

ACC makes valiant effort to pull ahead in educational race

TINA WILLIAMS  
Features Editor

After a successful pilot run with courses in the Business Information Systems curriculum, two courses are now underway via the internet: Spreadsheet I, II, and III and Language and Reason.

Ms. Lee Kirkpatrick, Instructor and Chair of the Business/Public Service Department, conducted the first on-line classes last semester. Eleven students took CIS 171, 172, and 173. Kirkpatrick called those students the "guinea pigs" and spent the semester "working out some of the bugs [that come with teaching class on-line]" The courses were considered a success and Kirkpatrick is currently teaching the same on-line SpreadSheet courses to 28 students this semester.

The second ACC internet course, PHL 125 Language and Reason, is currently being taught

by Mr. Terry Hall, Instructor of Humanities and Philosophy. The class accommodates 16 students who Hall said "had particularly pressing reasons why they couldn't take the class on campus." This is Hall's first semester teaching an on-line course.

Although on-line courses are extremely time consuming for the instructors (Kirkpatrick answered over 300 e-mail messages last semester), the student benefits are plentiful. The cyber classes cut down on traveling time for commuting students. According to Kirkpatrick, the majority of her students live outside of Alpena. Students can also go at their own pace, taking as much or as little time needed to learn the lessons. The classes have also solved scheduling difficulties.

"We've always struggled with trying to serve the day time students and the night time students," Kirkpatrick said. "With on-line classes we can

serve both."

Students must possess certain qualities to be successful on-line learners. Hall and Kirkpatrick agree a student must be comfortable with a computer and understand basic skills such as e-mailing, sending attachments, and using the internet.

Students aspiring to take on-line classes must also be self-motivated. Because there is no scheduled time for classes, it can be easier for the procrastinators to fall behind.

Mr. Hall's class is actually set up so students must log on every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. He is trying to make it as close to his on campus class as possible. Before Hall began teaching on-line he thought he would miss the face-to-face contact with his students, but he doesn't.

"I think I'm feeling a personal connection with my on-line students...I think in some ways you get a more intimate communication [with them]," Hall

said.

He would like to see more on-line classes being offered by ACC, "If we don't do this, we're going to loose students. I think we're behind."

There is a Michigan Virtual College where students can take a variety of on-line classes from many other community colleges in the state. If Alpena doesn't offer internet courses, students will take them from the other schools.

More on-line classes are being developed by ACC staff this semester: BIS 171 Medical Transcription, CIS 120 Introduction to Microcomputers and CIS 260 DataBase. ACC classes on-line are found at <http://coursesites.blackboard.com>. For more information students can log-on to blackboard with limited guest access and view course descriptions and summaries.

ACC gets down and dirty

RYAN RUBY  
CHERYL BEHNKE  
Staff Writers

The Beaver Island Program is apart of ACC's field biology class. It includes the study of nature through the collection of plants and animals in their natural habitats. The instructor for the course is Debra Hautau.

Beaver Island is located off the coast of Lake Michigan and is about 2 1/2 hours from Charlevoix by ferry. Beaver Island was chosen for use in this class because of its variety of habitats in a small area.

The class will make a ten day trip to the island to study its life and habitats. They will stay at the CMU Biology station on

Beaver Island. This class will be offered as a regular 3 credit course this summer. Tuition is the same as other ACC classes. It also includes a \$250 fee for ten day accommodation and transportation to, from, and on Beaver Island

The class is open to all ACC students, but there is only room for 18 at this time. This is a trial run for the class and if it goes well, it will be offered again in the future.

The instructors are currently working to make it possible for students to receive graduate credit for this class through CMU.

SPEAKER SERIES

Debra Danko will be featured in the ACC speaker series on Tuesday, February 6 at 10 a.m. Debra will be displaying her floral art quilts that have captured the attention of art enthusiasts around the country. In a lecture and slide presentation, she will share her love of gardens through her artwork. This presentation will take place in the ACC Granum Theatre. The public is invited.

SPOTLIGHT SERIES

The ACC Spotlight series will be featuring Mogue Doyle, an Irish pub band, on March 10. The spring semester ACC Jazz Ensemble will perform with Kathy Kosins on April 3. Mark Breckenridge instructs the Jazz Ensemble. Jazz Ensemble is a class that is offered up to four semesters during the students stay at ACC. Each semester culminates in a performance. Both shows will also take place in the Granum Theatre at 7:30 p.m.

For tickets or more information call 356-9021, extension 373.

WHAT'Z UP!

FILM SERIES

A film series on Africa will be presented in the Besser Technical Center on February 8 and March 1. Show times are at 6:30 p.m. A discussion follows each film. All are welcome to attend.

AN EVENING WITH THE ARTS

The ACC art department will again present "An Evening with the Arts" on April 27 from 7 to 9 p.m. This annual art exhibit will feature artwork from all ACC fine arts and photography students. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

LUMBERJACK OF THE MONTH

The Lumberjack of the Month for December was Carol Putkamer, instructor of the business and health information classes at ACC. She has been working at ACC for two years. Carol grew up in Alpena and is a graduate of ACC. Her favorite part about working at ACC is interacting with the students and staff.

This award is specially intended for a staff member of

the college. Winners get to choose their own parking place anywhere on campus, their name flashes on the electronic sign in front of the college, they get a night's stay at the Holiday Inn with a guest with dinner included, and they can refill a coffee mug anywhere on campus for free for the month. Their name goes on the plaque near the library, and the college plants a tree on campus in their honor. Nominations for Lumberjack of the Month can be made by anyone.

Homeless children forced to fend for their own education



MICHEAL PURGIEL  
Editorial Writer

According to the National Coalition For the Homeless, metropolitan cities in America report that better than twenty-five percent of America's homeless population is comprised of children. The average age of America's Homeless population is nine years of age.

The typical profile of a parent of a homeless child is that of a young single mother who left school before reaching the tenth grade, and has a sixth grade reading level. Their lack of education may make the parent feel alienated from school. This often makes them unable to reinforce their children's education. The parent's lack of education is the beginning of a number of hurdles that a homeless child must overcome on their path to an education.

There are also bureaucratic hurdles that spring up in the homeless child's path. Most state and local laws typically require students to prove permanent residence within a school district, even though "The Stuart B.

McKinney Homeless Assistance Act" states that homeless children do not need a permanent address to enroll in school. It does not make a difference if the child lives in an abandoned house, a motel,

car, or homeless shelter. They are entitled to the same educational opportunities as other children.

They have a choice of school placement, and may stay at the same school they attended before they became homeless or enroll in a school in the area they are temporarily living.

The law sounds good in theory but in most cases a homeless child must go to enroll in a new school without being accompanied by a parent or adult. Since an adult that knows exactly what the child's rights are is often absent, the child is left on their own to deal with a school official.

What would you think if you walked into a school and someone sitting behind a desk started demanding things that you knew were nearly impossible for you to obtain. In some states and cities school policy dictates that a student must have immunization records, birth certificates, and other records that are hard for a homeless student to obtain.

The Mc Kinney Act states that a child cannot be denied admissions to school because school records or other documentation cannot be immediately provided, but it does not stop schools from asking. I have never seen a homeless child with a cell phone attached to their belt, or a fax machine available to them.

Almost immediately after they are given the list of things that are required to register for school, they just give up. There are a whole lot of things more important to a homeless child than standing around trying to

collect paperwork and argue with an adult who is more concerned with proper procedure than with their well being.

The child is thinking about things they can fix or make better. They are thinking about their family, food, a place to sleep, and what the state agency will do when they find out about their situation. Will the state break their family up? Put them all into different homes or shelters? Maybe take away their mother's parental rights? A homeless child does not have time to think about their education.

In almost every city and state where homelessness has become a major problem, there are people who are considered to be advocates for the homeless. Why not put them in the schools or place them on call to help these children register for school. Most schools have a counselor or social worker on staff, so why can't they help these children with registration? A counselor's job is to counsel right? Make the child's registration as quick and as painless as possible? Once you get the child in school, then take care of the rest of their problems. Getting the child in school and keeping them there is the biggest part of the struggle.

Homeless children have a right to participate in all federal, state or local programs and activities for which they are eligible. The child should be tested and their learning skills should be evaluated. The lack of such testing has been a problem in the past because a homeless child is usually not at the same level in their education as their peers.

In the past, a lot of homeless children have been placed into special education classes, which puts un-needed strain on both the system and the child. The homeless child may need extra help in catching up in their classes, but many are by no means mentally handicapped.

Homeless children cannot be isolated or separated from the main school environment solely because of their homelessness. If they are, they have the right to receive prompt resolution to any dispute regarding their educational placement.

One of the biggest problems these children have in receiving an education is that they and their parents lack the knowledge of the laws that guarantee them the right to fair and equal treatment in our schools.

I don't imagine that a homeless parent is too concerned with current legislation. In a lot of cases the parent does not have time to care if the children go to school or not. They worry about food to eat and where their children are going to sleep at night.

This is why local and federal Governments, and school systems, must work together to help homeless children and their families move beyond the crisis which is homelessness. Specialized tutoring must be provided along with some sort of counseling for both the child and the parent.

Everyone has to realize that they or someone they know are not that far removed from being in the same situation. A lingering illness, a plant closing; it does not take much to put anyone in dire

The Polemic will now be accepting Classified ads for two dollars an ad

35 words or less For More info. ext. 264

Attention Students

Food For Thought will closed after 1:30 pm

Your Total Printing Professionals  
**MODEL PRINTING SERVICE**  
829 W. CHISHOLM ALPENA, MI 49707  
e-mail: [model@freeway.net](mailto:model@freeway.net)  
[www.modelprintingservice.com](http://www.modelprintingservice.com)  
PHONE: (517) 356-0834  
FAX: (517) 356-2123  
ED KLIMCZAK  
Owner

517-356-4664  
**SOPHISTICUTS SALON**  
Spa Facials Customized Haircutting  
Spa Manicures Outstanding Haircolor  
Spa Pedicures Massage Therapy  
Cindy and Bill  
106 N. Third st. \$5.00 off any Service with Student I.D.  
Alpena, Mi 49707 Thru 3-31-01  
[www.deepnet.com/sophcuts](http://www.deepnet.com/sophcuts)

