

Research replaces complex medical documents with interactive program

Researchers from Ball State University are collaborating with Medical Animatics, LLC and Community Health Network to see if a first-of-its-kind program combining education and informed consent can better explain complex medical information than traditional educational methods.

Community Health Network is now offering a multimedia education and informed consent program for its surgical weight loss patients. The program was developed by Medical Animatics and can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection. It combines cutting-edge medical animation, video, audio narration and interactive programming into an easy-to-use interactive design. Unlike other patient-education applications, this program uses proprietary knowledge-check technologies developed by Medical Animatics to ensure that patients see and understand information regarding bariatric surgery as well as the associated benefits and risks involved.

Corinne Renguette, a doctoral student in applied linguistics at Ball State, and her faculty adviser, Mary Theresa Seig, are conducting the study to determine whether patients actually learn more when they receive information through this multimedia program as opposed to only reading complex documents.

Traditional patient education often is done through such written documents, which, according to previous research, may not be the most effective way to ensure that learning occurs. Legal terminology also makes up a significant part of the informed consent process. However, patients need to be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the procedures and the risks before making decisions.

"According to the American Medical Association, over a third of our population is lacking in functional health literacy," said Renguette. "Many people do not understand complex medical information. We would like to see if this tool can help people better understand the complex material."

To help increase comprehension, patients can review the Web-based program as many times as they like, share it with family or friends, or really get familiar with the content prior to surgery — all from the convenience of home. Once the patient has been approved for surgery, he or she can complete the informed consent process within the same program.

"We believe that sophisticated technology is a key component to education, healthier lifestyles and ultimately patient outcomes," said Harlon Wilson, president and chief executive officer, Medical Animatics, LLC, which collaborates with health care professionals to develop innovative, technology-based educational tools for patients such as the patient education and informed consent program on bariatric surgery. "This research is part of our commitment to showing higher patient comprehension levels for our programs versus typical patient education."

According to the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS), weight loss surgery, also called bariatric surgery or gastric bypass surgery, limits the amount of food the stomach can hold by surgically reducing the stomach's capacity to only a few ounces. In addition to reducing food intake, some weight loss surgeries alter the digestion process, which curbs the amount of calories and nutrients absorbed.

Nearly 205,000 of the estimated 15 million people with morbid obesity in the U.S. had the procedure in 2007, according to the ASMBS.

"Since one of the most important steps in weight loss surgery is getting and understanding a lot of information, we believe this tool will increase comprehension for our patients," said Jack Ditslear III, medical director of Community Hospital North's bariatric program. "We're excited to see the research results so that we have firm data to confirm our beliefs."

Ball State becomes smoke-free March 17

When Ball State faculty, staff and students return from spring break on March 17, the campus will be smoke-free, creating a healthier environment for living, learning and working. Ball State will be among dozens of other colleges and universities around the country that are smoke-free.

Smoking will be prohibited in all university buildings and outdoor campus areas except designated locations. Anyone who fails to comply with this policy may be fined \$50 per occurrence.

More information about the policy, including designated smoking locations, may be found at www.bsu.edu/smokefree.

Ball State students creating crisis communications protocol for state agency

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) is putting its trust in Ball State University public relations students to develop its crisis communications. Under the leadership of Robert Pritchard, an associate professor of journalism who directs the university's public relations program, a seven-member student team from Cardinal Communications is currently researching and assembling a crisis communications protocol for IDHS. Cardinal Communications is Ball State's full-service, student-run public relations and advertising firm.

The target date for completing the project is late April or early May after students finish contacting public information officers around the country to determine what is considered most successful in terms of crisis communication planning.

"Crisis communications is a critical area for public relations professionals," Pritchard said. "Every agency needs a solid protocol in hand in order to survive a crisis and prosper after the event.

"We also believe this is the first time a state department of homeland security will be working with a student group on developing a public relations protocol. I think it will provide our students with an outstanding immersive learning experience that should be a cornerstone for their future professional careers."

In addition to gaining experience in building a protocol, the members on the team are also creating excellent resume and portfolio pieces, said Leah Logan, a Ball State senior from Fort Wayne who is the executive director of Cardinal Communications.

"Working with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, in general, is a big deal," she said. "It says a lot about our university and the type of students we have here.

"This will impact my career because it will be something that sets me apart from other candidates in the field. Not only am I gaining experience in writing a crisis plan, but I'm on a team writing a protocol for the state of Indiana. Not many seniors in college get the opportunity to participate in a project like this."

Ball State previously worked with IDHS in 2007, when students majoring in telecommunications and journalism spent a semester writing, shooting and editing eight 30-second, black and white video segments designed to educate viewers on the precautionary steps to take before an emergency occurs.

The "Take Responsibility" messages continue to air on broadcast and cable television channels statewide. The spots will rotate throughout the year, depending on the focus of the message and how it correlates with the weather of a particular season.

Ball State journalism professor featured in book about Wisconsin student newspaper

With a debt of \$137,700 and only \$43.71 in the bank, shutdown seemed inevitable for the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Daily Cardinal. During 1995, after a year of unchecked accounting, the leadership of the newspaper realized there was no money coming in, as an entire year's advertising had not been billed.

Vince Filak, assistant professor of journalism at Ball State and faculty adviser for the campus newspaper, The Ball State Daily News, recalls those tumultuous days in the new book, "It Doesn't End with Us: The Story of the Daily Cardinal." The book was written by Allison Hantschel, a former editor of the Daily Cardinal. Ironically, chapter 13 features Filak as an undergraduate working at the paper when it faced shutdown.

"There are things I don't understand why we did," Filak said. "All I can tell you is that I've always believed there was never a problem so horrific I couldn't outwork it. I eventually tried to outwork it."

Bills were mailed to advertisers, although staffers were uncertain advertisers would pay them. But the payments started coming in.

"We went from guaranteed closing to having a shot," Filak said. "We just worked, and I gave up almost everything. Every day, we were excited, but afraid at the same time, to get the mail."

With the odds against them, what was left of the Daily Cardinal staff asked student government for money to start printing again. Student government was willing to front the money, and after repeated efforts to figure the budget, the paper could print for at least a month.

Starting over was rough. There was always the question of whether the paper would live to see the next month, but it was better than nothing. The costs were incalculable, but Filak said the sacrifices he made for the paper were worth it.

"No matter what else I do, I don't think it will have the far reaching impact that did," he said. "I don't think I'll live long enough to see it again. The Cardinal is special. I can't quantify it. There comes a choice, and you make a choice. It's one I'll stand behind the rest of my life."

The lessons learned at the Daily Cardinal are ones Filak will carry throughout the rest of his career. As faculty adviser for the Daily News, he wants students to have a better experience with student journalism.

"The learning aspects are phenomenal," he said. "That is why student media is so important. You learn without a safety net. You play the hand you are dealt. It's really hard to explain. It's a sense of belonging. Caring. A sense that it changes you forever. I don't know who I was before that, but I know who I am now."

Ball State's public relations program part of national listing

Ball State University's public relations sequence is now a part of PR News Online, which has posted profiles of programs around the country.

Robert Pritchard, associate professor of journalism and public relations sequence coordinator, said PR News Online (www.prnewsonline.com) offers a place for prospective students to find valid, objective data on which to base their decision.

Schools submit a profile with information about their programs after filling out a questionnaire about faculty, class offerings and student programs.

"There was great reluctance on the part of a number of key educators to develop a ranking system," Pritchard said. "Diane Schwartz, vice president and publisher of PR News, had the foresight to put together a guide to provide to those studying public relations. There have been only two other guides, and neither really presented an objective picture."

Of the more than 100 schools that included their profiles, Ball State's program is one of only 18 certified for education in public relations by the Public Relations Society of America and is one of the few universities to offer a degree specifically in public relations.

The program also has one of the nation's eight nationally affiliated student-run firms, Cardinal Communications, and an active Public Relations Student Society of America chapter.

"We graduate leaders, not tacticians," Pritchard said. "You can lead at all levels of an organization, and that's what we stress. Our students have the skills, but they've also got the mindset and critical thinking skills to be leaders when they enter the profession."

Ball State University Theatre presents 'Into the Woods'

Out of the storybooks and into an enchanted forest, Ball State's University Theatre presents "Into the Woods," the ultimate fairy tale of need, drama and desire. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. March 27-29 and April 2-5 and at 2:30 p.m. March 30 in University Theatre.

Written by James Lapine, "Into the Woods" is a Tony Award-winning, Broadway musical with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim.

"It's a musical fairy tale intertwining the lives of well known Brothers Grimm characters that interconnect to tell a story," said Beth Turcotte, associate professor of theater.

The main characters are taken from the stories of "Little Red Riding Hood," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Rapunzel" and "Cinderella." All are tied together by an original story about a baker and his wife's wish to begin a family along with Cinderella's wish to go to the ball and Jack and his mother's wish for more wealth.

Though their wishes are granted, the plot follows the characters to explore the consequences. It's through their adventures that the fairy tale characters come together, Turcotte said.

"Into the Woods" has 12 main characters and includes 23 student actors and one faculty actor, Bill Jenkins, chairperson of the Department of Theatre and Dance.

"Having 12 main characters is what's wonderful about this show," said Turcotte. "It's a great learning tool for the young actors and musicians."

Although it's a fairy tale, the performance is on multiple levels, so children and adults will find the different themes thought-provoking, recognizable and enjoyable, she said.

Tickets cost \$15.50 for the general public, \$11.50 for senior citizens, \$9.50 for students and \$13.50 for faculty and staff. Tickets can be purchased at University Theatre box office.

ON CAMPUS

Kinsey Institute research fellow to deliver annual Dr. John P. McGovern Lecture

The Department of Physiology and Health Science is presenting its annual Dr. John P. McGovern Lecture at 7 p.m. March 18 at the Ball State University Alumni Center. William Yarber, a senior research fellow at The Kinsey Institute for Research on Sex, Gender, and Reproduction, will present his lecture "While We Stood By: The Limiting of Sexual Health Information for Our Youth."

Yarber is a professor of applied health science and gender studies at Indiana University, Bloomington, where he is also a senior director of the Rural Center for AIDS/STD Prevention. He authored the country's first secondary school AIDS prevention curriculum and has won numerous awards for his research and publications.

Made possible by the generosity of John McGovern, the lecture honors an individual who has made a significant impact on the health field. Past lecturers include Dr. Henry Heimlich, inventor of the Heimlich maneuver, and Dr. C. Everett Koop, former surgeon general.

The lecture is free and open to the public. For more information, call Robert R. Pinger, professor of health science, at 765-285-1504.

Ball State marks Disability Awareness Month with campus events

Ball State University's Disabled Student Development and Disabled Students in Action will host a series of events in March to mark Disability Awareness Month. All events are free of charge.

The events are:

- Blind Vision - 3 p.m. March 5, Pittenger Student Center forum room and 10 a.m. March 27, student center, room 301. Carlos Taylor, Ball State's adaptive computer technology specialist, discusses myths and misconceptions about blindness and what to know when interacting with a visually impaired person
- Disabled Students in Action information table - noon to 1 p.m. March 18, 20 and 21, Teachers College, first-floor foyer. Learn about Disabled Students in Action, take a disability quiz and receive giveaways

- Life After College: Challenges and Opportunities Created by a Disability - 5 p.m. March 20, student center, room 301. Jennifer Woods, compliance officer with the Indiana Family Social Services Administration, will discuss how students with disabilities can choose career paths that work for them and suit their interests and needs
- The Politics of Disability - 4 p.m. March 24, Teachers College, room 005. Indianapolis attorney Greg Fehribach, who uses a motorized wheelchair, will give a presentation about how politics affect students with disabilities and how they can affect politics
- Disabled Student Development Awards Program - 3 p.m. March 25, student center forum room. This program will recognize students, faculty, staff and alumni who have made positive contributions to access and opportunity for students with disabilities
- Sound and Fury - 6:30 p.m. March 26, student center forum room. This documentary will follow two families as they explore the option of cochlear implants for their children.

Monthly nutrition chat focuses on the new food pyramid

Learn how to apply the rules of the new food pyramid by attending this month's nutrition chat, "Understanding the New Food Pyramid Guide," at noon March 7 in the Applied Technology Building, room 203. The free talk is sponsored by the Department of Family and Consumer Science.

IN THE NEWS

Michael Bloxham, Insight and Research director

Bloxham was quoted Feb. 26 in *The Washington Times* about a study funded by Nielsen Media Research that will blueprint a consumer's daily use of the media.

Ball State's Center for Media Design will work with Sequent Partners to conduct a study that will track the daily media usage of about 450 consumers in five major cities. Researchers will observe media usage on various platforms throughout the day.

"This is going to change the way we look at media," Bloxham said. "Our observers will arrive at a participant's house when they get up, then follow them everywhere until they go to sleep, making a record of it all on a touch-screen electronic device."

An article covering the study was also posted on Adweek.com on Feb. 25.

Jo Ann M. Gora, president

Gora was quoted in *The Indianapolis Star* on Feb. 17 about Ball State alumnus Brian Gallagher and his contributions to the Ball State Foundation board.

Gallagher is the president and chief executive officer of United Way of America, one of the largest social agencies.

Gallagher worked his way to the top after interning for the United Way of Delaware County his senior year of college. He became the president and CEO in 2002. Since then, Gallagher's mission is not solely fundraising; it's also community impact.

Due to his leadership, connections and knowledge of Ball State, Gallagher will be a benefit to the board.

"He has opened doors for us that will have a long-term benefit for the university," said Gora. "Because of Brian's relationships and his knowledge of the university, he is a wonderful asset to our board."

Barry Umansky, Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball professor of telecommunications

On Feb. 19, Umansky was quoted in a report by WISH-TV about the nationwide switch to digital television.

The National Broadcasters Association estimates that 19.6 million Americans are still using analog sets and receive their TV signal via antenna. Another 15 million have at least one TV in the house that receives analog.

In February 2009, all television stations will use a digital signal. Analog users must adapt to this transition.

Umansky said that wireless companies want to purchase air frequencies to expand and introduce new technologies.

"\$19.3 billion has been bid for the bandwidth that television stations use across the country," said Umansky.

Umansky was also quoted in a Feb. 26 report by Inside Indiana Business about deregulating the telecommunications industry.

Umansky played a key role in persuading the state legislature to pass one of the state's most comprehensive telecom industry reform bill, which allows telephone companies to set their own rates and encourages competition by shifting control of cable television from local governments to the state.

Competition was immediately created among cable television and high-speed internet providers.

"Going into this, we knew that deregulating the telecommunications industry in the state would quickly pay dividends," Umansky said. "The reform bill is serving as a model with

more than 20 other states representing more than 50 percent of the United States' population having approved similar reforms."

SPOTLIGHT

Publications

Jayne Beilke, Department of Educational Studies, review of "The Rosenwald Schools of the American South" by Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *South Carolina Historical Magazine*.

Barbara Bogue, Department of English,

- "Dragon Skin," *Deadly Writer's Patrol*, January 2008.
- "Shedtown Statesman," *Earth's Daughters*, No. 72.
- "Requiem," *Earth's Daughters*, No. 72.

James Eflin, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management, "Protocols: Political Dynamics and Global Ramifications," *Climate Change and Variation: A Primer for Teachers*, Vol. 1, 211-218, National Council for Geographic Education.

Michael Meyerhofer, Department of English,

- "The Crayon Not Taken," *Margie: The American Journal of Poetry*.
- "Collateral Damage," *Margie: The American Journal of Poetry*.

Deborah Mix, Department of English, "A Vocabulary of Thinking: Gertrude Stein and Contemporary North American Women's Innovative Writing," University of Iowa Press.

Webster Newbold, Department of English, "Traditional, Practical, Entertaining: Two Early English Letter Writing Manuals," *Rhetorica*, the journal of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, 2008.

Leland Yarger, School of Physical Education, "Aquatic Management Survey to Identify Factors Related to Injuries, Accidents, and Deaths at Aquatic Facilities," *International Journal of Aquatic Research and Education*, Vol. 2 (1), 27-35, February 2008.

Presentations

Thomas Adams, Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities,

- "Oh Where, Oh Where is my AP Chemistry Going?" Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.
- "The Chemistry Conversation Pit," Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.

- "So How and What Do They Teach in High School Chemistry in Australia?" Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.
- "What is the 2007 AP Chemistry Exam All About?" Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.

James Eflin, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management, "Sustainability by Degrees," 2008 Sustainability for Indiana Colleges and Universities, Indiana Innovation Network, February 2008, Muncie, Ind.

Dain Kavars, Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities, "Using a Tablet PC in the Science Classroom," Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.

Sean Lovelace, Department of English, read from fiction manuscript, Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, February 2008.

John Prince, Department of English, presented at the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, February 2008.

Jeff Sayers, Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities, "Earthquakes in Indiana: IU PEPP Program," Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.

Rich Smierciak, Indiana Academy of Science, Mathematics, and Humanities, "Labs from A to Zed -- Gen Chem and AP Chemistry," Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.

Jeff Smith, Indiana Academy of Science, Mathematics, and Humanities,

- "The AP Biology 2007 Essay Exam -- A Debriefing," Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.
- "AP Biology Lab Tips and Tricks," Hoosier Association of Science Teachers Inc., February 2008.

Scott Trappe, Human Performance Laboratory, "Tapering to Optimize Sports Performance," grand opening of the Winter Sports Centre, Mid-Sweden University, Ostersund, Sweden, February 2008.

Service

Bruce Hozeski, Department of English,

- elected secretary of the board of directors for the Association of College Honor Societies
- elected secretary of the council of the Association of College Honor Societies for 2008 and 2009.

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