



# Research College of Education

## Utah State University

# UpDATE

OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES OCTOBER 2002 VOL 4 NO 1



### CURI Grants

Guidelines for 2003-04 CURI grants have just arrived. They are available in paper form at the ORS office, and on the Vice President's web page. The deadline for proposal submission is 11/26/02 to the ORS. CURI proposals must impact the lives of the citizens of Utah, must have the potential to generate extramural funding, should include student involvement in the project, and should have a clear plan for dissemination of the results.



### New Faculty Grants

Guidelines for New Faculty Grants are on the Vice President's web page now. You'll find the link on the Office of Research Services web site: [www.coe.usu.edu/brs/announcements.htm](http://www.coe.usu.edu/brs/announcements.htm) Submit all drafts to Carol Strong in the Office of Research Services. The COE deadlines follow.

- COE 1st Draft Deadline: November 18, 2002
- COE Final Draft Deadline: December 9, 2002



### Bringing Home the Bacon

A sampling of grants recently awarded to College faculty include:

- Charles Salzberg, Special Education and Rehabilitation: Training and development grant for \$1,000,000 over three years.
- Dave Wiley, Instructional Technology: NSF development grant for \$500,000.
- Richard West, Center for the School of the Future: Grant written by CSF awarded to Utah Office of Education for \$2.2 million per year for three years.
- Edith Bowen: Three year, \$36,000 First Amendment Training grant, only one of three awarded to elementary schools nationally.



### Posters on the Hill

Vice Provost Joyce Kinkead is calling for proposals for "Posters on the Hill," featuring undergraduate student research efforts. For more information go to [www.cur.org](http://www.cur.org).

### A Message from the Associate Dean

Research UpDATE takes a look at three Elementary Education faculty members' research projects. Drs. Barta, Dorward, and Byrnes are significant contributors to the College of Education's outstanding research efforts. In addition to securing external funding through contracts and grants, Elementary Education faculty contribute to scholarship through publications and presentations. You may want to take a look at Ray Reutzel's and Parker Fawson's book, [Your Classroom Library: New Ways to Give it More Teaching Power](#). Or review articles by other faculty members on topics as diverse as teaching about religion in public schools, family literacy bags, and virtual manipulatives in mathematics (see [www.coe.usu.edu/brs/reports.html](http://www.coe.usu.edu/brs/reports.html)). We appreciate Elementary Education's faculty for their contributions to scholarly excellence and research productivity in the College.

Carol Strong, Associate Dean

### Taking the Numbers to the Natives

Jim Barta, currently on sabbatical in Montreal, Canada continues to research the role of culture in the educational process specific to mathematics and Native Americans. His studies encompass both qualitative and quantitative methods for examining indigenous cultures and how mathematics is traditionally understood and applied. Jim's hope is that through this research, centers of education may help teachers in the field understand critical features of the educational-cultural relationship as well as become better able to generate culturally inclusive curriculum for those they teach.

Videos are being developed portraying Native Elders describing their perceptions and cultural applications of mathematics. Supportive written elementary mathematics curriculum is being created. Jim believes, "The more narrow the gap between a child's world, albeit their lived experiences and the "lessons" taught in the classroom, the healthier are the results for children. In addition to the skills and concepts shared, the curriculum must also teach the child who he or she is as a vital member of the community and therefore must overtly reflect important values and beliefs of their people." These works in

progress include interactions with members of the Shoshone and Ute Nations in Utah and Idaho and more recently, the Cree and Mohawk Nations of eastern Canada.

### **Jim Dorward: Worth his Weight in Grants**

In 11 years as a faculty member in Elementary Education, Jim Dorward has written, or co-written, 19 funded grant proposals for over \$4.2 million dollars. The resulting projects have involved collaborations with faculty and staff from Mathematics and Statistics, Physics, Instructional Technology, Psychology, and the Substitute Teacher Training Institute. Outgrowths of this scholarship include: creation of the National Library of Virtual Manipulatives website (<http://www.matti.usu.edu>), recording over 20 million visits a year; creation and evaluation of the Substitute Teacher Training Institute, the country's leading advocacy and dissemination organization for substitute teaching; evaluation of the Instructional Architect (<http://ia.usu.edu>) service software for the National Science Digital Library; creation of a computer lab for preservice and inservice teachers; evaluation of equipment upgrades for elementary education and undergraduate physics students; and development and delivery of multiple preservice and inservice distance education and multimedia programs.

Most recently, Dr. Dorward teamed with George Julnes, Steve Lehman, Karl White, and Blaine Worthen, from the Psychology Department to propose Building Evaluation Capacity of STEM Projects. On September 18, 2002, USU President Hall received notice from the National Science Foundation that this project was fully funded for three years. The team will be implementing an innovative mentoring program for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) project directors. This program is designed to maximize the effectiveness and utility of several hundred NSF project evaluations.

### **Using Group Interviews in the Selection of Students for Teacher Education Programs**

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*Research on student selection for Teacher Education programs, conducted by Dr. Deborah Byrnes (Elementary Education), Dr. Gary Kiger (Sociology, Social Work, and Anthropology), and Dr. Zipora Shechtman (University of Haifa, Israel), will soon be published in the Journal of Teacher Education. This study has resulted in numerous conference presentations and consulting requests from other Colleges of Education around the country. Dr. Byrnes plans to collect additional long-term data after these teachers have spent several years in the profession.*

Academic criteria have been used pervasively in the selection of teacher-education students despite the fact that they are generally poor predictors of successful teachers. Other critical qualities for teaching success are often ignored in the pursuit of academically outstanding students. To remedy this situation a group interview procedure was selected for implementation by the Department of Elementary Education.

The group interview involves eight students sitting down with two faculty members and engaging in a variety of discussions and tasks for 90 minutes. Both faculty members rate the students on a variety of qualities that are highly correlated with effective teaching. Students' scores on the interview are used in conjunction with academic criteria to make the final decisions regarding who will be accepted into the Elementary Education Teacher Education Program. The Department of Elementary Education has collected long-term data on the interrater reliability, concurrent validity, and predictive validity of the Group Interview process.

Research results indicate that it is a valid and cost-effective procedure for assessing a broad range of skills of teacher-education applicants and that it is a better indicator of student teaching performance than overall GPA, grades in Education classes, or ACT scores.

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### **Call for Nominations**

### **College of Education Scholar/ Researcher of the Year Award**

Deadline: 1/31/2003  
see web site for details: [www.coe.usu.edu/brs](http://www.coe.usu.edu/brs)