



**AIRWORTHY:** Two members of the DMS faculty, Drs. Ira Byock and Elliott Fisher, are among the featured experts in *Consider the Conversation: A Documentary on a Taboo Subject*. The film, about end-of-life issues, is being aired on public TV stations nationwide.

THEN & NOW

A reminder of the pace of change, and of timeless truths, from the 1980 DMS admissions viewbook:

“When Nathan Smith founded Dartmouth Medical School [in 1797], it was still possible for one man to lecture knowledgeable on all aspects of medicine. . . . As the science of medicine became more complex, [the School] grew. . . . Today, DMS has 140 full-time faculty members; another 272 physicians and scientists are affiliated with the School and hold faculty rank.”



969

Number of faculty today with a title of professor, associate professor, or assistant professor

1,216

Number of faculty today with an adjunct, research, instructor, or visiting title

Simulators drive home an important message

It's easy to underestimate the impact that concentration has on the quality of one's driving. If we're just a little tired, or have had only a drink or two (under the legal limit), or feel a need to send a quick text, we may think there is little to no effect on our reflexes.

But statistics on distracted driving suggest that this is not the case, and the Injury Prevention Center at DHMC has been working hard to address the problem. There were 110 traffic fatalities in New Hampshire in 2009. Although this was the lowest fatality rate in many years, there is still room for improvement. Alcohol was a factor in 29% of the state's 2009 traffic deaths. And national statistics on distracted driving for the same year show that 16% of traffic fatalities were attributed to a distraction such as texting.

**Distracted:** In an effort to keep the death rate headed downward, DHMC's Injury Prevention Center has increased its efforts to raise awareness about distracted driving. They are targeting young people so the reality of what can happen when they fail to concentrate while behind the wheel will hit home early in their lives as drivers.

Two driving simulators are now making the rounds of New Hampshire high schools under the coordination of the Injury Prevention Center. Teens taking driver's education are the primary audience for the devices, but

they're also being used with senior citizens and are available for use by anyone. The simulators were funded by a grant from the state of New Hampshire and will be making appearances at public events in the future.

They work by mimicking driving under a number of preset conditions, including driving normally, using a cell phone, or driving after having a couple of drinks. They demonstrate what happens if one is stopped by the police, given a sobriety test, cautioned, or even sent to jail for reckless driving.

**Monitor:** Using a simulator is a little like playing a video game. The machines include a wide-screen monitor, a steering wheel, and pedals; they're designed to provide a realistic driving experience that sends the message that there are consequences to

**The simulators are proving popular with schools and students alike.**

driving drunk or distracted.

DHMC's two simulators were unveiled at the New Hampshire Traffic Safety Conference this past April, and since then have been traveling around to high schools throughout New Hampshire. So far, they are proving very popular with schools and students alike; as of June 1, more than 500 students had used them. Students have commented on the realism of the experience—and since many are familiar with video games, they appear to find the format both fun and easy to use.

**Traffic:** The Injury Prevention Center hopes to acquire funding for more simulators, such as has been the success of the initiative. With this innovative new technology and the center's commitment to driver education, the Injury Prevention Center hopes that the traffic fatality rate in New Hampshire will continue to fall year after year.

KATHERINE DAWSON



Using the driving simulators is much like playing a video game—which is a key reason for their popularity with the high-schoolers who are their primary audience.