



PennState

**AGRICULTURAL AND
BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING**

Department Head Update

Paul Heinemann, Head of the Department

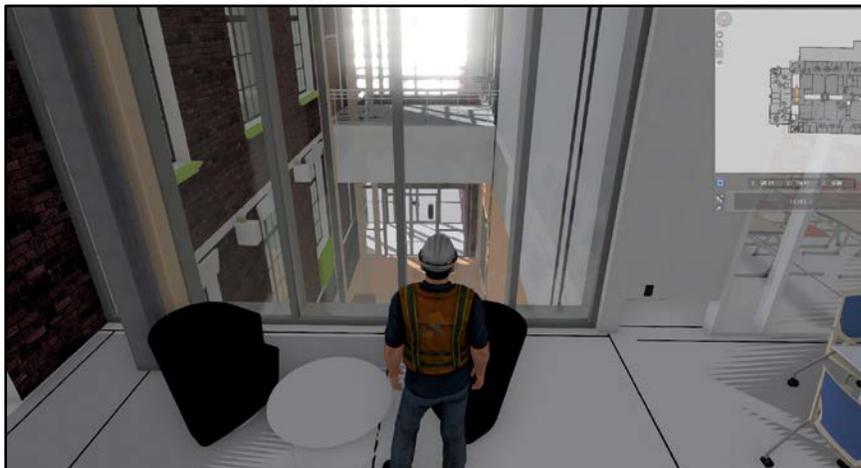
January, 2016

Greetings from the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering! The new semester has begun and it is a lively time for the ABE department. “Nothing more constant than change” as the saying goes, and I don’t recall a time when there has been so much change in the department and the university than in the last couple of years. Here are some highlights:

Building project

We are drawing ever closer to move-out. We are still on schedule for August to vacate the building. The department was treated to a 3-D walk-through of the building back in December, and then we focused on finalizing lab layouts and furnishings. The layouts and furnishings of offices, collaborative spaces, meeting rooms, etc. are in process now.

The naming values for space in the building have been approved, so we will be going public with those within the next month. We are looking forward to continuing our development efforts and we encourage you to consider these naming opportunities!



Rendering of the view from “The Forum”, a gathering place planned in the new building.

Recent Awards

We had three faculty win College of Agricultural Sciences teaching awards this past Fall. We are very proud of our teaching quality, and we congratulate these winners:



Heather Gall – NACTA (North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture) Award of Merit, which is awarded for teaching excellence for early career instructors



Doug Schaufler – The College of Agricultural Sciences Community of Teaching Excellence



Jeff Catchmark – The College of Agricultural Sciences Community of Teaching Excellence

Accreditation for our Biological Engineering undergraduate program

The BE major received full accreditation from ABET, along with 17 other engineering programs at Penn State.

New senior design sequence in Biological Engineering

One outcome of our ABET review was a change in the way we do the senior design experience. We had been spreading out the experience in our senior level courses, but the review identified that this may not be the most effective approach. The sequence begins with a 1-credit Fall semester course, BE 460 (Biological Engineering Design I), and culminates with a 3-credit Spring semester course, BE 466W (Biological Engineering Design II). We are very interested in external sponsorships for our senior design experience, and welcome your support. For more information about sponsoring a project, please go to: <http://abe.psu.edu/industry/capstone-design>

Here are other recent highlights from our department:

Howard Salis, Assistant Professor, receives recognition for Breakthrough Article



The Salis Lab has published an NAR Breakthrough Article on the predictive design and engineering of RNA-based sensor. Nucleic Acids Research (NAR), Breakthrough Articles present high-impact studies answering long-standing questions in the field of nucleic acids research and/or opening up new areas and mechanistic hypotheses for investigation.

New Holland Agriculture Continues to Provide New Tractor for ABE Department Educational Programs

New Holland Agriculture, North America, generously continued their tractor loan program with the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering. A brand new T7.270 CVT tractor was on display at Penn State's Ag Progress Days, August 2015, in the New Holland Building. By the end of the spring semester, the tractor will be taken by a local dealer and sold. This is the sixth tractor that the department has received from this loan program from New Holland Agriculture, North America.



Dave Dell, '76 Agricultural Mechanization, inducted into Armsby Honor Society



Dave is responsible for developing and implementing strategic marketing plans, guiding product development, and managing worldwide distribution channels for Brock Grain Systems, a leading global designer, manufacturer, and marketer of systems and solutions for producing grain, poultry, pigs, and eggs and for processing poultry. Dell has more than 30 years of marketing and sales experience, having held senior-level positions in the agriculture industry. He was invited to join the Armsby Honor Society as a retiring elected director of the Ag Alumni Society.

For more information on these stories and the latest department news, please visit our website: abe.psu.edu or join our Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/PennStateABE

Department Contact

**Department of Agricultural & Biological
Engineering
249 Agricultural Engineering Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-7792**