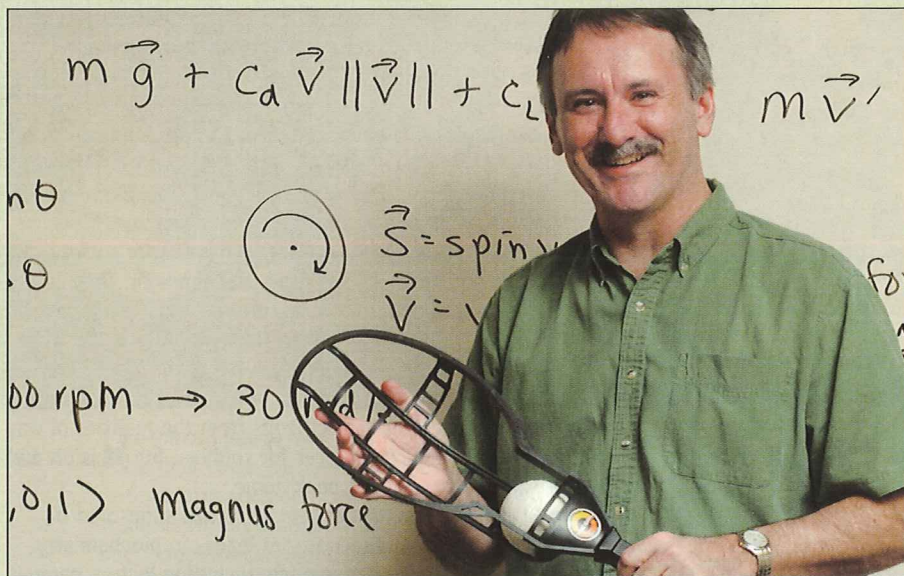


Professor scores teaming mathematics and sports



Math is generally considered a universal language, but Roanoke math Professor Dr. Roland Minton actually thinks that sports is as well.

He is convinced that his students are better able to grasp math concepts when they are in some way related to familiar sports. It works that way in the textbook *Calculus*, which he co-authored and is now used at more than 100 colleges and universities throughout the world. And it works that way in his classroom, where students follow the football results and work through sports lab applications.

"Mostly it's something different than the standard math problem," Minton says, "and it relates to something in the news, so it's more real to the students."

Minton, who received Virginia's Outstanding Faculty Award for 2005, even posts his own predictions on his website at www.roanoke.edu/staff/minton/bynumbers.html. His system for ranking college football teams has been published by COMAP, a consortium of mathematics educators. His sports statistics also have attracted a lot of attention, winning him invitations to speak at sports science conferences and in occasional news interviews.

"It's always hard to figure out why somebody learns or they don't," Minton says, smiling. "But generally, the more interested you are, the easier it is to learn."

Minton, now in his 20th year at Roanoke College, has been frequently recognized for his effective teaching. He received the recent Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council

of Higher Education. Sociology professor Dr. Gregory Weiss received it the year before — and Minton points out that in both cases, they were the only faculty from private colleges to receive the award.

"We have lots of faculty who would deserve that honor," he says, "but it certainly makes you feel good."

In addition, Minton was presented the Exemplary Teaching Award from the Roanoke College Dean's Council in 1998 for his consistently interesting approach. Minton also assists students outside the classroom by working with them on independent studies and honors projects. In addition, he has developed new academic courses in sports science, chaos theory and general education.

He has co-authored many mathematics textbooks for McGraw-Hill and plans to publish three more in the next two years. A native of Radford, Va., Minton began his education at Virginia Commonwealth University and earned his master's degree and doctorate in mathematics from Clemson University. He has been with Roanoke College since 1986.

His wife, Jan, also is a math professor at Roanoke College and the associate director for the honors program. They have two children.

"When I was 20, there just weren't that many things I had personal experience with," Minton explains. "So if there was a math problem involving a mechanical structure or something electrical, it was tough. But if it was sports connected, I got it. I understood. Really, it's as close to universal as anything I've ever tried."

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For better and for verse



Dr. Melanie Almeder says there's more to studying English than many believe.

The award-winning associate professor of English encourages her students to

explore other subjects "to fall in love with natural history or architectural theory or photography," she says, "not only to find subjects to write about but as fields from which to learn about structure, about how to write a poem."

It seems to work. In the five years since Almeder joined Roanoke College, she has been nominated twice for the Dean's Council Exemplary Teaching Award, winning it for 2002-2003. She also was named a Faculty Scholar and was a finalist in the "Rising Star" category in 2004 and 2005 for the Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award sponsored by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. In addition, she has won college research grants as well as national and international grants and residencies.

"I want (students) to take away a passion for learning as a lifelong activity," she explains. "It doesn't end when college does. It's a way of living in the world."

From piano keyboard to computer keyboard



Dr. Gordon Marsh says digital technology has created a new generation of music possibilities.

After spending his 2003-2004 sabbatical in Paris, the associate professor of

music is sharing those possibilities with his students. Marsh was awarded a residency from Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris and participated in 13 different professional training workshops in computer music at IRCAM, one of the world's leading centers of development for electronic music hardware and software.

A trained classical pianist, Marsh now teaches the College's first course in electronic music and an Intensive Learning course in the subject. He also helped redesign the music curriculum and create a new electronic music studio at the