



Does math degree plus hard work equal post-graduation job? —Pg. 4

Cross-country hits the ground running

Jennifer Middleton
STAFF WRITER

There’s a new addition to LSU Shreveport’s athletics division. Initiated this semester, the cross-country team is the newest sport offered by the university. Athletic Director Chad McDowell described some aspects of the new team. “This is our first year to have mens’ and womens’ cross-country,” McDowell said. “It’s a fall sport for the NAIA, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.” McDowell is the team’s head coach, and he receives assistance from Dr. Terry Harris, the faculty athletic representative and chair of the English department. “He’s helping me out with administration type stuff,” McDowell said, “but because he’s our faculty athletic representative, he can’t be a coach.” The cross-country team was introduced after the soccer program was cut last semester. “Part of the reason for the inception of cross-country was due to budget constraints,” McDowell said. “Our soccer program was suspended for the time being, and we needed six sports for the NAIA membership. Mens’ and womens’ cross-country was a lot more cost effective.” With their own sport suspended, a few former soccer team members have joined the cross-country team.

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Professors produce books for less

Alexandra Meachum
MANAGING EDITOR-PRINT

Diane Bizier from Fountainhead Press visited LSU Shreveport on Monday to inform instructors how they can write and publish textbooks in a faster, cheaper, and easier way. Fountainhead Press is a less expensive alternative to major publishing companies that charge higher prices for producing textbooks. Bizier works as a publishing representative and meets with instructors writing textbooks to show them the different features and options that can save money and create a product to meet their specific needs. “Professors are able to control what goes into the books and change it at any time to better fit their needs and the needs of their students,” Bizier said. There are two models professors can follow. One is using a “custom text” in which the professor writes the textbook themselves. If a professor does not want or have the time to write their own textbook, they can pick and choose certain chapters from a database provided by Fountainhead Press. This can help speed up the process for professors required to publish work while teaching classes. The other model, called “national titles,” offers already completed textbooks that professors can choose from. Oftentimes textbooks are used only one semester and not the next, which leaves students constantly buying new books even though the information remains the same. “Big publishers make revisions every year to books and often have only changed a little of it, students then are not able to sell them back and professor cannot dictate what they are teaching,” Bizier said. Fountainhead Press avoids this practice and publishes books for fractions of what big publishers charge.



Photo by Jessica Ingram

Diane Bizier, a representative of Fountainhead Press

The company also places heavy focus on being a “green publisher” and making eco-friendly products. Bizier said everything they do relates back to being conscious of the environment and, as a result, costs are cheaper. Recycling paper, digital formats, custom texts and national titles all cut down on costs by reducing the time and amount of paper it takes to publish a college textbook. “Professors will end up covering only a portion of textbooks during one semester, and have all this extra paper and unused information,” Bizier said. Using the features provided, professors are able to customize their work to include exactly what they plan to cover. By avoiding unnecessary revisions each semester students do not have to pay extra for the same book. “We focus on being eco-friendly, it saves

See BOOKS, pg. 2

Is it wait 10 minutes for the professor or 15?



Photo by Crystal Vandegriff

Students may become frustrated if forced to wait for a professor, but they may be marked absent should the professor arrive after they have left.

Crystal Vandegriff
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

A professor walks into a hallway crowded with students. The students are having a lively debate about how long before they can call their class a “walk.” The professor, however, dismisses the notion as a myth. The punch line? At least at LSU Shreveport, the professor is correct. Fact-checking website Snopes states that “although some schools do have an official ‘wait’ rule, many institutions of higher learning have no official policies at all in this area.” There is no policy written into the LSUS catalog or student handbook that implements a policy stating that after a certain period of waiting for the professor to arrive, students may leave class without being ab-

sent. Still, though, the subject can spark some rowdy debates and uncertainty among both students and professors, some of whom remember the myth going back to their college days. “When I was a student here beginning in 1987, an English instructor—professor, assistant professor, tenured, not tenured, who knows?—was late to the start of class because there was a horrible accident with a near-fatality at the intersection of Millicent and Youree Drive—right where cars enter the campus. She witnessed it and got stuck in the ensuing traffic jam,” said Dr. Terry LeGrand, instructor in the department of biological sciences. “When she finally got to her class, all but two or three students had left—invoking the rule, of course. She was so mad she said she was going to give all of them F’s!

See WAIT, pg. 2



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Red River Radio replaces programming

Crystal Vandegriff
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Beginning Oct. 1, Red River Radio listeners will notice a change in programming. The current programs “Fresh Air,” “From the Top,” and “World Café” will be replaced with five new shows: “Radiolab,” “TED Radio Hour,” “Ask Me Another,” “Snap Judgment,” and “Mountain Stage.”

Kermit Poling, general manager of Red River Radio, said that the programming change is

being made for a couple of reasons.

“[The reasons are] mixed, in part, these are new shows that will help build a new audience and will appeal to a younger audience,” Poling said. “These shows are very well produced.”

Poling also said that there was some financial motivation behind the switch. The new programming will help to save the Red River Radio network, funded by underwriters and donations from listeners, around \$20,000 this year alone.

Poling said that while some listeners will miss the programming that is being cut, he be-

lieves the new programs will help to draw the attention of listeners.

“Radiolab” will discuss topics relating to science, philosophy, and human experience. “TED Radio Hour” is inspired by the popular TED talks and covers innovations and ideas in all areas of study. “Ask Me Another” is a trivia game show which will air directly after “Wait, Wait Don’t Tell Me.” “Snap Judgment” combines listener stories with a certain amount of fiction and music. Finally, “Mountain Stage” is a performance show set in front of a live audience.

BOOKS cont.

money and savings can then be passed on to students,” Bizier said. “Employees, even the owners, work from home which cuts down on costs as well.”

Professors also get royalties from sales of their book. So, when students purchase the textbook, a percentage actually goes back into that department of the college.

Departments can use the money towards scholarship programs or even fund a grant which provides professors with extra funds while they are writing the textbook.

Bizier said the basic goal of Fountainhead Press is to “lower costs using green initiatives and give professors exactly what they need.”

The company was founded in Dallas, Texas in 2002 by Scott Timian and Felix Frazier. Both founders worked for publishing companies before and wanted to get away from the practices of major publishers by being more personal with instructors along with providing them with lower costs options.

RUN cont.

“It kind of goes hand-in-hand with their sport, and I think that they would be able to compete well,” McDowell said. “We have several student athletes that competed in soccer last year that are on campus and enrolled here. On the mens’ side, we have two people that competed in soccer. And on the womens’ side, three of our six members played soccer.”

Although the cross-country team has only just been introduced, McDowell said that the response so far has been good.

“For the first year, it’s generated really good interest,” he said. “At one point, we had about fifteen guys that were interested. We now have eleven that we’re going to certify to compete on the team. And we had about eight to ten women that were interested at one time, and that’s down to six [members].”

One of the new members, David Holland, freshman, network security, gave his reasons for joining the team.

“Running started out as a hobby to complete my thirty-minute recommended exercise activity a day,” Holland said. “I realized it wasn’t a chore for me and that I really enjoyed it. I joined cross-country to challenge myself. Having competition is the only way to bring out the best in you.”

Holland said that running helped him become more social.

“I am naturally shy and usually try to avoid big events,” he said. “But being around people with the same interest as me really helped me break out of my shell.”

McDowell explained that the team competes all over the Northwest Louisiana and East Texas area. They have out-of-state meets in Tyler, Texas, and more local meets in places like Natchitoches, Ruston, and Shreveport.

“It’s all within a sixty-mile radius, mostly,” McDowell said.

McDowell went on to describe his vision for the cross-country team.

“The community enjoys running,” he said. “The high schools here sponsor cross-country, and so I hope that it becomes a more and more popular sport, more attractive for student athletes. I would love to have at least eight to ten runners, if we can, each year. And try to just make it the best we can make it.”

WAIT cont.

I’m sure she didn’t, but you can see that this silliness has been around a long time.”

Dr. Alan Gabehart, dean of the Noel Memorial Library, also remembers the “rule” from his days as an undergraduate.

“I’m sure that there must be some rule as to how long students have to wait for an instructor because I participated in those same group discussions in the hallways forty-five years ago,” Gabehart said. “How many minutes for an assistant professor, for an associate professor, for a full professor... as if we knew what those titles meant.”

Some professors, though, have their own rule, with a bit more of a humorous take.

“My idea is this,” said Dr. Gary Joiner, associate professor and director of the history department, “unless I tell you that I will not hold class that day, you wait until I arrive or you die. If you die, you do not have to take the final.”

Jon Baarsch, English instructor, jokingly puts responsibility in the hands of the students.

“Students shouldn’t wait at all,” Baarsch said, “they should start class without the professor.”

Dr. Cran Lucas, professor of biological sciences, amends Baarsch’s suggestion with one of his own.

“Professors should always get their ahead of students,” Lucas said, “that would guarantee that [the professor] is always in a ‘class’ by themselves.”

Other professors, such as Rhonda Failey, an associate professor in the psychology department, have their own more serious manner of ensuring that their students do not “walk.”

“I make it a point never to be late for

class, I try to always treat the students the way I would like to be treated,” Failey said. “In all my years as a student or teacher I’ve never bothered to check out the story... I just giggle when I hear [students] talking about it and [the wait] brings up things like integrity and motivation and professional disposition—both for the professor and the student.”

Finally, Dr. Richard Mabry, professor of mathematics, does his best to service students by providing a mathematical equation to determine the exact wait time for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Mabry’s equation for undergraduate students states that “whatever the time $T(0)$ that Rule says to wait for a generic professor of certain credentials, in the special case of a math professor, multiply $T(0)$ by pi and add 7 minutes (for luck). That is, wait this long: $T(1) = \pi T(0) + 7$ minutes. If the math professor has still not appeared after $T(N)$ minutes, where N is a nonnegative integer, iterate the process and wait $T(N+1) = \pi T(N) + 7$ minutes longer.”

Mabry adds that for graduate students, they must divide by pi rather than multiply. Mabry concludes that “if the student cannot compute the required time using this simple recursion, then the student should simply wait.”

Overall, students should be aware that LSUS does not currently implement a policy allowing students to leave after a certain period of waiting for a professor to arrive. Instead, students are encouraged to check their student email, their class’s Moodle page, or perhaps even email or otherwise attempt to contact their instructor to determine whether or not plans for that day’s class have changed.



GOT SOMETHING THE STUDENT BODY NEEDS TO HEAR ABOUT? GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT BY EMAILING US AT ALMAGEST@LSUS.EDU



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Frank Johnson
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Krista Wilson

Executive Editor
Crystal Vandegriff
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Alexandra Meachum
Managing Editor-Video
Zachary Roberson
Photo Editor
Jessica Ingram

Louisiana State University Shreveport
Bronson Hall, Room 344
One University Place
Shreveport, LA 71115
phone/fax: (318) 797-5328
e-mail: almagest@lsus.edu
www.almagestlsus.com

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Dorie LaRue prepares for on-campus poetry reading

The Almagest invites you to get to know your professors through weekly professor profiles.

Jessica Ingram
PHOTO EDITOR

A poetry reading of original works written by Dr. Dorie LaRue will be held in Bronson Hall 263 during Common Hour on Sept. 25. Following the poetry reading, there will be a question and answer session with Larue and door prizes will be given away.

Larue will be reading some of her earlier works, a few poems that were published in CHEST, a national medical journal, along with a few excerpts from Section 2 in her book, *Seeing in the Dark*.

Seeing in the Dark is divided into three sections. The first section is composed of her flavorful Louisiana-inspired pieces and is followed by pieces from graduate school.

“I had to do something with all the literature I read, such as Sylvia Plath, or characters such as Robinson Crusoe,” Larue said of the graduate school pieces.

Larue also published three collections of poetry written in an organic free-style.

Dr. Elisabeth Liebert, an assistant professor in the English department who is helping to organize the poetry reading, said she is looking forward to the reading.

“People should expect to hear complex, and intelligent poetry,” Liebert said.

One of Larue’s three collections of poetry, the “Scottish Poems,” was written about her and her son’s adventures hitchhiking through Scotland and England.

Foreign landmarks such as Skye Island and monuments around the city of Hebrides also inspired Larue.

“We were trying to recapitulate Boswell’s and Johnson’s Journey in one summer,” LaRue said.

LaRue said her passion for poetry developed in the tenth grade after reading T.S. Eliot.

Upon beginning her creative writing career, Larue contacted Dr. Francis Irby Gwaltney, also a creative writer, whom she studied under at LTU. Gwaltney and his wife, also a poet, offered support for LaRue’s creative writing endeavors.



Photo courtesy of Dorie LaRue

Dr. Dorie LaRue will read some of her poetry in BH 263 during Common Hour next Wednesday.

This is the first time LaRue will read her work at LSUS. “We need to showcase the abilities of our professors,” Liebert said. “I’d certainly like to hear more of Dr. LaRue’s work and hope that the English Club will invite her to read on a regular basis.”

Larue’s *Seeing in the Dark* is available for purchase on Amazon.com.

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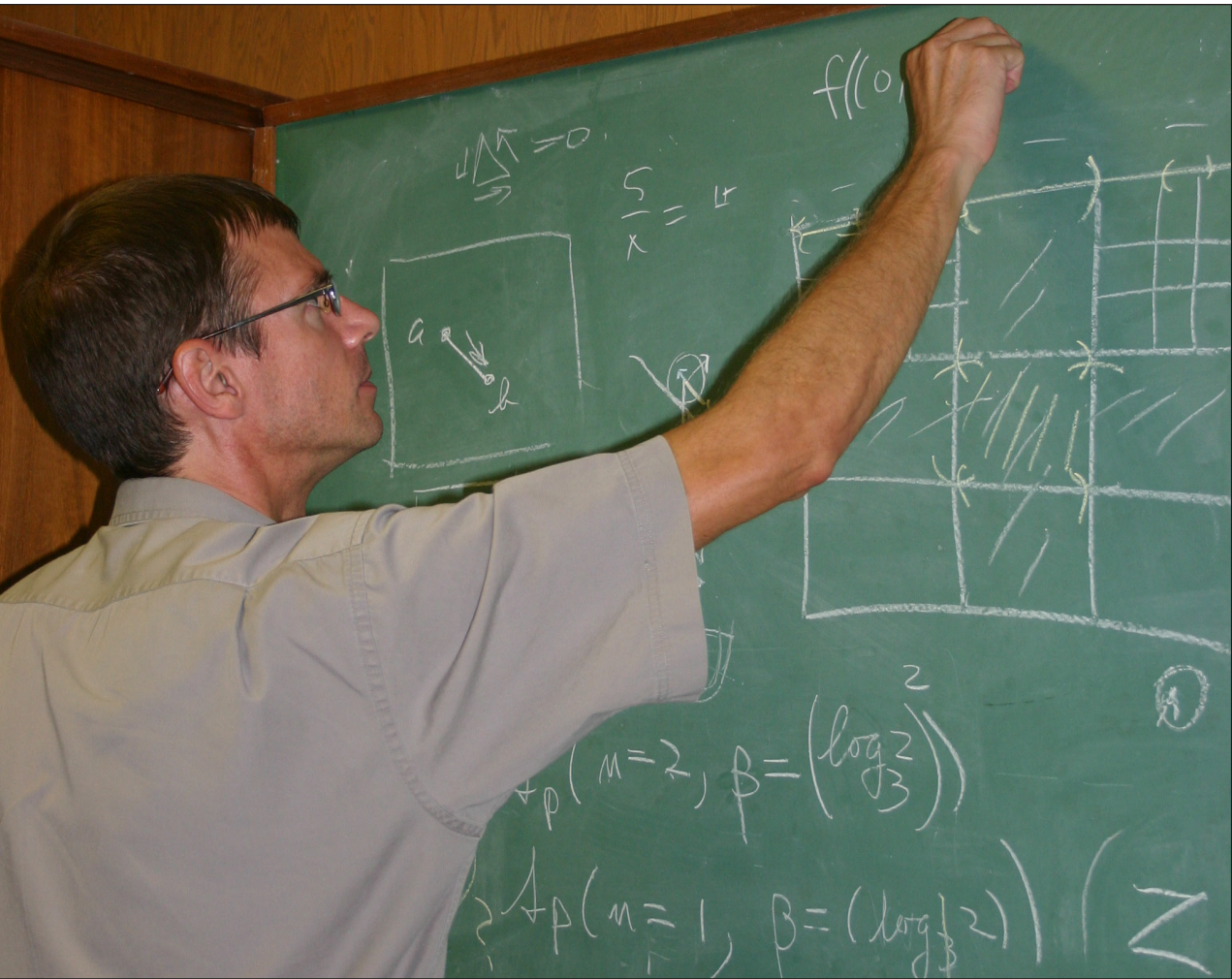


Photo by Krista Wilson

Dr. Tibor Szarvas, chair of the mathematics department

Krista Wilson
STAFF WRITER

Mathematics seems to be either a student’s worst nightmare or favorite subject. Generally thought of as a simply numerical degree, some LSU Shreveport professors explain why this degree is so much more than numbers.

“[Those who pursue a math degree] become a better thinking citizen, it makes you a problem-solving citizen, it helps you understand your surroundings,” said Dr. Tibor

Szarvas, chair of the mathematics department. “[And] you’ll be good at numbers, good at thinking, good at analyzing and organizing the information that comes at you.”

Szarvas notes the reliability of math and encourages his students to keep their books because he knows it may help them down the line.

There are many jobs available to a student with a math degree, including teaching, working for NASA, an insurance company, computer programming, analyzing data, and much more.

“If you look at the ten job summaries you will see seven or eight strongly deal with mathematics,” Szarvas said.

Students that study math may get more from the job market because students can use math it in their day-to-day lives, according to Rogers Martin, instructor of mathematics.

“If you are driven and talented you can do a whole lot with your bachelor’s degree [in math] or you can go to grad school and that opens up a lot of doors too,” Szarvas said.

Students in the math program also learn how to adapt to change, solve problems, communicate, and persevere through disappointment. Szarvas compares taking a math class to being in a mental gym, because students work out their minds in a math class.

Joy Densmore, junior, mathematics, said that she also enjoyed the fact that math was always constant.

“[Majoring in math] is challenging but it’s worth it,” Densmore said. “[As a math tutor] I enjoy helping students, it’s a great feeling when I help students and they come back after tests and say that they made a good grade. It’s a satisfying feeling.”

For those students that believe math does not affect them, Szarvas compares those that say math only deals with numbers to the bricks of a house being all it takes to build a house. While the bricks play a vital role in the house, there is much more that is needed.

“There is more to math than you think and there are more benefits to math than people think, way more,” Szarvas said. “Mathematics is more fundamental to real life than most people would think and for that reason most student need more math than they think.”

Students who study math are given an insight into how functions work. Students are able to recognize functions in events taking place all around them.

“Functions, in general, are rules of correspondence between two sets, but those do not need to be numbers,” Szarvas said. “When students come into a classroom and select a seat they are unknowingly determining a function.”

Szarvas said he felt he needed to inform students of the truth about math. He said he enjoys changing students’ minds to allow them to forget their previous experiences and to learn what math can offer.

If students have more questions about earning a math degree, they can contact Dr. Szarvas.