

# GRADUATE DEAN'S REPORT: INFORMATION AND UPDATES FROM THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Spring 2018/February

## USM FACULTY MEMBER WINS CONFERENCE OF SOUTHERN GRADUATE SCHOOLS OUTSTANDING MENTOR AWARD

Dr. Brad Dufrene, professor and director, School Psychology Service Center in the Department of Psychology, was selected to receive the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) Outstanding Mentor Award for 2018. CSGS is an organization of over 200 graduate schools in the southern states ranging from Texas to Maryland. Dr. Dufrene will receive the award during the awards luncheon of the CSGS annual meeting to be held in Fayetteville, Arkansas on February 24. Dr. Dufrene received his Ph.D. in school psychology from Mississippi State University in 2005. He completed a pre-doctoral internship in pediatric psychology at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. His research interests include prevention of emotional and behavior disorders in preschool children and prevention of obesity in Head Start children. However, his true passion is mentoring future psychological researchers and practitioners. He was named USM's Graduate Mentor of the Year in 2017.



Dr. Brad Dufrene, Conference of Southern Graduate Schools  
Outstanding Mentor Award Winner for 2018

## NEW MCNAIR SCHOLARS COHORT SELECTED



Following a rigorous interview process, fifteen undergraduate students were selected as 2018 McNair Scholars. The new cohort of students includes: Kapriyah Crosby, public health; Destiny Farmer, kinesiology (exercise science); Jaylin Goodloe, psychology; Sarah Jamison, biological sciences; Japriest Jerry, psychology; Sara-Lee Kidd, social work; Darrielle Martin, psychology; Dominique McArthur, psychology; Aaron Robinson, electronics engineering; Jamal Sampson, nursing; LaQuitta Simpson, psychology; Amber Slaughter, psychology; Zyra

Warfield, biological sciences; Tiara Watson, psychology; and Destiny Williams, kinesiology. The McNair experience begins this semester and continues through the fall. Scholars will conduct research with a faculty mentor; attend a summer course focused on professional development, including writing and communication skill development, interviewing, and GRE preparation; visit other universities or research sites; and present their research at a regional or national conference. The activities are designed to help Scholars understand the expectations of graduate school and develop competitive graduate applications. In a new partnership with USM's INBRE program, Scholars in STEM disciplines will also apply to USM's INBRE program to strengthen their research and professional skills if also selected for that program. The McNair Scholars Program, a U.S. Department of Education TRIO program, is named for Dr. Ronald McNair, physicist and astronaut who died on the space shuttle Challenger in January 1986. The goal of the program is to encourage first generation/low income or underrepresented students to pursue a doctorate and expand the academy with role models for underserved populations, thus encouraging students from similar backgrounds to aspire to reach the highest level of educational achievement.

## **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR 2018 GRADUATE STUDENT AND FACULTY AWARDS**

### **Graduate Assistant of the Year Award**

The Graduate Assistant of the Year Award recognizes an exemplary graduate assistant for his or her character, service and outstanding contributions to teaching and research, and scholarly achievements. Nominees must be currently-enrolled GA's in good academic standing on at least 9 semester hours of graded, graduate coursework. The nomination must be submitted by the student's department chair/director if the GA is in an academic area or by the immediate supervisor if the GA is in a non-academic area. The winner will receive a plaque and a cash award, to be presented at the Graduate Research Symposium awards luncheon. The electronic form with list of required documents can be found at this link: <https://forms.usm.edu/graduate-school/embed.php?id=48337>. Nominations are due by 5 pm, Friday, February 23.

### **Graduate Mentor of the Year Award**

Jointly sponsored by the Graduate School and the Vice President for Research, the Graduate Mentor of the Year Award recognizes an exemplary faculty member for outstanding graduate student mentorship that produces successful graduates who display competence, confidence, professionalism, and independence. The winner will receive a travel award and a plaque, to be presented at the Graduate Research Symposium awards luncheon. The electronic form with list of required documents can be found at this link: <https://forms.usm.edu/graduate-school/embed.php?id=48886>. Nominations are due by 5 pm, Friday, February 23.

## **ANNOUNCING GRADUATE SCHOOL EVENTS FOR PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS**

### **Graduate Program Coordinator Workshops**

All new and continuing graduate coordinators are invited to attend a Lunch & Learn Graduate Program Coordinator Workshop designed to inform and help program coordinators navigate the responsibilities of that role. The workshops will include training in:

- Radius and graduate admission processes
- Graduate assistantships
- Progress to degree forms; monitoring academic standing

- Graduate School queries useful to graduate coordinators
- Graduate School policies and procedures

Event dates and location: March 6 and March 7 (Choose one) | 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. | Thad Cochran Center Room 216

### **Graduate Recruitment Summit**

Directors, program chairs, and graduate coordinators, please mark your calendars and plan to attend the upcoming Graduate Recruitment Summit. The purpose of the Summit is to:

- Promote innovative recruitment strategies by sharing both successful and failed initiatives with members of the graduate recruitment community
- Identify best practices for graduate recruitment
- Assemble a graduate recruitment advisory board who will continue to disseminate information about successes and strategize for future initiatives

Event date and location: May 15 | 11 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | Thad Cochran Center Room 218 A-B  
Electronic invitations will be sent in the near future.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS**

### **Spring 2018 GRE Boot Camps Scheduled**

To help prepare undergraduate students for the GRE and encourage successful graduate applications, the Graduate School is hosting multiple GRE boot camps throughout 2018. The format for each boot camp on the Hattiesburg campus will be two, half-day sessions focusing on verbal and quantitative skills sections of the GRE. Sessions at the Gulf Park campus will be full-day Saturday workshops covering the same content. The boot camps will also be available to online students. GRE boot camp instructors will be doctoral students in English and mathematics with experience leading GRE preparatory courses. Each boot camp will be limited to a total of 30 students. A \$50 registration fee will cover the full course. Course materials will be provided at no additional charge. An online registration form for the first boot camp will be available soon. This project is funded through a grant from the Southern Miss Fund. The following is a list of spring sessions:

Hattiesburg campus: McCain Library Rooms 100 and 203

Boot camp 1: Saturday, March 24 and Saturday, March 31, 8:00 a.m. to noon

Boot camp 2: Tuesday, April 10 and Tuesday, April 17, 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Gulf Park campus: Date and location to be announced soon

Boot camps: Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **How to Get into Graduate School: a Panel Discussion**

In this panel discussion aimed at junior and senior USM students, faculty and graduate students will share their graduate school experiences; inform students on the expectations of graduate school; and advise them on developing a resumé that will support a competitive graduate application. Panelists will include: Dr. Hugh

Broome, assistant teaching professor, Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry; Dr. Marcus Coleman, assistant professor, Department of Communication Studies; and Dr. Marek Steedman, associate professor, Department of Political Science, International Development, & International Affairs; along with doctoral students Tanja Nathanael and Samantha Druwellar. Participants are encouraged to bring their own lunch. The Graduate School will provide snacks.

Event date and location: March 21 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Thad Cochran Center Room 118A

### **Graduate Student Appreciation Week Coming in April**

During the week of April 2 – 6, graduate students will be honored with professional development and social events to celebrate Graduate Student Appreciation Week. Departments are encouraged to plan an event for their graduate students during this week. A schedule of events will be released soon.

### **Date Change for Susan A. Siltanen Graduate Research Symposium**

Due to a scheduling problem at with the venue, the annual Susan A. Siltanen Graduate Research Symposium has been rescheduled for Thursday, March 29 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Thad Cochran Center (TCC), followed by the awards luncheon at 12:30 p.m. in the TCC ballroom.

Please note: Faculty in all disciplines are needed to judge oral and poster presentations. Please contact Roseanne Scammahorn ([Roseanne.scammahorn@usm.edu](mailto:Roseanne.scammahorn@usm.edu)) if you are available to judge either all or part of the morning.