



# Educating Educators is Focus of MA in Education

Whether standing in front of a high school class or directing a graduate program in education, a love of classroom teaching permeates the work of Dr. Debra Dosemagen, Ph.D. Dosemagen, a former teacher of secondary mathematics, is director of Mount Mary's graduate level education program, the Master of Arts in Education: Professional Development, a program from which she herself is a graduate.

Mount Mary's graduate education program, first offered in 1990, "builds on a commitment to excellence in classroom teaching that can be traced back to the work of the School Sisters of Notre Dame," said Dosemagen. "Educating educators has been an emphasis of Mount Mary College since its founding, and our program is an extension of that."

The program is designed to deepen a teacher's self-assurance as a professional, develop professional competence, foster leadership qualities, and stimulate continued intellectual development. Emphasis on attaining those goals is infused throughout the program, which is structured to provide a solid foundation of professional courses in instructional strategies, curriculum design and diversity among learners, while allowing individual teachers to concentrate on an area of specialization that is most useful to them.

"Mount Mary's graduate education program is different from many others in that all students do not complete a prescribed list of courses throughout," said Dosemagen. "There is more flexibility within our program and an opportunity to build a meaningful course of study by choosing electives. That is something that teachers need and appreciate."

Twelve credits of a student's graduate program are devoted to subject-area specialization. Students choose elective credits related to their grade level or subject area certification, such as mathematics or social studies, or they may complete one of a half dozen special emphases, including adaptive education, English, or reading. "Most of our graduates stay in the classroom," said Dosemagen. "They want coursework that will benefit them and their students."

The culmination of a teacher's graduate study is the development of an action research project which requires a candidate to apply knowledge, pedagogical expertise and craftsmanship to a project to be implemented in a specific instructional setting.

Many of Mount Mary's graduate education alums also assume teacher leadership roles within their schools, said Dosemagen. "They may become the 'math teacher leader' or act as coaches or school-based mentors for new teachers. Within our program we foster their commitment to classroom teaching and they in turn foster it in others. Many of our graduates also act as cooperating teachers who welcome Mount Mary student teachers into their classrooms."

To further promote teaching excellence, the graduate education program collaborates with the Wisconsin National Board Network to offer coaching and mentoring to teachers who wish to work toward National Board Certification, a rigorous, voluntary certification process administered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Four Mount Mary education alumnae are currently National Board Certified Teachers, including Dosemagen; three others are in various stages of the process, and more are becoming interested.

Mount Mary's education program does not serve current classroom teachers only. A significant portion of the program's enrollment is post-baccalaureate certification students who return to college with an undergraduate degree in a

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field other than education and seek the courses necessary for state teaching certification and licensure. "These students can take some of their certification credits at the graduate level," said Dosemagen. "Once they complete the courses needed for certification, some students continue on to finish their master's degree. We call these our 'certification to master's candidates.' This approach is a logical, measured progression for people attracted to teaching and promotes extended professional growth beyond certification."

That commitment to excellence in teaching extends into the Milwaukee community, as well. Mount Mary collaborates with the Milwaukee Teacher Education Center, operated by Milwaukee Public Schools, to bring classes focusing on urban education to MPS teachers at an off-campus location. A partnership with Great Lakes Teacher Training for Waldorf Certification offers off-campus classes for teachers interested in the Waldorf educational approach. And Mount Mary, in conjunction with Alverno College, offers the Urban Education Fellows Program, a two-year, hands-on program that prepares students who hold a baccalaureate degree (in any field) for teaching licensure, a master's degree in education, and careers in Milwaukee area independent, private, parochial or charter schools.

"These, and many other partnerships, underscore our institutional mission to promote excellence in teaching," said Dosemagen. "We know that excellent teachers can be the center of quality education. That's why it is imperative to prepare teachers who understand children's varied learning styles and the impact of an individual's life situation on education."

Current enrollment in the education master's program is holding steady, with 70-80 teachers enrolled in courses during any given semester. The program graduates between 10 and 20 master's candidates a year. In the future, Dosemagen said the program may add a track leading to administrative licensure with an emphasis on instructional leadership. "This is consistent with our emphasis on fostering what is necessary for good classroom teaching, but it allows teachers to explore careers outside the classroom in educational administration," she said. And anything that develops better teachers makes the teacher inside Dosemagen smile.

Debra Dosemagen, Ph.D., director of Mount Mary's Master of Arts in Education: Professional Development



## An Exemplary Teacher

Jaime Haar is not only beloved by her second-graders at Milwaukee's 95th Street School, she's also a role model for Mount Mary education students. For the past two semesters, Jamie, who earned her master's degree in education from Mount Mary in 2004, has opened her classroom to Mount Mary education students for weekly observation.

"We place students in her classroom so they can see an exemplary educator in action," said Dr. Debra Dosemagen, chairperson of Mount Mary's Education and Mathematics Division, who was Jaime's advisor when she was earning her master's degree. "She models the kind of instructional practices and commitment to the profession that we want all our students to demonstrate."

Jaime's commitment extends beyond her classroom walls. For five years, she's been 95th Street's "math teacher leader." She, along with two other teachers from the school, started the school's Academic Achievement Award program to recognize students who are excelling, and she serves as the athletic director and an after-school tutor.

With Dosemagen's encouragement, Jaime earned her National Board Certification in December 2006. She is one of just 35 National Board Teachers in MPS to secure certification. What also sets Jaime apart from other teachers, Dosemagen added, is how she actively engages her students and works with them to truly understand and comprehend the material she's teaching.

"I love actively doing things in the classroom. Projects excite the kids and that excites me," says Jaime. Throughout the year, her class studies and writes poems, eventually creating their own book of original poems that are shared with the class. Another activity has students read a book that they then present to the classroom through a puppet show, mural, character portrayal or other means.

Jaime says, "Teaching is rewarding because I am doing something that positively affects our community now and in the future. That's why I'm always looking to advance my teaching skills and to provide additional educational and social opportunities for the students of 95th Street School."



## For Your Information...

For more information about the graduate programs featured in this issue please contact:

### Master of Science in Art Therapy

Program Director: Dr. Bruce Moon, Ph.D., ATR-BC, HLM, LPC  
(414) 256-1215  
Email: moonb@mtmary.edu  
Website: [www.mtmary.edu/arttherapy.htm](http://www.mtmary.edu/arttherapy.htm)

### Master of Arts in Education: Professional Development

Program Director: Dr. Debra Dosemagen, M.A., Ph.D.  
(414) 256-1214  
Email: dosemagd@mtmary.edu  
Website: [www.mtmary.edu/education.htm](http://www.mtmary.edu/education.htm)

### Master of Science in Occupational Therapy

Program Director: Dr. Jane Olson, Ph.D., OTR  
(414) 256-1246  
Email: olsonj@mtmary.edu  
Website: [www.mtmary.edu/ot.htm](http://www.mtmary.edu/ot.htm)

## Coming in our next issue

## Part Two

In our Fall 2008 issue we will continue our examination of the Mount Mary College Graduate Programs. Featured in that issue will be: Master of Science in Dietetics, Master of Arts in English, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Community Counseling.

Watch for program overviews, hear from the directors, and learn some exciting news about each of these programs.



## Attention Alumnae

Want to move ahead in your career?  
Need a better business background to advance?

### Consider the Mount Mary College MBA!

In today's work world, business knowledge can make the difference between moving ahead and staying where you are. Employees, managers, and entrepreneurs in all fields can benefit from the acquisition of advanced business skills. To ensure student success, the Mount Mary MBA Program requires prerequisite undergraduate coursework in management, marketing, financial accounting, finance, statistics and economics.

**Mount Mary College alumnae may take these prerequisite business courses at a reduced tuition rate!** Individuals holding a baccalaureate degree from Mount Mary College receive a **50% tuition reduction on undergraduate courses**, up to a maximum of four credits per semester. **In addition, our graduate tuition is very competitively priced at only \$485 per credit.**

Contact us today to find out more about getting started on the road to career enhancement or advancement. No matter your undergraduate major, the Mount Mary MBA can help get you where you want to be.

**For more information call 414-258-4810, Ext. 399 or e-mail [gradinfo@mtmary.edu](mailto:gradinfo@mtmary.edu)**