

The Academic Author

For Creators of Academic Intellectual Property

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Changing economics of scholarly publishing

by Brandi Palmer

Professor Robert Picard journeyed from Sweden to St. Petersburg, Florida to address his peers at TAA's convention held on April 3.

Picard led the session, "Changing Economics of Scholarly Publishing", with an overview of the impact of evolving media markets on academic publishing. Picard, professor of economics and director of the Media Management and Transformation Centre at Jonkoping International Business School in Sweden, discussed publishing in a modern global economy that is increasingly trading industry for information.

He described publishing as a growing power player in the information market. He detailed how growing university enrollment, university libraries, and textbook budgets have inspired the printing of 50,000 new higher education text books per year.

In Picard's view of media marketing dynamics, publishers are churning out new textbook editions every three or four years in order to compete with the used book market. In turn, legislature is attempting to fix rising book costs so that students can afford all the new editions.

According to his research, the expanding world of academic publishing has developed to supply a growing population of students. Growing demand for the textbook product is in turn inspiring competitive niche markets, where authors battle publishers who are more concerned with marketability than content. The emergence of competitive on-line e-books is adding to the dynamic of academic publishing. Digitalization and electronic media are driving up the production costs for textbook publication. E-books and e-journals enjoy lower production costs but require costly intellectual property protection. "Transformation is created by and causing changes," Picard said.

According to Picard, textbook publishers are responding to the market flux by seeking new markets internationally, moving into trendy niche markets, and taking part in mergers and joint ventures in the hope of slashing some of their manufacturing, warehousing and distribution costs.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Bookstores' pricing hurts authors

The high cost of textbooks is a hot topic in the news these days. Congress is initiating a probe into the cost of college textbooks; California and other states are proposing legislation aimed toward curbing the price of textbooks at both el-hi and college levels; and CALPIRG, the California arm of PIRG (Public Interest Research Group), gained national attention with its call for publishers to reduce the price of textbooks and to lengthen the time between revisions. While CALPIRG is blaming what they see as frequent and unnecessary revisions as the cause of high textbook prices, the real culprits behind the rising cost of textbooks are used books and examination copy sales.

The general public is unaware of this practice, mainly because those who profit from it don't want it to go away. Most college administrators do not want to discuss it; book vendors and college bookstores exploit it; and faculty who are doing it don't want to lose the money it generates.

I visited the website of a large book buyer that buys complimentary copies from faculty. They supply boxes and free UPS mailing labels. They pay within two days of receipt of the books. They then sell the books directly to students (at a different website they maintain). For two of my just-published texts, they pay faculty from \$36.75 to \$44.75 and then sell the book to students for \$102.20! At Amazon.com, my just-published text, which will not be used in a classroom until this summer, is already for sale. The comment line in the Amazon ad reads: "Instructor's Edition, 7th. Same as student text except with ALL the answers." When the examination copy is, in fact, an Instructor's Edition, containing all the answers and perhaps annotations and sample tests and quizzes, the sale of that text back to the student compromises the integrity of the very course for which the text was written.

While publishers have made an effort to respond to criticisms by CALPIRG and others about the high cost of textbooks, including challenging statements made by CALPIRG in its report and announcing programs that will help reduce the cost of textbooks, both the AAP and publishers need to do far more to increase public awareness of the real reasons behind the cost of textbooks. But let's not forget our responsibility.

We authors continue to write our books, saying nothing of a practice that not only



TAA President Mike Sullivan says the sale of complimentary copies to students drives up text prices.

contributes to the high cost of textbooks, but that we all know is also morally and ethically reprehensible.

What should we do as members of TAA? I am asking every teaching member of TAA to take the following actions:

- Write a letter to your bookstore manager asking them what their position is on the resale of texts that are labeled as an Instructor's Edition, Annotated Version, Examination Copy, Free Copy, and Not For Resale. Copy TAA on the letter and the response you receive.
- Ask your Faculty Senate to discuss the practice of faculty selling textbooks they receive for examination purposes and to develop an Ethics Statement for faculty that condemns the practice.

For its part, TAA will be working with other interested associations to address this issue from the top down. Do your part by gathering information and starting dialogue from the bottom up.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mike Sullivan
TAA President

Author profile: Tim Reed

Teacher helps set agricultural educational standards

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the January 12, 2004 issue of The Telegraph PIASA Illinois

By Josh Stockinger

PIASA ILLINOIS -- Tim Reed's classroom is alive. Trails of ivy cling to its walls, snaking their way from fish tanks and bird cages to the ceiling above them. It is here, in Reed's lab at Southwestern Senior High School, that areas of Illinois' agriculture curriculum are being revised for the first time in more than 10 years.

And it is here that students are getting a sneak peek at the changes Reed is making.

Reed, 32, of Jerseyville, is the high school's career and technical education director and an agriculture instructor. He is also one of a handful of paid professionals who are helping Illinois keep its position as a leader in agriculture education. Reed is the only one from this area. "Illinois is on the forefront of agricultural curriculum," Reed said. "But a lot can happen in plant science and agriculture in 10 years."

In December, Gov. Rod Blagojevich announced the state's agriculture curriculum would be changing. Karen Fraase, agriculture-marketing director for the Illinois Department of Agriculture, said the changes were to be based on the ideas of volunteer agriculture experts and paid professionals, who would update the curriculum based on the industry's changing standards.

Fraase called Illinois' curriculum "cutting edge."

The first phase of the drive calls for experts to examine Biological Science Applications in Agriculture classes, which include the study of animal health and agriculture technology. Later, the state will look at Physical Science Applications in Agriculture classes.

The state developed the BSAA curriculum in the early 1990s. The class counts as required science lab credit for admission to seven major universities in Illinois — including Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Reed's work includes updating the materials teachers use to teach the BSAA classes.

On a laboratory table in Reed's

classroom, a hefty manual, nearly 300 pages long, sits next to an empty compact disc casing. On a computer screen, Reed points out the different tools he has helped design, which guide teachers through various curriculums, such as horticulture and plant and soil science.

The CD will replace the manual, which set teaching standards for 10 years.

"Every agriculture teacher in the state will get one in June," Reed said. Even the most inexperienced teachers should be able to use the CD to guide them in teaching at a level that meets state standards, Reed said. The CD provides teachers with classroom objectives, reading materials, diagrams, tests and achievement assessments.

"They can just print that off," he said. Of the curriculum on the disk, Reed has written on seven topics so far. He also has revised 10 writing assessments for teachers.

The time it takes to publish the material will push back its release to June, Reed said.

Other changes in agricultural education include the update of achievement assessments.

Reed also rewrites the assessments, which he said should help teachers meet state standards, particularly those set under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, by showing them how to evaluate their students' progress.

Reed said having a more standardized system of teaching agriculture was needed in Illinois, where agriculture is a primary industry. He said the changes should make a difference.

"It's a lot more standardized, where in some states, it's wide open," Reed said. "It ends up being a problem when students move."

But Reed said the changes are spilling into other states, as well. In fact, Indiana, Kentucky and Florida were among 14 states that have adopted the Illinois standards already.

Reed said individual teachers also would be able to purchase the curriculum materials, even if their state does not adhere to the Illinois standards.



Photo by James B. Ritter

Southwestern High School agriculture teacher Tim Reed is working with the state of Illinois to update the state's agriculture curriculum.

Southwestern Senior High School has one of the best agriculture programs in the state, Reed said.

The school expects nearly one-third of its 565-student enrollment to sign up for at least one agriculture course throughout a high school career.

Southwestern also is one of only five schools in Illinois to offer a veterinary science program, Reed said. Currently, the courses are taught at three levels.

Reed teaches the courses, which are designed to help students prepare for veterinary studies in college. In his spare time, Reed is writing an agriculture textbook for Prentice Hall-Interstate Publishing, the company that helps fund his curriculum revisions.

He also works with Southwestern's FFA organization, formerly known as Future Farmers of America, which has more than 100 members.

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Texty, McGuffey award winners announced

Six Textbook Excellence Awards (Textys) and four McGuffey Longevity Awards were awarded by the Text and Academic Authors Association in the college and elementary-high school level fields of physical sciences; communications/education/performing arts/visual arts; mathematics statistics; computer science/engineering; and life sciences. The awards were presented at the annual TAA awards banquet April 3 in St. Petersburg, Florida. Each author, including co-authors, and the book's editor or publisher, received a plaque.

TAA thanks the judges for volunteering their time to judge the entries.

The Texty winners for 2004 are:

- *Taking Their Place: Documentary History of Women and Journalism*, 2nd ed., by Maurine H. Beasley and Sheila Gibbons, published by Strata Publishing, Inc. (college level, communications/education/performing arts/visual arts). The judges said: "I picked this up, started reading, and truly wasn't able to put it down."

- "This is an excellent book, one that address two major college disciplines — journalism/communication and women's studies — and it illuminates both."

- "A unique book and quite important in the study of journalism. This new edition has brought the topic up to the 21st century as much as historically possible."

- *The Art of Public Speaking*, 8th ed., by Stephen Lucas, published by McGraw-Hill (college level, communications/education/performing arts/visual arts).

- "This is simply stunning, in all respects. No discernible weaknesses."

- "This textbook program is the most complete approach to public speaking ever. The ancillaries are outstanding, current and offer instructors a plethora of approaches to the design of their course. Absolutely impressive!"

- *Math Trailblazers: A Mathematical Journey Using Science & Language Art*, 2nd ed., by Phil Wagreich, published by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co. (elementary-high school, mathematics/statistics).

The judges said:

- "Recommended for Award!" Of this series, I was very pleased with how well the activities worked with children."

- "Well constructed, based on current standards and research — a yes!"

- "Excellent exposition, very extensive ancillaries and problem sets. Excellent activities for students."

- "This is how mathematics should be taught in the public schools. It has everything!"

- *Precalculus*, 6th ed., by Ron Larson and Robert Hostetler, published by Houghton Mifflin (college level, mathematics/statistics).

The judges said: "Strengths include: logical organization, consistency in the approach of presenting a main mathematical concept, showing how to work with it and then

showing several real-life applications, examples are worked out step-by-step and lots of practice exercises."

- "Every section starts with a short summary 'what you should learn' and 'why you should learn it.' That is very helpful -- giving the students an idea where the course is heading to."

- *Exploring Microsoft Windows XP Volume 1*, 1st ed., by Richard Alan McMahon, Sr., published by Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, Inc. (college level, computer science/engineering).

The judges said:

- "This 4-color text showing computer screens and pull-down menus is excellent. The little windows show you where you may have gone wrong and what the problem may be. I have not seen anything like this before and commend the author for the extra work in providing this."

- "Very appealing and appropriate text. Should be very teachable as it has lots of illustrations, an instructor's CD, a web site plus support for WebCT and Blackboard Chapters have 'Hands-on Exercises', summaries, key terms, multiple choice questions, additional practice and on-your-own projects."

- "Very good for beginning student, can learn on own."

- *Environmental Science: Earth as a Living Planet*, 4th ed., by Daniel B. Botkin and Edward A. Keller, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (college level, life sciences).

The judges said: "One of the best environmental science books on the market. Very student friendly. Very up-to-date, good ancillary package."

- "Very topical, with considerable depth to each subject. Outstanding range of stories, told simply and directly."

- "Book's paper produced by sustained yield harvesting suggest authors are serious about their work. This is a wonderful overview of ecology and our negative impact."

The McGuffey winners for 2004 are:

- *An Introduction to General, Organic, and Biological Chemistry*, 8th ed., by Karen Timberlake, published by Benjamin Cummings/Pearson Education (college level, physical sciences).

The judges said: "The visual appeal is as good as anything I have ever seen. The same is true of the organization. 'Learning goal' sidebars are especially useful. A reader-friendly presentation."

- "The author has nurtured this text through eight editions. I recommend this text for a McGuffey Award!"

- *The Art of Public Speaking*, 8th ed., by Stephen Lucas, published by McGraw-Hill (college level, communications/education/performing arts/visual arts).

The judges said: "This is simply stunning, in all respects. No discernible weaknesses."

- "This textbook program is the most complete approach to public speaking ever. The ancillaries are outstanding, current and offer instructors a plethora of approaches to the design of their course."

- "This is a classic that fully deserves to be recognized with the award of a McGuffey prize —

especially on the twentieth anniversary of the book's first appearance. *The Art of Public Speaking* is a resounding success."

- "Easy to see why this textbook is used in so many institutions of higher learning."

- *Calculus*, 7th ed., by Ron Larson and Robert Hostetler, published by Houghton Mifflin (college level, mathematics/statistics).

The judges said: "This is a very refined text. The basics of exposition, examples and problem sets are well constructed and students will benefit from some excellent embellishments."

- "I liked the additional 'features' such as the opening application and the PS Problem Solving."

- "This book has many strong features."

- *Administrative Medical Assisting*, 5th ed., by Marilyn Fordney, Linda French and Joan Follis, published by Thomson Delmar Learning (college level, life sciences).

The judges said: "I like this textbook very much. It's accessible and wonderfully human in the way it suggests tactful ways of dealing with patients who may not be feeling well. Very clearly written."

- "Makes a complex job seem worthwhile and important. This is a very well-written, comprehensive, and useful (but specialized) book."

- "Very complete! — even to topics such as handling job interviews, check-writing, and ethical considerations. Very up-to-date! Excellent layout that mixes text, how-to side bars, glossary, and summaries of expected behaviors. I learned a lot."

Awards background

TAA designed the McGuffeys, as well as the Texty awards, because text materials did not have awards of their own. TAA created the McGuffey longevity awards in 1993 to recognize textbooks and learning materials whose excellence has been demonstrated over time. To be nominated, a work must have been in print 15 years and still be selling. TAA designed the McGuffeys, as well as the Texty awards, because text materials did not have awards of their own.

The awards bear the name of William Holmes McGuffey, whose influential primers, which first appeared in 1836, helped bring the United States out of frontier illiteracy. McGuffey's Electric Readers, usually called simply McGuffey's Readers, were in print until 1921. Today they remain available in commemorative editions.

There are eight academic subject categories for Textys and McGuffeys.

If there are college and el-hi entries in all eight categories, there is the potential for 16 Textys and 16 McGuffeys to be awarded each year — eight in the college division and eight in the el-hi division. If there are no entries in a category, there are fewer awards. Judges may decide no entries in a category deserve an award.

Greenebaum Expands Intellectual Property Practice Group

Gillen and Krafte Increase IP Group to 13



Stephen E. Gillen, formerly counsel to a large educational publisher, concentrates in publishing deals and disputes, copyright, software development and licensing transactions, Internet, and advertising law.

Lori E. Krafte practices in the areas of trademark and copyright law, including U.S. and foreign prosecution, licensing, due diligence, and enforcement. Her focus also includes publishing and Internet law.

Respected intellectual property attorneys Stephen Gillen and Lori Krafte recently joined Greenebaum's intellectual property practice, one of the fastest growing in the region. Like their colleagues, they are committed to protecting businesses' competitive positions in an ever changing global marketplace. Greenebaum's experienced IP attorneys proactively counsel clients in trademark, patent, copyright and trade secret matters. They represent clients on both sides of licensing and franchise matters, advise publishers and authors, and address the legal challenges facing software manufacturers, Internet service providers and their customers. From securing rights through government agencies, to private negotiations and contracts, to enforcing rights in the courts or through customs, Greenebaum IP attorneys exemplify breakthrough law.

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Math book written with agriculture ed in mind

By Melony Leazer

HOPKINSVILLE, KY—Nearly five years ago, Nina Mitchell began teaching mathematics to students enrolled in the Agriculture Technology program at Hopkinsville Community College.

But Mitchell soon discovered there was no textbook available on the market to teach math for agriculture. For several months, she relied on a manuscript she wrote to teach the class.

With ag tech programs growing in popularity at colleges and universities, Mitchell realized that students and instructors needed a book that applies math to today's farm life. And it had to be accomplished in a way that was concise and simple, eliminating fears students often associate with math.

"I tried to use a general math book, but it was a failure. If you hand a student a 770-page book, they feel defeated before they get started," Mitchell said, recalling the first time she taught math in the ag tech program in 1999. "There was nothing for me to use. And then it just occurred to me, why don't I write one?"

On Dec. 4, 2003, Mitchell's first textbook, *Mathematical Applications in Agriculture*, was published by Delmar Learning, more than four years after work on the book began. It is divided into four parts: basic math concepts, crop production, livestock and agribusiness.

"Once you get through the first three chapters, you can go anywhere in the book because you'll have that basic knowledge," said Mitchell, who traveled across the southeast to learn about various crops.

Each of the sections contains case studies, sample problems, charts and graphs. Plus, a series of short features called "Did You Know?" are scattered throughout the text for extra insight.

Here's a math exercise a student might encounter in Mitchell's new book: "You build a greenhouse 28 feet wide, 80 feet long, 7 feet to the eaves and 15 feet to the ridge cap. How many square feet of plastic does it take to enclose the greenhouse? What is the slope of the roof? What angle does the roof make with the horizontal?" (For answers, see the end of the story.)

One might think that writing a math book would be effortless for Mitchell, whose knowledge in farming and teaching math served as a combined foundation for the project. Raised on a dairy farm, Mitchell later owned and operated a farm, specializing in crop and livestock production.

Also, Mitchell taught high school math for 27 years at Christian County High School, where she covered general mathematics and calculus. In 1990, after retiring from CCHS, she became a math adjunct instructor at HCC, teaching developmental mathematics and mathematics for nursing.

But the process of writing, copyediting and publishing a first book was a new adventure for Mitchell, who relied on local educator Mary Lou McReynolds for proofreading assistance. "I could see the big

picture because of my experience," she said. "But my biggest battle was using the computer. I am not a computer person. I had to fight with it."

Mitchell faced other obstacles as well, from name recognition to finding a publisher. "Everybody was telling me I don't have big letters after my name, and that I never had done anything like this before," she said. "It didn't stop me. I knew I was going to use it to teach."

One of the most significant problems Mitchell encountered was finding someone to review the manuscript. No one wanted to look at her material because there was no other book like it for comparison.

She started calling colleges with respected agriculture departments—Murray State University, Western Kentucky University and Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro—and found success. "I did not get a reject," Mitchell said.

The next step was finding a publishing company, but "the number of textbook publishing companies is equal to the number of fingers on one hand," Mitchell said. She sent her manuscript to four companies for consideration and eventually was awarded a contract from Delmar. Mitchell received her first copy of the book a week before Christmas. "When I got it, I was really proud," Mitchell said. "The whole book process was exciting, but scary, too."

In addition to math agriculture classes at HCC, Mitchell's book is being used as a supplemental text in agri-related curriculum at CCHS. "I pick problems out of it and give it to my students to reinforce what we have learned or as extra credit. It's a good book," said Brad Hawkins, agriculture teacher at CCHS who assisted Mitchell with portions of the book. "If I was teaching a strict ag-math class, this is the book I would use because there is nothing else like it anywhere."

Even farmers might find the book essential as a reference tool. "She's found a niche that we badly need in this area," said Nancy Stratton, owner of Arbor Books. "She's done a lot of research."

Jerry Gilliam, ag tech program coordinator, said Mitchell's book shows how fundamental math is for any subject. "This book sets a good example for other areas that rely on various applications of math," he said. "Her book really enhances student learning."

The math industry's newest author currently is at work on a second book—this time in the area of developmental math, which she also teaches at the college. "The stuff they have out there is garbage," she said of the current textbook offerings. "Why let the gains I've made with the first book go to waste?"

(Answers to math problem: It takes 4,296 square-feet of plastic to enclose the greenhouse. The slope of the roof is .57, and the roof makes a 30-degree angle with the horizontal.)

Mathematical Applications in Agriculture is a softcover textbook with more than 200 pages, published in seven countries including the United States. It sells for \$40.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Sullivan president. The TAA Council announced that current TAA President Mike Sullivan, whose term was set to expire July 1, 2004, will stay on as TAA president one more year. Jay Black, vice president/president elect, informed the Council that he would be unable to assume the position of president in July. Sullivan's term will end July 1, 2005, when newly elected vice president John Wakefield assumes the office of president, one year earlier than planned.

TAA elections. Since the TAA Nomination Committee received only one nomination for each open council position, it has declared the nominated candidates elected by acclamation. The following will assume office effective July 1, 2004: John Wakefield, Vice President/President Elect; Robert Christopherson, Treasurer; Steve Gillen, Council Member; Jim Prekeges, Council Member.

New employee. TAA hired Aaron Gregerson as advertising manager for *The Academic Author*. If you would like to place an ad in the next issue of *The Academic Author*. Please contact Aaron at: AMGreger5431@webmail.winona.edu

President interviewed. TAA President Mike Sullivan was interviewed for an article on academic authoring issues for the April issue of *Information Today*, a monthly print magazine that covers late-breaking news and long-term trends in the information industry.

Flynn dies. Ida Moretti Flynn, an award-winning University of Pittsburgh educator, researcher, and computer science author died on Monday, April 12 at age 62 of metastasized breast cancer. She was the author of *Understanding Operating Systems*, now in its third edition. It won TAA's Textbook Excellence Award in 2001. She also served as associate editor and contributing author for Macmillan's encyclopedia, *Computer Sciences*, a four-volume set written for high school students. Flynn also wrote numerous journal articles and a book chapter and made several conference presentations on information retrieval and multimedia systems, particularly for young writers.

Price drop. Elsevier imprint Morgan Kaufmann, which publishes computer science and engineering books, has adopted a new pricing and packaging strategy to promote fair textbook pricing in international markets. The third edition of the bestselling *Computer Organization and Design: The Hardware/Software Interface*, co-authored by John Hennessy, president of Stanford University, and David Patterson, Pardee chair of Computer Science at the University of California, Berkeley, is scheduled for release in August and will be sold in a single worldwide edition for \$64.95 U.S. This new global pricing and packaging strategy marks a departure from the industry practice of multi-market pricing and is designed to discourage reimporting and used textbook sales.

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Elliott, Walters illustrate how to simplify language

by Brandi Palmer

University of South Florida professors Deni Elliott, Poynter-Jamison chair of media ethics and press policy, and Mark Walters, author of the recent book, *Six Modern Plagues and How We Are Causing Them*, led a TAA convention panel on simplifying language. The two discussed what makes an effective communicator and addressed the value of simplifying complex ideas for real-life application. They referred to this as the “KISS method”, or “Keeping It Simple is Smart.”

Elliott used examples from a documentary film about the burden of knowledge and her weekly radio talk show, “Ethically Speaking”, to illustrate how difficult abstract concepts can be distilled into breathing models of ethics and morality. Elliott suggested that most textbooks in her field are impractical. Instead, she advocates the use of simple analogies to illustrate complex philosophical concepts, in an attempt to give morality a practical application. Elliott’s documentary film, for example, concerns the burden of responsibility imposed on a mother who has knowledge about her unborn child’s disability. Elliott asks what the mother does with that knowledge, coupled with ethical responsibility. She has also used the many hands analogy to illustrate moral responsibility.

She asked the TAA scholars, “If you are one of many hands involved in torturing someone, are you responsible for the torture?”

Elliott made a plea for the practice of philosophy, asking the audience of her peers not to reduce philosophical theories to bumper stickers. She stressed the importance of keeping philosophy close at hand, familiar, as a tool for

translating the practical experiences of everyday life.

“It is not so much a mystique, as much as really trying to communicate,” she said.

Walters talked about tackling tough ideas from science with ordinary language. Walters’ talk elaborated on the difference between the expert and the expert writer. He warned against sacrificing clear communication to elevated language. “Be humble and write well. Elevate your status, disenfranchise the reader.” he said.

He illustrated the etymology of language, warning against the use of obtuse, Latinate words where more Germanic phrases could be more effective. He talked about keeping sentences simple in order to communicate complex ideas. Walters attempted to demystify language, breaking down complex ideas by using simple language. He explored the idea of using the narrative as an effective tool in chiseling away the chaff of unapproachable information. He chalked a diagram to illustrate the intrinsic universality of language. He drew the connection between ideas with a simple line drawing chalked on the board that parallels a phrase.

“All non-fiction prose writing exists along a single continuum,” he said, illustrating complex language in a simple gesture.

In his most recent book, Walters links the abstract concept of epidemic and a vast base of scientific research to a non-fiction story line where the reader encounters real people. He talked about using interwoven story lines to knit together the topic of epidemic for his reader. His latest book, an investigation into the nature of ecology and epidemic, explains complex scientific concepts to a broad, non-expert audience.

Pilot project. Dell, Inc. hopes to take the burden of heavy textbooks off the shoulders of students with its Book Locker Pilot Project, which will test an alternative to print textbooks: a Universal Serial Bus (USB) storage device about the size of a pack of gum that can hold up to 20 textbooks’ worth of content. The USB device can be plugged into any computer.

Text report. According to a report conducted by the California Student Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG), the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG) and the OSPIRG Foundation, college students pay an average of \$900 per year for textbooks and publishers engage in market practices that drive up the price. Other findings: Half of all textbooks now come “bundled” or shrink-wrapped with additional instructional materials; more than 65 percent of the faculty surveyed for the report say they “rarely” or “never” use the bundled materials in their courses; and textbook publishers put new editions on the market frequently — often with very few content changes — making less expensive used textbooks obsolete and unavailable. For the complete report, visit www.pirg.org/highered

Copyright suit. The University of Chicago Press, Princeton University Press, Elsevier, inc., Pearson Education, John Wiley & Sons

and SAGE Publications filed a copyright infringement suit in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas in Austin against the owners of three Austin, Texas printing companies. The publishers say that Netpaks, Abel’s Copies and Speedway Copying regularly duplicated and distributed copyrighted college course materials without obtaining permission, with Netpaks offering the content online.

Cheaper textbooks. In response to student and instructor demand for quality learning materials at lower prices, Thomson Higher Education will produce a new line of lower-priced texts as well as digital versions of texts. The Advantage Series, a comprehensive selection of lower-priced texts and electronic solutions in the fields of humanities, behavioral and social sciences, sciences, and mathematics, will be offered at 25 percent below the price of typical hardcover texts. Digital Discounts will provide special limited-time offers on digital versions of selected leading Thomson Higher Education texts. The new line of texts will be available in summer and/or fall 2004.

New features. McGraw-Hill Primis Online users can now add their own documents directly within the finished Primis Custom text and send the completed text to Primis Online’s eBookstore, where students can purchase and download the custom texts as eBooks. The new

Quality key to tenure, promotion

by Brandi Palmer

Mark Durand, professor of psychology and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at USF St. Petersburg, and Robert Diamond, author, higher education consultant and president of the National Academy for Academic Leadership, discussed what accomplishments beyond an impressive volume of publications should contribute to faculty scholarship in a TAA convention talk entitled, “Publication, Scholarship, Tenure, and Promotion.”

“Are you having an impact in your field?” Durand asked the roomful of scholars. Durand addressed the need to turn to experts to determine the work with impact. “A dean can only count,” he said, referring to the number of published accomplishments considered in determining tenure. Durand highlighted the need to find the quality work in the quantity of publications. He examined some of the hierarchy of professorship, advising the assistant professor to concentrate on research and to be a model for students. “We are looking for someone who attends to their students, and is a good scholar” Durand said.

Local Content Upload feature, implemented by Fallon Consultants, Inc., and created by McGraw-Hill/Primis Custom Publishing, will allow users to upload documents in over two hundred popular file formats, which are automatically converted to the format used by Primis Online. For more information, visit www.mhhe.com/primis/online

3-D Imaging. New Mexico Tech electrical engineering Professor Stephen Bruder has developed a new online robotics textbook that utilizes 3-D imaging. *An Introduction to Robotic Manipulators — An Online Course in Robotics*, which will be used this fall in a New Mexico Tech senior-level robotics course, is free to anyone who wants to use it www.isrg.nmt.edu/robotics_class

Undergrad research. The University of Michigan announced the creation of a student-run undergraduate research journal. *Undergraduate Research Forum* will be a multidisciplinary journal that will include student-written articles on various topics in various fields. It is being financed through sponsorships by the Office for the Vice President of Research, Women in Science and Engineering and others. To view a copy of the first issue of the journal, visit www.umich.edu/~umforum

TAA Standing Committees contact information

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