

# ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

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## **Address from the Dean College of Arts and Sciences April 20, 2005**

Good afternoon.

President Bowman, Provost Presley, fellow faculty, staff, students, and friends of the college, I would like to thank you for spending time with us today.

First, let me thank the many you in the college and in the university and community at large who have done much to welcome me to ISU and to help me feel at home almost as soon as I arrived here in Normal. Your warmth and generosity has been truly outstanding. I very much appreciate your kindness and collegiality.

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I am pleased to report that despite three years of state-mandated budget rescissions, the state of the college is healthy and strong, and the future looks very promising. Although we expect one or perhaps two more years of flat funding, it appears that we have emerged from the worst of the dark days of budget slashes, and we are engaged in efforts to recover from those rescissions.

Despite this difficult budgetary situation, the college has pursued a number

of initiatives first presented to you in September at the Fall Address. This year we created the CAS Community Advisory Board to provide a mechanism by which the activities of the college can be effectively communicated to the community, and, in turn, the college can benefit from the wisdom and experience of community leaders in the Bloomington-Normal area and the state of Illinois at large. The Board is composed of 24 distinguished individuals who are committed to the college and to helping it strengthen its position in the university and in relation to colleges of arts and sciences in our peer and aspirational institutions. We held our inaugural meeting in January, and already the college has benefited from the wisdom and advice of these dedicated board members. The board is headed by retired judge Chuck Witte and retired education administrator and local entrepreneur Carol Struck, both of whom are here with us today. Please help me recognize their efforts on behalf of our students, faculty, and staff.

We also created the CAS Emeritus Faculty Board, a group of 19 distinguished

retired faculty who together provide the college with suggestions and advice about college initiatives, strategic planning, and a range of other important subjects. The board not only provides input on current CAS initiatives, it helps narrate our institutional history, assists with the production of our emeritus newsletter, and develops initiatives for enhancing the experiences of all college emeriti. The board is headed by former dean and professor of economics, Virginia Owen, and former professor of political science, George Gordon. Please help me recognize Dr. Gordon, who is here with us today.

This Fall, we published the first edition of the college's weekly electronic newsletter, CASNews—a forum where all constituents within the college can learn about developments, research, and individuals throughout the college. Since then, we have published 29 issues containing 185 articles. The newsletter has amassed nearly 3,000 subscribers, and the site itself has already experienced two million hits. The newsletter serves as a positive force in helping many in the college feel that they are part of a strong and vibrant community of teachers, scholars, and staff all working to make ISU one of the finest public institutions of its type in the nation. The newsletter also helps us fulfill our promise to maintain a maximum level of openness and transparency throughout the college. I would like to thank Assistant Dean Sarah Diel-Hunt and LILT Director Sarah Walczynski for their hard work on this project, as well as student workers Teresa Grettano and Cory Mayerck.

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Most of the initiatives announced last fall were dedicated to support our faculty and staff. One of our faculty support initiatives

this year was to negotiate a larger share of research overhead funds from the university. This year, the college began receiving an additional 5% in overhead funds, or a total of 28%. We passed this entire increase directly to the departments rather than reserve a portion for college-level operations. This increase has meant an additional \$16,153 of funding for our departments in just the last half year alone.

We also instituted the Research Enhancement Award Program, which made available on a competitive basis course releases or graduate research assistants to help faculty manage the demands of balancing their teaching and research. The REA Program funded nine proposals in this last year and eight for this coming year. I would like to thank the members of the Research Proposal Review Committee for their hard work in developing guidelines, reviewing applications and making recommendations.

The college also created a Travel Supplement Grant Program. This program makes available grants of up to \$500 to supplement travel awards provided by your departments. This year, we funded or partially funded 21 proposals.

With the assistance of the dean, faculty, and staff of Milner Library, we began the New Faculty Book Support Program. Each newly hired faculty member in the college was invited to designate up to \$500 of books in his or her research and pedagogical area to be purchased by the library. This partnership with the library will greatly enhance the library's holdings and assist our faculty in their professional projects.

The college has just completed a competition that will present exciting opportunities for CAS faculty. We received eight proposals for the creation of a cutting-

edge interdisciplinary program that will be designated an official Program of Excellence. The successful proposal or proposals will receive special funding to create a unique, academic program that will help bring distinction to the college and to the university. I will be announcing the winners of this competition shortly.

Later in this session, the college will present its first annual Dean's Award for Outstanding Scholarly Achievement. The Dean's Award comprises two awards of \$3,000 each, one for a tenured faculty member and one for an untenured tenure-track faculty member. These awards are based on a calendar year's research and are based on faculty input, including evaluations from scholars external to the university. This joins the Arts and Sciences Lecturer Award as the two most prestigious research awards in the college, and together they signal the college's commitment to excellence. I would like to thank the members of the various DFSCs who evaluated nominations and made recommendations to the CFSC, and I'd like to thank the members of the CFSC for their hard work in evaluating the 13 nominations forwarded to the college.

The college is firmly committed to retaining the excellent faculty we recruit. Toward that end, we created the Faculty Mentoring Program as a complement to the mentoring programs that some of the departments already sponsor. All untenured faculty in their first, second, or third year are invited to meet once a month for a series of sessions about a wide range of professional topics. Our input from faculty attending these sessions has been uniformly positive, and we plan to enhance next year's sessions. I would like to thank Associate Dean Sam Catanzaro and the various guest speakers—including Provost John Presley and

Associate Vice President Gary McGinnis—for making these sessions so rewarding.

During the spring semester, the college appointed its first intern in the Administrative Fellows Program. This program makes available to faculty the opportunity to gain substantial administrative experience by working for a semester as a faculty intern in the college office. Epa Rosa, an associate professor in the department of physics, worked on a number of projects and has contributed substantially to the life of the college during his internship. In fact, he recently spearheaded a new college initiative: the Research Grant Writing Support Program. In this program, faculty who have not yet secured external funding can obtain feedback on grant and fellowship proposals from an experienced colleague with a proven track record of success in obtaining external funding. Clearly, Epa has done much for our students, faculty, and staff, and we thank him for all his efforts.

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The college has made a genuine effort to open and maintain lines of communication with all the professionals that comprise this great college. The college hosted fall and spring forums where nontenure-track faculty were able to interact with members of the dean's office and other university officials, both to learn about new developments in the college and university and also to ask questions, air concerns and offer suggestions. The college also hosted regular forums with our AP and civil service staff in order to draw on the collective wisdom of our staff to discover ways to help the college operate more effectively and efficiently and to listen to their concerns and to respond to these concerns whenever possible. By all

accounts, these forums have done much to foster an atmosphere of openness and communication.

And to acknowledge those staff members who truly make outstanding contributions to the college, we created the CAS Outstanding Staff Award: two \$1,500 annual awards—one each for an outstanding civil service staff member and an outstanding AP staff member. These awards are meant to demonstrate that the college truly values our staff professionals as colleagues who work side by side with the rest of us to serve our students and further our mission. The first of these annual awards were given this fall to Don Schmidt a horticulturist in the Department of Biological Sciences (otherwise known as the Dean of Green) and Carl Wenning, the coordinator of the Physics Education Program.

I would like to remind you that these initiatives were all funded from *outside* the college; not one single dollar of college money has been expended to fund these faculty and staff support initiatives. They are all funded by grants and arrangements negotiated with other segments of the university.

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In addition to these programs first announced at the Fall Address in September, the college has launched a number of other initiatives. This semester we empaneled a committee to analyze the report of the Underrepresented Groups Task Force and the College's response to this report, with the charge to suggest concrete ways to enhance retention of faculty, especially women and minorities. The committee presented its findings this month. I am delighted to report that we have accepted

each of the committee's 24 suggested actions that the college can take to implement the broad recommendations of the task force. In fact, we moved immediately on one of the most important actions: to appoint a college ombudsperson. Professor Sabine Loew from the Department of Biological Sciences will serve as the college's ombudsperson, a neutral advisor available to faculty who have conflicts they are trying to resolve and who need advice on how to proceed. I would like to thank the Implementation Committee for their contributions, which promise to enhance the climate in the College well into the future.

The college has also appointed a director of international affairs: Professor Janie Leatherman from the Department of Politics and Government. She will lead the college's efforts to increase the global dimension of our teaching and research, helping to facilitate both study and research abroad programs, and she will also oversee the operations of the English Language Institute as we work to make this important institute a truly university-wide service to all international students. We look forward to enhancing our faculty and students' teaching and learning activities through her creative and energetic efforts.

The College Council and the Council of Chairs named technology support as the college's most pressing priority. Throughout the year the college has worked diligently to consolidate the various parts of its technology support into one strong and efficient entity: CAS-IT. This new group will allow the college to provide superior service to faculty and staff because it operates much more efficiently and effectively as a coordinated organization. And because of its size and importance, the new unit wields substantial influence in university-wide decisions about technology

and can serve as a strong advocate for the college. What's more, for the first time, the college has a dedicated budget for technology, and we will seek additional sources of recurring revenue to devote to enhancing our technological infrastructure—not only desktop support, but scientific instrumentation, the planetarium, and our radio and television stations.

Another college initiative involves the leadership role we have taken in introducing to the university an innovative way to fund summer school. Summer school at ISU has been funded by fixed budgets at the department and college levels. These resources have shrunk with each new rescission because in times of budget cutting it makes sense to shave money from these accounts rather than lay off personnel. Consequently, ISU has experienced ever-diminishing funding of summer school. We urged that ISU move to an entrepreneurial model of summer school funding in which departments can exercise maximum control over their summer offerings and the resources to support them.

Briefly, a formula allows the department chair to track how many students it will take to make a particular course break even. Any money above and beyond that amount is returned to the department to help cover under-enrolled courses. We convinced central administration to allow us to run a pilot of this model this summer using the Department of Communication as the test case, and I am delighted to report that the results are already stunning. Under the old model, the department was prepared to offer eight courses this summer; instead they are offering twenty-eight.

The preliminary enrollment figures are extremely encouraging; they indicate that most of these courses are going to make and even fill. I would like to thank Provost

John Presley, Vice President Steve Bragg, and Associate Dean Jonathan Rosenthal for their efforts in implementing this new model, and I'd like to thank Larry Long and all of the faculty and staff in the Department of Communication for demonstrating that we can run a robust summer that meets the needs of our students and faculty.

Perhaps the most important initiative this year has been the development of a strategic plan for the college. A college or institution has the best chance to move forward when it has a well-articulated and carefully crafted strategic plan. Thanks to the efforts of our Strategic Planning Steering Committee and to all the many faculty, staff, alumni, emeritus faculty, and community leaders who provided input on the college's draft plan, the college now has an impressive and very specific plan for the next half decade. I am pleased to report that the plan, the *College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Plan, 2005-2010*, has been formally approved and is available for the entire college community. The plan is accessible on the college website, and a limited number of print copies will be made available to your departments. I would like to thank the members of the Steering Committee for their work, and I'd like to thank University Marketing and Communications as well as Sarah Diel-Hunt and Sarah Walczynski for their efforts in producing the beautifully designed print document and website. And now I would like to formally present a copy of that plan to President Bowman.

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In the coming academic year, the college will continue the initiatives already mentioned, and it will concentrate on several new initiatives. We will work to transform

the English Language Institute into a truly university-wide service to all our international students. We will work to develop new and innovative study and research abroad programs so as to increase the global dimension of the college's curriculum. We will work to increase our educational outreach efforts in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. We will work to support, upgrade, and improve the animal-care facility. We will work to secure funding for additional technology support personnel, and we will continue to increase the level of funded research and the level of giving to the college. And we will begin to implement the actions specified in the newly approved strategic plan. In fact, as a first step in implementing actions called for in the strategic plan, I am delighted to announce that we will create a new teaching award: the Dean's Award for Outstanding Teaching. This award will mirror the Dean's Award for Outstanding Scholarly Achievement in that it will comprise two awards of \$3,000 each, one for a tenured faculty member and one for an untenured tenure-track faculty member. This action is called for in Strategy Two of the strategic plan.

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As you know, the Office of the Dean is here to serve you and to facilitate the good work you do. If you have noticed any themes in these initiatives, I hope that they are (1) continued and increased support for faculty and staff, (2) inclusiveness, and (3) a spirit of openness and transparency. We will continue to help you provide the highest quality instruction to our undergraduate majors, our graduate students, and the thousands of other students who take our

courses each year. We will continue to support your research and scholarly endeavors, which, cumulatively, help enhance the college's—and, thus, ISU's—reputation as a center of substantive scholarly research. We will continue in every way possible to support, recognize, facilitate, and reward the hard work of the various constituents that make this such a vibrant college. I am proud to be a member of ISU and to help you move the College of Arts and Sciences to new levels of excellence.

Thank you for your time today.

*Gary A. Olson*  
*Dean and Professor*

## **Award Ceremony**

I am delighted now to announce the winners of the Program of Excellence competition and the recipients of the Dean's Award.

The Program of Excellence competition is funded jointly by the college and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. The successful program will receive start-up funding of \$60,000 during the first year (2005-06) and \$30,000 during the second year (2006-07). The program may be an undergraduate or graduate certificate program, a new minor, a new sequence in an existing major, or a program devoted exclusively to primary research.

The guidelines specify that the program should be clearly interdisciplinary, drawing substantively on the disciplinary expertise of two or more academic departments. Unique and innovative disciplinary collaborations were highly encouraged, even those across collegial borders. The program itself should be clearly distinctive, unlike any other program in the state of Illinois. As such, the program in its

uniqueness should attract considerable national attention. The proposed program should draw on existing personnel and resources as much as possible.

I am very pleased to report that we received 8 extremely well-crafted proposals, any one of which could have easily been named the winner. As you might imagine, the strength of the applications made a decision quite difficult. In an ideal world, we simply would have funded all 8 programs. As you can see from the program titles, each of the proposals draws on a number of faculty from a range of departments:

- “Biomathematics: MS Sequence and Cross-Disciplinary Research at the Interface of Biology and Mathematics”
- “Homeland Security”
- “Interdisciplinary Program on Personal Relationships”
- “The Mind Project Learning and Research Center”
- “Nanotechnology Education and Research”
- “Quantitative Risk Study Center”
- “The Scholar-Educator Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program in Neuroscience and Behavior”
- “The Treatment of Chronic Pain Using Photodynamic Therapy”

I would like to thank the 6 faculty proposal reviewers (Professors Alison Bailey, Ann Beck, James Day, Ronald Fortune, Elizabeth King, and Maria Pao), our external reviewer, Ralph Wilcox, Associate Vice President Gary McGinnis, and Associate Deans Sam Catanzaro and Jonathan Rosenthal for helping to make what turned out to be a very hard decision that much easier.

Because we received an unanticipated number of genuinely outstanding proposals, we decided to attempt to increase the number of designated “programs of excellence” in the college. One program has “won” the competition and will receive the full amount of start-up funds attached to the competition, but three additional programs have received “honorable mention” and are eligible for partial funding as well as the designation “program of excellence.” That is, the college will potentially have four programs of excellence. Dr. McGinnis has generously contributed additional resources toward this end, as has the college itself. In the coming weeks, we will meet with the authors of the proposals receiving honorable mention to determine if they believe it is feasible to move forward with their projects using the partial funding available.

I’d like to begin by announcing the three programs earning honorable mention. The first is “Biomathematics: MS Sequence and Cross-Disciplinary Research at the Interface of Biology and Mathematics.” This is a new master’s sequence that incorporates cross-disciplinary research as integral to the curriculum. This project draws on the expertise of 17 faculty from two departments to create an innovative and much-needed program.

The second is “The Mind Project Learning and Research Center.” Building on the existing strengths of ISU’s Mind Project, the proposed center is “positioned to become not only *the* Internet destination for state-of-the-art research and curriculum materials, but a digital public square where innovation abounds.” This project draws on faculty from 9 CAS departments plus faculty from other departments both at ISU and elsewhere.

The third is “Nanotechnology Education and Research.” This is a truly innovative integration of an academic program, a research agenda, technology transfer to industry, public outreach, and national and international collaboration among researchers. It is headed by an interdisciplinary team of faculty from 4 CAS departments (Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Biological Sciences) as well as from CeMaST and Technology.

These three projects are well conceived and will bring real distinction to the college and to ISU. The authors are to be commended for creating three exciting new opportunities for our faculty and, most importantly, for our students.

Again, all three of these fine proposals stand to be designated “programs of excellence” if their authors wish to proceed with their projects using the partial funding available.

It is now time to name the winner of the Program of Excellence competition. This program weds a rigorous academic curriculum with a cutting-edge research agenda. It substantially enhances the educational experience of a large number of ISU students while promising to add substantively to knowledge in several disciplines. It draws on the expertise of a dozen faculty representing 4 departments in the college and one external to the college. It leverages the \$90,000 of POE funding into \$172,000—almost double that provided. I am pleased to announce, that the winner of the College of Arts and Sciences Program of Excellence Award is the proposal entitled “The Scholar-Educator Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program in Neuroscience and Behavior.”

Employing a scholar-educator model, this program establishes two scholar-educator post-doctoral fellowships in neuroscience and behavior. These fellows will teach courses, engage in research, mentor our students, and be mentored by our faculty. Participating faculty are from the Departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Philosophy, and Psychology, as well as from the Central Illinois Neuroscience Foundation. While there is officially no principal investigator among the twelve faculty involved in this project, one member in particular has played a leadership role in related work for several years: Paul Garris. I’d like to invite Professor Garris to say a few words on behalf of his colleagues.

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And now it is time to announce the winners of the Dean’s Award for Outstanding Scholarly

Achievement during the calendar year, January 1 to December 31, 2004. This is among the highest honors bestowed upon a faculty member by the college. It is a peer-determined award that is meant to identify and reward the faculty member with *the most extraordinary scholarly achievement* in the preceding calendar year.

Two awards of \$3,000 are made, one to a tenured faculty member, and one to an untenured, tenure-track faculty member.

Nominees are evaluated on their research and creative activity, including publications, grants and contracts, presentation of papers and major speeches; honors and awards; service on doctoral dissertation committees, master’s thesis committees, and undergraduate research; and service to the discipline. Nominees’ works are reviewed by peer scholars external to the university and are screened by their Department Faculty Status Committees. Those nominations that are sent forward are then evaluated by the College Faculty Status Committee.

I am pleased to report that your DFSCs forwarded 13 nominations to the CFSC, 7 in the “tenured” category and 6 in the “untenured” category. As with the nominations for the Program of Excellence, the nominations for this award were uniformly stellar. This embarrassment of riches is a clear indication of the superb quality of work being done by our faculty. Each of the two categories has an honorable mention and a winner—both receive plaques and the winner receives the monetary prize.

I’d like to begin with the honorable mention in the “untenured” category. This recipient truly had a superb year. This recipient supervised 12 research projects; served on 10 master’s thesis committees and three doctoral committees; received ISU’s Research Initiative Award as well as the Teaching Initiative Award; gave 15 presentations at local, regional, and national forums; had three grant proposals funded for a total of almost a half million dollars; submitted two additional proposals for close to a million dollars; and published three articles in important scholarly journals. This is

very impressive work. I am happy to present honorable mention in the “untenured” category to Professor Jon A. Friesen of the Department of Chemistry.

The winner of the Dean’s Award in the “untenured” category had a stellar year. This recipient served on 6 master’s thesis committees; made presentations at four national and international conventions; had four refereed articles accepted or in press and submitted two others; and published one book and had a second accepted for publication. Writing about the recipient’s book, one of the external reviewers wrote, “I know of no author in recent years who has a more perceptive understanding” of the subject. Another reviewer described the work as a “most sophisticated, nuanced, and discerning analysis.” I am pleased to present the inaugural Dean’s Award for Outstanding Scholarly Achievement to Professor Ali Riaz of the Department of Politics and Government.

The nominees in the “tenured” category were a special challenge for the CFSC. Each and every one of the nominees deserves an award. The winner of honorable mention is no stranger to awards, having already won practically every award ISU has to offer. This recipient presented two major speeches; received two external grants and submitted two others; published five scholarly articles in major journals and had four others accepted; published a book chapter and two encyclopedia entries; and published one book and has two others in press. I am happy to present honorable mention in the “tenured” category to Distinguished Professor Willard Bohn of the Department of Foreign Languages.

The inaugural winner of the Dean’s Award for Outstanding Scholarly Achievement is beyond doubt one of ISU’s most distinguished and celebrated scholars. This individual’s scholarly record over the last year is truly humbling. This recipient supervised 8 undergraduate research projects and served on a number of other undergraduate committees; chaired or served on 8 master’s thesis committees and 6 other graduate projects; gave 22 presentations at regional and national conferences; directed three major grants totaling

almost a half million dollars and submitted proposals for two grants totaling one and a third million dollars; and published 11 peer-reviewed articles in prestigious journals.

Three of the five external reviewers are distinguished professors. One wrote that the scholarship under review is “outstanding on any measurement scale.” Another referred to our winner’s productivity as “a source of amazement and inspiration to us all.” As if all this were not enough, our winner was named chemist of the year by Illinois Heartland Section of the American Chemical Society, and somehow managed to find time to review 50 manuscripts for scholarly journals—a fulltime job in and of itself.

It gives me special pleasure to present the inaugural Dean’s Award for Outstanding Scholarly Achievement to Distinguished Professor Timothy D. Lash of the Department of Chemistry.

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This ends our agenda for the day. I’d like to thank President Bowman, our several distinguished guests, and everyone in the audience for spending time with us today. Please help me recognize with one final round of applause all of today’s award winners. I invite you to stay and join us for refreshments and conversation.

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