FROM MY DESK – Bernd Buldt, Chair

Hello everyone and welcome to the spring 2013 issue of our department newsletter!

Currently, we see IPFW undergoing many changes. You may have heard that Senator Jim Banks (R–Columbia City) urged the legislature to give us more independence from Purdue since “IPFW [is] the fifth largest campus in the state,” and “with a growing diverse campus, along with numerous academic opportunities, it deserves to efficiently be managed by the appropriate on campus personnel.” There were a few hearings, but the legislation did not clear by the deadline, so it is “dead.” Becoming a more independent institution while retaining the affiliations with our two “mother ships” (like IUPUI), however, is still very much on our wish list.

Mike Wartell stepped down as our chancellor last summer. He served our campus for 18 years and under his leadership we added numerous buildings, bridges, and student housing, and advanced to NCAA Division I sports. According to colleagues with lengthy tenures here, he was responsible for beginning our transformation from a small college housed in Kettler Hall to a “nationally recognized regional university known for the excellence, value, and accessibility of our academic programs” (one of our strategic goals). So, we all owe him much. And on a personal note, I may add that he was instrumental in bringing me here by making IPFW a place that just “feels right.”

Our new chancellor, Vicky Carwein, left her position at Washington State University Tri-Cities in Richland, Wash., to return to her roots; she’s a Hoosier from Gwynnville, Ind., east of Indianapolis. On the one hand, we are excited and have just started to prepare the new strategic plan for 2014–19. On the other hand, we first have to resolve some difficult financial issues. We are facing a multi-million dollar budget shortfall that we certainly don’t want to impact our mission or our students.

Even though our department doesn’t seem to be affected right now—our college as a whole certainly is—it still means we won’t get back positions we recently lost since two colleagues left us, both of whom many of you remember fondly. Bill Bruening retired for good last fall. We are happy, though, that he accepted our offer to remain with us as professor emeritus. Kathy Squadrito, while not retired, is away from campus on long-term disability, and it is not clear whether she will come back. What is certain, however, is that many students and faculty miss her sorely.

Speaking of money—inside this issue of the newsletter you will find information about how you can support us with one-time or recurrent donations. We are raising money among faculty right now for two things: first, to more permanently secure funding for our “Churchill Scholarship”; second, to be able to pay for things Purdue policies don’t cover (e.g., retirement dinners). We know that while monies are tight everywhere, many of you might be able to make a small gift. It would great if you could help us with that.

Finally, if you have ideas for what to include in future issues of the newsletter, don’t hesitate to send an email to the faculty editor, Michael Spath, at spathl@ipfw.edu.

All our best and yours in discourse,
Faculty News

Bernd Buldt: During the fall I was on sabbatical. My sabbatical research project was on probabilistic reasoning in 19th century Germany; a topic in the history and philosophy of science. While we have decent studies of how the “Probabilistic Revolution” (i.e., developments away from Cartesian ideals of certainty and rigor toward the use of probability theory and statistical methods) originated in and affected scientific thinking in France and England, comparable studies for Germany are still lacunae. My starting point is Kant and the philosopher-scientist Jacob Friedrich Fries with the end point being John Maynard Keynes, the famous British economist who summarized German contributions before logical empiricists took the lead. I attended an international workshop on one of the major players, Johannes von Kries, which led to me concentrating on his work. I was fortunate to find and evaluate many hitherto unknown sources (letters, diaries, etc.). It will keep me busy for some time, as my research will result in conference papers and, hopefully, a monograph.

Clark Butler: I have been working on an elementary ethics textbook, titled *Normative Ethical Theories: A Prologue to Applied Ethics*. Working with work-study students in IPFW’s Center for Applied Ethics, we have been studying the competition, hoping to produce something attractive to a mainstream publisher. It is being class-tested for a third semester and is being revised in light of student and faculty feedback. Special resources include captioned pictures from great moral philosophers, lexicon, tests, and study guides. In addition to treating the history of normative ethical theories, this textbook also does moral philosophy. It differs by including chapters on Christian ethics (based on logos Christianity, reason rather than faith) and dialogical human rights ethics, arguing that the classical theories are eclipsed by a human rights ethics grounding moral rights in the U.N. Universal Declaration. For example, either the utilitarian standard is merely arbitrarily asserted without justification, or it is subordinated to the ethics of justification—dialogical human rights ethics. Comment is welcome, and the file is available upon request.

Jennifer Caseldine-Bracht: I taught an ethics and animals class at IPFW this year. The class chose to host an animal visibility day, which included representatives from local organic farms, the Fort Wayne Vegan and Vegetarian Group, the Fort Wayne Co-op, the Pit Bull Coalition, H.O.P.E. for Animals, ACSPCA, Black Pines Animal Sanctuary, and students’ own tables about conscientious omnivores and GMOs. The class handed out ACSPCA coloring books, dog treats, vegan cookies, chocolate almond milk, organic bananas, apples, and lollipops. The event was a great success, with all of the participants having asked to be included in any future visibility events.

Joyce Lazier: It was a great honor to be presented in 2012 with the College of Arts and Sciences’ Enhancement of Teaching Award, and to be nominated for the Student Choice Award for Teaching Excellence. I also published two small articles—one on Descartes and one on Kant in 100 Most Important Arguments in Philosophy. Due to my continuing work with the iPad in my classes, I co-presented and presented at ten different conferences last year in the United States and Canada, including: International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Toronto Canada (“We Will Rock You: Curricular Disruption With the iPad”); American Association of Philosophy Teachers 19th International Conference, Austin (“What’s the Meaning of Life? There’s an App for That”); and Association of Core Texts and Courses 18th Annual Conference, Milwaukee (“Transcendental Deduction of the Ipad: How Use of the iPad Resuscitated Core Texts”).

Kenneth Long: My recent research focuses on a response to Kyle Sanford’s attack on scientific realism based on the problem of unconceptual theoretical alternatives. My thesis is that scientific reasoning concerning theories is an eliminative inference in which (ideally) a single option among many possible ones is singled out as the best. Such reasoning, if it is to justify belief in the approximate truth of the “winning” option, has to start from a list that includes all genuine competitors. But, according to Sanford, scientists have a bad track record of conceiving genuine theoretical options. Genuine options (that only come into play later) were never seriously considered, and that current scientists are in the same boat; hence we are not justified in eliminative inferences to the truth of currently accepted theories. On a more personal note, my wife and I continue to enjoy our new granddaughter.

Erik Ohlander: In November 2012, I participated in an international colloquium held in Paris, *Ethique et spiritualité en Islam: l’adab soufi*. Organized by a group of French and Italian scholars, the colloquium was attended by scholars from as far away as Finland and Tunisia. I gave a paper entitled “Situating Group, Self, and Act in the Medieval Sufi ribâb: The Kitab zad al-musafir wa-adab al-hadir of ‘Imad al-Din Muhammad al-Suhrawardi (d. 655/1257),” as well as chairing the final session of the colloquium (“Corpus d’adab à l’époque moderne et contemporaine”). Earlier that month, I attended the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Denver, where I chaired a panel entitled “Sufis and Their Worlds,” as well as spending time promoting the new *Journal of Sufi Studies* (Brill), for which I serve as executive editor. In spring 2013, I am teaching a brand new course, “Religions of the Ancient World” (REL 30000).

Jeff Strayer: I offered two shows in fall 2012: *Selections from the Haecceities Series*, a one-person show at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art from November 10–December 2; *Does Abstract Art Have a Limit?*, a one-person show at the IPFW Visual Arts Gallery from October 1–November 13. Installation views of the previous two exhibitions can be seen at jeffreystrayer.com. In addition, I gave a presentation on the opening night of my IPFW exhibition: “Does Abstract Art Have a Limit?” a talk and slide presentation on Oct. 1, 2012, which consisted of a selection of artworks from the Haecceities Series. It can be viewed at jeffreystrayer.com/events.php.

Dustan Moore: My current research continues to involve Marx and Whitehead, more particularly relating the Marxist notion of reification to what Whitehead calls the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. The reification of higher education and the misplaced concreteness of the credit hour was the subject of paper and presentation at a critical theory conference in Rome, May 2012. As director of general education at IPFW, I have been involved with the development and deployment of a core transferable statewide general education program mandated by the Indiana legislature.

Abraham Schwab: During fall–winter 2012, I spent a lot of time in public, I gave presentations at three bioethics conferences, two on issues of professionalism and bioethics and one on the ethical issues surrounding intellectual property and the human microbiome. I also gave another half dozen talks on campus, in the community, and on the radio. The radio broadcasts addressed ethical issues at the end-of-life (npr.fm/post/health-360-november-21-2012) and on the coming implementation of Obamacare (wbsi.org/post/news-review-monday-november-19-2012). In late October, I also created a panel discussing the effects of Obamacare on small business, medical practitioners, and insurance (on demand, titled “A_S Obamacare”, at http://149.164.68.202:50000/video_portal). Finally, I was also appointed to the Allen County Ethics Commission in January.

Michael Spath: I was very busy giving community presentations in fall and winter 2012, including: leading a retreat, “Poets of the Spirit,” featuring Angelou, Blake, Eliot, Rilke, and Zen poets; the opening of a Palestinian art show (“Room for Hope: Palestinian Post-Nakhtla Art”); “My Neighbor is Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist Cultural and Religious Diversity in Allen County” as a part of IPFW’s University Community Connections (UCC) series; and “Religion Before Adam and Eve.” I continue as executive director of the 501(c)3 not-for-profit Indiana Center for Middle East Peace, which hosts monthly presentations and whose keynote speaker at the 2012 Gala was nonviolence advocate Arun Gandhi, the Mahatma’s grandson. I was also featured in the cover story of The Fort Wayne Reader (“Areas of Confluence,” fortwaynerreader.com/story.php?uid=2109), and was the featured interviewee on the podcast magazine Fort Wayne Speaks.
Featured Alumnus
Hernando Estevez

When were you at IPFW?

What caused you to pick philosophy as a major, Hernando?
My first encounter with philosophical studies occurred in Bogota, Colombia, at the Universidad Javeriana. I chose philosophy as a major because of my love for reading, inquiry, and knowledge. I have always believed that ideas shape the world and therefore teaching about ideas that can transform the world is a noble pursuit.

Philosophy’s aim is to understand the world in which we live and philosophers’ duty is to create a community of inquiry conducive to providing individuals the tools for questioning the world’s paradigms and their various challenges.

Was there a particular philosopher, movement, or area of philosophy that you wanted to study? Is there a particular philosopher or tradition to which you are drawn?
Social and political philosophy and phenomenology not only further traditional claims about knowledge and its practical application, they also hold philosophy accountable for how it is developed in Western thought. In other words, phenomenology and social and political philosophy questions philosophy itself and the core of its own methodology.

Critical theory, feminism, race theory, and philosophy of education are all areas of philosophical inquiry that derive from acknowledging the study of consciousness and their direct object from experience. At IPFW, I received a strong and in-depth study of the tradition of philosophy and all its intricacies as well as a comprehensive study of major philosophical figures, traditions, and methodologies.

Latin American philosophy was the main theme of my dissertation and continues to be the intellectual focus of my research. The tension between political and cultural identity during state formation raises important questions about Latin America and its unique position in Western thought.

Describe your experience in the philosophy department while you were here at IPFW.
IPFW’s philosophy department was extremely important regarding my decision to become a philosopher. It provided a kind, generous, and thought-provoking environment where my intellectual interests and political concerns were well received and nurtured for future academic pursuits.

Professors David Fairchild and Clark Butler were extremely supportive of my love for philosophy. They become the “voices of wisdom and insight” when deciding on graduate school.

After finishing my Master of Liberal Studies, also at IPFW, David offered me the opportunity to teach philosophy in the department as a continuing lecturer. This furthered my interest in a vocation of teaching as well as becoming “a philosopher.” Teaching became a way of both learning and practicing philosophy. David’s emphasis on rigorous and critical thinking as a part of effective teaching became an essential element in my classes.

And although my interest in philosophy was motivated by social and political concerns, it was Clark Butler who taught me the importance of analytical philosophy by providing intellectual and academic arenas where I could experience and understand the complementarity of continental and analytical philosophy. Clark’s class on hermeneutics was extremely important in my formation as a philosopher.

If someone asked you how philosophy helps (or has helped) you in your profession, how would you answer him/her? If someone asked you, “Why should I study philosophy?” what would you tell them?
Without philosophy you would be missing out on the wonders of pondering and thinking, as well as the fascinating universe of inquiry and self-knowledge. The study of philosophy is a mode of living and comprehending the world. To know from where we’ve come and who we’ve become is to begin to know the world, and to know the world is also to transform the world into a more equitable, just, and peaceful place for all.

Tell us what you’re doing now, Hernando.
Since 2008 I have been assistant professor of philosophy at John Jay College of Criminal Justice at City University of New York. I teach in the areas of 20th century continental philosophy and social political philosophy.

I’m very interested in the fields of post-colonial studies and critical theory in Latin America, particularly in the ways political identity during the formation of the state in 19th century Latin American countries contributed to the idea of citizenry. I am also conducting research into the rhetoric of current developments within Latin American politics.

Finally, I’m serving as the co-editor of a special edition of the Inter-American Journal of Philosophy, dedicated to the bicentennial of the 1812 Constitution of Cádiz and its relation to state formation in Latin America. I’ve also been privileged to teach in the programs of history and philosophy in the School of Arts and Sciences of the Universidad del Rosario, Bogota and been invited to lecture in the Dominican Republic.

This all sounds very interesting, Hernando. Tell us a little more about your teaching. How has your philosophy degree informed not only the content but also the way you teach?
My goal in teaching is to foster the acquisition of a base of philosophical concepts and critical thinking skills that will help students in all their learning. I guide students in the evaluation of arguments, argument development, verbal and written expression, and the application of essential philosophical principles and notions to past and current political and social issues.

I emphasize three common themes: (1) an emphasis on philosophical content knowledge; (2) the development of critical thinking skills; (3) the generation of enthusiasm for philosophical inquiry. These skills make students thoughtful practitioners of philosophical inquiry presented in both academia and society. My lectures also always cover issues relevant to students’ life and reality. For instance, in my undergraduate introductory course to philosophy, we spend parts of the class period discussing local, national, or international issues relevant to the essential role that philosophy plays when understanding reality. These sorts of academic activities not only provide students with exposure to the world around us, but also promote the development of skills in critical thinking and argument development.

What are your hobbies, things you enjoy?
Traveling is my hobby. One travels not only to see other places or meet other people but also to ask who one becomes in new geographical spaces shaped by different stories and built upon diverse values. In that sense, philosophy is a traveling compass for questions and answers about the our permanent or temporal surroundings.

Featured Faculty
Joyce Lazier

If I had my way, IPFW would have AppleTVs in every classroom and every teacher and student would have iPads. VGA projectors would be beaten “Office Space” style with HDMI TV screens as their replacement. Lecterns would be publically burned in a massive bonfire and those awful chair/desks (is there a Platonic form for that? Oh yes, we’d find that under the Form “Lucky”) would be replaced with beanbags and comfortable couches set up in a circle—and maybe a carpet on the floor.

Imagine sitting comfortably in a circle discussing Plato’s Meno and one of your students pulls up a YouTube video of Bobby McFerrin teaching a TED audience music and shows it instantly through AppleTV. You all watch and your students begin to comment how what they are seeing is the Meno! McFerrin is making the crowd recollect music—he’s not teaching at all! You all begin to draw contrasts and comparisons to the Meno-citing areas of the primary text for support and you can see that they all have a firm grasp on Plato’s argument. Suddenly it doesn’t feel like a foreign, ancient idea that

(Continued on back page)
learning is simply recollecting—there is a personal connection to the concept. Or, another student connects one of the fragments from the pre-socratics with an Adam Sandler movie and, as he shows the movie clip to everyone using Apple TV, he makes the argument why the two are similar. Another student disagrees using another fragment to bolster his opposition. Or, during a discussion about skepticism your students all go find examples of it on the Web and share those to the class via Apple TV and they offer arguments as to whether the examples accurately depict the definition that was in the book. Welcome to my classroom—except we don’t have beanbags (yet).

I’ve had two classes now where all the students have iPads and there is an Apple TV in the room and I love the chaos it invites. They are used to this kind of chaos as the actual examples above show. They are multi-taskers who grew up with a vast array of information readily available to them. Being in a class like this is like, well, being at home. When they are freely able (and invited) to provide immediate content to the course, they become colleagues and are therefore more invested in the outcome. They find the information in the moment, bring it to the table, and together we critically think to figure out if that information is good, bad or ugly. Given the already vast and ever-growing amount of information out there, this is a necessary skill since so much bad information is dressed up like a relevant argument. We control the chaos.

I’ve seen the power that the iPad has in invigorating group projects and peer commentary—two areas that seemed to be dying on the vine. Mobile devices and shared apps allow true collaboration outside of class time without requiring the students to arrange mutual meeting times. I’ve re-thought the research paper utilizing the technology and the result was better papers. I’ve Skyped in students who were unable to attend class using the iPad (a great benefit to my many single parents out there). My 110 Intro class is using their iPads to write, animate, and illustrate our own interactive textbook. I’ve seen tremendous creativity and humor result from sketches made and iMovies produced about individual philosophers or commercials for ethical theories. I’m excited by the ability to tear down the classroom walls and invite entire classes to collaborate on shared projects across disciplines using shared apps and cloud folder sharing in DropBox.

Mobile technology is not a fad and it is already in the classroom, thanks to smartphones. I think it is wise not to ban or ignore it but to harness the power they hold for the Good. I’m excited by the power they have in transforming the classroom to better meet my learning outcomes. I’m encouraged by the skills my students have after a semester using the iPad. I still want beanbags.
Greetings Dear Alumni,

Two years ago, I was appointed to be the Department of Philosophy’s director of assessment. Part of my responsibility is to chair the committee that selects the recipients of the department’s two scholarships: the Jean and Bill Bruening Philosophy Scholarship and the James S. Churchill Philosophy Scholarship. The Churchill Scholarship was established in 1990 and the Bruening Scholarship criteria were established in 2009. Both scholarships are merit based; however, in 2011, the Churchill Scholarship criteria were amended to include a written essay component with specific rubrics to be judged by a faculty committee.

Scholarship details are included under the Advising and Student Resources tab on the department’s website: ipfw.edu/philosophy/.

The most recent scholarship recipients are Daniel Todorovic and Joshua Bertsch. Daniel was the Featured Student who was interviewed for the Fall 2012 Alumni Newsletter. To read the interview, simply go to the department web page at ipfw.edu/philosophy/, click on “About Us”, which will take you to the Alumni Newsletters.

In order to continue this most worthwhile student program, we need assistance. I am writing today to ask you to consider contributing to the Philosophy Department Scholarship fund. Contributions of any amount will allow us to continue to offer merit-based awards to deserving philosophy majors.

Please allow me to make some gifting suggestions:

1. A one-time gift in any amount
2. A pledge with monthly payments spread over a year
3. Stocks
4. Personal checks, credit, or debit card
5. Payroll deduction, if at IPFW

Of course, your gift is tax deductible, and the State Tax Credit information is also outlined on the reverse side of this letter. Other details and donation options are listed on the reverse side as well.

Let me close here dear friends by thanking you ever so much in advance for your support of the Department of Philosophy here at IPFW. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of our philosophy majors.

Sincerely,

Johnathan P. Decker
Director of Assessment
Please Print

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• The CC-40 tax form is available at locations that supply other Indiana tax forms. You may download the form on the Internet at IN.gov/dor or call IPFW at 260-481-6962 to request one.