

# Inside THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY

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NEWSLETTER  
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## School of Business Launches Fayette County MBA Classes

The School of Business' first MBA classes offered in Fayette County, Georgia began this January at the Dolce Atlanta – Peachtree Conference Center. These MBA classes offer students the possibility of obtaining their degree in less than 2 years, on a part-time basis and has attracted some "outstanding students," says Dr. Michael Deis, MBA Director and Associate Professor of Management. The 14 graduate students represent a variety of impressive career experiences, such as CEO of a technology firm, Vice President of Real Estate Services, Logistics Administration Manager, and Director of Marketing for a medical firm.

Dr. Louis Jourdan, Associate Professor of Management, says his first

impressions of the Fayette class have been "...good because this is a group of highly motivated people. I'm particularly impressed with how well they work in teams on group projects. Like the fall cohort on the Clayton State University campus, these students really pull together and help each other out. This is the kind of group I learn from; they have



very good insights and great discussions." According to Dr. George E. Nakos, Professor of Marketing, both the Clayton campus cohort and Fayette County class "are very good, but the programs tend to appeal to different types of students."

Nakos explains that the Clayton State cohort tends to attract younger professionals from the Atlanta metro area that have been out of undergraduate studies for 3 to 5 years. The Fayette group holds their classes in an established area where there are older families, thus attracting older, more seasoned executives with an average age of 40 to 55. Generally, the younger professionals at Clayton State hope to use their MBA as a springboard to another position. For the Fayette group, the students' goals tend to be advancement of their current careers. Regardless of which group students are part of, one thing remains constant, they are receiving education and experience that will change their careers' trajectory.

## Biomass Gas and Electric CEO to Speak at Business Conference



Glenn Farris, President and CEO of Biomass Gas and Electric (BG&E) will speak on February 20<sup>th</sup> at the School's Business Conference located in Spivey

Hall at 6:00 p.m.

Each semester, the School of Business hosts the Business Conference to address broad business issues and their implications for corporations and society. The most recent speakers were Professor John Mascaritolo whose presentation was "A Behind the

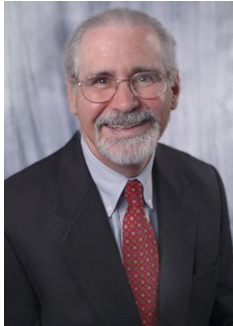
Scenes Look at the 1996 Olympic Games Through Use of Logistics Management," and Mr. Harsha Agadi, CEO of Church's Chicken. This semester's conference will focus on energy issues that are playing prominently in local, national, and global communities. According to Dr. Michael Tidwell, Acting Director of Marketing and Communications, "The Business Conference is designed to address issues of local, national, and international importance while showing students that classroom discussions have real world application. Between the oil crisis, Georgia's drought, and the debate over global warming, energy is one of today's top issues. Americans are grappling with these issues on a day-to-day

basis."

Mr. Farris will speak on "Energy in Georgia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Myths and The Realities." Farris has 30 years of experience in the energy field, ranging from drilling gas wells to building natural gas plants. He has spent the last 20 years focusing on renewable energy, which he defines as, "Sustainable energy - energy that happens as a fact of nature, such as wind or hydro or geothermal, or energy we grow, such as biomass. It's naturally reoccurring fuel." His program is geared for the consumer worrying about gas prices to the student who realizes their energy manage-

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## February's Faculty Research Profile



For School of Business faculty members, intellectual contributions are key to providing students a quality education. In addition to teaching and service,

the faculty engage in scholarly activities. They publish and present their research findings in journals and at conferences, but most importantly, the faculty incorporate their work into curriculum content for their students. This effort ensures that the faculty members are current in their fields of discipline and are able to teach their students about emerging trends and cutting-edge business concepts.

This month, the newsletter's Faculty Profile interviews Dr. Gary May, Associate Professor of Management.

**Q:** Dr. May, can you please describe your research program?

**A:** I'm currently focusing on ways to improve the peer evaluation process in

team projects. I've published two refereed journal articles, a literature review of best practices for group member assessments, and an empirical study on the effect of social style on peer evaluation ratings in project teams.

**Q:** Can you tell the readers about one of your latest publications?

**A:** My latest research paper, which has been accepted for publication in 2008 in the *Business Communication Quarterly*, tests the effect of a rater-training program on reducing social style bias in project team peer evaluations. The test group that received the rater-training program exhibited significantly less ratings bias when compared to the control group.

**Q:** How do you apply your research in the classroom?

**A:** Like many college instructors, I use peer evaluation as part of the grading system in collaborative team projects to control "social loafing" and evaluate student contributions to both process and task. Based on my research, I now in-

clude in all my classes a Web-based training program on how to do peer evaluation. My research indicates that the training reduces bias and improves the validity and reliability of the ratings. Objectivity is particularly important when peer evaluations are used for grading purposes.

**Q:** What are the implications of your research for society?

**A:** Since teams are an integral part of the workplace, my research has application for business leaders, as well as instructors in academia. We want team members to evaluate peer behaviors based on contribution to task and process in their team projects, not based on personality, race, gender, or other factors. Everyone needs to be taught how to accurately assess the performance of others. Based on my research, I believe all businesses should include rater-training as part of the support system for teams when peer evaluations are required.

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## Business Conference (cont. from page 1)

ment is a viable career opportunity.

Farris plans to address the United States' roll in supply, import, and use of oil, coal and natural gas, then narrow the focus to Georgia, which has no indigenous fuel other than biomass

and renewables. According to Farris, "What I find scary in the marketplace is that there's more and more competition for these fuels, and the use of them is growing because of economic growth in developing countries. That's not good news. That's why prices continue to go up. States with

*The Business Conference is designed to address issues of local, national, and international importance.*

access to traditional fuel sources will start protecting them more. Where does that leave Georgia? Fuel is going to become a concern like water. But there are other ways to do things. We have to explore alternative fuel sources."

Farris' company, BG&E, is a renewable energy project development company located in Atlanta, Georgia. Their renewable energy projects provide a range of electricity, gas, and/or steam outputs directly to an industrial customer as well as transmitting electricity to the utility grid.

## Upcoming Events

### Business Conference

Mr. Glenn Farris, CEO of BioMass Gas and Electric is speaking on, "Energy in Georgia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Myths and The Realities". The presentation is being held in Spivey Hall on Wednesday, February 20 @ 6 p.m. For more info call Mike at (678) 466-4546. Admission is free.

### Speakers Series

Mr. Ercell Charles, VP of Instruction for Dale Carnegie, Inc. is speaking on "Personal Branding for Today's College Grads" at 12 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12. Location TBD.