Memorial Union Programs and Activities
Celebrates twelve years of outstanding faculty lecturers!

2006
Ariel Anbar, Geological Sciences and Chemistry & Biochemistry
Oscar Giner, Theatre and Film
Matthew Whitaker, History

2005
Ted Guleserian, Philosophy
David Hrabe, Nursing
Waziyatawin Wilson, History

2004
Allan DeSerpa, Economics
Ed Garnero, Geology
Rose Weitz, Women's Studies

2003
Daniel Brouwer, Hugh Downs School of Human Communication
Greg Durham*, Finance
Chris Smith, History

2002
Paul Knauth, Geology
Neal Lester, English
Laurie Manchester, History

2001
Daniel Canary, Hugh Downs School of Human Communication
Lynn Nelson, English
Trevor Thornton, Electrical Engineering

2000
Richard Burdick, Economics
Barbara Kerr*, Psychology in Education
Max Underwood, Architecture

1999
Jess Alberts, Hugh Downs School of Human Communication
David Williams Foster, Language and Literature
James Green*, English

1998
Maria T. Allison, Recreation Management and Tourism
Alisa Klinger*, Women's Studies
Alberto A. Rios, English

1997
Robert F. Ashcroft, Recreation Management and Tourism
Anthony Gully, Art

1996
James Foard, Religious Studies
Jeff Hester, Astronomy and Physics
Paul Privateer, Humanities

** Faculty no longer with ASU*

12th Annual Last Lecture Series

Presented by the Memorial Union

Professor Glenn H. Hurlbert
Mathematics and Statistics

Is 42 Really the Answer?

ASU Arizona State University

April 23th, 2007
Pima Room, Memorial Union

Monday, April 23, 2007

Welcome

Kristina Day, Member, Faculty Recognition Committee

Is 42 Really the Answer?

Professor Glenn H. Hurlbert,
Mathematics and Statistics

Reception

Outside Pima Room, Memorial Union Room 218

Biography

Professor Glenn Hurlbert received his BS in Mathematics and Computer Science from Wake Forest University, his MA in Mathematics from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and his PhD in Mathematics from Rutgers University. He has been a professor at ASU since 1990, as well as a visiting professor at Vanderbilt University, Dartmouth College, and the Johns Hopkins University. He has also been a visiting researcher at the Institute for Defense Analysis and is currently a Barrett Honors College Visiting Fellow.

His research interests lie in Graph Theory, Combinatorics, and Optimization, and are funded by the National Science Foundation and the National Security Agency.

Dr. Hurlbert started the annual Arizona Mathematics Undergraduate Conference.

A notable student of his is Jack Hawes, a Goldwater and Marshall Scholar and winner of the Mathematics Association of America Best Student Paper award. He also co-built the Summer Certification Institute in Secondary Mathematics for mathematics majors to become High School teachers.

Lecture

What mathematical ideas apply to questions of the human condition, of philosophical realities, or of religious concerns? Is mathematics merely a utilitarian discipline, or can it be a way of thinking about life, the universe, and everything? In this, my final lecture, we ask (with apologies to The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy) if 42 is really the answer or, better yet, is there an answer at all? Do some questions have no answer, several answers, contradictory answers? Do many hands make light work or do too many cooks spoil the broth? What does this have to do with voting systems and God? I hope to address these questions for you before I (somewhat dramatically) die.