Colleagues on the job market are hearing that teaching experience is more important now than ever. There are limited possibilities to teach through the Dean’s Teaching Fellowship (DTF). Is it possible to increase the funding to the DTF? There are many benefits to increasing the number of teaching opportunities, including the benefit to undergrads from the greater variety of courses.

Dean Weiss: The DTF is a quality investment, and it’s a good experience for everyone. We have increased the investment over the years. Students have the opportunity to teach in three ways: by being a TA, through the DTF, and by teaching summer courses. Teaching experience is indeed important in the job market.

Dean Falk (Chair of the committee that selects DTF recipients): The number of fellowships awarded is not limited by the budget. The committee has very high standards and only awards the fellowship to those courses that will provide an excellent experience for undergrads. If more extraordinary applications are submitted, there is the possibility that more resources could be found to fund those applicants.

Dean Burger: There is also an opportunity to teach during intersession. Courses piloted during intersession could become regular courses later.

Three questions. One: In the History Department, fourth-year and higher students are going nonresident. They feel like they’re being treated as second-class citizens, since they do not get the insurance subsidy. They’re not benefiting from the new program, while new incoming students get the full subsidy for the duration of their time as resident students. Two: International students are not allowed to work on campus when they go nonresident, and they cannot work off campus because of their status as international students, making it extremely difficult for them to support themselves. And three: Most teaching opportunities require you to be a resident student. By the time History students finish their teaching assistantships, they do not have the opportunity to teach. [This student also noted that there is a big difference between financial support and the quality of summer classes versus DTF courses.]

Dean Ostrander: The nonresident status was originally set up to provide a benefit for grad students who were leaving the university for a semester or year or so to work. As tuition increases, however, the nonresident burden is significant. Historically it may have made sense to decouple resident and nonresident status for the use of facilities, etc. What happened over time is that students have gone nonresident, and therefore

(continues on Page 9)
First, I’d like to make one thing clear: “PassPort: Voyages of Discovery” totally sucks ass.

I probably should have built to that, but I don’t want anyone who only reads the first paragraph of the article thinking that I had anything resembling a good time.

So just what is this overpriced, overhyped, underwhelming monstrosity of an activity? Sunspot.net, the Baltimore Sun’s website, describes PassPort as a “multisensory entertainment attraction.” This sounded pretty cool—which is how I ended up at PassPort in the first place—but in retrospect, when’s the last time you visited an attraction that wasn’t multisensory? (“Welcome to the Museum of Just Smells!”)

In actuality, PassPort is a motion-simulated theater, the kind with the big IMAX screen and the hydraulic seats that throw you around. The theater also touts “special effects,” which means that someone must have considered fans and fog special. But wait, there’s less! There’s so much less!

I tried this ambiguous “PassPort” thing with a group of friends. We arrived twenty minutes early, still unsure of what PassPort was, only knowing that it cost us $13 each. For an additional $4, they said, they could upgrade us to Premium Seating. We declined.

Our early arrival gave us plenty of time to peruse the gift shop. We would not learn until later that the items they sold—astronaut ice cream, logic puzzles, beanie babies—were at best only tangentially related to the PassPort experience.

Why, I wondered, would such a state-of-the-art attraction need to augment its income by selling cheap trinkets? I soon found out.

Total number of students in my party: eight. Total number of people in the theater, including my party: eight.

A college student in a puffy velvet hat, which I think was supposed to make him look like a fruity Renaissance explorer, let us into the holding area. It wasn’t called that—it had some name like “The Pre-Experience Zone”—but that’s what it was, a big empty room where we watched “Look at all there is to do in Baltimore!” propaganda for a good ten minutes.

These ten minutes, mind you, came out of our forty-five. That’s right, PassPort promises a forty-five minute voyage of some sort, which Sunspot.net advertised as an actual forty-five-minute motion-simulated movie. With the clock already down to thirty-five minutes, the hydraulic seats were nowhere in sight.

Then the movie went “live” to our “correspondent” on Federal Hill, which was for some reason covered in snow despite the clear weather outside. He briefed us on the multisensory experience we were about to undertake and how important our mission was. (“What mission?” I whispered to a friend. She shrugged.)

But first, before we could exit the Pre-Experience, we had to play a game to select one lucky participant to be the Navigator. “We need eight volunteers to take their places in the front of the room,” said the correspondent, “so choose carefully.” The eight of us looked at each other.

We spent the next ten minutes playing glorified bar trivia. Finally a member of our party—we’ll call (cont’d on Page 5)
Restaurant Review: Tam-Tam

Ellwood Wiggins, German

It all began when my roommate lost his job as a journalist for the occupational hazard (turned crime) of being too honest. After a short stint as a shopping-mall Santa, which despite all his efforts he was unable to extend to a more permanent position, he faced a dreary future of (a) mooching off the generous bounty of my Hopkins stipend (at which prospect I immediately applied for a slot as the GRO restaurant reviewer, hoping that thereby I’d have a chance to enjoy at least one meal outside besides the 33-cent boxes of Mac & Cheese from Sav-A-Lot), or (b) accepting work outside the world of journalism.

After a couple weeks of subsisting under the conditions imposed by option (a), he applied for a job as a taxi driver with a Baltimore Co. cab firm. On the very same day he was accepted and installed in a shiny blue automobile. During his first shift, my roommate drove around with an experienced cabbie to learn the tricks of the trade. His mentor happened to be an immigrant from Senegal, whose brother owns and runs a restaurant specializing in the cuisine of his homeland. My roommate came home to regale me with tales of Latyr, who would drive around, constantly chewing on special Senegalese beans with one side of his mouth, incessantly muttering prayers in Arabic with the other, and simultaneously managing to utter wry comments about the quirks and stupidities of Americans and the natural goodness of all things Senegalese.

Impelled as much by my roommate’s description of his trainer’s character as by curiosity about Senegalese food, five of us from the German Department (Tinka, Bernhard, Felix, Douglass, and Ellwood) settled on Tam-Tam as a perfect choice for the next review. Though we had all enjoyed experiences at Ethiopian restaurants, the culinary arts of the rest of Africa were entirely novel to us, and we suspected that the same might be true for the majority of the GRO’s readership, so we hoped that the review might not only introduce a new restaurant, but also a whole new cuisine to the adventurous spirits among Hopkins graduate students. Armed with such idealistic goals, and after working up healthy appetites during a long seminar on political romanticism, we set out on a chilly Wednesday full of anticipation for our evening’s repast.

Tam-Tam

Phone: 410-435-1121
Address: 5722 York Road
Hours: 9:00 AM—midnight daily
Reservations: Nope
Reviewer’s Rating: (out of five barracudas)

Tam-Tam is located at 5722 York Road, about a block south of The Senator. When we first drove past the place, we were afraid that it might have already gone out of business, as the window was cracked on which the cheery letters “TAM-TAM” appeared, and the place looked eerily abandoned and empty. The main door was locked, and a small sign indicated that we should use the other entrance, but the only other door had another sign claiming to be the entrance for take-out orders. The subscript “African-American Dining” under the restaurant’s name inspired fear in some hearts (and hope in others) that we furthermore had stumbled into a soul food joint rather than any exotic establishment. After shuffling around outside for several minutes, we intrepidly decided to venture in through the take-out door. Once inside, we were faced with a makeshift wooden partition along our left and a long, cafeteria serving-style construction of stainless steel dish-containers on our right—all of them empty. We grew even more convinced that the place was no longer in business, but as we huddled together in indecision, we were greeted by the smiles and gestures of a man at the end of the corridor who jovially insisted that they were indeed serving good food, and who beckoned us forward. As we rounded the end of the partition, we found ourselves in a brightly painted room furnished with booths that must have been salvaged when the local Tastee-Freeze went out of business. A huge-screen television officiated serenely over the empty room with animated coverage of some South American soccer match. Large, red plastic letters were affixed to the yellow walls with the following slogan: “NICE-N-DIFFERENT EATERY WELCOMES YOU!”

After some consternation about how to squeeze all five of us into the hard (and somewhat sticky) booths, we began to peruse the wallet-sized menus of folded paper that the maitre d’ in his threadbare, red tee-shirt and colorful hairnet had passed out as we came in. He came over to our table to inform us that only the section marked “Dinner” (as opposed to the one headed “Dinners,” or the two marked “Lunch”) was available that particular evening and that we should just come up to his desk to tell him of our choices as soon as we’d made them. He spoke with a pleasingly thick French accent that, along with a quick overview of the menu, quieted any doubts we might have
LUKEWARM AT HOPKINS

Are you visually tolerable? Send us a nomination for Lukewarm at Hopkins! E-mail: gradnews@jhu.edu

Name: Mary Helen Berk
Sign: Aquarius
Year: Sixth
Dept.: Philos.

As Descartes would say, “I think, therefore I am interested in this South-Carolina-native Philosophy grad student.” And who wouldn’t be? Mary, who eagerly volunteered for this month’s “Lukewarm at Hopkins” while drunk, studies the sexiest subjects of all: ethics and political theory. Yowza! A Hillsdale College graduate (go Chargers!), Mary’s worst date story is truly heartbreaking. After she and her date returned to her car in the pouring rain, the car wouldn’t start, and her date made her stand in the downpour to check under the hood while he relaxed in the dry vehicle. Then, to make matters worse, he called JHU Security for a ride home in an escort van—but didn’t take Mary!

Her best date? It’s not as interesting as her other worst date: Apparently her now-ex-boyfriend got angry at her, yelled “I’m leaving!” in a public place, made a huge scene, slammed down his ring, stormed out—and then came back five minutes later to tell her he was mad she didn’t chase after him! Guys, the bar has been set pretty low!

When she’s not watching A&E’s Pride and Prejudice or the classic Liar, Liar, which is probably pretty often, because people don’t really watch their favorite movies more than a few times, Mary likes to run, play basketball, read The Onion, bullshit with friends, and drink a lot. Hint, hint, fellas!

Mary’s best feature is her “uncanny ability to remember email addresses,” which is a crappy best feature. And she says there’s only one quality she’s looking for in a guy: “Motorcycle.”

If “motorcycle” describes you, you’d better give Mary a call. After all, she won’t chase after you!

Name: Andrew Dixon Skora
Sign: Aries
Year: First
Dept.: Biology

Do you want a strong, suave, capable lover? Or do you want Andrew Skora?

A first-year Biology student, this University of San Diego graduate isn’t studying anything right now because he’s still rotating—yeah, rotating like a carousel of hot lovin’!

If Andrew was stranded on a desert island, and he could only take one food, because it’s just that kind of desert island, he’d take doughnuts. I guess it’s a desert island!

It’s also the kind of desert island where you can watch movies and television, so you’ll find Andrew watching The Simpsons and the epic romance chick-flick Patton.

When he’s not stranded on a desert island, this 6’3”, 140-pound dynamo likes to rock-climb at the gym, play golf, read, and smoke cigarettes with little plastic filters “to filter out all the crappy stuff.” Guess he still has a few things to learn about biology!

The best way to win Andrew over? “Take off your shirt!” he declares. “I’m not that picky!”

Maybe not, but he is dedicated. Andrew once jumped off a 70-foot cliff into a pond to impress a girl…and then couldn’t move for three months. While he was recovering, the girl hooked up with his best friend! Not that he could have had her anyway—as Andrew warns, “Never jump with your legs open.”

Now for the clincher, his best quality: “I have big feet,” Andrew says. And you know what that means, ladies. It means he has big shoes! And a gigantic penis!

Impending GRO Happy Hour Menu

April 8: Chicken Etouffée with Red Beans, Vegetarian Rice Creole Style, Vegetarian Jambalaya, Corn Bread, Crisp Tortilla Chips with Picante Sauce

April 15: Spicy Texas-Style Chili, Spicy Texas-Style Vegetarian Chili, Steamed Rice Pilaf, Warm Flour Tortillas, Shaved Cheese and Sour Cream, Crisp Tortilla Chips with Picante Sauce

April 22: Glazed Beef Short Ribs, Assorted Grilled Kebabs (Chicken and Veggie), Coconut Rice, Action Station of Flamed Deserts, Pretzels

April 29: Penne Pasta Tossed with Roasted Veggies, Penne Pasta with Grilled Chicken and Roasted Garlic, Caesar Salad, Crisp Tortilla Chips with Picante Sauce

All GRO Happy Hours also include assorted beer and wines, which are really cheap (like a couple bucks) but really good. GRO Happy Hour takes place every Thursday from 6:00-8:00 PM in Levering Café.
(cont'd from Page 1)

“Jesse” because that’s his name—earned the title of Navigator, and we could enter the theater.

“So…what do I do?” Jesse asked our velvet-headed host.

“Nothing,” he replied. That was it. Jesse’s status as Navigator was never mentioned again. We sat in our hydraulic seats, pushed down on our lap bars, and the forty-five minute movie had been successfully whittled down to twenty-five. (As part of the evening’s only pleasant surprise, we were upgraded, free of charge, to Premium Seating. Then again, we were the only people in the theater. Premium Seating, as it turns out, just means “the first row, rather than the second or third row.”)

PassPort offers two films, Oceanarium 2 (an ocean adventure for all ages) and the one we saw, Time Elevator America (for more mature audiences). It began simply enough: Anthony Freeman, some sort of fifty-year-old grad student, bikes to a library to research his family’s genealogy. He locks his bike, smiles at everyone, and begins typing at a glass console.

Our seats rumbled and swayed in response! But I wondered…in response to what? Nothing was really happening onscreen to warrant the hydraulics. Look out, Anthony, it’s a friendly librarian! Wheeeeeee!

Anyway, the friendly librarian gets Anthony to sign some extensive forms, and she drags him back to the Time Elevator as an unwitting guinea pig in the library’s secret underground experiment. The Elevator descends past giant screens, where Anthony learns about his first ancestor in America. Finally she clamps a metal bracelet on his wrist, which seems to only be there so that she can warn him: “Whatever you do, don’t touch this!”

He touches it. Sorry to ruin the surprise.

Cue the fog machine, and suddenly Anthony is traveling through time. Initially stuck in the late seventeenth century (where he witnesses a slave auction), Anthony leaps through portals that allow him to jump forward in time from ancestor to ancestor. Coincidentally enough, most of Anthony’s ancestors seem to have been present at major events in our nation’s history (the Boston Tea Party, the writing of the Gettysburg Address, and—in a nod to Charm City—the writing of the Star Spangled Banner). He also had no ancestors between 1689 and 1775, which is biologically quite a feat.

In each new epoch, Anthony sits back and watches heated discussions about the state of the country. If you’re thinking that “sits back” isn’t the most thrilling verb for a motion-simulated theater to enact, you’re right. The hydraulics do little but pan you across scenery until Anthony plummets through another portal.

Anthony does take history in his own hands, once. Chatting with Lincoln on a train to Gettysburg, the librarian (whose voice echoes from his wrist) warns Anthony not to alter history—to which he responds, “Mister Lincoln, don’t go to the theater!”

A plot twist, perhaps? Nope. Anthony tumbles through another portal, and like Jesse the Navigator, Anthony’s impact on Mister Lincoln is never mentioned again.

Eventually Anthony—who seems totally unsurprised at his own ability to time-travel—ends up in the twentieth century, sitting in his grandfather’s Italian barber shop in Brooklyn during World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War, where each time he watches his relatives argue politics amid radio broadcasts.

One final portal plummet, and Anthony miraculously finds himself back in the library. Just when you think he’s seen all the ancestors he’d care to, he’s struck with a sudden, inexplicable curiosity about his cousin. (What cousin?)

The librarian looks up the cousin. “He always wanted to be a firefighter,” says Anthony, and sure enough, Anthony’s cousin fulfilled his dream in lower Manhattan in 2001, and—you get the idea. Cue fog, a hug, and a waving American flag the size of a cliff face.

Don’t get me wrong; I’m not criticizing patriotic attractions as a whole. I loved, for example, Philadelphia’s brand-new National Constitution Center, which was tasteful, powerful, and remarkably high-tech. I emerged from that museum in awe of America. I emerged from PassPort thirteen dollars poorer.

So I hope I haven’t been ambiguous. Ride the dragon paddleboats, ice-skate alongside the Harbor, and get cannoli at Vaccaro’s—but avoid “PassPort: Voyages of Discovery” at all cost.

As for whoever designed the attraction, I’d like to give them a multisensory experience. One that involves sucking.

PassPort: Baltimore’s newest downtown attraction, “PassPort: Voyages of Discovery” is about as much fun as shitting a cactus.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
had that the restaurant might only serve soul food. The “Dinners” from which we had to choose all sported French or (what we could only assume to be) Senegalese names, such as “Brochettes du Cap Vert,” “Debe,” or “Chawarma.” The descriptions of the dishes whetted our appetites and generally featured lamb, chicken, or fish (though there were three vegetarian dishes) and included such sides as couscous, salad, and the deliciously exotic alako. We decided to order five different entrees so as to be able to report on as many different dishes as possible, and after some discussion, we unstuck ourselves from the booth to go and confer with the man at the front desk.

Felix ordered Salade Koldoise, which the menu describes as “chopped chicken in as special salad w/ a variety of vegetables, eggs w/ an exotic Senegalese sauce.” He reports: “I thoroughly enjoyed my chicken salad at Tam-Tam! The lettuce was fresh, the dressing well-balanced, and the juicy chicken unusual in appearance—cut into those tiny pieces—and spiced really well. I have never tasted anything like it before...I also liked the coconut juice, especially the bits of pulp.”

Tinka tried to order Moroccan Couscous, but after the second time the man repeated “Yes, Debe?” after her attempted order, she agreed and ended up not regretting the misunderstanding: “I had a Debe of grilled lamb, served with salad, tomato, eggs, and onions and a large portion of French Fries. To start with the latter, these were (very unfortunately) very cold—probably because they tried to serve all 5 of us at the same time. But the rest was very tasty—a generously spiced huge portion of meat with a very distinct barbecue flavor and large amounts of fresh salad. I enjoyed it!” [Note: I think the two Americans who happily accepted Tinka’s offer to taste a morsel of her delicious lamb would both agree that the Germans must have a very different conception of “barbecue” than our own if they would term what we tasted with that distinction.]

All of the seven entrees under “Dinner” were priced $9.99, except for one, which cost $4.99. “Bernhard,” who insists on referring to himself in the third person, “decided—instead of choosing the remaining fifth $9.99 dish—to order Chawarma, since a restaurant review should cover as many things as possible.” At the time he insisted that he had in mind the poor graduate students who cannot afford the exorbitant dinner prices and who would come during lunch for the cheap eats. Chawarma is “the Senegalese version of a burger” (again, only a German could make such a claim), “or ‘like Gyros,’ as our waiter tried to explain. ‘Our version of the gyro—very delicious,’ to quote from the menu. Indeed, it comes in a bread wrap, and again there are a variety of possible fillings (chicken, shrimp, lamb, all for $4.99). Bernhard chose the shrimp, since he goes crazy for seafood. Imagine a wrap with jumbo shrimp, mayonnaise, sauce, and fries on a plate—there you go. But it was very tasty, to say the truth (at least that’s what Bernhard says).” One may be inclined to question the judgment of one who feels it incumbent on himself to qualify third-person pronouncements with such disclaimers, but the rest of us who nibbled at the Chawarma also agreed that it was quite tasty.

Douglass went for the grilled fish with alako and onion sauce. When we asked what kind of fish Douglass was being served, we were told that it was barracuda. This report was particularly exciting to me, as I’ve harbored a peculiar interest in this lightning-fast, fiercely fanged creature since childhood. After Douglass had finished excavating all the tender, delicious flesh he could eat from the fish, we begged him to let us examine its mouth but were sorely disappointed not to find any of the sharp, dangerous teeth we’d read about as children. Maybe African barracudas are more benevolent than their Caribbean cousins.

The Brochettes du Cap Vert sounded too scrumptious for me to pass up, and they quite lived up to all the images evoked by their name. The menu touts “a string of tender lamb or chicken cubes, well marinated (Senegalese style) w/ fresh Tomatoes and egg, served with salad, couscous or vermicelles,” and my lamb bits on a skewer were yummilicious. It came with three different sides, including couscous, all of which I downed with as much gusto as uncaring ignorance for the names of what I was eating. We are still not sure what alako is, but I suspect that it was the cabbage-like delicacy that came with my meal and that matched the eponymous side that came with Douglass’s fish. I couldn’t have been happier with my meal, for it was not only spiced and prepared unlike anything I’d ever eaten before, but it was also just plain yummy. As my grandfather would say, “It tasted so good, my tongue jumped out and licked my eyebrows off.”

Some time after we had returned to our table to await our food, a new waiter scuttled out of the kitchen and exchanged several harsh words (at least some of which were French, the rest in a language unidentifiable to us) with the chagrined maitre d’ and then glided over to our table with water and to ask for drink orders. For the rest of the evening, this new waiter in his elegant Moroccan-looking blouse served us most graciously. When Bernhard ordered a glass of bouye, he came back and apologetically reported that they were out of that particular beverage. As recompense, though, he brought out a tray filled with several different kinds of exotic juices and gave them to us free of
Movie Review: Secret Window

Rita Banz, SPSBE - Counseling

Note to self: Don’t marry a psychotic person.

For the most part, Secret Window is a good movie. I like psychological thrillers because I can usually figure out what is going to happen before it happens. Movies like that make me feel smart. Maybe that’s Hollywood’s way of selling its nearly always cookie-cutter merchandise—it keeps the public coming back, plunking down $8 time and time again. I don’t mind too much, though, if I can turn to my husband and say, “Oh, he’s dead,” or “Good Lord, she should not be going to his house alone!”

I wouldn’t be surprised if Hollywood is “dumbing down” its thrillers so that the audience is able to piece together the storyline and figure out “who done it” before the end of the movie just to make a buck. But typically, there is a great twist at the end of the movie that not even the best gumshoe audience detective could have guessed.

That’s the one major problem with Secret Window: There is no jaw-dropping twist at the end.

Everything that I figured out ahead of time came to pass, and then the movie passed without so much as an “Oh, by the way, check this out,” at the end.

In this latest Johnny Depp film, Johnny plays a fiction writer going through some emotionally hard times. The movie opens with a shot of him sitting in a car with only his face, left hand, and top half of the steering wheel on the screen. As you can imagine, on a big screen, this is a lot of Johnny all at once.

The gumshoe in me takes over and I immediately notice the ring on his left hand (married) and that the audience is listening to his thoughts since we can hear him talking but his lips are not moving. The next thing you know, Johnny is entering a motel room, and he starts screaming at a woman in bed with another man.

Cue credits. After the emotionally charged motel room scene, the next time you see Johnny, he is asleep in a cabin set back in the woods, sans wedding ring. His wife is nowhere to be seen, but a puppy that we later learn was hers is just about the only thing she leaves Johnny’s character with following the divorce.

Note to self: Don’t decide to divorce psychotic husband and leave cherished puppy with said psycho.

Enter John Turturro’s character, a menacing, mysterious, mean-spirited person, who seems to hail from Mississippi. (Never be afraid to try to make correlations early in psychological thrillers—for instance, could words that start with the letter “M” be a clue in this movie?)

So that I don’t spoil the movie for other gumshoe graduate students, I’ll just say this: While it is this moviegoer’s opinion that the ending was indeed lacking, Secret Window is very entertaining up until the last ten or fifteen minutes. I enjoyed figuring out the relationship between Depp’s and Turturro’s characters. And the clues given throughout the film are artfully placed or mentioned. Amateur detectives everywhere will be very pleased with the movie, especially if they go to the matinee screening.

Secret Window

Runtime: 97 min. Rating: PG-13
Starring: Johnny Depp, John Turturro, Timothy Hutton, Charles S. Dutton, & Maria Bello.
Directed By: David Koepp
Reviewer’s Rating: (out of five secret windows)

Mentors: The Freshmakers

Suzanne Feldman, Writing Seminars

About thirty undergrads and twenty grad students showed up for the first Mentoring Mixer on the afternoon of March 3rd in the Gilman Lobby. Dipping into the abundant and delicious snacks, the crowd gathered to discuss the pitfalls, opportunities, and challenges of graduate school. A wide range of specialty areas was represented, both in the grad and undergrad camps. Grad students of the Philosophy and Psychological & Brain Sciences Departments, as well as a Writing Seminars grad student and even a professor from Romance Languages, generously shared their experiences and insights with serious-looking undergrads looking for a different perspective than that supplied by academic advisors.

Financed by Dean Boswell and supported by the Office of Student Services, the event was planned to last for two hours, but planners Suzanne Feldman (Writing Seminars) and Kathleen Schowalter (History of Art) agreed that there was definitely a need for another Mentoring Mixer in the fall, before graduate school applications are due. Anyone interested in helping to plan this event should contact Kathleen Schowalter (ksch@jhu.edu).
The USS Constellation is an imposing figure in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor. Though docked at Pier 1 for the last five years, the Constellation was first launched at the Gosport Navy Yard in Virginia in 1854. In addition to its usual tours and historical reenactments, the Constellation’s staff and crew have planned a variety of sesquicentennial anniversary activities, making 2004 an ideal time to visit this elegant sloop-of-war.

A trip to the Constellation starts in a small museum on Pier 1. Visitors have a chance to see photographs of the sloop through the years and learn about her history and the lives of the sailors and officers who served aboard her. Visitors can also view naval artifacts, including an irregularly shaped wooden desk designed to provide a level writing surface by following the slanting lines of the cabin in which it had been installed. These types of items help visitors to understand how much life at sea differs from ordinary experiences on land.

These exhibits, while informative, are not really the museum. The real experience begins after crossing the gangplank to board the Constellation, the last all-sail ship designed by the Navy. Visitors feel as though they have stepped backward in history as they freely explore all four decks at their own pace. At approximately twenty-five stations, they learn about life aboard the Constellation in the words of the men who originally sailed her and the curators who have written her history. The curators and staff at the Constellation Museum make it easy to absorb what at first glance might seem to be an overwhelming amount of information. Most visitors rely on handheld recorders to narrate the highlights at each station, but those who want to know every last detail can read the placards at each station. Roving sailors, dressed in period garb, also answer questions and provide additional information.

On the quarterdeck, visitors can rest their hands on the wheel or observe demonstrations by the Ship’s Crew, including the firing of the cannon. On the gun deck, they can learn about naval warfare and see the cannon positioned on each side of the sloop or visit the beautiful captain’s cabin, recently restored. Highlights here include the period furnishings, especially in the offices, and the private bathtub and privy. Down one more deck, visitors can learn about various aspects of life aboard the Constellation, including medical practices, food, and how twenty officers, 220 sailors, and forty-five marines entertained themselves. Most visitors seemed shocked to learn that some sailors stopped caring when weevils infested the flour since this put a little more variety (and taste) in their diet. Rows of hooks indicate where sailors hung their hammocks to sleep when they were not on duty. In addition to these interesting tidbits, many visitors like to focus on the Constellation’s service during the Civil War when she was stationed in the Mediterranean to protect U.S. merchant shipping from Confederate cruisers.

A variety of special events mark the celebration of the Constellation’s 150th anniversary. In partnership with the Maryland Historical Society, the USS Constellation Museum presents a monthly speaker series on the Constellation and nineteenth-century maritime themes, including the slave trade, naval medicine, and African-American sailors who served during the Civil War. In late October, the Constellation will undertake a homecoming cruise to the Naval Academy in Annapolis where it was stationed as a training ship for twenty-three years.

The Constellation offers an afternoon of entertainment for anybody visiting the Inner Harbor who wants to avoid the crowds at the National Aquarium and the Cheesecake Factory. At only $6.50 per ticket, the Constellation is one of the best bargains in the Inner Harbor district. The enjoyment of the experience does not end with simply imagining life aboard a naval vessel during the late nineteenth century. Taking the tour also presents an opportunity to see lots of parents and families having fun while they are learning, a moment of pure gratification for graduate students.

The GRO is looking for a few good grad students to act as Social Coordinator and Sports Coordinator for the upcoming year.

You’ll get paid hourly!

If interested, e-mail gro@jhu.edu.

Got a problem only the Vice Dean of Research and Graduate Education in Arts & Sciences can solve? Dean Ostrander’s office hours are the last Tuesday of every month, 3:00-5:00 PM, in 237 Mergenthaler. Free hugs!
paid tuition but still tried to complete their work. We’ve been working on rolling out the health insurance premium, which causes a significant hit to the budget. With the leadership of the GRO, we’ve brought this issue to the forefront and developed a model that we’re examining right now. The issue that we’re working on now is the cost. The idea of this potential model is that after a student has completed their residency over, say, 5 years, and hasn’t completed their dissertation, a student could pay 5% of tuition costs the first year of nonresidency, then 10% the next year, and so on. We’re increasing stipends, and we’re increasing the duration of stipends. We’ve turned over the model to the Chief Financial Officer to examine its feasibility. Other issues that will be considered are resources, like use of the Counseling Center and libraries, and teaching on campus. These issues do have costs associated with them. We’re hoping to roll out something that would take care of all these issues at the same time. It would be nice to give you an environment where you have use of these facilities. We’re giving it serious thought and trying to work it out right now. Two years ago Mary Berk of the GRO started a survey of nonresident students. We were told by some departments that this was an issue for them, while some said it wasn’t. The survey, to those of you who participated, has been instrumental in our examination of this issue.

Dean Weiss: Regarding your third question, there is a financial difference between summer session and fall and spring semesters. The educational mission of the departments is also a factor. The amount of money you get depends on needs. In the summer a different marketplace model is used.

As a student with a disability, I have trouble moving around campus, especially in the winter months when the bricks and marbles are very slippery. What are you doing to improve safety?
Dean Ostrander: If you have a specific issue of a place on campus where there is a problem, contact my office. We’ve been working with Peggy Hayeslip for the past two years to identify problems. Even in areas where we are technically compliant, she’s been looking for ways to address problems. The Facilities Department works to improve conditions as soon as possible in inclement weather.

Regarding graduate student job recruitment, the Career Center seems focused on undergraduate recruitment. I don’t see any companies focused on grad students. What sorts of initiatives have been considered for students who are not intent on academia as a career? Many universities have many companies who come in to recruit graduate students.
Dean Conley: We’re dealing with this issue on the undergraduate and graduate levels, but companies have cut back on recruitment. We work very hard advocating for our students, but Hopkins is small compared to other institutions. These companies often look at the number of students in certain programs in determining where to go to recruit. We’re hoping that our efforts, combined with an improving economy, will result in benefits of improved opportunities.

There are many other efforts that can be made, such as passing along recruiting information to students so that they know where to apply. The small scale of the school does not have to be a limiting factor.
Dean Weiss: We don’t necessarily have the resources to improve this. A group of you should sit down with the Career Center to get a sense of what they’re doing and what your needs are. Get a dialogue going. Perhaps the GRO would be willing to facilitate this discussion.
Dean Burger: We’re working with alumni connections for career opportunities for networking. There are online possibilities. Technological possibilities have also been given some attention. We’re working to develop a student portal to a variety of services.

Many of us are planning on making academia our career. I know the GRO is working on this, but I want to stress that we need to get more feedback on other types of teaching. I would love to have an outside educator visit my class to give feedback about my teaching abilities. On the job market you are often asked about your teaching abilities, and feedback could help us craft a response.

Dean Ostrander: We’ve been looking to expand the capabilities of the Center for Educational Resources (CER) to provide access for TA issues. Already the CER has Buzzword Bistros, as a series of seminars surrounding teaching issues. In expanding the CER’s capabilities, we’re looking to provide services such as videotaping and feedback on teaching from qualified staff.

Where can a grad student get support for dealing with student issues when teaching a class? What can a TA in charge of his/her own class do to find help for students (such as counseling, etc.)?
Dean Ostrander: Call my office. If you want me to meet with the student, my assistant can help you reach the appropriate office.
Dean Weiss: In this sort of situation you are no different than a faculty member. Your graduate student status should not affect the response you get from the administration to these types of issues.
Dean Conley: My office is also available to help, and these sorts of issues may fall under the purview of Academic Advising. We hope this information is available to all students and faculty.
charge. Only after this spontaneous show of uncalled-for generosity did I ask him if his brother worked as a taxi driver. His smiling nod and wink showed that we were not the first customers lured by his brother’s eloquence. During the course of the meal, several other groups of people filed in—some in fancy African garb—and picked up orders of food. We remained the only diners to sit down and enjoy our dinner on the premises, but the original feeling of discomfort soon dissipated and was replaced by the cozy, congenial atmosphere for which good friends and happy tummies are the unfailing recipe.

After we finished our meal, the waiter also served us complimentary bowls of thiakri, a Senegalese dessert. It is a pudding-like concoction of fine couscous mixed with sour cream and pure vanilla extract, topped with fruits, and it proved to be a fitting end to a fine meal. The bill itself was a final cause of good-natured laughs: It consisted of a list of five identical meals with five identical prices ($10.00). The total was an easily splittable, round fifty dollars.

Though all of us entered the restaurant with varying degrees of trepidation and mistrust, we were all soon won over by the friendliness of the staff and the deliciousness of the generous helpings of food. We unanimously agreed that we look forward to returning and trying out their lunch fare (which, by the way is very reasonably priced and includes such exciting items as rabbit) and can unreservedly recommend the restaurant and its food to all and sundry, especially in conjunction with a trip to the picture show (once The Senator finally stops showing The Passion, that is...).
Dean Burger: We should probably take a look at the resource information you have available. This information should be a part of your TA training.

Apparantly on most campuses some sort of childcare is provided on the campus.
Dean Weiss: This issue is fundamentally a community issue, and it is also an issue that concerns faculty. Across from Eastern High School, we, with the YMCA, are building a facility. Half of the 80 spaces in that facility are reserved for JHU. Another solution we're examining is building a facility on campus, but the economic aspect of this is problematic.

The Hopkins daycare downtown is very expensive to Hopkins students, and there is no discount for students or alumni. Will this new facility be affordable for graduate students?
Dean Weiss: I don't know the pay scale or if it will be subsidized.

This question relates to graduation timing. The tuition payment schedule is set up so that tuition is charged on an all-or-none basis per semester. Can we institute a graded payscale for those students who do not finish right at the end of the semester?
Dean Ostrander: I see some potential issues relative to international students. Those students would have to leave before graduation. I will need to talk to faculty to get a sense of how important this issue is.

First, can spouses and children have access to the Health & Wellness and Counseling Centers? May they make use of discounted prescriptions? Is anything being done to improve issues of family health coverage? Second, payments for the insurance premium for dependents are due at one time. Can this be changed?
Dean Ostrander: Right now we're in the process of renegotiating the insurance. I will have our representative on the Health Insurance Committee look into this issue.

Jen Roth (GRO Chairperson): You can speak with Student Accounts to set up a payment plan.
Dr. Joffe (Homewood Campus Medical Director): To support spouses and dependents I would need to hire a staff of pediatricians as well as other additional staff members. This is purely an access issue. Right now we don't provide Peabody students with access, and they are next in line for access. The issue about prescriptions is difficult. Maryland law prohibits us from dispensing medications to people who are not under treatment by our staff.

The on-campus parking situation is ludicrous. I pay $35 a month for no parking. Is there ever going to be parking on the campus again? The parking at Eastern High School is not a good substitute. Where will the parking be finished?

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Trojka: Free Foreign Films for Grad Students!

Normally, Shaffer 3 is an auditorium like all the others on campus. However, on March 11th, around 100 people turned it into (almost) a real movie theater on campus. Add popcorn and soda stands and you're almost there, and even better than the real thing, it's always free!

Trojka, the revived film series on campus, started with Zhang Yimou's The Road Home, a bittersweet love story from rural China. This movie was also typical for this series, which intends to bring international movies to the campus. Starting as a Russian film group a couple of years ago, the series ceased to exist due to the graduation of the people organizing it. On March 25th, the film series continued with a screening of Das Boot, directed by Wolfgang Petersen of West Germany.

The next screening will be Y Tu Mama Tambien by the Mexican director Alfonso Cuaron on April 1, a road movie through Mexico. Two teenagers, Tenoch and Julio, meet the older Luisa at a wedding. They try to impress her by telling that they are heading for a secret beach. Luisa joins them on this trip, which leads to rising tensions between the three of them.

The complete schedule for the remainder of the semester is:

April 8: Kandahar (2001), Dir. Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Iran (Farsi)
April 22: White (1994), Dir. Krzysztof Kieslowski, Poland (Polish)
May 6: The Pillow Book (1996), Dir. Peter Greenaway, UK (English)

All shows are Thursdays at 9:00 PM in Shaffer 3. Did I mention they're always free? For more information about the group and the movies, please also see http://www.jhu.edu/trojka/index.html and watch out for flyers on campus.
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**April 2004**

- Comments -
- Suggestions -
- Submissions -
- Heather May Not Suck -

Adam Ruben
gradnews@jhu.edu

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