

Campus News



Photo Credit: Amanda Congialdi

Know Your Professor: Dr. Fredricks

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Communications is one of the more popular majors here at Brandywine. Odds are, if a student is studying communications, he or she has had the pleasure of taking notes from one of the finer tuned teachers on campus--Dr. Susan Fredricks.

The owner of three different degrees – a B.A. in Mathematics, Master's in Public and Corporate Communications and a Ph.D. in Communications Studies – Dr. Fredricks teaches multiple communications courses at Brandywine that include, but are not limited to, Comm 494, CAS 352 and CAS 252.

Originally, Dr. Fredricks wanted to use her Mathematics degree to become an actuary or financial. Eventually, however, Dr. Fredricks put her time and studies into communications because she thought of herself as more and liked the “softer skills” of business. If not pursuing communications, Dr. Fredricks would have worked to get her MBA in business,

where she would have aspired to go into management. A native of Wisconsin, Dr. Fredricks continues to show her loyalty to her hometown by supporting Wisconsin's professional football team, the Green Bay Packers. A big cheese head, Dr. Fredricks proudly represents her hometown team with Packers gear in her office. Fredricks is also quite the competitor. Over the summer, she did a 5k mud run in Philadelphia and is currently in the midst of training for a mini tri-athlon for swimming, biking and running that will take place in Wisconsin. With so much to prepare for, Dr. Fredricks makes it a point to train for each category 4-5 times a week to build endurance.

Dr. Fredricks has taught at three other institutions

in New Jersey before settling in at Brandywine. She believes it is the fun learning environment that makes her job so enjoyable.

“When you get those students that you can joke with, that's what I really like,” Fredricks said.

Fredricks' goal each day is to interact with students while also being able to bring positive examples in the classroom.

“I think one of the biggest things students can take away with is how to interact in a work environment and an organization. I hope I can give you the tools to reflect back and know how to react in a situation,” Fredricks said.

Dr. Fredricks has also impressed colleagues out-

side of the classroom. Earlier this year, Fredricks was a recipient of an accommodation award certificate for a published book she co-authored titled, “Kinship, culture and ethics in organizations: Exploring implications for internal communication.” The book is a research study that tested relationship effects on ethical behavior.

Moving forward, Dr. Fredricks is determined to become a professor known to do more and sometimes have greater say in things – within the next five years.

“You're seen as being more weathered and more of an expert,” said Fredricks.

Dr. Fredricks sounds more determined and decisive to accomplish this feat in the near future.

Pace Yourself, Don't Cram for Exams

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Most college students dread those famous words: final exams week.

It can be the most stressful time of the semester. The time when one prepares himself or herself to stay up all night, drink a lot of coffee or some other caffeine beverage and snack like crazy in order to survive studying for finals.

Most college students were taught to study the conventional way: dedicate yourself, memorize all your notes, lock yourself in a quiet room and do not leave until you know the material. It is a learned fact, amongst college students, that these techniques do not always work.

There are several other more effective ways to study, which will also reduce stress while studying. Stress is a major factor that must be considered before attempting to study because it can make the studying experience harder.

Finding a quiet place and making sure that you have a clear mind, before studying, is the first step. The atmosphere matters when studying because it can be a crucial aspect that can determine how effective your studying will be and the grade that will come as a result. Also, studying in a place that is quiet and that puts you in the mindset to study is very important.

Getting enough sleep is a must. How much sleep you get before and during your studying time will affect how much studying you will get done and will determine if you will become stressed while studying.

“The most effective way for me to study is to study little by little,” Brandywine freshman Dasiah Shaw said. “I do not cram it all in at one time. I study and then I take a break. Then I go back to it later and pick up where I stopped. Even when reading the chapters in my text books that the professor assigns, I use this technique and it works every time.”

Do not immerse yourself in the subject matter in order to master the area. Instead, take your time and give yourself ample time to study so that you will not be cramming everything at once.

Making flash cards is one studying technique that has been around for years, but is still very effective. They help keep your notes organized and are easier to understand and to memorize, compared to just studying from notes and a text book.

“The best studying tips that I can recommend are getting a quiet place to study in, follow the study guides that your professors give, do not procrastinate and give yourself a quick review about an hour before the test,” Brandywine Advising Counselor Khalica Boyd said.

Studying for finals can be very stressful but with the right techniques, it can make things easier and will boost the chances of getting a good outcome on final exam grades.

Good luck!

p2

What's Next in the Spring

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With fall semester coming to an end, students are starting to talk about what's next for the spring semester.

Renovations of the Main Building are complete. What's next? Could it be dorms? Maybe a bus shelter or more building renovations?

“Currently the campus is undergoing a housing feasibility study to determine whether the infrastructure exists to support design and construction of a 250-bed residence hall as well as a student union building,” Lisa Yerges, Director of Business Services at Brandywine said. “We also have some near term plans to install a bus shelter and to construct a new outdoor gathering space/plaza in front of the Tomezsko Classroom Building.”

If the housing feasibility study comes back positive, it may mean Penn State Brandywine is looking at more renovations. The price of the project would be determined from the study.

“The housing feasibility study will inform the University on design and construction costs for both the residence hall(s) and the student union building,” Yerges said.

The possibility of a long-term project will require numerous negotiations.

“My understanding is that the University's 5-year capital plan has allocated funding to support this undertaking, but many approvals would still need to be sought/received to make this development a reality, from the University's Board of Trustees to our local township council,” Yerges said.

It appears that Penn State Brandywine's campus is looking at a lot of renovations for the future.

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