

**RESOLUTION,
CONTINUED**

Cheating Scandal:

Edwards said two major incidents of cheating within the MMJ program from 2017 to 2018, which accounted for a 60% loss in graduates, was not an extenuating circumstance the ADHE would consider when reviewing program viability. "A cheating scandal of that proportion, even if it's 100% accurate, seems to matter zero to the Department of Higher Education Coordinating Board," Edwards said.

The AHECB annual review of program viability graphic lists three circumstances in which ADHE staff would determine a program warrants special consideration. If it is central to the school's mission or has a history of high wage, demand job placement, the program continues with reduced viability standards for five years. ADHE staff will also make a special consideration in the event of a data submission correction, in which the program meets viability standards and continues to receive state support.

Edwards said since the ADHE does not consider cheating scandals a reason

for special consideration, departments that experience similar cheating incidents may not feel inclined to properly discipline cheating students.

"I think a small department that is on the bubble with their numbers would be foolish, in light of this, to ever institute academic discipline ever again," Edwards said. "Because if you lost several majors, you would go below and the higher education coordinating board does not care why you go below. They only want to know 'What are your numbers?'"

Resolution:

Associate professor of chemistry John Hershberger, Ph.D., presented the resolution he created with associate professor of English Khem Aryal, Ph.D., and Edwards.

The resolution said, "The University commits to providing the resources and data for faculty to be empowered to fulfill their duties, including but not limited to teaching, research, service and administrative tasks."

Hershberger said when faculty would previously ask for data, the administration would often not provide it.

"The impression we would get was 'Well you don't need to know that,' or, 'We don't want to give that,' and why that is, I don't know," Hershberger said.

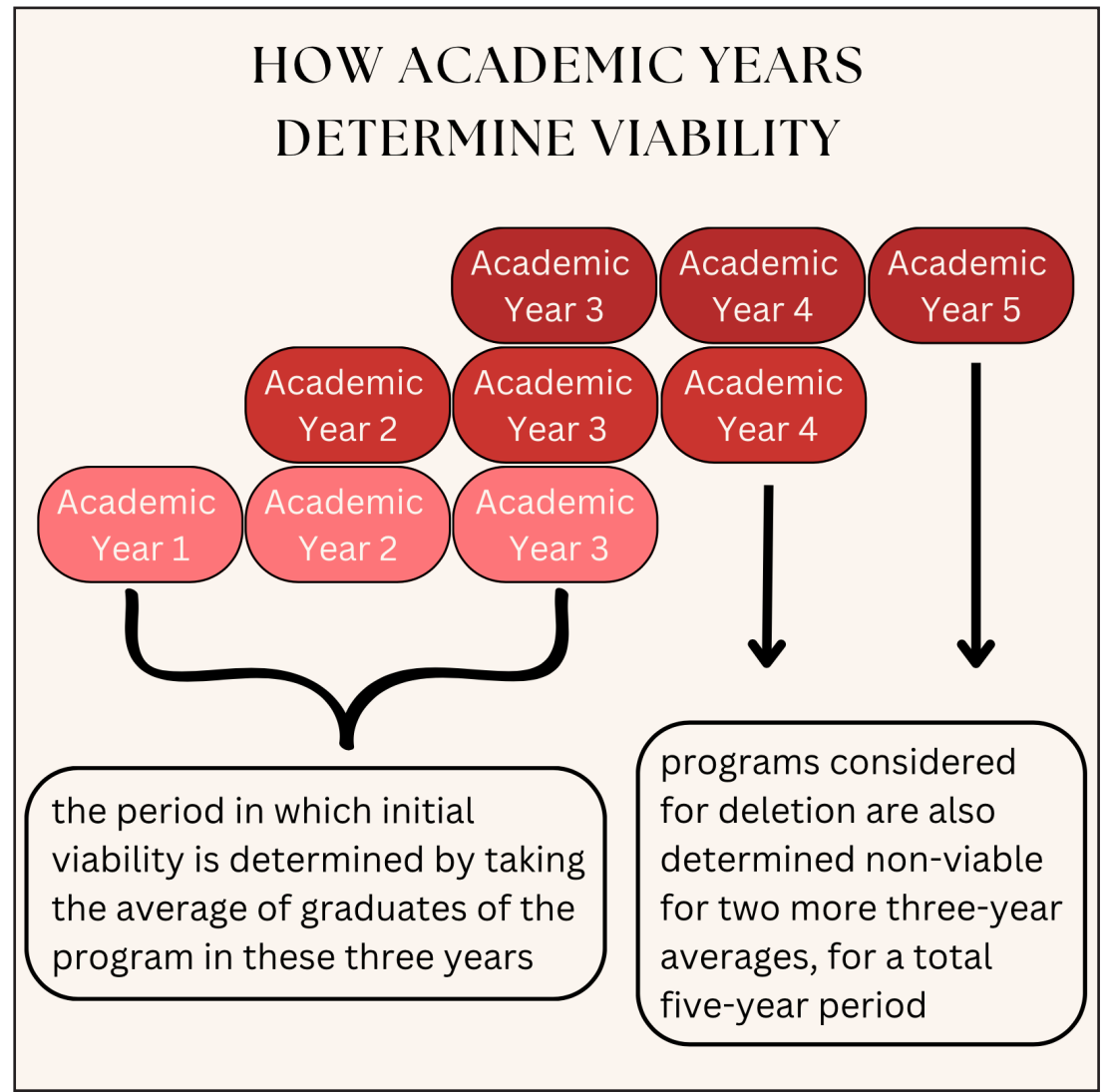
The resolution requested A-State administration provide faculty with any relevant rulings from the ADHE as decisions are made and to clearly document that communication.

Additionally, the resolution requested the administration design a system for faculty to easily access information without having to request it from the administration. The resolution said faculty should have access to information like degree enrollment data, graduation data, and the demographics of current and former students in a program.

"It's always a struggle to get this data," Hershberger said. "It's something we would like to ask the university to help us with so that we can more effectively do our jobs."

The resolution passed unanimously via voice vote.

For a full copy of the resolution, visit the faculty senate page on the A-State website.



Graphic by Caroline Averitt | Life Editor

The graphic above depicts the ADHE program viability policy, specifically regarding how academic years determine viability.

A-State celebrates Darwin Day with paleontologist guest speakers

SHAILEY WOOLDRIDGE

COPY EDITOR

A paleontologist from Dinosaur National Monument and faculty from the New York Institute of Technology discussed evolutionary biology through the lens of paleontology to celebrate Darwin Day.

Andrew Sweet, committee chair of Darwin Day, said one of the goals of the event is to make evolutionary biology more accessible.

"Evolution is not so much a subfield of biology as it is a lens through which we view biology," Sweet said. "Darwin Day is therefore not necessarily a celebration of Darwin himself but an opportunity and a nice alliteration for the day to highlight how evolution plays an integral role and understanding how life works, both now and in the past."

Sweet said Darwin didn't invent evolutionary biology or even come up with the idea of evolution or natural selection first, but his book "The Origin of Species" was a turning point in how people think about evolution in science.

"One area that's especially relevant to evolutionary biology

is paleontology. Darwin himself was really interested in fossils and actually one of his main roles on the famous voyage of the Beagle was as a geologist to collect fossils from all over the world," Sweet said.

The event featured guest speaker ReBecca Hunt-Foster, a monumental paleontologist at Dinosaur National Monuments. In 2003 Hunt-Foster did a study on the only dinosaur fossil found in Arkansas, informally named *Arkansurus* Friday and found it to be an unknown species of dinosaur.

"There's a lot of really cool fossils around the state of Arkansas and a lot of them are marine fossils that are older than dinosaurs, so that's cool that we have all these abundant marine fossils but that we also have some cool dinosaurs that have never really been studied and that are kind of new to the science," Hunt-Foster said.

Hunt-Foster said she wanted to speak at A-State because she grew up in Arkansas, so she wanted to share information about fossils found around the state.

The roundtable Feb. 14 featured four paleontologists who teach at NYIT to

share their expertise.

Karen Poole, Ph.D., said she wanted to be a paleontologist from a young age and her enthusiasm for the field grew when she went on a dig in Utah at 14 years old and found a *Datasaurus* femur taller than her.

Poole now studies Iguanodontians, a group of herbivorous dinosaurs that lived in the middle Jurassic to late Cretaceous periods, using CT scanning to reconstruct the bone structure of fossil features.

Adam Cossette, Ph.D., studies both modern and fossil relatives of the modern American alligator.

"I'm very concerned with looking at biotic change over long timescales into both short timescales and I'm also interested in looking at how biology changes as a result of environmental disruptions, especially climate change," Cossette said.

Cossette said he found a new species of alligator in the Tupelo tongue in Mississippi he named *Deinosuchus Schwimmer* after David Schwimmer, a paleontologist at Columbus State University.

Todd Green, Ph.D., said he studies living animals to



Photo by Shailey Wooldridge | Copy Editor

(From left) Paleontologists Jason Bourke, Adam Cossette, Todd Green, Karen Pool and Darwin Day committee chair Andrew Sweet. The Four Paleontologists hosted a roundtable on Feb. 14 to share their expertise.

better understand extinct animals and particularly enjoys big flightless birds.

"Some of us go in on gigs trying to find fossils, trying to understand piecing together the animals that were once alive. I'm actually working backward. We're trying to understand some of these living animals to better understand the extinct animals," Green said.

Jason Bourke, Ph.D., is a vertebrate paleontologist specializing in functional

morphology. Bourke said a lot of his work is in soft tissue reconstruction and paleophysiology.

Bourke said a question he gets at the beginning of every school year is 'Why are paleontologists teaching at a med school?'

"It helps to have people who study anatomy and know it well teach anatomy to that next generation," Bourke said. "Whether it's a crocodile, cassowary or human being, a vertebrate's

a vertebrate and we all share basically the same structures."

Isabella Davis, a junior biology student from Beebe, Ark., said she learned more about different rock formations, fossils and paleontology as a field.

"It's a great way to learn more about science and get involved," Davis said. "The roundtable was a great way to learn about the different research opportunities out there in the field of paleontology."

CAMPUS CRIME

JERRY DON BURTON

NEWS EDITOR

Feb. 18 | 1:59 a.m.

Sgt. Chase Barnett was parked on Johnson at the intersection of Caraway Road, when he heard a car accelerating aggressively. He observed a black

Mustang traveling eastbound on Johnson at a high rate of speed. Barnett attempted to lock the speed of the car on radar, however, a slower-moving vehicle speed was locked.

The vehicle in question was traveling over double the posted speed limit, so much so that

when the vehicle attempted to turn onto University Loop, it failed to maintain its lane. Prior to turning onto University Loop, the vehicle changed lanes after overtaking a slower-moving vehicle.

Upon stopping the vehicle, officers made contact with the

driver, Suspect One. Suspect One admitted he was speeding because of "the temptation of the long straight away".

Officer Barnett detected the odor of alcoholic beverages coming from Suspect One's breath and asked him to step out. Suspect One stated he had

two beers earlier in the evening.

Barnett checked Suspect One's eyes and conducted a horizontal gaze nystagmus (HGN) test. A HGN test is a sobriety test used to test for the involuntary jerking of eyeballs. Suspect One completed the HGN test and Barnett did not

observe signs of impairment.

Suspect One was allowed to enter his vehicle while Barnett issued a citation arrest for reckless driving due to his speed and failure to maintain lane.

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CAMPUS CRIME, 4A