There’s a New Sheriff in Town: An Interview with Dean Sherman

When I walked into the Education office in Memorial Hall, it was filled with organized chaos. Students asking about placements, professors having meetings, phones ringing, and papers being shuffled: this office meant business. It was the Dean’s office after all. Her office is the very last one down the hall, and is the place to go to with questions and problems. When I walked into the office of Dean Sherman, the lamb stopped screaming. I was greeted by a calm, serene, and warmly welcoming person. Dean Sherman has the ability to make students feel as if she has known them for years; that they are her only priority.

As the new Dean in town, I had so many questions to ask her. Who is Dean Sherman? How can she help students? Who is the woman behind the Education Department? I thought it was about time I found out.

As a former secondary education teacher, Dean Sherman is no stranger to teaching, “I taught middle school science and high school chemistry for several years before going on to teach chemistry at the community college level.” The person who is now the Dean of the Rider University School of Education was once one of us. She then worked her way up, “Following that I led the Science Education Program at Princeton University. We provided professional development for area teachers and hosted high school and college students and teachers in mentored internships.” The extensively published Dean Sherman is also no stranger to New Jersey. She was recruited as a science and math education professor at The College of New Jersey, where she worked for nearly 15 years.

With so much experience, I was anxious to know what she thought of Rider University. Dean Sherman was very clear: “I love the job and enjoy being a part of the Rider community. The Rider Education Program stands for high quality. We have excellent students and faculty members who shine.

They are exemplary professionals who are devoted to teaching, learning, and leading. Ours is a caring community where every student gets special attention.” It is refreshing to know that the Dean has such pride in Rider, and cares about the school, the faculty, and the students.

With such expertise, I wanted to get her advice for secondary education students, “This is the advice I give to all students. Make the most of your education at Rider. Explore every opportunity that comes your way and become involved in those opportunities that are most meaningful to you. Go the extra mile. Strive for excellence in your practice. Enjoy your work and have fun!”

Walking out of Dean Sherman’s office is bitter sweet. Reentering the commotion of Memorial Hall, I am able to take a piece of the tranquility that Dean Sherman possesses, and move forward with my day knowing that the person sitting at the top really cares about the people at the bottom.

— Dana Weinstein, Class of 2011

Field Trip to the Education Office

“Who do I go to?” Often times we find ourselves running back and forth, from faculty member to faculty member, trying to find the right person who can help us with what we need. No more of that! This article is your crash course on who to go to with what problem:

Terri Podgorski, Academic Coordinator – Office: Memorial 116: Terri is the person who can answer your question of, “will this class count for...?” She can sign off on adding or dropping classes, approve an independent study or sign off on an off campus course. If you ever doubt the classes you are taking in regards to whether they count for graduation – she is your contact. Terri evaluates all of our credits and clears us for graduation. When asked about her favorite part of the job she said, “Working directly with students and seeing them become young successful adults and professionals.”

LouAnn Zerambo, Administrative Specialist – Office: Memorial 111C: Imagine this: you are about to student teach and are waiting anxiously to figure out where you have been placed. LouAnn works closely with Veronika Winkler (Director of Placement) and can let you know when your placement is in, where they sent your paperwork, or any changes that need to be made on your resume. Her favorite part of the job is the “student’s thrill of the job hunt, especially when the hunt yields a dream job.”

Sue Dintrone, Administrative Associate – Office: Memorial 102 C (Center): If you head into the Education office in the middle of Memorial you have probably already run into Sue. She works with the Chair of the Department, Dr.Tamar Jacobson, along with “16 full time faculty and numerous adjuncts.” She enjoys “working with the students and (continued on page 2)
Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of SED SOUND-BYTES: A Newsletter for Second- ary Education Majors by Secondary Education Majors. This is a newsletter where students can come together and stay connected. I want to give Secondary Education majors somewhere to turn to express their opinions, find connections, and access resources. This newsletter is a place to find all there is to know about Secondary Education, along with stories by peers and professionals in the community. The theme for this semester’s newsletter is Renewal. It is time for Secondary Education majors to renew their faith, renew their spirits, and renew their attitude in Education. If you are a Secondary Education and English, Math, Business, History, Science, or Foreign Language major, then this newsletter is for you. The goal of this newsletter is to bring together, empower, and inspire Secondary Education majors.

If you have any questions or would like to join the SED SOUND-BYTES team by submitting an article, please contact me at Weinsteinda@rider.edu.

Sincerely,
Dana Weinstein

My Sincerest thanks to Dean Sherman, Professor Setters, Dr. Warner, Collegiate Press, Rick, and the Education Department for making this newsletter the best it can be.

Journey to the Job

The commencement ceremony came quickly, methods classes, student teaching, speeches, awards, and extrinsic motivators. Then it came: “So, how many of you have interviews lined up yet, or maybe even jobs?” No hands.

The education industry is going through a major overhaul. Assuming I had the power to choose, I began to seek out the school I’d prefer to work in. (Yes, I know this contradicts Rider’s fifth commandment of newbie employment: Thou shall not be picky.) Would I prefer rich kids, poor kids, pre or adolescent kids, large schools, Catholic schools, charter schools, high scoring schools, etc?

This process led to one school in particular. I sent the director an email and asked about the possibility to tour the school. They agreed and, to my surprise, also asked to see my résumé. The day came and the tour was unexpectedly turned into an interview with the curriculum director. Although I felt unprepared, the interview resembled a conversation more than an inquisition, which was nice.

That conversation led to a demo lesson for their sixth grade class. Nervous, I quickly assembled the questions: What is the gender ratio? What have they covered already this year? What tech-

Field Trip (continued from page 1)

helping them with whatever needs they may have.” So whether you are looking for a professor, or need any paperwork – Sue can help you out!

These three administrative members are only a few of the people you can get to know while you are here, but no matter what problem you need solved there is always support staff available to help. Don’t forget to check in with your advisor (which can be found on your MyInfo page) if you are having trouble creating your schedule – they are there for you, just reach out!

- Sam Durham, Class of 2011

As aspiring teachers, getting through College is only half the battle. The next step is actually getting hired: that is of course the main objective. However, walking into an interview can be daunting at the very least. If we could only get a glimpse of what the principal is thinking when they are asking us those tough questions. Instead of racking our brains to try and figure out what the other side is thinking, I decided to venture into the unknown, and get some answers.

Mr. Dahr is the principal of Hopewell Valley Central High School, a well known high school in Pennington, New Jersey. Many Rider secondary education students will eventually get the chance to do their field work at Hopewell. I wanted to get the inside scoop on the interworkings of the people that hire us.

Even before an interview, the application is what can get a future teacher through the door. With so much competition, how can a future teacher excel? Mr. Dahr explains, “A well written, organized and clear resume and application. Impressive credentials such as good grades in college and valuable experience.” This seems like something feasible for the average Rider student. Not only are credentials important but, “We always look to see if the candidates have done something to make themselves more desirable, such as studying abroad, or some kind of experience that adds to their resume.” This is something to keep in mind when applying for summer internships, and working summer jobs.

A good application gets you one step further: the interview. So what makes an applicant stand out in interview? How can we make that principal want to hire us? Mr. Dahr has many good tips for acing the interview, “Appearance, must be well dressed and well groomed… answers that are clear and concise. Be friendly, smile, and give the appearance that you are enjoying the interview. Confidence and honest answers. If you are unsure of an answer, be honest, do not bluff.” Knowing what to do in an interview may just give you that leg up on the competition. However, knowing “Be friendly, smile, and give the appearance that you are enjoying the interview. Confidence and honest answers. If you are unsure of an answer, be honest, do not bluff.”
nology will be available to use in the room? Any IEP’s? I really wanted to craft a lesson specific to those kids. To my surprise, the administration didn’t answer any of those questions and instead encouraged me to just do my thing. One minor issue: I didn’t have my thing quite yet.

I can’t say I changed any lives with that demo lesson, but it was enough to secure the job. Most importantly, I was able to be myself during the entire process; something that my mentor at Rider often reminded me of. In retrospect, I believe the school was looking to hire a specific type of person. Interesting, I was hoping to work for a specific type of school.

Now sitting down to write this article with a whopping three days of teaching experience under my belt, I don’t have any pearls of wisdom to offer. What I can attest to, though, is the power of following your instincts and passions; they often lead you to someone – or someplace – doing the same.

Few paths are forged alone, and I need to recognize and send the deepest thanks to Anthony, Joe and Kathleen for supporting my passions while occasionally (and gently) redirecting my path along the way – it’s what teachers do.

— Michael Scottos, Rider (GLTP) 2010 Alum

Want to become a member of the Education Honors Society? Here’s how:

Kappa Delta Pi Requirements
• 30 credit hours/first-term sophomore standing
• GPA of 3.0 of higher
• At least 12 semester hours in education courses programmed, in process, or completed
• Must attend at least 2 events and 2 meetings per year

Benefits to being a member
• Based on academic achievement, therefore prestigious to belong
• A great way to enhance your educational career through informative events and workshops.
• Networking opportunities with others in the field.
• Allows for collaboration among Rider’s future educators.
• Quarterly issues of New Teacher Advocate from KDP Nationals for new inductees and the quarterly magazine KDP Record for members who remain active.
• Giving back to the community through service activities

If you have any questions please contact: meyerst@rider.edu, nissend@rider.edu

Need to take your Praxis? Take a look at the schedule!

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Praxis Details:
• Secondary education majors need to take the Praxis II in your subject area
• Your scores will be sent to you within four weeks of taking the test
• The subject test is not offered online, only paper-based tests
• You can take your test at Rider University!
• For study materials, and questions about the test visit ets.org
Through the Eyes of a Student

As a future teacher, we want our students to be inspired, interested, and most importantly learning the skills necessary to succeed in life. But how can we help them? How do we know what engages students? How do we know what they love about our class, and what they dislike about our class? I needed this information. I wanted to hear directly from a student.

To satisfy my curiosity, I sought out a student I may be teaching one day. Cameron is a 7th Grade middle school student in South Jersey. I was able to crack open his mind and ask him what he considers to be a good teacher.

In the Words of a Seventh Grade Student:

1. A good teacher is a fair grader. For example the tests or quizzes that he/she gives should have enough questions in them so that if you get one or two wrong you won’t get a bad grade.

2. If a teacher sees that a student is not doing well and getting bad grades, the teacher should take time to ask if the student is having problems or if they understand the work. But the teacher should talk to the student in private – not ask in front of other people.

3. It would be good if the teacher would give the student a chance to choose their own books for reading assignments. For example a class at my school is reading “A Wrinkle in Time,” and I really didn’t like that book at all. Also, there should be more non-fiction reading assignments, like biographies and science books.

4. I know that not all school work can be fun, it would be nice to have at least one fun school project a year to work on with a large group even if it isn’t for a grade, but just something that is interesting and related to the class.

Sometimes seeing things through the eyes of a student really puts things in perspective.

— Cameron Kalfas, 7th grader in South Jersey

Learn Through Teaching (Mind Your Own Business)

The School of Education at Rider University is no longer the only way to get field work experience and work with students while earning credits. The School of Business along with the Leadership Development Program at Rider, provides students with the opportunity to take LDP-220 - Service Learning through Minding Our Business (M.O.B). M.O. B is a community outreach project that seeks to advance the personal and vocational development of Trenton youth through entrepreneurship education and mentoring. M.O.B’s supportive mentoring relationships and active-learning curriculum strongly support the development of important life skills, positive attitudes toward school and learning, and students’ self-esteem.

I took this course last spring, and I can honestly say that I learned just as much, if not more, about working with middle school aged children from this course than any of my other field based education courses. The course consisted of a 12 week mentoring program, in which I mentored students from Trenton who were in Grades 5-8 about how to run their own business. With a partner, I was provided with a team of 10-12 students who I met with once or twice a week after school. I was provided with a classroom and all the materials necessary to work with the students. I guided them in team-building activities, leadership, and communication skills development. At the beginning of the semester I attended a two day training session where I learned everything I needed to teach the students. Unlike our typical education courses where we work with a cooperating teacher, the M.O.B program provided us with the opportunity to exercise our teaching and classroom management strategies. At the end of the program students from all the middle schools in Trenton got together for the Market Fair, to demonstrate their business’ successes.

The best part of this program however, was not the amazing learning experience I was given as an educator, but the sense of accomplishment I felt after spending a semester working with these underprivileged students. It is truly one of the most memorable and rewarding courses you can take at Rider.

To learn more information go to: (www.rider.edu/172_798.htm).

— Andrea Garcia, Class of 2011

Things I know for Sure

1. Patience isn’t just a virtue, it’s a necessity.
2. Always carry spare pens and pencils. ALWAYS.
3. There are no stupid questions.
4. A positive attitude can make the most boring of days exciting.
5. Everyone makes mistakes, that’s why even pens have erasers.
6. Never grade papers while eating. It’s always uncomfortable explaining to students why there’s pizza stains on their quizzes.
7. Students can learn just as much from each other as they can from you.
8. You can never remind students about the difference between to, too, and two or there, their, and they’re enough times.
9. Giving 110 percent is sometimes the bare minimum.
10. Even teachers should still be learning.

— Brian Long, Class of 2011