New Faculty Highlight: David Weindorf

Dr. David Weindorf stepped into role as B.L. Allen Endowed Professor of Pedology on September 1, 2013. Weindorf is a nationally recognized expert in land-use planning and a Fulbright scholar. He served as an associate professor for six years at Louisiana State University before coming to Texas Tech. Weindorf was a professor of soil classification and land use, as well as the soil judging coach at LSU, and a professor of soil science, as well as the soil coach at Tarleton State University before that.

Historically, Weindorf has focused his research efforts on new technologies in field soil survey, land use management/planning, remote sensing, environmental quality assessment, compost science, and international translational soil taxonomy. He has published more than a dozen research papers on technology applications. One of his primary goals here at Texas Tech is to strengthen collaborative research efforts using new technologies and remote sensing techniques. Weindorf will teach students about these technologies, in order to best prepare them for the working world.

Weindorf received his bachelor’s degree in range management, a master’s degree in soil science, and a PhD in agronomy all from Texas Tech. In addition to being a Fulbright Scholar in Romania in 2011, Weindorf has received the USDA-NRCS National Cooperative Soil Survey’s Eagle Award in 2012, LSU Gamma Sigma Delta’s Agricultural Teacher Honor Role in 2011, Sedberry Award for Outstanding Graduate Teacher at LSU in 2012, and LSU Gamma Sigma Delta’s Teaching Award of Merit in 2012.

In addition to his teaching and research engagements, Weindorf stays involved in the professional community. He is a member of the Soil Science Society of America, a licensed Texas Professional Geoscientist, editor of the Soil Horizons journal, and serves on editorial boards of Pedosphere and SOIL.

Congratulations to the following PSS Students that graduated in August 2013:

Graduate students: J.D. Booker, Rebecca Grubbs, Lenore Klag-young, Chenhui Li, Zhuanzhun Ma, Jessica Poole, Corey Thompson, Shi Wang, and Zhanxia Yang.

Chat with the Chair

Many times when I give talks to groups of people either coming on Texas Tech campus or making presentations off campus, I use the statement “Texas Tech is Not a Land Grant University, but functions as one.” Of the 50 Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture in the US, Texas Tech is in the top half in most metrics without the financial advantages of being a Land Grant Institution. Let me give you four examples. Recently, Cotton Grower, a popular cotton trade magazine, featured Dr. Peter Dotray documenting glyphosate resistant pigweed in West Texas. Two more examples are the featuring of Jennifer Moore-Kucera’s work on microbes in the Texas High Plains in CSA News, and Chuck West’s “Conserving Water on the Texas High Plains” in Crops and Soils. Both of these are Agronomy Society trade journals. The fourth example is the Plant and Soil Science Department being a tour stop on the 2013 Cotton Breeders tour. The department hosted events at the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute and the Quaker Avenue Research Farm. While I have singled out three individual faculty members, all of these activities mentioned above, as well as what we do as a department, are done through a combined effort of faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students. We have a great department. Chancellor Kent Hance is noted for saying that at Texas Tech University: “We dream no little dreams”. Being very recently featured in three prominent trade journals and two stops on the Breeder’s Tour are no little dreams. The work of the Plant and Soil Science Department and other departments within the College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources are indicative of Texas Tech functioning as a Land Grant Institution.

PSS Faculty Hall of Fame Reception

On Friday, October 11th, the Department of Plant and Soil Science will be inducting their fifth member in the Faculty Hall of Fame. Dr. Dan Krieg will be honored that evening from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Krieg was a valued departmental faculty member, as well as an invaluable resource in the farming industry. Dr. Krieg still serves the university and department in many capacities.

The Faculty Hall of Fame Committee selected Dr. Krieg as the 2013 recipient because of his contributions to Texas Tech.

Please join us for this reception!

Friday, October 11th, 2013
5:30-7:30 p.m., come-and-go reception

Goddard Building room 101, Texas Tech University Campus

If you have any questions about this event, please contact Christi Chadwell at (806) 742-2838, extension 233.
Philip Brown and Rick Kellison presented research papers at the 22nd International Grassland Congress in Sydney, Australia, in September 2013.

Dr. Weindorf will travel to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan the first week of October as an invited speaker and session chair at the 1st Central Asia Congress of Modern Agricultural Techniques and Plant Nutrition. The event is being sponsored by Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University (KTMU). Dr. Weindorf’s presentation is entitled “Soil Science Applications of Field Portable X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry” and will feature a number of different applications of the technology ranging from pedology and agronomy to environmental quality assessment.

Drs. Cynthia McKenney and Thayne Montague hosted a webinar for the Texas olive Oil Council on September 19, 2013.

Maureen Qualia has joined the PSS teaching team as a viticulture instructor in Fredricksburg, Texas.

Drs. Cynthia McKenney traveled with a faculty contingent from CASNR and the College of Human Sciences to Malawi and Kenya, Africa, this past summer to explore research opportunities regarding food security.

Dr. McKenney and Dr. Cindy Akers, from CASNR Dean’s Office, lead a faculty study abroad trip with 20 students, to China, this past summer. The students visits agricultural production areas and universities.

Drs. Cynthia McKenney, Thanye Montague, and Ashley Elle presented a paper at the ASHA Annual Conference in Palm Springs, Calif., entitle: “Effective Online Labs: How to Keep Yourself from Getting Tied Up in Knots!” The video stream can be viewed at: http://bit.ly/16EWNMX

The department would like to welcome three new faculty members: Dr. Terry McLendon – Research Professor of Ecosystem Modeling and Watershed Dynamics; Dr. Venugopal Mendu – Assistant Professor of Cell Wall Biology; and Dr. David Weindorf – Associate Professor of Pedology.

Dr. Joey Young and the Texas Tech Turf Club will be ordering polo shirts and Nike hats to help fund their activities throughout the year. If you are interested in purchasing an item, please contact Dr. Young, at joey.young@ttu.edu.
Student and Staff News

Loren Davis, Kelby Imel, and Bralie Hendon received the AAIC 2013 Student Travel Award to attend the Association for Advancement of Industrial Crops Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. in October. These students will be attending workshops and presenting research papers.

The TTU Soils Judging Team will be competing in the Region IV Intercollegiate Soils Judging Contest hosted by the University of Arkansas from October 14-18. Team members include: Trenton Smith, David Brockman, Reed Johnston, and Trey Roach. Travis Conley is assisting with team preparation and Dr. Weindorf will coach the team.

Welcome to Donna Cantu, the new Business Assistant. She is in the PSS front office, room 263.

Congratulations to Christi Chadwell, communications and recruiting coordinator, on being appointed to a three-year term on Texas Tech Staff Senate.

A big thanks to Lori Walraven, Teresa Davis, LuAnn Hillhouse, and Christy Barbee for taking time to attend and learning about the Texas Tech Raider Research University. These ladies will attend a 10-hour certification program to be efficient, effective, and complaint in the administration of sponsored project funding. The Raider Research University is hosted by the offices of Sponsored Programs Accounting and Reporting (SPAR) and Research Services (ORS).

The Entomology Club and Entomology classes have been busy with new activities and working out at the Quaker Research Farm!

PSS News

The Quaker Research Farm has completed two field tours this year: The Annual Quaker Farm Field Day with over 100 industry professionals in attendance to view student and industry research; and the 2013 Cotton Breeders Tour with over 150 national and international professionals that visit cotton areas all over the south plains.

The Texas International Cotton School completed its 33rd session in August. This session had 19 total participants, including 10 Texas Tech graduate students and three international professionals.