A Message

From the Dean

Maureen Ryan

Now in my second year as Dean—after a long career as a faculty member in the college—I am pleased to lead the college and help it expand its programs and activities. Each year, the College of Arts and Letters reaches several thousand majors as well as (in general education courses) every undergraduate in the university.

Arts and Letters is the largest and most diverse of the academic colleges at Southern Miss. Faculty and students in the humanities, arts, and social and behavioral sciences teach and study subjects as varied as classical opera, archeology, 19th-century British fiction, Japanese history, ceramics, U.S. foreign policy....I could go on.

Perhaps our most interesting intellectual work occurs in interdisciplinary programs—centers and academic minors and faculty research groups on topics such as urban studies, civil rights in Mississippi, and digital archives. The Department of Interdisciplinary Studies supports student work and faculty research that crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Through lecture series in a traditional academic discipline such as “Philosophical Fridays” or “Interdisciplinary Investigations,” an avant-garde multidisciplinary performance and lecture series on sound in “Reverberations,” or how the human body is viewed in “Fleshed Out: the Body Politic,” Arts and Letters programs demonstrate faculty’s original and important research and creative activity. These faculty, in turn, share their expertise in undergraduate and graduate classrooms, instructing students through lectures and discussions, and facilitating students’ own research projects. Undergraduate research—through internship programs, the Undergraduate Research Center, and other projects—is now common among all our disciplines, and faculty mentoring is fundamental to the teaching-learning initiative.

This year’s Front & Center features just a few of our recent and current programs. Our website—usm.edu/arts-letters—lists upcoming events. If you are in Hattiesburg, please attend some of our many arts performances and academic lectures and programs. Tell us you’d like to sit in on a class. Talk to our students. Help us spread the word.

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Credits

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When asked why they came to Southern Miss, here’s what our Ambassadors had to say:

“IT FELT LIKE THE PLACE I WAS MEANT TO BE”

I chose USM because it felt like the place I was meant to be. I fell in love with the family feel that students, faculty, and staff exhibit. USM has every expect that someone could look for: high academic programs, interactive student life, endless opportunities, and so much more. You cannot possibly miss the Southern Miss spirit and the pride that is an innate part of everyone who comes on campus.

– Brooke Boisseau, International Studies and French (Ponotoc, Miss.)

“SOMEONE IS ALWAYS WELcoming and speak to prospective Golden Eagles and their families throughout the year at on-campus recruiting events such as Black and Gold Day, Honors Day and Transfer Day. Representing a specific department and area of study, each Ambassador has a unique perspective on what it’s like to be a Southern Miss Golden Eagle.

“A MORE PERSONAL COLLEGE EXPERIENCE”

My classes are small, my professors are personable, and connecting and networking is incredibly easy on this campus! I grew up in a very small town, but transitioning to Hattiesburg was absolutely no problem. There is so much to do, both on camp and around Hattiesburg, and Southern Miss is in the perfect college town! My favorite place on campus is the brick wall outside the LAB, the perfect place to soak up some sun while reading!

– Lakelyn Taylor, Communication Studies and Spanish (Long Beach, Miss.)

“USM MADE ME FEEL LIKE THEY WANTED ME HERE”

Although Southern Miss had a perfect program for what I was interested in and was located in a town with which I was already very familiar, the real reason I wanted to come here was because of the people I met when I visited campus as a prospective student. Everyone from the professors to the student assistants was incredibly helpful and supportive. They made sure they answered any questions I had, and most importantly, they made me feel like they wanted me. I felt the family and community atmosphere of USM even before I was officially a student.

– Kathryn Sckiets, English Licensure (Jackson, Miss.)

“ALWAYS WEL WELCOME”

Although I visited a couple of other schools, Southern Miss was the best fit for me. I love the atmosphere of the campus and Hattiesburg. Throughout the entire process of applying, someone was always willing to help and answer my questions, which is still one of my favorite things about Southern Miss. My favorite place on campus is the Intermezzo, which is a place for music majors to sit between classes, talk to friends, study, or have a snack.

– Brittany White, Music Education/Music Performance (Vancleave, Miss.)

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– Brooke Boisseau, International Studies and French (Ponotoc, Miss.)
Field school is an essential part of what you do while you’re in college if you want some of those job opportunities out there.”

Nicholas Glass, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology and graduate field assistant to Jackson, is concentrating in prehistoric southeastern archaeology. “Dr. Jackson has taught me a great deal about field methodology, excavation procedures, logistics of managing a large scale excavation, and of course lifeways of Native Americans.”

The excavation process consists of digging in small groups in a grid system, mapping out certain areas of the site, washing and retaining artifacts, and much more.

“Most digging is done with trowels, and we’re moving dirt a little at a time because we not only want to find the artifacts, but there are all sorts of evidence in the ground,” Jackson explained. “Like earth discoloration that represents where pits were and post holes were set, we want to be able to map that in as we find it. We have a water screening system set up so the dirt is moved to another location and is all washed away, leaving artifacts in the screens that separate the items from the dirt.”

Jackson and his team of students will return to the same excavation in the summer of 2017 to uncover more of the structure they believe to be significant.

Southern Miss Anthropologists Uncover Hundreds of Years of History in the Mississippi Delta

Every chiseled rock or oddly-shaped stone could be a potential clue to unearthing a part of the vast pre-European history of Native Americans in Mississippi. Dr. Ed Jackson, an anthropology professor at Southern Miss, wanted his students to adopt that mindset when they traveled to the Mississippi Delta last summer to discover more of the state’s untold stories.

Their excavation site is located at the Winterville Mounds on the north side of Greenville near the Mississippi River. The mound is one of the largest ceremonial and political centers in the Delta, embedded with several hundred years of Native American history.

“My primary interest is to understand its role in the political and social dynamics of Native American cultures of the last 500 years before Europeans got here,” Jackson said. “The site was first occupied about 1000 A.D. and became a mound center about 1200 A.D. and was abandoned around 1500 A.D. just before the Spanish made their march across the Delta.”

Since they began work at the site in 2005, Jackson and his team have made significant discoveries. Their most notable finding was an unusually large structure adjacent to various mounds, which is believed to be a ceremonial structure for high-ranking society members of the historic tribes.

“I’m interested in the politics of the economic system, how high-status people are being supported by low-status people,” said Jackson. “The structure is located behind a couple mounds, so the long-term goal would be to try to relate it to the mounds. That’s what we’re trying to do—to envision this site as being inhabited by the leaders of different segments of society.”

The dig is a great opportunity for students to participate at the forefront of anthropological research. “Students are responsible for excavation, record keeping, artifact recovery, everything,” Jackson said. “So by the time they leave they’re prepared to participate in other projects. If you’re an anthropology major, and you’re interested in archaeology, participating in the field school is the first step in the path toward employment after graduation. Almost every government agency or private firm would require a field school as part of your training. It’s an essential part of what you do while you’re in college if you want some of those job opportunities out there.”

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Beauvoir Project Sheds Light on Civil War Veteran Care in Mississippi

“We went from having too little data to more than we could possibly handle,” Southern Miss historian Susannah Ural laughed, referring to her study of Mississippi’s Confederate Home, better known as Beauvoir, home of Confederate president Jefferson Davis. “The students were learning a lot, but I knew that, at this rate, we wouldn’t finish for another decade.”

That’s when Ural thought to apply for the College of Arts and Letters’ Charles W. Moorman Distinguished Professorship, which was created to honor the memory of Charles Wickliffe Moorman III, an English professor at Southern Miss from 1954-90, and to support humanities faculty in a major research project. “It saved the project,” Ural explains. “Our team’s work has made a major contribution to our understanding of the American Civil War and of veteran care in the United States, all while educating students and building bridges between Mississippi communities.”

When Ural first became interested in studying the Jefferson Davis Soldier Home, her primary focus was on how residents remembered the American Civil War and their experiences in the home. Ural discovered, however, that few letters, diaries and other traditional sources survived from the facility. Then she realized her questions could be answered in the hundreds of thousands of census, military service, pension, and newspaper records that were being digitized each year.

Rather than ask how veterans remembered the war and Beauvoir, Ural decided to ask how their fellow Mississippians remembered the soldiers. This approach led Ural to investigate how and why residents were learning a lot, but I knew that, at this rate, we wouldn’t finish for another decade.”

Through this localized study, Ural was determined to contribute to our larger understanding of America’s historically poor record of fulfilling its promises to the men and women it sends to war.

In the summer of 2014, Ural created a random 10-percent sample of the 1,845 veterans, wives, and widows who called Beauvoir home from the day it opened in 1903 until it closed in 1957. Census and pension data offered insights into residents’ education and income levels, birth, marriage, and death rates, and their geographic mobility from 1850 through 1940.

“I went from having a limited directory of all residents, board meeting minutes, other official correspondence, along with a few personal accounts housed in Southern Miss’ McCain Library Archives and at the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library,” Ural recalled, “to having more data than I could possibly process.” That moment inspired “The Beauvoir Veteran Project” and a plan for involving Southern Miss students and community members. Three years later, thanks to funding from the Moorman Professorship, the project is nearly complete.

The support from the college allowed Ural to hire graduate and undergraduate researchers, web designers, and digital historians.

The project’s results are challenging scholars’ understanding of Civil War soldier homes, particularly those in the South. “Unlike most Confederate homes, Beauvoir was never an all-male facility,” Ural said. “Veterans and their wives or widows all lived at the home; it is the only known facility where a woman served as superintendent for extended periods of time, and women started serving on the home board in the 1920s.”

Their statistical analysis has also challenged the argument that veterans had long suffered from the poverty that sent them to soldier homes like Beauvoir. Residents had to be in dire financial need to gain entrance to these facilities, creating the impression that they had always been poor and carried with them other burdens of poverty, including poor educations and low literacy rates. But the Beauvoir Veteran Project is finding the opposite to be true. The men and women who lived at the Jefferson Davis Soldier Home were poor when they arrived, but most lived in solidly middle class households in their younger years. Student researchers have also documented things descendants were reporting to the team through their own family memories and records: residents were often educated, well read, and they continued learning

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Ural and one team member, long-time Beauvoir researcher Lisa Foster, have published an essay on the home in Mississippi History News, which is accompanied by a lesson plan to help teachers incorporate this material into classrooms. Ural noted that as the final project data comes in, it appears that Beauvoir is one of the rare success stories in which Mississippians successfully cared for most, though not all, of their veterans, as the state had promised families it would.

“This project, with the support it received from the Moorman Professorship, serves as a powerful reminder of how the humanities better inform us as scholars, community members, and the nation as a whole,” says Ural. “It’s also a beautiful example of how much Southern Miss and the College of Arts and Letters value work like this. At a time when humanities organizations and budgets are being slashed, Southern Miss is standing firm and delivering on its promise to offer our students a full education that benefits generations.”
For students at Southern Miss, there are many opportunities to gain hands-on experience in the professions they hope to pursue after graduation. For many broadcast students in the School of Mass Communication and Journalism, Southern Miss Radio has often served as an introduction to a fun and satisfying career. WUSM-Southern Miss Radio FM 88.5 broadcasts from the Hattiesburg campus. The station is dedicated to playing an assortment of more than 60,000 Americana songs and produces a daily public affairs show, Southern Miss Today. WUSM started in the early ’50s as WMS, a 10-watt AM station. The station broadcast news and classical music to an audience in an area between I-59 and Highway 49. The college added an FM station in the late ’60s, leading to the modern-day Southern Miss Radio, which showcases the very best in “roots radio.” Whether you listen online or on a radio, you can enjoy everything from Bob Dylan, Sturgill Simpson and Lucinda Williams to Johnny Cash, the Staple Singers, and Nathaniel Rateliff and the Night Sweats. This format, along with a grassroots business approach, has earned the station a “Best of the Pinebelt” award from Signature magazine for the last four years. Justin Martin serves as the general manager of the station, and his duties range from directing and managing to being the on-air talent. “Southern Miss Today gives me the opportunity to offer students the chance to get their hands dirty and produce a no-safety-net talk show,” Martin said. Students are also involved in other tasks, such as Federal Communication Commission administrative duties, music selection, booking guests, and hosting the show. “There are a myriad of jobs for students to be involved with at WUSM,” Martin said. “I would think that if a student takes what WUSM does seriously and gets involved, he or she would have a big head-start on getting a job in radio.” One former Southern Miss student, Courtney Carter-Ingle, benefited greatly from her experience at WUSM. She volunteered as a host and operations manager during her undergraduate career and later served as the assistant general manager while a graduate student. “My time at WUSM prepared me in ways that, at the time, I didn’t understand,” Carter-Ingle said. “I learned time management, how to work under pressure, how to hone my craft, how to better myself, all while learning to roll with the punches and realize when you’re not in control and that things happen.” Carter-Ingle, who graduated in 2012 with a bachelor’s and 2013 with a master’s in Mass Communication and Journalism, currently works for MS News Network in Jackson. “When I face an obstacle in life now, I look back to my time there, the lessons I learned, and I’m eternally grateful for the opportunities WUSM provided for me,” Courtney-Ingle said.

As Southern Miss Radio’s catchphrase suggests, we invite you to dial it down and turn it up. Support the students and station and check out 88.5 FM in the Pine Belt or listen online at SouthernMissRadio.com.
In 2016, “the Southern Miss Ceramics National Show-case was the first of its kind at Southern Miss,” said Mark Rigsby, assistant professor for the Department of Art and Design and museum director. “The event set the bar high for the rest of the year and was hyped by many artists and organizations as one of the best-juried shows. The national ‘Call for Entries’ served to attract the attention from artists, curators, arts educators, and collectors from around the country. Our students are still talking about the experience of having renowned ceramic artists such as Brian Harper as the juror, and Kenneth Baskin as lecturer in conjunction with the show,” added Rigsby.

The University of Southern Mississippi’s College of the Arts has long been acknowledged as exceptional. In 2016, the university created the Arts Institute of Mississippi (AIM) to enhance its academic programs in the arts and to unify them with other arts organizations in the region.

Under the leadership of Jay Dean, executive director, AIM strives to serve as an advocate for the arts. AIM has the mission of creating a structure that allows and invites Southern Miss arts departments—Art and Design, Dance, English (Center for Writers), Music, Theatre, and Mass Communication and Journalism (Entertainment Industry and Film Studies)—along with the Partners for the Arts, its fundraising entity, to work together.

As the dean states, “unifying the arts under one umbrella and creating a common vision encourages collaborations and initiatives that foster excellence in every area of the arts.”

With regular cultural arts events, exhibits, performances, and special projects, the departments provide a myriad of life-changing opportunities for students.

Art and Design

Whether in the 3-D studio, the 2D arts building, or in the Gallery of Art and Design, the Department of Art and Design prides itself on honing students’ abilities and preparing the next generation of artists for the professional world—skills in graphic design, sculpting, painting, metal casting, professional pottery, mass production, to real world experiences outside the classroom. With initiatives like the Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition, the Ceramics National Showcase, and the Visiting Artist Series, students receive exposure and expand their vision as they pursue opportunities in the visual arts.

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Arts Institute of Mississippi: Fostering Excellence in Every Area of the Art

Dance

Students from Mississippi, Louisiana, the Florida Panhandle, Alabama, Tennessee, and other regions unite at Southern Miss—all for the love of dance. Set apart by its performance-based course of study and a close-knit community, the Department of Dance produces skillful and knowledgeable performers through its rigorous program. Students always jump for the challenge, as they are required to audition to join professional caliber ensembles every semester, including the Freshmen Repertory Company and the Repertory Dance Company. The department also hosts residencies, including the National Dance Artist Series (NDAS) throughout the academic year. The NDAS brings independent choreographers and small dance companies from around the nation to teach, choreograph, and hold lectures.

“NDAS not only brings dancers of exceptional talent to Southern Miss and the community, but it allows our students to forge strong and meaningful relationships with guest artists due to the creative and collaborative setting,” said Stacy Reischman Fletcher, professor and chair of the Department of Dance. “Students are trained to achieve the competencies needed for professionalism, so they can take their performing capabilities from Southern Miss to the region and the rest of the nation,” she added.
Music
The Southern Miss School of Music has an international reputation for musical excellence. Each semester patrons enjoy top-notch performances from the Guest Artist Series, the Faculty Artist Series, the Wind Ensemble, the Connoisseurs Series, the Symphony Orchestra, and many more. These ensembles not only train stellar and versatile artists, but also bring rich cultural experiences to the community.

This year, the School of Music further enhanced its acclaim with the return of world-renowned flutist Sir James and Lady Jeanne Galway for a special concert with the Symphony Orchestra, featuring three acting students from the Department of Theatre.

“Having internationally known artists of such caliber as Sir James and Lady Jeanne Galway, as well as past performers like Plácido Domingo, Renée Fleming, Itzhak Perlman, and Yo-Yo Ma, and popular artists such as Doc Severinson, The Pointer Sisters, Patti La Belle, Dionne Warwick, and Sandi Patty, adds to a long list of life-changing opportunities that we are able to provide to our students,” said Jay Dean, symphony director. “Being able to bring legendary icons to perform is not only a validation of our students’ musicianship, but also of the superb work being done by our talented faculty and staff,” added Dean.

Theater
Nurturing the power of imagination through the creation of artistic and innovative sets, impeccable performances, and poignant characters is just a few reasons the Department of Theatre has drawn thousands of audiences over the years to enjoy its productions. Theatre provides a multitude of performance opportunities by bringing six productions to life each school year, along with intensive practical training for student actors, directors, designers, and stage managers.

Last year, the Department of Theatre kicked off the return of an annual tradition with the 40th season of Southern Arena Theatre. It featured two classics — Neil Simon’s The Star-Spangled Girl and Agatha Christie’s classic And Then There Were None, as well as Improv Comedy Club for the third event.

John Warrick, department chair of theatre, explains that this is a unique opportunity for these students. “Southern Arena Theatre captivates an audience that is distinct from our academic season, expanding our reach and enforcing our commitment to not only showcasing our students’ talent throughout the community but also demonstrating the quality of our program.”

Creative Writing
The Center for Writers, a program in the Department of English, has maintained a tradition, celebrating the 10th anniversary of its pre-performance talk series, in collaboration with Theatre, and over 30 years of its Visiting Writers Series, which brings to campus internationally acclaimed authors of poetry and fiction. This year was no exception as the center welcomed poet Aimee Nezhukumatathil, professor of English at State University of New York–Fredonia. As Luis Iglesias, professor and chair of the English department, notes, “Aimee Nezhukumatathil is an acclaimed and award-winning poet; recent honors include a poetry fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pushcart Prize. It is vital for our students to be exposed to such groundbreaking poets, as well as different styles and aesthetics to fully learn the art.”

Film
The movers and shakers in the film program are exposed to state-of-the-art technology and hands-on experience that teaches them skills needed across multiple platforms, including filmmaking, TV, web series, documentary and commercial work. Vincenzo Mistretta, Southern Miss film professor, says the program is an integral step in a student’s filmmaking career. “Graduates are prepared for entry-level production positions and go on to do great things. Several recent graduates have been selected for the American Pavilion program at the Cannes Film Festival, a leading showcase that boasts emerging and young up-and-coming filmmakers around the globe,” said Mistretta.

Film students got to capture history this past summer in a developing documentary detailing a space relic’s journey from Louisiana to Mississippi. “One of the goals here at the Southern Miss film program is to give our students excellent opportunities to develop as capable filmmakers and as active citizens. Working with NASA and INFINITY supported our mission of building connections with the community and was an honor for our students; they seized every moment,” said Mistretta.

Nationally accredited in all four major areas of the Arts, Southern Miss is extremely proud of our arts curriculum and the talented and dedicated students who graduate from our programs. “Our arts programs without a doubt foster excellence in every area of the arts—equipping the next generation of artists with the competencies they need to succeed in their fields, and showcasing the talent at Southern Miss to the region and beyond,” reaffirms Dean.
New Orleans Women and the Poydras Home: More Durable than Marble
Pamela Tyler
LSU Press, 2016

Nine Protestant white women established the Poydras Home in New Orleans in 1817 to address the plight of orphaned and/or needy girls who were educationally disadvantaged, economically distressed, and sexually vulnerable. The women founders, and others who came after them across the decades, created the home, funded it, sustained it, expanded it, and on more than one occasion, fought to save it. The “lady managers” displayed a fascinating combination of tender hearts and business heads. Animated by womanly compassion, they simultaneously manifested traits normally associated with men. They circumvented antebellum women’s legal disabilities by incorporating themselves and becoming thus empowered to buy, rent, and sell property, which they did to create a revenue stream to sustain the home. At a time when woman’s property was controlled, and her rights were circumscribed by law and custom, these women represented a model of female empowerment. Their actions and philosophy, as well as the nature of their governance, reflected a strong abiding commitment to the value of women, to the cause of education, and to the idea of women’s education as a means of service to society. Their approach to the home was both rigorous and practical. They endorsed the idea of self-help and achievement. The women founders, and others who came after them, sought to develop in the girls under their care a firm moral foundation that would provide them with the strength and courage to face the hardships of the world. The women who worked at the Poydras Home were an inspiration to the girls they sought to serve through a combination of education, financial training, and meaningful employment. Their efforts were successful. The women managers at the Poydras Home were able to maintain the home, build a strong local reputation, and provide a successful training ground for young women who would lead lives of service to their families and communities. The story of the Poydras Home is one of perseverance and dedication, of women who refused to be held back by tradition or convention, and who sought to create a better future for the girls in their care. The story of the Poydras Home is a testament to the power of women to overcome obstacles and create meaningful opportunities for others.
have a place to visit and remember their loved ones.”

Kimes, commissioned to create the memorial, remembers how quickly the media’s focus shifted from the loss of life to the ecological effects of the resulting oil spill. It was sad how easily overshadowed the loss of the 11 men became, Kimes said. ELEVEN is on Elysian Fields near Dauphine Street. When Kimes was commissioned to create the piece, he began to research the men’s lives.

“I was particularly moved by the various small towns each man was from, along with the young age of many of the men, many even younger than myself. I was also inspired by this project because the surviving family members had no remains to bury nor a location of the tragedy to visit. ELEVEN isn’t just a memorial honoring the 11 men of the Deepwater Horizon tragedy. This piece and space is for the families of those men so they have a place to visit and remember their loved ones.”

As a freshman, Barker was elected student body vice president in the Student Government Association. He was also active in the Baptist Student Union, Men of Excellence and his fraternity, Pi Kappa Phi. He participated in mission projects in West Africa, Mexico, New England, New Orleans and the Pacific Northwest. After graduation, Barker was elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives, serving District 102.

At age 25, he was the first Millennial elected to the Mississippi Legislature, serving on a number of committees, including the Universities and Colleges committee as its vice chairman. Many at Southern Miss, including Dr. Paul, remember Barker fondly. “Toby Barker was one of the very best student leaders I have had the privilege of working with. He did then, and does today, epitomize true servant leadership. He displays an open caring heart and the courage of his convictions. As a State Legislator, it is so refreshing to see him focus on the needs of others above his political self-interest. Toby strives daily to leave it better than he found it.” Paul said.

Southern Miss Gulfport native Claire Gerald Brantley is executive brand manager with McGraw-Hill Education Publishing in New York City, where she oversees sales of the company’s books in sociology, anthropology, and health and human performance. She has previously held positions as vice president of Pearson Learning Solutions as well as Harcourt Brace’s acquisitions editor for literature. She earned a bachelor’s (1989) and a master’s (1993) degree from The University of Southern Mississippi’s Department of English and was a student in Honors College.

“I started at USM as a math major, but quickly decided that a Liberal Arts path was better suited to my interests and strengths,” Brantley says. “I wanted the flexibility in my career to be able to pursue opportunities in a wide array of fields, and majoring in English taught me sophisticated ways to communicate effectively, regardless of the subject matter. Reading and interpreting a Sylvia Plath poem, as it turns out, is the perfect preparation for reading and interpreting spreadsheets. Telling a good story as a writer is not really all that different from explaining features and benefits to a sales force or to customers. Carefully unpacking meaning is the same whether it’s a Raymond Carver short story or a profit and loss statement. And Shakespeare’s Richard III is practically a treatise on Corporate America.”

Tori Bowie knows that discipline and determination are important values in the classroom—and on the field. Her dedication to her education earned her a degree from Southern Miss. Her dedication to her sport led her to multi-medal-winning performances in the 2016 Summer Olympics games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. “I know that everything is a gift,” Bowie said. “It can be taken away at any time.” Bowie made history in athletics during her time at Southern Miss. The then-junior became the first Southern Miss athlete to win an individual national championship at the NCAA outdoor meet and swept the long jump NCAA titles in a single season for both indoor and outdoor events.

“After competing on the international stage for the next three years, Bowie would later represent the United States in the 2016 Olympics, winning a bronze and silver medal in the women’s 100- and 200-meter dash. Bowie also came home with a gold medal in the 4x100 relays, her team finishing with the second-fastest time in the race’s history. “I feel like I’m telling my story to the world,” Bowie said. “I’m just trying to be an example to everyone from Mississippi and especially from my hometown of Sand Hill. I just want to let everyone know we are capable of doing whatever it is we want to do in life.”
Certificate Programs: Pathways to Opportunity

Our certificate programs allow students and adult learners to take a series of classes from different departments focused on a particular theme. They are a great way for students to enhance their resume, and to let future employers know the skills they bring to the table beyond their college major. For adult learners, certificates are a great way to enhance their knowledge in their field, or even a way to branch out into a new area of interest in preparation for transitioning to a new career.

Apparel and Construction Design

The Department of Theatre in the College of Arts and Letters has teamed up with the Department of Marketing and Merchandising in the College of Business for an exciting new certificate program in apparel construction and design. Students learn about theatrical costuming, textile manufacturing, consumer behavior, and the history of apparel through the ages. They also get hands-on experience designing costumes, including millenary, fabric dying and printing, and mask-making.

Whether students and adult learners are interested in pursuing a career in theatre or a career in fashion merchandising (or simply want to bring new skills to their local community theatre), the Apparel Construction Design Certificate is a great way not only to learn, but to gain the practical experience employers look for.

For more information, visit usm.edu/theatre/apparel-construction-and-design.

Leadership Experience Program

Today’s job market is competitive, and we want to make sure our students have the skills they need to stand out. After education and experience, the number one attribute employers look for in potential employees is evidence of leadership skills.

Our Leadership Certificate introduces students to leadership theories and helps them examine ways to put theory into practice. A semester-long practicum and three out-of-class leadership activities offer real-world experience and opportunities to build a portfolio for prospective employers. As students work toward becoming confident, knowledgeable, and skilled leaders, they can choose electives that match their interests, from small group communication to tactical leadership in military science to cultural diversity, ethics, and politics.

For more information, visit usm.edu/interdisciplinary-studies/leadership-experience-program.

Nonprofit Studies Graduate Certificate

Nonprofits attract people who want to make a difference in the world we live in, whether they work in social services, human rights, the arts, education, the environment, animal welfare, healthcare or international affairs. But what is the best way to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to help their nonprofit be a success?

Our graduate certificate in nonprofit studies combines courses in sociology, nonprofit studies, and business to provide skills in fundraising, resource development, management, accounting, marketing, and management of boards and volunteers. It’s open to both Southern Miss graduate students and career professionals who want to take their careers to the next level.

We also offer nonprofit studies as a minor for undergraduates. Visit usm.edu/anthropology-sociology/graduate-certificate-nonprofit-studies-0 to learn more.
While some slow down to enjoy lazy summer days by the pool, faculty in the College of Arts and Letters are just getting started on their summer activities. If you take a summer stroll from the Liberal Arts Building to the Theatre and Dance Building, or from Shoemaker Square to the Gallery of Art and Design or Mannoni Fine Arts Building, you will see various groups of young people laughing and learning. Maybe they’re playing instruments under the shade of the trees or learning lines on stage at Tatum Theatre. Or maybe they’re sitting in the shadow of one of the outdoor sculptures finishing a short story, or playing a game inspired by Harry Potter on Pride Field. This is how we do summer in the College of Arts and Letters. Hundreds of students from near and far participate in our summer camps every year.

The School of Music, Department of Theatre, and Department of English host exciting camps that attract students to our Hattiesburg campus to hone their craft, meet new friends, and have loads of fun.

**Summer Camps**

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**Summer Camps**

- **FestivalSouth Chamber Music Workshop**
  - The FestivalSouth Chamber Music Workshop welcomed string players ages 18 and younger and was designed to sharpen listening skills and provide invaluable musicianship training.

- **All-South Drum Major and Guard Camp**
  - The All-South Drum Major and Guard Camp was open to students in grades 7-12. Participants learned fundamental modern, contemporary-style techniques that will benefit them throughout their high school years and beyond, should they join The Pride of Mississippi!

- **Summer Drummin’**
  - Summer Drummin’ was led by our very own internationally renowned percussionist John Wooten; this camp was 13 days full of mini camps, including Mallet Keyboard Camp, Drum Set Camp, Marching Percussion Camp and Middle School Percussion Camp.

- **The Southern Flute Festival**
  - The Southern Flute Festival featured internationally renowned flutist Raafaele Tievissani and was geared to all levels of flute playing from middle school through graduate level, as well as to amateur flute enthusiasts.

- **FestivalSouth Orchestral and Chamber Music Academy**
  - At the FestivalSouth Orchestral and Chamber Music Academy, for an intense six days, participants acquired, developed and enhanced their skills as orchestra and chamber ensemble performers under the guidance of national and international artists.

- **Midsummer Musical Theatre Experience**
  - Midsummer Musical Theatre Experience has been running for over a decade; youth ages 8-15 have been developing their acting, singing and dancing skills while they have a great time. Space Pirates! was performed at the conclusion of the camp to the delight of multiple audiences.

- **Camp Quidd-Lit**
  - At Camp Quidd-Lit, participants (ages 8-13) discussed children’s and young adult books, created their own fictional creatures and worlds, and learned how to play Quidditch with the official USM Quidditch team.

- **New Writers Institute**
  - The New Writers Institute was a two-week camp that encouraged young writers (ages 8-15) to explore their literary talents in a friendly and supportive environment under the guidance of published writers.

- **The FestivalSouth Orchestral and Chamber Music Academy**
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“I’d urge people to think about studying abroad sooner rather than later in their college years,” Davies agreed. “One thing we tell students is that seldom in later years do you have the opportunity to take off from your job, education or family for an entire month.”

Luisa Garrido Baez, director of the Spanish in Spain program and Spanish instructor at Southern Miss, took 21 students to the beautiful, historic Spanish city of Cadiz. The experience was more than learning a new language—it also broadened their world perspective in a way that media can’t. “Everybody enjoyed it very much,” Baez said. “I even saw some tears on the last day.” There were many memorable moments from the trip that included a weekend trip to Granada, Flamenco dance shows, and breathtaking views above the city.

“It’s such an important experience to have,” Baez said. “Students will taste new foods, observe new customs and learn new traditions. They will gain a better understanding and appreciation for the new country’s people and history.”

When asked, “Why should students consider studying abroad?” Rowland quoted renowned French writer Simone De Beauvoir. “Exister, c’est oser se jeter dans le monde.” To exist is to dare to throw oneself into the world.
History Professor Named Teacher of the Year

Each year, the Mississippi Humanities Council’s Humanities Teacher Awards recognize the contributions of humanities faculty at each of the state’s colleges and universities. This year, Dr. Wesley Follett acknowledged his award with a November public lecture on his Gulf Park home campus entitled “Let’s Get Medieval! A Fourteenth-Century Argument for the Liberal Arts.” In his lecture, Dr. Follett discussed the contemporary issue of the value of the liberal arts within the context of his particular scholarly expertise in medieval history and the works of Italian poet Petrarch.

“Petrarch greatly esteemed the learning of Classical Greece and Rome and learning their languages, literature, philosophy, history, theater and other Liberal Arts disciplines that we now associate with the Humanities,” Follett noted. “He was in fact quite a harsh critic of those in his day who questioned the continued relevance and place of those subjects in higher education. To those in our own day who similarly question the worth of the Humanities, I point to Petrarch’s argument that the Humanities are in fact timeless, and provide us with the critical tools to express, define, and understand our own lives. As Petrarch put it, the liberal arts offer remedy for the diseases which tear apart the soul, and also society,” Follett added.

Follett is a medievalist specializing in religious history, with emphases on monasticism, hagiography, liturgy and manuscript studies, and a geographical focus on pre-Norman Ireland. He is the author of Céli Dé in Ireland: Monastic Writing and Identity in the Early Middle Ages (2006) and has published numerous peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on early medieval Ireland. Follett teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in medieval, classical and world history at Southern Miss’ Gulf Park campus.

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