



MECHANICAL ENGINEERING NEWS

April 30, 2003

A newsletter for the UML Mechanical Engineering community (also available online at <http://m-5.eng.uml.edu>)

Any items you would like to see included in the newsletter or any suggestions/comments?

Please email them to: peter_avitabile@uml.edu or leave them with Jackie Paradise in the Mech Eng office.

Education/Courses/Learning

As we approach the final leg of the semester, students are found running around the halls and classrooms in a somewhat chaotic fashion. The crunch at the end of the semester finds bleary-eyed students drifting from one class to another trying to take end of the semester exams and finals. In addition, the printer in all the labs are bulging with projects to be printed at the last minute to be rushed to the professor for a final deadline. Students start to skip classes in an attempt to get all the necessary paperwork completed as their classes are ramping up with material that is needed for the final exam and completion of the course.

I recently overheard several students in conversation as to material that might be covered in the final exam. The discussion went something like this.

First student: "I'm not sure if we should study this particular section or not."

Second student: "I'm not even sure what that stuff is all about."

Third student: "I'll bet that Prof. X is going to have a problem on that and it will be 20% of the test grade – so we better study it whether it makes any sense to us or not."

Fourth student: "Last year Prof. X didn't have that on the test (at least that's what I heard from last year's students) so let's not bother with it."

The idea behind course material is to master important concepts and ideas that are necessary in engineering design and analysis. ALL of the material should be fully understood and comprehended – not just the material that is expected to be asked on a final test!

If this sounds all too familiar to you as the student, then something is wrong. If you keep up with the pace of the class all semester long then there shouldn't be a need for the last minute cram of material. End of the semester exams and final tests should be no more than a review of the material – provided you have kept up on all the material all semester long.

At the conclusion of this semester, make it a point to resolve to the fact that next semester, you will keep up to date on homeworks, projects and related course assignments and reading. This way when final crunch time comes around, you will be better prepared to just review material that is pertinent to the course. You will be better prepared, relaxed and will likely do better overall in all of your classes.

Capstone Projects – May 9th 2:30pm

Capstone projects are well underway. Here is a list of all the capstone projects this semester.

Fuel Pump Vibration Analysis; Leak Tester Device
Thermal Design Guidelines for Electronics Design
Jet Engine Material Selection and Design
ME Lab Flow Bench Experiment; Robotics Design
Mass, Spring System for Dynamic Systems Labs
Cannon Pitching Device for Baseballs
Wave Tank Design
Radio Controlled Model Airplane

All of the students have spent a tremendous amount of time pulling together all of the pieces of their projects. For the Juniors, this is an excellent opportunity to get some ideas for your own capstone projects. (It is less than a year until you will be working on your own capstone project.) Come see the results of their efforts.



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Commencement Information!!!!!!!

Here is some critical information regarding commencement. This year there will be no formal mailing of commencement activities. The students MUST obtain that information on the web site.

<http://www.uml.edu/commencement>

Los Alamos Dynamics Summer School

Every year Los Alamos National Labs hosts a Dynamics Summer School. This program is staffed with 16 top students from around the country at different universities that are either Seniors or first year graduate students. The purpose of the program is to work on complex structural dynamics problems that will entice young engineers to enter this field of study and possibly pursue graduate studies and a career in this area.

This year Jeffrey Hodgkins has been selected as one of the participants of this elite group of students. There are over 50 applicants to this program from very well known institutions such as Purdue, Rose-Hulman, Virginia Tech, Michigan Tech, UC-Irvine, Montana State, Case Western Reserve, Cal Tech, Georgia Tech, Cornell, UC Berkley and others. Typically the applicants have grade point averages of 3.75 and higher. Congratulations, Jeff.



DEPARTMENT OF
MECHANICAL
ENGINEERING

University of Massachusetts at Lowell

TAU BETA PI Initiates New Members

This past Sunday evening the Tau Beta Pi National Engineering Honor Society – MA Theta Chapter at UMASS Lowell held its spring initiation. Among the fifteen new initiates are four Mechanical Engineering students – Chris Dinitto, Chris Graham, Chris Morand, and Pete Tavilla. Jeff Hodgkins and Kari Stevens participated in the initiation ceremony as current Tau Beta Pi officers.



Some Web Tags of Interest

John McKelliget has done a lot of work to keep the Mechanical Engineering Department Web Page up to date. He has been constantly adding new material all the time. Why not take a second a review some of the material that is available online for your use.

Main Page - <http://m-5.eng.uml.edu/>

Trying to hunt down courses for the fall – Courses - <http://m-5.eng.uml.edu/crsebook%20A41v2.pdf>

Student Resources - Resume Writing Tips – http://m-5.eng.uml.edu/Resume_tips_030303.pdf

Prerequisites to classes – text and graphical version <http://m-5.eng.uml.edu/prereqs.htm>
http://m-5.eng.uml.edu/course_reqts_032901.PDF