

Campus Choices

These Aren't Your Everyday College Offerings

BizVoice® asked 10 colleges and universities throughout the state to identify a unique class or program on their campus. Eight responded with a variety of offerings. The following pages provide a brief look at these initiatives:

- Ball State architecture students creating new lives for old airplanes
- The Survey of Popular Music course and music business degree program at Indiana State University
- Indiana University's Bizarre Foods class
- Ivy Tech Community College's Associate Accelerated Program
- "The Human Experience" course that comprises the Core at Valparaiso University
- Innovation One at Trine University
- Franklin College journalism students at work in TheStatehouseFile.com
- A Financial Responsibility course and focus at Manchester University

Ball State University: Aero-Architecture

There is re-use and then there is almost inconceivable re-use. The latter is what is taking place in Muncie.

The mission: Students in the Aero-Architecture: A Second Life for Boeing Airplanes studio class taught by Harry Eggink are tasked with designing buildings using pieces of aircraft that have been retired and sent to airplane graveyards in the deserts of Arizona. The results, a few highlighted here, are amazing.

Background: Eggink's brother is a chief engineer for Boeing's 747-800. His son is an aeronautical engineer working on the 787. Students have completed their designs the last two years and traveled to Washington state – first to the Future Flight Museum in Everett and this year to present their work at Boeing.

Eggink explains: "These airplanes are the best technology that we have. They take on stress that is unbelievable. Tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, etc.; our architecture can't take it. Right now we can take 100 mile per hour winds. What if we designed something that could take 200 mph. To me, it's just a matter of time before we

have to do something.

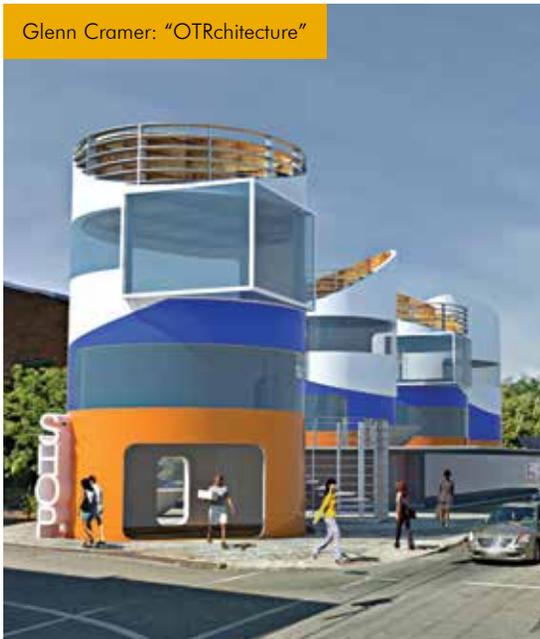
"When you start to run professions together, like aero people and the architects, you start to get some really interesting designs. Now students say, 'How can I use certain parts and build the architecture between them.'

"The students were excited. They see a whole pallet of new stuff opening in front of them.

"This is what their generation is going to be challenged with, these kinds of disasters and these kinds of opportunities. And this is the technology – this is what architects and manufacturing of homes ought to be looking at.

"What they learn is problem solving. This is work that's in their field, but also on the edge of our field. They learn about structure, forces, crises. How you can use something that is being disregarded and how you can project it into architecture," Eggink continues. "I called it cradle to cradle – when you can find a secondary use. I hope they see everything a little differently, that this is a potential piece that they can put into their architecture rather than into the dump."

Glenn Cramer: "OTRchitecture"



Joshua Stowers: "Smalltown Healthcare"



Eric Beaman: "floridAIR House"



Indiana State University: Music Education

Indiana State (ISU) was one of the first universities to offer a music degree program (in 1977). In the last few years, it has added a foundational (or general) studies course titled Survey of Popular Music that is open to all students.

Ted Piechocinski, director of the music business program, is a former music publishing/copyright attorney and senior executive in the industry. He says the Survey of Popular Music class provides an opportunity for students to go much deeper in thought than simply enjoying a particular song or artist.

"It's not just about pop music; let's use that to say, 'What was going on in society, what was the effect on culture, what does business have to do with any of this?' In all of our conversations, I always want to make connections to today. I want kids to be able to look at life differently, to get out of their notions of what they like or dislike, to become more broad thinking."

Examples range from pre-Civil War minstrel performances to today's rap and hip-hop. The independence of women in the Roaring '20s is another theme.

"We talk economics; we talk history. Around week 14, I fess up to them and say, 'You're on to me. You know this isn't a course about American popular music. It's about pop culture; it's about our society,'" he explains. "By that time, they're invested and they're pretty much along for the ride with me."

On the degree side of the equation, Piechocinski estimates there are still only about 50 programs in the country. He values the fact that ISU students are "music students first." Beyond their performance work, their eyes are opened to a very broad industry.

"We prepare our students to be prepared for the opportunity to look at the industry, find where their interest is, find where there are openings to pursue that interest and have enough knowledge and skills and enthusiasm to know how to jump in there and be a part of it," he reveals. "To me, that's very exciting. I love it when my students say, 'I hadn't thought of that before.' The ones that scare me are the ones that come the first semester and say, 'Here's what I want to do.'"



Ted Piechocinski says he loves the wide range of topics available to students in the Survey of Popular Music class.

Samples of bizarre foods from Bloomington and around the world are available at a public event that concludes the annual class.



Indiana University: Bizarre Foods

Are you adjusting your diet to include balut, hakarl or durian? See the definitions at the bottom of this story and the answer to that question is likely a resounding, "No."

But students in the Indiana University Bizarre Foods class learn about these delicacies – in their cultures – and much more. Anthropologist Sonya Atalay developed the class several years ago before leaving the university. Sheena Ketchum taught the class in the spring of 2013.

She says her class included about 10 anthropology majors, 10 to 15 others filling a social science requirement and another five to 10 first-year students trying to figure out their course of study.

"It's a really fun class," Ketchum declares. "There is introductory anthropology, looking at how our cultural background affects the way we see the world. Food has the power to shape the way we experience the world. We have the ability to eat a whole range of things, but we don't."

After moving past the "yuck factor" early in class, other topics include competitive eating, seal consumption, cannibalism and more. The class concludes with a fair (the 200 free tickets went quickly in 2013) in which students present a variety of research projects and some of the bizarre foods are available.

One topic a year ago was the "McDonaldization" of culture as the fast food giant sports a near vegan menu in India, utilizes pita bread in Greece and substitutes rice for french fries in Japan.

For those who can't wait to know:

- Balut, a fertilized duck egg that is boiled and eaten alive in the shell, is popular in the Phillipines
- Hakarl, travel to Iceland for what Ketchum describes as "raw fermented rotten putrid shark meat"
- Durian, "the world's stinkiest fruit," is well-liked in Indonesia and Southeast Asia

As Ketchum aptly sums up, "In many ways our own food habits and traditions seem bizarre to other cultures."

Ivy Tech: Associate Accelerated Program (ASAP)

A one-year accelerated associate degree program piloted at four campus will expand to all 14 Ivy Tech regions by 2016. The program served 300 students – with a one-year completion rate of 70% – in Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Lafayette and South Bend in its first three years.

Paula Birt, ASAP director, details how it works.

“A typical college student has a lot of free time during the day. What we have found for this target population (2.5-3.2 grade point average with financial need and often not realizing in high school that they’re capable of going to college) is that free time is dangerous. They get off track.

“This is highly structured. Classes begin at 8:30 or 9:00 and they are here on campus engaged in formal or informal education/instructional activities until 5:00,” she continues. “It’s cohort based. There is a lockstep curriculum, classes are laid out for them. Support is built around them: their cohort and a faculty team with four instructors collaborating by not all having tests the same day and a shared final exam – one high-stakes project or product assessed by four different instructors rather than writing four different papers.”

Degrees are offered in health care support, computer information technology, general studies and business administration (with the latter two the most popular). Graduates are prepared to enter the workforce or transfer to a four-year institution.

The evolution, according to Birt: “The first eight weeks, they figure out they’re smart enough to do college and we see their confidence level rise. The next two terms, they figure out how to navigate college. By the time they complete with us, they believe they can do anything – they’ve done two years of college in one, they’ve worked harder than they ever thought they could, succeeded and feel like they can conquer the world. The majority will transfer and complete college. They see this as one step in their journey.”

The following regions will be added in the 2014-15 school year: Evansville, Columbus, Wabash Valley (Terre Haute), Richmond and East Central (Marion and Anderson). Birt anticipates recruiting 30 students per campus, with numbers as high as 150 in Indianapolis.

Esmeralda Alvarez says, “One of the best things about the (ASAP) program is the strong relationships I built with our teachers and the other students.”



Valparaiso University: Core

The university web site describe the year-long Core program for freshmen this way: “It’s about what it means, what it has meant and what it will mean in the future to be human.” The six units of study are origins, education, love, leadership and service, work and vocation, and life and death.

“One of the things that makes the Core special is you’re going to read religious or theological texts mixed in among the others,” states John Ruff, director of the program and a Valpo faculty member since 1989 (Core started in the late 1990s). “Not only does it provide certain basic intellectual skills, but it nurtures certain habits of mind and heart that we think are important. There is a service learning aspect and a focus on the ability to think and think critically.”

Enrollment in each section is capped at 20 students (51 sections and more than 30 faculty were part of the fall 2013 classes). Student reactions, Ruff says, range from, “This is another damn thing I have to do, to students for whom it’s a game-changer. They learn certain essential things about themselves and the world that go beyond what their expectations are.”

The six themes remain the same each year, but faculty members are chosen to select different texts. Each teacher spends four hours a week with students but a fifth hour with faculty in diverse disciplines. Students also have a fifth-hour obligation that includes participation in various campus programs and events.

Ruff terms it an unintended pleasant consequence that students get to know each other very well, particularly with one of their first papers on their own origins that is peer reviewed.

“We try to foster intellectual and emotional engagement. The second semester has a five-week unit on work and vocation. Many students come out of that knowing what they do or don’t want to do. In life and death, we go to a mortuary and a cemetery. Students might be experiencing death for the first time.”



John Ruff describes the comprehensive Core program as probably the “most difficult humanities course” for Valparaiso students but one that prepares them for the rest of their academic careers.

Trine students gain the ultimate hands-on experience through their work with Innovation One.



Trine University: Innovation One

A university working to assist businesses is not a new concept. But in taking over Trine's Innovation One incubator and accelerator, director Tom DeAgostino wanted to be sure the program was relevant.

"I said if we're going to do this, we need to really figure out what's needed out there. The phrase I use: 'We didn't want to be the answer to a question that no one asked.'" With that in mind, Innovation One provides services and collaboration to many of the plastics manufacturers in the area.

Innovation One works with businesses, organizations, community members and more as a regional resource. It's not just equipment and laboratories, but intellectual capital. While DeAgostino has 25 years of mechanical engineering experience in the auto industry, he says he employs business majors, chemists and students from a variety of other disciplines.

"We pride ourselves on our students being work ready (91% of Trine graduates find work related to their major course of study within six months)," he adds. "Our goal is to have every student experience a 'real world' project. Meeting deadlines, being flexible and changing direction on the fly – those are difficult to compartmentalize and teach in a classroom setting."

While important business projects have resulted, DeAgostino points to a special hands-free, automatic shower system designed by five senior students for a Fort Wayne man who was born without arms and only partial legs. This was the last hurdle to making his home fully accessible.

"The impact on the students was, 'Not only do we have to make this work because Terry is counting on us,' but it's the fulfillment of something larger than themselves. This was really life changing for this gentleman. Hopefully the students were taught you can use your engineering skills for something very important."

Franklin College: TheStatehouseFile.com

A goal, as with many college programs, is for students to apply what they have learned on campus into professional settings. Franklin College did that by having journalism students use the January term to write stories about the first month of the Indiana General Assembly session. In doing so, it was discovered that a greater need could be fulfilled.

John Krull, director of Franklin's Pulliam School of Journalism, elaborates: "I started getting calls from editors saying, 'We really like this. Any way you can keep doing this beyond January.'" Classroom obligations prompted an initial "no" answer. When the calls kept coming and newspapers offered to pay for the coverage, TheStatehouseFile.com (a year-round resource) was born.

"We charge a pretty modest fee," Krull clarifies, "then take the money and funnel it back to the students in scholarships. The kids get really excited about doing this. The idea was we were going to blur the lines between the classroom and the real world, and try to make the real world our classroom."

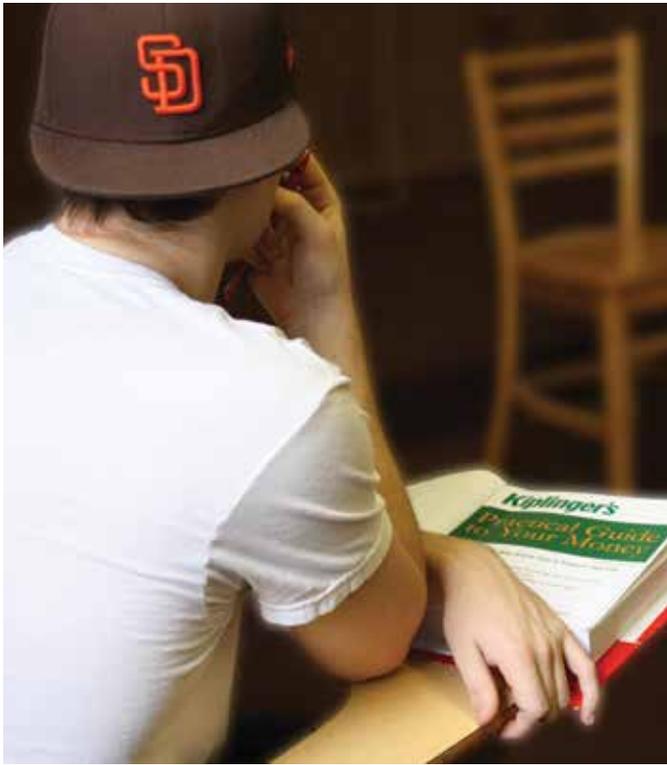
Leading newspapers and publications around the state are among those utilizing the student stories. Krull points out that it's not only a way to provide Statehouse coverage for their readers, "but it gives them a great way to begin identifying talent on the rise. They know these students are being prepared in ways that will make the transition to what they do pretty seamless."

The right-to-work battle of 2011 that resulted in House Democrats spending more than a month away from the Statehouse was a turning point for the Franklin students. They met the challenge of continuing to provide the coverage that was demanded on a story in which there was not activity on a daily basis. At that year's Society of Professional Journalists' awards event, the students earned first place.

"You could see in the room that this is more than just a little student project, that this is a serious enterprise," Krull shares.



Franklin College students, including Natavia Howell and John Sittler, are able to refine their reporting skills at a Statehouse news bureau that is housed at Emmis Communications.



Money, and how to successfully deal with it, is something many Manchester students learn about early in their college careers.

Manchester University: Financial Responsibility

No matter a student's course of study or future career plans, one lifelong benefit of their education could (and maybe should) be the ability to take care of their money. Manchester University tries to meet that need through its Financial Responsibility class.

"We look at a myriad of different financial issues, personal responsibility issues – credit, debt, credit cards, major purchases, long-term financial planning (sending children to college or retirement), insurance, investing taxes," reveals Jen Lutz, an associate professor of accounting and business. "I always start with lifestyle and how the choices you make will have a huge impact on your finances."

Students enroll for a variety of reasons, including to help their parents understand finances better and learn strategies to either pay off their own upcoming student debt or save from graduate school. Lutz knows one student who opened her own Roth individual retirement account. After one of the annual spring lectures by university president Jo Young Switzer on debt management, a student was waiting at the side of the stage after the talk, with her credit cards cut up in pieces.

Class discussions also extend to topics such as the housing crisis and how personal finance issues impact society. The course, offered six or seven times a year, always fills to capacity with approximately 30 students.

"I'd love to see the class required for everyone," Lutz confesses. "One of the things a lot of professors do is have the students do a financial plan for different scenarios of life. It wraps together everything they learn over the course of the semester."



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