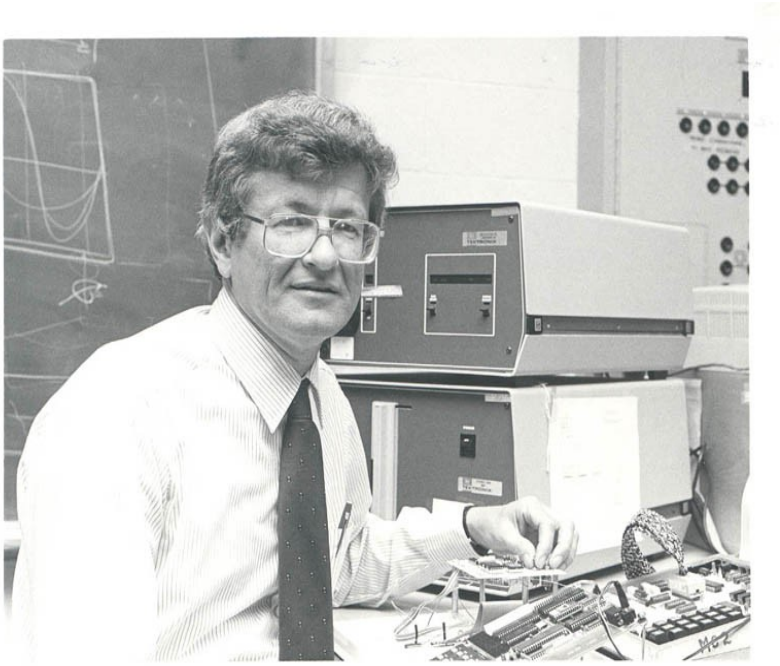
December 2004

Exemplary Service



This August marks the beginning of a new era for Professor John Field. He will be retiring from the University of Maine after 36 years of service with the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE).

John came to the University of Maine ECE Department as an Assistant Professor in 1969 with a PhD degree from Northeastern University. In 1975 he was promoted to Associate Professor and in 1985 to Professor. He served as Chair of the Department from 1987-1997 and again from August 1998-June 1999. From July 1997-July 1998 he served as Interim Dean for the College of Engineering. From 1996 to the present John has been the Henry R. and Grace V. Butler Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

One of John's greatest accomplishments was the establishment of the Computer Engineering degree with a major grant from Hewlett Packard Corporation. While there were only a few schools offering computer engineering programs in the nation, John recognized the need for this program at the University of Maine. When he first came to the University, his major area of interest was electromagnetics. However, as the computer began to be more of a part of electrical engineering, John recognized the importance of computer engineering education in the world of next generation students. At that time no one demonstrated expertise in the microcomputer area. Thus, in the late 1970's he made a career decision to change his area of interest from electromagnetics to microcomputers. Since then, the Computer Engineering program has grown under his guidance from one student to a program equal in size to Electrical Engineering. John has over forty publications in electromagnetics, education, and computer engineering, and with Prof. Bruce Segee (a graduate student at the time) he wrote a book on Microprogramming and Computer Architecture.

John was a champion of establishing an industrial advisory committee for the department, and in 1990 the first Electrical Engineering Department Visiting Committee met. The role of this committee is to provide an independent evaluation for the program. Over the years this committee not only proved to be very helpful in enhancing our program but also provided many job and Coop opportunities for students.

John also led the effort to establish a Ph.D. program in Electrical Engineering. The goal of the program is to supply highly trained individuals who will not only enhance the department's BS and MS programs and research at the University of Maine but also meet the existing and growing demand in both industry and academia. The PhD program was approved in 1994 and implemented in 1999 when funds became available.

Professor Field is recognized as one of the most outstanding teachers at the University of Maine and is a former recipient of the University of Maine Faculty Teaching Excellence Award. John was also the recipient of the 2001 Ashley S. Campbell Award (shown here accepting the award from former department Chair James Patton). At this ceremony, Dr. Larry Matthews, Dean of the College of Engineering stated: “There is no one at the University of Maine more dedicated to students and their education than John.” A Georgia Tech University Course Critique, published in 1982, documents John Field with having an exemplary teaching style in the Electromagnetic area. There are numerous students’ comments on John’s teaching style over the years.

“John did an excellent job helping me through the course. Not only did he help me understand but he also took time outside of class to help me…. This inspired a great interest in the subject and I firmly believe that without John’s aid I would not have learned as much about EMags and never have developed skill in that field. I am glad he was the instructor.” - Marcus Soule

“John Field was a great instructor who was willing to help anyone at just about anytime who needed it… He also showed his thoughts completely and clearly.” - Jason Withee

“John’s ideas in class were very well presented and organized. Homework problems and in-class examples were used to show what was expected of us. Tests were clear, fair, and challenging… I greatly enjoyed John Field’s class, and I felt he was truly concerned about his students’ progress. Thanks a lot John.” - Jon Lamarre

“I can honestly say this was the best class I have taken in college to date…. I was very impressed with Dr. Field’s instruction. Because of Dr. Field’s excellent job of teaching ECE 351, I now want to pursue a deeper understanding of Electromagnetic Fields and Waves.” Thank you very much Dr. Field. EXCELLENT JOB!!!” - Jared Jordan

His involvement with students didn’t stop with college students, but extended beyond the University boundaries. From 1991-1999 John participated with high school students throughout Maine in the Young Scholars Program (YSP). The YSP program, sponsored by the National Science Foundation, targeted talented high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors who showed high aptitude in math and science related subjects. The summer program was designed to give students an introduction to engineering and to encourage them to consider it as a career choice. While housed on campus, students learned about various engineering disciplines, took part in career explorations, and took field trips to various engineering firms in Maine.

John has long been an advocate for promoting women engineers. Over the years he has advised many female students and has also invited former female students to ECE luncheons to discuss women in the engineering workplace with female engineering students. He has created a friendly environment for female students to feel comfortable in a discipline that is traditionally dominated by male students. In 1989, former computer engineering student Kathleen Love received from the Digital Equipment Corporation of Augusta its First Women Minority Scholarship (shown here receiving the award from John).

Although John will officially be stepping down as a professor, from the John that we know, he’ll always stick with the department that he loves so much. John dedicated his life-long career to creating opportunities and enriching the lives of so many people, and he’ll continue to do so as a mentor and guide to the department. The faculty and staff of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering wish John well in the start of his new era.

A Rogue's Gallery

		
1977	1979	1997

Grants Received

J. Vetelino, "REU Site: Sensor Science and Engineering," NSF, $258,985 (revised budget for 3 years), December 2.

Publications

Textbook: "Mastering MATLAB 7" by Duane Hanselman and Bruce Littlefield, ISBN 0-13-143018-1, Prentice-Hall, 852 pages.

Other

Since November the faculty has submitted 1 proposal for a total of about $185,000.