Speaker’s Note

Two tragedies have struck our college community over the break and I feel it is my responsibility to inform you of them upon your return.

Ewa Wojcicka, Associate Professor of Mathematics, was in a serious automobile accident Sunday, December 10 while driving back from Georgia on Highway 17. Her condition now is stable and she is often conscious, but her future is still uncertain. It is difficult to describe how grave her injuries were and are. None of the emergency personnel thought she would survive. But she did and knowing Ewa for over ten years, it is difficult not to have hope that she will recover and someday grace our halls with her considerable talent and energy. Nevertheless, my hope for Ewa should not obscure the fact that the extent of her injuries, especially to her head, are still largely unknown and consequently her wholeness as a person is in serious doubt. Ewa is currently in Savannah Memorial hospital, but is expected to be moved to Columbia on Wednesday, January 10.

Jozef Modzelewski, Associate Professor of German and Co-Chair of the Department of German and Classical Languages and Literatures drowned while snorkeling in Puerto Rico during the last week in December.

Stephanie Mignone, Instructor of German wrote a short piece about her colleague and friend which follows.

Jozef Modzelewski
March 1952 - December 1995

The College is in mourning for Dr. Jozef Modzelewski, who died in a snorkeling accident during a vacation in Puerto Rico over the holidays. We understand that Dr. Modzelewski and three others, including his sister, were pulled out to sea by treacherous currents and had to be rescued. The others survived; Dr. Modzelewski died in a local hospital shortly after the incident. His remains were cremated and a service was held in Puerto Rico. He leaves behind his mother, two sisters, three cats and many sorrowful friends, colleagues and students. Jozef Modzelewski was forty-three.

Dr. Modzelewski was Associate Professor of German, Head of the German Program, and Co-Chair of the Department of German and Classics. Dr. Modzelewski, a native Pole, did his undergraduate work at Wrocław University and came to the College in 1987 after earning his Ph.D. at New York University. He taught courses in German language, German Literature, German Culture and Civilization, and the New German Cinema. His specialty was German literature since 1945. Among numerous other accomplishments, he authored a scholarly monograph, Das Pandämonium der achtziger Jahre (Peter Lang Verlag, 1990) and a textbook/study guide, Der Besuch, to accompany Friedrich Dürrenmatt’s drama Der Besuch der Alten Dame (The Visit) for use in third-year composition courses. A sample of projects in progress were an intermediate level
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expectations with one hand and, with the other, providing every possible support needed to meet those expectations. Whether you knew him or not, know that we have all lost one person with an unremitting commitment to making this a quality institution. Renewing my own commitment to high standards and redoubling my efforts to meet them will be my personal way of seeing that Jozef lives on.

Memorial Service to be Held for Dr. Jozef Modzelewski
Wednesday, January 10, 10 AM
Recital Hall
Simons Center for the Arts

Senate Meetings (100 Maybank Hall, 5 p.m.)
- Tuesday, January 16
- Tuesday, February 6
- Tuesday, March 12
- Tuesday, April 2
- Tuesday, April 16 (if necessary).
(Please remember that agenda items need to be received in my office by two Thursdays before a given Senate Meeting.)

Spring Faculty Meeting (Recital Hall, Simons Center for the Arts at 5 p.m.)
- Monday, April 22

Martin Luther King

Martin Luther King Day celebrations will be held on Monday, January 15 at 8 p.m. in Sottile Theatre and will last a little over one hour. Admission is free. The program should be interesting and very enjoyable. The complete program is reproduced and included with this special issue. Both President Sanders and I wish to personally invite the faculty and staff to attend the celebrations.

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textbook/study guide to selected chapters of Michael Ende's novel Die Unendliche Geschichte (The Neverending Story) and the editing of a collection of essays highlighting Friedrich Durrenmatt's "Spätwerk".

Our hearts go out to Jozef's family and close friends as they attempt to cope with this tragic loss. Those of us who worked with him and alongside him are paralyzed. We hardly know how we will go on without him. Even those who knew him in passing or not at all feel the jolt. One of our own, someone like us, has died. Suddenly. Accidentally. Young. It makes no sense.

Jozef was an extraordinary person. We hired him almost ten years ago from a ridiculously large and qualified applicant pool because his vita was stellar and the chemistry in the interviews clicked. He instantly became part of a small, tightly knit, harmonious German program and rapidly assumed ever greater responsibility in shaping and articulating a vision for its future that we in the program will be mightily challenged to realize. He was one of those people with tirelessly high standards that he consistently personally met. He never cut corners, never did anything halfway. He was driven by a love of language and literature, a real need to share his ideas, and a perfectionists' abhorrence of mediocrity. He worked all the time, not out of some kind of blind workaholism, but because he was compelled to get things right.

It's not that Jozef didn't know how to take a break. He had a life, a truly full one; and a heart, a truly warm and loving one; and a sense of humor, a wicked one. He could make anything grow, could cook with zest, and could listen to you. His personal resources were devoted in great part to the financial and emotional support of his mother in Poland as well as to other family members. When we get to the point where we are at peace and fondly missing him (I know I have a long way to go. I keep thinking he'll be there on Thursday to take care of all this), we will miss his incredible efficiency, his great coffee, his little smile, his spiffy wardrobe, his mellow voice, his impeccable German, his quirky English idiom.

Jozef Modzelewski was at the same time a very demanding and very caring teacher and colleague, holding up his impossibly high