Imagine signing up for a one-credit class that meets on Fridays for only half a semester, then finding out a week before the scheduled end of the class that there was a mistake in registration and you have to come to class for the entire semester to get the credit? That is exactly what happened to the professor and students of a one-credit Natural Disasters class this semester.

Mike Conklin, in his first semester teaching at Wayne College, went to get the student evaluation sheets in mid-March thinking the class had covered all the material on the syllabus and would wrap up the class after the mid-term/ final exam. When the administration office checked to see if the evaluations for the class were ready, they found that the class wasn’t scheduled to end yet because it hadn’t met the required number of class meetings. Naturally, Conklin wondered how this could be since he and about 15 of his students signed up for the class believing it to be only half a semester long.

According to Dr. Timothy Vierheller, Director of Faculty, there were two date fields in the school’s system. One told anyone looking at classes through the class directory that Natural Disasters was a once-a-week class meeting for 50 minutes and only half a semester, while the other date field showed the class meeting twice a week, or an hour and a half. Conklin discovered that without the full amount of seat time the class was supposed to provide within those eight weeks, students couldn’t receive the full one credit for the class. “We forgot to use just one of the fields,” Vierheller said. “The fields aren’t tied together to allow changes in one to automatically change the other, so we have to do it manually.”

It seems to be the first time this has happened here at Wayne and greater attention is now being given to the way classes are registered and viewed on the schedule. “A facet of the system does allow for changes in the past, but students did see a difference [when they registered], so we will work to make sure that this doesn’t happen again,” Vierheller affirmed. Until a link in the systems can be created so that changes occurring in the viewed schedule automatically adjust to changes in the other system field which must have the correct amount of hours registered for a class - manual corrections will have to be made to both system fields.

Conklin announced the news to his students at their next scheduled meeting time and apologized for the inconvenience which was as much a shock to him as anyone. For the unexpected remainder of the semester, the class decided to have more videos and light weight material, as well as a planned nature walk and some extra reading for a final exam in May.

March was Women’s History month and was celebrated at Wayne with lectures given by the faculty and staff. Vicki Craig, who works in Media Support, and Bonnie Huffman, a Wayne College instructor of philosophy and history, talked about influential women of the past and history, talked about some of the women’s history. Huffman focused on Eleanor Roosevelt’s undiscouraged character, as well as some of the invaluable advice she gave to her husband, Franklin D. Roosevelt, during his presidential campaign. She is probably best known for her work on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Sheila talked about Roosevelt’s strong character, but also mentioned private attributes, such as her love of dogs and Eleanor’s insistence that a black singer named Marian Anderson sing for the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Staff Presents for Women’s History Month

By Ethan Goodwin, Writer

Self Defense a Valuable Course

By Kristy Hogue, Writer

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Before the spring semester of 2004, I did not want to take self- defense because I was scared of being attacked. I thought about it a lot, but never really did anything. After a friend of mine told me about it, I gave it a try. I thought it was unnecessary, but now I wish I had taken the class. Today, I am glad I did. It seems to be the first time this has happened here at Wayne and greater attention is now being given to the way classes are registered and viewed on the schedule. “A facet of the system does allow for changes in the past, but students did see a difference [when they registered], so we will work to make sure that this doesn’t happen again,” Vierheller affirmed. Until a link in the systems can be created so that changes occurring in the viewed schedule automatically adjust to changes in the other system field which must have the correct amount of hours registered for a class - manual corrections will have to be made to both system fields.

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The Wayne Mirror

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The Wayne Mirror is the student newspaper of The University of Akron Wayne College. The opinions expressed in the Mirror are not those of Wayne College administration, faculty or staff. Rather, they are those of the individual writer, contributor or columnist.
Wayne College closed because of snow on March 16. Although all students are affected by snow closings at Wayne, many students are not sure how the decision is made.

The decision to cancel Wayne College classes due to inclement weather is made by Dean Jack Kristofco. Although we had two and a half snow days this year, Wayne College has only been closed because of weather conditions an average of one day per year in the past ten years.

The process involved in making the decision usually begins the evening before the possible snow day. Kristofco explained that he monitors the evening weather reports to get an idea of what may be coming. If there is a possibility of weather interfering with travel, he is up and in action by 4:30 the next morning, contacting the highway patrol by telephone and reading their recommendations on the highway shortly before 10:00a.m.

Coordinator Lisa Simons said that the substance was first noticed around midnight throughout the building. The strange fumes around campus. Kristofco also notified the University Communication Office. If the school is closed, it will remain closed for the entire day to avoid further disrupting students’ schedules.

Wayne also does not automatically close when other area schools close because the situation is different, Kristofco explained. Elementary and high schools run buses for many of their students and are responsible for the transportation of those children. Wayne College students come from a wide area, and different students will have different weather conditions and other circumstances to consider. In some cases, the weather may be fine in Orrville and surrounding areas, but students coming from other counties like Holmes or Medina may have unsafe driving conditions. It is expected and encouraged that students will “make a decision based on their own judgment” in regard to attending classes in inclement weather. Kristofco said that he takes road conditions into account when looking at his class attendance. This may not be the same for all professors, but Kristofco added that even when Wayne College closes, most area businesses are still open and sometimes busy. Wayne College students are responsible for attending classes, much like attending a job, while balancing other concerns, but the decision to close the school is made carefully, with student safety in mind.

Wayne College closed at 5:00 p.m. after a small gas leak was discovered. Maintenance had been called three times before coming to check out the problem, and both student assistants felt they weren’t taken seriously.

No one received any definitive answers as to what the substance – being called “the gas” throughout the day for lack of a better description – was. Maintenance insisted that there was no gas in the building, and that a farmer must have sprayed something that drifted into the school. When Meehan was asked if she had any personal theories on what it may have been, she replied that, from what people were describing to Maintenance, it seemed to have been “working on cholinergetic substances.” This was the first time she had ever experienced anything like this at Wayne. The fumes seemed to have dissipated by late that evening, and no effects were reported the next day.

On Thursday, March 11, several individuals reported strange fumes around campus. Although the fumes were strongest in the library, learning center, and Filling Station, they were noticed throughout the building. The substance was first noticed around 9 a.m. by student assistants working in the learning center. Library Coordinator Lisa Simons said that it was noticeable in the library shortly before 10:00a.m. Maintenance was called by several different people during the day, and maintained that the fumes were coming in from outside, something a farmer was spraying.

According to psychology professor Sue Meehan, “Lots of students were coming in saying there was something nasty in the air, and I did smell anything!” The fumes affected Meehan as well. “I wasn’t inhibiting what I was saying, it just came out!” She said she was fine by the next day, while some people didn’t feel “back to normal” for two days.

Several students experienced emboldening effects similar to Meehan’s, while others became quickly exhausted and unusually lethargic. Erin Gardner, a student assistant in the learning center, said that “everyone seemed extremely happy or a daze.” She had no real bearings on what was going on around her. She became concerned when the effects reminded her of having had carbon monoxide poisoning. Another learning center assistant went to her doctor as soon as her shift was over, experiencing medical problems. Her doctor believed that whatever was in the air had made her sick. Maintenance had been called three times before coming to check out the problem, and both student assistants felt they weren’t taken seriously.

On Friday, March 12, Kristofco addressed the Student Union to the other side of main campus in a line four deep, for three and a half hours to hear him speak. The doors were scheduled to open at 3:30 p.m., but Secret Service took extra time securing the building before finally opening the doors to the public around 5 p.m.

Waiting in line outside turned out to be an event of its own, as people began chatting and arguing. It was especially heated once I moved to the front of the line to close the small pocket of Bush supporters engaging the Kerry supporters in spontaneous debates. Kerry’s personality seemed to be resonating well with most of the crowd as people chanted and debated opinions. It was the first time she had ever experienced anything like this at Wayne. The fumes seemed to have dissipated by late that evening, and no effects were reported the next day.

At the University of Akron’s Student Union an estimated 5,000 signed up Sunday March 14th, to hear Massachusetts Senator, John Kerry speak about his campaign. I waited through the immense line of people attending the Student Union to the other side of main campus in a line four deep, for three and a half hours to hear him speak. The doors were scheduled to open at 3:30 p.m., but Secret Service took extra time securing the building before finally opening the doors to the public around 5 p.m.

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Some attendees in line talked about the large turnout comparing it to past political rallies. Kerry compared the emotionally charged crowd with the one he had seen in the 1992 Clinton presidential election campaign. That same man yelled with fervor toward Bush supporters, like “chicken little, it’s all coming, ten months and more” and “hail to the thief,” while Bush supporters rallied back with, “Kerry is scared” and “Who signed NAFTA?”

It was no usual day on main campus, police stood w/ barricades between Bush and Kerry supporters to keep a divide amid the growing arguments. While there were only seven to 70 Bush supporters in attendance, they were able to incite a strong reaction from the long line of Democrats by sounding blow-horns and chants such as “B-U-S-H! What does that stand for?”

Once the doors opened and everyone was put through metal detectors and bag searches, the crowd piled into the upper level ballrooms where we stood waiting until 6:30p.m. After the delay, US Representative Sherrod Brown (D-Lorain) addressed the crowd. People cheered as Brown said “this state is the state that will make,” which Kerry later reiterated.

Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic gave a brief introduction for Kerry in which he thanked the crowd for being there and respectfully despaired that more Ohioans 15-44 are leaving the state than in any other state in the county. He took a stage and addressed the crowd, throwing his suit jacket on the floor behind him and immediately turned his attention to the support giving him 52% of the vote. Kerry continued to criticize President Bush, saying he had failed to do anything about the war in Iraq and debating opinions. It was the first time she had ever experienced anything like this at Wayne. The fumes seemed to have dissipated by late that evening, and no effects were reported the next day.

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Familiar Faces: Dr. Susi Meehan

By Pamela F. Roeper, Writer

Attending Wayne College and not taking a class with Dr. Meehan is like visiting Paris and not seeing the Eiffel Tower. An Associate Professor in the Psychology Department finishing her sixth year at Wayne, Dr. Susi Meehan is the older sibling everyone’s always wanted. She is the cool big sister who won’t tell mom and dad that you snuck in past curfew, who gives you advice on that first big date and then cries with you when it turns out awful.

It is with this approach that she teaches her classes. Intro to Psychology, Developmental Psychology, or Social Psychology, Meehan makes her students feel comfortable and relaxed. There are no questions off limits and no comments too odd. Amiable and accommodating, she is often sharing personal tales that relate to whatever subject is being discussed. Kicking off her shoes and sitting on a table, you feel as though you’ve just come into her house for a friendly chat. The classroom is very much Meehan’s home. Getting a feel for teaching while still a student, she knew instinctively this is where she belonged, “I can still remember being up there at the blackboard with a piece of chalk in my hand, talking about Washburn and the Gardeners, and having this epiphany that this is what I want to do for the rest of my life, because this is so cool.”

Coming from a background of research, Meehan still keeps her inquisitive mind involved in the experimental aspect of things, “Reading something new is one thing…finding something new is a whole different high.” Currently she is working on a slug project, which permits one to ponder about her favorite food of grilled octopus.

When asked what she does when she’s not at school she patently responded, “Different fields, same jerseys. I do the same thing at home that I do here. Yep, I grade, I read.” When pressed a bit further on her summer activities, she reveals that she likes to climb rocks and be outside. With a family home in the Adirondacks, she does a lot of climbing there, but she also enjoys going out to the Rockies, and climbing the Presidential Range in New Hampshire. This summer Meehan is going to Mexico.

To unwind Meehan divulges that a lot of manual labor is what really relaxes her, and not the wimpy stuff either, “If I can get up on the roof and nail in a shingle, or put up and fix a gutter, or put in a new rock wall… I’m a happy camper.” Perhaps she makes house calls?

There is something so very natural and placating about Meehan’s personality that just draws people to her. Even as we did this interview a steady stream of students flowed to her door. Seeking advice, help on a project or just wanting to talk, she sprinkles her pupils with support like an April rain feeds the soon-to-bloom flowers. It’s difficult to imagine a teacher more determined to see her students thrive. With challenging coursework and critical thinking projects that test everyone’s cognitive limits she can, in the words of John Milton, “teach ye how to climb, higher than the sphery chime…”

Media Support offers Technology to Students

By Miah O’Brien, Writer

Media Support Services manages technology-enhanced classrooms and equipment used by faculty and students to enhance lectures, projects, and presentations. Located to the left of the circulation desk in the library, you will find Media Support staff at work. The Media Support Services department handles requests for equipment, technical support, and equipment training.

Many speech classes have a visit from a member of the Media Support staff to give an overview of equipment in the classroom. They are able to acquaint students with the available options for enhancing presentations with technology and media. Photographs, magazines, books, slides, maps, and objects are just a few of the available options.

Cher Deeds, media support technician, Vicki Craig, media support associate, and student assistants Natasha Bennett, Melinda Davenport, Jennifer Jackson, Richard Frazier, Brandon Molnar, and Richard Scott Jr. staff the office during classes and special events. Media Services is available from 7:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday - Thursday and closes at 2 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Many students and faculty members use media services as a way to enhance their teaching, learning, and overall performance in school. Media Support Services is an invaluable resource that should not be overlooked.