LOYOLA CHAIR IN ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

2000-2001

Environmental Communications is a nationally emerging speciality in the field of Communications. There are presently fewer than five such endowed chairs in the United States. Most are held by persons with a Ph.D. in Communications or a related field or people who have served a distinguished career in the journalism private sector. At Loyola University, the holder of the Loyola Chair in Environmental Communications has a Ph.D. in vertebrate Zoology and has spent the majority of his career as an environmental educator as Executive Director of the Louisiana Nature Center. In this role, he has focused his attention on communicating complex environmental issues to the breadth of the Greater New Orleans community - from five year olds through school age to adults. He has developed means of communicating environmental information to those who are highly educated and those with less success.

The field of environmental communications is an increasingly important element in the state of Louisiana. No other state is so dependant on its natural resources and their direct and indirect use as is Louisiana. Much valuable time and effort is spent dealing with poorly understood and/or mis-information. It is, therefore, crucial that our state=s professional communicators (especially print and broadcast journalists) refine their abilities to communicate the often very complex and vitally important information relative to the impact of human use of natural resources on the environment. The co-existence of economic and environmental well-being is vitally important to Louisiana. If the citizens do not understand the implications of the use of natural resources and exposure to the by-products of their use, then the state will never reach its economic and human potential.

An environmentally educated citizenry will make the right choices for our state=s economic and environmental health.

One of the foci of the Loyola program is to improve communications among stakeholders in environmental issues in the State of Louisiana. This is done by LUCEC staff working on environmental intervention programs (such as the EPA=s Common Sense Initiative) and hosting the Institute for Environmental Communications (a program that brings together citizens from business/industry, environmental activism, government, science, and the media to have an open discussion of the issues).

Another is to work with environmental communicators in Latin America (Belize, Guatemala, and Trinidad at this time) and the Caribbean (the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States) to solve their problems. The economic linkage between Louisiana and Latin America is obvious and is part of economic plans throughout the state.

The Loyola Chair in Environmental Communications sponsors the only program in this arena in the state. It is one of only eight of its kind in the nation, and the only with the holder of
the chair being a scientist and having a background in environmental education.

The endowment funds available to the Loyola Chair in Environmental Communications have served as the cornerstone for the activities of the Center for Environmental Communications (LUCEC), and its subsidiary program - the Institute for Environmental Communications (IEC).

The following are activities directly funded by the endowment proceeds:

- General operation of the office was guaranteed.
- The web site was maintained (www.loyno.edu/lucec).
- The chair holder was able to be active in the International Federation of Environmental Journalism, thus networking with international colleagues.
- LUCEC was able to maintain communications projects in the tropics. This year, a program was developed proposing to train environmental journalists and ecotourism businesses in the Caribbean (proposal sent to the U.S. Agency for International Development), a program to provide training for biomedical technicians on the detection of Chagas Disease in Guatemala (with Dr. Patricia Dorn) was recorded on video, and discussions have continued with Carlos Pérez Brito (LU >96) regarding a joint environmental communications venture with the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala (this has been strengthened by including the International Center for Journalism, Washington, DC).
- Hosted a number of national and international environmental journalists (see section below).
- Finalized funding for a survey of broadcast editors (as gatekeepers) regarding how they analyze environmental story opportunities at their stations (survey by Dale Willman, Midwest Editor of National Public Radio).
- The LUCEC traveling exhibit was updated to reflect changes in the program.
- Magazines and other publications were made available for students.
- Student workers were hired to work on LUCEC projects.
- New software was purchased to maintain efficient communication.
- The IEC held its second program with 30 graduating Fellows (for further information, see www.loyno.edu/lucec/fellows.html).

ENHANCEMENT OF CONTINUING/NEW AREAS OF RESEARCH/INQUIRY

The funds allowed the Chair to attend meetings, visit with colleagues, and gather extensive research materials for his communications research program.

PUBLICATIONS: PEER REVIEWED

Resources 21, 35-36.


PUBLICATIONS: NON-PEER REVIEWED


PRESENTATIONS

Environmental Journalism Academy, College Park, MD, Basic Techniques in Researching Scientific Topics, June 30, 2000.

Environmental Journalism Academy, College Park, MD, Panel: Ethics and Truthfulness in Environmental Reporting, June 30, 2000.

Communications Faculty, Universidad de San Carlos, Guatemala City, Guatemala, Environmental Communications: How Do We Obtain Our Information and How is It Used?, July 13, 2000.


Strategic Management Services - USA, Loyola Campus, Lessons Learned in Norco, Louisiana, October 9, 2000.


Dr. Rogene Buchholz=s MBA Class, Loyola University, Environmental Justice: Is there an answer?, October 31, 2000.
Dr. Robert Moreau’s MBA Class, Southeastern Louisiana University, Environmental Justice: Is there an answer?, November 6, 2000.


International Federation of Environmental Journalists, Cairo, Egypt, The Role of the Media in Improving the Urban Environment and Developing Historical Areas in Old Damascus, Syria, panelist discussing comparisons to Western Hemisphere environmental issues, November 14, 2000.


LUCEC High School Environmental Communications Workshop, Environmental Expert Sources: Who Are They, Why Do They Talk Funny, and Why Don’t They Want to Talk To Me?, December 16, 2000.


Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Board, Loyola University, Truly Informing Louisiana’s Citizenry About the Impacts of Coastal Erosion, January 20, 2001.

Cypress Academy, Westwego, LA, Topics in Local Natural History, January 24, 2001.


Greater New Orleans Foundation Development Dinner, Strategic Thinking of the Loyola University Center for Environmental Communications, February 15, 2001.


Marine Bioinvasion Conference, led a swamp tour to discuss and demonstrate how invasive plant species are affecting Louisiana, April 9, 2001.

New Orleans Center for Science and Mathematics, Keynote address for Earthday Celebration:
The History of the Environmental Movement and your Responsibility for the Future.
April 17, 2001.

PRESS COVERAGE/INTERVIEWS:

CityBusiness, Carolyn W. McLellan, Publisher=s Notes: re LUCEC, p. 3, June 26, 2000.
Maroon, Staff, Thomas to Discuss Nutria on Explorer, p. 5, October 27, 2000.
National Geographic Explorer, Alien Invasions, served as a field producer and on camera interviews, October 29, 2000.
Tulane Hullabaloo, Advertisement thanking LUCEC (among others) for working with Tulane interns, p. 11, November 10, 2000.
Times-Picayune, interviewed for an article about the heavy rain=s effects on purple martin nestlings, June 14, 2001.
Dallas Morning News, Bill Manuel, interviewed about geckos.
Scientific Consultant, X-Files (TV show), topics including mechanisms for spitting snakes, adaptations for seeing in the dark, and vision in lizards.

DISPLAYS AND SHOWS

Sponsored showing of Thom Scott=s photos from the John P. Oakes Environmental Journalism

Table top displays re LUCEC: Society for Environmental Journalists, East Lansing Michigan, October 19-22, 2000; International Federation of Environmental Journalists, Cairo, Egypt, November 13-17, 2000; Association of Southeastern Biologists, New Orleans, April 4-7, 2001.

MENTORING OF STUDENTS

The Chair works with many students in mentoring various aspects of their professional development. They use LUCEC as a source of information and resources, and he mentors students as they pursue their professions, theses in the honors and biology programs, and independent studies projects.

TEACHING ENHANCEMENT

LIST OF COURSES TAUGHT

- CMMN A499. Special projects. 3 credits (several students.) Fall 2000.

HONORS THESIS ADVISEES:


GRADUATE STUDENTS AT OTHER UNIVERSITIES:

- Dale Willman, Antioch University, Summer 2001.
NON-HONORS RESEARCH:


OTHER: See activities listed under AMENTORING OF STUDENTS.

CURRICULUM INNOVATION/DEVELOPMENT

The following courses (unique to the state) have been formally approved by their respective departments and the university:

CMMN A370. Environmental Communications. 3 credits. Taught each Fall.
CMMN A 371. The Environmental Beat. 3 credits. Taught each Spring.
BIOL Z144. Ecology of the Mississippi River Delta Region. 3 credits. Taught in odd-year Springs.

The following course is being taught for the first time in Fall 2001 and is also unique:

CMMN A496. Management and Communications of Environmental Relations. 3 hr.

**Course Description:** The focus of this course is to identify environmental expectations of environmentalists regarding the activities of business/industry, and of the latter regarding the role played by the former. Students will meet and hear discussions by a number of leading representatives of the environmental community, business, and industry. Students will then develop strategies for overcoming the challenges they learned about, and orally present their findings to one another in class. Additionally, students will produce a newsletter (to be mailed to the guest participants and organizations related to theirs) detailing student findings and recommendations.

It is directed at students in the fields of Advertising, Public Relations, and Business.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During the past year, the Chair has attended a number of training programs regarding the use of computers, and he has attended professional meetings. Additionally, he visits with colleagues and hosts visitors in his profession.

SEEKING EXTERNAL FUNDING

Charles A. and Anne Morrow Lindbergh Foundation, $10,580 to develop and present a workshop entitled *A*Introduction to Environmental Journalism for High School students. Declined.
Shell Foundation, $10,000 in support of the Center for Environmental Communications.
Awards.
Koch Industries, $95,000 to continue support of the Institute of Environmental Communications. Pending. Pending.
Luso-American Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal, $10,000 to present a week long workshop about Louisiana’s coastal wetlands for five Portuguese environmental journalists. Awarded.

Letters of Interest Developed and Submitted: Nathan Cummings Foundation, McKnight Foundation, Turner Foundation, Charles Stuart Mott Foundation, Needmore Foundation, Ford Foundation, Moriah Foundation.

**ENHANCEMENT OF PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT QUALITY/REPUTATION**

As LUCEC develops, its reputation is building. The department and university are becoming widely known as a place where people can discuss environmental issues in a constructive atmosphere.

**UNITING UNIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND BUSINESS/INDUSTRY**

The principal portion of LUCEC that answers this need is the Institute for Environmental Communication (IEC). IEC is held each fall semester. Its purpose is to bring together environmental stakeholders and to stimulate conversations among them. IEC participation has a balance of people from business/industry, the environmental community, government, the media, and the scientific arena. This activity, taking place at the university, creates opportunities that do not exist elsewhere.

Persons completing IEC are named Fellows of the program. There are presently 69 IEC fellows, all of whom are connected via a LUCEC supported listserv. A new class of 30 participants will begin in August.

**SERVICE TO COMMUNITY**

_Environmental:_
Member, Top 10 by 2010, an initiative of Metrovision.
Member, Governor’s Environmental Task Force
Member, Greater New Orleans Foundation Environmental Committee
Member, Shell Oil Bayou Trepagnier Task Force
Member, Awards Committee, Louisiana Nature Conservancy
Board, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.
Member, Strategic Planning Committee, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.
Board, Environmental Research Consortium of Louisiana, a not-for-profit organization that will do research, communications, and educational projects on the environment of Louisiana
Board, J. Bennett Johnston Science Foundation, a not-for-profit foundation that will fund environmental research in Louisiana
Board, Asa Wright Nature Centre, Arima, Trinidad
Board, Save Our Lake Endowment
Member, Senator Mary Landrieu=s Outer Continental Shelf Technical Task Force
Board, Cypress Academy, a not-for-profit educational organization (assumed the lead role of developing the Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, and IRS arrangements)
Member, Environmental Committee, New Orleans/River Region Chamber of Commerce
Member, Outdoor Activities Advisory Committee, City of New Orleans Recreation Department.
International Federation of Environmental Journalists Representative, Society for Environmental Journalism

Other:
Board, Council for a Better Louisiana
Member, Archbishop=s Annual Appeal Committee
Member, Rotary Club of Metairie Sunrise

ORGANIZE EVENTS AND LECTURES BY AUTHORITIES IN THE FIELD

Hosted visits by the following environmental professionals:
Dr. Suhua Yu, Beijing, China; to discuss hydrological management in the United States (sponsored her visit).
O. B. Moro, S. D. Yusuf, U. K. Ndunusa, Ge. E. Nwachukwu, Uto Iheukwumere, and Buchi Sibeudu, all of Nigerian agencies that regulate oil and gas production, to discuss the Common Sense Initiative at Shell/Motiva Enterprises in Norco.
Ricardo Garcia, Paulo Chitas, Rita Siza, Antonio Marques, and Jose Pedro Frazão, all of Portugal, to attend a five day workshop on issues arising from coastal erosion in Louisiana.
Gua Yuan, Xu Gang, Caleb Loo (all of China), and Chen Fan (Tibet), to discuss the regulatory command of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
Juan Gonzales, Paraguay, to discuss how New Orleans and coastal Louisiana interact with the massive Mississippi River (as they do with the Río Paraná).
Pedro de Faria e Castro, University of the Azores, and Dr. Janice Sumler-Edmond, Clark Atlanta University, to discuss ecotourism communications.
Cimnelia Shaimemanya (Fulbright Scholar), Namibia, to discuss a variety of environmental issues.

COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOLARS/PROGRAMS
Serving on a committee that is establishing a new journal in the field of environmental communications.

Working with Mark Schleifstein, Times-Picayune, to host the Society of Environmental Journalists annual meeting, 2003.

Serve on the Loyola Environmental Studies Faculty

Videoing Jefferson Parish=s Christmas Tree/wetlands project (with Jefferson Parish Environmental Departmental Staff)

Serving on LA Department of Wildlife & Fisheries= Reptile and Amphibian Task Force Collaborating with National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration monitoring sea turtle strandings along the Louisiana coast.

Serving on the Chamber of Commerce Environmental Committee to help them open a dialogue with the local environmental community.

Attending community meetings in Norco, LA, which are resolving environmental justice issues.

Speaking to Silver Scribe competition, chaired by Drs. Larry Lorenz and Leslie Parr.

Field producer and talent in two Discovery Channel films on venomous snakes.

Working with Dr. Patricia Dorn, Department of Biological Sciences, on her Chagas Disease project.

Working with Faculty in the College of Business regarding sustainable planning.

Working with Shell Oil Refinery (Norco) and local environmental interests to reach an equitable decision on the fate of Bayou Trepagnier. I serve as the go-between.

Leadership role in the formation of the J. Bennett Johnson Science Research Foundation, a concept I developed in 1993 that is coming to fruition. Wrote the early drafts of By-laws and Articles of Incorporations. Worked with the attorneys and CPAs during the submittal of documents.

Appointed to the Houston Toad (endangered species) Recovery Team by the Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Consultant, Russell Sage Foundation, New York. Advise them on biological management of their holdings in Louisiana.

Member of a team (based with Eskew+, and architectural firm) developing a master plan for the Pine Jog Environmental Center, West Palm Beach, FL.

ENHANCE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT OF PROFESSOR

The Chair funds provide a base-line of support for the Chair=s work and allow time and necessary resources for basic programs and the ability to seek additional support.

ENHANCE RESEARCH EFFORTS

As described in several places above, the funds allow the Chair to fund basic research needs and to travel to important meetings and resource locations.

PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CONFERENCES
The Chair participates annually in the meetings and activities of the Society for Environmental Journalism and the International Federation of Environmental Journalists. Other meetings that are relevant are attended when possible.

LEADERSHIP TO COLLEGE AND DIVISION

The Chair makes the resources of LUCEC available to colleagues throughout the university. He is gradually including more departments in LUCEC activities.