Aiming High: Highlights and Updates from the Graduate School at Southern Miss

Dean’s Report (October 2015)

Student Spotlight

Laura Whitmore, second year master’s student in the Department of Marine Science from Palmer, Alaska, reached the North Pole on the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy early in September. According to her advisor Dr. Alan Shiller, this is “only the fourth time a U.S. surface ship has reached the pole, and the first time it’s been done by a single U.S. ship.” Laura’s research project is a part of a National Science Foundation-funded research cruise. She is measuring dissolved methane, an important greenhouse gas, in the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean during the 65-day cruise. For more information see http://www.usm.edu/news/article/southern-miss-student-conducting-research-part-north-pole-expedition.

Kelley Winship, doctoral student in the Department of Psychology

Kelley Winship won the Best Student Poster Award at the 2015 Conference on Comparative Psychology for a poster entitled “Bottlenose Dolphin (Tursiops truncatus) Vocalizations during a Cooperative Task”. The meeting was held in Melbourne, Florida in April. Coauthors on the poster were Brittany Jones, Audra Ames, Holli Eskelinen, and Dr. Stan Kuczaj. Kelley, a doctoral student in the Brain and Behavior program in the Department of Psychology, is advised by Dr. Kuczaj. Kelley is from Tampa, Florida.
Bragging Points from Graduate Programs

- Students in the Counseling Psychology Master’s program recorded a 100% pass rate on the national licensure exam.

- Dr. Mike Madson, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology, was awarded a grant from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for a project called “SBIRT Training for Medical Students and Residents in Mississippi”. The project will train medical students and residents for screening, intervention, and referral for patients with substance abuse problems. Dr. Madson will collaborate with colleagues at the University of Mississippi Medical Center to conduct this study.

- Four doctoral students in the Communication Studies program were selected to present their work at the National Communication Association convention in Las Vegas, Nevada in November. This meeting is a key event for scholars in the field of communication, and they were selected in a competitive process. The students include Kevin Bryant, Piyawan Charoensap-Kelly, Seth Findley, and Vernon Humphrey. They will present on topics including Google discourse, debate mentoring, and combating human trafficking.

- In April, graduate students in the Department of Theatre participated in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, along with about 20,000 other college students, including both graduate and undergraduate students. USM students’ outcomes were truly impressive:
  - Corey Bradberry placed 1st in Directing and will advance to become a national fellow at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.
  - Beca Lake earned 1st in Allied Arts and will advance to the national competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. She also earned an all-expenses paid trip to the U.S. Institute of Theatre Technology (USIT) conference in Cincinnati to compete in a separate event.

In addition, Beca Lake and Mateo Morris earned scholarships to the Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas for training on top end entertainment technology this summer.

- Mark Helgeson, a student in the MBA program with Sport Security Management Emphasis, was named the transition manager for the sport security division of Whelan Security. Whelan Security, an international company, contracts security and training for such companies as the Minnesota Vikings, the University of Iowa, and the Alamadome.

- Dr. Lilian Hill, Professor and Departmental Co-Chair, and Eric Platt, Assistant Professor, both in the Department of Educational Studies and Research, were awarded the Imogene Okes Award for Outstanding Research in Adult Education by the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. The award was presented for their outstanding publication: Platt, R.E. & Hill, L.H. (2014) Storyville education: Spatial practices and the learned sex trade in the city that care forgot. *Adult Education Quarterly, 64*(4): 285-305.
Dr. Betsy Sullivan, 2011 doctoral graduate in Science Education from USM, was selected as Mississippi’s recipient of the 2015 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching. Dr. Sullivan teaches biology and chemistry at Madison Central High School and is adjunct professor at Hinds Community College.

Professional Development Upcoming Events

- “Hair-On-Fire!” Presentation Skills: How to Speak Confidently and Compellingly Anywhere, Anytime. Mandi Stanley, Certified Speaking Professional, will lead a workshop designed to help students and faculty develop the skills to communicate with any audience. This event is open to all students, faculty, and staff.
  Date and Time: Friday, October 9 from 1:00 – 5:00 PM
  Location: Thad Cochran Center Ballrooms I and II.
  Co-sponsors: Southern Miss Fund, the Graduate School, the Learning Enhancement Center, and the Vice President for External Affairs.

- Effective Graduate Student Mentorship Part I.
  Join us for a Lunch n Learn featuring a panel discussion with Dr. Douglas Masterson, 2015 Graduate Student Mentor of the Year, Associate Professor of Organic & Bioorganic Chemistry, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Affairs in the College of Science & Technology; and Dr. Marie Danforth, Professor of Anthropology and Chair of the Center for Undergraduate Research steering committee.
  Date and Time: Friday, October 30 from noon to 1:00 PM
  Location: Hall of Honors Room, Union Complex
  Seating is limited and registration is required through the Learning Enhancement Center https://lec.usm.edu/events/. Co-sponsors: Southern Miss Fund, the Graduate School, and the Learning Enhancement Center.
• Three Minute Thesis

The 2nd Annual Three Minute Thesis® (3MT) competition is scheduled for November 4-6 beginning at 2:00 pm each day in the Trent Lott Center first floor (A-D). 3MT requires students to articulate the importance of their research to a general audience in three minutes or less using only a single, static, PowerPoint slide as a visual aid. Preliminary competitions on November 4 and 5 will feature presentations by master’s/specialist and doctoral students in the following four categories: 1) Arts and Humanities; 2) Life, Health, and Environmental Sciences; 3) Physical Sciences and Mathematics; 4) Social and Educational Sciences and Business. Master’s/specialist and doctoral winners from each category will be awarded a $250 prize, and the eight finalists will compete in the finals competition on Friday, November 6. The following awards will be presented:

- Grand Champion $1000
- Runner Up $750
- People’s Choice $500

The Grand Champion will compete in the regional competition at the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Annual Meeting in Charlotte, NC in mid-February with all expenses paid. Information about the competition and how to participate can be found on the Graduate School website at [http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/three-minute-thesis-2015-competition](http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/three-minute-thesis-2015-competition).

• Plagiarism Workshop

Graduate students are encouraged to attend the workshop *Plagiarism: What Graduate Students Need to Know*, led by Dr. Sam Bruton from the Office of Research Integrity.

Date and Time:  Wednesday, November 11 from 12:00 to 1:00 PM
Location:  Cook Library 123
Lunch will be provided to registered attendees.

Students can register by accessing the following link: [http://www.usm.edu/research/november-11-2015](http://www.usm.edu/research/november-11-2015)

• Recruiting

• Graduate Recruitment Advisory Board (GRAB)

A new advisory board has been formed to assist the Graduate School in developing a plan for strategic recruiting that will foster effective and efficient use of resources to recruit the best and brightest students. Members include: Dr. Tom Hutchinson, Assistant Director of Academic Technology, Learning Enhancement Center; General Jeff Hammond, Director of Veteran and Military Student Services; Dr. Marie Danforth, Professor of Anthropology; Petra Marlin, Director of International Recruitment and Admissions; Dr. Shea Houze, Director of New Student Recruitment and Retention Programs; Carolyn Cawthon, Director of Operations and Recruitment, Graduate School; and Sharon Pool, Degree Auditor, Graduate School.
• Campus visit
The Graduate School will host prospective students from Rust College for an on-campus visit on November 3. Students will be treated to an informational breakfast and lunch to meet with Graduate School admissions and auditing staff. Throughout the day they will tour departments and the campus and visit with Graduate Coordinators in the students’ department of interest.

• Off-campus recruiting
During the month of September, Graduate School recruiters logged 4322 miles on the road attending recruiting events in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida. Table 1 shows the eleven universities visited and the number of students expressing interest in graduate programs at USM. Prospect data was loaded into AdmissionPros and is accessible to departments through the prospect tab (email Tracy Barnhill tracy.barnhill@usm.edu for assistance). Departments are encouraged to contact these students to nurture their interest in USM. To determine the return on investment of Graduate School funds to attend these events, these prospects will be tracked over the next year to determine the number who apply and the undergraduate institutions attended. The Graduate School will continue to recruit through October and November (13 additional events) at events in Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, and Alabama.

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