

Fall Lecture Series Focuses On Character Education Topic

As concerns about classroom violence, student safety and acceptable social behavior continue to rise, the timing is right for the School of Education's second annual Fall Lecture Series. This year's series is about character education.

The mission of the series — entitled "Character Education in the Classroom" — is to further present information associated with the subject that continues to generate interest and action in school districts across the country. Four of America's foremost experts will address the topic on successive Monday evenings, beginning Oct. 11, 1999, at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in downtown Grand Rapids.

"It is a topic that affects not only K-12 educators but a cross section of the business community and parents as well," School of Education Dean Robert Hagerty said. "Our timing for this series is really good."

Kicking off the series on Oct. 11 is Dr. B. David Brooks, who will demonstrate how character education improves school climate and school performance on state assessment tests. Brooks has worked with educators across the country helping school districts establish character education programs. He has authored several books on the subject and has appeared on "Good Morning America," "20/20," and ABC's "American Agenda."

On Oct. 18, Dr. Henry Huffman will discuss how schools and communities build consensus for character education programs. Huffman is a professor of Education at California University of Pennsylvania and director of the Character Education Institute.

Eleanor Childs, a high-profile criminal defense attorney, appears Oct.



OCTOBER 11, 1999
Dr. David Brooks



OCTOBER 18, 1999
Dr. Henry Huffman



OCTOBER 25, 1999
Ms. Eleanor Childs



NOVEMBER 1, 1999
Dr. James Leming

25 to talk about how her life was profoundly affected after defending two children who were tried as adults for the cold-blooded murder of two older adults. The children expressed no remorse for their actions, prompting Childs to work with people in the mental health and education fields to search for answers. Her experience resulted in the founding of the Heartwood Institute, which is now the largest producer of character education curriculum material.

On Nov. 1, Dr. James S. Leming lectures on how "core values" programs decrease student anti-social behavior. Leming is professor, author and researcher at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and speaks widely on the effectiveness of teaching core values as a deterrent to violence in the schools.

Each presentation begins at 7 p.m. and runs approximately two hours. Admission is free and open to the public.

GVSU Inks Doctoral Partnership Extension With EMU

As the first doctoral cohort moves forward, an agreement between GVSU and Eastern Michigan University to extend the partnership is now signed, sealed and delivered. The second Ed.D. in Educational Leadership will be formed next fall.

The unique GVSU-Eastern Michigan University doctoral partnership was formally extended into the next millennium when presidents from both universities signed an extension during a Sept. 3, 1999, ceremony at the Eberhard Center. Additional educational leadership cohorts will be offered in 2000, 2002 and 2004.

"In addition to providing doctoral degrees for those who need them in West Michigan, it is my hope that out of this interesting collaboration will come a way to experiment and develop curriculums that may be a little different," GVSU president Arend D. Lubbers said.

"There is such a need for reform and change in the way we prepare teachers and administrative

skills, that perhaps these administrators of the future will be the ones who carry the water for that cause."

How unique is the cooperative program? Eastern Michigan president William Shelton summed it up this way: "I don't think that it's any more rare than the chances of finding five Hope diamonds in one state in the same room, or the chances our (EMU) football team has of beating Michigan State in football." Michigan State won that game, 51-7.

"There is nothing more beautiful than a quality education process and this is about making the educational system in Michigan more meaningful for the young people who go through it," Shelton said. "We're delighted to be part of it."

The doctoral partnership enables K-12 educators — including superintendents, principals and other district administrators — to take classes toward completing their degrees in West Michigan.



GVSU President Arend D. Lubbers, left, and Eastern Michigan University President William Shelton sign a contract extension that will take the doctoral partnership into the new millennium.

Attending the ceremony were Dean Robert Hagerty, Ed.D., and members of the School of Education, along with many members of the inaugural doctoral cohort of 25.

Web Program Creates Interactive On-line Communication

World Wide Web partnerships linking K-12 classrooms with college classes are being offered at GVSU as a way to help pre-service and beginning teachers get in touch with the internet by getting in touch with students.

Coordinated by Mark Van Gorp of GVSU's Department of Computer Science and Information Systems as part of the required CS 205 course, the on-line communication began in the fall of 1998. Its purpose is to link GVSU pre-service teachers with elementary and middle school students in order to exchange information

on thoughts, attitudes and thinking processes. The two-pronged approach enables pre-service teachers to learn more about how children view education and other school matters by placing questions on the internet for their "partners" to answer. Students responding write reflective essays, which helps them with their writing and communication skills. Both ends benefit from an increased familiarity about the World Wide Web.

During the winter semester, a different approach was taken with formations of web pages and digital photography used so the on-line part-

ners could see with whom they were communicating.

"The program not only promotes learning and motivation on both ends, but also markets Grand Valley by putting it virtually into elementary and secondary classrooms," Van Gorp said. "Classrooms from Caledonia and Godwin Heights were used in the first sessions, but in reality, anywhere in the world is the limit."

For additional information on forming an interactive partnership, contact Van Gorp at van-gorpm@stream.csis.gvsu.edu