

Business

Dean's Remarks

Dear Colleagues, Students, Alumni and Friends of the Romain College of Business,

USI recently made the difficult decision to move its coursework online for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester, and to require its faculty and most of its staff to work remotely from their homes until at least April 30. We do this as part of our role in slowing the spread of the deadly COVID-19 virus. Our faculty are working hard to convert their course content to an online format. Many have never taught online before, and many of our students never wanted to learn online. Yet everyone has risen to the challenge! While our physical campus is largely vacant, we want to make sure everyone recognizes that we are still open. We are answering our phones and email. We are conducting classes and interacting with our students. We are working behind the scenes to ensure the best learning experience that we can provide under the circumstances.

What can you do to help? Our students still need the support and guidance of our community. Many of them are missing out on the final months of their senior year. Others are just learning to adjust to college life. Still others are involved in clubs, Greek life and competitions. This crucial time is when many students would ordinarily find jobs, receive awards, enjoy the company of good friends through collaborative activities and celebrate a job well done as they enter a new phase in their lives. If you are an alum or friend of the college and have been involved with our students in some way, please continue to stay engaged with the faculty and students virtually. If you have not been involved, but would like to be, contact me, and we can discuss ways that you can still present to classes or mentor students. And if you prefer, you can help by contributing to scholarships, funding future learning experiences for students or supporting faculty research through a donation to the Romain College of Business.

If you are a student, please stay engaged. Talk to us about what you are experiencing and how we can help. We want you to be successful. And we are committed to helping you be the best you can be.

We are all in this together. Stay safe. Stay home. But stay engaged.

Cathy Carey, Dean



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by John Michael O'Leary

Romain College of Business is pleased to recognize six educators as recipients of summer faculty fellowships. Each brings a unique and promising perspective to their field of study—and a personal commitment to shape a better future for students, fellow researchers, people in business and the community at large.

Community-Based Engagement Fellowships

"It's hard to know precisely, but well over 30,000 people in our community are food-insecure," says Bryan Bourdeau, instructor in business. "They lack access to nutritious food for an active, healthy life."

That fact has led Bourdeau and Dr. Sima Fortsch, assistant professor of management, to put this critical quality-of-life issue squarely in their sights. Their fellowship, "Analyzing Supply Chain to Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness for all Stakeholders Involved" targets Evansville's food insecurity ecosystem for remedy.

"We're studying three flows in the supply chain," says Fortsch. "There's the physical flow of product, the flow of information and the flow of funds."

Right now, about two dozen organizations comprise the supply chain; the dominant stakeholder in the food-insecurity ecosystem is Tri-State Food Bank. But all the other stakeholders in the ecosystem tend to be siloed, with no formal network in place to guide their cooperation. As a result, the system for obtaining and distributing food throughout Evansville is inefficient and often wasteful.

"We intend to develop multiple models, with different costs and benefits, and let the client choose," says Fortsch.

"With a good model in place, it will be clear for all stakeholders, especially new suppliers, how they can take part most effectively," says Bourdeau. "Ultimately, it's about keeping people from going hungry and ensuring they have access to the nutrition they need."

Creating Computer Knowledge

"Many students in middle school and high school have an interest in computer science, but they have been 23

Innovation in Student Learning and Teaching Fellowship

"I have noticed that most students in my Introduction to Operations Research do not bring their textbooks to class, despite my best advice," says Dr. Gary Black, associate professor of decision science. "I conclude this is because they have not purchased the book . . . at a list price of \$295, I understand why."

Optimizing Code

“You may recall the failed launch of healthcare.gov in late 2013,” says Dr. Xue Han, assistant professor of computer science. “An

What's In It For You?

by John Michael O'Leary

Jamie Read is director of marketing and strategic development with Hubb Management in Evansville. She completed the master's in business administration (MBA) in December 2018 with a concentration in data analytics. She shared her thoughts with us about her motivation for achieving the degree, her experience in the program and what it has meant to her career.

Why did you enroll in USI's MBA program?

I have a master's in occupational therapy; however, my professional experience and background has focused more on business development and sales. I pursued a master's in business administration to enhance my technical knowledge and increase my credibility as a business leader. In addition, I looked at this endeavor as a personal investment that would help me develop a framework for problem-solving, improve my leadership skills, network with other business professionals, improve my strategic thinking and build on my communication skills within the business world.

What is your impression of USI's MBA program?

I valued the convenience of the program in that I could complete all classes online and within a reasonable timeframe. USI's program did not require me to sit for the GMAT (Graduate Management Admissions Test) because I met certain criteria due to my GPA, professional experience and prior master's degree. Lastly, the structure of the program allowed me to focus on other important roles in my life, such as being a parent, wife and employee. Cost played a factor as well.

How would you describe the learning environment in the program?

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