Civility: It’s Our Business

Joseph Leahy, a professor of biological sciences at the University of Alabama at Huntsville, was attending a faculty meeting last year when a colleague opened fire hitting Leahy in the head, killing three, and wounding two others. Despite a long and difficult recovery that has cost him nearly all of his vision, Professor Leahy hopes to resume teaching next fall. More recently, during a community outreach event she was hosting in Tucson, Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords received a severe injury to her brain, when a gunman targeted her and claimed the lives of six, including a 9-year-old child.

We live in dangerous times where tempers can quickly flare to the boiling point, where we have little tolerance for others’ opinions, and patience seems a lost virtue. We use the electronic media to hurl insults at one another at the mere stroke of a key with little regard for the consequences of our actions and with little proof of our accuracy.

Ernest Boyer, educator, multiple-award recipient, and author of the highly acclaimed 1987 book, College: The Undergraduate Experience in America, wrote eloquently about the important role higher education plays in developing a civil society. He contended college campuses must be open communities where freedom of expression “…is uncompromisingly protected and where civility is powerfully affirmed.” Boyer also said college campuses should be caring communities, “…where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged.”

Indiana State University has long held that it is our unwavering responsibility to prepare our graduates to live their lives with civility and with respect for the opinions and beliefs of others—even when different from their own. Recently, that belief has been reinforced by our requiring all degree recipients to complete “Ethics and Social Responsibility,” a three-credit Foundational Studies course. Moreover, included in every Foundational Studies syllabus there now appears a statement of our expectation for civility among every member of the class, including the instructor.

Our words have consequences. Unless and until we are willing to respect others’ opinions and treat one another in a civilized manner, incidents like that which occurred in Huntsville and Tucson will continue and the American way of life our forefathers fought and died to protect will be lost forever. We simply can’t let that happen.

John Beacon
Vice President, Enrollment Management, Marketing, and Communications
As John McNichols viewed the illustrated plans for a proposed cross country course in Terre Haute more than 15 years ago, he was formulating his opinions of them when one of the project organizers asked him what he thought.

That question helped change cross country in Indiana.

McNichols has more than left his mark on collegiate athletics. Currently in his 28th year as the head coach of men's track and field and cross country teams, he has mentored All-Americans and national champions. He's officiated at the Summer Olympics and has worked as a coach for U.S.A. Track and Field. As the coordinator of the men's and women's track and cross country programs, he's been integral to a program that has won 26 Missouri Valley Conference championships. The team has also finished runner-up about as many times, he said.

"So those numbers and statistics, sometimes they catch me off guard," McNichols said of the conference performances, "but we're typically so busy in the day-to-day business of what we're doing that I don't really dwell on that too much."

McNichols has done all that in addition to helping create a cross country course that has become the perennial site for the NCAA national championships, bringing national attention to the Wabash Valley in the process.

"So often, cross country was you ran out into the woods, and people might see the runners go by a couple times, and then they come back and finish, and that was it," McNichols said. "We purposely designed our course to make it spectator-friendly."

The course design includes elements that either meet or exceed NCAA recommendations for course width and the straightaway before the first turn, McNichols said. Several loops were designed on the course to allow spectators to gather and watch runners, and the complex was created so almost the entire course is visible from stands built on a nearby hill.

Last fall, ISU and the LaVern Gibson course hosted the men's and women's Division I cross country championships for the seventh straight year, and the eighth in the last nine years. The course also has been used as a model for other major universities as they are constructing new courses, McNichols said.

The coach helped design a course that is "the envy of many," ISU athletic director Ron Prettyman said.

"The reputation of the course is evident in the recognition that the NCAA has given it by awarding the NCAA men's and women's cross country national championships for many years," Prettyman added.

From when the residence halls open to past May commencement, McNichols stays busy mentoring athletes. The cross country season begins in August and continues until the Monday before Thanksgiving. The indoor track and field season starts shortly after the holiday and goes through mid-March. The outdoor track and field season runs from March until June.

Though they are distinct sports with different schedules, several athletes participate in all three. McNichols coaches half a dozen distance runners throughout the year.

"So it's a very full year, particularly for our distance kids," McNichols said. "That's just part of being a distance runner. It has to be a continuous process or you detrain too fast."

The teams' results under McNichols have been impressive. Indiana State won its first MVC title in outdoor track and field in 1988, his fifth season with the Sycamores. ISU then garnered its first conference championship in cross country in 1996.

Yet of all the MVC titles that the Indiana State track and field and cross country programs garnered during McNichols' tenure, the conference meet for indoor track and field earlier this semester turned into one of the most memorable.
The team finally won the long-sought MVC championship in men’s indoor track and field that had eluded the Sycamores. It was won in McNichols’ 83rd conference championship meet as a coach for ISU.

“So that’s a lot of times to stand there with your heart pounding, trying to find a point here or there, to win a meet,” McNichols said.

He also received his first MVC Coach of the Year award for men’s indoor track and field. McNichols previously has won the conference coaching honors for outdoor track and field and cross country seven times each. He has won more championship honors than anyone else in the history of Indiana State athletics, Prettyman said.

“Coach McNichols is an outstanding coach that many young men and women have looked up to, respected and admired as he coached them to excellence,” Prettyman said.

McNichols has been a strong advocate for ISU in the community, Prettyman added. He also said that the coach cares deeply about the athletes he mentors.

“Through his coaching and role modeling, he works to prepare them for a successful life after college,” Prettyman said.

“We are all fortunate to have the opportunity to work closely with Coach John McNichols at Indiana State University.”

If you or your student has questions about finding help in paying for college, whether it be searching for scholarships or completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, trained staff at Indiana State University can help.

Unlike some websites and private companies that charge for their services, Indiana State provides that assistance at no cost, said John Beacon, vice president for enrollment management, marketing, and communications.

“No student should be deprived of a college education because of cost,” Beacon said. “Through a combination of grants, loans, and student employment, a college degree is within reach of anyone who is adequately motivated to succeed.”

At ISU, three out of four students receive some form of financial assistance. To ensure full consideration, all students are encouraged to file the FAFSA, as some loans are available to families without need, said Kim Donat, director of student financial aid.

While the deadline has passed for receiving state aid from the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana, students can complete the FAFSA at any time to be considered for federal assistance.

“While the March deadline is important for state aid and many scholarships, many people do not realize it’s almost never too late to apply for federal aid, said Donat.

Income is just one factor in determining aid, Donat explained. Financial assistance for students at Indiana State and all other public colleges and universities uses a uniform method of calculating need that takes several other factors into account. Those factors include family size, the number in college, the amount of savings, investments and even parents’ ages.

To help families plan for college, the U.S. Department of Education provides an online financial aid estimator at http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov. Families can securely enter information about their finances and see a summary of the estimated amount of federal assistance for which they could qualify.

The free estimator is intended only to help a family gauge its eligibility for federal assistance. According to Donat, the estimate is only as accurate as the information a family submits and awards can change as a family’s financial situation changes. Actual awards of aid are provided to students by the financial aid office at the college or university in which they enroll.

“All students will have some eligibility for financial aid in the form of grants, work study or loans,” Donat said.

In addition to grants, loans and work study, freshmen can borrow up to $5,500 to finance their first year of education with a federal Stafford Loan, with interest rates between 5.4 percent and 6.8 percent. Other loans are available at interest rates between 6 percent and 11 percent.

Indiana State officials counsel students and families to borrow only the amount they really need to pay for college and to consider all options to make college affordable, including part-time jobs. Many ISU students take advantage of a variety of student worker positions available on campus.

For assistance in understanding the financial aid system and help in completing the FAFSA, students and families may contact the Office of Student Financial Aid at 812-237-2215. Information is also available at http://www.indstate.edu/finaid.
Study Abroad Changes Students

Jack Ciancone wasn't nervous as the plane carrying him to a year-long adventure flew across the Pacific Ocean. He wasn't nervous changing planes in Tokyo. The nerves hit when he stepped off the airplane in Fukuoka, Japan and he stared into a sea of Japanese faces. There was no one holding a sign with his name written across it.

“I wasn't nervous until 15 minutes after stepping off the plane,” he said about that wait for his ride.

Then the person escorting him to Baiko University in Shimonoseki arrived after first stopping at the wrong terminal. Ciancone's nerves vanished.

Tara Knopp spent her flight to Costa Rica worrying about the semester ahead of her in that Central American nation. She would live with a host family as part of her immersion into Spanish.

“There's nothing like stepping off the airplane and seeing someone holding a piece of paper with your name on it,” she said.

After days, weeks and months being immersed in other cultures and languages, Ciancone and Knopp said they found themselves changed by their study abroad experiences.

Janis Halpern, director for academic programs abroad, said study abroad provides many opportunities for students to grow as individuals.

“Tara and these students are changed,” she said. Living and studying abroad moves the students into interacting with the world around them.

“They learn about themselves. They can get on the plane and go to another country,” she said. “They become so curious about the world.”

Indiana State encourages students to spend anywhere from a week to a year studying in the country of their choice. Financial aid can be used toward study abroad as long as students take six credit hours in the summer or 12 hours during the semester.

“They are earning credits and credits are counting toward their degrees,” Halpern said. “They all need general education classes. They can stay in Terre Haute or they can spend it in Italy.”

Halpern said she is available to speak to parents who have concerns about their children living abroad. She has visited most of the countries and programs available for students and also has connections to on-site coordinators with all of the locations. About 150 ISU students are studying abroad this year.

From spring break to year-long programs, students have variety of choices in how long and where to study. Halpern said Italy remains one of the most popular study abroad destinations for ISU's students.

“The program in Italy is all in English. They take an Italian class,” she said explaining its popularity. “Let’s be honest, it’s Italy.”

Hayley Bean, a freshman history major from Washington, Ind., has applied to study abroad in the fall at the University of the Arts in Florence, Italy.

“It was between there and England,” she said. “I was always more into Renaissance culture and the cost is very reasonable.”

Though Bean has traveled to Mexico and the Caribbean, she knows that an extended stay will impact her life.

“It makes you more well rounded, accepting of diversity and other cultures,” she said. “It’s important for younger students to know how different the world is other than Terre Haute, Indiana.”

Knopp said her time in Costa Rica made her “braver, but more aware as well.”

“It’s the best journey for a person to take for independence, for their own spiritual journey,” she said.

Interacting with another culture also impacts students in perhaps unseen ways.

“You learn how to make mistakes gracefully,” Ciancone said. “You really gain from that insight of how another country works. There are rules to be obeyed. Japan is very, very formal. You can almost pick up the wind changes when you’re doing something wrong.”

To succeed in studying abroad, Ciancone offered advice.

“Never say no,” he said. “Eat every disgusting squid bit. Go out with people who ask. Leave no stone unturned. Don’t be an introvert.”
When Annie Smith arrived on campus four years ago from her hometown of Columbus, her main goal was playing Division I soccer and pursuing a degree in public relations.

She gave up soccer after her freshman year and decided to get involved on campus instead. “My dad was involved in his school’s Union Board (UB) as a student so I decided to start there,” she said. It was a move that she wouldn’t regret. “I met so many people through Union Board, which led to more opportunities to connect with others on campus,” said Smith, daughter of Cindy and Joe Smith and a 2007 graduate of Columbus North High School. “When I joined UB and my sorority I felt connected. I love ISU.”

During her sophomore year, she participated in Up ’Til Dawn, a letter-writing campaign that supports St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital. During the evening, one of the student directors, a cancer survivor, turned to her and said, “Do you know what you did tonight? You probably just paid for a child to receive free radiation treatment. I wish someone would’ve done that for me.”

That comment set her off on a new path.

The following year, she served as co-executive director for ISU’s Up ’Til Dawn campaign and started a new student organization, ISU Dance Marathon, to raise money for Riley Hospital for Children.

“I participated in Dance Marathon in high school and I thought it would be good to bring to campus,” she recalled. “There’s nothing like it – everyone’s together for six hours celebrating Riley Hospital.”

The first ISU Dance Marathon in February 2010 raised more than $4,200. The 2011 Dance Marathon raised $8,800. “We can still grow this event,” she added.

“The biggest accomplishment I have made at Indiana State is taking three sentences that an Up ’Til dawn director and cancer survivor shared with me and placing them in my heart,” Smith said.

Smith served as an event marketing intern at St. Jude’s fundraising office in Chicago last summer, where she created public relations materials, obtained sponsorships and donations and assisted with the logistics and planning of major events such as the 25th Annual Chicago Golf Classic, Chicago Marathon/St. Jude Heroes, and the Peoria to Chicago Run. She also attended the national leadership conference for Up ’Til Dawn in Memphis. “I loved going to work each day,” she said, beaming. The experience further interested her in pursuing a career in fundraising and event planning.

“They can be separate career paths, but they also work hand-in-hand.”

But there is more to Smith’s experience than her passion for helping children battling illness. In addition to pursuing a public relations major and marketing minor, she has kept a 3.93 grade point average while being active in Chi Omega sorority, Hulman Memorial Student Union, playing intramurals, serving as a Sycamore Ambassador, studying abroad in London for a summer and attending two national Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) conferences. “At both those conferences, Indiana State students presented,” she said. “I presented at the 2010 conference in Washington, DC.”

As a marketing minor, she spent a portion of her spring break participating in the National Collegiate Sales Competition at Kennesaw State University. Her attendance at those events was fully-funded by the university, a fact she is grateful for. “They were incredible experiences,” she said. “I don’t think I would’ve had that same opportunity anywhere else.”

Her activities at Indiana State have collectively contributed to what she wants to do once she graduates in May. “In the beginning, I wanted to do public relations, but I didn’t know what I wanted to do. Now I know what I want to do and I’m much more confident.”

Smith will walk across the Hulman Center stage with fond memories of her time on campus. “I was always a good student in high school, but I never thought I could stand out,” she said. “Other schools have opportunities for student involvement, but ISU made it easy to get involved and grow as a person. Now, I stand out.”

She has one piece of advice for new Sycamores. “If you’re going to school, be a part of that school and get involved.”
University Speakers Series
Connecting distinguished speakers with the community

There are many activities throughout the year for you and your student to experience. The University Speakers Series brings distinguished individuals from a variety of backgrounds — politicians, authors, scientists, journalists, and activists — to the Indiana State campus to meet with faculty and students and to address the general public.

Over the past 30 years, the series has brought to campus Ralph Nader, Gerald Ford, Sister Helen Prejean, Amy Tan, Nancy Grace, Andy Rooney, Robert Ballard, Carole Simpson, Marlee Matlin, Maya Angelou, Jim Lovell, Garrison Keillor, Bob Woodward, Robert Osborne, Mitch Albom, and Andrew Young. During the 2010-11 season, Byron Pitts of CBS News, Eugene Robinson of the Washington Post, film critic and Chicago Sun-Times columnist Richard Roeper, and author/blogger Meghan McCain visited ISU.

The primary goal of the series is community outreach. One of the hallmarks of the University Speakers Series is the opportunity for students and the general public to interact with the presenter. Many speakers participate in classroom question and answer sessions with students in addition to giving a public lecture. During a post-presentation reception, patrons are often able to get a book authored by the speaker autographed. Many of the distinguished guests are willing to pose for photos.

University Speaker Series events are free and open to the public. No tickets are required. The 2011-12 speakers will be announced in the fall. To learn more about the series, go to www.indstate.edu/speaker.

Indiana State freshman’s voice is heard: staying enrolled to graduation matters

Briana Guinn, a freshman studying special education in the Bayh College of Education, was recently quoted in an article in the Indianapolis Star about her experience at ISU and the importance of staying in school and making progress toward a degree. She said, “To be honest, I have not thought about taking a semester off, not only because I’m driven to stay on schedule, but also the campus is a beautiful place, and I would rather get my undergraduate degree here more than anywhere else.”
New ISU App Available for Smartphones

Information about Indiana State University is now as close as your smartphone thanks to State Mobile.

Also known as ISU Mobile, the university’s new smartphone application features athletic information, faculty and staff directories, emergency phone numbers, campus news, student alerts and a buildings guide. Apps are available for BlackBerry, iPhone and Android.

“This initiative is about bringing useful information to students in a format they enjoy,” said John Beacon, vice president for enrollment management, marketing, and communications. “It’s information at their fingertips at any time and in any place.”

Phase two of the initiative will provide more interactive applications for users. Many of the services currently available on Sycamore Express will be accessible on mobile devices, such as accessing midterm and final grades, and checking the status of financial aid awarding. The ability to register for classes and buy parking permits are also being considered.

“That will be so cool,” said McCall Christopher, a freshman athletic training major from Lee’s Summit, Missouri and iPhone owner. “I think it will be really beneficial to students with smartphones. I have everything on my phone, so if I have that the phone it will be so much easier. I will just always have information on the go.”

State Mobile was launched in January and students have the opportunity to provide feedback and offer suggestions for improvements. In addition, two ISU students have been hired by the Office of Information Technology to work on developing future applications.

“It is always important to have student input on the things they like and can use and will enjoy,” Beacon said.

The Offices of Information Technology and Communications and Marketing at ISU and Pyxis Mobile collaborated to develop the mobile application, designed to be interactive in nature.

Universities such as Stanford and Purdue have launched similar mobile phone applications, but State Mobile is expected to be more interactive and in-depth than those applications.

“This is an exciting new tool for our students to be able to use because it is cutting-edge technology and that is something students like,” Beacon said.

“Offering the latest technology also says we are on the move as a university and progressive in our thinking about the future. I think students want to be associated with a university where exciting new things are constantly occurring.”
There’s something for all Sycamores this summer!

**Orientation**
Register now at www.indstate.edu/orientation

**Classes**
Hundreds of classes, on-campus and distance, offered during two sessions

**Summer Honors**
July 17-23 and July 24-30; Deadline to apply—May 20; www.indstate.edu/experience

Driver Education, Camps, Crossroads Repertory Theatre, Sports, and so much more. Check it out at www.indstate.edu/summer