Psycho? Logical? Bulletin!

October 2007

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Et Cetera
The Graduate Coke Team would like to announce...

**New Flavors for the Coke Machine**

- Coca-Cola Classic
- Diet Coke
- Diet Cherry Coke
- Sprite
- Sprite-Zero
- Ginger Ale
- Fresca
- Diet Barq’s
- Water

The new products will be introduced gradually as we use up what is left of the old sodas.

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**The PLB Presents:**

How well do you know our newest faculty member?

About which of the following organs did Kevin Pelphrey say, “*That’s it? It’s so tiny and wrinkled. I expected more.*”

A. The spleen  
B. The brain  
C. Insert your own dirty joke here  
D. The gall bladder

Hint: He has one

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Ice Cream Social a Success
Thank you to Ginger Placone, Emilie Rendulic, Wes Barnhart, other Psychology staff and all CMU staff who took the time to attend our Ice Cream Social (“Meet Your Rep”) event, held on Sept. 27th. Attendees commented on the good quality & taste of the ice cream, and appeared to enjoy the event.

Middle States Accreditation Process
Our September meeting was mainly occupied by a PowerPoint presentation about the (in-progress) Middle States Accreditation process. The accreditation process requires several steps, such as a period of self-examination (CMU administrators prepare a report analyzing their achievements/deficiencies in various academic categories), a planning visit (Nov. 5) by outside accreditor team members to meet with CMU administrators, as well as the actual evaluation team visit (Feb. 24-27, 2008). CMU has been accredited since 1921 and the re-accreditation process generally takes place every 5 years. I encourage you to browse the Self-Study Report in your free time (follow link; click on red box). It’s long, and quite a bit of it is dry and boring, but it contains a lot of behind-the-scenes financial and other interesting info about how things are done at CMU.

Flu Shots
The important thing to remember about flu shots this year is that to receive a free one, you must go on October 30th, to the CMU Benefits and Fitness Fair. Any other day, and you’ll pay for it. This year, supplies seem good. See the graphic box (above, right) for more details.

“Flu shots will be available at the Benefits and Fitness Fair on October 30th. The cost will be covered by Human Resources on that day only. Additional flu vaccine clinics will be held at Student Health Services, Morewood E144 for students, staff, faculty and spouses. The clinics will be October 2nd: 9AM-11:30 AM, October 9th: 9AM-11:30 AM, and October 18th: 1:30PM - 4:30 PM. The cost for the vaccine is $16.00 for everyone.

Faculty and staff who do not want to wait for the Benefits and Fitness Fair on October 30th must bring a CMU ID and a check or cash for the $16.00 charge.”

SOURCE: official.cmu-news

For more details, contact:
Geri Liersaph, Student Health Service
8-3631

Benefits Changes for 2008
The word on the street is that premium and other cost increases won’t be relatively jolting for 2008. We haven’t yet been shown actual dollar amount breakdowns, however, and your particular situation will vary, depending on your choices as far as tiers of coverage, etc. In some cases, the price of one tier of coverage will go down, while another rises. There is a new life insurance carrier (MetLife).

Staff Council’s benefits committee, on which I sit, has been trying to work with HR to get some meaningful financial rewards for staff members who participate some fabulous preventive initiatives. For more details on these efforts, see the next page!
Incentives for Preventive Initiatives

Staff Council’s Benefits Committee (on which I sit) is trying to get HR to work with us about creating meaningful financial rewards (e.g., discounts on health insurance premiums) or other substantive incentives if staff members choose to participate or complete some of the fabulous preventive initiatives that, in some cases, Staff Council has worked so hard on either creating ourselves, or assisting with. These include the Walking Club, Yoga/Meditation programs, smoking cessation programs, routine wellness visits or checkups, cholesterol checks, adherence to diabetes regimens, Weight Watchers at Work, etc. Plenty of other universities already have meaningful financial incentives if their staff participate in one or more of these health behaviors.

The unique characteristics of CMU employees (well-educated plus, often, long periods of service to the university), and the fact that the university is self-insured, mean that CMU is likelier than other companies to itself financially benefit from investing much more in preventive incentives than is currently the case. Such incentives also serve as nice recruitment and retention tools, since CMU competes for workers with the often much-higher salaries of the private sector. Such incentives would also attract the attention of more health-conscious applicants, holding future medical insurance costs down for all at CMU.

- Ellen Conser

Important Upcoming Events

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 23, 2007</td>
<td>Benefits Open Forum (Q&amp;A &amp; informational session), noon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 30, 2007</td>
<td>Benefits and Fitness Fair. <strong>Free flu shots THIS DAY ONLY</strong></td>
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<td>Oct. 30, 2007</td>
<td>One Day, One Can: A Food Drive event (If you would like to donate, bring a</td>
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<td>can of food or other nonperishable food items with you to the Benefits and</td>
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<td>Fitness Fair)</td>
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<td>Oct. 29-Nov. 9</td>
<td>Benefits Open Enrollment period.</td>
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<td>This is a dental &amp; vision election year (you may make changes this year)</td>
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<td>Oct. 29-Nov. 9</td>
<td>CMU Food Drive</td>
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<td>Nov. 7, 2007</td>
<td>Cans Across the Cut (another Food Drive event)</td>
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<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td><em><strong>note new date</strong></em> President Cohon’s Open Forum (bring your Q&amp;A about</td>
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<td>anything that concerns you at CMU). If you cannot attend, or are shy about</td>
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<td>speaking in groups, feel free to submit your question to me in advance</td>
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<td>at <a href="mailto:conser@andrew.cmu.edu">conser@andrew.cmu.edu</a> or anonymously by putting a note in my mailbox.</td>
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Health Benefits
First, the good news: 50% of all CMU employees will experience no increase in the cost of health coverage. These lucky individuals are the ones covered by the UPMC Option II and Health America HMO plans. Now, the bad news: for the rest of us the cost of coverage will increase by 7% to 25% (holy cow!), depending on the specific plan and provider. These increases are “driven by the utilization of the plan” (I guess, getting sick too much?)

Capital Campaign
First of all, it turns out that before the university goes into Phase III of the campaign (i.e., publicly announces the campaign), it is supposed to be a secret. So, please make sure you don’t mention the campaign to any billionaires you happen to know. Right now the campaign is in Pre-Phase III stage, and transition to Phase III is expected in the Fall of 2008. The cumulative goal of Phases I & II was to raise 500M. 408M has been raised up to date, which I guess is good enough to proceed into Pre-Phase III. The cumulative goal for all three phases is to be decided, but we were secretly told that it’s $1B (again, please make sure you don’t leak this info!)

For those of you wondering where 408M came from, here are some of the sources: (1) trustee giving generated 120M (268% up from the last campaign!); (2) the largest individual gift of 55M came from Mr. Tepper (to be paid in the course of 5 years); and (3) 30M from came from Qatar (to be added in 2008). As you can see, the last two gifts aren’t exactly given yet, so some faculty senators raised issues with the university counting practices and offered the director of the campaign some assistance with basic math. The director of the campaign thanked faculty senate for this kind offer but declined it.

- A. Fisher
- Anna F.

Footnotes
1) Our legal counsel believes that it’s safe to publish the information in the PLB. The context of the PLB constitutes plausible deniability, insofar as virtually none of the information contained therein is reliable.

2) No, it wasn’t Anna. Anna is the lovable kind of faculty senator, unlike certain others (Brooke Feeney, we’re looking right at you)

3) Given the sensitivity of the material published in this Faculty Senate report, we felt it necessary to obscure the identity of our faculty senator. We’re still working out kinks in the process

The PLB wants to know: what are your cooking secrets (the PLB’s secret is: cook it until it stops moving). Submit your recipes to the PLB, and we’ll publish the best ones.

See example on next page
Peanut Sauce Delights!

**Easily Blender Peanut Sauce**

4 cloves fresh garlic  
Juice from 1/2 lemon  
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter  
1/4 cup water  
1/4 cup ketchup  
1/4 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce  
1/4 cup brown sugar (not packed)  
2 tablespoons peanut oil or vegetable oil (better w/peanut oil)  
4 teaspoons bottled ground ginger (see Note; fresh ginger gives it more kick)  
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar  
1 tablespoon onion powder  
1 tablespoon sesame oil  
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper, or to taste  

**OPTIONAL GARNISHES:** Crushed unsalted peanuts, chopped green onions, sliced cucumber, cubed/sliced cooked chicken, chopped red bell pepper, toasted sesame seeds (get from an Asian/Chinese grocer e.g. in the Strip)

Gather all of the ingredients and place them on the counter beside the blender. Peel the garlic by placing the broad side of a chef’s knife or other flat surface over each clove and giving it a firm whack with your hand. Drop the cloves, one at a time, through the top of the blender onto the moving blade to chop finely.

In blender container, combine lemon juice, peanut butter, water, ketchup, soy sauce, brown sugar, oil, ginger, vinegar, onion powder, sesame oil and crushed red pepper. Pulse on high just until combined, about 5 seconds. Scrape down the sides and pulse again 3 to 4 times. Serve at once or refrigerate in an airtight microwave-safe container until ready to serve, up to 1 week.

Note: Look for bottled ground ginger in the produce section of the supermarket. If it’s not available, substitute fresh.  
Makes 1 3/4 cups.

**Peanut Chicken Pasta**

12 ounces thin spaghetti  
12 ounces to 1 pound grilled or roasted chicken breast (see Note)  
1 medium red bell pepper, for 1 cup chopped  
4 scallions, for 1/2 cup chopped  
1 cup Easy Blender Peanut Sauce (you know how to make this now!)

Break the spaghetti in half, to make the dish easier to serve and eat. Place spaghetti in 2 1/2 quarts of already-boiling unsalted water and cook 7 to 9 minutes until tender.

Meanwhile, cut chicken into bite-sized pieces and place into a 3-quart or larger bowl. Rinse and seed bell pepper and cut into bite-size pieces. Add to the bowl.

Cut scallions into 1/4-inch slices, using whites and enough tender green tops to make 1/2 cup. Add to the bowl. Toss to mix well. Set aside. Place prepared peanut sauce in a microwave-safe dish and microwave, uncovered, at high, 1 to 2 minutes or until heated through. Set aside.

Drain the spaghetti and add it to the bowl. Drizzle the peanut sauce over the pasta. Toss well until the spaghetti is coated with sauce. Divide evenly among 4 plates and serve at once. If desired, sprinkle finely chopped unsalted peanuts on top.

Note: This recipe assumes the chicken is cold. The heat from the pasta is sufficient for this dish, which is served cold.

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Urge to eat peanut sauce... rising. Rising. Actually, who am I kidding? It’s high all the time.
October’s Graduate Student of the Month is Susan Perlman, who is actually a grad student at Duke (she came to CMU with Kevin Pelphrey, but remains enrolled in Duke’s program), making her our first extramural GSotM. We talk about comparisons between CMU and Duke, Pittsburgh and North Carolina, and also how graduate students are a lot like NBC’s comedy 30 Rock.

PLB: Tell us a bit about your past
I’m from Chicago – I was raised in the city, so I’m a big city kid. I lived there my whole life, until I went to college at the University of Wisconsin, where I majored in psychology. Then I went back to Chicago for a year, to work as a research assistant. Then I moved to Spain, where I had already studied abroad. I took a job there for a year, and I still go back and forth a lot to Spain – my husband is Spanish. After all of that, I enrolled at Duke!

PLB: What lead you to pursue graduate school at Duke?
I had been talking with a professor at Duke for two years, so it was an ongoing relationship. What I was going to study was actually emotion and regulation in the context of the infant-mother relationship. I knew a lot about psychophysiology, which I had done as a research assistant. So I was going to contribute that to the lab. But, then my advisor left Duke right after I got there. Fortunately, two years later, I started working with Kevin, and started to learn how to do imaging, and it’s ended up working out great for me.

PLB: Where are you in the program?
This is now my 4th year. Duke doesn’t have formal exams, no prelims. There’s also no first-year project at Duke. But the program does have a second-year review paper, which I’ve completed. I proposed my dissertation right before I left Duke. And then I surprised my committee with, “oh, and by the way, I’m leaving!” But that went well. We hadn’t started collecting the data yet – my committee just asked where I’d be collecting the data, and I said Pittsburgh, and that was that.

PLB: How would you compare Pittsburgh to North Carolina?
We actually really like it. Maybe you’ll have to ask me again when it’s snowing. I live in Shadyside, which is a great location. In fact, I live in the same building where David Rakison used to live. In contrast to North Carolina, there’s a lot of cultural stuff to do. Here, every weekend, there’s a museum, or a trip to the Strip District. And it’s an easy city to live in – it’s not as crowded, there’s less traffic. It’s a good mix of easy living and culture. And price!

PLB: What’s different about CMU so far?
At CMU, the grad students seem to be treated as though they’re part of the department a bit more than at Duke. I think it’s related to the funding. At Duke our funding came from TAs and RAs, often not even in the department of Psychology and Neuroscience. We were never given office space at Duke. Your advisor could, if they wanted, dedicate some of their lab space to grad student offices. Or, they could not. And many didn’t, so a lot of grads ended up working in the computer lab or from home. CMU is nice because all the graduate students are together in the cluster. At Duke, I often only saw my friends on the weekends.

Duke is a little more, well, it’s got a lot of money! The campus is really beautiful. There’s free food everywhere all the time. There was always some kind of lunch talk. There’s just a lot of money. They spend a lot of time planting flowers and exotic plants. Also, Duke sends out way more e-mails than you guys do. I get like 50 e-mails a day from Duke.
PLB: **What kind of research are you doing?**

I am interested in the biological mechanisms of emotion regulation, so we use imaging and genetics techniques to discover regulatory circuitry in the brain to learn how people control emotion so they can successfully function interpersonally. You meet some people who can’t sometimes! My dissertation is in adults, three studies that are parallel to ones we’ll be doing in children, as well.

PLB: **What do you do in your spare time?**

I usually work out, but I haven’t found a gym yet. The gym here, I visited once, I wasn’t impressed. I do lots of art stuff. I paint – I’m not trained, but I make stuff for friends. I’m also into home decorating, and I enjoy making stuff for my home to decorate it. I also like to travel a lot. I’ve been to 30 countries! We try every year, for our anniversary, to go somewhere and do something interesting. I watch TV. Maybe I shouldn’t admit that.

PLB: **What kind of TV do you watch?**

I watch really bad TV. Reality TV. I realize it’s bad. But I’ve been thinking all day! I get home and I’m tired and I don’t need to think any more. I just want to turn on Big Brother and ignore everyone. Last week we watched Kid Nation. It was disappointing. Those kids were more supervised than I ever was at summer camp. I was hoping for more of a Lord of the Flies type thing. I do watch some slightly better TV, as well. A whole bunch of home design shows. I love Lost. I used to watch Veronica Mars and Arrested Development before they got canceled. I’m still sad about that. The Office is great. Maybe I shouldn’t have such a long list. Will Kevin be reading this? I’ve been trying with 30 Rock. It’s OK. Could be better. You want to keep tuning in, because you know it has potential. But it’s not quite reaching it. Much like graduate students, I guess.

PLB: **OK. Now it’s time for the traditional three tough questions. The first is, what, for you, is the big question you want to answer with your career?**

How do our emotions make us who we are?

PLB: **Lot of ways to interpret that. Very sphinx-like, very nice. What would you be doing if you weren’t a graduate student?**

I always wanted to get a PhD in art history and be a curator. I’ve been attending art exhibitions my whole life and it’s my favorite thing to do. Curators come up with the concept for the exhibition, do the research, and work with artists and galleries to make it happen. Or, I would be a travel writer. I guess those are both pretty writing-oriented. I’d enjoy writing guidebooks, or travel articles.

PLB: **Finally, if someone gave you a ring with a cubic zirconium stone, would you think of it as fake diamond, or REAL cubic zirconium?**

Is this a serious question? Wow. I think it depends. It depends on what they tell me it is. What do they say when they hand it to me? Do they say it’s a diamond? Because then I think it’s a fake diamond! But if they say, here’s a pretty ring that isn’t a real diamond, then I think, okay, it’s real cubic zirconium. It depends on the context! That’s an emotion researchers favorite assertion: it’s context-dependent!

Even as a 3-month-old, Susan knew that she liked psychology. And televisions.
This month’s PLB Shout-Out goes to Ken Kotovsky. Ken spent a fair bit of time this last month - like he does every semester - hashing out the course schedule for next semester. Despite how much time it takes, he never takes shortcuts like assigning me to teach the course “Whatever is available, and you’ll like it that way!” Every semester, I end up teaching something that I’m vaguely qualified to teach, and the department ends up offering enough courses that undergrads keep on graduating. So thanks for going through the balancing act to get a schedule made, Ken!

As ever, anyone can submit a PLB Shout-Out. If someone has gone out of their way to make your life better, and you’d like to let them know about it, e-mail thiessen@andrew.cmu.edu

We had some extra space this month, and an article about Ken that DIDN’T mention squirrels, so...
When Carnegie Mellon alumnus Arshad Chowdhury (MBA ‘03) began his first job at an investment banking firm in New York, he saw a familiar sight from his college days — people trying to grab a mid-day nap. A trained entrepreneur and raised in a family of innovators, Chowdhury quickly recognized a need and offered a solution.

“I co-founded MetroNaps with the goal of making it easier for people to take naps during the workday,” he said. “Today students, doctors and office workers in the United States, Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom nap in the MetroNaps EnergyPod.”

Designed to improve employee morale and boost the bottom line, the EnergyPod is a cozy, darkened nook that keeps external sounds out and internal ones in.

From: GenWay Biotech [mailto:nancyridge@igysolutions.com]

Dear Dr. Holt,

From your article titled “Neighboring spectral content influences vowel identification.” (J Acoust Soc Am. 2000 Aug;108(2):710-22.), we learned of your research with F2 and thought you might be interested in knowing that GenWay currently offers an antibody against this target in our catalog of products.

Here is a link to our NEW website to view the datasheet: F2 Antibody

GenWay specializes in avian (IgY) antibodies and their applications. GenWay’s IgY antibodies have the following features:

* GenWay’s IgY antibodies are domain-specific, which are raised against a target of 40-300 amino acids to full-length, which is at least 5 times greater than the target size of peptide antibodies – usually about 20 amino acid residues.

* GenWay’s IgY antibodies can be readily generated in 3 months simply based upon gene sequences or GeneBank ID numbers identifying target proteins or cDNA templates.

* Polyclonal IgY antibodies have been shown to be suitable for standard immunoassays such as Western Blot, ELISA, Immunoprecipitation, Immuno-staining of cell or tissue (Immunohistochemistry or Immunocytochemistry), etc.

* IgY antibodies are particularly suitable for array, nano-bar and microbead applications.

* IgY’s strong avidity and stability are particularly useful for immunoaffinity separation and protein partitioning.