

## HLC staff impressed during first visit to SVSU

SVSU hosted two staff members of the Higher Learning Commission Thursday, Oct. 11, as part of ongoing preparations for a March 2014 review by the accrediting body for colleges and universities across 19 states, including Michigan.

Tim Gallimore and Eric Martin, both vice presidents for accreditation relations for HLC, had an opportunity to meet with a number of key academic staff, and share lunch with SVSU's full accreditation team, which includes some 65 faculty and staff. Neither had visited SVSU previously. They found

an institution serious about self-improvement.

"All of the groups that we have talked with, we got the sense that these were people who didn't just come to a meeting to talk about what was on a paper," Gallimore said. "There was something about the life and the culture of the institution that has been

settled and has quite a bit of support across the board."

Each remarked that SVSU is ahead of many of the other colleges and universities they visit. "You're already frankly well-prepared in terms of what needs to occur," Martin said.

While the value and importance of accreditation

and accrediting agencies is sometimes questioned, Gallimore emphasized that HLC's rigorous review should serve to reassure a skeptical public.

"Accreditation is a process that allows an institution to continue granting degrees and gives the public, and more importantly the student, a thought of confidence that the institution is doing what it said it's doing," he said. "We provide an outside, external validation of that contribution of the higher education institution very broadly, but also to give the public and employers a kind of confidence that the institution is preparing students for the next level."

Neither Gallimore nor Martin will be among those who conduct SVSU's site visit, but they encouraged faculty and staff to speak openly with those who come.

"It's not an inspection," Martin said. "This should be treated as a healthy dialogue and a sort of consulting interaction where you've got peers coming in from institutions not unlike this one bringing to bear their experiences, their observations."

Martin expects those conversations to be positive.

"You've got a great story to tell; you've got good people to tell it, and I think things will go really well," he said. "I think the team is going to be very impressed with what's taking place here because there's definitely an understanding – you can feel it – the institution knows what it's about and what it's doing."

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Eric Martin (left) and Tim Gallimore (center), vice presidents for accreditation relations for the Higher Learning Commission, enjoy a lighthearted moment during their campus tour with J.J. Boehm.

# Tom Mahank

Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering

With Tom Mahank, his work is all about flow.

For one thing, the assistant professor teaches fluid mechanics — the study of how things move through a fluid. “And since air is one, almost everything does,” he said.

Yet for him, flow is more than that. It’s a philosophy. Teaching upper-level mechanical engineering courses, Mahank isn’t terribly fond of lectures. While he concedes that there are times when that approach works best, he said, “I like to promote learning with more than one direction.

“I like to present some theory and then step back, be a part of my students’ experience — let them make connections,” he said. “Together, we look up at the whiteboard, and we contemplate and share opinions.”

The process defies rigidity; it’s natural. It flows.

And it seems to be working for Mahank. In the 2012 winter semester, he was awarded an SVSU Foundation grant to study air movement with the school’s racing team, to optimize the air flow through the car’s manifold and improve its engine performance.

This year, Mahank was also an adviser to a team of engineering students who invented a special drier for the school’s greenhouse. Funded by the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Student Research & Creativity Institute, the device cut drying times for the greenhouse’s compost production and increased the substance’s sales potential.

Originally from Michigan, Mahank joined SVSU’s faculty in fall 2011. He earned his doctoral degree at Pennsylvania State University, and taught there for five years before coming to SVSU.

Teaching, for him, extended naturally from learning, a kind of karaoke to someone who loved taking classes. As a child, he discovered a fascination with mathematics. “It’s beautiful,” he said. “I was enamored with the structure.”

That grasp of math flowed right into learning music. After studying piano, Mahank later mastered the trombone, the tuba and the guitar. He loves jazz, and frequently has music playing — sometimes jazz, sometimes classical — as a buffer for his thinking.

And Mahank’s thoughts are often about helping his students. “For me in the classroom, the challenge is to make the abstract tangible. Students’ challenge is to see it from both perspectives — the physical and the mathematical. So we’re often bridging a chasm between those two worlds.”

When Mahank was first hired here, he didn’t know what to expect, he said.

“But soon I found it was very collegial — it seems as though we’re all here chasing the same goal. And I don’t mean ‘us,’ as in staff and faculty; I include the student body in that. Merely educating students would be kind of shallow. It’s really about shared learning and growth — the advancement of something special.”



# Dawn Iseler

Director of Auxiliary Operations • October 2012

If you asked Dawn Iseler about her job, she'd answer with maternal dignity that it all goes back to human needs.

Some 70 years ago, New York psychologist Abraham Maslow described a pyramid of essentials for everyday life, and set at its base things like food and shelter. As Iseler tells it today, her role here is simple: to help students establish that foundation. "Students have to have that before they can really feel comfortable in their own skin and do what they came here for."

From her office in Curtiss Hall, Iseler works as the director of auxiliary operations, recently expanded from directing the Housing Department. Her previous role — overseeing lodging on a 2,700-bed campus — grew in July to also include the partnerships with Aramark and Barnes & Noble, food services and the bookstore.

"And the doors keep knocking," she says.

That's one of the things she loves most about working at SVSU: there are always opportunities to advance, to become more. Iseler first took job as a student employee in 1996. She accepted a full-time post at SVSU as an administrative secretary in 2000, completing a B.A. in 2002 and an M.A. 2004.

Today, describing her department's work, she often mentions Residential Life, a team that plans student social events — more

elements from Maslow's hierarchy. "Neither one of us can function without the other," she said. "We each have different specialties, but together, we create the whole living experience for our students."

Yet students aren't the only ones with needs. When freshmen arrive in the fall declaring their independence, some of the biggest needs come from parents. Iseler understands, though: she and her husband, Mark, have two children — William, 6, and Abigail, 4.

"I first heard the term 'helicopter mom' a few years ago," Iseler said, "and when my son started kindergarten, I think my rotors were spinning faster than anyone else's — and that was just kindergarten. So I have a deep appreciation for what these parents are going through."

Granted, not every parent feels that way. "We have some parents who laugh on the way out and say, 'They're all yours!' And then we have the moms who might need a little hug to get them on their way. And here, we do both. We make sure they know their kids are in good hands."

And those kids are not the only ones, she added. "I feel like I found a home," she said. "People often talk about Southern hospitality, but I think we really have that here."



## Professional Profile

• **James Bowers**, assistant professor of criminal justice, coauthored a paper titled “Collateral Consequences of Registry Laws: A Preliminary Analysis of the Effects of SORN Laws on Wisconsin Registrants,” which was presented at the Midwest Criminal Justice Association, Sept. 29 in Chicago. Bowers also coauthored a paper titled “Specifying the Dynamic Relationships of General Strain, Coping, and Young Adult Crime,” which has been published in the August 2012 edition of the *Western Criminology Review*.

• **Eric Gardner**, professor of English, presented a paper titled “Citizen Subscribers: Women Subscribers to the Christian Recorder, 1861-1865” at the Society for the Study of American Women Writers triennial conference held in Denver Oct. 11-13. Gardner also chaired a session on “new regionalism” and the study of American women writers and served as a juror for the SSAWW’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

• **David S. Karpovich**, H.H. Dow Endowed Chair in Chemistry, coauthored an article titled, “Partnership focuses on restoration research on Kawkawlin River,” which was recently published in *Michigan Outdoor News*.

• **Erik Krag**, instructor of philosophy, had a paper, “Health as Normal Function: A Weak Link in Daniel’s Theory of Just Health Distribution” accepted for publication in *Bioethics*. Krag also had the final revisions of his manuscript, “Rich, White, and Vulnerable: Rethinking Oppressive Socialization in the Euthanasia Debate” accepted for publication in *The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*.

• **Kaustav Mirsa**, assistant professor in economics, co-authored a paper titled “Indian Youth Poverty: A District Level Analysis” accepted for presentation at the International Conference on Inclusive and Sustainable Growth ISG-12, Oct. 2012, in Pune, India.

• **Michael Mosher**, professor of art/communication & multimedia, is exhibiting his paintings at Creative 360 in Midland. “The Humanity, the Energy: Figurative Drawings and Paintings by Mike Mosher” will run through Nov. 4. Also, Mosher presented “Detroit Contradictions: Jon Lockard of Michigan” at the Mid-America College Art Association, hosted by Wayne State University, in Detroit Oct. 5.

• **Hong Park**, professor of economics, had a paper titled “Macro-micro integrative approach to knowledge creation and new product development,” accepted for a presentation at the 14th Business & Economic Society International Conference in Perth, Australia, Jan. 7-10, 2013. The paper is coauthored with Hyejung Chang and Stephen Park (both are professors at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, Korea).

• **Christopher Schilling**, Charles J. Strosacker Endowed Chair in Mechanical Engineering; **Kassiani Kotsidou**, assistant professor of electrical & computer engineering; **Bruce Hart**, manager of the Independent Testing Laboratory; Kevin LaVigne, engineering technology management student; and Roland Warzel III, collaborator at North American Höganäs Corp., published a research paper titled “Ultrasonic Analysis of Elastic Properties of Two Lean Powder Metal (PM) Alloys”; also, Schilling, Kotsidou and Warzel published a research paper titled “Elastic Properties from Sound Velocity Measurements: A Review”; in addition, Kotsidou and Schilling published a research paper titled “Effects of Composition and Sintering Parameters on Ultrasonic Velocities and Elastic Properties of Iron and Bronze Powder Metal (PM) Alloys.” All three papers were published in *Advances in Powder Metallurgy and Particulate Materials-2012* (edited by I. Donaldson and N. T. Mares) and were presented at PowderMet 2012, the International Conference of the Metal Powder Industries Federation, June 10-13, in Nashville, Tenn.

• **Stephen Taber**, associate professor of biology, discovered two new species. The findings will appear in the *Southwestern Entomologist* as “Two New Nearctic Species of *Molophilus* Curtis Crane Fly (Diptera: Tipulidae).”

• **Paul Teed**, professor of history, has published a book titled *A Revolutionary Conscience: Theodore Parker and Antebellum America* (Lanham MD: UPA, 2012). Parker was one of the most controversial theologians and activists in pre-Civil War America. A vocal critic of traditional Christian thought and a militant opponent of American slavery, he led a huge congregation of religious dissenters in the very heart of Boston, Mass., during the 1840s and 1850s.

• **Matthew Zivich**, professor of art, has a painting titled “Flu-like Symptoms, 2009-11” (acrylic on canvas, 50x60 inches) in the new “Dissidence” show at the University of Michigan-sponsored modern art gallery WORK:DETROIT. The exhibit was curated by Ryan Herberholz, University of Michigan Penney W Stamps School of Art & Design. “Dissidence” called for entries throughout North America.

## New Cardinals

• **Ryan Stockford**, police officer, announced the birth of a daughter, Allison Diane Stockford (7 lbs., 18.5 in.), Oct. 2.

## Condolences

• To **Jaime Ayala**, manager of central stores and receiving, whose father-in-law, Thomas William Bechmer, passed away Oct. 13.

• To **Chris Giroux**, assistant professor of English, whose mother-in-law, Alice Ann Teisman, passed away Sept. 21.

• To **Judith Hill**, professor of philosophy, whose mother, Mary Hill, passed away Sept. 17.

• To **Ann Ousley**, development coordinator, whose father-in-law, John R. Ousley, passed away Sept. 28.

• To **Ron Portwine**, associate vice president of the administration & business affairs, whose mother-in-law, Diana K. Shilling, passed away Oct. 8.

• To the family of **José “Rob” Ruiz**, who passed away Oct. 19. José worked for many years as a custodian at SVSU.

• To **Kimberly Rynalski**, custodian, whose mother, Yvonne ‘Susie’ Rynalski, passed away Oct. 17.

## Briefly Speaking

• Faculty and staff may present the Diploma Cover to graduating members of their immediate family during the Commencement Ceremony @ 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 14. Call Suzette Zimmerman at ext. 4384 to make arrangements.

## Transitions

Due to the large volume of new hires, promotions and personnel changes, the list of Transitions can be found at [blogs.svsu.edu/newsroom](http://blogs.svsu.edu/newsroom). For complete directory information, including office numbers and telephone extensions, go to [svsu.edu/lookup](http://svsu.edu/lookup).

**The Interior is published on the last Tuesday of each month for faculty and staff at SVSU.** University departments sponsoring activities or events listed in the Interior will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities when contacted at least three days in advance.

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### Submission Deadline:

**Noon on Wednesday before the publication date.  
Please send items by email to: [jjboehm@svsu.edu](mailto:jjboehm@svsu.edu).**