First Students Set to Graduate from Online Master’s Programs

Twelve students will be graduating in June with master’s degrees they earned enrolled in MUM’s online offerings – the first students to earn degrees online.

Having completed three years of coursework, 10 will receive a Master of Science in Maharishi AyurVedaSM and Integrative Medicine and two a Master of Arts in Maharishi Vedic ScienceSM.

Both programs launched in 2014. In addition to the graduating students, each program has a healthy enrollment of continuing students who will graduate in future years: 26 in integrative medicine and 17 in Maharishi Vedic Science.

“We are so proud of all our students. They work hard, are goal-oriented, focused, and they are committed,” said Vanessa Haskins, online student services coordinator for MUM’s Department of Distance Education.

Students view recorded lectures online and participate in live webinars every week or two, asking questions and participating in discussion. They also have the opportunity to participate in an online forum. Plus, integrative medicine students come to campus for five days each year for an in-residence training course.

Some of the online courses are also available as non-credit courses to interested students who are not seeking a master’s degree. The recently completed course on the Bhagavad Gita, for example, had 18 students, with half of those taking the course just for the enjoyment.

See www.mum.edu/mum-online.

58 Students to Graduate with MUM Degrees in South Africa

Last weekend Maharishi Invincibility Institute in Johannesburg, South Africa, held ceremonies for their graduating students, with 58 expected to earn bachelor’s degrees in business from MUM by June graduation on campus, bringing the total number of MUM degrees awarded to MII students to 235.

Students at MII enroll in MUM courses during their third and fourth years of undergraduate work, receiving live lectures from MUM faculty via the internet.

“They really appreciate the education they are receiving from MUM faculty,” said Morad Malekghassemi, MUM’s director of the international business program. “Many of them have written to me to express their appreciation. Our faculty work hard to understand the students’ needs.

Students in the graduating class at Maharishi Invincibility Institute in Johannesburg, South Africa, earned bachelor’s degrees in business from Maharishi University of Management.
 CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 and to ensure that they are grasping the content of the lectures.”

The ceremony last weekend also included 35 students who had received an MBA or a post-graduate diploma from MUM in the past four years.

All the students at MII practice both the Transcendental Meditation® technique and TM-Sidhi® program.

Mr. Malekghassemi said that enrollment continues to increase at MII, since it’s one of the few low-cost institutions of higher education in South Africa. Another 55 students are expected to graduate with MUM business degrees in December, and another 85 have registered with MUM in recent months and have begun taking MUM classes.

Further, he anticipates that an additional 120–150 will enroll with MUM within the next year.

“On behalf of the graduating students and the country of South Africa, we are deeply grateful to the wonderful and dedicated faculty of MUM,” said Taddy Blecher, CEO of Maharishi Invincibility Institute. “They have given our students knowledge for a lifetime of success, through the profound system of Consciousness-Based education brought by our shared founder Maharishi. Most of the graduates are already placed in jobs.”

The students at MII are from 17 countries across Africa.

MUM professor Gabriel Akura traveled from MII to preside over the recent graduation.

The Review

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FROM THE FOUNDER

“Transcendental Meditation leads the mind to inner happiness, bringing inner contentment which results in right thinking and a true sense of values. Inner contentment leads naturally to increased tolerance and the capacity to harmonize conflicting relationships. Spontaneous love of others brings mutual harmony.”

— Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Science of Being

Campus MakerSpace Offers New Sewing Studio

The Fairfield MakerSpace, housed in the science wing of the MUM library, now has a new sewing studio in room 139, thanks to a trove of equipment from a generous donor.

The roster of equipment includes an industrial-grade, straight-stitch sewing machine, four regular sewing machines, two sergers, and a blind hemmer. The industrial machine is powerful enough to easily sew canvas, drapery, and upholstery fabric, said Leslie Hollis, who along with Lyndi Ouellette has been coordinating the makerspace since January.

She said that a serger creates an overlocking stitch by combining four threads. It’s ideal for use with stretchy fabrics, such as knits or lycra, for garment seams that may get a lot of wear, or for fabrics whose cut edges can unravel easily.

The blind hemmer can precisely prick a few threads of the fabric and create a stitch that is only visible on the backside of a hem fold. “It’s fascinating to watch this machine in action,” Ms. Hollis said.

The sewing studio cutting table is a 5’ x 8’ wooden frame on wheels, topped with a Homasote board that has small metal rulers attached to the top edge of each 8’ side. Homasote is a dense board made from recycled paper. Ms. Hollis said that a benefit of having a paper fiber top is that you can write on it and cut on it, since the dense paper fiber is “self-healing.”

Because the table had been used primarily for measuring and marking drapery, it has many line markings for folding and pressing that can be used for other applications such as making pillow cases, napkins, curtains, and tote bags. The Homasote surface can also withstand heat from an iron, so measuring, cutting, and pressing can be done more efficiently.

During Open Sew hours visitors will be assisted by Pam Ryerse, who has a background in the sewing industry. Work-study assistant Jackie Kumer, who is becoming familiar with the new equipment, will be joining her. The cost is $5 per session for non-members.

The Fairfield MakerSpace, which is a membership supported, community workspace, also has a wood and metal shop in room 141 in the science wing of the MUM library. Tools include an industrial milling machine, belt sander, chop saw, two band saws, a wood planer, a jointer, a horizontal band saw for metal, a MIG welder, a slip roller and shear, and two wood lathes that are in the process of being made ready for use.

Ms. Hollis credits former Fairfield MakerSpace directors Dora Pollak and Kris Johnson for doing much of the initial work to get the space cleared out and organized as a community makerspace workshop.

Among the events offered by the makerspace is the popular Creative Furniture Making workshop, with the next one being held on Sunday, May 7, 1:30–4:30 p.m. The cost is $45, or $30 for students.

For more information, please email fairfieldmakerspace@gmail.com. To see a listing of Open Sew hours, or to register for the workshop, visit the website at www.fairfieldmakerspace.com.

Pam Ryerse
Agriculture Students Begin Planting; Veggie Processing Building Renovated

Seeds are sprouting, and the renovation of the vegetable processing building is proceeding quickly, as the new program in organic agriculture gets off to a strong start.

When complete, the Center for Regenerative Organic Agriculture, which lies immediately north of the grain elevator that borders campus, will comprise classrooms, offices, a greenhouse, a composting facility, kitchen, produce processing areas, 26 acres of land, and more.

The 12 students in the program have started seeds in the two greenhouses near the creek on the east side of campus. They will soon be moving those to their plots at the agriculture center or to the greenhouse that is nearing completion.

The students have divided in two groups of six, and each group has a 40 x 100 ft. plot.

“We wanted them to have a manageable area so that they get a maximum learning experience,” said farm manager Kris Johnson. “They can use their plots to try different things and not have to worry about failure.”

Mr. Johnson and assistant farm manager Dan Harvey themselves have a third plot that will demonstrate best practices.

Extensive renovation of the 4,800-square-foot sheet-metal building at the Center includes large windows on the west and south sides for ample day-lighting, and a new entrance on the east side. A greenhouse is currently being installed on the south side.

The building will primarily be used for cleaning and storing vegetables, as well as storing equipment. Other amenities will include lockers, a changing area, bathrooms, and showers. A loft area will include a small library of books on agriculture as well as a curing area for garlic, onions, and squash.

The large central room in the building will have stations for washing vegetables and putting them into storage tubs. They will then be moved to one of two walk-in coolers, each at a different temperature depending on the type of vegetable.

The large room on the north side of the building has a garage door entrance and will be used as a workshop for repairing tools and tractors.

Several other smaller areas are available for general use.

The building renovation is also serving as a demonstration of how students can create low-cost processing facilities once they graduate. Instead of using steel bins for washing, staff have built wooden frames that will hold low-cost plastic bins. Similarly, the walk-in coolers will use ordinary window air conditioners that have been modified to output lower temperatures, costing a fraction of commercial equipment.

A composting area east of the building has now been created, and a hoop building is being constructed.

Construction of a new classroom/office building at the Center for Regenerative and Organic Agriculture is expected to begin this summer.

Maharishi School Grad Posted at Liberian Embassy

Colette “Coco” Clark, a 2011 graduate of Maharishi School, has recently been hired by the U.S. State Department as a Foreign Service Officer. Her first posting will be at the U.S. embassy in Liberia, beginning in June.

Ms. Clark is the daughter of Fran Clark and the late Henry Ogden Clark of Fairfield. She received a Bachelor of Science in foreign service, summa cum laude, from Georgetown University in 2015 and a Master of Arts in security studies the following year, also from Georgetown.

She is proficient in Arabic and has worked for the past two years at the Department of Justice on legal negotiations between the U.S. government and Middle Eastern countries.

Foreign service officers spend their career serving at a variety of locations around the world. They are expected to be skilled in representing the interests of the United States in economic, political, and cultural matters. They help overseas Americans in distress and process visa applications for those wanting to visit the U.S. for the first time.

Ms. Clark will also handle a portfolio of interests encompassing environmental, energy, and trade policies.

Liberia, located on the western coast of Africa, is the continent’s oldest modern republic, enjoying a stable democratic government whose president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 for her work in international peacekeeping.

Campus Outdoor Lighting Repaired

In an effort to upgrade appearance and improve safety, facilities management has recently repaired 18 light poles on campus that haven’t worked in years.

A legacy of Parsons College, the light poles repaired include about eight on the old part of campus, about five along Swan drive (the east-west road immediately north of Crow Creek), and about five around the west end of the library.

In some cases, the repairs have included digging trenches and burying cable to connect the poles to a power source. Often the fixtures themselves have needed repair.

“The biggest effort has been old campus,” said Nathan Gerdes, maintenance and grounds manager. “That area has been dark for so many years. When we were doing the repairs, we saw that area has a lot more traffic than we realized.”

Future plans include repairing another 10–15 lights, Mr. Gerdes said. “The recent project was part of an overall goal to get every light working on campus.”

The forthcoming repairs will include light poles around the residence halls known as “frats,” poles around the high-rise residence halls, and poles on the south edge of the Men’s Dome and the parking lot south of the Men’s Dome – an area that Mr. Gerdes said has historically been dark.
New Development in North Campus Village Sells Out, More Planned

All 56 units in the new phase 5 development in North Campus Village have now been sold, including 20 townhomes that have been completed and 36 units (townhomes and one-story triplexes and duplexes) that will be finished in the next 1.5–2 years.

Because of the strong demand, the developers now have tentative plans to begin another development in two years that will lie west of the current project and border the University’s organic farm.

According to developer Martin Brett, about half of those purchasing units are from out of town and will be moving to Fairfield.

“This development influenced their decision to move to Fairfield,” Mr. Brett said, citing the low cost, the Maharishi Vastu® architecture, and the closeness to the Golden Domes. “They weren’t sure they wanted to commit to Fairfield, but the availability of this housing convinced them. The Super Radiance community will be influenced by this.”

Because of government grants and tax incentives, the price has typically been in the range of $100,000 for a 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom home that’s part of a duplex, to $127,500 for a 2-bedroom, 1.5-bathroom, two-story townhome in a triplex.

Although all units already constructed and units planned for construction in phase 5 have been sold, those interested can be put on a waiting list in case something becomes available. Email mbrett@vastupartners.com. Also, some buyers of units in phase 5 are making them available for rentals.

The type of housing to be offered in phase 6 construction will depend in part on the preferences of those on the waiting list.

Co-developer Doug Bachar expects similar low prices for phase 6.

“The state tax incentive programs are likely to continue, so we’re looking forward to another round of below-market prices,” Mr. Bachar said.

The city of Fairfield has been very helpful to developers, assisting with the procurement of grants and tax abatements, he said. An extensive survey by the city found that there was a shortage of housing and that many people were commuting from cities in the region to their jobs in Fairfield.