Letter from the Chair

HAPPY NEW YEAR from Roanoke’s education faculty! As we enter 2007, we’re celebrating the centennial anniversary of the College’s teacher education program. Our plans to commemorate this milestone in the College’s history are detailed in the newsletter.

However, our faculty is not simply looking back into history; we’re also engaging the 21st century, playing a role in reshaping and redefining teacher education so teachers can meet the challenges of an age of information explosion. As the recent Roanoke College Magazine reported, the education faculty is fulfilling this responsibility by developing “A New Perspective on Teaching” — a perspective that includes a curriculum which differentiates instruction for our preservice teachers, while teaching these same students to one day differentiate instruction for their own students. By making instructional decisions based on student readiness levels, interests and learning profiles, teachers can assign content, processes and products that encourage learning. This student-centered, problem-solving approach to teaching and learning produces teachers who are able to: 1) work effectively in cross-cultural classrooms; 2) recognize concepts that bridge the disciplines; 3) serve as project managers for student learning; and 4) facilitate skills and dispositions necessary for cooperative problem solving.

These abilities are required for teachers in the 21st century. No longer can teachers be information dispensers working in isolation in a system designed for an industrial, agricultural society. Instead, teachers must work collaboratively with a host of constituents, including, but not limited to, students, parents, community leaders, colleagues, business associates and administration. In other words, teachers must break the mold of chalkboard deliveries, rote learning, and overhead projectors. Our new digital democracy requires problem-solving abilities, collaboration skills, and an eye to evaluate the validity and quality of information that is instantly delivered through blogs, YouTube, Wikipedia and videophones. In preparing students for this new era, teachers must still instruct students in the values and principles of democracy and free society, including an appreciation for culture and an ability to recognize human dignity and worth even when faced with terrors imposed by those who fear others and their differences.

The challenge is great and sometimes seems daunting, but our students rise to the new expectations and our alumni continue to meet the demands of the classroom. In this issue of the Education Alumni Newsletter, you’ll read about several of these alums and their work to educate students for our new century. We’re proud of the work of all our alumni and value our privilege to be a part of Roanoke College’s history.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tim Reynolds
Associate Professor and Department Chair

Mark your calendars for April 20, 2007! We will celebrate one hundred years of Education course offerings at Roanoke College as part of the College’s Alumni Weekend festivities. The celebration will open with a buffet reception in Olin Hall’s Smoyer Gallery. Our main event, to be held at 8 p.m., in Olin Theatre, is a program celebrating our alumni and featuring speaker Ron Clark, the Disney American Teacher of the Year, 2000. Mr. Clark’s work with disadvantaged students in rural North Carolina and inner-city Harlem has garnered worldwide attention. He was invited to the White House on three separate occasions to be honored and has appeared on the Today Show and Oprah Winfrey Show. In addition, Ron’s experiences as a teacher are the subject of the critically acclaimed movie, “The Ron Clark Story,” which stars Matthew Perry. Ron has authored two books that have become well-known in the education profession. His first book, The Essential 55, a New York Times Best Seller, is currently published in over 25 countries and in its 11th printing of over one million copies. We are very pleased that Ron will take part in our hundredth anniversary celebration.

Help us identify “The Face of our Alumni” to honor during the celebration. We believe that all educators deserve recognition for the difference they make in the lives of students. To honor our graduates and our profession, we are looking for a group of individuals that represents the body of alumni who have been licensed as teachers through the Roanoke College Education Program. Please help us identify a teacher or administrator to recognize in this way as part of our Centennial Celebration. We would like to identify both veteran and novice educators. While some of these individuals may have received formal recognition for accomplishments such as national licensure or teaching awards, others may be unsung heroes whose innovative classroom practices, daily role modeling for children or unique life experiences are reflective of our alumni’s work. If you would like to nominate a teacher or administrator to represent our alumni, please e-mail Dr. Tim Reynolds at treynold@roanoke.edu. Include the individual’s name, contact information and your reason for submitting it.

Look for more information about the Education Program Centennial Celebration in your mailboxes during the coming months. Please feel free to contact our department if you have questions, (540) 375-2470. We hope to see you in April!
Spotlight on Dr. Lorraine Lange: Roanoke Alum Journeys to Superintendency

Dr. Lorraine Siminski Lange ’69, was honored recently as the newly elected superintendent for Roanoke County Public Schools. Her achievement has deep roots in the Roanoke College campus and its dedicated education tradition. A thirty-six year veteran of education, Dr. Lange continues to draw on her meaningful Roanoke College learning experiences to inspire her vision for educational leadership. She asserts, “The education I received at Roanoke supplied a strong foundation which made it possible for me to continue my education and ultimately receive my doctorate. The support and encouragement of the Roanoke College faculty greatly influenced my decision to seek a career in education and to remain in the Roanoke Valley.”

After receiving her B.A. from Roanoke, the New Jersey native pursued graduate studies at Hollins University and Virginia Tech, where she received her doctorate in education. As an experienced educator for both Roanoke City and Roanoke County Schools, Dr. Lange now continues to build her diverse portfolio of educational experiences as a superintendent, advocating that an “excellent instructional program is the core” of her school division.

Dr. Lange’s vision for Roanoke County Schools is grounded in her hopes for nurturing “open communication among parents, students and staff,” while maintaining the Adequate Yearly Progress and success of a strong instructional program. Her diverse background, which includes not only her formal education but also her experiences as a civic leader, teacher, principal, language arts supervisor, and assistant and deputy superintendent, will surely help make her goals a reality for Roanoke County Schools.

In addition to her professional roles, Dr. Lange enjoys spending time with her family and six grandchildren and staying actively involved in numerous civic activities. Her greatest contribution to our community is arguably her strong leadership, enthusiasm and dedication to quality education in the Roanoke Valley. Roanoke College and all of its faculty and students who are committed to education are honored to call Dr. Lorraine Lange a member of our alumni, and congratulate her for her personal and professional achievements.

Complementing the work of the Copenhaver Institute is a professional research project currently underway in the Roanoke College Education Department. Faculty members, Dr. Lisa Earp and Dr. Leslie Murrill, are researching the potential for professional development efforts such as the Institute to effectively meet the needs of a wide range of teaching professionals at various points in their educational careers. Their work frames the teaching career as a continuum of stages across which educators progress over a period of time. By examining elements which transform theoretical beliefs and classroom practices, Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill hope to better accommodate the growth and professional development of all teachers attending future Copenhaver Institutes, and also to benefit other programs by providing a model for professional growth which is differentiated and directed toward the diversity of the teaching profession.

Inspired by a presentation made at the National Staff Development Council in Vancouver in December 2004, Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill began contemplating the “life cycle” of a K-12 teaching career and the fundamental role that professional development programs and a supportive professional learning community play in the growth of teachers at different stages of the continuum. Recognizing the evolving phases which span a teaching career, the project is focused on emphasizing the specific needs and professional support systems relevant for each stage. The element of teacher mentoring has emerged as a significant factor in an individual’s professional growth.

After identifying four distinct “mentoring roles,” Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill are enriching their research by contemplating the personal experiences shared by four Copenhaver Institute veterans who represent each mentoring role along the continuum of the teaching career cycle.

Looking Ahead: RC Alumni Cultivate Educational Growth through Professional Development

The Margaret Sue Copenhaver Institute for Teaching and Learning is a professional development program which offers hundreds of diverse educators and administrators the opportunity to explore and critically reflect on best teaching practices. Now in its eighth year, the Institute is preparing for the June 2007 program, “Education Leadership: A Task for Teachers and Administrators.”

Complementing the work of the Copenhaver Institute is a professional research project currently underway in the Roanoke College Education Department. Faculty members, Dr. Lisa Earp and Dr. Leslie Murrill, are researching the potential for professional development efforts such as the Institute to effectively meet the needs of a wide range of teaching professionals at various points in their educational careers. Their work frames the teaching career as a continuum of stages across which educators progress over a period of time. By examining elements which transform theoretical beliefs and classroom practices, Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill hope to better accommodate the growth and professional development of all teachers attending future Copenhaver Institutes, and also to benefit other programs by providing a model for professional growth which is differentiated and directed toward the diversity of the teaching profession.

Inspired by a presentation made at the National Staff Development Council in Vancouver in December 2004, Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill began contemplating the “life cycle” of a K-12 teaching career and the fundamental role that professional development programs and a supportive professional learning community play in the growth of teachers at different stages of the continuum. Recognizing the evolving phases which span a teaching career, the project is focused on emphasizing the specific needs and professional support systems relevant for each stage. The element of teacher mentoring has emerged as a significant factor in an individual’s professional growth.

After identifying four distinct “mentoring roles,” Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill are enriching their research by contemplating the personal experiences shared by four Copenhaver Institute veterans who represent each mentoring role along the continuum of the teaching career cycle.

Complementing the work of the Copenhaver Institute is a professional research project currently underway in the Roanoke College Education Department. Faculty members, Dr. Lisa Earp and Dr. Leslie Murrill, are researching the potential for professional development efforts such as the Institute to effectively meet the needs of a wide range of teaching professionals at various points in their educational careers. Their work frames the teaching career as a continuum of stages across which educators progress over a period of time. By examining elements which transform theoretical beliefs and classroom practices, Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill hope to better accommodate the growth and professional development of all teachers attending future Copenhaver Institutes, and also to benefit other programs by providing a model for professional growth which is differentiated and directed toward the diversity of the teaching profession.

Inspired by a presentation made at the National Staff Development Council in Vancouver in December 2004, Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill began contemplating the “life cycle” of a K-12 teaching career and the fundamental role that professional development programs and a supportive professional learning community play in the growth of teachers at different stages of the continuum. Recognizing the evolving phases which span a teaching career, the project is focused on emphasizing the specific needs and professional support systems relevant for each stage. The element of teacher mentoring has emerged as a significant factor in an individual’s professional growth.

After identifying four distinct “mentoring roles,” Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill are enriching their research by contemplating the personal experiences shared by four Copenhaver Institute veterans who represent each mentoring role along the continuum of the teaching career cycle.
By highlighting the different stages which comprise an educational career, Dr. Earp and Dr. Murrill hope to demonstrate how mentoring encourages teachers to progress across the continuum.

Seeking to maintain a professional development program which aims to accommodate critical and theoretical exploration of education, the Copenhaver Institute continues to be a vehicle for substantive professional growth. Emphasizing the different needs of all teachers, and uniting diverse educators and administrators with a shared vision of teaching and learning, the Copenhaver Institute serves as a springboard for professional learning communities which engage mentees and mentors alike.

Dr. Murrill and Dr. Earp are looking forward to submitting two chapters of their collaborative work for publication consideration this year. Both remain actively involved in the ongoing work of the Copenhaver Institute.

Dr. Lisa Earp, Stephanie Doyle, Meggen Devlin, Brandy Collier and Dr. Leslie Murrill present their project in Vancouver

What’s New with Alumni

Warren A. Crawford ’70 is principal of Monterey Elementary School in Roanoke City. He is completing thirty-six years of service in public education.

Dr. Denvy A. Bowman ’78 was appointed interim president of Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, in June 2006. Since then, the Board of Trustees has extended his term through June 2008. Based on the unanimous choice of the search committee following a national search, he had been named provost and vice president for Academic Affairs in March 2006. He was responsible for 200 full-time faculty and all graduate and undergraduate programs as well as non-credit courses on several campuses. Denvy has been with the university since 2003 when he was named dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He previously served with Coastal Carolina University and Keene State College. He holds a master’s degree and doctorate, both in ancient history, from the University of Virginia and University of North Carolina, respectively.

Elizabeth Houston Highfill ’78, a retired teacher, lives on a barrier island in North Carolina. She enjoys spending her days reading, writing and exploring tide pools. She recently published her first book, Savannah’s Blessing. The book tells the story of Savannah Maxwell and her little brother, Sam, who are the youngest of six siblings growing up during the 1960s in the hills of southwest Virginia. Their young carefree days are rich in humor and goodness until a tragic accident changes things forever.

Enid Larrimore Lum ’94, of Georgetown, Md., completed a Master of Arts degree in leadership in teaching: TESOL, from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland.

Jennifer Cottellino ’97 recently moved to her home state of New York and is teaching high school math in Poughkeepsie. Last summer she spent three weeks in Italy and also enjoyed a nine-day camping trip driving across Canada from Alaska. She has finished her goal of visiting all 50 states and her next goal is to visit all the continents by the time she is 40.

Kimberly Petcher Smith ’97 is teaching sixth-grade math at James Madison Middle School in Roanoke City. This is her tenth year of teaching and fifth year in the Roanoke City School system. She lives with her husband, Chris, and their daughter, Emily, 4.

James P. Guthrie ’98 teaches Japanese full time in the Chesterfield County Schools. He is working on his M.Ed. in leadership studies at VCU.

Marian C. Sutton ’03 is teaching English in Hong Kong.

Join us for the 8th Annual Margaret Sue Copenhaver Institute for Teaching and Learning

June 25–27, 2007
Theme: Education Leadership: A Task for Teachers and Administrators

Keynote Speakers: Dr. Lorraine Monroe, Dr. Richard Sagor, Ms. Esmé Raji Codell

The institute is filling quickly!
If you are interested in participating, please submit your online application at www.roanoke.edu/msci/

Friday, April 20, 2007
8:00 p.m.
Smoyer Gallery
Education Department
Centennial Celebration

Meggen Devlin takes part in a Copenhaver Institute session
Please share your professional development news with us! Submit information about your recent professional endeavors to murrill@roanoke.edu for publication in an upcoming newsletter. Be sure to include your name, year of graduation, current position and a photo.

VALERIE SCHMITZER, staff writer of the Education Alumni Newsletter, is a junior at Roanoke College. A resident of Doylestown, Pa., she is pursuing a major in environmental policy and teacher licensure in elementary education. Valerie recently served an internship in the third grade at Oakland School, Roanoke City Schools, and ultimately hopes to teach in a primary classroom.

LINDA LINDSAY, editor and designer of the Education Alumni Newsletter, is program administrator of the Margaret Sue Copenhaver Institute at Roanoke College and assistant editor of Roanoke College Magazine's Alumni News.

LESLIE MURRILL is faculty editor of the Education Alumni Newsletter.

Get Connected

Education Web site: www.roanoke.edu/education

Education Department: 540-375-2470

Copenhaver Institute: www.roanoke.edu/msci/

What's New submission: murrill@roanoke.edu

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.
—Henry B. Adams

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

What’s New?

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.
—Henry B. Adams