

BIORHYTHMS



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Hi! Welcome back to Grinnell everyone...and a special biology welcome to all the first years! For those of you who don't know, the BioSEPC (Student Educational Policy Committee) is a student-faculty liaison which provides the faculty with student input on professors, candidates, curriculum and other department issues. As our primary duty, we survey students and summarize their opinions regarding current professors and professorial candidates. We also organize department study breaks, biology t-shirts, and picnics throughout the year.

If you have any questions, comments or requests, please feel free to email us [biosepc].

New Stuff

We would like to welcome our two new professors Ben DeRidder, a plant molecular biologist, and Shannon Hinsa, a microbiologist. Say "Hi!" if you see them around Noyce.

Our bulletin boards have moved to a new and exciting location in the bio commons (in the 1800 corridor of Noyce). If you actually want to see who wrote this newsletter or read about our lives, come check out our biographies. If this doesn't lure you in, the bulletin boards will also include information about upcoming bio events, research, and study abroad opportunities.

Upcoming Events

The Fall Biology Picnic will be held on Friday, September 21st at 5PM. Professor Robertson will be hosting the picnic at her home, across from Younker on Park Street. Sign up sheets will be distributed in class, posted on the bulletin board in the bio commons, or you can email [BioSEPC] with your reservation. Please include your name, ID# (if you're on a Grinnell College meal plan) and meat or vegetarian preference. If you are not on a meal plan, write "off board" instead of your ID#. The picnic is a great opportunity to meet the biology faculty and other biology majors, including your friendly neighborhood SEPC :)

The first biology study break of the year will be held on Wednesday, October 3rd at 8PM (location to be announced). We will be watching the movie, 'Evolution' and we'll have delicious

edibles. If you have any special requests, please feel free to email us! Signs will be posted around Noyce.

Also, there are biology seminars every Friday at noon, in room 2021. These seminars include student or faculty research presentations, grad school panels, or research presentations by visiting professors. Everyone is welcome and we have snacks!

Faculty Insider

Hello to all of you, I'm Shannon Hinsa one of the new faculty in the Biology Department. I have come to Grinnell from Michigan State University where I studied as a postdoc for the past two years. Before MI I was out east in NH where I did my PhD work at Dartmouth Medical School. I originated from WI (Green Bay in fact, GO PACKERS!) and I did my undergraduate work at UW-Madison. I moved here with my family this July and we are starting to feel like Grinnell is our home. My family consists of my husband Bruce, he is a graphic designer, our son Liam (15 months old), and our husky-mix dog Cooper.

I am a microbiologist and my current research focuses on biofilm formation and microbial diversity studies. Biofilms are microorganisms attached to surfaces and are found everywhere including on your teeth, vegetables and in the soil. I am working on microorganisms from the Siberian permafrost and I will soon be working with some microorganisms from CERA. I got interested in working with bacteria in extreme environments while I did Mars simulation experiments in Northern Canada during my PhD research. I am very excited to be here at Grinnell where teaching and research are valued. I am currently teaching BIO 365, Introduction to Prokaryotes. Next semester I will be teaching a BIO 150 section and a special topics course with a lab investigating microbial diversity and life in extreme environments. I look forward to meeting you, so stop by and see me sometime.

Alumni Insider

Coming soon! This section will include blurbs from Grinnell biology department alumni to update us on their lives and/or provide any advice they have in regards to living life after Grinnell (i.e. grad school or how they used their major).

Biology Comic of the Month

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"We're taking soil samples today ...
in other words, FIELD TRIP!"

From: <http://www.cartoonstock.com/newscartoons/cartoonists/ato/lowres/aton15921.jpg>

Random Fact of the Month

Did you know? A goldfish (like most marine fish) can survive in a tank full of human blood.

From: <http://www.sciensational.com/biology.html>

Keep an eye out for future issues of BioRhythms! If you have any questions, please feel free to ask!

Your friendly BioSEPC.

Marci Kirchberg '09
Zach Newman '08
Courtney Smith '09
Ali Titiz '08
Nick Vitko '08
Zach Wegermann '08
Hannah Yourd '09