Magura awarded $2.1 million federal grant

About 20 national registers are available to help clinicians find and use programs that are most effective in treating behavioral problems such as alcohol and drug misuse. But how well are they working? That’s the question Stephen Magura will try to answer in a major three-year project sponsored by a $2.1 million grant from the National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Magura, who directs the Evaluation Center, says the registers help clinicians, practitioners and administrators make better decisions about which behavioral programs to implement or expand. These websites disseminate information on evidence-based programs and practices to community behavioral health care providers so they can make decisions based on scientific evidence rather than word of mouth, intuition or what other agencies are using.

But nobody has actually studied how well the websites are working for this purpose, at least not until now. “The evidence-based program registers fill the need as a sort of mediator between the rather complex research base and the practitioners, administrators and clinicians who need the results of that research,” Magura says. “So the registers digest the research, summarize it and interpret it and then make

Become part of the homecoming 2017 royal family

“We Will Reign” is the theme for WMU’s weekend homecoming that takes place Monday through Sunday, Oct. 9-15, and includes the annual Family Weekend Friday through Sunday, Oct. 13-15.

Most activities are open to the public, and many are free or low-cost although advance registration or tickets may be required.

Numerous organizations and academic units are gathering across campus to welcome alumni home, stage award programs and hold special pregame tailgates Saturday, Oct. 14, to gear up for the 94th annual homecoming football game. Fans should wear gold to the game, which will pit WMU against the University of Akron. In addition, the WMU Bookstore is offering discounts to alumni during homecoming weekend.

Scholar-related award recipients to be feted at convocation

Editor’s note: Five campuswide award programs will be celebrated during the Fall Convocation Friday, Oct. 6, in the Bernhard Center. This issue recognizes winners of two of those programs. The Fall Convocation will include a Teaching and Learning Bash from 9 to 10:45 a.m., Assessment as Ally and Teaching with Technology conferences from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m., the award ceremony at 11 a.m., and the State of the University address at 11:45 a.m. followed immediately by a free luncheon.

Distinguished Faculty Scholar Award

This award will be presented to Thomas Gorczyca, Victor Cumru Xiong and Ping Zhang. The honor is the highest award WMU bestows on faculty members and salutes individuals whose work constitutes a significant body of achievement that is widely recognized within the national and international academic communities.

- Gorczyca, physics, is a first-rate theoretical atomic physicist with keen physical insight and unquestioned scientific integrity for work in the area of photon- and electron-initiated collisions. He has theoretical collaborators in Europe and experimental collaborations with scientists from Columbia University as well as universities in Europe.

- Xiong, computer science, has a strong record of research and teaching excellence.

- Zhang, civil engineering, is a professor of mechanical engineering. He has a strong record of research and teaching excellence.

Honorary degree nominations accepted

The Honorary Degree Committee has issued a call for nominations of individuals to be considered for honorary degrees from the University in 2018. The committee will accept nominations materials through Friday, Oct. 27, and review the materials received in October and November. For more information, visit wmich.edu/policies/honorary-degree.
Faculty development programs set

The Office of Faculty Development has many programs scheduled for this fall, including Cool Tools for Teaching, Part-Time Instructor II and Teaching Inclusivity Professional Development workshops. For more information, including how to register, visit wmich.edu/faculty-development/programs.

Annual China Festival coming up

The fourth annual China Festival will be held from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 7, in the Student Recreation Center to promote Chinese studies programs on campus and to broaden the community’s understanding about Chinese culture. Admission to the festival and parking are free, and for a nominal fee, attendees may sample traditional foods prepared by local restaurants. Attendees also may participate in free classes and hands-on cultural activities, enjoy cultural performances, and peruse informational display booths.

Talk to focus on climate change

Vinod Thomas, formerly with the Asian Development Bank and World Bank, will discuss his latest book and lead a panel discussion with WMU climate experts at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 11, in 2028 Brown Hall. WMU President Emeritus John M. Dunn will offer introductory remarks. The event will conclude with a reception and refreshments in 3025 Brown.

The panel discussion will focus on the subject of Thomas’ most recent book, “Climate Change and Natural Disasters: Transforming Economies and Policies for a Sustainable Future.” Participating in the panel discussion will be Paul Clements, political science; Lisa Dechano-Cook, geography; Duane Hampton, geosciences; and Carson Reeling, economics as well as environment and sustainability.

Michigan Autism Conference slated

The fifth annual Michigan Autism Conference will be held Wednesday through Friday, Oct. 11-13, in the Radisson Plaza Hotel and Suites. The conference is dedicated to providing families, practitioners, educators and researchers with the latest information on a variety of topics related to the assessment and treatment of autism.

Richard Malott, psychology, and Cameron Jonaitis, teaching, learned and educational studies, will kick off the event with a presentation titled “The Past, Present and Future of Applied Behavior Analysis and Autism” at 6 p.m. Oct. 11. The event will include a special tribute to Malott for his contributions to the treatment of autism for more than 50 years. For registration and other information, visit michiganautismconference.org.

Panel to address immigration

Issues surrounding immigration, hospitality and being a good neighbor will be explored in a panel discussion by editors and contributors of the new anthology “Immigration and Justice for Our Neighbors.” The event will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 12, in the Bernhard Center’s Brown and Gold Room. Anthology co-editor Miriam Downey tutors WMU international students, and contributor Hedy Habra is on the English faculty.

Get ready to #GiveGold Oct. II

Since WMU’s founding in 1903, Broncos have been helping Broncos succeed by donating the time, talent and money necessary to keep WMU strong and growing.

Now, WMU is launching a new giving effort to boost Bronco success. The first UniversityWide Giving Day is set for Oct. 11 — Western Wednesday of homecoming week. The goal is to encourage 1,903 employees, alumni, retirees, students and friends to make a gift to WMU in the 24-hour period between midnight and 11:59 p.m. A matching fund has been established that challenges various categories of donors to take part in a friendly competition that increases the impact of their giving. Called Golden Opportunities, these challenges award $1,000, $2,000 or $3,000 bonus dollars to the winners to donate back to their WMU units or other WMU areas of choice.

Challenges have been set up for WMU colleges, WMU non-academic units, individual fundraisers and the gift furthest from campus. A random winner also will be selected as well as a social media-related winner based on criteria to be announced at noon Oct. 11 at facebook.com/wmyuwu. Faculty and staff members are encouraged to get involved to help raise funds for their academic or administrative units. Spread the word via social media using #WMU-GivingDay and #GiveGold.

The day is replacing the Broncos4Broncos campus campaign that the Office of Development and Alumni Relations has been running the past few years.

For more information, visit givingday.wmich.edu.

Trustees approve retirements of 25 faculty, staff; resignations of nine faculty

The retirements of nine faculty members and 16 staff members were approved by the WMU Board of Trustees at its Sept. 20 meeting. Trustees also signed off on nine faculty resignations.

All of the faculty members who are retiring are doing so with emeritus status. The employees leaving the University, along with their names, positions, and effective dates of leaving, are:

Faculty retirements — Bruce Bejcek, biological sciences, May 1, 2018; Christine Browning, mathematics, April 30, 2023; Janet Coryell, history, Dec. 31, 2017; Douglass Davidson, sociology, April 30, 2018; Thomas Edmonds, finance and commercial law, Aug. 14, 2017 (change in date only); Leigh Ford, communication, June 30, 2018; Hyunkeun Cho, statistics, Aug. 14, 2017; Amy Curtis, physical sciences, Aug. 14, 2017; Geoffrey Clegg, business information systems, Aug. 14, 2017; Rajib Sydlik, Mallinson Institute, July 1, 2017; and Robin Parish, landscape services, Aug. 1, 2017.


WMU sees increase in important enrollment categories this fall

The University has seen a dramatic increase in its number of out-of-state students this fall as well as a strong overall surge in the number of new undergraduates and a significant boost to the academic profile of incoming students.

Total fall 2017 enrollment stands at 22,893—down 1.5 percent from the fall 2016 total of 23,252. Graduate enrollment was up slightly to 4,958 students, while undergraduate enrollment was down slightly at 17,935 students.

The final WMU census numbers reflect a 5.1 percent increase in the number of beginning undergraduate students—to 3,179 this year, compared with 3,026 last year. This year’s freshman class comes from 65 Michigan counties and 29 other states. More than 42 percent of them have a high school GPA of 3.5 or above, compared with 37 percent the previous year.

Undergraduate nonresident domestic enrollment—students from other U.S. states—rose by 30.8 percent this fall, and out-of-state graduate numbers grew by 14 percent. Those figures reflect increased marketing efforts beyond Michigan’s borders, as well as a change to the University’s out-of-state undergraduate tuition structure. Minority student numbers, however, continue to account for 85 percent of WMU’s total student population.

Employee groups launch survey

The University’s two nonbargaining groups for Staff Compensation System employees launched the WMU Staff Engagement Survey this week to gather staff input about working at WMU.

The Administrative Professional Association and Professional Support Staff Organization discussed the survey with WMU President Edward Montgomery Thursday, Oct. 31; takes about 15-20 minutes to complete; and can be started, saved and restarted at a later time.

It is open to all benefits-eligible nonbargaining staff members governed by the Staff Compensation System. Members of the two groups should have begun receiving an email message that contains their link to the survey. Nonmembers are asked to visit wmich.edu/apasurvey and provide their name and email address so they can be sent their link.

The survey is designed to be taken online, but a paper version is available upon request. Responses are anonymous, and respondents will be entered into a drawing for $10 gift cards.

Montgomery kicks off 2017 campus United Way campaign

WMU President Edward Montgomery kicked off the 2017 campus United Way Campaign during a Sept. 28 event by announcing the 2017 goals of raising $200,000 and increasing participation by 10 percent.

Faculty and staff should receive their pledge cards soon. For reasons of privacy, the card is to be returned directly to the Office of the President. The kickoff event also marked the launch of a children’s book drive to jump-start the collection of 1,000 new or gently used books throughout the University community for students in kindergarten through the third grade. The “Book-It” drive benefits a similar effort organized by the United Way of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region.

Among additional elements of the fall census was a surprisingly strong showing in international enrollment. Although colleges and universities around the nation have reported steep, double-digit decreases this year in the number of international applications they’ve received, WMU saw a much more modest downturn in applications. The University has 1,881 international students from 96 countries studying on campus—from 1,849 international students last year. That’s an increase of nearly 1.7 percent.

Additional fall enrollment highlights include the following increase in WMU’s minority student population, which increased to 23 percent of the student body this fall, up from 22 percent last year, and continuing growth in the size of the Lee Honors College, which attracted a record incoming class of 54 students to hit a total enrollment of 1,745.

New lab to tackle shortage of manufacturing talent

Construction has begun at WMU-Grand Rapids’ downtown regional location for a state-of-the-art manufacturing laboratory that will occupy the first two floors of the downtown building.

According to a recent employer assessment by Talent 2025, an organization consisting of 100 CEOs from West Michigan who are working to ensure an ongoing supply of talent for the region, the demand for engineers and designers within manufacturing outstrips the supply of qualified individuals by at least a factor of two. The assessment also states that the supply for managers and supervisors within the manufacturing industry in the region is about 90 percent of the demand.

The facility will serve as a program to cultivate the next generation of engineers, designers and other skilled individuals to serve the manufacturing industry. The AMP Lab will combine prototyping, training and small-scale manufacturing with the opportunity for individuals to earn a degree. “AMP Lab @WMU will establish academic and career pathways between workforce development entities, educational institutions and industry partners for our region,” says Dawn Fortin Mattoon, Extended University Programs.

ResidenceHall naminghonors alumni

A trio of celebrated alumni were honored Sept. 27 when WMU named a residence hall complex after them and unveiled portraits of the three. The Westen Heights complex is now designated Hall-Archer-Pickard West and Hall-Archer-Pickard East in honor of the late automotive executive Ronald Hall Sr., former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer and entrepreneur William Pickard.

Artist Gale Fulton Ross, pictured with Pickard, created multiple portraits of the honorees as part of the commemoration. (Photo by Mike Lankl)

Obituaries—wmich.edu/news/obituaries

Rita “Claire” Callan, emerita in occupational therapy, died Sept. 18 in Kalamazoo. She was 87. Callan joined the full-time faculty in 1980 and retired in 1996 after over 15 years of service.

George Dales, the most successful coach in WMU’s athletic history, died Sept. 27. He was 96. Dales was a track and field and cross country coach. He came to WMU in 1953, retired from coaching in 1970 and remained on the faculty until his 1987 retirement.

Judyth K. Timmerman, a former office supervisor, died Aug. 14. She was 77. Timmerman joined the staff in 1980 and retired in 1996 after over 15 years of service.

Art rendering of the building
On Campus with Cheri Butler

During busy times at the beginning and end of semesters, the registrar’s office can field an average 500 calls a week, not including walk-in traffic and emails. As office supervisor for academic records, it’s Cheri Butler’s job to supervise that contact with students, making sure questions get answered and concerns solved.

A large portion of her work is supervising requests for transcripts, the removal of incomplete and grade changes—all work that is done manually—as well as processing grades for study abroad and academic forgiveness forms.

“What I enjoy the most is that I get to interact with current and former students and a lot of different departments within WMU. It’s nice to get to know the staff in the other departments because we’re all on the same team and all have the same goal: to help the students in any way we can,” says Butler, who’s worked in the office for 12 years including the past nine in her current position.

A major project since 2014 has been scanning student records, some as far back as the 1980s, into WMU’s Image Now document management system and eliminating paper files that fill rows of cabinets among the counters and cubicles in the office. The records area staff of eight, an additional four student employees and two temporary full-time employees help with the project that began with 73,000 files. Working alphabetically, the team is now up to last names beginning with “S” and hopes to be done this December.

Prior to joining WMU, Butler worked four years as a kindergarten paraprofessional. She earned her bachelor’s degree from WMU in early education and music and has a son who is a 2014 alumnus touring with a well-known band as a lighting specialist. Another son is an Air Force pilot, while her husband owns Bruce Electric in Oshtemo. Butler, who grew up on a dairy farm, lives in Vicksburg, Michigan, and has three grandchildren. She is a member of the Kalamazoo Log Cabin Quilters. The fabric quilter’s office is decorated with samples of her work, including a Bronco “W.” Butler retired last year as leader of her church praise band after leading it for the past 10 years. She plays the piano, guitar and hammer dulcimer. She also enjoys vegetable gardening, reading and camping with her husband.