

# Exhibition participants exemplify PSU's diversity

By VICTORIA PETTIES  
Collegian Staff Writer

A poster featuring photographs of 1,000-year-old bones from the Mayan civilization located in the near Yucatan Peninsula in southern Mexico placed first at the Graduate Research Exhibition held Friday and Saturday.

Stephen Whittington (graduate-anthropology) said the bones show signs of nutritional stress such as vitamin and mineral deficiencies. The bones are evidence that environmental decline may have caused the collapse of the Mayan civilization about 1,000 years ago.

Anthropologists believe environmental decline and lack of foresight in agricultural management stressed the civilization. To test the theory, Mayan bones were studied to discover whether Mayan individuals suffered nutritional deficiencies.

Whittington unearthed some of the Mayan bones used for his nine-month graduate research in Honduras.

Dave Sanderson (graduate-physical education) also was a first-place winner with his exhibit titled, "The Use of Augmented Feedback for the Modification of the Pedaling Mechanics of Inexperienced Riders."

First-place winners received \$1,000, and their academic adviser \$300 for research expenses.

The first annual research exhibit sponsored by the Graduate Council attracted over 70 exhibits with \$10,000 in prize money awarded to the winners.

Charles Hosler, University vice president for research and dean of the graduate school, said the exhibition exemplified the high quality as well as diversity of University graduate research.

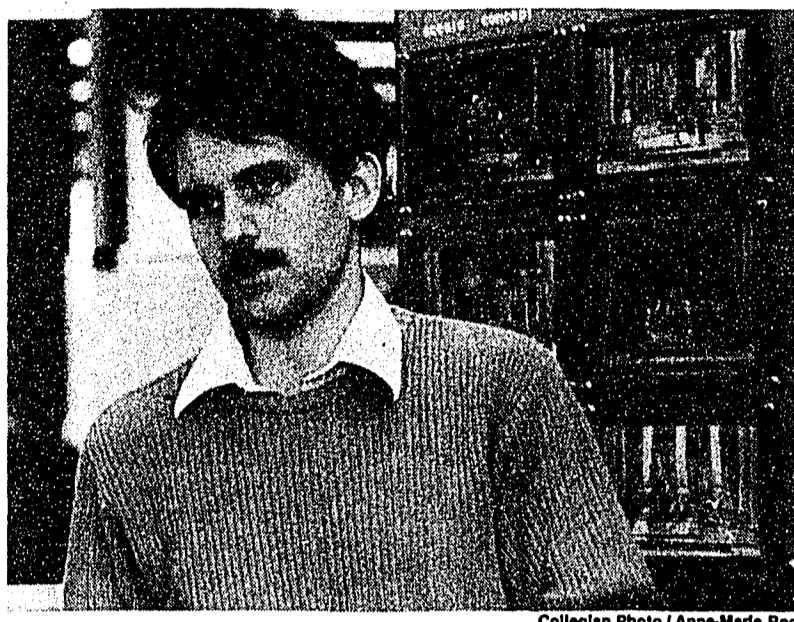
Though all 11 University colleges exhibited their graduate research, Hosler said he hopes for a more balanced representation next year. Engineering had the most exhibits while the foreign languages had only a few.

Second-place winners are: Haldun Dirkseneli (graduate-engineering); Kristen Geer (graduate-geochemistry and mineralogy); Charles Kaiser (graduate-geochemistry and mineralogy); Steven McLean (graduate-theater); Elizabeth Oldham (graduate-veterinary science); Dezzo Benedek (graduate-comparative literature) and Masaki Mori (graduate-comparative literature); John Costello (graduate-anthropology); Kenneth Gish (graduate-psychology) and Charles Goebel (graduate-psychology).

Second-place winners were awarded \$500, and their academic advisers \$200 for research expenses. Honorable mentions recipients received \$100 for research also.

Second-place winner Benedek said he recorded 60 tapes of similar folk tales from societies on Iwatan, a highly-civilized island, and Irala, a primitive island. The islands are 100 miles apart 25 miles off the southeast coast of Taiwan.

Both groups are descended from the same culture.



Steve J. McLean (graduate-theater) explains his display on his research in modern Shakespearean scene design: a case study of an original scenic solution for Hamlet.

Benedek, who lived in both Irala and Iwatan during his research, explained that the cultures had not contact for 300 years but their folklore remained similar.

When he recorded the Iwatan myths, Benedek said he could pick out names that corresponded to names in the Irala legends. Benedek also worked with both island natives to help them discover their common descent.

Jennifer Mastrofski (graduate-community systems planning and development) in her exhibit titled, "Judicial Attitudes Toward Mediation in Child Custody," said that the opinions of Pennsylvania judges are reflective of the views of their jurisdictions.

Her study on 75 Pennsylvania judges indicated that a judge's view on mediation for child custody cases depends mostly on the jurisdiction the judge is working. This theory is relatively new and is now being examined by other researchers, Mastrofski said.

# Display shows active role of research at the University

By ADAM BOONE  
Collegian Science Writer

The graduate research exhibition held in Kern Building Friday and Saturday emphasized the highly active role of graduate research at the University, said the dean of the graduate school.

Charles L. Hosler Jr. said because research fosters active involvement in education, University graduate students may be more informed, up-to-date, and enthusiastic than is possible in a non-research environment.

"It motivates students to have enthusiasm in the field," he said. "It is a much more fool-proof system (of teaching) if the professor is greatly involved in that research."

Valerie J. Nisbet, administrative assistant to Hosler, said the exhibition brought together the graduate students from all 11 University colleges and allowed them to display their individual research efforts.

"The exhibition, with over 70 graduates participating, stressed the University-wide scope of research, with presentations ranging from engineering to art to medicine, she said.

Hosler said the University's past research efforts have had an impressive impact on many fields.

He said the University's graduate research programs in the state, adding that only the University of Pennsylvania exceeds Penn State's annual research budget. This emphasis on research is vital to the University's academic well-being, Hosler said.

"As someone once said 'teaching without research is like confession without sin,'" Hosler said.

"(Research) is an integral part of the whole University," he added.

He said the importance of graduate research must be recognized by the University, adding that a responsible educational institution cannot afford to ignore its research program.

In the future, the University will continue to stress these research aspects, he said, adding that he believes more universities across the nation will do the same.

"(Higher education) of the future will look more like the research university (of today)," he said.

# Seminars educate the educators on STS

By KATHI BOBSON  
Collegian Science Writer

About 102 teachers and administrators from public schools throughout the state attended a seminar last week aimed at increasing the scope of science education in elementary and high schools, said the co-director of the University's Science through Science, Technology, and Society Program.

Paul Bell said Thursday's was the second of three seminars designed to help teachers explain the impact of science on decisions made in politics, economics and other areas of society.

The seminars are designed to improve science understanding among students not planning to pursue higher education — the "man and woman on the street," said Bell, a University associate professor of education.

Conference participants are working together to help develop new curricula that will make science easier to understand in the context of the real world, instead of presenting science as a set of theoretical concepts in a textbook, Bell said.

The way to improve understanding is through STS, Bell said. However, he added, many of the teachers and administrators who attended the conference had never heard of STS.

University's STS program, introduced the teachers to STS during the first seminar by using metaphors. Roy compared science and math education in the United States to a flagpole, while in other countries, like the Soviet Union, science and math education is like a pyramid, Bell said.

"The Soviet Union builds a pyramid of strength and understanding by having even its lowest workers well-trained in math and science. However, Roy explained, in the United States only a few people are well-trained in these areas — like a flagpole, Bell said.

National studies show that science education is not adequate because average American citizens cannot compete with citizens of other countries in science-related fields, Bell said. But, he added, STS can help make average Americans more aware of the changing needs of their society.

Robert Rocco, an eighth and 10th grade life science teacher from West Branch School District near Snow Shoe, added that students must be taught not to fear technology and science, like computers.

Charles Hoover, a ninth grade physical science teacher from Phillipsburg Osceola School District, said science education is like the Titanic headed for an iceberg. Science educators only see the tip of the iceberg — the students who are educated in science and technology — and not the largest part of the iceberg — those students without science training.

Citizens must learn to live with their environment, said Shirley McElravy, a fifth grade teacher from Clarion Area School District.

"As educators it becomes our prime concern to prepare young people for their entry into a society that has the ability to destroy all life," she added.

Both public school administrators and teachers were asked to attend the seminars, Bell said, because both groups have an impact on STS curriculum. Administrators make policy decisions that help organize programs focusing on STS and teachers help spread the information throughout school districts.

The seminars are sponsored by the Center for Education in STS in cooperation with the Science through STS program, a project funded by the National Science Foundation to study STS curriculum in pre-college education, Bell said. The seminars are also sponsored by the Pennsylvania School Study Council, he said.

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