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## A Message from the Dean



Dear members of the faculty:

As we look forward to the fall term and the Faculty Development Workshop day on August 22, 2013. I wanted to connect with you, on behalf of the staff and administration of the College, in this way, in a newsletter that we hope will become a venue for news and information-sharing about your work.

In dozens of conversations, in large and small groups, we have heard that you would like deeper engagement with the College and with each other, to share your ideas about teaching and learning, and better ways to serve the needs of our students. And, on practical matters, you would like to get information you need more quickly and efficiently. We hear you, and we want that open dialogue and efficient communication, too.

We're offering a number of sources of information and ways of interacting, so that your needs and your voice can be heard:

- [New Faculty Central webpages](#)
- Two faculty development workshops per year (including access via technology for faculty unable to attend on campus)
- Faculty Newsletter that will address College of Professional Studies news and national issues of interest to faculty
- More frequent professional development events throughout the year

Please tell us what you think, what is on your mind, and what you would like to share with your faculty colleagues. The size of our faculty could be seen as a challenge to communication, but as we've learned from social media, sometimes communication around common interests and shared passions across a large and vibrant group can yield extraordinary creativity. Please email me at [cpsdean@neu.edu](mailto:cpsdean@neu.edu) with your questions, ideas and suggestions.

Thank you for your leadership and your contributions and, most of all, for the ways you inspire our students and all of us at the College of Professional Studies.

Sincerely,



John G. LaBrie, EdD  
Dean

## What's Changing in Higher Education? Three Qs with John Caron, Senior Associate Dean, Academic and Faculty Affairs

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An article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* declares, "The Future is Now" and then goes on to detail 15 recent technological innovations in higher education, most of which are familiar to the faculty of the College of Professional Studies. Given the rapid evolution of higher education, John Caron responds to three recent signs of change, technological and otherwise.

**1. The news is full of stories about MOOCs (massive online open courses). Is CPS going to get into offering MOOCs?**

We have adopted a wait and see approach, because there are so many unanswered questions about how to offer MOOCs in a meaningful way. If we do enter the MOOC space more fully, we will want to do something that is distinctive. Last year, for example, we offered free course modules on [US Political Campaigns & Conventions](#) to help teachers leverage the national attention for learning purposes.

The questions we need to answer about MOOCs are these:

-How do you assess the work? Is learning happening, and how do we know?

-Persistence rates are very poor for MOOCs right now. Yes, MOOCs may be offering ready access through free and open registration, but if students don't stick with the course, is the learning real?

-How do you create a sustainable credit and funding model? While many institutions serve the continuing education student, we know that our students are interested in degree programs leading to a credential, both for career advancement and the satisfaction and confidence that come with completing a rigorous program.

Have you seen MOOCs work? Email us at [cpsnews@neu.edu](mailto:cpsnews@neu.edu) and tell us about it.

**2. There have been news reports that a union is trying to organize part-time faculty at area colleges. What do you think about this?**

I have been following the reports of the union activity because I have experience working with a faculty union at another school. My experience there leaves me feeling strongly that union representation would have a negative impact on the entire CPS community. One of the most exciting things about working here is our innovative and constantly evolving approach to providing

the best possible education for our diverse student population.

I believe our faculty and our College are much better off working directly with one another to continue to foster an environment where we can prepare our students for success in the global arena and provide opportunities for advancement in their professional careers. In my prior dealings with a union, they often actively opposed the very kind of innovation that is a hallmark of CPS. I value our collaborative approach to educating students. I would not want to see a union come between us and interfere with our important work.

If a union organizer approaches a member of the CPS faculty, I hope that she or he will tell them that they are not interested in union representation. I believe this is the right approach to continue the remarkable success we have achieved.

### **3. Faculty everywhere face the same challenge - how to help students improve their writing skills? What is CPS doing on this front?**

Almost every faculty member and institution I know is experimenting with different ways of supporting students in improving their writing skills, and the online learning environment adds one more piece of the puzzle. We haven't answered the question yet, but I have some encouraging news to share.

The College of Professional Studies sought and won a Davis Educational Foundation grant in 2010 to establish an online writing lab for students in our Foundation Year program. It was a success. Students adopted new skills, improved in writing clarity and organization and expressed greater confidence in their writing ability after working with writing specialists.

Building on this effort, the College is making the Online Writing Lab a one-credit co-requisite to undergraduate College English courses. Students will have the opportunity to work with a professional writing specialist on their assignments for these courses.

We look forward to seeing the results of this effort. Do you have other ideas for improving writing? Please share your thoughts with your faculty and administration colleagues.

Do you have a question to address in the newsletter? Email it to [cpsnews@neu.edu](mailto:cpsnews@neu.edu).

## **Faculty Recognized with 2013 Excellence in Teaching Award**

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Each year, the College honors two faculty members for their excellence in teaching. The selection committee seeks indication of especially high intellectual standards in terms of course content, rigor, and integration of the best scholarship, depth of knowledge in the subject and evidence of scholarly and pedagogical growth as new knowledge is created and new classroom technology is developed.

**Dr. Sanga Kugabalasooriar**, who teaches basic and advanced chemistry to undergraduate students, and **Dr. Nena F. Stracuzzi**, a faculty member in the Graduate Education programs, are the 2013 recipients. Read their stories here:



"An Instructor who "Encourages Students to Attempt Challenging Problems without Fear or Failure"  
• An "Inspiring Instructor Who Encourages Intellectual Risk-Taking"



## Northeastern to Adopt Smoke-Free Campus Policy

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This fall, Northeastern's commitment to public health and the health of students, faculty, staff, and visitors will be evident in a new smoke-free policy on campus.

How can an urban campus crossed by public streets and sidewalks go smoke free?

Read [Northeastern to adopt a smoke-free campus policy](#) along with the press coverage this move has received.

## Northeastern Launches Empower, \$1 Billion Comprehensive Campaign

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Northeastern launched a comprehensive campaign that will shape the future of teaching, learning, and discovery at the university by supporting students, faculty, and innovation in education and research. The campaign will also strengthen Northeastern's partnerships with government and industry.



*Empower: The Campaign for Northeastern University* aims to raise \$500 million in philanthropic support and \$500 million through industry and government partnerships by 2017. The campaign will capitalize on Northeastern's surging momentum in areas ranging from research to global leadership in experiential education.

## New Master's Degrees: Food Regulatory Affairs and Homeland Security

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The College announced two new degrees: [Master's in Regulatory Affairs of Food and Food Industries](#) and [Master's in Homeland Security](#), both of which will accept the first class of students for the fall 2013 session.

The [Master's in Regulatory Affairs of Food and Food Industries](#) will focus on food law and regulations and address business, management and legal topics critical to the success of companies and organizations in the food industry.

"This master's degree provides the expertise needed to interpret, implement, and refine regulatory policies that dramatically affect consumers, producers, and sellers of food products," said Kelly Otter, associate dean, Graduate Academic and Faculty Affairs, at the College. "This degree is offered 100% online, giving working professionals the option to pursue a professional master's degree anywhere, studying on a schedule that works for them."

The [Master's in Homeland Security](#) teaches all aspects of a disaster cycle: preparing for natural disasters, like hurricanes, responding and recovering from man-made disasters like hazardous waste leaks and explosions and mitigating the effects of an emergency, such as an act of terrorism.

Otter notes, "Our program and its curriculum are strengthened by affiliations with top centers and institutes including Northeastern's George J. Kostas Research Institute for Homeland Security, the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security, and Northeastern's ALERT Center. These collaborations will provide opportunities for teaching, research collaboration and networking for both students and faculty."

## We Want to Hear from You!

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What information would you like to receive in the next issue? We welcome all suggestions, and will do our best to incorporate your ideas into future communications. Thanks in advance for your input and support. To submit a note, send an email to [cpsnews@neu.edu](mailto:cpsnews@neu.edu).

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