From the Co-Director

Dear Colleague,

As we forge ahead in the new academic year, the co-directors are pleased to report that over the summer the Discovery Learning Center continued to thrive and move forward as a result of the involvement and enthusiasm of our Affiliates and staff. The DLC has its first seed grants, which are helping to grow interdisciplinary discovery projects to the point where they can compete for external funding. Several teams have submitted proposals and competed in site visits with DLC assistance. Existing projects such as "Interns for Indiana" have emerged successfully from their startup phases, and we are closing in on the next stage of our building project - working with architects to come up with a design that includes all of the spaces and facilities our task force identified to advance the mission of the DLC. We look forward to working and growing with you as the Learning Center enters this exciting period of growth.

Jon Harbor, Co-Director, Discovery Learning Center

What's Happening in the Learning Center?

"Connection, collaboration, and completion" is the mantra of the Discovery Learning Center. Since the Center's inception in March 2003, DLC has worked at bringing people together, shaping practices that help rather than hinder working across disciplines and across schools, and funneling the work into actual grant applications. Discovery Learning Center supports the creation of large, multidisciplinary projects by serving as the proposal creation administrator and coordinator. Once grants are awarded, DLC provides assistance in project initiation and project management. This newsletter summarizes some of DLCs recent activities and other information of interest to DLC affiliates. For specific information about DLC programs and initiatives or additional information about how the Discovery Learning Center can work with you, visit the DLC webpage (www.purdue.edu/dp).

Designing a Home

This is an exciting time for the Discovery Learning Center as we begin the transition from "virtual" to "physical"! The DLC Advisory Committee is in the process of interviewing Architectural and Engineering firms and drafting a detailed Academic Program Statement to guide the design and construction of the Learning Center. Our new building will be located west of Lilly Hall adjacent to the old horse barn, south of Russell on State Street, which currently serves as the Grounds Maintenance Building. We hope to break ground in 2005 and complete construction early in 2007. Stay tuned for updates as the planning accelerates.

We're Moving

We're looking forward moving into our permanent home when the Discovery Learning Center building is completed in 2007. In the meantime, DLC will move from temporary office space in ENAD to a lovely first floor office in Hovde late in September. Stop by for a visit and check out the view of the Engineering Mall and fountain from our window!

Growing

DLC is pleased to welcome 325 affiliates representing Purdue University, other academic institutions, the K-12 community, the business community, and others with an interest in education. Affiliates receive notification of DLC events and
opportunities, grant, seminar, workshop, and project announcements, and other information that may be of interest. In addition, Purdue affiliates are eligible for DLC aid in project preparation and management and participation in other DLC activities. You can become an affiliate by completing the on-line registration form found on the DLC website (www.purdue.edu/dp).

Proposal Update
Proposal support is a primary activity of the DLC. In the first 8 months of 2004, the Learning Center has supported the submission of eleven external proposals, for an excess of $43.7 million dollars. Three of these grants have been awarded, two are in the final budget negotiation stage, and three are currently in review. Abstracts of funded projects are available on the DLC website. Please contact the Discovery Learning Center to talk about your project ideas.

Undergraduate Research Center Comes to Purdue
Gabriela Weaver, Chemistry, is PI on a recently funded NSF Undergraduate Research Center Award establishing the Center for Authentic Science Practice in Education (CASPiE) in collaboration with the University of Illinois Chicago, Ball State University, Northeastern Illinois University, and several community colleges. This Center, the first and only funded by NSF, will address major barriers to providing research experiences to younger and diverse undergraduate science students while enhancing research capacity of participating institutions. To achieve these goals the Center will develop a laboratory course sequence in which students carry out 2 to 3 research-based projects in a single semester. The projects are developed by research faculty working in collaboration with PUI and community college faculty and will be used in courses taught at all of the Center collaborating institutions. The Center will also establish an online network of instruments to provide access on a 24/7 basis to advanced research-level instrumentation for all students involved in the activities of the Center.

Soooo Close
"It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed." (Theodore Roosevelt, Chicago, Illinois, April 10, 1899). Teddy Roosevelt wasn't talking about grant proposals, but the sentiment seems applicable. The recent DLC sponsored Engineering-2-Education Design Center proposal, submitted to NSF in response to the Center for Learning and Teaching call for proposals, made it to final stage of review. The project team, headed by Kamyar Haghighi in Engineering Education, participated in a reverse site visit at NSF headquarters in Washington. Although the project wasn't funded, the process and the reviews provide insight that will be invaluable in future project development. Kudos to the E-2-E team for all their hard work.

First Seed Grants Awarded
Congratulations to Sorin Matei (Communications) and Jennifer Richardson (Curriculum and Instruction), winners of the first Discovery Learning Center Seed Grant competition! This competition is intended to stimulate innovation and research in interdisciplinary teaching and learning; encourage implementation tests of new teaching and learning initiatives based on research into discovery-based learning; and develop learning initiatives that build on Discovery Park research programs. Seed grant funds support early stage development of projects with potential for significant external funding. Richardson's project, Socially Constructed Knowledge in
Online Learning Environments: Student Scaffolding Strategies and Peer Feedback in Discussions, will provide insight into the efficacy of on-line course development by examining how knowledge is created in online learning environments through asynchronous discussions and through scaffolding of knowledge and skills in these discussion forums. Matei's project will collect preliminary data to support an NSF proposal examining issues related to the social impacts of using new communication methods (made possible by the advent of wireless Internet connectivity) to deliver location-aware information.

**Growing Jobs, Training Students**

DLC is leading the Interns for Indiana component of Purdue’s Opportunities for Indiana program. Funded by the Lilly Endowment, this project seeks innovative ways to keep Indiana's college graduates in Indiana. This summer's pilot placed 38 interns in 27 companies across the state. The Interns for Indiana program offers students a unique opportunity to learn about the business world through a combination of education and experience. Through a seminar series and other activities, students will explore entrepreneurial issues and skills, have opportunities to network and develop as a community, and earn up to 2 academic credits. In addition, participating students will be eligible for placement in paid internships (up to a maximum of $8000/year) with start-up companies. DLC is currently seeking interested students and companies. For more information or to nominate a student, visit the DLC website ([www.purdue.edu/dp](http://www.purdue.edu/dp)) or call Intern Coordinator Kim Tobiason (496-1820).

**What Does it Mean?**

Evaluation, research, and assessment - we've all heard about it, but few of us know what it really means or how to do it effectively. DLC, in collaboration with the Assessment Research Center and the Office of the Vice Provost for Research, is working to identify and make available resources to help Purdue faculty and staff make better use of assessment, research, and evaluation (ARE) to enhance all aspects of the University’s discovery, learning and engagement missions. Visit the new ARE website accessible from the DLC webpage ([www.purdue.edu/dp](http://www.purdue.edu/dp)) for background and introductory information, tools, links, and more. Watch for a special ARE workshop featuring world renown experts coming in the spring.

**HAPPY NEW SCHOOL YEAR!**