

CHEMILUMINESCENCE

Department of Chemistry Newsletter
University of Central Oklahoma

Chairman's Comments (Fred Grosz)

I have returned to the Chemistry Department to serve as Chairman after completing two years as Interim Dean of the Graduate College. The experience was very valuable, as I was involved in University activities at a different level than during my first 26 years of university service. I feel the experience helped to broaden my view of the university and the strengths, weaknesses, restraints, etc that are placed on individuals at all levels of university life. Often the further one gets from the role of a faculty member, situations are seldom black or white, but mostly gray areas. If they weren't gray, someone else would have handled them. Enough of my philosophy lesson. I am glad to be back to accept the challenge of serving as Departmental Chair. There are a number of challenges that the Department met during 1998/99 with many more remaining.

For those of you who have previously received our Departmental Newsletter, you will notice that we are trying a new format. Perhaps it shows that even though we are getting older, we can change or it may mean the younger faculty is pressuring the mature faculty to try change.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs. Cindy Coleman for so graciously and ably serving as Interim Department Chair while I was serving as Graduate Dean. My daily visits with her helped keep me in close contact with departmental activities.

One of the most rewarding experiences for me is to visit with former students and graduates who stop in for a visit or correspond by phone or email. I am always interested in their career paths and what they are doing in general. Keep in touch, the rest of the faculty and I appreciate the contact.

This newsletter is rather lengthy, but it has been several years since the Chemistry Department has distributed one. In the future, I will try to be more diligent in preparing and distributing a Departmental Newsletter. My goal is to correspond with our graduates at least twice a year.

Chemistry Department Actions and Reactions

The Department has finished a second year in the new LAB facilities. The facilities are certainly more spacious and modern than the labs in old Howell Hall. Some Howell Hall renovation has been completed and more is being planned. Six departmental offices have been created in the space previously occupied by the old Instrumental Analysis Lab. The Physical Chemistry lab has been converted into a student computer lab. The former General Chemistry labs are currently being converted into Physics Department Offices. Two "shelled" spaces remained when the LAB building was constructed. Both of these "shelled" spaces are now scheduled for completion. One lab will serve as a Physical Chemistry/Inorganic/Research laboratory and the other is designated for Forensic Science and Biochemistry.

The Department has acquired several new pieces of equipment and computers for faculty and student use. A Cary 50 UV-Vis Spectrophotometer and a Nicolet 410 FTIR were purchased for the Instrumental Analysis Lab and a GOW MAC Gas Chromatograph was acquired for the Organic Labs. An HP5890 GC with HP5970 MSD was recently donated to the department from

Tinker Air Force Base due to the diligence of a chemistry graduate. If your place of employment has surplus equipment that is in good condition, but is being surplused, please let us know, as we might be able to use it.

Curriculum Changes

Some changes in the chemistry and forensic science curricula were implemented during the 1998 Fall Semester. The five-hour senior level Instrumental Analysis I course has been changed to a four-hour junior level Fundamentals of Instrumental Analysis with Laboratory course. All Chemistry and Forensic Science majors will take this course. Chemistry majors will then take a four-hour Advanced Instrumental Analysis with Laboratory course while Forensic Science majors will take a three-hour Forensic Analysis with Laboratory course. There are also additional biology course requirements for the Forensic Science major.

The Department has completed the process of preparing the full proposal for an interdisciplinary MS Degree in Forensic Science. This program will provide options in Criminalistics, Technical Investigations, and Forensic Nursing. The proposal has received all internal approvals and in April was approved by the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges. It should be considered for final approval at the June meeting of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. We are optimistic that the program will be implemented beginning with the 2000 Spring Semester. There are no guarantees that this will happen, but we are trying to be optimistic.

Faculty and Staff Stuff

Mrs. Cindy Coleman

Mrs. Coleman served as Interim Chair for the two years I served as Graduate Dean and this year resumed her role as assistant chair. During the time she served as chair, she was able to experience the challenges and joys of chairing an academic department. I believe she agrees that the release time received by the chair has a high price, including working long hours and being able to spend less time preparing for classes. As expected she did an **excellent** job as chair.

Dr. Al Albahadily

Dr. Al taught the Instrumental Analysis course and maintained the instruments for the chemistry labs. Last summer he worked on a research project at Tinker Air Force Base related to interpretation of corrosion data. Dr. Al was active on the Faculty Senate and chairs the College Bowl activities. Dr. Al and his wife Zena also have an addition to their family with the birth of their second son, Adam.

Dr. John Ferguson

Dr. Ferguson completed his fourth year at UCO and has become active in Departmental and University activities. He has directed the work of several students in Directed Research and special projects, which has resulted in presentations at various meetings including the National ACS meeting in Anaheim. He has also been active in outreach activities by giving demonstrations at area schools. Dr. Ferguson and his wife, Kelly, provided the most recent addition to the Chemistry Family when their son Todd was born.

Dr. Cheryl Frech

Dr. Frech continues to coordinate the General Chemistry program and is experimenting with alternative means of instruction. She was elected to serve as Alternate Councilor to the Oklahoma Section of the ACS, serves on the National ACS General Chemistry Test Board, chaired a Curriculum Committee on the UCO Academic Affairs Council, and was elected to serve on the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Jim Dechter

Dr. Dechter served as the Assistant Chair of the Chemistry Department for two years when Ms. Coleman served as chair. He also serves as the Departmental Network administrator, supervisor of the student computer lab, has oversight of the FT-NMR, chairs the Technology Committee, and serves on the Graduate Council. He found time to prepare a proposal and submit it to the NSF-ILI program. The matching grant of \$49,700 to purchase a broadband probe and variable temperature control for the FT-NMR was funded. He attended an NMR conference in Denver and has recently had a paper accepted for publication. This past year he served as Chair of the Oklahoma Section of the ACS.

Dr. Olivia Hanson-Painton

Dr. OHP continues to teach Biochemistry I&II and lab. She is also in charge of the Departmental Assessment Program and serves on other Departmental and University Committees. She prepared an OCAST proposal on behalf of the Department to fund a student internship program. The proposal was funded and implemented during the 1998 Fall Semester.

Dr. David von Minden

Dr. von Minden completed his third year at UCO. He has been given the responsibility for the Forensic Science program, which has been steadily growing. He is also a very active sponsor of the Chemistry Club and last year started the Student Academy of Forensic Science Club.

Dr. Pamela New

Dr. New completed her third year at UCO. She is recognized as a very good teacher and has been well received by students in her General Chemistry and Chemistry and Society classes. In addition to serving on a number of Departmental Committees she was co-sponsor of the Chemistry Club and served as a member of the OKAMP committee. Dr. New and her husband Dallas are proud parents of a 2-year-old son, Thomas.

Dr. Mike Jezercak

Dr. J. has completed ten years at UCO and is becoming a senior member. He teaches Physical Chemistry, General Chemistry, Chemical Calculations and several other courses. He has been busy preparing several class for offering on the Web. He also serves as the Departmental WebMaster and photographer.

Dr. Mike Hellwege

Dr. Hellwege is the senior member of the Department having been on the faculty for over 32 years. He continues to teach Organic Chemistry I and II and Lab. He presents his "Chemistry Magic Shows" for National Chemistry Week and on other occasions. He recently

became a grandfather again when his son Roger (a UCO Chemistry graduate) and his wife became parents of a baby girl.

Dr. Dallas New

This Dr. New served for the 97/98 year as a full-time temporary replacement for Dr. Terry Smith who retired in May 1997. Dr. New teaches Organic Chemistry I&II and lab. He was appointed to a permanent position beginning with the 1998 Fall Semester. That makes him the “new” or “newest” (pun intended) Chemistry Department faculty member. Dr. New was very helpful in finally getting our chemical inventory somewhat under control.

Dr. Kay Bjornen

Dr. Bjornen served as a full-time temporary faculty member during 1997/98 replacing Dr. Michael Garoutte who resigned in May 1997. She primarily taught General Chemistry classes.

Mr. Stan Sanders

Stan served two years as a full-time temporary faculty member replacing Dr. Grosz who was serving as Interim Graduate Dean. Stan is a UCO graduate and has served as an adjunct teacher in the Chemistry Department for a number of years. Stan was very active in the Department, as he is highly student oriented.

Dr. Fred Grosz

While Dr. Grosz was not physically located in the Chemistry Department when he served as Graduate Dean, he was there in spirit. He visited nearly every day and participated in meetings, curriculum matters, ACS functions, etc. He served as Chair of the Vice President for Academic Affairs Search Committee and was recently appointed to a seven year term on the Oklahoma Air Quality Advisory Council by Governor Keating. He returned to the Chemistry Department in July 1998 to complete his term as Department Chair. During the 1998/99 year he taught Fundamentals of Instrumental Analysis with Lab. He plans on retiring at the end of the 1999/2000 academic year.

Mr. Bill Alters

Bill suffered a heart attack in October 1998 and ended up having quadruple bypass surgery. He did not return to work until January 2, 1999 and will retire on June 30, 1999 after serving 20.5 years as Chemistry Laboratory Associate. We wish him well.

Mrs. Linda Ginter

Linda was hired as the departmental Administrative Secretary in July 1996. She provided excellent service to the Chemistry Department for nearly three years. She recently left us to move to Pennsylvania to be with her aging parents.

Sara Paschel

Sara graduated in May 1999 with a major in Forensic Science. She served the Chemistry Department in an exemplary fashion for nearly four years. She was hired as a Student Secretary, but played many valuable roles ranging from general office work, departmental tutor, SAACS officer, President of the Student Academy of Forensic Sciences, grader, babysitter, and much more. She will be irreplaceable.

Retired Faculty

The Department has the following five emeritus faculty: Dr. Frank Frow, Dr. David Hart, Dr. Verlin Richardson, Dr. Terrill Smith and Dr. Larry Westmoreland. With the exception of Dr. Frow, all served as adjunct professor for at least one course during the past few years and frequently visit the Department. Dr. Smith continues to conduct research when he is in town.

Student News

The Chemistry Club had a record number of members and was very active under the leadership of Susan Mass, Rebecca Sanders and the sponsorship of Dr. Pam New, Dr. Frech and Dr. von Minden. The club was involved in very successful National Chemistry Week activities. Last year eight students attended the National ACS meeting in Dallas to present a poster and to be recognized for receiving a Commendable Chapter award for 1996/97. This spring five students attended the National ACS meeting in Anaheim to present a poster and to be recognized for receiving an Outstanding Chapter award for 1997/98. This is the fifth consecutive year that the Chapter has received either a Commendable or Outstanding award.

To serve the interests of the growing number of Forensic Science majors (over 100 declared majors), the Student Academy of Forensic Science was established in Spring 1998. The club has been active by sending ten students to a Southwest Association of Forensic Sciences meeting and by bringing in several well-known speakers from the forensic community.

The number of graduates remains at a near record level with 27 graduating during the 1997/98 academic year and 35 in 1998/99. An increasing number of the graduates are obtaining degrees in Forensic Science.

Former Students

It is always good to hear from former students and to learn what they are doing and where they are located. The following is a list of some of our graduates who have stopped in, called or sent email messages. Since it is being constructed from memory (my memory) it is undoubtedly incomplete.

Dan Scully – works for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

Kelly Sprankle – works for Isis Corporation in San Diego, CA

Dr. Kathy Swallows – works as an analytical Chemist for Phillips Petroleum. She and her husband recently moved to Sweeny, Texas and had a baby.

Paul Langevan – will be beginning his second year at the Osteopathic College in Tulsa.

Jim Wright – Jim graduated 30 years ago and lives in Amarillo, Texas

Dr. Michele Harris – Michele is an Assistant Professor at Stephen F. Austin State University. She and her husband had a baby girl in May 98.

Mark Hatley – Mark is pursuing a Ph.D./MD at Southwest Medical School in Dallas. Mark will be getting married on June 12. Congratulations Mark.

Shawn McCleskey – Shawn is attending graduate school at the University of Texas in Austin.

Karen (Hall) Reed – Karen recently resigned her position at Petrolite Corporation and became a mother at the end of April, 1998.

Paula (Ozborn) Fitzer – Paula works as Criminalist at the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department Crime Laboratory. She and her husband are awaiting transfer to OKC or New Mexico.

Mike Sullivan – Mike graduated from Palmer College of Chiropractic in 1995 and has a practice in Norman, OK. He is married and has two sons.

Todd Albright – Todd completed D.O. school and is (was) completing an obstetrics residency in Hawaii.

Byron Curtis – Byron continues to work for the Medical Examiner and was recently accepted into the graduate program at the OUHSC.

Sheena O'Brien – Sheena works at the Office of the State Medical Examiner in OKC. She will soon be moving with her husband Richard McAroy to Keene, NH to work for the New Hampshire State Police.

Richard McAroy – Richard completed the Veterinary Medicine Program at OSU and now has the title of DVM. He will be moving to Keene, NH to work at the Court Street Vet Hospital.

Jim Schmidt – Jim works for Abbott Laboratories in Abbott Park, IL. He has his own Home Page: <http://www.concentric.net/~schmidtj/> if you want to find out more about him.

Lane Gardner – Lane has worked for Lubrizol for more than 10 years. Lane always stops to visit when he comes back to OKC. Lane has recently become the proud father of twins (a boy and a girl).

Mark Fuller – Mark has been working for BioMedical Enterprises, Inc. in San Antonio. He is seeking a position with the Bexar County Forensic Science Center.

Wing-Kit (Kitty) Li – Kitty returned to Hong Kong and has found employment although we don't know with which company. She is adjusting to life in Hong Kong under the rule of Mainland China.

Dan Bolton – Dan received his Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from Washington University in St. Louis and is currently employed by Baeyer in Pittsburgh.

Kristy Hoggat – Kristy works for Eagle Pitcher in Joplin, Mo.

Graylon Williams – Graylon received his Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry from the University of Delaware and is currently employed at Automotive Systems laboratory

Arron Karcher – Arron is pursuing a Ph.D. degree in chemistry at OSU.

Jonathan Leonard – Jonathan works for Woodward's Wines & Elixirs and also worked for the Chemistry Department as an Interim Laboratory Associate while Bill Alters was on disability leave.

On a separate sheet we have provided a list of Chemistry alumni for whom we have email addresses. If we do not have your current email address, please send us (fgrosz@ucok.edu) an email message as that will give us a chance to hear from you and will also provide us with your email address. We have also included a list of names of alumni that we have been unable to locate. If you know their addresses, telephone numbers, or their place of employment, please let us know so we can contact them.

We have also included our Web Site address (<http://www.chemistry.ucok.edu>) to make it easy for you to access departmental information.