Greetings From The Chair...

Welcome to the first edition of the Department of Kinesiology newsletter! Our aim is to use this as a vehicle for keeping our alumni, current and prospective students abreast of developments here at Gordon College. There is much to be excited about and thankful for this year, and it gives me great pleasure to share with you the activities and plans that the department is involved in. This issue will highlight several developments.

To begin with, many of you may wonder what happened to the Department of Movement Science. In the fall of 2006, an official name change came into effect, and we are now the Department of Kinesiology. This change represents an effort on our part to be more consistent with trends at many major institutions, and comes in response to suggestions resulting from our recently completed 10 year review. Already, I’ve noticed an increase in interest at Gordon Experience Day events as the families of prospective students seek to learn what our major entails. We think that this change has been a move in the right direction.

This issue also describes several initiatives that we have taken on. Along with a name change have come major curricular revisions. These changes highlight our attempts to more clearly prescribe specific coursework for students pursuing different postbaccalaureate degrees. We are also thrilled with the prospect of the new Balance, Mobility and Wellness Center to be constructed this year (see feature). Part of that project includes the establishment of a Semester at Gordon in Clinical Kinesiology program described on page 2 of this document. I also report on the new Ken Olsen Science Center, our home for the future. You will be amazed at the plans we have for that building!

Finally, I am pleased to report in this issue on the research projects that my colleagues and I have been involved in. As a department, we remain committed to the involvement of our undergraduate students with our own research, and you will see how that works itself out in this issue. Enjoy the reading!

Peter W. Iltis, Ph.D.

The New Center for Balance, Mobility and Wellness

- We’re building! From its conception six years ago, the Gordon College Center for Balance and Mobility has embodied the role of the human movement specialist as the purveyor of expertise that can be used in the redemption of those who suffer from balance disorders. After six years of growth and development under the guidance of Dr. Sean Clark, and Marie Lucey, PT, Clinical Director of the Center (pictured above), we have determined that it is time to expand our vision to include expertise and facilities that can be used in the proactive pursuit of physical wellness in “graduates” of balance intervention training as well as in healthy older adults. We need room to grow!

From July of 2003 through June of 2006, the growth in terms of patient visits has been a remarkable 40% per year! While it may not be possible to sustain this rate, it is clear that the program is highly successful and that future growth is virtually inevitable.

The result is that the department has secured a commitment from the college to build a new, ~6500 square foot facility at the Brigham Athletic Complex site. This new building will not only allow the balance intervention work to expand, but will also provide a functional balance movement room for graduates of the intervention clinic to continue more independent training geared toward their specific needs. In addition, the new building provides for a 2500 square foot wellness center targeting the adult population over 55. This facility will help meet the needs of an ever-growing aging adult population, and we’re thrilled to help meet the challenge.

- New Executive Board Formed: A venture like this requires the input of a variety of individuals to insure its success. As a result, an Executive Board has been formed consisting of several key individuals. First, the Department of Kinesiology, is represented by its chair, Dr. Peter Iltis and the programs progenitor, Dr. Sean Clark. The Center’s Clinical Director, Marie Lucey, PT. and Gordon’s Senior Vice President for Finance, Jim MacDonald round out the college representatives. In addition, two key outside people have consented to serve. For one, Pete Harmeling, PT., director of the Harmeling Physical Therapy Clinic at the Bennett Center has offered his expertise. Rounding out the group is Dr. Marianne Beninato, DPT, PhD, Coordinator of Admissions, Professional Program, Associate Professor, Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy MGH Institute of Health Professions.

- The timetable: The projected date for the construction to begin is this spring, with completion of the project to allow for occupation by the fall semester of 2007.
Where are they now?

- Laura Doskoci, '05 is one of three kinesiology graduates at the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions in Boston, MA. This program was recently rated in the top five of similar programs in the country. She was accepted and began pursuit of her doctoral program in physical therapy in the fall of 2005 with a scholarship covering half of her tuition. Now in her 2nd year, Laura is in the home stretch of her pursuit of the DPT degree.
- Aimee Landis, '06 has completed her first semester in the Massachusetts General Hospital DPT program. Aimee graduated from Gordon College with highest honors (summa cum laude), and is doing very well in her new environment.
- Kate Dempsey, '06 is the third Gordon student joining ranks in the DPT program at Massachusetts General Hospital, and is loving her experience there.
- Mbong Azang-Njaah, '06, is doing graduate work in Occupational Therapy at Tufts University in Boston.
- Rebecca Scott-van Vliet, '04 completed her nursing degree at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. She is now practicing at a major teaching hospital in ...
- Andrea Toews, '03 is in the second half of her PT program at the University of North Carolina, a top 10 PT program.
- Elisabeth Whitley (Little), '02 completed her DPT degree at Massachusetts General Hospital and is now working at the Gordon College Center for Balance, Mobility and Wellness. By the way, a baby is coming soon! Congratulations, Lissa!

Ken Olsen Science Center Moves Ahead

On the Gordon Website, you will find information about the Ken Olsen Science Center: “The Ken Olsen Science Center is the College’s most ambitious building endeavor to date: an 80,000 sq. ft. science and technology center to be built in two phases at the heart of our campus, starting with the areas that have the most need.”

What this means for the Kinesiology Department is that our facilities will be part of the second phase of construction. Construction of the exterior shell for the entire building is currently underway, but the interior part of the building housing the Department of Kinesiology will await further financial support.

We are very excited to watch these plans unfold. In our portion of the building, we have office space for four faculty, a small seminar room, as well as three very well-equipped laboratories. An 857 square foot biomechanics laboratory will be located on the third floor, along with a 919 square foot bionenergetics lab and a 442 square foot motor control lab. These labs will be state-of-the-art in many details, including imbedded force plates, a Vicon motion analysis system (to complement our SkilTech and PEAK systems), electromyography testing equipment, and upgraded bionenergetics systems. Coupled with the Balance Master system in the Center for Balance, Mobility and Wellness, our faculty and students will have tremendous opportunities to conduct collaborative research with these fine facilities.

If you’ve not already done so, take a few moments to examine the progress on the www.gordon.edu site!

Scholarly Work …


- Ilitis, P.W. Reliability of EMG to study facial muscles; application to embouchure dystonia. Presentation at the annual meeting of the Performing Arts Medicine Association, June 2005.


Dr. Givens and Dr. Clark are working with two seniors, Jill Burton and Alicia Heelan preparing a poster for possible presentation at the national NASPSPA conference. Additionally, Dr. Ilitis has been working with four students, developing visual feedback software for teaching proper technique in musical expression elements and timbre in French horn players.

Dr. Clark, Dr. Ilitis, and Dr. Givens at the Clark homestead, '06

At left, Kinesiology graduates, May 2006 at Clark homestead annual senior breakfast. At right, Ken Olsen Science Center