The Center for Applied Social Research enthusiastically welcomes five new faculty members this fall who have distinguished research records and represent a variety of departments in the social sciences. They are: Prof. Nora Dunbar (Communication), Matt Jensen (Management Information Systems), Paul Spicer (Anthropology), Judee Burgoon (Communication), and Lori Jervis (Anthropology). Welcome to OU!

Drs. Linda Atkinson, Deniz Eseryel and Scott Wilson, along with Dixie Swearingen and Glenne’ Whisenhunt, presented the K20 Center's massive multiuse online game “McLarin’s Adventures” at the 2008 Association for Educational Communications and Technology International Convention in Orlando, Florida. Their presentation was showcased via competitive selection.

The paper "Exact results for Casimir interactions between dielectric bodies: The weak-coupling or van der Waals limit," by George Lynn Cross Prof. Kimball A. Milton and his graduate students, Prachi Parashar, and Jef Wagner, was published in the 17 Oct 2008 issue of Physical Review Letters, the most prestigious journal in physics. Prof. Milton and Mr. Wagner presented this work at the international workshop on "60 Years of the Casimir Effect" held in Brasilia. The research promises a revolution in our understanding of the way quantum vacuum forces act between bodies of arbitrary shape, and will have important implications in the design of nanomachinery, where for example the Casimir force can be used to operate nano-gears. A new proposal to continue this work has been submitted to the National Science Foundation.

The K20 Center was awarded a $2.8 million Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Eligible for renewal after five years, the total award could ultimately reach $17 million. Designed to help schools prepare students for post secondary opportunities, GEAR UP begins with seventh graders and supports the group as they move through middle school, high school and post secondary education.

OU OUTREACH, the Center for Spatial Analysis and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation are developing a first-in-the-nation GPS system to track every community sidewalk and intersection in Oklahoma for compliance with ADA. The $776,250 project is a joint partnership with the Federal Highway Administration.

The Center for Spatial Analysis, housed in Two Partners Place on the OU Research Campus, received $578,000 for FY09 to conduct three projects that build digital mapping support and geographic information services for three state agencies: The Oklahoma Tax Commission, the Oklahoma State Election Board, and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. More information is available at http://csa.ou.edu.

Prof. Shane Connelly, Department of Psychology and Center for Applied Social Research, received a Phase I ($50,000) Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant from the U.S. Army Research Institute. Prof. Connelly and Dr. Eric Day are partnering with The Ontar Corporation to develop a model of emotion management intended as the basis for web-based training of Army officers.
People

- Ms. Shawn M. Snidow, Communications Ph.D. student, received a top paper award for “Finding the Ethical Relation in Political Representation,” which she presented at the National Communication Association’s Annual Conference on November 20-24 in San Diego.
- Ms. Julie Davis-Ramsey, recent School of Music MS Graduate supervised by Prof. Brad Williams, won Singer of the Year honors at the NATS Regional Competition. During the past two summers, she attended Marilyn Horne’s Santa Barbara Program. Lorne Richstone is Ms. Davis-Ramsey's coach and competition pianist.

Funding

- Prof. Bing Zhang, Department of Zoology, received a 3-year, $540,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to study the cellular and molecular mechanisms by which synaptic vesicle proteins are recycled after exocytosis.
- "Profs. Georgia Kosmopoulou (Economics) and Dimitrios Papavassiliou (Chemical Engineering) received a 2-year NSF grant of $149,904 to develop learning tools to bridge economics and chemical engineering.
- Prof. Loretta Bass, Sociology, received $43,748 to conduct a demographic assessment of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes living in several counties of northwestern Oklahoma. Using OUPOLL, telephone survey data will be gathered to assess the health and general welfare of the Cheyenne and Arapaho people to inform tribal needs and priorities.

Scholarship

- Prof. of Spanish Robert Lauer recently published a remarkable four essays across four different nations: the UK, India, Brazil and the United States. They include works by invitation (UK, India) and oral presentation (Brazil).
- A book by Prof. Gisela Heffes, Modern Languages, titled Las ciudades imaginarias en la literatura latinoamericana (Imaginary Cities in Latin American Literature), explores the literary representation of non-existent urban spaces and their significance in the wider political and cultural framework of Latin America.
- Prof. Anthony Stoops, School of Music, presented two concerts and had an original composition performed at Bass2008, an international convention held at the world renowned Paris Conservatory of Music and Dance (CNSMDP).

People

- Prof. Susan Sharp, Sociology, received the Saltzman Award for Contribution to Practice from the Division on Women and Crime at a recent meeting of the American Society of Criminology.
- Prof. Fred Carr, Director of the School of Meteorology, was in October elected a Trustee of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research—a non-profit organization that manages the National Center for Atmospheric Research on behalf of NSF. He also was named co-chair of a major review of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, consisting of nine centers including the National Hurricane Center, Storm Prediction Center, and Aviation Weather Center. Dr. Carr also co-authored a recent National Academy report on the Nation's next generation of high-resolution weather observing systems.