teased at school, being left out of a social group, being punished by a teacher, being embarrassed by their appearance, being asked things they didn’t want to do by other students, and not being liked by someone they liked a lot.

The following school year, those same students, as sixth-graders in middle school, were questioned in both the fall and spring of the year. Students responded with the following three top stressors: having trouble with homework, failing tests and being treated unfairly by a teacher.

According to the study, comparing elementary school to middle school, most students articulated two main differences. First, middle school was harder, in terms of class work and navigating the building. Also, students found themselves with more of the following in middle school: homework, books and materials

to manage, and rules to follow.

The pencil and paper surveys were administered in suburban schools because researchers needed schools with similar grading structures who would participate for the long haul of the study, Wenz-Gross said. They decided on three schools in Medford and schools in Belmont, Newton and Canton. According to Wenz-Gross, the Center is also studying at the Umana/Barnes Middle School in East Boston.

The study looks at stress not only in the school environment, but also in the extra-curricular lives of the middle-schoolers. Students take a depression inventory and a self-concept scan, Wenz-Gross said. Surprisingly, most of the stress is academic, not social, she said.

She notes the social stresses differ between boys and girls and between students with high versus low academic-concept and self-concept. “We also found that boys reported more stressors related to problems with teacher/rules than did girls,” a preliminary report stated. “Peer stress and peer social support were major predictors of students’ self-concept,” the study revealed.

The researchers will hold a poster session on the study at the biannual meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, April 3 - 6 in Washington, D.C.

# Botman Shares Insights on Egyptian Women

Since the 1970s, Egyptian women have received mixed signals from society, Dr. Selma Botman told a UMass Boston audience on March 5.

Botman, vice president for academic affairs for the UMass system, presented "Women in Politics, Religion, and Society: The Case of Contemporary Egypt" as part of the Women's Research Forum, sponsored by the Office of the Chancellor, McCormack Institute's Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, and the Women's Studies Program. The program was one of several events in the week-long campus celebration of International Women's Day.

Botman centered her discussion around three different political periods in 20th century Egypt and articulated three main conclusions regarding Egyptian women. First, since the 1970s, Islamic fundamentalists have tried to redefine the role of women in Egyptian society and have urged women to return to their homes. Second, women face an uncertain future in an increasingly autocratic country. Third, despite advances in education and work opportunities, women remain subordinate in Egyptian family hierarchy, Botman said.

Egypt is a socially traditional society, and historically women lacked freedom of choice in marriage, divorce and schooling. Under the modernizing rule of Abdul Nasir, women gained the right to vote in 1956, access to free education and increased job choices. Poor women were still separated from upper class women by class and experience,

though all women gained status by having sons, she said.

Anwar Sadat saw modernizing women as a badge of his success and moved far beyond his predecessors by taking on the status of women in the family and in public society, Botman said. During his reign, Sadat announced support for expanded women's rights and introduced a gender quota system that doubled the number of women in parliament and led to an exponential rise in the number of women running for office, she said.

"The real reverses came under Mubarak, Sadat's successor," Botman said, referring to Hosni Mubarak, who took office in 1981 following Sadat's assassination. The former president's quota system was overturned, and Mubarak argued that he needed to guarantee geographic constituencies, not gender constituencies, Botman said.

"Islamist activism continues to pose a threat to women and women's citizenship," Botman told the group. "For Islamists, public society is synonymous with male culture," she said. Despite the real setbacks for women as well as the Western perceptions of social roles, Egyptian women actively struggle for equality. "It is a mistake to see women as passive recipients of a male culture," she said. "It is a herculean task to oppose the fundamentalists."

An expert in modern Middle Eastern politics, Botman has written two books, "From Independence to Revolution: Egypt, 1922-1952" and "The

Rise of Egyptian Communism: 1939-1970." She earned her Ph.D. and M.A. degrees at Harvard University, her B.Phil. at Oxford University, and her B.A. at Brandeis University. Before joining UMass, she was a tenured faculty member at the College of Holy Cross.

## Women's History Month

On March 3, President Clinton officially proclaimed March 1997 as Women's History Month. "Women's History Month provides Americans with an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of all the women who have enriched our Nation, to honor their legacy, and to reflect upon what we can all do to end discrimination against women," he said in the proclamation. "I encourage all Americans to learn from, and share information about, women's history in their workplaces, classrooms, and family rooms," he said.

Nine days later, in her remarks on International Women's Day, Hillary Rodham Clinton praised America's first woman Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright. The first lady also called for "the seamless inclusion of girls' and women's needs in American foreign policy."

"One goal in every country should be to see that all citizens, regardless of race or gender or ethnicity or religion, have a full place at their society's table," she said.

# Utopian Vistas Receives Accolades, Awards

Houses don't usually have their own biographies. But now the Mabel Dodge Luhan House in Taos, New Mexico, is one that does.

*Utopian Vistas: The Mabel Dodge Luhan House and the American Counterculture*, by Professor Lois Rudnick, chronicles the history of the Luhan house in three parts: from its construction by Luhan in 1918 until her death in 1962, when it was a magnet for artists and writers, including D.H. Lawrence, Carl Jung, Willa Cather, Georgia O'Keefe and many others; from 1970 to 1978, when actor and artist Dennis Hopper bought it and turned it into a "studio/commune," and from 1978 to 1995, as a center for alternative education under George and Kitty Otero.

"Not many private houses have a history like this one. For over three generations, it's been occupied by movers and shakers in many fields. It was fun to work on a topic so unusual," Rudnick says.

The project was time consuming, says Rudnick, because much of the history was so recent. Considerable information came from interviews with individuals who were part of the house's orbit during the sixties and later.

Rudnick is pleased with the recognition *Utopian Vistas* has received. A full-page story in the *New York Times*, with photos, introduced the book to a vast audience. It also garnered publicity in the *Boston Globe* and on National Public Radio.

*Utopian Vistas* has been recognized with The Southwest Book Award, given by the Border Regional Library Association, and the Gaspar Perez de Villagra Award from the Historical Society of New Mexico. The awards represent the approval of those more intimately familiar with the times and the milieu of the Luhan house. "While these are modest regional awards, I feel good about being recognized by insiders," says Rudnick.

*Utopian Vistas* was published by the University of New Mexico Press, publishers of Rudnick's previous book, a biography of Mabel Dodge Luhan, in 1984.

## Child Care Center Serves Students, Staff, Community

It's a 10-minute walk or a free bus ride away, and its proximity to campus, as well as its existence, makes a major difference in the UMass Boston community and neighborhood.

The UMass Boston Child Care Center, located at 270 Mount Vernon St. in Harbor Point, currently serves 61 children. About half of their parents are UMass Boston students, 15 percent are staff members, and the remainder are community residents.

"I think it's an essential service for students and a great service for staff," said Marcia Boston, director of the Child Care Center. "Students really appreciate this," Boston said. "Without the affordable child care, they just couldn't make it."

Michele McIntyre, a preschool teacher who has taught at the center for 14 years, agrees the service is vital. "I think it's crucial. I don't think a lot of students would have an alternative," she said.

Boston believes the center is affordable but would like it to be less expensive for students. Fees are based on three sliding scales — state subsidized, students and community residents. Boston said she recently submitted a proposal to the Student Senate requesting increased funding to boost the student subsidy. "That will allow us to subsidize students at the state scale," she said.

The center has 12 staff members, 10 work/study students and an intern from Bay State College. "We would like to get some

interns from UMass Boston," Boston said.

The center aims to serve children and their families, Boston said. "We want families to feel comfortable here," she said, explaining that parents should feel welcome, experience little pressure and feel the center is responsive to their needs and opinions. By the looks of the waiting list — 26 toddlers are waiting to get in — parents do feel comfortable. McIntyre's four-year-old son is already in the pre-school program, and her daughter is on the waiting list. "We have a smaller toddler program and more toddlers on the waiting list," Boston said. "People really do need to get on the waiting list as soon as they're interested in child care," she advised. (continued on pg. 6)

# Program Creates Hope for Homeless Elders

Old, alone, and homeless. These three words conjure up a sad picture. A recent study conducted jointly by the Committee to End Elder Homelessness (CEEH) and the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance shows that there are more than 1,000 homeless elders in Massachusetts, 500 of whom make the streets or shelters of Boston their "homes." Results of the study were published in the *Boston Globe* on March 19.

Homeless elders are often the victims of factors that are beyond their control—physical or mental illness, disabilities, the lack of affordable housing, and the end of rent control statewide. Sadly, the numbers are increasing, up by over 25% since 1993, according to the study.

"That's the tip of the iceberg," says Associate Professor Linda Dumas of the College of Nursing, referring to the elder homeless count produced by the study. "Those are the ones you can count," she says, referring to the difficulty of counting individuals who have no permanent residence, and are often cycling in and out of homeless shelters.

Founded in 1991, The Committee to End Elder Homelessness (CEEH) has helped over 350 elder men and women find a place to call home since its inception. In addition to Dumas, other UMass Boston members of CEEH include Assistant Professors Victoria Palmer-Erbs and Carol Ellenbecker, part-time

faculty members Ann Stuart and Mary Hennessey, and alumnus Robert Burke, all of the College of Nursing.

CEEH founder and president of its board of directors Anna Bissonnette, dates the organization's beginning back to a conference of social services and health care services providers held in 1990. They had gathered to find out more about a program called "Elders Living at Home." There was only one problem: "We knew that our patients in the South End were being evicted from rooming houses due to gentrification," she says. "How can you take care of an elder's health care needs if they don't have a roof over their heads?" she asks.

Since that time, CEEH has worked to create housing solutions for homeless elders, including Bishop Street House in Jamaica Plain and the Symphony Shared Living Program for elders with special needs on Huntington Avenue in Boston. Many partners in this endeavor helped make it possible, including members of the medical, business and social services communities.

In its most ambitious undertaking yet, a 40-unit elder "assisted living" residence is taking shape in the South End. What was once the Aerated Bread Factory will soon be Concord Street Elder Housing, ready for occupancy in June of 1997. The building was

donated to CEEH by the Boston Medical Center, and numerous private and public agencies helped pay its \$6 million price tag. Services will be available on site to help the residents live as independently as possible.

According to Dumas, CEEH plans to establish a modest medical clinic on the premises, where medical and nursing students, including students from UMass Boston, can get experience while attending to the needs of the residents.

UMass Boston has been a strong partner, says Bissonnette, not only because faculty members have committed time and expertise to CEEH, but also because the College of Nursing has brought its students into the care of the homeless. "UMass Boston has been a leader in using homelessness as a teaching experience for their students," she says.

While it is heartening to see the Concord Street Elder Housing taking shape, it is sobering to consider the extent of the need that organizations like CEEH are trying to address. But Bissonnette maintains a positive outlook, focusing on how much can be done. "A bunch of old ladies on the Board of Directors made this happen," she says, referring to Concord Street. "They brought together people who cared, rolled up their sleeves, and made things happen."

Check out what's happening at UMass Boston on our world wide web site at <http://www.umb.edu>

Calendar

"New Terrain, New Artists: A Juried Print Exhibition," runs until April 1 at the First Expressions Gallery, 81 Arlington Street, Boston. Works by UMass Boston students **Joanne Desmond, Hitomi Minami, Stephen Bailey, and Nancy Clougherty** are included. Assistant Prof. **Sam Walker** of the Art Department curated the exhibit.

On April 1, Meredith Steinbach, professor of creative writing at Brown University and author of three novels, will give a reading in the Harbor Art Gallery at 1:00 p.m, sponsored by the **Creative Writing Program's Reading Series**.

UMass Boston **Career Fair '97** will take place on April 2 from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Ryan Lounge, 3rd floor, McCormack Hall. Over 30 regional employers representing business, environmental services, high technology, and human and health care services will be present to discuss career opportunities for students from all majors. For more information, call 7-5519.

The **CAS Honors Program** will hold its third annual Family Night April 2 from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. McCormack Institute Senior Fellow **Padraig O'Malley** will speak on "The Myths of Reconciliation: The Search for Justice and Truth." Location: University Club, Healey Library.

April 2, 9, and 16, The **Center for the Improvement of Teaching** will sponsor "Writing to Learn: Using Student Journals and Related Assignments," from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in Wheatley Hall, 4th

floor, room 022. The cost is \$10.00 for all three sessions, and includes lunch. For more information, call 7-6749 or 7-6256.

On April 3, 9:00 a.m. to noon, the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (**NERCHE**) will sponsor "Faculty Professional Service and Scholarship: Making the Link" for faculty and administrators. Location: Chancellor's Conference Room.

**NERCHE** will also hold three Think Tank Meetings in April: April 4, the Student Affairs Think Tank meets at Bentley College on technology; April 10, the Department Chairs Think Tank discuss academic integrity at UMass Boston; and on April 17, the Academic Deans Think Tank meets to discuss Alternative Modes of Instructional Delivery/Distance Learning at Salem State College. For more information, call 7-7740.

On Sunday, April 6, at 2:00 p.m. in the Faculty Club, Healey Library, the **Irish Studies Program** will host "'Famine & Exile Darkening the Land'...The Legacy of the Great Hunger." Stonehill College historian Edward McCarron and emigrant Cork City poet Greg Delanty will be featured speakers. Admission is free. Call 7-6752 for more information.

On April 7, The **Network of the Center for Women in Politics** sponsors "Wanted: More Women in Political Office," in the University Club, 11th floor, Healey Library from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

On April 10, the 1997 **Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series** presents David Hackett Fisher, Warren Professor of History at

Brandeis University. His lecture, "The Origin of African American Cultures," will be held in the Media Library, Healey Library, lower level, at 3:00 p.m. For more information, call 7-5700.

On April 16 at 7:30 p.m., Prof. **Lois Rudnick** will present "Counter-cultural Visions in Taos" in the Remis Auditorium, The Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Tickets are \$8.00 and \$9.50. Rudnick's lecture is part of the Museum's Visions and Visionaries series.

On April 16, the Graduate Studies Distinguished Lecture Series hosts Prof. **Michael E. Stone** of CPCS on "The Down Side of Government Downsizing: The Effects of the Cuts and Changes in Housing, Homelessness, and Income Support Programs on Low-Income Massachusetts Residents," from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

On April 17, the **Irish Studies Program** will host a reading by poet Peter Fallon in the student lounge, 4th floor, Wheatley Hall. Admission is free. For more information, call 7-6752.

The Third Annual **Conference on Undergraduate Research** will take place at UMass Amherst on Saturday, April 19. At the Conference, 28 UMass Boston CAS honors program students will present scholarly, creative, and community service projects. Prof. **Celia Moore** will present the luncheon address, "Learning in Academia's Real World."

The Food for Thought Series sponsored by CPCS will host two discussions in April:

April 9, "Welfare Organizing:

Fighting Back Against Welfare Reform," with **Vicky Steinitz, Ann Withorn, Gina Thompson and Lea Luzrios.**

April 23, "Peace Without Justice," with **Clark Taylor and Joan Ecklein**. Both discussions will take place in the CPCS conference room from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. For more information, contact Segi Stefanos at 7-7363.

The **Gaston Institute Spring '97 Speakers Series** will present three lectures in April:

April 1, "Racial, Ethnic & Gender Stratification in the Boston Municipal Work Force: What Mayor Menino Inherited," by Prof. **Andres Torres** of CPCS, 11th floor, Healey Library;

April 8, "Listening to Trauma Stories Among Latino Families," by Prof. **Gonzalo Bacigalupe** of the GCOE, in the Provosts Conference Room, Healey Library;

April 29, "Gay Latino Organizations & the Development of Identity," by Prof. **Luis Aponte** of CPCS, in the Provost's Conference Room, Healey Library. All lectures are from noon to 2:00 p.m., with lunch available upon advance registration.

The **Gerontology Institute and Center's Multidisciplinary Colloquium Series** will sponsor the following lectures in April:

April 1, "The Oldest Old of China" by PeiPei Song, Shanghai Second Medical University, in the CPCS Conference Room, 147-2, 4th floor, Wheatley Hall;

April 3, "Challenges Facing Families Living with an Adult Child with Mental Retardation" presented by Alison

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# Professor's Software Program Aids Exploration of Population Dynamics

It's a complex world, and in Professor Ron Etter's Population Biology course (Biology 290) students get a taste of how complex it is by playing *Mother Nature*. They manipulate populations of hares and lynx by altering the animals' rates of reproduction and mortality, and the nutrients and vegetation available.

They test out hypotheses: what if the reproduction rates of the hares explodes? How about if the vegetation is more bountiful than usual? What if the lynx population is suddenly struck with a virus and reduced by 50%? Students change the rates of the dynamics, and then plot the results of those changes over time.

And it's all done on computer, with a program designed by Etter that lets students explore basic ecological models, such as single population growth, competition, and predation. It's called PopDyn, short for population dynamics.

"PopDyn gives students a chance to understand the fundamental concepts of population dynamics and see the benefits of modeling," says Etter, who created the program as a graduate student. "It gives students a chance to guess what might be going on in the real world."

PopDyn also eliminates the need for the student to deal with the mathematics of population dynamics models, which can hamper a student's understanding of the principles of ecology at an early stage in their studies.

"The program allows students to develop their intuition, consider what they think will happen in a given situation, and test their hypotheses. In the end, a student will have a good idea of why the math is needed," Etter says, adding that math is a tool, and not the goal in his course.

"I'll present something in my lecture that doesn't work with the program, and hope that the student will come back to me, tell me it doesn't work, and why," says Etter, who believes that students will best understand the concepts he teaches through their own process of discovery.

When Etter developed PopDyn, he handed it out to colleagues at Harvard University, Brown University, and the University of New Hampshire. Since that time, it has been distributed to over 600 universities and agencies around the world. He recently received a request from a university in Papua New Guinea and has begun e-mailing the program to those who request it.

For students who decide to make biology their major and develop an interest in ecology and evolution, Etter is a model of a scientist pursuing exciting research in his field. Among his research projects: descending as far as 3,500 meters (approximately 11,000 feet) in submersible vehicles to collect organisms for genetic studies, and examining biodiversity in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the Caribbean.

Another research project involves travelling the world's oceans to

examine sub-tidal rock wall communities in seventeen different locations, where local diversity of species is examined in relation to local processes (competition, predation and small-scale disturbances) and broad-scale processes (dispersal, development of new species, and historical effects). Etter and his colleagues expect that this research will be important to developing strategies for conserving biodiversity.

Etter joined the UMass Boston faculty in 1991. He was awarded his Ph.D. from Harvard University, and his B.A. from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

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## Childcare

*continued from page 6*

Appointed director last September, Boston served five years at Our Place in Cambridge. She was attracted to UMass Boston's vision, diverse population, program size and community base.

Boston is aiming for increased interaction between the peninsula's two locations. "Part of my job is to make a stronger connection between the center and the campus," she said. A recent presentation by Human Resources and her staff's utilization of the Learning Center have helped. The Child Care Center is also working with Community Partnerships and the GCOE to establish a resource center, thanks to a grant from the Department of Education.

Gottlieb, Research Analyst, Gerontology Institute, CPCS Conference Room, 147-2, 4th floor, Wheatley Hall;

April 10, "Financial Planning for Retirement: A Woman's Business" by Prof. James Schulz, Brandeis University, in the Troy Colloquium Room, 2nd floor, Wheatley Hall;

April 17, "Pension Systems in the United States" by **Jack Pizer and Harold Kastle** of the Pension Assistance Project of the Gerontology Institute, held in the CPCS Conference room, 147-2, 4th floor, Wheatley Hall;

April 24, "How to Write Social Science: A Dialogue Between Mark Kramer and **Robert Weiss**," in the CPCS Conference Room, 147-2, 4th floor, Wheatley Hall. Kramer is a Journalism Professor at Boston University, and Weiss is a UMass Boston Professor and Gerontology Faculty Affiliate.

On April 30, Prof. **Joan Lukas** of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department and Prof. **Judy Clark** of the Graduate College of Education will present a faculty colloquium, "Conceptual Revolutions and Mathematical Discovery" from 4:15 to 6:00 p.m. in the Troy Conference Room.

#### Publications

English Prof. **John Tobin** served as collaborating editor for the second edition of the *Riverside Shakespeare*, published in February by Houghton Mifflin. Prof. Tobin wrote introductions and notes on two works newly included in this volume, "Edward III," and a poem, "A Funeral Elegy by W.S."

Prof. **Dan Simovici** of the Math and Computer Sciences Department is one of two managing editors of *Multiple-Valued Logic - An International Journal*, published by Gordon and Breach Science Publishers.

Prof. **Russell Schutt**, chair of the Sociology Department, has published a student workbook to accompany his research methods text, *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research* (Pine Forge Press). The text has been adopted by over 150 colleges and universities.

#### Awards

University **President William Bulger** and **Chancellor Sherry Penney** were honored by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education with the 1997 Administrative Leadership Award, which recognizes administrators who support gerontology and geriatric education.

**Diane Dujon**, co-Director of Assessment for CPCS, received an "Unsung Heroine" award from Rosie's Place at the "Share Your Heart" awards ceremony in February. The awards recognize work done on behalf of disenfranchised and disadvantaged women.

College of Nursing Prof. **Joan Garity** was recently elected chair of the Cabinet on Nursing Education of the Massachusetts Nursing Association.

English Prof. **John Brereton's** book, *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875-1925* has been recognized as the outstanding book of the year in its field by the Conference on College Composition and Communication, at their annual meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, March 14.

Prof. **Gerald Garrett** was elected to the executive offices of the Northeastern Association of Criminal Justice Sciences (NEACJS). He is slated to become the NEACJS president in 1998-99.

#### Dissertation Defense

On April 1, **Marianne Lyons**, a Ph.D. candidate in gerontology, will defend her dissertation, "The Relative Influence of Work and Family on the Life Purpose of Older Japanese Women," in room 99, 3rd floor, Wheatley Hall at 9:00 a.m. The university community is welcome to attend.

#### Accomplishments

The UMass Boston **men's basketball team** wrapped up its season by making it to the Eastern College Athletic Conference Championship, where they lost to Eastern Nazarene College, 78 to 65. Congratulations on a great season!

#### Clarification

The patent applications featured in last month's issue of *The University Reporter*, submitted by Dr. Gopal Rao and associates, are the first patent applications assigned to UMass Boston.

The Learning Center Offerings for April

Publishing Without Perishing: A Primer for Faculty and Staff April 3

Adapting Liberal Arts and Science Courses for Teacher Education April 7

Self Awareness, Self Improvement April 9

Introduction to JAVA April 11

Moving Imagery and Sound in the Classroom April 14 and 28

Expanding the Classroom April 16

State Retirement Plan/Tax Sheltered Annuity Workshop April 23

Workshop VI: Generating Your Own Resources on the Internet April 23

Using the Healey Library Catalog to Search the Internet April 23

Personal Safety and Crime Prevention April 23

The Macintosh Desktop April 30

#### Registration

Register Early. Enrollment is limited, and workshops are on a first-come, first-served basis. Register by e-mailing The Learning Center at: learningctr@umbky.cc.umb.edu or calling 7-3990. Contact Phil Quaglieri or Anthony Martin for more information.

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# “Small Victories” Puts Homelessness Center Stage

The play, written in the early seventies, sat in a drawer for twenty years. It was based on the experiences of a real woman, a feisty woman who refused to leave her old neighborhood because of the urban renewal plans that dictated her home should be sacrificed to the wrecking ball. In real life, that woman eventually died in a fire due to faulty wiring in a city-owned apartment.

But, says Kip Tiernan, founder of Rosie's Place, housing activist, and author of “Small Victories (Are the Biggest Ones of All!),” it is really about the human spirit, embodied in the play's heroine, Peg Doyle. It is also about a community coming together in the face of “bureaucrats and bulldozers.”

The play had its first production at UMass Boston's McCormack Theater for six performances during February and March. Its producer was Tiernan's long time friend and colleague Fran Froehlich, co-founder with Tiernan of the Poor People's United Fund, and it was directed by UMass Boston student Brendan Hughes. Original music was composed by Michael Woodnick.

While the play may have languished for over twenty years, its message has as much, if not more, relevance today than when it was written. According to Tiernan, circumstances have changed since she first started working with the homeless—for the worse. “With a 1% vacancy rate in Boston, people can't find apartments, let alone affordable ones,” she says. Instead of housing, Tiernan sees the creation of shelters, which, she points out, are nothing like a home.

Tiernan and Froehlich's work on behalf of the homeless resulted in their being awarded Bunting Fellowships from Radcliffe College in 1989. After two years of reflection and thinking in Cambridge, they found themselves with exhaustive files on homelessness, and a desire to stay connected to academia.

“We agreed that if we were going to teach, we would like it to be at UMass Boston,” says Tiernan, citing the fact that many students here come with more “real-life” and job experiences than those who attend other area schools. She and Froehlich approached the College of Public and Community Service and presented their course idea to the acting dean, Ann Withorn. In 1991, Ethics, Moral Principles, and Social Policy, or “Oxymoron 101” was offered for the first time.

When Tiernan revived the idea of the play, she and Froehlich decided to experiment with teaching their course in a different way. The production of “Small Victories” was developed as part of the course. It eventually included students, faculty and graduates as well as others in its design, and production.

“We were very interested in expanding the walls of teaching to a larger audience,” states Tiernan in her forward in the playbill. To that end, both Tiernan and Froehlich donated their semester's teaching salary to the production.

Over the last six years, Tiernan says that UMass Boston has become “close to her heart,” especially CPCS, where she prizes the cooperation and collaborative spirit she has found there. “It's an environment where we are comfortable—the fit has been marvelous. I love working with students who work as well as study, because they have a handle on reality that we can appreciate.”

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For news on campus closings due to inclement weather, tune in to local radio and TV news, or call 287-5000

## High-Tech Program

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UMass Boston's program in Geographic Technologies was established in 1992. Xia came to UMass Boston in 1993 to develop and direct the program, which is open to degree and non-degree seeking students. Course offerings include cartography, remote sensing, global positioning systems, geographic information systems, and basic computer skills.

Michael Trust received his certificate in the program in December, 1996. He enrolled after obtaining his bachelors degree in geography from Boston University, where, he says, he received little training in geographic information systems. He is currently employed at MassGIS, which functions as a geographic information distribution center run by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

As a GIS analyst, he is responsible for the maintenance and distribution of GIS materials, which often means programming data onto a CD to be sent out to engineers. He also works with MassGIS's collection of digital orthophotos, which are black and white photographs from which the distortions have been re-

moved so that they can be used as maps.

"Three of the courses I took through the GIT program—remote sensing, applications of GIS, and computer applications in geography, have had direct applications to my job," says Trust. Approximately forty current students and graduates of the program now hold jobs in the field.

"When I arrived at UMass Boston, I took a look at the GIS offerings at M.I.T., Boston University, Clark University and others. Our facilities are better, and our curriculum more comprehensive," says Xia. An \$84,000 grant from the National Science Foundation and UMass Boston have funded the furnishing of a laboratory dedicated to geographic information systems technologies.

Xia came to UMass Boston from the University of Cincinnati, where he was the co-director of the Joint Center for GIS and Spatial Analysis and a member of the Geography faculty. He received his Ph.D. in 1990 from the City University of New York.

## Quinn Award Honors Crime Watch Founder

Chris Hayes, founder of Boston's Neighborhood Crime Watch movement, was honored with the 1997 Robert H. Quinn Community Service Award for his contributions to the City of Boston. The award was made to Hayes at UMass Boston's 8th Annual Community Breakfast on March 18.

The son of Irish immigrants, Hayes is credited with the success of the City's oldest crime watch group, which he founded in his South End neighborhood. In 1985, he was invited by Boston Mayor Ray Flynn to implement a comprehensive Neighborhood Crime Watch plan. Today, he oversees the Boston Police Department's Neighborhood Crime Watch Unit, which has grown from a staff of one to six, and coordinates the individual crime watch groups, which has expanded from one to over 900.

The Robert H. Quinn Community Service Award honors the former Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, who co-sponsored legislation in 1964 that created UMass Boston.

University of Massachusetts Boston  
100 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125-3393