Cross-Cultural Conversations
How Administration Can Support Diversity Efforts

Zvi Szafran – Vice President of Academic Affairs
SPSU History

• Founded in 1948
  – Two year division of Georgia Tech
  – To serve the needs of returning veterans and Georgia industry

• Accredited as a four year college in 1970

• Granted independent unit status in the University System of Georgia during 1980
Engineering and Science Focus

• Engineering Technology Programs
  • Civil Engineering Technology, Computer ET, Electrical ET, Environmental ET, Industrial ET, Mechanical ET, Surveying & Mapping, Telecommunications ET

• Engineering Programs
  • Civil Engineering, Construction Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Mechatronics Engineering, Software Engineering, Systems Engineering

• Science Programs
  • Biology, Biology Education, Chemistry, Chemistry Education, Environmental Science, Mathematics, Math Education, Physics, Physics Education

• Computing Programs
  • Computer Game Design & Development, Computer Science, Information Technology, Software Engineering

• Other
  • Accounting, Architecture, Business Administration, Construction Management, English & Prof. Communication, International Studies, New Media Arts, Political Science, Psychology, Technical Communication
Our History: Student Pioneers

In 1948, SPSU was known as “The Technical Institute”

Our First Class of Students:
115 Men    1 Woman

First Female Student and Graduate:
Barbara Hudson Purdy
Entered 1948, Graduated 1950
Building Construction Technology
Our History: Student Pioneers

First African American Student:
Willie Hope
Entered 1964, Graduated 1967
Electrical Engineering Technology

David E. Manuel
MET, IET

Filmore M. Thomas Jr.
EET

Henry L. Head Jr.
MET

Ronald H. Brown
MET

Students entering in 1966
Anniversaries and Milestones

In 2008, SPSU Celebrated:

• SPSU’s 60th Anniversary

• Lisa Rossbacher’s 10th Anniversary as its first female President

• Enrollment of 1000 black students for the first time in its history

• Enrollment of 1000 female students for the first time in its history

• Enrollment of 500 Asian students for the first time in its history
SPSU Faculty 1971

97% Male
3% Female

1.5% Black
1.5% Asian
Supporting Diversity in Hiring

SPSU Faculty: Forty Years Later

71% male
29% female
9% Black
3% Hispanic
15% Asian
Promoting Social Engagement

- Cross Cultural Conversations: Established February 2012 by Academic Affairs
  - Members include faculty, staff, administrators, and students
  - A series to reflect and celebrate the diversity present at SPSU
  - A broad range of events to provide students and faculty with broader perspectives
  - Events should be a mix of intellectual, celebratory, and “courageous conversations”
  - Establish new events and coordinate with existing efforts
Coordination Across Campus

• Major Events
• “One-off” Events
• Africa Heritage Center
• Black History Month; Hispanic Heritage Month
• International Issues Series
• International Film Series
• Fulbright Speaker Series
• Nine College Consortium Events
• Departmentally Sponsored Events
Japanese film “Big Man Japan”, November 4 at 6:00 PM

SPSU’s International Film Series is proud to present the film “Big Man Japan” November 4 at 6:00 PM in the Student Center Theatre.

An eccentric man aged about 40 lives alone in a decrepit house in Tokyo. He periodically transforms into a giant, about 30 meters tall, and defends Japan by battling similarly sized monsters that turn up and destroy buildings. The giant and the monsters are computer-generated. – IMDb

Conference on “Infusing Latin American Perspectives Across the Curriculum”, October 18 at 8:30 AM

Recent Posts
- Japanese film “Big Man Japan”, November 4 at 6:00 PM
- Conference on “Infusing Latin American Perspectives Across the Curriculum”, October 18 at 8:30 AM
- Visit of Consul General of India, October 17, 6:00 PM
- Chilean Film “No”, at Student Center Theatre October 7 at 6:00 PM
- Dillen Roven and Prada Kahn Architecture Lecture “A Living Machine”, October 2 at 12 Noon in 3-516

Recent Comments

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Major Events:
Well-known speakers and outside events. One per semester. Funded by Academic Affairs. Cosponsored by Departments.
“One-Off” Events:

Events not fitting into any other series, but fitting the general framework of “Cross-Cultural”
Each Fall, sponsors a major African leader visiting SPSU

Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chair of African Union Commission

Cheick Sidi Diarra, UN Special Advisor on Africa and High Repr. For Least Developed Countries
Black History Month

• Multiple events during February (but not only)
• Integrated with other series as well as unique events

Kevin Powell: “What Happened to the Civil Rights Movement?”

Celebrate Africa

Sickle-Cell Anemia Awareness
Hispanic Heritage Month

- Multiple events during September and October
- Integrated with other series as well as unique events
- Faculty and student presentations
- 2013 featured musical theater, movie, faculty travelogue, lecture, student presentation, and conference.
International Issues Series:

Presentations on current international issues. 2-3 per semester.

• Consul Generals speaking on current issues in their countries. South Korea, France, Brazil, India

• Dr. Laurence Michalak (former Director of the Center for Maghrib Studies in Tunis (CEMAT)): “Tunisia and the Arab Spring”
International Conference Series:

Nine-College Consortium Partnerships with International Centers at other Universities. 2 per semester.

- “Incorporating International Perspectives on Energy into the Curriculum” with University of Pittsburgh
- “Infusing Latin American Perspectives Across the Curriculum” with University of Florida
International Film Series:

International films, with discussions hosted by a faculty member. Four per semester.

- Films from (or about) Spain, France, Denmark, Ghana, India, Iran, Italy, Israel, Chile, Japan, Australia, Argentina

- Films lead to discussions on: women’s rights in Iran (*10 on Ten*), Israel-Palestine relations and rights (*Lemon Tree*), Christian-Muslim relations in Ghana (*Tears of Womanhood*), Aboriginal policies in Australia (*Rabbit-proof Fence*), dictatorship in Chile and Argentina (*No; La Historia Oficial*), Hindu-Muslim relations in India (*Mr. and Mrs. Iyer*)
Fulbright Speaker Series:

- Apply for Fulbright Scholars resident at SPSU every two years.
- Support SPSU faculty on Fulbright every year
- Bring in visiting Fulbright scholars

- Resident Fulbright Scholars: Hungary, Argentina, New Zealand
- SPSU Fulbright Fellows: Tunisia, Latvia, France, Tadjikistan
- Visiting Fulbright Scholars: Serbia, Japan, Mexico, Ireland, Norway
International Forum Series:

Sponsored by Social and International Studies Department. Focuses on a different country or region each Spring. Three events.

Departmentally Sponsored Events

Architectural Culture Series:

Several events per semester, many of cross-cultural interest.

- “A Living Machine”: Architectural studies on the lives of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera
- Architours: Paris/Barcelona
- Cultural Life of Ladino Jews
Key Ideas:

• Seed funding from Academic Affairs for major events
• Broad involvement of academic departments, student organizations, civic partners
• Integrate events into existing series
• Use existing institutional strengths
Questions?