

New recruitment initiative debuts with success

This spring, the Office of Admissions began piloting a new campus visit experience, First Look Friday, for prospective students. After a successful launch on Jan. 16 with more than 75 families in attendance, the admissions office is now gearing up for the second First Look Friday on Feb. 13.

Similar to Preview Day, First Look Friday allows visitors to familiarize themselves with campus through the traditional campus tour, but includes extras such as lunch in Thomson Café, small group session interaction and a unique classroom experience specific to the student's college of interest.

Research shows that prospective student visits are a vital part of the recruitment process, because they provide a taste of life on campus.

"We want them to be able to imagine themselves as Winthrop students," said Michelle Lynch Clevenger '97, director of recruitment.

Beginning at 10 a.m., the day ends after an abbreviated classroom presentation at 3 p.m.

"We wanted to be able to give them a classroom experience, something interactive and really vibrant," Clevenger said.

The admissions office asked for volunteers from among the faculty members who regularly participate in

a similar classroom presentation for a visit from Junior Scholars each year.

Sociology Professor Jonathan Marx, who presented a short class on creativity in the social sciences, sees significance in the connection between faculty and prospective students at events like First Look Friday.

"I think the parents and students came to share my enthusiasm for sociology, but more importantly view the passion that Winthrop faculty have for their chosen fields of study," Marx said. "It is important for potential students to have contact with Winthrop's best resource, a teaching faculty that remains active in research. This balance separates Winthrop from many other institutions the students may be considering."

Traditionally, holiday weekends are high traffic periods for campus visits. To capitalize on the large number of visitors on these Fridays and allow admissions to provide additional experiences, the inaugural First Look Friday events were scheduled for the holiday weekends of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Presidents Day.

For more about First Look Fridays and how you can help welcome prospective students to campus, contact David Rollings at ext. 2191.

PASCAL cuts continue

As of Jan. 1, PASCAL (Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries) no longer provides statewide access to Nature, Science Online, ProQuest Nursing or Ovid Lippincott titles.

Due to a 90 percent reduction in program funding by the South Carolina legislature, statewide subscriptions to these electronic resources have been discontinued, a cut of more than 800 titles in nursing, allied health and the sciences.

This latest cut dramatically reverses the progress the state had made toward providing a foundation for ubiquitous access to science, technology and medicine research, and teaching materials statewide. It follows on reductions made in July 2008 which included the loss of more than 6,000 news, business and legal sources with the cancellation of LexisNexis Academic, a core online legal and business tool for student and faculty research and a 40 percent reduction in the popular book delivery service, PASCAL Delivers.

PASCAL's 58 member libraries, including Winthrop's Ida Jane Dacus Library, have scrambled to maintain access to the remaining elements of the statewide electronic library for higher education, and access to the remaining core collection, more than 7,000 research titles, will continue through the end of the current semester, but unless funding for these resources is found, the subscriptions supporting them will need to be terminated in July 2009. The delivery service also may be in jeopardy.

The PASCAL crisis has gained national attention, most recently in Web site articles for the American Library Association and Campus Technology. In addition, the Library Journal named PASCAL's funding crisis as one of its top 10 stories of 2008.

To view the current status of PASCAL's subscriptions, please visit <http://pascal.sc.org/content/view/39/57/>

For more information on PASCAL and its funding crisis, please visit <http://pascal.sc.org/helpsavepascal.html>



Jim Johnston, chair of the biology department, spoke with prospective students and their families on program offerings during the Jan. 16 First Look Friday. The second First Look Friday will be held on Feb. 13, Presidents Day weekend.