

University to launch new method of delivering internal electronic communications

Beginning March 16, Ball State will unveil a fundamental change to the method and delivery of internal electronic communications on campus.

The coming changes are a response to students' desires to have more control over the way the university communicates with them, not only via e-mail but other forms of electronic communication as well. To address this issue, the Office of University Marketing and Communications is introducing the Communications Center, an initiative with three key components.

The first component is the Communications Center Web site. It will be a one-stop-shop that promotes all campus goings-on. Visitors can review, by category, announcements that have been submitted by approved publishers. When launched on March 16, the site's URL will be www.bsu.edu/commcenter.

The second component is a new Ball State Digest, delivered to the inboxes of students, faculty and staff twice weekly on Mondays and Thursdays. One version will go to faculty and staff; another to students. The digest will be a round-up of timely announcements containing content generated through the Communications Center Web site.

The third component is a permission-based interface accessible from the Communications Center Web site that will allow users to manage e-mail and RSS feeds. Subscriptions to emergency text messaging also will be integrated into this interface. Individuals will be able to choose to opt out of unwanted e-mail.

All e-mail currently sent through the university's batch e-mail system will be processed through this new system when the Communications Center Web site goes live. The Communications Center will replace existing methods of electronic internal communications delivery, including Vignette Dialog, the batch e-mail system, the ALLBSU listing option in Outlook and the Employee Bulletin Board. It will not replace Blackboard, Gradebook or BSU@Work.

The Communications Center initiative was created by a task force comprised of students, faculty and staff that met extensively in 2008 to devise improvements addressing the issues the university faced in routing electronic messages to its internal audiences.

"What started as a discussion about how to reduce the amount of e-mail sent to our students evolved into a conversation about how best to communicate electronically with

our campus community," said Tony Proudfoot, associate vice president for marketing and communications. "And we realized the way to do this was to provide users with more control and more options for communications.

"This is an exciting project for us and the feedback we've received so far in testing the site has been positive," Proudfoot added. "Student leaders and usability test subjects who've had a chance to preview the center were excited about the new approach."

The campus community will continue to receive essential communications via e-mail that will not be optional. Examples include emergency e-mails, critical business communications, e-mails from the president, the twice-weekly Digest and administrative e-mails necessary for faculty and staff to carry out their responsibilities.

Proudfoot said it's important for the campus community to remember the new system is an evolving tool and process.

"For those who take advantage of the permission-based e-mail management, they will see a drop in unwanted e-mails immediately," he said. "As with the launch of any large project, phase one will be refined and will continue to evolve over time.

The system is designed to provide us with feedback so that gradually we can improve both the permissions, and also the policies, that allow e-mails to be sent to large lists. A year from now, we'll be even better at identifying and limiting unwanted e-mail than we are today."

Tiny particles the answer to world's biggest problems, says 'World is Flat' author

It's all about electrons these days for Thomas Friedman.

Whether the question is climate change, worldwide poverty, biodiversity loss or future energy and resource supply and demand, the answer is finding the means to provide "abundant, cheap, clean and reliable electrons," said Friedman, foreign affairs columnist for The New York Times and the next guest in Ball State's Bracken Environmental Speaker Series.

The author of the best-selling "The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century" will address an expected full house in Emens Auditorium on Wednesday, March 4, beginning at 7 p.m. He will examine the concurrent crises of global warming and increasing competition for energy as set out in his latest book, "Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution — and How It Can Renew America." The event is free and open to the public.

Occasionally referred to as "America's Global Voice" (by CNN) and "The Great Explainer" (The Washingtonian), Friedman proposes that an ambitious national strategy — which he calls "Geo-Greenism" — is not only what we need to save the planet from overheating; it also is what we need to make America healthier, richer, more innovative, more productive and more secure. And it all comes down to electrons.

"The green revolution is about how we produce ... electrons," Friedman told Foreign Policy magazine in a recent interview, discussing the world's need to generate ever greater amounts of electricity without burning carbon-based fossil fuels. "The search for and the discovery of [an environmentally friendly] source of those electrons is going to be the next great global industry. And I think the country that mounts a revolution to be the leader of that industry is going to be a country whose standard of living is going to improve, whose respect in the world is going to improve, whose air is going to improve, whose innovation is going to improve, and whose national security is going to improve."

According to Friedman, the last big innovation in energy production was the commercialization of nuclear power half a century ago. Since then, he argues, the field has mostly stagnated.

"Do you know any industry in this country whose last major breakthrough was in 1955?" he asked, further condemning U.S. business leaders and government regulators alike by noting that American pet food companies spent more on research and development in 2007 than the nation's utilities did.

"The Stone Age didn't end because we ran out of stone," Friedman said, adding that, likewise, the climate-destroying fossil fuel age will end only if we invent our way out of it.

However, unlike the top secret, federally bankrolled Manhattan Project that ushered in the nuclear era, Friedman does not advocate a few dozen "guys and gals going off to Los Alamos" to solve the world's present energy problem.

What current circumstances require instead, he argues, is something akin to the more recent information technology (IT) revolution, when "everyone [became] a programmer."

"I want so many people throwing crazy dollars at every idea, in every garage, that we have 100,000 people trying 100,000 things, five of which might work, and two of which might be the next green Google," said the three-time Pulitzer Prize winner. "What IT was to the '80s and '90s, ET — energy technology — will be to the early 21st century."

Since joining the Times' editorial staff in 1981, Friedman has traveled hundreds of thousands of miles reporting on persistent conflicts in the Middle East, international economics, U.S. domestic politics and foreign policy as well as the worldwide impact of the terrorist threat. He was named the newspaper's foreign affairs columnist in 1995.

A graduate of Brandeis University with a degree in Mediterranean studies, Friedman earned his master's degree in modern Middle East studies from Oxford University in England, where in 2004 he also received the honorary title Order of the British Empire (OBE) from Queen Elizabeth II.

Ranking Senate Republican to deliver Ball State's Commencement address

Sen. Richard Lugar, Indiana's senior senator and now the U.S. Senate's ranking Republican, has agreed to serve as Ball State University's Commencement speaker on May 9.

The distinguished senator has been a leader since his childhood in Indianapolis. In the Boy Scouts, he earned the rank of Eagle Scout, the organization's highest rank. He graduated first in his class at Shortridge High School and Denison University. And later went on to attend Pembroke College in Oxford, England, as a Rhodes Scholar.

As mayor of Indianapolis, he helped lead the adoption of Unigov, which consolidated city and county government. And in the U.S. Senate, he has played a lead role in the dismantling of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons around the world as well as provided key leadership to the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee and the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee.

"Sen. Lugar's career achievements will form the basis of a powerful and inspiring message for our entire university community and will make the 2009 spring commencement one of our most memorable," said Ball State President Jo Ann M. Gora.

Lugar's political career has been characterized by creative thinking and risk taking, demonstrating an entrepreneurial spirit for which Ball State is increasingly becoming known, she added.

During his tenure of public service, Lugar has proven to be an innovative leader regarding alternative fuels, new energy technologies and sustainability practices, and his energy initiative has reshaped the national debate about the relationship between national security and energy.

In recent years, the distinguished senator has been a frequent guest at Ball State. His most recent visit in 2007 was a result of Ball State's Council on the Environment (COTE) earning a Richard Lugar Energy Patriot Award.

Many of Ball State's sustainability initiatives fall in line with Lugar's goals. COTE is the longest-standing green committee in Indiana's higher-education community, and the university's two newest buildings, Park Hall and the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, will be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified at the silver level. The university's Board of Trustees also recently approved a proposal to replace the university's existing coal-fired stoker boilers with a heating and cooling system employing geothermal energy — the largest of its kind in the nation.

Honorary degree

This year's graduation exercises also will be marked by Ball State awarding internationally known architect and alumnus Craig Hartman with an honorary doctor of arts degree.

Hartman, who graduated in 1973, has earned critical acclaim for designing the International Terminal at the San Francisco Airport, the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland, Calif., and the American Embassy in Beijing. His work has earned more than 50 national and international honors, including seven National American Institute of Architects (AIA) Honors Awards and a 2000 Federal Design Achievement Award.

In 2001, Hartman earned the citation as the youngest recipient of the AIA Maybeck Award for lifetime achievement and three 2009 AIA National Design Honors Awards with Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, LLP.

On campus, Hartman was named as the College of Architecture and Planning's Distinguished Alumnus in 1998 and earned Ball State's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2001.

Ball State's spring commencement takes place on the Old Quad and is traditionally attended by more than 14,000 faculty, staff, students, family and friends. Past speakers have included conductor Arthur Fiedler; Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and author David Broder; then-Surgeon General C. Everett Koop; jazz musician Ellis Marsalis; editor, educator and presidential advisor David Gergen; and Andrew Card, former White House chief of staff.

Residential property management graduates buck trend, net multiple job offers

For students enrolled in Ball State University's Residential Property Management (RPM) program, many internship and job offers await even in this current recession.

"The apartment industry is thriving, and our students and alumni continue to be in high demand," said Carla Earhart, RPM program director. "This was demonstrated by our recent Face to Face event and the university job fair the following day.

Having 16 regional and national companies come to campus resulted in many of our students netting multiple internship and job offers."

Currently, there are about 100 students pursuing RPM majors, minors and graduate degrees. And each year, companies such as Associated Estates Realty Corp., CWS Apartment Homes and Edward Rose Companies come to Ball State to recruit the program's top students, Earhart said.

"I regularly receive employment announcements from our alumni and advisory board members. In fact, I had three firms that were hoping to recruit our December graduates," Earhart said. "However, we had only one graduate, and he had already accepted a position several months before graduation. It was such an attractive offer that he started the job before graduating and completed his last semester through distance education."

Earhart doesn't have to look too far for testimonials on RPM's success. Many can be found in the College of Applied Sciences and Technology or during job fair events such as the recent Face to Face.

During the 2008 event, James Workman received several internship offers. This year, however, he earned a solid job offer.

"Last year, I met many professionals who I used for job shadows and to e-mail questions regarding class assignments," he said. "This year I'm graduating in May, and I've already accepted a position with the Sexton Companies in Indianapolis as a manager-in-training."

High praise for the RPM program comes from company representatives attending each recruiting fair.

"We view the Face to Face event as the single most valuable recruiting opportunity," said David Hinds of CWS Apartment Homes. "The caliber of Ball State students is second-to-none in our industry."

Additional endorsements come in from many recent graduates, such as 2005 alumna Ashley Benner, who recently sent a letter to Earhart alerting her former professor of her promotion to property manager of Castle Creek apartments in Indianapolis. Along with her promotion, Benner has been instrumental in the apartment community's securing multiple statewide awards.

Students interested in studying RPM at Ball State can apply for a freshman scholarship that pays \$2,500 annually and is renewable for four years or a total of \$10,000. Additional RPM scholarships are available for sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students.

For more information, contact Carla Earhart at 765-285-3707.

Public service announcements push closed captioning

Thanks to a group of Ball State University students, a pair of public service announcements (PSAs) designed to raise awareness about closed captioning may soon be seen on television broadcasts throughout the nation.

Written, shot and edited by graduate and undergraduate telecommunications students, the two PSAs bring to light the need for increased closed captioning of a variety of video programming in order to assist 34 million Americans with significant hearing loss.

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) is distributing the PSAs to all television stations in the country through regular satellite feeds in the coming weeks.

Closed captions are on-screen text descriptions that display a video product's dialogue, identify speakers, and describe other relevant information that are otherwise inaccessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

"The issue came up in my graduate school class focusing on legal issues in digital storytelling," explains Barry Umansky, a telecommunications professor and former NAB

legal counsel. "At that point, we thought it would be a great idea if we came up with a couple of scripts that focused on the growing need for closed captioning not only for television programming, but all sorts of emerging media."

"We came up with the scripts, and then they were developed by students from a class taught by Tim Pollard in telecommunications," he said. "When we were done, I made a few calls to contacts in NAB, and they thought highly enough of the finished spots that NAB's offering them up nationally to television stations across the country."

The PSAs offer viewers a link to www.captioninfo.org, a site hosted by Ball State's Office of Disabled Student Development, which assisted in the video project.

Umansky said his current graduate-level class is reviewing other potential issues for new scripts that would eventually be produced by students within the College of Communication, Information, and Media.

"I think we've opened the door to an ongoing project that could result in changes in how we think about different issues related to the media," he said. "Eventually, we believe such PSAs could be viewed on a variety of platforms because today's media are expanding."

ON CAMPUS

Ball State Employee QuickClinic offers advice for the flu season

With the arrival of flu season, the Ball State Employee QuickClinic provides diagnosis and treatment by its nurse practitioners as well as advice to keep away the colds, flu and strep throat.

Treatment is available for Ball State employees and their family members older than age 2 Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. No co-pay or deductible is needed for employees under the wellness option PPO or the low deductible PPO. Individuals under other plans must pay at the time of service. Call 765-285-1106 with any questions about services or the costs at the QuickClinic.

The QuickClinic also suggests the following tips for staying well during flu season.

- Wash your hands often.
- Keep your hands away from your nose, eyes and mouth.
- Maintain your resistance to infection by eating a healthy diet, getting plenty of rest and getting regular exercise.

For more resources on self-care and home treatments attend the upcoming half-hour Health Wise Class offered from noon to 12:30 p.m. March 26 in Bracken Library, room 215.

IN THE NEWS

Ball State University

Ball State was featured in a Feb. 15 Hotel South Korea article, "Because of the Television, No Two Countries are Really Apart." Television is still a dominant medium for Americans, according to a Ball State study. An average American spends about 4 1/2 hours a day watching TV, the study said. Television has enabled information to reach many parts of the world.

Michael Hicks, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research

USA Today quoted Hicks in a Feb. 13 article, "How will the \$787 Billion Stimulus Package Affect You?" The stimulus plan might not solve the problems of the economy, but it could reduce the damage. Increasing payments is a good way to stimulate the economy because, "You can get money into the hands of people right away," Hicks said. "And people who are unemployed are likely to spend it." The story was published by more than 47 media outlets, including MSNBC.

James Jones, assistant professor of technology

Jones was quoted in a Feb. 18 Midwest Construction article, "Johnson Controls' HQ." Jones said contractors see many benefits from involvement in green and sustainable projects with prominent firms such as Johnson Controls. Some want to establish themselves as green builders with one significant project or client. "Green construction is here to stay," he said. "Sustainable building practices will become incorporated in varying degrees on many projects."

Robert Koester, director of the Center for Energy Research Education, Service

Hoosier Ag Today quoted Koester in a Feb. 22 article, "Agriculture Cannot Play Duck and Cover on Vital Issues." Robert Kennedy Jr., an environmental attorney, spoke at Ball State on Feb. 18. Koester invited Kennedy to speak. "Kennedy was perfect because of his work with economic, environmental and social issues and his ideas complement this year's Freshman Common Reader," he said.

Marilyn Weaver, chairperson of the journalism department

PR Week quoted Weaver in a Feb. 17 article, "Journalists See Teaching Transition Hurdles." Many long-time journalists are looking for work in higher education. However, they are having a hard time making the transition because of tough economic times for universities, evolving curriculum and the need for advanced degrees. Weaver said journalists have a better chance of getting an academic job if they can teach multimedia or cross-platform skills. For the three jobs she has open in her department, two require a master's degree and the other requires a doctorate." Applicants may be great writers, but

if they can't teach students how to deliver across platforms, then they're not as attractive," Weaver said.

SPOTLIGHT

Publication

Rathin S. Rathinasamy, Department of Finance and Insurance, co-author, "Capital Structure and Product Markets Interaction: Evidence from Thai Firms," *Global Business and Finance Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 2009.

Presentations

Tammy Burt, Marge Hobley and Carla Vidoni, School of Physical Education, Sport, and Exercise Science, "YouTube: Stretch Your Imagination," 22nd annual Sharing the Wealth in Elementary, Middle and High School Physical Education Conference, Jekyll Island, Ga., Jan. 23, 2009.

Jeffrey Fry, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, "Gluttons for Sport," International Association for the Philosophy of Sport, American Philosophical Association, Central Division meeting, Chicago, Feb. 21, 2009.

Rathin S. Rathinasamy, Department of Finance and Insurance, "Kellogg: A Mini Case on Multinational Capital Budgeting," International Association of Public and Business Administration Disciplines, Orlando, Fla., January 2009.

Lori Rhoden, School of Music, "Sight-Reading Boot Camp," Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Feb. 18, 2009.

Creative Endeavor

Lori Rhoden, School of Music, guest artist piano recital, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Feb. 17, 2009.

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