Early Registration

Early registration for continuing/reenrolling students begins Wednesday, October 28th by the current classification as listed:

- **October 28-29:** Seniors
- **October 30- November 2:** Juniors
- **November 3-4:** Sophomores
- **November 5-6:** Freshmen

We cannot stress enough the importance of registering early. Be sure to register for the classes that you need and that meet your interests before they fill up!

BAAS is Growing!

We are always looking to get the word out about what the BAAS program can do for potential students. One of our primary goals for the 2015 academic year has been to see our program grow and flourish.

In addition to the usual education fair events, we’ve also updated our promotional materials. The largest recruitment effort we have been working on is the “We Want You Back Campaign.” Our department secretary, Brenda Rich, spearheaded this sizable project and worked hard to make it a success. The “We Want You Back Campaign” focuses on bringing former MSU students back to the university to finish their degrees.

The BAAS program saw a growth of 44 new students since last fall. This number includes returning former students and students new to the university. We are very excited to see this increase in enrollment and we hope to continue to thrive.

It is our ambition that as we continue to grow we will be able to offer more online classes and add new and exciting educational options for our students. We need to continue to grow to make this happen.

MSU Online Offerings Garner Attention

Recently Midwestern State University was ranked sixth by American Colleges Online (AC Online) on their list of the best online colleges in Texas. All colleges considered for this distinction must be a non-profit accredited institution.

Among the factors considered by AC Online were affordability, student-faculty ratio, student support, job placement and six-year graduation rate.

The BAAS Program is honored to be among the MSU online program offerings.

The endorsement of our program by current and former students is by far our most valuable and effective recruitment tool. Please continue to spread the word about the BAAS program and Midwestern State University!

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‘We Want You Back” postcard and new brochure.

It is exciting to see the distance education community grow and flourish.

You can find more information and AC Online’s list of best online colleges here: [http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org](http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org)
An Interview with Clarissa Kennedy

Clarissa is a Junior in the BAAS program. This is her first semester at MSU.

Q: What do you want to share with your fellow BAAS students about yourself and your background?
A: I decided to return to school after I noticed that I was being overlooked for promotions and not being respected in work circles. I work in higher education as a Financial Accountant. My educational goals are to complete the BAAS degree. I have thought about continuing in pursuit of a Master’s degree in Business. Last December, I married a great guy. My only son, who is 31 years old, is excited about me returning to school. I have a group of friends who are supportive in every way.

Q: Why did you choose to pursue a BAAS degree?
A: I chose the BAAS degree through Midwestern because it was offered online. After being accepted to the program, I now know that I would have pursued the BAAS degree if it had not been offered online. The degree plan and offerings are perfect for a working student. The degree is from a true brick and mortar school. That was what really attracted me to the BAAS degree at Midwestern. The fact that work related experience can also be accepted towards the degree is truly a plus.

Q: What motivates you?
A: I am motivated by my devotion to reading the Bible and praying for others. I attend church every Sunday. Prayer has been a key factor in my success at school. I also love music and singing.

Q: What have been the greatest challenges to continuing your education and how have you faced them?
A: The greatest challenge that I have faced in continuing my education is finding information. I learned that you never accept just any answer. You seek and keep asking until you get the answer you need.

Q: What has been the most rewarding college experience?
A: My most rewarding college experience thus far would be receiving my associates degree this past summer. This helped me to add more credits to my BAAS degree plan and prepared me for further studies.

Q: What advice do you have for fellow working adults who may be considering continuing their education?
A: Follow your dream. Never think that you are too old, do not have enough money or do not have enough college experience. Never accept "no". Realize that you uniquely make the best student. Why? You are serious, diligent, and ready. Also, remember that returning to school is a family endeavor. The whole family is involved in the process.

“Dreams are the touchstones of our character.”
-Henry David Thoreau

National Distance Learning Week (NDLW) will be celebrated from November 9 -13, 2015. During NDLW, all USDLA sectors including Pre-K-12, Higher Education, Corporate, Government/Military and Telehealth will educate their constituents on the amazing growth in distance learning and showcase their accomplishments.
Student Spotlight: Colleen Saffron

I am the epitome of the non-traditional student. I am 44 years old and have been married for 26 years. My high school sweetheart, Terry. We have three grown children ages 21-26, a daughter-in-law and a son in law and a perfectly perfect 5-month old grandson.

I got married a few days before my 18th birthday. Just a week and a half after I graduated from high school, I learned I was pregnant and so my plans for my future went on hold as I learned to care for my young family. My husband, who was in the Army, promised me I would still get my degree one day. I started back to school with The Art Institute in 2003 as my husband was deployed to Iraq with the 1st Cavalry Division, Ft Hood, Texas in March of 2004. On May 5, 2004, my husband was severely wounded in Iraq and although I did finish my program at AI, I could not go further than my diploma in Residential Interiors because my husband required extensive care.

In 2011 I decided to return to school, this time attending our local community college online. I am legally deaf and although I do well in one on one situations, classroom environments and crowded places are extremely difficult for me. I have had to adjust my learning style from auditory to reading for information. I confess it was a serious blow to my resolve when I discovered I was unable to transfer my credits from AI to Central Texas College and so, at the age of 40, I had to start from the beginning. I completed the credits for an associates program in May 2014 and decided to take a semester off of school for our daughter’s wedding. I also wanted to find a university in Texas with an online program that could help me finish my bachelor’s degree. I had never heard of MSU but when I began reading the information on the website and about the programs available, I knew it was a perfect match for me. In January 2015 I began attending MSU to pursue my BAAS and to complete the goal I had made for myself back in 1989.

After much research and many emails and phone calls with my advisor, Carley, I realized that with my diverse experience (I created and ran a nationwide nonprofit and had a mix of credits from two different schools) that this would be the best path for me in obtaining a bachelor’s degree. This is not about career opportunities for me, it is about finishing the path I started back in the 80’s. It is about showing my children and myself that I can do this!

I am the only one in my family who has pursued higher education. I grew up in Pittsburgh during the years when the steel industry collapsed. I saw what happened when industry no longer existed and there were no job opportunities for people. So many families lost everything and to this day have not recovered from that economic hit. I did not want that for my life, or my children’s. My husband and I both chose to pursue education. Sadly, because of my Traumatic Brain Injury, my husband only managed to complete a semester of college while he was active duty but he has encouraged me, pushed me when I wanted to quit, and has been my biggest cheerleader. We wanted our children to know a different life than we had and that education is the ticket out of poverty. The only way to do that is to model it.

My biggest challenge has been learning to fail. My husband requires a full time caregiver due to his brain injury. I work part-time at home from my computer and I am an advocate for wounded warrior caregivers and families. Learning to accept when I have bitten off more than I can chew and being gracious with myself have been difficult lessons. I used to think I could do it all. It flies in the face of the super achiever, American, can-do attitude to admit I cannot, but I am learning it is not failure unless I stop trying. I am not a straight A student, I wish I was, but with the stress of overseeing medical care, day to day life and all that comes with our new normal, it can be overwhelming. What I have learned is to prioritize. My education is a priority but that does not mean it should be a burden or completely wear me down. I do love to learn, it’s not as easy as it used to be, but it is still as exciting.

I hope to complete my degree by December 2016, but also realize that with my husband heading back into surgeries right now, this could be delayed. That is ok with me. I cannot believe I am saying this, but I am considering a master’s degree. I am realizing there are opportunities to work from home for people with a master’s degree and I want to work again. I miss that challenge, so this is the path I am considering.

Online learning takes an incredible amount of self-motivation and discipline. You cannot go into the online learning environment thinking it is “easier than real school.” Online learning means YOU are responsible for your time and YOU are responsible for your work. I struggle with this incredibly as I am a world class procrastinator but I have learned to set aside time daily in my calendar for reading and homework. I have color coded my calendar in my phone and set it to send me reminders one day in advance of my work being due to let me know I need to read. I am also working on assigning a day to a subject so I am not overwhelming myself with a full day of non-stop cramming for each class. Some days this works better than others.

If you are considering returning to school, DO IT! Every time you try to talk yourself out of it, just tell yourself, you CAN do it. There are so many ways to pursue education now, online learning, flexible environments, and shortened classes. How can opportunity knock on your door if you have padlocked the gate at the bottom of the porch stairs? You won’t like everything you have to take, you may not get straight A’s, but you can do it!

“We know what we are, but know not what we may be.”

-William Shakespeare
Outstanding Student Award

We would like to recognize our 2015 BAAS Outstanding Student, David Gill. Captain Gill has worked for the Mesquite Police Department for 21 years. He is currently assigned as captain over the Criminal Investigations Bureau. Captain Gill graduated from the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas Leadership Command College in 2014. He holds a Master Peace Officer License from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and has received several departmental awards during his years of service. He graduated summa cum laude in May with a 4.0 GPA. Gill is pictured, along with his wife Christy, at the Annual Honors Recognition Banquet on April 24, 2015.

Congratulations to Our May and August Graduates!

We want to take a moment to recognize and extend a special note of congratulations to our BAAS May and August graduates! We are so proud of every one of you and all of the hard work you have put forth to accomplish this goal. Best wishes for a bright future, BAAS Grads!

May Graduates
Abiodun Oluwaseun Adegoke
Brianna Beason
John David Bowers
Shelley Denise Capps
Michelle Diane Edwards
Casey Beth Fletcher
David Scott Gill
Sharlotte Leann King
Richard James Kurtz
Cynthia Loredo
Sabina Marie Marroquin
Brandi Sanderson McGee
Geneva M. McLean
Thad Madison Olive
Earl C. Rabb
Brittany Nicole Reagan
Corbin Michael Thomas
Justin Mark Veitenheimer
Beatriz Elaine Villalba
Violet Ward
Krista C. Woodrow

August Graduates
Josephine Adusei
Christopher Joseph Barr
John Benjamin Blissett
Francisco Javier Espinoza
Becky Elyse Holster
Orisa La Touche
Miesha Renae Maiden
Misty Dawn McBride
Austin Garrett Quintero
Russell Shawn Ragsdale
Jason Marcus Raub
Michael Charles Skinner, Sr.
Meagan Lee Smith
James Wilborn Tannahill
Gerardo Tijerina
David Kirk Winkles
Daniel Joseph Woolard