SAE goes off-road in Ohio

Midwest Mini-Baja a great learning experience for student organizations

Combating 90-degree heat and plenty of dust, UW-Stout’s student members of the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) went off-road June 4-6. Eight students traveled to Troy, Ohio, to compete in the 1999 SAE Midwest Mini-Baja. The team designed and built a four-wheel, single seat, all-terrain vehicle.

The Briggs & Stratton Corporation provided an eight-horsepower engine to all the competing schools. According to Linards Stradins, UW-Stout’s department of technology, the students were not only judged by their performance at the competition. “The judges are real sticklers about documentation,” Stradins said. “The students were required to submit design, cost and safety reports.” At last year’s competition in Milwaukee, UW-Stout’s team placed 80th out of 97 teams with just their design plan. They were not able to finish the car and could not compete in the off-road tests.

Because the vehicles are built with the intention to sell to the public, the students had to submit a cost report, analyzing the cost to build 4,000 vehicles. The safety report detailed the team’s adherence to safety guidelines, which included a 41-inch-high roll cage, a five-point seatbelt, four wheel brakes, and a firewall between the engine and the driver compartment. The three-day competition involved a hill climb, powdercoat the frame. Airtec supplied hardware. UW-Stout’s team placed 80th out of 92 teams with just their design plan. They were not able to finish the car and could not compete in the off-road tests.

The UW-Stout team scored points in the static events and in the acceleration, hill climb, sled pull and maneuverability tests. They ran into some problems in the endurance race. “Fifty minutes into the four-hour-long endurance race, we broke a drive belt,” Stradins explained. “Unfortunately, we had no spare belts. We did manage to make about 10 laps before the belt failed.” The team was awarded some points toward the endurance race event, he said. UW-Stout placed 57th out of the 77 teams who met the report requirements. University of Akron was declared the overall winner, scoring the highest accumulation of points in both static and performance events. UW-Madison placed fifth with one of their two cars.

“The advantage we have over other schools is that we are truly a hands-on, minds-on school,” Stradins added. “We have our own shops where we can fabricate our own parts.” Other teams may have to purchase parts that UW-Stout’s team was able to provide themselves.

SAE team members make final adjustments on UW-Stout’s entry in the Midwest Mini-Baja. The team’s car completed 10 laps before breaking a drive belt 50 minutes into the endurance race (below).

Hacken mentioned he would also like to get involved in the Formula SAE competition; however, the cost to build a formula-style race car may be out of the UW-Stout SAE chapter’s reach. The Midwest Mini-Baja competition provides an engine, leaving the vehicle construction and how to drive the wheels up to the teams. Hacken said. In the Formula SAE competition, the air intake cross-sectional area is limited, but the team is challenged by engine design and how to drive the wheels up to the teams.

Hacken said the team improved their communication skills during the building process. “It was kind of tough in the beginning,” he commented. “I had my own ideas and other team members had theirs. We had to figure out how to work as a group.”

I’m glad to say that we survived the Mini-Baja. ... The eight students that made the trip worked extremely hard. It turned out to be a great learning experience for all of us.”

Linards Stradins

“for all of us.”
Cross-cultural design

Preservation project presents a unique opportunity

After returning from spring break, students in Interior Design I in the department of art and design at UW-Stout got some hands-on experience. The students, whose course work focused on residential interior and architectural design, worked with Himalayan Missionaries to develop ideas for a local historic preservation project. The Himalayan Missionaries plan to remodel the old, vacant East Elementary School on 11th Street in Menomonie. The building is comprised of two components built in 1925 and 1950.

The Himalayan Missionaries are a non-profit spiritual, educational, and charitable organization involved in spiritual science, meditation, academics, music, yoga, philosophy and wellness. They will use the building as a missionary seminary, for training advanced monks in meditation and yoga sciences.

The students’ instructor, Kristine Recker, said the project was a positive experience for her class in many ways. “I couldn’t resist the chance to explore design cross-culturally,” she stated. “The project has presented a unique learning opportunity to students, challenging them to think about spatial design, aesthetics, materials and color from an Eastern perspective—even the Eastern method of cooking and food prep has challenged our idea of kitchen design.”

Students began by meeting with Sant S. Dharamananda, chair of the Board of Advisers of the Himalayan Missionaries. “This has been a new experience from the students’ perspective, as they have been allowed to develop their design program through dialogue with a non-designer as a mock client—yet one who intimately understands the user requirements,” Recker explained. The students have incorporated principles of “Sikhapatya Veda” (the art of placement according to Himalayan Indian spiritual beliefs), cooking and food prep, and color and spatial design.

Students have also collaborated with Peter D’Souza and Phil McGuirk, of UW-Stout’s hospitality and tourism department, in designing a large-scale kitchen and dining facility within the structure.

Grads “hit the ground running”

UW-Stout graduates report a 98.1 percent rate of employment, according to the university’s 1997-98 annual employment report. Of those employed, 91.1 percent report employment that is related to their majors. The survey’s response rate of graduates is 89.2 percent.

Graduates are working in a reported 32 states and earn a median yearly salary of $27,500, compared to $26,000 last year. Graduates from 26 of UW-Stout’s programs and concentrations report 100 percent employment. Teacher preparation programs produced graduates with a 99.8 percent rate of employment.

UW-Stout’s majors are designed to prepare students for a smooth transition from the university to the workforce. "Our students' education and work experience help them get up to speed quickly," he said. "Our students' education and work experience help them get up to speed quickly." During the 1997-98 school year, 422 students participated in co-op programming. Of these students, more than 40 percent were offered jobs from their co-op employer after returning to the university, Meinen said. A recently passed 5 percent “bution differential” increase, proposed by the Stout Student Association, will allow the university to eliminate co-op course fees, making co-op accessible to more students. Meinen said the elimination of these fees will have a positive effect on the employment rate. "Employers prefer the structured work experience of a co-op, as opposed to other types of work experience," he explained. "Structure has accountability. Co-ops have extensive requirements, like monthly and final reports, and the students are evaluated by both the employer and the university."

UW-Stout has had 10 years of successful employment rates because the majority of its programs are career-oriented, Meinen said. UW-Stout responds to the needs of business and industry, developing new majors as needed and eliminating old majors when they no longer make sense, he said.

"Recruiting Trends 1998-99," a study produced by Michigan State University, reported growth in the economy is led by the retail and service sector. UW-Stout recently introduced a new service management program and is developing an industrial management program. Meinen said the majors will come at a perfect time. "Students will be graduating just in time to meet this growth," he said. "This is a beautiful example of how Stout responds and reacts to what is happening in the economy."

"Most of Stout’s majors have an advisory committee made up of people from both academia and business and industry," he added. "Stout responds to the input of those committees, and that is basically what is keeping us on the forefront."

The 1997-98 rate of employment is down slightly from the previous year, from 98.7 percent to 98.1 percent. Meinen said this slight decrease may be attributed to the growing shortage of graduates in many majors. "Last year, we had a number of companies cancel on-campus recruiting because of a lack in student sign-up for interviews," he explained. "Some of those employers have found other universities with similar majors to fill their hiring needs."

According to Meinen, applied mathematics and technology education have the greatest shortage of graduates, followed by other computer-related majors like telecommunication systems and graphics communications management.

Other areas in need of graduates include packaging, family and consumer education, marketing education and special education. Meinen said the demand for education majors will increase over the next 10 years because the baby boomers are reaching retirement age.

UW-Stout’s rate of employment is also affected by shifts in the economy. Recruiting Trends reported that "very large organizations (more than 20,000) anticipate reducing hiring levels. The slack will be taken up by medium-sized companies (2,000 to 20,000) who expect to hire more employees."

UW-Stout’s Placement and Co-op Services works with approximately 4,000 employers, targeting mostly small to mid-sized organizations, Meinen said. This shift in the economy has a minimal effect on UW-Stout. "We work with many small companies, so when the bigger corporations start laying people off, we don’t feel the same impact that the Big Ten universities do," he explained.

The overall picture painted by UW-Stout’s Placement and Co-op Services Annual Employment Report is positive. Even after 10 solid years of successful employment rates, UW-Stout will continue to look forward to predict and meet the employment needs of its students.

Celebrating another milestone

I am pleased to join the entire university community in celebrating the $20 million mark for the Stout University Foundation. This is a great testimony to the dedication and support provided by many individuals. Current and past foundation boards of directors have played an active role in the promotion of the university. We are extremely appreciative of this assistance. In addition, we have been fortunate to have had executive directors to the Stout Foundation who demonstrated exemplary leadership and, along with their dedicated staff associates, worked long hours in raising funds in support of the university and the students that we serve. Many of our faculty members also become involved in this most important work.

And, of course, our loyal alumni have an excellent tradition of giving.

An important example of the foundation’s involvement in the university’s success includes the new $7 million recreation complex, which will begin construction next year. The foundation provided a substantial loan and subsequent fund-raising efforts to repay the loan in order that we could move forward with construction. The complex will provide great benefit to our students, as well as to this region of the state. We are grateful for the progressive thinking of the board on this project. Another example is the STEPS program, designed to acquaint girls with engineering and technology at an early age. The foundation has been a major player in underwriting this program, which will continue to provide benefit to the future careers of participants.

People are particularly willing to contribute money to an organization when they can see direct positive results. Certainly, the most important result is the record of achievement by our graduates. This edition of the Outlook carries an article about the employment success of last year’s graduating class. Year after year, employers hire our graduates because of the quality of education that they receive at this university. Stout graduates leave here knowledgeable in their fields of study and ready to become productive members of employers’ organizations.

Last spring, Governor Tommy Thompson was on campus to break ground for our new $8.6 million Communications Center. The governor gave a stirring speech praising UW-Stout for the kind of education it delivers. As I sat next to him, listening to those words, I reflected on the fact that without outside support we would not be the great institution that inspired the governor’s praise.

Your support and your contributions over the years have made us what we are. My sincere thanks to all the wonderful people who not only celebrate but also bring about our success.

Chancellor’s Message

"People are particularly willing to contribute money to an organization when they can see direct positive results. Certainly, the most important result is the record of achievement by our graduates."

Charles W. Sorensen
Global hospitality management

University offers online master’s degree

UW-Stout’s hospitality and tourism department is redesigning its graduate program for distance learning. The department received a grant from the UW System to develop a program that would include students and faculty from around the world and provide a curriculum with a global perspective.

Christine Clements, hospitality and tourism department chair, explained the program will not only increase student access to UW-Stout, but it will also globalize the curriculum and faculty. The interaction between students and faculty from all over the world will be “an illuminating experience for everyone involved,” she said.

“It is imperative for our department to have a global curriculum, which is really hard to deliver here in the Midwest, where our perspectives are predominately Midwest, no matter how hard we may try,” she added.

According to Clements, the department began developing partnerships with other universities last July. Currently, their global partners are Nottingham-Trent University in Nottingham, England; Oxford Brookes University in Oxford, England; Paderborn University in Paderborn, Germany; and UW-Whitewater. They are also working on an Australian connection with Southern Cross University.

The target market for the program is the midlevel manager who is currently working, but cannot afford to quit to go back to school. Online courses are offered using a platform called Learning Space, which can be accessed at anytime of the day in any part of the world.

Courses will be delivered in six-week modules with a four-week break in-between. Class projects will be based on situations in the workplace, so students can apply what they have learned in their work environment. This will also be advantageous to the growth and development of businesses that fund employee education.

Clements thinks the contact with students who are working within the industry will also benefit UW-Stout.

“It forces us to be current and to become facilitators of learning, as opposed to just disseminating information,” she stated. “We have always said students will be able to take this information and apply it in a job sometime—now it’s tomorrow that they will do that.”

The program will require two residencies. The first will include face-to-face team-building activities at the beginning of the program. The second will be a presentation at the end, Clements said.

The program pilots in September. An issues class, taught by UW-Stout’s Len Sterry, will be the first class. A strategic management class, team-taught by UW-Whitewater and Nottingham-Trent, will follow.

While planning curriculum with the international partners, Clements said there have been several teaching issues that they have had to work through. “Even though they speak English, their vocabulary is different. One area we found especially different was finance. We have a finance class that will be team taught, and we use completely different terms. So, we will need glossaries for both,” Clements explained.

The UW System also approaches assessment differently. Its courses are based on a credit system. Courses in the UK are outcome based, she said.

The online master of science degree in hospitality and tourism is offered through UW-Stout. To simplify enrollment for the students, all of the classes will have UW-Stout numbers. UW-Stout will work with the other institutions to provide compensation.

Clements explained, “We felt this was the easiest way to get the program off the ground, as opposed to having a free-standing program that then needed to be accredited by some accrediting body.”

UW-Stout’s department of hospitality and tourism also offers several exchange programs to help prepare its students for a changing global economy. They are launching a WinTerM wine and food-pairing course at UIB in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, and are offering an exchange with Southern Cross University in Lismore, Australia. Clements said they are also in the process of developing exchange programs with Pau Chain Taejon, Korea, and with areas in the Netherlands.

Preparing for the future

UW-Stout pitches in to help revitalize Milwaukee Technical High School

Len Sterry, program director for UW-Stout’s M.S. in industrial/technology education, was engaged some 10 years ago by The Milwaukee Public School System to do a study on the need to remodel the Milwaukee Trade and Technical High School and update its programs. Recently, there has been a great deal of renewed interest in the project. An increase of industry, community and private financial support is gathering around the replacement project.

The Milwaukee Public School System is organized around a magnet school program delivery concept. As a result, each high school has a different emphasis, and students elect to attend the high school they are most interested in. Students from throughout the city apply to Milwaukee Trade and Technical High School, where the emphasis is placed on trade and technology careers.

Milwaukee Tech will be getting an extensive face-lift in the near future. The school’s program and building, which date back to 1906, have become dated as the world’s industry and technology have dramatically changed.

Sterry and Fred Schroedl, Milwaukee Technical High School’s assistant principal and UW-Stout alumnus, are members of the curriculum planning committee. Schroedl received a B.S. in industrial education in 1973 and an M.S. in safety in 1979 at UW-Stout.

The focus of the first two years of the new program model is broad-based technology awareness and exploration. The second two years will give students a chance to specialize, participate and prepare for a variety of careers in technology, Schroedl said. “Stout is supporting our efforts to identify and implement current and future technical education standards at the high school level,” he added.

In the interest of improving the learning process, the new curriculum is based on a new instructional method. Sterry commented, “I am really pleased with the curriculum at this time; it has good potential, and seems...
**Outstanding graduate faculty named**

**Two UW-Stout educators have received the university’s Outstanding Graduate Faculty Award.**

The award was presented to Jill Thompson, assistant professor of school counseling; and Richard Tafalla, professor of psychology, during Research Day activities.

Thompson and Tafalla were selected as Outstanding Graduate Faculty members by a committee that includes faculty, staff and graduate students.

Thompson was also honored by the university for her dedication and commitment to graduate education. Thompson received a B.A. degree in 1976 and an M.Ed. degree in 1983 from Nichols State University.

Tafalla earned a B.A. degree from California State University, Long Beach, in 1983, and a M.A. degree in 1985 and a Ph.D. in 1990 from the University of California, Irvine.

Before coming to UW-Stout in 1997, Thompson was a counselor with the Orleans Parish School System.

Tafalla has had numerous articles published, and is currently working on “Combined Effects of Noise and Task Focusing on Physiology and Performance” and “Informational Feedback Effects on Physiological and Cognitive Stress.”

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**Governor Thompson honored by university**

A groundbreaking ceremony and a special event honoring Governor Tommy Thompson were held on the UW-Stout campus May 14 on the grassy area immediately south of Bowman Hall.

Thompson was presented with a special plaque, and Sorensen thanked him on behalf of students, faculty and staff who have benefited from the new buildings.