

# COUNSELING CONNECTIONS



MISSION COLLEGE Counseling/Matriculation

Summer 2004, Volume 16, Number 4

## Counseling Connections Editor retires in Spring 2004

Joni Johnson, editor of the *Counseling Connections* newsletter and counselor, will retire at the end of this school year. Donnelle McGee, counselor and journalism minor in his undergraduate degree, will take over as editor for the newsletter next year.

Joni began the Counseling newsletter, *Counseling Connections*, as a 4-page dittoed handout during classroom presentations her first year as a Counselor at Mission College. With support from Matriculation and Dan Matarangas, the Vice President of Student Services, she started the newsletter officially in

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## Tricia Lowe Defeats Math Anxiety and Transfers to CSU

Many Mission students have seen Tricia Lowe wheeling down the halls with her beautiful golden retriever, Nikki. This year, Tricia Lowe will graduate with an A.A. in General Studies, and will transfer to CSU Bakersfield to pursue her goal of becoming a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT). When Tricia came to Mission College in Spring 1999, she had already chosen this career goal. Her involvement in a high school organization called "Peer Helpers" had required her to take a counseling course and had given her the opportunity to counsel classmates. She enjoyed it and found that it was important to her to connect with people in this way and to be a positive influence in others' lives. At Mission, she co-founded the Christian Club, "Oasis," in Spring 2000, and served on the Advisory Committee of the Disability Instructional Support Center in Spring 2002. These experiences have reinforced her commitment to a career in counseling. *One of Tricia's most relevant experiences — in fact her greatest challenge in earning a degree — has been confronting her own test anxiety in mathematics.*



*Tricia Lowe with golden retriever attendant, Nikki*

**Math has always been Tricia's most difficult subject, and she developed a dislike for it in elementary school.** Memorizing numbers was easy, but manipulating them was not. A visual learner, Tricia floundered as math topics became more abstract. Because cerebral palsy interferes with her ability to draw accurate graphs and diagrams, it is often hard for her to visualize problems.

At Mission, Tricia started with MATH 902, Pre-Algebra, which she repeated once before taking MATH 903, Elementary Algebra. When she moved on to MATH C, Intermediate Algebra, it was like finally losing a failing radio signal and just hearing static. It was too abstract. "I really struggled, and I would just cry because I was spending so much time on it," Tricia said. She

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## Editor Retires

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1988. The name and masthead were both chosen as the result of several contests including a design project from one of the graphic arts classes. They almost named the paper "Bob" after a bridge in Iowa. But that suggestion was eventually eliminated.

When Mission published the first newsletter, Joni had no computer and relied on an outside source for editing and publishing. Having no control in the final stages of each newsletter drove her crazy. By 1989, she had her first MAC, an SE with 20 megabytes hard drive. But it was enough to start. Several years later, the newsletter grew to 6 pages. It returned to its 4-page status this year because of extensive State budget cuts to Matriculation funding. Several years ago, Joni won an award from the Academic Senate for Excellence in Publication.

It is with mixed feelings that Joni leaves her work as counselor and editor of the *Counseling Connections*. She will miss Mission but she feels that she is leaving her creation in very good hands.



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## NEW MUSIC COURSES AND A.A. DEGREE IN MUSIC

*By Joseph Ordaz*

The Mission College Music Department announces new classes starting this Fall 2004 semester for students interested in pursuing an A.A. Degree in Music. The core of the degree is a 4-semester sequence of Music Harmony and Musicianship courses, Music 6A, 6B, 7A, and 7B that will prepare students with a thorough knowledge of music theory, harmony, rhythm, sight-singing and musical dictation, as well as elements of composition, instrumentation, and musical styles. Some students may choose a degree that focuses on classes related to Digital or Commercial Music, while others may choose a more traditional curriculum that focuses on a particular instrument, such as piano, guitar, or voice.

A complete layout of the degree requirements and semester by semester course recommendations can be found online at (<http://missioncollege.org/depts/music/index.html>) or by contacting Joseph Ordaz, Music Department Chair at [joseph\\_ordaz@wvmccd.cc.ca.us](mailto:joseph_ordaz@wvmccd.cc.ca.us) or by calling 408-855-5276.



## Do Your Classes Require Research?

*By Judie Smith, Instruction/Outreach Librarian*

Most English and Communication courses require you to do research before writing a paper or giving a speech. Research is included in class assignments for anthropology, nursing, marketing, history and many other subjects. Does the thought of research scare you? Have you spent hours looking for information and ended up confused and frustrated? It doesn't have to be a problem.

The Library offers two one-unit courses to help you research and get ready to write your papers. The time you invest in the Library classes will pay you back over and over in your college career.

**Enroll in Library 10, *Basic Information Competency*, to learn how to find, analyze, organize and present information.** In addition, you'll learn about legal and ethical aspects of doing research. Many four-year colleges require Information Competency. **Even if you think you know how to find information on the Internet, Library 6, *Using the Internet for Research*, will show you how to make your searching more effective and useful.** This class is taught online and so you can schedule your work at your convenience.

In addition to the courses, the Library will hold a series of Information Competency Workshops in the fall. These free workshops will help you with your research projects.

# Summer 2004 Brings a Significant Change to CSU Transfer Requirements

By Yolanda Coleman,  
Articulation Officer

Beginning Summer 2004, Mission's American History and Institutions (AH&I) Requirement for the CSU system will change considerably. To meet the new requirement, students will need to take a two-course sequence that is different from those which have been in effect thus far. That means that students who have not met the full requirement for AH&I by Spring 04 will need to take the following combination of courses:

HIST 17A & POLIT 1

OR

HIST 17B & POLIT 1

***POLIT 1 can no longer be used as a stand-alone course for this requirement. History 20 can not be used to meet this requirement at all.***

However, if you have already taken Polit 1 or a two-course combination of History 17A, 17B and History 20 at Mission by the end of Spring 2004, then you will still be able to use those courses to meet the AH&I requirement for transfer.



## Mission College Financial Aid Update

***It's not too late to apply for Financial Aid for the 2004-2005 academic year. If you missed the March 2, 2004, priority filing deadline, you may still apply, but your application will be processed after the priority applications.***

In order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), remember to comply with all regulations learned in your SAP Session. The SAP rules also apply to your summer classes. Dropping more than 1/3 of your units will place you on Financial Aid Probation or Disqualification, and may require you to repay a portion of your financial aid. If you feel you need a review of the financial aid rules and regulations, feel free to attend another SAP session. A new schedule will be posted in the Financial Aid Office window for the sessions which will be held this summer.

### [Financial Aid Web Site](#)

The Financial Aid Web Site has been updated. To view this site, go online to the Mission College Financial Aid website ([www.missioncollege.org/student\\_services/financial\\_aid/default.html](http://www.missioncollege.org/student_services/financial_aid/default.html)). Look for new information and links to different financial aid forms and applications. New features include:

- a link to the 2004-2005 Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver (BOGW) Application for 2004-2005

### [BOGW](#)

Even if you received a Board of Governor's Fee Waiver for the Spring of 2004, you will need to reapply with the 2004-2005 application for the fee waiver to be active in the Summer 2004, Fall 2004, and Spring 2005 semesters. Not only is the Board Of Governor's Fee Waiver application available in the Schedule of Classes, but it is now online in the Mission College website ([www.missioncollege.org/student\\_services/financial\\_aid/default.html](http://www.missioncollege.org/student_services/financial_aid/default.html)). Look for the link to the correct application form.

### [Cal Grant B and C](#)

Regarding the 2004-2005 Cal Grant applications, students who have completed 24 transferable college units at Mission College and who were enrolled here in 2003-2004 do not have to complete a "2004-2005 Cal Grant GPA Verification" form (but must still complete a 2004-2005 FAFSA) because we will send GPAs electronically to the California Student Aid Commission. Students who have not completed 24 college units must obtain a Cal Grant GPA Verification form from the Financial Aid Office and go to their high school to have the GPA verification form completed. ***For the 2004-2005 school year, even if you missed March 2, 2004, the Cal Grant deadline date, Mission students have until September 2, 2004 to apply for Cal Grant B.***

An exception to the general Cal Grant application procedure above concerning GPAs is the "Re-Established GPA," which states that students who have completed at least 16 community college units may use those units' GPA instead of their high school GPA. (Students should choose this option if the re-established GPA is higher than their high school's.) Re-Established GPAs only apply toward the Cal Grant B competitive award. Students here during 2003-2004, do not have to complete a Cal Grant GPA Verification form because their GPAs will be sent electronically to the California Student Aid Commission, but they must still complete a 2004-2005 FAFSA by September 2nd.

# EOPS Helps Students Explore Career Opportunities

*Pharmacy, Engineering, Law, Physical Therapy, and Medical Social Work*

*By Bianka Doomani,  
EOPS counselor*

The EOPS department at Mission College presented an excellent Career Panel Workshop on April 14, 2004. The panel speakers consisted of Dr. McElligott, a Pharmacist, Mrs. Bridget Bouyssounouse, a Physical Therapist and Mrs. Holly Paquette, a Medical Social Worker, all from Santa Clara Kaiser Hospital. Michael Guardino, Corporate Attorney and Travis Bryson, Electrical Engineer from Sun Microsystems were also on the panel. Each shared their educational background, internships, salary, job responsibilities and the current trends in the job market. Below are a few of the panelists' suggestions regarding success in their fields:

- \* *Try to stay focused, set goals and follow your dream.*
- \* *Take speech courses to enhance your communication skills.*
- \* *Take additional English courses to develop your writing skills.*
- \* *Participate in a volunteer job or find an internship related to your major. These often turn into future job opportunities.*
- \* *Stay positive and confident.*
- \* *Success comes from doing well on the job.*
- \* *Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Medical Social Work and Law all require advanced degrees.*
- \* *A B.S. is all that is needed for Engineering.*

## Tricia Lowe

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thought well of her instructor and appreciated his willingness to work with her; but for her, his teaching style and vocabulary prevented algebraic concepts from entering the Earth's atmosphere. "I need things to be concrete. I need to understand how things can be applied in life." She dropped the course and took it again the next semester with a different instructor.

**While the next instructor's teaching style enabled her to better grasp the concepts, and repetition of the material helped, Tricia still didn't make peace with algebra.** In retrospect she wishes she had taken another course before attempting MATH C again because she approached the second course still feeling angry and defeated. As with previous math courses, assignments were daunting and each test gave rise to a tidal wave of anxiety. She dropped MATH C again, this time auditing the remainder of the course so that she could do the problems and reflect on the concepts without the pressure of taking tests. "It rubbed salt in my wound," Tricia said, describing how it felt to keep showing up for a course that she had dropped, "but it was helpful."

**She decided to play to her strengths and next take Elementary Statistics, a topic with practical applications she could appreciate.** Her MATH 10 instructor, Karl Ting, was concerned that she didn't have sufficient background in algebra, but after considering the effort she had put into studying algebra, he let her attempt the course. Tricia liked his teaching style. "He explained things as if we didn't understand it. At the beginning of the class, Mr. Ting said that we need to go home and think of a way we can apply this to the rest of our lives." Studying psychology, where research tends to be based on case studies, Tricia understood the usefulness of knowing how to represent data statistically, and how to analyze statistics. Perceiving a "real life" purpose to learning the subject, Tricia felt motivated and more at ease. The software component of MATH 10 enabled her to do assignments easily. "It was actually fun because you can apply what you learn, and it was fun learning Excel 2000 in the Lab."

**Throughout all of her math courses, Tricia relied on the Math Lab. "I was in there five days a week, a few hours a day.** I liked to do my homework in there, because there was no one at home to answer questions, and if I got stuck on the homework it was too discouraging for me."

Tricia's most powerful resource has been her religious faith from which she has developed three principles for dealing with test anxiety:

- 1) *Fear isn't productive.*
- 2) *Life is larger than a school test. Doing well on a test is important, but it's a relatively small goal.*
- 3) *Let go. Prior to a test, use prayer, meditation, or music.*

"I give it over to God," Tricia said, "and accept the performance that comes [from the preparation]." The device she wears on her upper arm, which people tell her looks like a blood pressure monitor, is actually an MP3 player. Before tests Tricia listens to Christian music to relax her body and mind.

Tricia also recommends these strategies for coping with test anxiety:

- \* *Study. Not preparing will give you a reason to feel anxious.*
- \* *Exercise and rest.*
- \* *Audit courses you drop, to learn the material without pressure.*
- \* *Regard your situation in terms of actions, not feelings. Focusing on things you can do or will do is empowering.*