New Faculty Bios for University Meeting August 27, 2014

Biology

Kurt M. Lucin | Ph.D. Ohio State University; B.S. Dickinson College. For the past year, Kurt has worked as an Adjunct Professor of Biology at Fitchburg State University. Prior to that, Kurt was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Stanford University. His research has focused on the role of immune cells in nervous system diseases and injuries. At Eastern, Kurt will teach histology, organismal biology and human biology.

Jason S. Goldstein | Ph.D. University of New Hampshire; M.S. Old Dominion University; B.S. University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth. Jason has recently completed a Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship working at the University of Haifa and The Recanati Institute of Maritime Studies in Israel. His research focused on the biodiversity of marine plankton in the Mediterranean Sea and the biology and behavior of slipper lobsters. Jason’s projects and travel have taken him to Japan, Brazil, the Caribbean and New Zealand to study lobster ecology and aquaculture. At Eastern, Jason will be teaching ecology and organismal biology, while also continuing with marine ecology research.

Business Administration

K. Niki Kunene | Ph.D. (2006) Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA; M.Com University of KZN, Pietermaritzburg South Africa. Niki completed her Ph.D. in Information Systems (IS) at Virginia Commonwealth University. She taught previously at the University of Louisville. Her teaching is in business information systems and healthcare informatics. Her research is interdisciplinary examining information systems in healthcare, business intelligence and information privacy, information systems and economic development.

Gregory J. Bucci | M.B.A., Iona College; B.A, Lehman College; Gregory has a mix of both public and private accounting experience including work with Pricewaterhousecoopers LLP, General Electric Capital Corporation and most recently as a sole proprietor. He will be teaching financial and managerial accounting. He previously taught financial and managerial accounting, and individual and corporate taxation at Manhattan College in Riverdale, NY.

Communication

Jehoon Jeon | Ph.D. in Communication Studies, Wayne State University. Jehoon is joining as a health communication assistant professor in the Department of Communication, and will teach health communication and communication theory in fall 2014. His research interests span in the areas of health communication, public health, and digital/social media. His articles have appeared in various journals.
Economics

Sonal Vats | Ph.D., Boston University; M.A., Delhi School of Economics, India; B.A., University of Delhi, India. Sonal has recently completed her Ph.D. in Economics from Boston University. Her research interests are in the field of Health Economics, Applied Economics and Experimental Economics. Her research has focused on some key areas in health care markets, specifically the behaviour of economic agents in response to information, incentives, and cost-sharing. A separate strand of her research has focused on stereotype threat and its impact on cognitive task performance of low caste junior high school children in India. Her work has been published in Medical Care and has been cited by Bloomberg. Sonal will be teaching Health Economics, Microeconomics and Statistics at Eastern.

Education

Mark A. Fabrizi | Ph.D., University of Hull; M.S.Ed., University of Pennsylvania; Sixth Year in Educational Leadership, Southern Connecticut State University; B.A., Potsdam University. Mark taught English at North Branford High School in Connecticut for eighteen years, serving as English Department Chair from 2004 until 2012. Before coming to Eastern, he taught graduate courses in education at the University of New Haven and has presented at several conferences, including the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Maine. He was a four-time runner-up in the NEATE Poet-of-the-Year competition, he has co-written several feature-length screenplays, and he is currently revising a young adult fantasy novel. He will be teaching English methods courses in the teacher preparation program and supervising candidates in secondary English.

Tanya Moorehead | Ph.D. in Exceptional Education, University of Central Florida; M.A. in Special Education, University of Connecticut. Tanya was a special education teacher in the Bloomfield Connecticut Public School system for 8 years. She worked with students who had mild to moderate learning disabilities. She primarily worked with middle school students. During her time in Bloomfield she was honored as Carmen Arace Middle School Teacher of the Year and Bloomfield Public Schools Teacher of the Year. After her time in Bloomfield she pursued her Ph.D. in Exceptional Education at the University of Central Florida. Prior to moving back to Connecticut, Tanya completed three years as an assistant professor at Montclair State University in the Curriculum and Instruction department. Tanya will be teaching in the Education department working with future teachers.

English

Allison Speicher | Ph.D., Indiana University Bloomington; M.A. Indiana University Bloomington; B.A., University of Richmond. Allison comes to Connecticut after recently completing her Ph.D. at Indiana University Bloomington. Her dissertation, “Schooling Readers: Reading Common Schools in Nineteenth-Century American Literature,” is currently undergoing peer review at a university press. At IU, Allison taught a range of courses in composition and American literature and designed unique themed courses on tomboys and single women. At Eastern, she will teach American and children’s literature, drawing on her experiences working at an inner-city high school to help prepare future educators.
Jordan R. Youngblood | Ph.D., University of Florida; M.A., University of Mississippi; B.A., University of Texas at Dallas. Jordan is a scholar in the field of digital humanities and gender & sexualities studies. Before coming to Eastern, he completed his Ph.D. at the University of Florida with a dissertation focused on the connections between video game studies and queer theory. He has presented at various conferences, been published in the feminist digital studies journal *ADA*, and has two pieces forthcoming in the first scholarly collections focused on video games and sexuality. At Eastern, he will be teaching a variety of courses in the newly-created new media major, along with traditional writing and literature classes in the English department.

Environmental Earth Science

Paul A. Torcellini | Ph.D., P.E.: B.S. Worcester Polytechnic Institute; Ph.D., M.S. Purdue University. Paul’s expertise is in sustainability and renewable energy. His current research focuses on ways to improve the efficiency of energy consumption in buildings and the secondary impacts this has on the built environment. His activities have led to many innovations in building design. Some of his projects include the new visitor center at Zion National Park, the evaluation of the Oberlin College A.J. Lewis Center for Environmental Studies, and the evaluation and testing of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory Thermal Test Facility. Paul comes to us from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (US Department of Energy, Golden CO), where he served as the Principal Engineer and Principal Group Manager for Commercial Buildings Research. Paul will be teaching courses applied to Sustainable Energy and Green Buildings this year and, as the new Endowed Chair in Sustainable Energy Studies, he is looking forward to strengthening Eastern’s Sustainable Energy Studies Program.

Performing Arts

Alycia Bright Holland | MFA, CMT – Alycia is an educator, performer, choreographer, director and activist. Currently, she works in the Performing Arts Department at ECSU, teaching Improvisational Theatre, Concepts of Dance, The Art of Everyday Life, West African Dance and Dance for the Actor. In the Fall of 2014, Alycia will happily transition from adjunct lecturer to Assistant Professor of Theater, with an Acting/Movement emphasis. She is also the Artistic Director of WUMALA: West African Dance Ensemble, a semi-professional dance group comprised of ECSU students who wish to continue their dance studies and share their passion of Guinea-based dance & music with the University and greater Connecticut area.

Stacy Dziuk | DMA in Bassoon Performance, Music Education and Woodwind Pedagogy, University of Minnesota. Stacy is a woodwind specialist who will teach and serve as director of the Eastern Concert Band. Originally from Minnesota, Stacy has performed in a variety of venues and genres from classical to jazz to commercial. As a multiple woodwind specialist, she has had the opportunity to perform with many Broadway touring productions, including Young Frankenstein and A Chorus Line. Stacy has also performed for the American Guild of Organists national convention, VocalEssence, and was a musician on the soundtrack to the independent film, The Hagstone Demon. As a jazz musician, she has performed with artists such as Wycliffe Gordon, Sam Pilafian, Byron Stripling, Nestor Torres, and the vocal group 5 by Design. Stacy
Amanda Whitfield | MFA, CUNY Brooklyn College. Before receiving her MFA in fashion design and technical theater from CUNY Brooklyn College, Amanda studied fashion design at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York and maintained a career in the fashion industry. As a costume designer Amanda’s professional experience spans theater, film and dance. Her previous teaching experience includes: Visiting Professor at Lamar University in Texas, Costume Shop Manager at Kean University in New Jersey, and as Adjunct Faculty for online and continuing education with Southern New Hampshire University. She is also a member of IATSE United Scenic Artists Local 829.

Psychology

Joseph Dracobly | Ph.D. in Behavioral Psychology, University of Kansas, 2014; M.S. in Behavior Analysis, University of North Texas, 2009; B.A. in Psychology and Italian Studies, Gonzaga University, 2005. Jacob’s research interests include the development and enhancement of response variability, creativity, and problem solving, the role of basic processes in severe behavior disorders, assessment and treatment of behavioral and psychological disorders, and the experimental analysis of everyday language.

Jenna L. Scisco | Ph.D. in Human Factors Psychology from Clemson University, 2012; MS in Applied Psychology from Clemson University, 2009; BA in Psychology from The College of New Jersey, 2007. Prior to joining the faculty at Eastern, Jenna worked as a Research Psychologist in the Military Nutrition Division at the United States Army Research Institute for Environmental Medicine in Natick, Massachusetts, and as an Adjunct Instructor at Emmanuel College in Boston, Massachusetts. Her research program investigates factors that influence human food choices and eating behaviors, and she is particularly interested in designing novel tools to measure food intake and improve human nutrition. Jenna is a member of the Association for Psychological Science, Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, Society for Occupational Health Psychology, and Society for the Teaching of Psychology.

Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work

Sarah E. Baires | Ph.D. 2014, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Sarah is an archaeologist with research interests in the roles of death, mortuary practices and religion in creating and sustaining complex societies in the Americas. Her current research at Cahokia, a Native American city on the floodplain of the Mississippi River (1050-1350 C.E.) in what is now Southwestern Illinois, provides interpretations of the human past that reveal previously unrecognized links between religious beliefs and practices and political systems, specifically in relation to landscape construction. She will teach courses about archaeology and Native American Studies and involve students in her ongoing excavations at Cahokia.

Pamela Pei-Ling Chiang | ABD in Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. At the University of Illinois, Pamela minored in gender relations in international development. Her dissertation, to be defended this fall, examines the state effect on Asian and
Latino immigrants' service use in health and mental health care. Ms. Chiang was a licensed social worker in Taiwan where she worked in youth and child abuse services. She holds a Master of Laws degree and worked to draft the Gender Equity Education Act in Taiwan. She also held the post of administrative assistant to the President of Taiwan where she was engaged in policy and diplomatic assignments.

**Zoe Meleo-Erwin** | Ph.D., The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 2013. Zoe is a qualitative sociologist whose research interests include structural determinants of health, health inequities, social inequality, stigma, gender, and embodiment. Her current research focuses on weight based stigma as both a health and social problem. She joins Eastern after having been a visiting assistant professor at Hunter College in New York City for the past academic year.

**Visual Arts**

**Tao Chen** | MFA, Graphic Design from Louisiana Technical University | BA, Engineering from Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication. Tao has taught Web/interactive Design, Graphic Design and Digital Drawing at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside since 2005. While at UWP he developed new Web and Interactive Design courses for the department and brought real world design projects into his advanced classes. Tao was awarded promotion to Associate Professor and tenure at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in 2011. He is an exhibiting artist, both nationally and internationally, and is an active design professional with regional and national clients.

**Afarin Rahmanifar** | MFA, University of Connecticut. Afarin specializes in painting, mixed media as well as Persian miniature painting. Her work has been exhibited and privately collected nationally and internationally. She was formerly the Vice President of Connecticut Women’s Artists. Afarin has been interviewed and featured on the cover of “Eastern Art Report” magazine of London UK. She was also featured in a documentary film directed by Carina Tautu and produced by Mattatuck Museum. The film was screened at Yale University, Mattatuck Museum and La Poisson Rouge in NYC. Afarin will bring her expertise to teach classes in the area of figure drawing, water media, oil, and mixed media painting.