

## Software engineering approved as new major

Oswego has received approval to become the first public college in New York to offer a software engineering degree.

“At a time when our state and nation face a shortage of engineers and computing professionals, this program will enable us to recruit the state’s best and brightest students into a career field that offers lucrative job opportunities and helps to address New York’s growing need for computer specialists,” President Deborah F. Stanley said.

While other SUNY schools have computer engineering programs, the bachelor’s degree in software engineering is unique to Oswego. There are only around 15 such accredited programs nationally, with Clarkson University and the Rochester Institute of Technology the only others in the state.

“As we talked with businesses, industries and non-profits in the region, we continuously heard there was a high interest in an engineering program and engineering graduates,” said Susan Coultrap-McQuin, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Rameen Mohammadi, associate provost and a member of the computer science faculty, noted the opportunities at local large employers like Lockheed-Martin and Sensis, as well as smaller contracting companies in the Utica-Rome area. Employers told the college that searching nationally is expensive and that there should be plenty of placements for Oswego graduates, he added.

The new major evolved from Oswego’s longstanding bachelor’s program in computer science and newer graduate program in human-computer interaction, Mohammadi said. Components of software engineering were already embedded in introductory computer science courses, he added.

**‘Software engineering students will complete a yearlong capstone experience where they will solve real problems for real clients.’**

— Rameen Mohammadi

Students pursuing the new degree can focus on human-computer interaction, with courses tying into the master’s degree program, or “middleware” development, Mohammadi said. Middleware is the software that connects network applications and components.

“Software engineering students will complete a yearlong capstone experience where they will solve real problems for real clients,” Mohammadi said. “We felt it was essential for someone receiving a software engineering degree to have that experience.”

SUNY Oswego will also pursue the highest educational standard in the field from the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology. “We will be seeking ABET accreditation as soon as that is possible,” Coultrap-McQuin said.

“The program was designed with the accreditation standards in mind,” she added. “The learning outcomes we’ve developed and the courses we’ve included in the program all are designed to meet accreditation standards.”

With the software engineering major now approved, Coultrap-McQuin said Oswego will look to establish additional programs in engineering to meet other demands in the field.

“Business and industry look to colleges and universities to educate the engineers and computer scientists who are needed for today’s workforce and the workforce of the future,” Stanley said. “We have an obligation to meet their needs.” □ — Tim Nekritz



**Urging vision, investment** — SUNY Oswego President Deborah F. Stanley made SUNY’s case with Syracuse media last week at a press conference on the budget challenges facing the State University, along with six other campus presidents, including Ray Cross, left, of Morrisville and David Smith of Upstate Medical University. Statewide, SUNY made \$38.8 million in cuts in state operating funds under the state budget passed in April, utility funds were cut, and the board of trustees agreed to an additional \$11.2 million reduction in June. Last week, the trustees’ finance committee indicated campuses would shoulder at least another \$40 million of the \$96.3 million reduction ordered by the governor for SUNY in July. Stanley convened the campus Budget Advisory Committee last week and was scheduled to speak at the general faculty meeting Monday on the developing budget issues.

## Campus celebrates Constitution Day today

Oswego’s free Constitution Week activities this week will include a dramatized reading of the U.S. Constitution, an art exhibition, a film and voter registration.

Nola Heidlebaugh, the college’s new civic engagement coordinator, said the activities are intended to raise awareness of the Constitution’s importance while helping prepare students for greater involvement in the democratic process.

President Deborah F. Stanley, faculty, staff and students will convey the key historical document in the “Rock the Constitution” dramatized reading at 3 p.m. today, which is Constitution Day. Attendees can pick up a free mini-Constitution at the event in the academic quad in front of Penfield Library. Inclement weather would move the reading into the Campus Center.

### Film, exhibit, more all week

“A More Perfect Union,” a film on the struggles that led to the then-controversial document and the formation of the United States, will screen at 7 p.m. tonight in Room 228 of the Campus Center.

Celebrating the First Amendment’s freedom of speech, “Pondering Propaganda,” an exhibit of posters in which SUNY Oswego art students created both positive and negative images of 2008 U.S. presidential contenders, can be seen from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday in the foyer in front of The Point.

Prominent poet and activist Sonia Sanchez, the keynote speaker of the ALANA Student Leadership Conference, will discuss her work and community engagement at 8 p.m. Thursday in the Hewitt Union ballroom. While the talk is free, tickets are required due to demand through Tyler box office.

Members of the campus community can “see our huge copy of the Constitution and feel what it’s like to affirm its truths by signing it” at “I Signed the Constitution” on Friday, Heidlebaugh said. Several Student Association organizations will sponsor the

event from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in front of The Point.

A special display in Penfield Library, on view throughout the week, will showcase landmark court cases concerning the rights of students, including access to education, equal opportunity and affirmative action.

### Registering voters

Voter registration forms will be available at many of the Constitution Week events, encouraging students to participate in the democracy the Constitution envisioned in 1787.

The week is part of long-running campus-wide efforts starting with the Campus Compact, American Democracy Project and other initiatives. Activities are intended “to make students more comfortable to take part in leadership and involvement, not just politically but on a community level,” Heidlebaugh said. “Students should feel they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to make a positive difference.”

For Heidlebaugh, who is retiring from 30 years of teaching communication at Oswego, the transition to civic engagement coordinator dovetails with her longtime interests and involvements.

“I’d been working more and more on things involving campus and community engagement,” she said, including teaching a capstone course in civic engagement and lecturing on conflict and peace studies.

“As somebody in communication, one of the things I bring to this is a desire for dialogue and communication,” she said.

Future civic engagement projects will include Debate Watches — where students gather to watch campaign debates, followed by faculty-moderated discussions — and Focus the Nation programs tying into this year’s Oswego Reading Initiative selection of Elizabeth Kolbert’s *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*.

The civic engagement committee also seeks student input into future activities. □

— Tim Nekritz

## Inside:

• People in action, page 2 • New book on shame, page 3 • Steinkraus Lecture, page 3 • Hip-hop troupe in residence, page 4 • Hispanic Heritage Month, page 4 • Spotlight, page 4 • Calendar highlights, page 4



College trends

Risk management

“Colleges are increasingly using sophisticated accounting procedures to measure risks on campus, from football games to foreign travel by students and faculty members. . . . Risk management has become a part of nearly every process on the campus, including building contracts, campus events, experiential learning and internships, and managing foreign campuses. And risk managers aren’t just trying to protect lives and limbs; they have to think about their college’s financial health, property, and even reputation.”  
— News blog, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sept. 12, 2008

Library trends

“Know your library user—and worry about who’s not using the library. That’s the main advice to librarians in a new white paper that notes ‘a growing ambivalence about the campus library’ among faculty members as more and more knowledge goes digital. The report was released . . . by Ithaka, a nonprofit organization that promotes the use of technology in higher education. The paper probes the relationship between libraries and the faculty at institutions of all sizes, and how the digital shift is altering that relationship. . . . The report confirms what everyone already knows—that electronic resources are ever more central to scholarly activity. It emphasizes that scholars still value libraries as buyers and archivers of scholarship, and many still use them as gateways to scholarly information. However, it also confirms that researchers increasingly find what they need through Google Scholar and other online resources, a trend the report’s authors anticipate will accelerate as more and more knowledge goes digital. Since 2003, faculty members across the disciplines have shown a marked decline in how devoted they are to libraries as information portals. Eighty percent of humanities scholars are still devoted to library research—although that may be not because they’re traditionalists but because they can’t yet get what they need in digital form. But only 48 percent of economists and 50 percent of scientists value libraries as gateways.”  
— *Academe Today*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Aug. 26, 2008

Stubborn graduation rates

“Colleges throughout the United States are attempting to increase and accelerate graduation rates among college students. According to the College Board, the number of students earning bachelor’s degrees within five years has held steady at 52 percent, down from 55 percent in 1988. Colleges are trying to improve the graduation rates by appealing to college sophomores, men and adult dropouts.”  
— *Edlines*, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Aug. 28, 2008

Less likely to light up

“College students are smoking tobacco at the lowest rate since 1980, but that decline will not necessarily continue, according to a report . . . by the American Lung Association. About one in five college students smoked in 2006, compared with almost one in three in 1999, the report says. That record high, however, came after a decade-long rise starting with a rate, in 1989, almost as low as it is now. The report attributes the recent decline primarily to the increased price of cigarettes and expanded smoke-free laws and policies. But many students still smoke to control stress or depression, the report says, and tobacco companies’ marketing continues to take aim at 18-to-24-year-olds. White students and members of fraternities and sororities report particularly high smoking rates, it says.”  
— News blog, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sept. 8, 2008

People in action

**Remembering 9/11** — On the morning of Sept. 11, members of the campus community found 2,974 miniature American flags — one for every person killed in the 2001 attacks — planted overnight by members of Oswego’s College Republicans. James Strang, first vice chair, and Meghan Upson, second vice chair, were among the members of the organization who coordinated the effort.



**Bruce Altschuler** of the political science department played in the 2008 New York State Chess Championship in Albany from Aug. 29 to Sept. 1 with approximately 200 players. Although he was ranked 31st of 47 players in the top (open) section, he finished tied for 11-17th place. The cross-table can be found at: <http://www.chesstour.com/nysc08r.htm>.

Over the summer, nine publications by **Tom Bertonneau** of the English department have appeared in a variety of forums. They are a review of Paul Gottfried’s *Strange Death of Marxism* in the winter issue of *Modern Age* under the title “The Sacralization of Politics”; an essay on the late William F. Buckley under the title “The Obliging Order” in fall issue of *The Intercollegiate Review*; essays on “Dr. Paterson Visits the Library” and “The Vanishing Cultivated Girl” in the winter and fall issues of *Praesidium*, respectively; and on “Spengler on Diatribe,” “The Martian Chronicles as Critique of Empire” and “The Gist of Eric Voegelin” in *First Principles*, the online journal of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. A revised version of Bertonneau’s essay on “Frederick Delius and the Secular Sublime” appears at the “Music of Frederick Delius” Web site. In mid-August, Bertonneau also contributed a feature to the Palladium-Times about local aviator Fred Bullard.

Bertonneau has entered into an agreement with the Intercollegiate Studies Institute to be a twice-a-week contributor to its columnist-forum “The Porch,” which will commence this month.

He contributed a photo of his ancestor Arnold Bertonneau to BlackPast, an online reference guide to African-American history. In 1864, Arnold Bertonneau was one of two delegates of the free citizens of Louisiana of African descent who traveled to Washington, D.C., to urge President Abraham Lincoln and Congress to allow these citizens to vote. His speech “Every Man Should Stand Equal Before the Law” was later published in the abolitionist newspaper the Liberator.

**M. Neelika Jayawardane**, assistant professor of English, gave a lecture at the International Centre for Ethnic Studies in Colombo, Sri Lanka, recently. She was there as a fellow with the American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies to (re)learn Sinhala and to conduct research on the role of the Buddhist clergy in Sri Lankan parliamentary politics. She was interviewed by the Daily Mirror, one of the major English-language newspapers there, and the article appeared Sept. 9.

**John Lalande II**, professor and chair of the department of modern languages and literatures, spent part of the summer teaching in Austria as part of a cooperative program involving the American Institute of Musical Studies and the University of Graz.

**Lawrence Spizman** of the economics department is the author of the article “Sample Selectivity Bias of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Employee Benefits Study,” which appears in the current issue of *The Earnings Analyst*. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Employee Benefits Study presents annual fringe benefit information that U.S. employers provide to their

workers. The study has been used in litigation for decades as a base for estimating fringe benefit losses in such matters as personal injury, wrongful death and medical malpractice. This paper demonstrates that the selectivity bias from the sample of firms responding to the chamber’s survey questionnaire raises serious issues about the reliability of the study for litigation purposes. While the Chamber of Commerce study may be helpful for businesses to compare their fringe benefit packages to those of the participants in the study, it has a selectivity bias problem that cannot be ignored by forensic economists who are trying to use a broad statistical average on fringe benefits. Given the potential problems of the chamber study, it may be best not to use it for litigation purposes, Spizman concludes.

Research by scientists from Oswego will be presented at the joint annual meeting of the Geological Society of America, Soil Science Society of America, American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and the Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies. The meeting will be held Oct. 5 to 9 in Houston. Approximately 10,000 scientists are expected to attend this first-ever joint meeting of these scientific societies, which will celebrate the International Year of Planet Earth. Oswego presentations include “The Piseco Lake Structure: Arc Plutonism, Generation of the AMCG Suite, and Escape Tectonics, Southern Adirondacks, New York?” by **David Valentino** of the earth sciences department with co-authors Jeffrey Chiarenzelli of St. Lawrence University and Gary Solar of Buffalo State College; and “Using Individually Dated Bivalve and Brachiopod Shells to Reconstruct Epibiont Colonization and Taphonomy Over Millennial Timescales” by **David L. Rodland** of the earth sciences department with co-authors Richard A. Krause Jr. of the Museum fuer Naturkunde in Berlin, Susan Barbour Wood of Western Carolina University, Darrell Kaufman of Northern Arizona University, John Wehmiller of the University of Delaware, Michal Kowalewski of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Marcello Simoes of the Universidade Estadual Paulista in Brazil. □

Display-to-Archives Program submissions due by Oct. 31

Penfield Library is collecting recently published or produced work by faculty and staff for its semi-annual Display-to-Archives presentation in the library lobby. The deadline is Oct. 31.

“Here is your opportunity to shine among your colleagues and be featured in Penfield Library’s display cases,” said Elizabeth Young, who is coordinating the program.

Material may be sent to Young in Penfield Library. Details on the 20th annual Display-to-Archives reception will be forthcoming. “We hope you will be included in this historic event!” Young said.

She noted that those new to campus or unfamiliar with this project can learn more online at [www.oswego.edu/library/archives/display\\_to\\_archives.html](http://www.oswego.edu/library/archives/display_to_archives.html). □



# Professor’s book asks: Have we no shame?

Tim Delaney of Oswego’s sociology department asks whether shamelessness is running amok in society, and the reasons why, in his new book *Shameful Behaviors*.

“The book is meant to be interesting and entertaining, but it’s also designed to get people talking about the culture that we live in,” Delaney said. “What some people consider shameful, others may not. That’s why we can have this culture of growing shamelessness and also this countermovement saying, ‘you should be ashamed.’”

He recalls reading a newspaper article about “drunk shamings, when somebody drinks too much and passes out, and friends draw on them, place things on them, and take pictures to shame the person,” Delaney said. While it’s nothing new, the behavior that used to be hidden now shows up on the Internet — sometimes put there by the victim, he said.

First planning a journal article, Delaney talked to students and learned there were even rules related to drunk shamings: “If you pass out with your shoes on, you’re fair game, because you clearly had too much,” he said. “If you get home and to your bed, you’re off limits because you took care of yourself.”

The more research he did, the more he realized there was enough for a whole book on the culture of increasing shamelessness, how it is influenced by technology and the Internet, and reactive forces trying to enforce shame.

**Changing values**

In early Puritanical America, wrongdoers were shamed by being placed in the town stocks or, for adulterers, branded with the scarlet A. In modern America, public shame is sometimes the ticket to fame. *American Idol* reject William Hung parlayed a laughably bad performance of Ricky Martin’s “She Bangs” into a record deal and countless TV appearances. Everyone from Paris Hilton to the cast of “Jackass” has attained fame from videos or acts people wouldn’t have made public in previous generations.

Published by the University Press of America, *Shameful Behaviors* includes the history of shamings and stigmatization, the continued existence of formal shaming ceremonies such as military court-martials, and informal shamings where people jokingly slam their friends.

“Because this is about the growing culture of shamelessness, it includes a lot of sociology, but because it also concerns self-esteem, there is a lot

## Third annual ‘Connections’ women’s conference scheduled

SUNY Oswego’s Office of Business and Community Relations and the Women’s Network for Entrepreneurial Training will gather women from across Central New York on Oct. 7 for “Connections,” a day-long conference to be held in the Sheldon Hall ballroom.

“Connections” is designed to bring women of all ages and backgrounds together to explore their place and power within their professions. The theme this year is “Vision, Change and Growth.” The event will feature several dynamic speakers, networking opportunities, a dessert reception and a “Women’s Marketplace” where vendors promoting products and services for women will be showcased.

“‘Connections’ energizes women to learn from each other, generate new ideas, and develop their careers and entrepreneurial aspirations,” said Nancy Bellow, executive director of the Office of Business and Community Relations. “Each year women gather from as far away as Rochester to listen to speakers that in the past have included internationally known business coaches and New York Times bestselling authors.”

To register for “Connections,” call the Tyler box office at 312-2141 or e-mail tickets@oswego.edu. Tickets are \$30 per person and include a continental breakfast and lunch.

For more information, visit [www.oswego.edu/about/centers/cbcd/connections](http://www.oswego.edu/about/centers/cbcd/connections), or contact Jeff Grimshaw, “Connections” co-chair, at 312-3492. □



**Pondering shame** — Tim Delaney of Oswego’s sociology department ponders a seemingly increasing culture of shamelessness, and how technology has influenced the trend, in his new book, *Shameful Behaviors*.

of social psychology, too,” he said.

Delaney’s research included surveying Oswego students on some behaviors, identifying subjects as perpetrators, “victims” and self-shamers, the latter those who publicize their own humiliation.

“I found that people with high self-esteem really don’t care, but people with low self-esteem saw [self-shaming] as a way of showing they belong, that they go to parties and have friends,” he said.

“As a professor, I try to warn students that anything out in cyberspace can be accessed by anyone,” Delaney said. “Future employers routinely Google their applicants, so this could come back to haunt them. I tell students to ask themselves two things: ‘Would I want future employees to see this? Would I want my kids to see this?’ If not, then don’t post it.”

Before people could post self-shaming images on YouTube, MySpace or Facebook, families submitted their embarrassing moments to “America’s Funniest Home Videos.”

The tradition has continued with shows like “Blue Collar TV,” where viewers submitted pictures of their own property for the “Redneck Yard of the Week” competition, “where the ‘prize,’ if you can call it that, is to have Jeff Foxworthy and others mock you and your yard for the world to see,” Delaney explained.

Whether it’s Hilton, Hung or teenagers who willingly show off for “Girls Gone Wild,” part of the appeal is the quest for what Andy Warhol first termed one’s 15 minutes of fame, Delaney noted.

But the increasing perception of cultural shamelessness also brings a backlash movement of people trying to censor or crack down on these behaviors, he noted, as “there are still a lot of social institutions and people trying to force shame onto others.” □

— Tim Nekritz

## Steinkraus lecturer to address creationism, intelligent design

Barbara Forrest of Southeastern Louisiana University will discuss “Inside Creationism’s Trojan Horse: A Closer Look at Intelligent Design” when she delivers the 21st annual Warren Steinkraus Lecture on Human Ideals on Saturday, Oct. 4.

The annual Steinkraus Lectures are free and open to the public. This year’s will begin at 2:15 p.m. in the Historic Lecture Hall, Room 222 of Sheldon Hall.

The Warren Steinkraus Lecture Series was founded in honor of the late SUNY Oswego philosophy Professor Warren Steinkraus, who retired in 1987. For two decades, the Steinkraus Lecture has championed the ideals that he held valuable: social justice, equality and peace. Philosophers of international distinction have spoken.

A member of Southeastern Louisiana University’s department of history and political science, Forrest co-authored the book *Creationism’s Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design* with Paul R. Gross. It was published by Oxford University Press in 2004.

### ‘Compelling exposure’

“This is the definitive work on modern creationism,” said renowned sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson, university research professor emeritus at Harvard University. He called the book “an exhaustively detailed and compelling exposure of the attempt — by the well-known process in nature called by biologists ‘aggressive mimicry’ — to corrupt science in the service of sectarian religion. In the process, the book explores the larger and seemingly endless struggle between religion-based tribal values and science-based universal values.”

Forrest first addressed the controversial topic with an article “The Wedge at Work: How Intelligent Design Creationism Is Wedging Its Way into the Cultural and Academic Mainstream” in the 2001 book *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics*.

She served as one of six expert witnesses for the plaintiffs in the first lawsuit against intelligent design, *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District*, in 2005. She received her doctorate in philosophy from Tulane University. □



**Crash site?** — Agent Meyers, played by junior theatre major Jeremy Waterman, tries to rebuff a photographer’s attempt to take a picture of what looks like a crashed UFO at last week’s mock news conference promoting Squonk Opera’s upcoming “Astro-rama” production at the college. Several improvisational theatre students played roles at the event, also featuring communication students “covering” it, near the H. Lee White Marine Museum in Oswego’s Maritime District. A free outdoors performance-art piece, “Astro-rama” will start at 8 p.m. Oct. 2 to 5 on campus.



Announcements

Graduating seniors face deadlines

Seniors who expect to graduate in December should file to graduate by Sept. 30 for their names to be listed in the commencement program. Degree forms are filed online via myOswego or in the Registrar’s Office, Room 307 of Culkin Hall.

Seniors who have filed to graduate should next meet with their advisers to do the senior check form. Senior check forms for students graduating in December are due in the Registrar’s Office by Nov. 1. □

SCAG proposals due Oct. 22

Scholarly and Creative Activity Grant proposals are due Oct. 22.

These grants provide support for faculty and staff as they develop their research and creative activity programs. Projects that are expected to result in peer-reviewed output or to have significant impact on the local or campus community will have priority.

Full-time teaching faculty (including librarians), full-time temporary faculty who have multi-year contracts and are not in their final year, and non-teaching professionals on term and continuing appointment in the Division of Academic Affairs are eligible.

Any individual grant may be funded up to \$3,000. Proposals must be complete and turned in to de-

partment chairs by Oct. 22 with an electronic copy e-mailed to Assistant Provost Michael Ameigh (ameigh@oswego.edu).

For complete guidelines visit [www.oswego.edu/administration/provost/grants\\_and\\_awards.html](http://www.oswego.edu/administration/provost/grants_and_awards.html). □

Hip-hop troupe to perform, teach

The Rennie Harris Puremovement dance troupe will bring “Rome and Jewels,” a hip-hop version of “Romeo and Juliet,” to SUNY Oswego for performances at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 26 and 27 in Tyler Hall’s Waterman Theatre as part of the college’s Artswego Performing Arts Series.

An award-winning choreographer and director, Harris transports Shakespeare’s story of star-crossed lovers to the gritty streets of North Philadelphia. The result earned a Bessie Award for Choreography. The work combines dance, drama and a DJ and uses both Shakespeare’s original text and passages created by the cast.

Harris formed Puremovement in 1992 to preserve and disseminate hip-hop culture through workshops, classes, residencies, mentoring and performances.

Tickets cost \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students, \$7 for SUNY Oswego students). The production includes mature themes. For information or reserva-

tions, visit [www.oswego.edu/arts](http://www.oswego.edu/arts), call 312-2141 or e-mail [tickets@oswego.edu](mailto:tickets@oswego.edu).

Members of the troupe will present dance workshops and lectures/demonstrations while in the area, including in Lee Hall dance studio and Waterman Theatre on campus, at Oswego Middle School and Leighton Elementary School in Oswego, and at Hutchings Psychiatric Center and Syracuse Stage in Syracuse. For information on these sessions, contact Cheryl Wilkins-Mitchell at 312-2339 or [artswego@oswego.edu](mailto:artswego@oswego.edu). □

Hispanic heritage events planned

Events are planned and in the works for Hispanic Heritage Month, which started this week and runs through mid-October.

A Latino Festival, from noon to 3:30 p.m. Sept. 24 in Hart Hall, will feature students reciting Latin American poetry, performing plays and singing traditional songs; traditional Hispanic food; and several arts and crafts exhibits. Visitors can also learn how to dance salsa, meringue, tango and other Latin American rhythms. The event is free and open to all.

Upcoming speakers will include Ilan Stavans, author of *Growing Up Latino: Memories and Stories*, *Spanglish: The Making of a New American Language* and other books and essays about Hispanics’ presence in and contributions to the United States.

“We are still working on the specific date and venue, but we expect a rather large turnout, since his name will probably attract some people from other universities in the area,” said organizer Otilia Cortez of the modern languages and literatures department.

For more information, call 312-2196. □

Spotlight

Cortez enjoys collaborative, supportive, friendly colleagues

*This week’s Campus Update Spotlight shines on Otilia Cortez, an assistant professor of modern languages and literatures. She started teaching at Oswego in fall 1999.*

**Q. What classes do you teach?**

A. I teach Spanish language and literature at all levels — beginning, intermediate and advanced.

**Q. What is your educational background?**

A. I began my academic career at the National University, in Nicaragua, where I trained specifically in Spanish language and education. I obtained my advanced degrees at Syracuse University, where I received an M.A. and a Ph.D. in Latin American literature.

**Q. What is your favorite part of working at Oswego?**

A. I truly enjoy teaching in SUNY Oswego — for multiple reasons. First of all, my department is extremely collaborative and welcoming. I really have the best colleagues. I have always been encouraged and supported in the development of new initiatives and activities, like our Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration. Also, I feel like I can really connect with my students here. I’ve always enjoyed building rapport with my classes, and I think my students know that I try to be a supportive mentor for them.

**Q. What is your impression of Oswego’s students?**

A. I think we have many excellent students here. They are all very talented and friendly. In my courses, I try to provide the kind of environment where they can learn freely. You know, to learn a second language you have to let go of some inhibitions, so I try to create a somewhat goofy environment for my students, and that helps them not to take themselves so seriously. For example, I make them sing with me in class. Even though at first they feel a little shy, they always end up being very enthusiastic about it. It helps them to bond and learn.

**Q. What are your research interests?**

A. I am constantly exploring the way Latin American literature reflects the political struggle in the region. I’m also very interested in feminism and the unique journey of women in literature. Another big interest for me is Chicano literature, and last semester I created a new course on that topic.

**Q. What are some of the special programs you work on?**

A. With the support of the entire MCLL collective (students, faculty, staff), I have organized the Hispanic Heritage Celebration in SUNY Oswego



since 2001. The other event I coordinate is the annual Spanish Symposium. In this symposium, our students get involved in both artistic and academic activities. We encourage them to use their Spanish to create poems, essays and short narrations, and present them in the symposium. They love it! Everyone is welcome to participate, not just students in our Spanish classes.

**Q. Do you have any hobbies?**

A. I love to read, and I get lost in good books. I also like to listen to music and dance. I am a very outgoing person, so I like to socialize and get to know people. Also, since I grew up on a farm, I like gardening, or just to be outdoors and enjoy nature.

**Q. What can you tell us about your family?**

A. My husband and I are very proud of our two daughters. They work hard and they are genuinely kind. The older graduated from Syracuse University, got a master’s from USC, and now leads a youth leadership program sponsored by the National Council of La Raza, in Washington, D.C. The younger recently graduated from Stanford University and works in San Francisco for a Hispanic marketing firm. My husband teaches linguistics in Cal State, Northridge. So even though our professional goals forced us to move far away from each other, we do cherish every opportunity that we have to get together and have a good family time. □

Police report

Since Aug. 29, University Police have investigated several cases of theft, vandalism and disorderly conduct and made 17 arrests.

Police charged a 22-year-old Rochester man with driving while intoxicated, aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and driving with a blood alcohol content above .08, all felonies due to prior convictions. Charged at the misdemeanor level with driving while intoxicated and driving with a blood alcohol content above .08 plus traffic infractions were a 22-year-old Redfield man and a 20-year-old Oneida Hall resident.

Police charged two 19-year-old Seneca Hall residents with unlawful possession of alcohol. A Cayuga Hall resident and Johnson Hall resident were charged in separate incidents with unlawfully dealing with a child by providing alcohol to minors.

Four teenage students residing on campus were charged with criminal possession of marijuana in the fifth degree, a misdemeanor. Four students residing on campus, a commuting student and a teenager from New Rochelle were charged with unlawful possession of marijuana, a violation. □

Calendar highlights

- Constitution Day Celebration, today
  - Amelia Piano Trio in concert, today
  - Oswego State Downtown reception, Sept. 18
  - Poet Sonia Sanchez, Sept. 18
  - ALANA Fashion Show, Sept. 19
  - Rice Creek Rambles, Sept. 20 and 27 and Oct. 4
  - ALANA Dinner and Step Show, Sept. 20
  - Latino Festival, Sept. 24
  - “Rome and Jewels” performance, Sept. 26 and 27
  - Rosh Hashanah, no classes, Sept. 30
  - “Astro-rama,” Oct. 2 to 5
  - Steinkraus Lecture on Human Ideals, Oct. 4
- For a more complete calendar, see SUNY Oswego Events online at [www.oswego.edu/news/calendar/](http://www.oswego.edu/news/calendar/). □