



Take a closer look
at poetry with
Katie Bickham:
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SAB stresses relaxation for Dead Week

Jennifer Middleton
STAFF WRITER

As the semester begins to wind down, students are becoming increasingly wound up. Multiple final projects with looming deadlines can weigh heavily on the minds of even the most conscientious students, but LSU Shreveport’s Student Activities Board can help.

Advisor Angel Martin explained what the SAB does each year in the weeks leading up to final exams.

“We do a stress-free zone,” Martin said. “[It] is just activities. It’s not necessarily centered around a specific seminar topic, it’s just to help students kind of decompress and get ready for finals, and we do that [during] Dead Week.”

In most fall semesters, Dead Week immediately follows Thanksgiving Week, but due to the way the dates align on the calendar this year, Dead Week is Thanksgiving Week.

“It’s probably extra stressful this year,” Martin said, “coming back from Thanksgiving and right into finals.”

The uniqueness of the schedule means the SAB has even less time to help students de-stress, because LSUS gives students the last two days of Thanksgiving Week off.

“We only have Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday,” Martin said. “We’re gonna do a hot tea and hot chocolate bar. For relaxation, we’ll have massage chairs, we’ll have

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Foundation grants advising rewards

Corey Drummond
STAFF WRITER

The Noel Foundation is granting \$2000 to the Advising Committee to be distributed to one advising professor from each school based on their dedication to the aid of student advising.

Dr. Elisabeth Liebert, chair of the advising committee, wrote the grant proposal in hopes of being able to reward advisors for their efforts.

The work by the Advising Committee aims to help students and faculty by providing ways to simplify and encourage advising on the LSU Shreveport campus. Regular discussion meetings are held, in which the members work on many issues and possible ways to address them.

“Since the very early discussions when we were just an ad-hoc committee, this was one of problems we saw[...]advising is not rewarded. It was something that we identified as a problem almost immediately,” Liebert said.

The committee meets when it can due to the varying schedules of the professors involved. Members include teaching faculty members as well as various administrators.

The Advising Committee has gone through many changes over time. It had been disbanded as an ad-hoc committee when assignments were complete, before restarting a month later as a permanent committee. It now runs all year working on new challenges to help student development.

Faculty and administrative staff are both involved with the Advising Committee, allowing the committee to be more active and knowledgeable regarding current activity with LSUS. Over the past few years, the Advising Committee both constructed a new advising webpage that offers more information to students and overhauled the Steps for Success worksheet to apply it specifically to LSUS.

“We were an ad-hoc committee and our responsibility was to review advising within the school and come up with recommendations for the dean on how advising could be improved. One of the recommendations that we brought to him was that advising needs to be assessed, recognized, and rewarded.”

— Dr. Elisabeth Liebert

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Since its beginning as an ad-hoc committee, the Advising Committee has been working to improve student advising. This led to the conclusion that advisors should be rewarded for their efforts.

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Photo by Corey Drummond
Dr. Robert Leitz, curator of the James Smith Noel Collection

be assessed, recognized, and rewarded,” Liebert said.

The Noel Foundation’s acceptance of the grant proposal by the Advising Committee gives them a success the committee has been working toward for years.

The Advising Committee requested \$1000 in the grant proposal—\$200 was to be awarded to one advisor in each of the five schools, to be chosen by the chair of each advisor’s department.

“The Noel Foundation Board read the application [and] didn’t think \$1000 was enough, so they gave [the Advising Committee] \$2000 so there would be a sort of continuity. It would be for 2013 and 2014,” said Dr. Robert Leitz, curator of the James Smith Noel Collection.

The Noel Foundation awarded the Advising Committee a two-year grant. The idea to award five advisors \$200 for their dedication to helping their students is still in place, but now the committee has the funding to continue to reward advisors in the next academic year.

Leitz presented the grant proposal to the Noel Foundation and pitched to them the idea to double the reward. Acting as a liaison, Leitz oversaw the application process and worked to acquire the award for the Advising Committee.

The Advising Committee remains persistent regarding compensation for advisors who take the extra effort to help students make the right choices. Advising adds an extra layer of work and stress on professors and faculty with classes to teach.

Advisors in the fields of psychology and the sciences can have upwards of 80 students to advise due to the number of students majoring in these fields. The reward offered by the new grant may give added incentive to advisors to continue to do their best.

LSU Shreveport gets classy with classical concert



Photo courtesy of Crystal Vandegriff
Mario Alberto Hernandez, piano, and Rodrigo Garciarrojo, tenor.

Crystal Vandegriff
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Famous classical music visited LSU Shreveport last Wednesday, with thanks to the Piatigorsky Foundation and the Noel Foundation.

Famed classical musicians Rodrigo Garciarrojo, tenor, and Mario Alberto Hernandez, pianist, performed several famous classical pieces during Common Hour in the UC Theater.

The musicians were introduced by Dr. Lawanda Blakeney, associate professor of fine arts. Blakeney also took the time to recognize Dr. Robert Leitz of the James Smith Noel Foundation for his efforts in bringing the concert to LSUS.

The hour-long concert was comprised of 12 pieces, with some performed in Italian, some in English, and some in Spanish. The musicians also performed a one-song encore

after receiving a standing ovation from the crowd.

The ground-floor seating of the theater was nearly full of students and faculty members, while the bleacher-style seating was kept roped off.

The musician duo have been traveling to perform concerts for the Piatigorsky Foundation, a non-profit organization whose stated mission is to bring classical music to areas that might not otherwise have the opportunity to host such concerts.

Garciarrojo was born in Mexico and expressed early interest in music and the stage. He studied music under Jorge Gonzalez Avila and later at the Escuela Nacional de Musica and the Escuela Superior de Musica in Mexico City. Garciarrojo has also continued to train his voice at international institutions, including institutions in Puerto Rico and Israel, under a number of different

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LSUS workshop strives for poetic justice

Editor's Note: The editors of the *Almagest* and Christopher Talerico, the author of this piece, would like it to be known that Talerico was also a participant in the event covered in this piece. This allows him to provide an insider's perspective, but also may cause some conflict of interest that the reader should be aware of.

Christopher Talerico
STAFF WRITER

Anyone interested in sharpening their poetic wit was in for a treat last Saturday as Katie Bickham held two poetry workshops in Bronson Hall.

"Next semester the English Department is offering English 228 in Creative Writing, and of course there was my English 390 over the summer, but there are few opportunities on campus for structured creative engagement," Liebert said. "Attending a poetry workshop can lend new impetus and new ideas to any writer."

The workshops were broken down into a brainstorming and revision shop. In the first shop, participants were asked to quickly write poems with unique approaches. The second shop had poets bring in completed works to be critiqued.

"Workshop is almost like therapy in that it is a safe place for people to come and air out their thoughts. Once a poem is printed or out in the world, it's open to all kinds of criticism and that can hurt," Bickham said. "In a workshop, you can air out ideas, ask questions, or screw up royal without fear of retribution."

The participants, who each paid a five dollar fee, were first given the opening lines of an already published poem and then asked to finish it. The second prompt involved finishing a poem when provided the last word of each line.

From that point, a series of clever edits, from the removal of words to the listing of verbs and nouns to the addition of lines, allowed the poets to see more clearly what makes a poem a poem. At the end of the shop, students then read the poems aloud.

During the second workshop, poets were asked to bring an unedited poem that they would like critiqued for its strengths and weaknesses.



Photo by Christopher Talerico

Katie Bickham, poet, addressed workshop participants with helpful tips for writing and reading poetry.

Through a rather intensive procedure the poet was exposed to external perceptions without being able to respond so as to simulate the effect their poetry would have if published and read by an unknown audience.

As the third poetry-related event sponsored by English Instructor Dr. Elisabeth Liebert, this event could serve as an exclamation point on a semester focused on generating more interest and excitement about poetry. This event in particular drew a forceful response from Liebert in regards to why it should have been held and who should participate.

"I'm inclined to respond 'who wouldn't want to attend a poetry workshop?' But, more se-

riously, anyone who wanted to experiment with new approaches to writing," Liebert said. "It's too easy to fall into habits as a writer, and attending a workshop forces us to try strategies we might not feel entirely comfortable with."

Bickham, an LSU Shreveport alumnus, has also won the 2012 Editor's Prize from the Missouri Review. She is also a strong advocate for the importance and value of poetry.

"Poetry has a lot to do with cultural identity. I think one of the reasons poetry has gone out of favor is because people like to write it more than they like to read it," Bickham said.

CONCERT cont.



Photo courtesy of Crystal Vandegriff

Hernandez, left, and Garciarroyo, right, took their bows and received a standing ovation from the audience.

instructors.

Hernandez, also born in Mexico, studied the piano under Maestro Eugenia Arvizu and Maestro Teresa Rodriguez. He gradu-

ated from the University of Guanajato's law school and played the violin in the Orquesta Sinfonica de Guanajato.

SAB cont.

a [place to] make your own stress-ball, and then Tuesday night we have what's called UC Late Night, and it's gonna be breakfast after the basketball game. So students can come and make their own waffle, eggs, bacon, and things like that. They can study, they can hang out."

The day before Thanksgiving is the most important part.

"On Wednesday we have Turkey Leg day," Martin said. "It's our tradition—the Wednesday before [Thanksgiving] we have Thankful Wednesday, so we do turkey legs. It's free, good old-fair-style turkey legs."

They may only have three days to help students de-stress, but the SAB plans to make the most of it.



VOLUME LXIII, ISSUE 13

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Photo by Joanna Kresge

Lady Pilots score highs and lows

Montana Davis
STAFF WRITER

Last weekend definitely had its ups and downs for the Lady Pilot basketball team. They kept their record pristine when they defeated the Lady Panthers but couldn't hold it the next night, losing to Xavier College.

The Lady Pilots continued with their winning streak through Friday night's game at The Dock. They beat the un-ranked Philander Smith College Lady Panthers 87-80 during the LSU Shreveport Classic.

Though the Lady Panthers led the game during the first half, LSUS made a strong comeback during the second half and led by eight points.

The Lady Pilots made an impressive sixteen free throws during the first half and eight more in the second.

The hero for the Lady Pilots that night was Shanovia Gamblin. She had a game high of 21 points and managed to pull down eight boards.

Another LSUS star for the game was Jenna Diakos, who almost broke her twenty point barrier. She had her first double double of the season with nineteen points and ten rebounds.

Kiara Taylor finished with 17 points, 10 of 12 from the stripe. Victoria Smith scored nine points for the Lady Pilots and made eight rebounds. Smith also made the team high in assists, finishing the game with six.

The next night was not as good for LSUS (3-1) as the Lady Pilots lost their first game of the season to the Xavier Gold Nuggets (3-2). The game ended a close 63-58 and was the last game of the LSU Shreveport Classic.

During the second half, Lady Pilots only trailed by 11, but after several timeouts, they had a two-point advantage with only 12:40 left to play in the game. This was their biggest lead the game.

LSUS turned the ball over 24 times, cutting 20 of Xavier's 63 points. The Nuggets had three players who scored double digits while the Lady Pilots had only two; Bryroneshia Santiago and Dominique Taylor.

Santiago had a game high of 22 points and nine rebounds, while Taylor finished with eleven points and hit a few key threes off the bench.

Both men and women's basketball will play Centenary November 19, at the Gold Dome. The ball will drop for the women's at 5:30 p.m. and the men's team will take the court at 7:30 p.m.

PELICAN BRIEFS

Almagest will resume publication in January

With Thanksgiving break and classes drawing to a close next week, this is the *Almagest's* final issue of the fall 2013 semester. Publication will resume, as usual, at the beginning of the spring semester.

The staff of the *Almagest* wishes you all good luck on your finals, a good (several) night's rest after finals are over, and a wonderful semester break. Congratulations to you graduates and, hopefully, we will see the rest of you back in the spring.

The Port offers students affordable Thanksgiving

Students worried about how to fit a traditional Thanksgiving meal into a college budget are in luck. The Port, located in the University Center, is offering students a fully-cooked meal at an affordable price.

Students have the option of ordering a fully-cooked 12 to 14 pound turkey for \$35.95, a quart of cornbread dressing for \$4.95, and a quart of giblet gravy for \$2.95. Dessert is also taken care of: students can choose between a nine-inch sweet potato pie for \$8.95 or a nine-inch pecan pie for \$11.95.

All orders must be placed by Nov. 22 and picked up before 2 p.m. on Nov. 27.

For more information or to place an order, call 318-797-5181 or email ssittena@lsus.edu.

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