

SNL expands in new Loop location



Big changes are under way at SNL. When the school year begins in the fall, faculty and students will be settled in the 14 E. Jackson Blvd. building in Chicago, just a block away from SNL's previous home.

Dean Marisa Alicea says the space is about 30 percent larger and newly remodeled. She says SNL faculty and staff members were able to weigh in on the design of their new digs to create a space that fits the way they work and teach.

"It's brand-new construction. They totally gutted the 14th and 15th floors, and we were able to work with the architects to customize it to our needs," Alicea says.

The new location features a large space with breakout rooms that SNL will be able to use for training sessions and special events. One of the rooms includes six computer stations that will be used to train instructors to teach online courses, which are becoming increasingly popular among students (See story, p. 3).

Alicea also says the new space is brighter and has more offices with windows. It's a small change, she says, but it creates a more uplifting work environment for faculty and staff. "The university has done a really stellar job in designing a cohesive look to our building," she says.

DePaul's College of Communication, Office of Sponsored

Research and Programs, School of Public Service and other university departments also have space in the building, which DePaul purchased in June 2008. The College of Law is expanding into SNL's former space in the Lewis Center.

One of the most anticipated and exciting benefits of the new space is a fully equipped audio-visual studio that professors will use to create audio and video recordings for classroom and online courses, Alicea says.

Zaya Khananu, a part-time visiting faculty member who teaches computer courses, says he will use the studio to create audio and video podcasts for his classes. Khananu says SNL's studio will be decked out with high-definition camcorders, lighting, a green screen and several computers. Professors will be able to create podcasts and other digital media content using programs like iLife, iMovie and Final Cut Express.

"For example, if I want my students to understand the parts of a computer—the insides—I can create a podcast where they see me taking it apart, identifying the parts and putting it back together," Khananu says. "In this way, they might have a better understanding of it as a whole, rather than looking at a textbook."

Whether they teach in a traditional classroom or in a "cyber classroom," professors will now be able to bring to life in three dimensions concepts that were previously taught only in textbooks. Professors will be able to share content easily with students, either by presenting it in class or posting it on Blackboard. Khananu says his podcasts may even replace some of his traditional assignments.

"An effective podcast, I believe, can prep students to be more effective when they come into the classroom," Khananu says. "By creating a more dynamic experience as part of their homework, they can come to the class with, I hope, a better understanding of that week's assignments."



New programs, location support SNL's mission

The summer quarter has been a busy one for SNL faculty and staff. We moved our offices to the 14th and 15th floors of 14 E. Jackson Blvd., an 18-story building that DePaul purchased more than a year ago (See story, p. 1). Our June graduation ceremonies included a very diverse group of students, and we welcomed three new faculty members to SNL. We also began work to implement two new degree completion programs that we hope to launch in winter 2010 at our Naperville Campus (See story, p. 5).

SNL's new Loop home is a completely remodeled suite that represents much more space than our previous offices and is designed to better serve our students and provide faculty and staff with a quality work environment. Within our suite, we also have three 30-seat training rooms fully equipped with smart technology, several breakout rooms and small conference rooms for student committee meetings. Wireless technology throughout both floors will allow students, faculty and staff to use laptops to access the Internet and DePaul Web sites. We invite you to come visit us and see our new suite of offices during our open house on Oct. 16 from 3 to 6 p.m.

This year's graduation ceremonies were a great success, and our graduating class included students from SNL's many diverse programs (See stories, p. 4). Twenty-seven students from our master of arts in applied professional studies program in Bangkok flew to Chicago to attend the June 13 commencement ceremony and to participate in various professional development and cultural activities. Our 2009 graduating class included students from our Chronic Illness Initiative, which provides support services for students who suffer from chronic illnesses. Graduates also included students who completed their program fully online and flew in from places such as Colorado, Michigan, Florida and North Carolina to participate in commencement (See story, p. 3). Students who started SNL through our Bridge program with Truman and Wright colleges also were among those who completed their degrees. At graduation, we also took the time to acknowledge graduates of our bachelor of arts program in Nairobi, Kenya.

As summer winds down, we are busy implementing new initiatives. To better serve students with an associate degree, SNL will launch two undergraduate degree completion programs: one is a B.A. in leadership studies and the other is in applied behavioral studies. These degree programs will make it possible for students with associate degrees to complete their programs in as little as two years. We will pilot the degrees at our Naperville Campus, but we hope to make them available at other suburban campuses, the Loop Campus and online within the next two years.

On the graduate level, administrators and faculty are developing the liberal learning seminars, a core component of our graduate degrees, as hybrid or blended courses. These courses are offered mostly online but do require some classroom time. This low residency requirement will make it possible for students who live outside the Chicago area and who are willing to come to the city several times throughout their degree program to complete a graduate degree with us.

Since its inception, SNL has prided itself on making higher education accessible to adults from many different backgrounds. The diverse group of students who participated in our June commencement ceremonies is a testament to our fulfilling this mission. **Our new programs, enhanced facilities and additional faculty will help to ensure that we continue to fulfill our goals.**



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SNL Online offers access to education for students worldwide—from Chicago to Seoul

Thanks to SNL Online, students and instructors don't have to be together in the classroom to create a quality educational experience. In fact, they don't even need to be in the same country.

Nina Kutty lives in Rhode Island, many states away from DePaul University's Chicago campuses, but she is able to teach writing courses to SNL students online. Her students may be in Chicago, or as far away as Seoul or Istanbul, but they can all convene in Kutty's virtual classroom.

"The flexibility is a huge benefit," Kutty says. **"I can take my time if a student has a question that requires some research, and it's nice for students because they have the flexibility of doing class work whenever it fits into daily schedules."**

SNL Online's Assistant Director Shirin Kadwani says that flexibility is key for the program's adult students, many of whom have full-time jobs and families. When people have a lot of demands on their time, even taking a night course can be challenging, she says. But, if they have the flexibility to complete course work online during a lunch break, late in the evening or on weekends, pursuing higher education becomes a real possibility.

The online program began in 2001 and has grown so popular that SNL Online classes now make up about 30 percent of the school's course offerings. The program now offers about 60 online classes each quarter.

Kadwani says SNL Online's professors use a variety of technologies, including the Blackboard course management system, streaming media, podcasts, Web conferencing, VoIP, wikis and blogs, to communicate with students.

"These interactive systems keep students well connected with faculty members, advisors, professional experts and classmates," Kadwani says.

Kutty teaches her writing classes by assigning

readings and hosting online discussions. Students can ask questions and make comments online at their convenience before turning in weekly writing assignments. Although Kutty and her students aren't physically meeting for discussions, she says the classes adhere to the same standards as a traditional SNL course.

Monica De Asa works at SNL and has taken online classes. She says the online discussion forums help her feel connected to her professors and classmates, even though they aren't in the same place.

"Usually there are weekly discussion forums where we have to start or reply to a thread," De Asa says. "Our communication is to be personal and thoughtful, and my instructors are very good at answering any questions we have."

It's not just busy working parents who benefit from SNL's expanded course offerings, Dean Marisa Alicea says. Some of the students in the program may have started a degree on the Chicago campus and then needed to relocate to another state. Or, a student may live in Chicago, but have a chronic illness or disability that makes getting to campus on a regular basis difficult. Through the online program, students in those situations can continue to take courses.

At a recent SNL Online commencement breakfast, graduates in attendance came from as far away as North Carolina and Colorado, according to Alicea.

"If it weren't for the online courses, it would have been impossible for many of them to complete their degrees," Alicea says.



"These interactive systems keep students well connected with faculty members, advisors, professional experts and classmates."

—Kadwani



Highlights from Commencement 2009



Honorary degree recipients: Bertram L. Scott (B.A. '80), executive vice president and chief institutional development and sales officer for TIAA-CREF, received an honorary degree and served as the speaker at SNL's commencement ceremony. In his commencement address, Scott shared the story of his career path and DePaul experience. He spoke about the fears graduates may have about the economy and its impact on career prospects, but told them that their life experience and DePaul education provides "a key, sustainable strategic advantage" over the competition. Brother Anusak Nidhibhadrabhorn, director of St. Gabriel's College in Bangkok, Thailand, one of that nation's leading educational institutions, also received an honorary degree from SNL. He is a prominent figure in educational reform in Thailand, and St. Gabriel's College is a model of interfaith cooperation.



Graduation breakfast: SNL celebrated the accomplishments of SNL Online graduates who live outside the Chicago area at a breakfast the morning of commencement. Dean Marisa Alicea, SNL Online Director Beth Rubin and SNL alumnus Rodney Pate (B.A. '08) were among those who congratulated the graduates and their families, who came from as far away as Colorado and North Carolina. "These students have an even more difficult challenge in completing their degrees," Rubin says. "They don't get face-to-face social support from classmates, faculty, advisors or mentors to help deal with their challenges. We wanted to give them a time to meet with some support staff and faculty and to congratulate them for their great accomplishments. The students were very pleased to be honored and get their hard work and discipline recognized."



Thai graduates in Chicago: Twenty-seven students of the master of arts in applied professional studies program in Bangkok, Thailand, traveled to Chicago to take part in the commencement ceremony. The SNL program is offered to teachers at St. Gabriel's College in partnership with Assumption University, and this is the third cohort of students to graduate. During their visit to Chicago, students presented their culminating projects, toured the city and DePaul's Loop and Lincoln Park campuses, visited local schools and met many faculty and staff members from SNL and DePaul.

Upcoming events

Sept. 22: International change leader Margaret Wheatley will give the keynote address and facilitate an afternoon workshop during the Center to Advance Education for Adults conference, "Thriving in Transition: Recharging-Reinventing-Reconnecting," which will take place at the DePaul Center on the Loop Campus. The one-day conference will be kicked off by a panel discussion where SNL students, alumni and friends will share their lessons for thriving in transition followed by several experiential and reflective sessions led by faculty members and alumni.

For more information, visit snl.depaul.edu/About/Centers/Center_to_Advance_Education.asp.

Oct. 16-18: Save the date for Reunion Weekend. Reunion classes celebrating a milestone anniversary this year are 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999 and 2004. Please join us during this three-day celebration to reconnect with classmates and friends, share memories and revisit your alma mater.

For complete details, visit alumni.depaul.edu/reunion.

SNL to offer accelerated B.A. completion programs

SNL soon will offer two new accelerated bachelor's degree completion programs: a B.A. in applied behavioral sciences and a B.A. in leadership studies.

These degrees target the adult learner who is 24 years old or older, already has an associate degree, and who may have a background in either the nonprofit or the for-profit sector. The interdisciplinary B.A. programs can be completed in as little as 24 months—the equivalent of eight consecutive terms—or less.

The B.A. in applied behavioral science is designed for students with course work in psychology, communication or human services who seek to build careers in these sectors or in nonprofit management, social work, human resources, training, coaching or similar fields. The B.A. in leadership studies is for students primarily interested in leadership in the workplace. In addition to fulfilling the general education requirements for the associate degree, an adult who applies for this course of study may have taken electives in business, leadership or organizational development.

“Leadership studies will give intellectual context to experience they already have,” says Corinne Benedetto, an associate dean in SNL.

The value of the programs goes beyond obtaining the degrees. “Core principles and ideas are embedded in these programs,” says Dean Marisa Alicea.

“The cluster of principles includes service and sustainability,” Benedetto says.

Students in the degree completion programs work on several courses simultaneously and come to campus just one night each week. “They’ll be learning in a classroom environment with other adults who bring experience and practical knowledge to the classroom,” says Suzanne Depeder, assistant vice president for graduate and adult recruitment at DePaul, who is involved in new program development for adults.

DePaul will begin offering the degree completion programs in the winter quarter of 2010 on the Naperville Campus. Within 12 to 18 months, the university will include them in the course offerings on the school’s other campuses, Benedetto says.

“If a person has an associate degree and chooses one of these programs, we know they can enter the job market in as little as 24 months with a DePaul University degree in hand and the qualifications of a serious competitor,” Benedetto says.

Adult learners may finish the programs even more quickly by transferring credits from courses already taken for a two-year degree, from experiential learning for professional development through work or volunteering, or by passing proficiency exams in writing, information technology, critical thinking or quantitative reasoning.

The university will offer financial aid, flexible payment options and employer tuition reimbursement.

“It’s exciting news for adults who have associate degrees,” says Anne Brennan, director of Community College Partnerships at DePaul.

“If a person has an associate degree and chooses one of these programs, we know they can enter the job market in as little as 24 months with a DePaul University degree in hand and the qualifications of a serious competitor.”

—Benedetto

While SNL is offering the bulk of courses for the programs, DePaul’s College of Communication and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences also are offering some classes.

“With DePaul University’s reputation in the market, earning a degree from DePaul puts these students a step ahead of the rest,” Depeder says.

For more information, visit snl.depaul.edu or call the SNL advising center at 312.362.5445.



Alumna devotes herself to elevating the world of dance

Residence:

Chicago

Occupation:

Crutchfield says that one might call her a “professional” volunteer. She currently serves on the boards of a number of arts organizations, including the Old Town School of Folk Music, Dance/USA and DanceWorks Chicago, an organization she co-founded two years ago. DanceWorks Chicago, she says, is committed to the growth of individual artistry, experience and responsibility. While it employs six dancers, it is more than a dance company. “We place equal emphasis on the development of artists, as well as the creation and presentation of dances,” she says. “We are concerned with creating community within our own organization and promoting a sense of responsibility within the field to contribute to the art form and move it forward.” Crutchfield also serves on the advisory boards of River North Chicago Dance Company, Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago and Luna Negra Dance Theater.

Vital stats:

After graduating from Gage Park High School in Chicago in 1965, Crutchfield attended Mayfair Junior College and Fox Business College for a year each. Both schools were in Chicago. Crutchfield worked for The Harris Foundation in Chicago for nine years, until 2000. Specifically, she worked for Joan W. Harris, who was the president of the foundation, which had a generous education program that paid for her tuition at DePaul. “I am forever grateful to both Joan and [her husband] Irving B. Harris for that gift.” As an advertising professional, Crutchfield was a production manager for an agency in Northbrook, where she was responsible for all the print projects and purchased about \$1 million worth of print advertising yearly. She worked at House & Garden Magazine in Chicago and also planned events in Chicago for the magazine. Over the years, volunteer work has been an integral part of her life. Crutchfield’s husband passed away four years ago. She has one son, Daniel McEnerney.

What I like most about what I do:

“Because I love dance so much, working with the dance community is a work of love and joy for me. As each year passes, I see a larger and more interesting dance community develop in Chicago. It gives me a great sense of accomplishment. I feel I am helping to make a contribution to the dance community even though I am not a dancer.”

The biggest challenge I face:

“Our current economic downturn has created very challenging times in the dance community. Raising money right now is difficult for everyone. I fear some of the companies will not be able to ride out the hard times. When that happens, we all lose. Not only do the dancers and staff lose jobs, but we have less art to help us get through difficult times and raise our spirits.”

My SNL experience helped me by:

“I gained a great deal of self-confidence through my SNL experience. I read books and articles and had discussions that opened my mind to many new areas of thought and ways of thinking differently. Through one of my courses, I volunteered at a shelter and learned so much about mental disorder and brain chemistry. I now have a much better understanding and wider view of the world around me.”

The words I live by are:

“In the words of William Purkey, ‘Dance like no one is watching, love like you’ll never be hurt, sing like no one is listening, live like it’s heaven on earth.’”

Exploring student violence in Kenya: Faculty of the DePaul University/Tangaza College B.A program in Nairobi, Kenya, are helping find solutions to issues facing local communities. Nyambura Salome Owinyo, instructor and assistant coordinator of the program, for example, has undertaken pioneering research into escalating violence in Kenyan schools. Deeply concerned that insufficient attention was being paid to the root causes of student violence, she traveled to a school that experienced seven such incidents to investigate what was happening. She discovered that students often acted violently because an authoritarian school system routinely ignored their grievances. The result of her yearlong study is a book, “Caught in-Between: Exploring the Complexities of School Vandalism,” published last year. During a book presentation at SNL in April, Owinyo explained that in 2003, the year of her study, violence occurred in more than 200 schools across Kenya. In the deadliest incident, 68 students perished. “In the past, school violence was in subtle forms of bullying and walk-outs,” she notes. “This has now changed to young boys fundraising to buy [fuel], then petrol-bombing their schools.” Owinyo is now involved with initiatives that engage educators, parents and students in addressing school violence. The Tangaza program was established in 2006 with a \$480,000 grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.



Labor leaders explore fiscal policy: Labor educator Jack Metzgar presented a two-session class titled “Bailout Economics for Labor Leaders,” which was offered by DePaul’s Labor Education Center. The course applied the basic principles of Keynesian macroeconomics to the nation’s economic problems, and students developed and defended their preferred fiscal policy for 2009 and 2010. A retired professor of humanities at Roosevelt University, Metzgar is the author of “Striking Steel: Solidarity Remembered,” which won the Sidney Hillman Foundation Award in 2001. He was founding editor of Labor Research Review, a Chicago-based national publication on organized labor issues in the 1980s and 1990s. The center also hosted two author visits. Kim Bobo, founder of Interfaith Worker Justice, spoke about her new book, “Wage Theft in America: Why Millions of Working Americans Are Not Getting Paid—And What We Can Do About It,” on Feb. 18. Her Chicago-based national organization educates, organizes and mobilizes the religious community to improve wages, benefits and conditions for workers. On March 4, Bob Bruno, program director of Labor Education Programs at the University of Illinois at Chicago, talked about his latest book, “Justified for Work: Identity and Meaning of Faith in Chicago’s Working-Class Churches.”

Challenges in workplace explored: The Chronic Illness Initiative at the School for New Learning hosted its fifth annual chronic illness and postsecondary education symposium on April 28. Titled “After Graduation: Creating Opportunities for Employment, Education, and Community and Family Involvement,” the daylong symposium featured workshops and speakers covering a number of topics, among them empowering students with chronic illnesses to make good choices about their future, improving the skills of those who advise students with chronic illnesses, and educating employers about reasonable accommodations for workers with chronic illnesses. Disability rights activist Karen McCulloh, executive director of disabilityworks at the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, was the keynote speaker.



Symposium explores Obama’s impact: Award-winning Chicago Sun-Times columnist Mary A. Mitchell and renowned civil rights activist Prexy Nesbitt discussed hope and change in light of Barack Obama becoming the first African-American U.S. president during the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Symposium. Mitchell, an editorial board member at the Sun-Times, and Nesbitt, an activist, educator and expert on Africa, foreign policy and racism, shared their perspectives on the impact of Obama’s presidency on the global community. The symposium was sponsored by SNL’s Africa Diaspora Committee as a kickoff to Black History Month.

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY



School for New Learning
1 E. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604-2287

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Please call Ruhan Memishi, editor, at **312.362.8629**
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the buzz

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Play explores mental illness: "Facing the Rain," a play that explores mental illness, was performed April 16 at DePaul. The drama chronicled five true stories of college students' experiences with mental illnesses and was followed by an interactive dialogue facilitated by SNL alumna Brigid O'Shaughnessy (M.A.'07), executive artistic director of Erasing the Distance. Her non-profit organization aims to increase awareness of mental illness and disarm the stigma surrounding it, as well as provide people with access to resources for help.

Increasing literacy: The Polk Bros. Foundation Center for Urban Education designed a literacy framework with the aim of improving student learning for 15 Chicago public elementary schools on the West Side. The framework provided guides to instruction and assessment of strategies and reading and writing skills. The center guided implementation through workshops for principals, teachers and reading coaches during the 2008-09 school year. Preliminary scores indicate that all the participating schools increased their achievement, particularly schools for which the center also provided intensive on-site teacher development.



O'Shaughnessy