



1956 - 2008
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Autumn 2008

message from the chair

We had quite a summer here in Iowa City with record floods inundating much of the campus as well as other areas of the city. We were fortunate in Communication Sciences and Disorders in that our building is well away from the river and consequently the Department did not suffer direct effects of the flood waters. Still, I suspect that everyone had relatives or friends whose homes or businesses were affected by the flood. The peak of the flood came just as we were completing several summer programs here at WJSHC. Getting the children home turned out to be a bit of a task, with many of the roads closed around Iowa City and the state. Several from out of state were airlifted out by Angel Flight. Because of access and power issues, we were closed completely for a week in summer session and with limited activity for a period following that.

While the river has receded, the effects on individuals' lives and on the campus community will be felt for quite a long time. Our colleagues on the arts campus are particularly hard hit. We are hosting the classes in music therapy at WJSHC for the coming year and will likely continue for a longer period. Other music programs are being housed all over the city in storefronts, churches and schools. The latest information that I have heard is that it may be several years before many of the displaced programs in music, art and theatre are back in permanent facilities.

Life goes on though. The fall semester has brought us an excellent group of new students into all of our programs. The undergraduate program continues to generate a great deal of interest and now has over 200 majors, a high in recent years.

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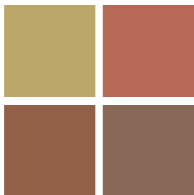
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Gordon awarded research funds to define wisdom

Jean K. Gordon is among 23 researchers worldwide who have received grants from the University of Chicago, with funding from the John Templeton Foundation, to study the nature and benefits of wisdom. As a whole, the "Defining Wisdom" project is a \$2 million research program within the Arete Initiative at the University of Chicago. More than 600 applicants submitted proposals for grant funding.

Gordon will receive a two-year, \$99,700 grant to examine the relationship between language use and perceived wisdom. Gordon's study will analyze ways in which people rate wisdom through an assessment of fluency, grammatical complexity and vocabulary.

"I think wisdom is in the mind of the beholder," Gordon said. "It's not some abstract concept for which we can come up with one definition."

By examining the correlation between language and wisdom, Gordon hopes this study will provide evidence of how language changes with age and how those changes influence the way an individual is perceived.

"If we can figure out what influences the perception of wisdom, then we might have a better understanding of how wisdom is passed on," Gordon said.

The 23 grant recipients will reconvene annually over the next two years to discuss their research and findings. The colleagues will also participate in quarterly conference calls to share ideas. Grant recipients are from a vast array of disciplines ranging from neuroscience to philosophy.

"The big question is: how do we define wisdom?" Gordon said. She explained the initiative's goal is not to understand wisdom through individual projects, but to bring researchers together to discover numerous ways of understanding and measuring wisdom.

"By coming at the question from all of these perspectives, I think that's really a valuable way to attack a big question like this," Gordon said.

Lauris Kaldjian, director of the Program in Bioethics and Humanities and associate professor of internal medicine, is another UI participant in the project. He will develop a framework of wisdom for the medical practitioner.

- excerpted from *UI Health Science Relations* article

Bentler garners DOE funding

While the need for advancement in technologies such as hearing aids, cochlear implants and supplementary hearing technologies is pressing, there is an equally important need for better methods of fitting hearing technology, and an even greater need for better methods of providing accessible and affordable aural rehabilitation services that enable people with hearing loss to make maximum use of technology in their natural environments.

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, a component of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at the U.S. Department of Education, recently announced a 5-year funding cycle for Gallaudet University's Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Hearing Enhancement. Ruth Bentler is a collaborator on that grant. Two series of projects will be carried out over the next five years: one is to assess the impact of hearing aid service provision on patient outcomes, and, two: to assess factors to explain the lack of real-world effectiveness of directional microphone hearing aids.

Yu-Hsiang Wu, a postdoctoral fellow in Bentler's lab, is a co-investigator in the effort.

personnel

Faculty

Abbas, Paul, *Department Chair*
Akeson, Marcia
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Cilek, Toni
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Finnegan, Eileen
Fleckenstein, Stephanie
Gfeller, Kate
Goodman, Shawn
Gordon, Jean K.
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Hurtig, Richard
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Karnell, Michael
Kelsay, Danielle
Klemuk, Sarah
Louko, Linda
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Miller, Charles
Moon, Jerald
Niebuhr, Diane
Owen, Amanda
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Tyler, Richard
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Zebrowski, Patricia

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Zebrowski part of video project

Tricia Zebrowski is one of five nationally recognized experts appearing on a video / DVD, entitled *Therapy in Action: The School-age Child Who Stutters*. It is distributed free of charge to public libraries nationwide by the Stuttering Foundation.

The video also features students from first through sixth grade, some of whom talk about their experiences with stuttering. They talk openly about the teasing they face from classmates and how their stuttering sometimes makes them feel about themselves. The content, developed for speech-language pathologists, teachers and parents, focuses on demonstrating a variety of therapy strategies that are appropriate in working with children who stutter.

faculty profile

Sandie Bass-Ringdahl joined the faculty in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at The University of Iowa in 2003. Before accepting her current academic position, she worked with Iowa's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program as well as with the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics' Cochlear Implant Team in the Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery.

Sandie has a long-standing interest in the early identification and intervention of childhood hearing impairment stemming back to her work as a pediatric audiologist at Temple Children's Hospital in Philadelphia. During that time, she managed Temple's newborn hearing screening program and worked with a grant to determine the barriers to follow-up and possible solutions for newborn hearing screening conducted in a large, urban area.

Currently, her research interests include the early speech development of infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing as well as early identification and aural (re)habilitation of hearing impairment. In terms of early speech development, she is currently studying vocal emergence in children who receive unilateral and bilateral cochlear implants at The University of Iowa. She is also forging relationships with faculty at the Center for Disabilities and Development to study early speech development in children with multiple disabilities who are receiving treatment for self injurious behavior and/or functional communication training.

Regarding the habilitation of children who are deaf or hard of hearing, Sandie participates as faculty in the Department's Focus on Communication and Understanding of Speech (FOCUS) seminar offered at least three times per year. This intensive one-day seminar is intended to provide families of young children who are deaf or hard of hearing with assessment and recommendations for intervention in the areas of auditory, speech, language and literacy development. She also teaches the coursework in the area of aural (re)habilitation and educational audiology for the Department's undergraduate and graduate students.

In the future, Sandie plans to continue the study of early speech development and to expand that work into the area of barriers to early intervention. Toward that end, Sandie is an investigator on a new NIH, multi-center grant led by Drs. J. Bruce Tomblin and Mary Pat Moeller to study outcomes in children who are hard of hearing. (See page 5.) Sandie plans to study barriers to hearing aid compliance and impact on speech, language and auditory development in this population of children.



Tomblin leads major NIH grant

To date, most research on childhood hearing loss has focused on severe to profound hearing loss that constitutes deafness. But a five-year, \$8.9 million grant to Iowa from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders will help further research on milder hearing loss in preschool children.



Children with milder hearing loss have hearing thresholds in the 26-75 decibel range, compared to the normal threshold of 0-20 decibels. Often they are fitted with hearing aids, and with speech and educational intervention, can develop spoken language, explained the grant's principal investigator J. Bruce Tomblin. "It's obviously been very important to study the communication challenges faced by children who are deaf and determine how to help them gain communication skills. However, much less is known about the impact of milder forms of hearing loss on children's ability to communicate, succeed in school, and have good social and psychological development."

The grant will help UI researchers, along with colleagues at Boys Town National Research Hospital and the University of North Carolina, explore whether educational and audiological services and aids can improve outcomes for young children with mild and moderate hearing disorders.

"We hope to better understand the factors that affect the development of children with early-identified hearing loss, so that treatment might be refined," Tomblin said. "The results may affect early intervention and fitting of amplification devices in infants and young children."

Mary Pat Moeller, director of childhood deafness at Boys Town National Research Hospital, is serving as the study's co-principal investigator. In addition to Tomblin, faculty colleagues involved in the study are Lenore Holte, Ruth Bentler and Sandie Bass-Ringdahl.

- excerpted from UI Health Science Relations article

Message from the chair (continued)

Last year we received approval from the graduate college to offer a combined AuD / PhD degree. We are quite pleased that we presently have four students who are either continuing in the PhD program after completing the AuD or are pursuing the joint degree. We are planning a push to recruit more students into the PhD program. We will be at ASHA in Chicago to stress particular areas in our program, including the PhD / AuD joint degree, the Center for Developmental and Learning Sciences, the Voice and Speech Collaboration as well as our doctoral training grant that funds students interested in molecular biology or cochlear implants. If you know of anyone thinking about doctoral work, please have that individual contact us. Our graduates are usually our best recruiters.

Finally, we will be recruiting a new clinical faculty member in the coming months. This is an important opportunity to enhance our clinical teaching program. We also have successfully recruited Karen Kirk, most recently at Purdue University, to join our faculty. She will start at Iowa in August 2009. She will be an important contributor to our teaching and research program, and it will be great to have her back in Iowa City.

- Paul Abbas

alumni honored

Sheila Pratt (PhD, 1988) will be named an ASHA Fellow at the 2008 ASHA convention in Chicago.



Fuh-Cherng Jeng (PhD, 2006) was one of five new faculty members to be awarded ASHA's 2008 Advancing Academic-Research Career (AARC) Awards. Fuh-Cherng is an assistant professor in the

School of Hearing, Speech and Language Sciences at Ohio University. The AARC award program is aimed at reducing the shortage of PhD-level faculty in communication sciences and disorders. The monetary awards encourage new faculty who are at the beginning of their research careers to remain in higher education. The awarded funds may be used to support activities such as mentoring research in students, conducting personal research, improving teaching knowledge and skills, preparing a grant application, preparing publications or presenting at professional meetings.



Ted Madison (BS, 1982) was honored with the Michael Beall Threadgill Award by the National Hearing Conservation Association at the AHCA meeting in February. The award was established to

honor individuals who have contributed significantly to the growth and continuing excellence of the NHCA with an outstanding commitment of time and effort. Madison has formerly served as treasurer and president of NHCA, and he is currently the liaison to ASHA. Other professional involvement includes membership in the ANSI S-12 Working Group 11, serving on the Noise Committee of the American Industrial Hygiene Association. He is a member of the International Safety Equipment Association, American Auditory Society, Acoustical Society of America and is a fellow of the American Academy of Audiology.

help us maintain our tradition of excellence

UI Foundation funds and awards established over the years attract excellent students and help them achieve their goals. The following awards were announced in Fall 2008.

Laurel Stanzel Award for Outstanding Graduate Student in Audiology **Paula Gay, James Lewis Shirley and Thomas Salmon Award** **Rachel Olson**

Leland and Esther Ogdahl Award (Graduate) **Katie Barnett**

Kristin Lodge-Miller Award **Megan Slater**

Leland and Esther Ogdahl Award (Undergraduate) **Ben Oakes, Stephanie Nielsen**

Bette Williams Scholarship in Clinical Fluency **Jenna Lee**

Bette R. Priestestersbach Award **Meagan Cole**

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connections

We're committed to keeping the communication channel open between alumni, friends and former faculty of the Department to our current students, faculty and staff. We hope you will read, enjoy and respond to this newsletter. We also encourage you to visit the department website at www.uiowa.edu/~comsci to keep up to date with your former colleagues and current Departmental news. If you have not already done so, consider returning the completed form below to us via mail or FAX 319.335-8851. You may also Email speech-path-aud@uiowa.edu, using "my news" as a subject line. We'd enjoy hearing from you, and if you agree, we will publish your news in the Alumni Updates section.

keep in touch

Name _____

Degree / year earned _____

Current job _____

Your news _____

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