

2 + 2 at WVVSU

State offers cost-, time-saving engineering program in conjunction with WVU

By Clint Thomas
METRO STAFF

Two years “here” plus two years “there” can equal a four-year engineering degree through the 2+2 educational program offered by West Virginia State University and West Virginia University.

It’s a money- and time-saving equation where students can launch their pursuits of civil, industrial or mechanical degrees on WVSU’s Institute campus and complete their studies at WVU in Morgantown or WVU Tech in Montgomery (or Beckley, if current plans to relocate apply in the future).

The WVSU segment of the 2+2 program provides a 15:1 student-to-faculty ratio, allowing more personalized attention. Students can take four semesters in pre-industrial, pre-civil and pre-mechanical engineering classes in Institute and integrate them into advanced courses at either WVU site.

The 2+2 program was established at WVSU, with support from local stakeholders, to meet demand for a cost-efficient engineering program in the Kanawha Valley.

“As a fellow land-grant institution in the state of West Virginia with a stellar engineering program, West Virginia University was the obvious choice for the university to partner with, providing a valuable opportunity for our students to pursue a civil, industrial or mechanical engineering degree,” said WVSU Vice President for University Relations and Operations Vice President Kimberly Osborne.

After developing a pre-engineering curriculum at WVSU, an articulation agreement was signed in fall 2013 and the first cohort of students began 2+2 classes at State in fall 2014, Osborne added.

WVSU students who successfully complete the two-year engineering program at WVSU can transfer seamlessly into the WVU system for their final two years of study to complete an engineering degree in civil, industrial or mechanical engineering, she said.

“West Virginia State University works diligently to meet its mission of meeting the higher education and economic development needs of the state and region,” Osborne explained. “West Virginia State University provides business

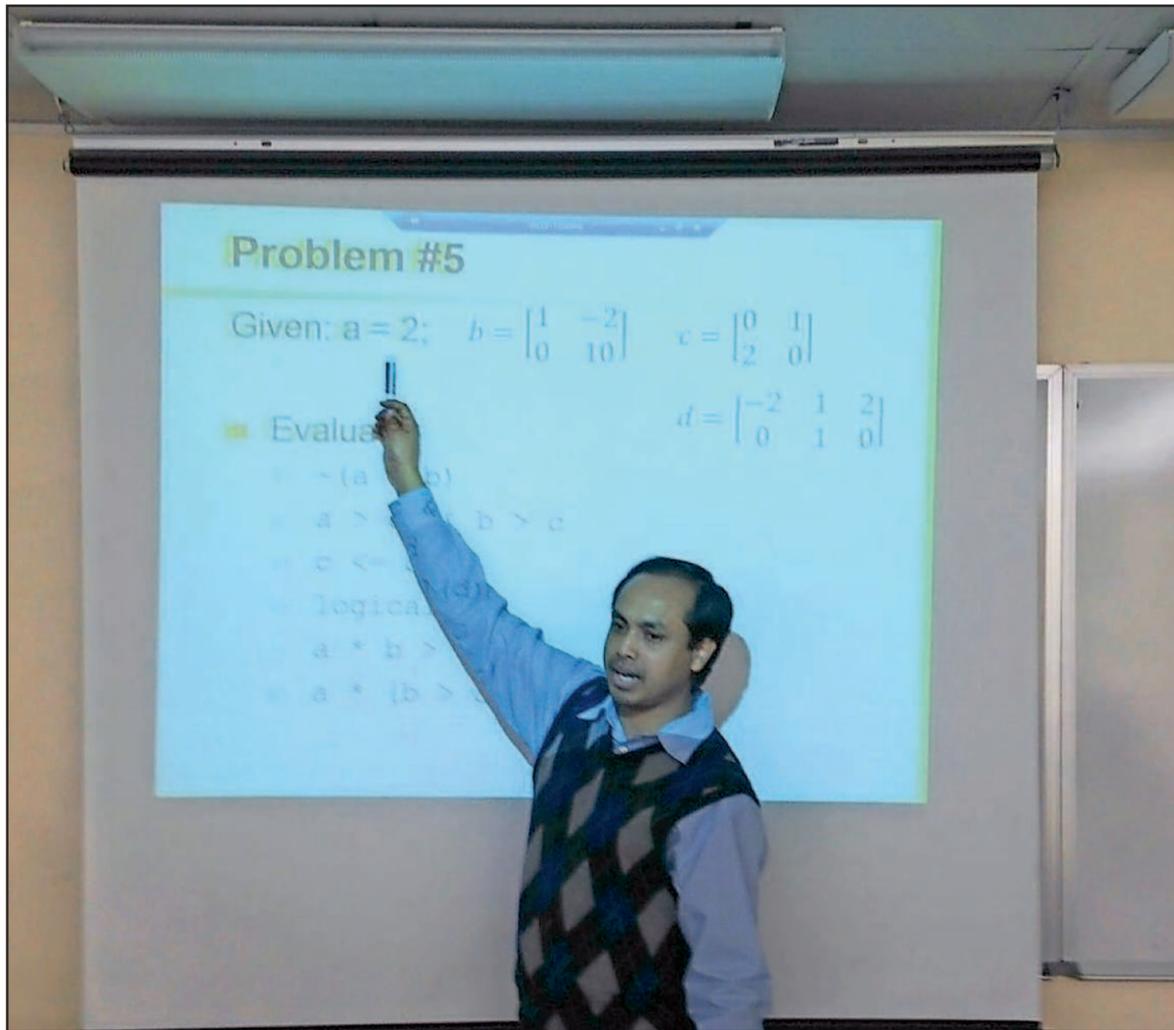


Photo by CLINT THOMAS

West Virginia State University Professor Mohammad Bhuiyan discusses metrics in a recent Intro to Problem Solving engineering class in Institute.



Bhuiyan



Eskins



Miller



Crain

and industry with capable, knowledgeable leaders to propel our local, state, national and global economy to an even brighter future. Agreements such as this add to the university’s abilities to connect students’ passions with the education needed to succeed in their chosen profession — often in-demand industries related to science, technology, engineering and math, or STEM.

“As documented by many scholars, the nation needs

more STEM leaders and, as a research institution with the most diverse student body in the state, WVSU has the ability to meet the STEM demand by partnering with WVU. The engineering program is one such example of WVU’s commitment to supporting our community, state and regional economy and meeting its needs today and long into the future,” Osborne said.

During the current spring

semester at WVSU, 10 students are enrolled in the WVSU 2+2 engineering program. Six are focusing on civil engineering, two are pursuing industrial engineering and the remain four are engaged in mechanical engineering studies.

“We are encouraged by the success of the program and believe WVSU will quickly attract more students to participate in this partnership due to WVSU’s affordability and commitment to one-on-one learning — preparing our students to turn their passion for STEM subjects into successful careers,” said Osborne.

Logan Crain, a 20-year-old Sissonville resident, is a sophomore in the 2+2 program, pursuing mechanical engineering. Upon completion of his WVSU classes, he

intends to transfer to WVU’s Morgantown campus to complete his engineering degree.

“I like having a program closer to home,” Crain said. “It gives me a good perspective about what all is involved, what kind of classes there are.”

Crain’s stepbrother, Nathan Miller, also of Sissonville, is studying civil engineering at WVSU. “I like how the classes are more one on one,” he said. “I’ve pretty much been building stuff all my life, so civil engineering was what I wanted to do. I like that it’s closer and the classes are smaller; it’s more like high school -- it’s not like you’re going into a classroom of 300 people.”

Caleb Eskins, who commutes to and from St. Albans and the WVSU campus, is focusing on industrial engi-

neering and plans to attend WVU Tech upon completion of the 2+2 studies. As well as the academic advantages the program gives him, he said there are other pluses to the endeavor.

“It’s definitely affordable. More than that, it’s the staff here. To be perfectly honest, I haven’t had a professor I haven’t liked or that hasn’t been as helpful as I hoped they would be. They’ve all been more than willing to stay after class. In fact, just before this class, I had my Physics for Scientists and Engineers class and my professor stayed an extra 20 minutes.”

WVSU Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering Mohammad Bhuiyan began instructing 2+2 program classes a year ago. He sees numerous advantages to the WVSU approach and enumerated a few of them after a recent class session.

“When I was an undergraduate, I studied in a larger situation, but I was a number,” Bhuiyan said. “When you go to a large school -- let’s say, Georgia Tech -- they’d don’t know a person’s name. When you have some students -- not all, just one or two -- who need special help, they’re not going to get it at a bigger school, but they get it here.

“Success in an engineering program depends upon your basics and foundations. Here, you see, they are learning what’s important. I can tell you from my own undergraduate experience, I saw many of my friends, when they came to the university, they became like ‘freebirds.’

Away from your parents, in your freshman or sophomore year, you say, ‘What happened?’ You’re a freebird academically. If you’re lacking a fundamental knowledge [of the material], then you’re going to struggle in your junior and senior years.

“Here, they’re getting one-on-one attention. We can alleviate their concerns and they can come to us personally during office hours, and that makes that foundation much better for them than a traditional, four-year program,” Bhuiyan said.

For more information on the 2+2 engineering program, contact WVSU Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering Dr. Mohammad Bhuiyan at 304-766-3087 or towhid@wvstateu.edu.

WVSU’s Engineering program website URL is: www.wvstateu.edu/engineering.aspx

WVU Engineers Week to feature lectures, competitions, prizes

A full slate of activities, including lectures by two corporate executives, the chance to win great prizes and a first-ever video competition, highlight a week of activities planned in the Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources at West Virginia University as part of National Engineers Week, scheduled for Feb. 21-27.

The week of events, which is sponsored by The Williams Companies, kicks off on Monday, Feb. 22, with a lecture by Kim Simpson, director of product operations at Continental Tire’s Mount Vernon, Illinois, location. The lecture, entitled, “What Motivates Me,” will be held at 10 a.m., in room G38, of the Engineering Sciences Building. A reception follows. Simpson, a self-proclaimed tire builder, has spent the past nine years at Continental in a variety of leadership positions. Attendees will have the chance to win an Apple iPad at the conclusion of the lecture.

On Tuesday, Feb. 23, David Wade, vice president at Air BP America’s Performance Unit, will present a lecture on leadership. The event will be held at 9 a.m., in room 101, of the National Research Center for Coal and Energy. Wade, whose efforts are focused on commercial development of growth projects in supply and marketing of aviation fuel, was recognized as a Business Leader of Color by Chicago United in 2013. In 2015 he received the Multicultural Leadership Reward from the

“Engineers Week is a wonderful opportunity for us to share the important work being done by our students and faculty with the rest of the university and the community at large.”

— Gene Cilento, Glen H. Hiner Dean of the Statler College

Illinois Diversity Council. Attendees will have the chance to win an Apple Watch at the conclusion of the lecture.

The Eaton Corporation will host Engineer Appreciation Day on Wednesday, Feb. 24. From 8:30 to 10 a.m., students will be treated to a pancake breakfast on the first floor of the Engineering Sciences Building. At 11 a.m., students are invited to test their trivia knowledge by playing “Jeopardy” in the ESB atrium. Boxed lunches will be provided.

Rounding out the day is the Engineering Career Fair, featuring a LinkedIn photo booth, from noon to 2 p.m., in the ESB lobby. Approximately 20 companies will be in attendance.

“Career fairs are one of the best and most direct ways for students to connect with employers regarding internships, co-ops and full-time employment,” said Sarah Glenn, associate director of employer relations in WVU’s Career Services Center. “In the age of virtual recruiting, students should take advan-

tage of that fact that so many employers will be located in the hallways of the Engineering Sciences Building during Engineers Week.”

A new event – an interdisciplinary video contest – challenges students to answer the age-old question: “What do engineers do?”

“We often get asked what students can do with an engineering degree,” said Mary Dillon, director of marketing and communications in the Statler College. “We’ve decided to go straight to the source – our students – for the answer.”

The contest, which is open to students in all disciplines

at WVU, challenges teams of no more than three students to produce a video of 90 seconds or less that helps answer the question. Teams must be interdisciplinary – they cannot include students in the same major – and must include at least one engineer.

Members of the winning team will each receive a Go-Pro Hero+ HD action camera with members of the second-place team each receiving \$50 Best Buy gift cards.

Other events scheduled during the week include the college’s second annual essay contest, which is an effort to increase the public dialogue about the need for engineers and to bring engineering to life for students, educators and parents.

Also scheduled are the annual Society of Women Engineers formal and Merit Badge University for Boy Scouts, both planned for Saturday, Feb. 27.

Additional financial support of these activities has been provided by The Thrasher Group.

“Engineers Week is a wonderful opportunity for us to share the important work being done by our students and faculty with the rest of the university and the community at large,” said Gene Cilento, Glen H. Hiner Dean of the Statler College. “It’s also a chance for us to celebrate our students. We are grateful to our sponsors – The Williams Companies, Eaton and The

Thrasher Group – for their financial support of these events.”

Founded in 1951 by the National Society of Professional Engineers, National Engineers Week is an annual event that celebrates professionals in all fields of engineering and computing.

(Source: www.WVU.edu)



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