

Northeastern University

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Office of Marketing and Communications

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Northeastern University - Division of Marketing and Communications

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Northeastern Voice

In This Issue

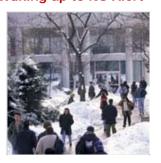
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Communications conference gathers on "common ground"

Featured Article

Waking up to NU Alert



The university is working to fine-tune its NUAlert emergency contact system after its first use, for the cancellation of classes Jan. 14.

Faculty, staff and students were notified early that morning of the university's closing due to a snowstorm. The notices came via e-mail, text messages and telephone calls, based on the contact information provided by community members through the MyNEU web portal. More>

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University hosts interdisciplinary conference

The fourth International Conference on Technology, Knowledge and Society kicked off at Northeastern on Friday with a charge to discuss a "set of ideas ... which demand to be understood in a cross-disciplinary way." More>



Professors muse on the campaign (an ongoing Voice project)

Faculty in the news

- The Boston Globe publishes an <u>investigative piece by eight</u>

 <u>Northeastern students</u>, under the supervision of professor Walter

 Robinson, on the Massachusetts probate court system's practice of putting the elderly in supervised care, against their will.
- Columnist features the work of Andrew Sum and Joseph McLaughlin of the Center for Labor Market Studies on the statistical analysis of Mitt Romney's gubernatorial leadership of Massachusetts.

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Waking up to NU Alert

The university is working to fine-tune its NU Alert emergency contact system after encountering some glitches when it was put to use on January 14.

Faculty, staff and students were notified early that morning of the university's closing due to a snowstorm. The notices came via e-mail, text messages and telephone calls, based on the contact



information provided by community members through the MyNEU web portal.

Inadvertently the notices also went to the "emergency contacts" of faculty, staff and students, many of whom reside in other parts of the country and were alarmed by the recorded message.

The team managing the new system is conducting a thorough review of the data to ensure that emergency contacts are eliminated from future non-emergency communications and to verify that all contacts in the system are indeed affiliated with the university.

Members of the Northeastern community do not need to change or remove any emergency contact information.

The team also decided that going forward only text messages will be issued for weather related campus closings, eliminating phones from ringing in the pre-dawn hours. As has traditionally been the practice, the university will publicize snow closings on local television and radio, on the website, and at (617) 373-2000.

For more information about NU Alert, please see http://www.northeastern.edu/publicsafety/nualert.html.

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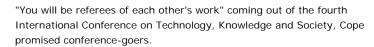
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Conference gathers on "common ground"

Faculty from around the globe have come together to think about a "set of ideas ... which demand to be understood in a cross-disciplinary way."

The charge to an interdisciplinary conference audience came from University of Illinois professor Bill Cope, director of Common Ground, an organization dedicated to creating "new forms of





Northeastern Provost Ahmed Abdelal, who brought the greetings of President Joseph Aoun to the Friday morning opening session in the Curry Student Center ballroom, took up the theme of "common ground."

Academe as well as popular culture too often focuses on "how people differ," Abdelal said. But Northeastern, with its focus on interdisciplinary research, "emphasize(s) common ground."

And, he suggested, if more global factions sought such understanding, "peace could break out."

Jody Berland, associate professor of humanities at York University in Toronto, delivered the opening talk, a study of "small animals, small machines and contemporary consumers." She examined how, often, animals are used to promote communications technology.

"There is no more accessible symbol in the universe than the morphology of animals," she said, "Animals can represent "freedom ... unencumbered by thought," Berland said.

She also discussed the youthful "culture of display" involving new communications technology, and lamented the "two things lost" to such technology: "freedom and silence."

She was followed by David Matheson, philosophy professor at Carleton University in Ottawa. The conference was slated to breawk into smaller group discusses and talks over the weekend.

Marcus Breen, associate professor of communication studies and a member of the advisory board for the three-day conference, emceed the event.

Faculty signed up to attend the conference came from Australia, Austria, the British Virgin Islands, Canada, China, Congo, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Iran, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South

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Africa, Spain, Sweden Taiwan Thailand, Turkey, the United States and Venezuela.

(In photo: Professor Jody Berland)

For video from the conference opening, see:

http://www.neu.edu/voice/evoice/article1-video.html.

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