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Newsletter Spring/Summer 2022

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Graduate School

Newsletter Spring/Summer 2022



Dear Students, Alumni, Colleagues, and Friends of the Graduate School,

As I pen this welcome for our Spring/Summer 2022 newsletter, students have moved back into the dorms to kick off another academic year. This has been a hot summer in Oxford, with the temperature exceeding 90 degrees Fahrenheit frequently and heat advisories on multiple occasions. Of course, with that heat comes the many blooms around campus. In the Graduate School, summer means an opportunity to focus on celebrating the successes of the past year and planning for the next academic cycle. This provides us an opportunity to tell you

about some of the amazing things our graduate students do. It is my pleasure to introduce 11 stories about the achievements and accomplishments of our graduate students and the fine graduate programs on this campus.

In this cycle's newsletter, you will have an opportunity to read about how special it was to return to a more typical hooding ceremony and to meet our class marshals—it was wonderful to be able to see our graduate students' smiling faces as their mentors hood them, welcoming them to the academy. Of course, you can view the full ceremony at <https://www.btsvirtual.com/22graduatehooding>.

Next, you will see a story related to a new initiative in which we co-sponsored a trip that supported graduate students to engage with the history of the state while studying at UM. We also introduce you to our latest Advancing STEM scholarship winner (which focuses on students who contribute to the advancement of women in STEM), a graduate student who honed his skills in astrophotography during the pandemic, our newest SREB doctoral scholar and a now SREB doctoral scholar graduate who is joining our accountancy faculty (we are thrilled she will stay in Oxford and teach graduate students), and two students who won first place in their field categories at the Mississippi Academy of Sciences annual conference. We also highlight ways that our graduate students positively contribute to the state of

Mississippi, providing mental health services in the state and region while they complete their graduate training. For a state that is among the three states with the least access to care (see the National Alliance for Mental Health [NAMI] Mississippi at <https://namims.org/state-mental-health-america/>), it matters that our students help expand opportunities for mental health and wellness treatments. You will read about exciting developments in two of our programs—the residential Integrated Marketing and Communication M.S. and the Clinical Psychology Ph.D.

In the final set of stories, this newsletter includes a story about this year's Graduate Student Council's (GSC's) symposium. It's changed quite a bit. If you participated previously, I think you will find the changes the graduate student leaders implemented to evolve this event impressive. It was a big lift for them and they have a lot to be proud of with the work. In addition, you will find a letter from the outgoing GSC President, summarizing some of the key successes they experienced this year.

Speaking of those points of pride for the GSC, I anticipate they will have another alumni weekend and tailgate this year. I encourage our alumni to keep an eye out for details in the fall. Also, the Graduate School will again host at least one tailgate this fall. I hope all of you, including alumni, current students, faculty, staff, and friends, will attend the Graduate School's tailgate if able. And, if you do head to Oxford for a game, stop by the Graduate House and say hello. We are eager to hear your latest news.

Also during the fall, the University will celebrate the 60th anniversary of James Meredith's enrollment at UM, officially integrating the University of Mississippi. There are many events scheduled for that last week of September heading up to the Kentucky football game. Additional events will continue throughout the academic year. The University will publish a listing of events; please check out the [website for the 60th anniversary](#).

Finally, 2027 will mark the 100th anniversary for the University of Mississippi Graduate School. We are beginning to plan ways to celebrate our 100 years. If you have ideas and want to be part of the planning, please let us know (gschool@olemiss.edu).

As always, we appreciate your support of the Graduate School and our graduate students at the University of Mississippi.

Best wishes as we near the end of summer!

Annette S. Kluck, Ph.D.

Dean of the Graduate School

Professor of Leadership and Counselor Education

Spring/Summer 2022 Articles

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Graduate School

The 2022 Doctoral Hooding Ceremony

By: Margaret Savoie

This May, the Graduate School celebrated the doctoral class of 2022. Many weeks of preparation went into planning the hooding ceremony to commemorate the special occasion for over 100 doctoral students.

“Each year, the doctoral hooding ceremony is special, and this was no exception. After the disruption of the past few years, it was really wonderful to be able to see our new doctorates smiling as they were welcomed to the academy, to watch them exchange a hug with their mentor, and to shake hands as we congratulated them,” said Dr. Annette Kluck, Dean of the Graduate School.

In attendance among the family and friends of our students, was Dr. Glenn Boyce, Chancellor of the University.

“We welcome each of our new graduates into the academy,” said Boyce congratulating the graduates on earning the highest degree the academy has to offer.

Boyce also thanked the faculty and mentors for their continuous encouragement of the graduates.

“Tonight I want to congratulate and thank deeply our faculty, staff, mentors, and advisors – our graduate faculty work tirelessly to support the success of this doctoral student class,” he continued. “Our graduates are challenged to create and innovate new knowledge that was provided to them through faculty, they were challenged through guidance and support as they were also inspired and motivated, and sometimes they had difficult conversations... it may not always be recognized but they were always in your corner.”

This year, two students were selected as the 2022 Doctoral Class Marshals. These students were Dr. Candies Winfun-Cook, who received her Ph.D. in Education with an Emphasis in Elementary Education, and Dr. Kritika Gupta, who received her Ph.D. in Nutrition and Hospitality Management with an Emphasis in Nutrition along with a Master’s of Public Health degree.

In her speech, Winfun-Cook elaborated on the many emotions doctoral students have felt during their journey to graduation, making particular mention of the challenges of 2020 as well as the inspiring



Dr. Candies Winfun-Cook

African Americans who have been *firsts* past and present, such as James Meredith and the Honorable Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson. She also encouraged her peers to continue to persevere on their journey.

“While we have completed one assignment to obtain our doctorate degrees, I encourage you to complete life’s next assignment and do it with great enthusiasm, urgency, and love,” Winfun-Cook continued.

“Remember your why and trudge ahead with all the faith and determination you can muster up.”



Dr. Kritika Gupta

Gupta congratulated her peers as well, and she also took this time to congratulate first-generation students for their accomplishments.

“We all stepped into this institution from different walks of life, diverse backgrounds, different struggles and experiences, and most importantly different inspirations...today when we graduate from one of the most beloved universities in the US, we serve as an inspiration for many around us,” said Gupta.

Awards were also given out during the ceremony. Dr. Donald Skinner received the Graduate Instructor Excellence in Teaching Award, Carly Rock, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry received the Graduate Teaching Assistant Award, and Dr. Todd Smitherman, Professor of Psychology and Director of Clinical Training, received the Distinguished Teaching Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching and Mentoring Award.

The Graduate School is proud of all our students for their efforts and achievements. We look forward to seeing what they do in their future endeavors.

Graduate students impacted by *Sites of Resistance, Sites of Healing* trip

By: Margaret Savoie



In March 2022, the Graduate School co-sponsored a trip with the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, “Sites of Resistance, Sites of Healing.” This trip included visits to historical sites of racial injustice to reflect on the legacy and imagine new possibilities for the future. Starting in Oxford, MS, the group of students (mostly graduate students), along with faculty, staff, and community members traveled to Sumner, MS, and Montgomery, AL.

While in Sumner, the group visited the Emmett Till Interpretive Center. Here the group learned about the death of Emmett Till and the subsequent murder trial that brought light to the brutality of Jim Crow segregation in the south and was an early impetus of the civil rights movement. Once in Montgomery, the group visited the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice. The group examined and discussed America's history of racial injustice and its legacy and learned about current work being done to challenge racial and economic injustice.

Prior to the experience, the group gathered the night before their departure to engage in storytelling and group formation activities facilitated by the Alluvial Collective (formerly William Winter Institute) to begin building relationships with one another that would last beyond the two-day itinerary. The group also reconvened a week after they returned to debrief their experience and process the next steps.

"It was beautifully planned and professionally handled," said graduate student Anthony Gottlich, "I think the directors did an incredible job and were not afraid to sit with the discomfort of the trip and shape it into something productive."



The trip was sparked by a conversation between Dean Annette Kluck of the Graduate School and Assistant Vice Chancellor of Diversity and Inclusion Dr. Norris “EJ” Edney III. Both had previously visited the museum and memorial in Montgomery and wanted to take students. For the Graduate School, the trip would align with the desire to ensure graduate students engage with our local history while they study at UM, especially history related to racial injustice and civil rights. The Graduate School had previously committed to organizing and sponsoring an annual trip to such sites and the chance to partner with other units meant it would be possible to make the trip to the museum and memorial in Montgomery. The partnership led to a trip that was larger and more engaging than the original vision.

Edney reached out to Dr. Castel Sweet in her role as Director of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) and Assistant Professor of Practice in Community Engagement. Sweet was interested to provide opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community residents to engage with one another in transformative experiences. Sweet had visited the sites of the trip many times – each time deeply impacted. She values the knowledge of community residents and seeks to incorporate community perspectives in anything she does.

“Merging these two things I felt that taking a group of university affiliates and community residents on a trip would be a valuable learning experience for all involved,” said Sweet.

The Graduate School sponsored several graduate students on the trip. Four Graduate School employees also joined. Graduate student participants in the Southern Region Education Board (SREB)

Doctoral Scholars program and the Cole-Eftink Fellows program on the trip also had a chance to meet with students from Auburn University (AU). Over the past year, the two Graduate Schools had organized monthly networking events via zoom. Traveling to Montgomery made it possible for those who attended to meet some of the students from the UM-AU networking events.

For Gottlich, the most significant moment on the trip was the Lynching Memorial. “I practiced reading each name in my head to make space for that person’s humanity, as someone’s child or parent or neighbor.”

“I walked away not only moved by the sheer horror of the violence – some of which I was expecting – but a renewed energy to be a part of telling history in all its morbidity: to be a part of the side that resists the editing and manipulation of history,” said Gottlich.



When asked about feedback for this trip, participants shared how deeply impacted they were by the experience. Many appreciated the opportunity to visit the sites as a group and hear about the different stories and experiences of other participants.

Braxton Thomas, a graduate assistant at the CCE was also in attendance for the trip.

“One moment that sticks out for me was the reflection room at the end of the Equal Justice Initiatives Museum tour – it was a calming room where you could channel your emotions after leaving the actual exhibit,” she continued, “The room’s four walls were covered with African American people who had contributed [in] some way to the advancement of their people in America... it was breathtaking.”

There is hope for future trips. “There are so many additional sites and locations in the state of Mississippi that would provide an impactful experience for future opportunities... the options are endless,” said Sweet. Already, Sweet, Edney, and Kluck have initiated planning for a similar trip in 2023. Students, alumni, and members of the UM-Oxford community are encouraged to look for an announcement of details for next year’s trip in the upcoming months.

Astrophotography: One Student's Work to Bring Science to Everyone

By: Margaret Savoie



Sumeet Kulkarni

Sumeet Kulkarni took what started out as a hobby during the 2020 quarantine and turned it into an exhibit at the John Davis Williams Library here at the University of Mississippi.

“I think it was about April 2020, a month after we were told to go and stay at home. I was bored and wanted to go out and do something. I had this camera that was collecting dust – I decided to take it out and see this meteor shower that happens in April called Lyrids,” explained Kulkarni.

Kulkarni continued, “I went out there, clicked one picture that was not the best but showed the slightest hint of the Milky Way and I was just like wow, I continued to work with the settings, and I was hooked.”

Kulkarni is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Physics and Astronomy with research focused on gravitational wave astrophysics.

“It has been a pleasure to work with Sumeet,” said Dr. Anuradha Gupta, assistant professor. “Sumeet has a keen interest in astronomy and astrophysics and wants to learn about our cosmos – his astrophotography images are also amazing.”

When asked about his path to a Ph.D. at the University of Mississippi, Kulkarni said, “I think I was in the right place at the right moment.” He started as a physics undergraduate student who was looking to find a research project. There was a group at his previous institution who was working with the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) in 2015.

“That was just around the time when for the first time ever they [LIGO] detected gravitational waves, I was kind of part of the group and it was really exciting to be a part of this discovery, so I stuck with it,”



One of Kulkarni's images

said Kulkarni.

A friend suggested to Kulkarni to submit his astrophotography images to the J.D. Williams Library for one of their exhibits.

"I would say this is a newfound passion and it has been great to stick to it over the past year and half," said Kulkarni.

Kulkarni had already honed his skills in writing and communicating about science with more general audiences (**read about his work, along with recent graduate Dr. Kritika Gupta, with ComSciCon**). Kulkarni hopes to use his love for writing about science with his newfound comfort and passion for astrophotography to form a creative way to communicate science using different media.

UM graduate students participate in the SREB Doctoral Scholars and Dissertation Scholars Program

By: Margaret Savoie

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Doctoral Scholars and Dissertation Scholars Program is a program whose main goal is to encourage more racial and ethnic minority Ph.D. students to seek careers as faculty on college campuses. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, as of 2020 nearly half of all college students are not from the white, non-Hispanic category. But this fraction is not mirrored in college faculty. To help change this, the SREB Doctoral Scholars are afforded many benefits such as financial support, career counseling, networking, and opportunities for research funding.

The University of Mississippi's Graduate School is fortunate enough to have approximately 6 Institutional SREB Doctoral Scholars at any one time, with each scholar being part of the program for 3 years. In addition, starting in 2022, the Graduate School funded one student to be an SREB Dissertation Scholar, which enables the student to participate in similar professional development programming as they complete their doctoral degree. This latter opportunity is especially useful for students who may not have considered an academic career when they first started their doctoral program but who now have goals that align with broader aim of increasing capacity for underrepresented minority students to learn from individuals whose backgrounds may mirror their own. Among the current year's doctoral program scholars are Diego Fleitas, a newly named SREB Scholar, and Dr. LaToya Flint, who just graduated in May 2022. Learn more about these two SREB Scholars below!



Diego Fleitas, is a doctoral student in the Department of English and our newest SREB Doctoral Scholar. Fleitas' studies focus on Early Modern Literature. In the future, Fleitas hopes to become a professor. To Fleitas, being an SREB Fellow means a great deal and he is thankful for the many wonderful people he has had the opportunity to

Diego Fleitas

meet. When asked about what he wants people to know about the SREB program, Fleitas said, "We look forward to making waves!"

Dr. LaToya Flint recently graduated from the Patterson School of Accountancy. In the Fall of 2022, Flint will begin working as a tenure-track Assistant Professor in the Patterson School of Accountancy. For Flint, her favorite part of being an SREB Fellow has been the opportunity to attend the in-person conferences put on by SREB called the Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, in 2018 and 2019. Flint said, "I look forward to fulfilling the Doctoral Scholars Program's mission to increase the number of minority students who earn doctorates and become university faculty."



Dr. LaToya Flint

Recognition for our outstanding master's student scholars: Meet Sarah Lawrence

By: Margaret Savoie



Sarah Lawrence

Every year, the Mississippi Academy of Science holds an annual meeting to present addresses, symposia, workshops, scientific papers and exhibits of interest to its members. This year, Sarah Lawrence, a Master of Arts in Sociology student won first place in the Psychology and Social Science Division.

Lawrence, originally from Albemarle, North Carolina, completed her Bachelor of Arts at the University of Mississippi, with a major in psychology and minors in sociology and history.

"I decided to continue my education at the University of Mississippi due to the exceptional mentorship from Dr. Willa Johnson as well as other incredible professors in the sociology and anthropology department," said Lawrence.

The area of research for her presentation stemmed from a previous project that evolved into Lawrence's thesis. The focus is on understanding how students with non-apparent psychiatric disabilities navigate higher education through relationships with institutional partners.

"This is a tremendous honor and demonstrates the scholarly prowess of our students," said advisor to Lawrence, Dr. Anne Cafer, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Population Studies.

"In my research and experience to date many problems that this specific set of students face can be at least partially attributed to social norms and social structures that are in place," said Lawrence. "Within my current project I am using a Community Based approach to involve these students within my research design and allow them to be equal stakeholders in this project's development."



Dr. Anne Cafer, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Population Studies

Cafer said for the future, "I hope to be able to recruit more students like Sarah, who are interested in exploring and solving problems through analytical reasoning and critical thinking."

After defending her thesis proposal, Lawrence plans to continue her journey of data collection through her current thesis.

"My ultimate goal is to work within a community development environment to best serve those whose voices need to be uplifted and included in important conversations," said Lawrence.

"Sociology is a great place to work on real and interesting problems facing our society today," said Cafer.

Lawrence said one thing she wants people to know about studying sociology at the University of Mississippi is, "Sociology gives us the tools to better understand deep and complex social issues and phenomena through empirically based research and if we can fully understand issues and problems that our society is faced with, we are best equipped to address these problems and in some instances develop policies and practices to best serve one another."

Recognition for our outstanding master's student scholars: Meet Emily Morphis

By: Margaret Savoie



Emily Morphis

Emily Morphis, a Communication Sciences & Disorders (CSD) master's student, won first place in the Division of Neuroscience at the Mississippi Academy of Sciences annual conference.

Morphis presented a poster entitled, "Speech Fluency Changes Following Deep Brain Stimulation of the Subthalamic Nucleus in Parkinson's Disease: A Meta-Analysis." Morphis has continued this meta-analysis as her thesis.

"Deep brain stimulation is a procedure sometimes offered to patients in the later stages of Parkinson's disease," explained Morphis. "The procedure has been shown to improve fluency of movement/reduce tremors, but preliminary research also showed that it worsens speech fluency. After running the meta-analysis, we can say that deep brain stimulation has a medium or moderately negative effect on speech fluency in this population."

The American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) does not address neurogenic/acquired stuttering in its research base. This is what sparked Morphis' interest to dive deeper into this area.

"My hope is that this meta-analysis will provide concrete evidence justifying the need for further research into neurogenic/acquired stuttering in order to provide better resources [for] speech-language pathologists and their patients who may have this diagnosis," said Morphis.

Students in the CSD program are not required to present at conferences but it is highly encouraged. Student engagement in research is also supported through events such as the Three-Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition, at which Morphis won first place in the category for master's student competitors.



“It has been a pleasure working with Emily; she was actively involved in the development of her thesis project, and her continued work in my lab suggests to me that she truly values research and enjoys the process,” said Dr. Myriam Kornisch, Assistant Professor of CSD.

Morphis started her academic career at the University of Mississippi and received her bachelor’s degree in CSD.

“I applied to several graduate program[s], but once I learned that I had been offered a graduate assistantship in the neurogenic communicative disorders lab with Dr. Kornisch, I knew that I wanted to stay at UM for my graduate degree as well,” said Morphis.

Dr. Myriam Kornisch

The CSD program is clinically-based but there are many opportunities for students to explore research.

“We are all very proud of Emily’s accomplishments and we anticipate attracting more students who are interested in the various research opportunities we offer at the department level,” said Kornisch.

Morphis wants prospective students to know more about the CSD program.

“If someone is looking for a well-rounded experience of diverse clinical practice opportunities in addition to research opportunities and faculty support, it would be difficult to find a better program than the CSD program at the University of Mississippi.”

Kornisch reiterated Morphis’ sentiment, “The CSD department includes faculty and staff members with a wide range of research interests and specialties.” She continued, “Our students have the opportunity to learn from and work with experts in topics from child language development to adult neurogenic disorders.”

Graduate School

Graduate students serve the state and region as they hone their skills and complete their degrees in mental health fields

By: Margaret Savoie



Dr. Todd Smitherman, professor of psychology and director of clinical training.

The Graduate School is lucky to have multiple programs that can give back to the community in different ways. One such mechanism is providing mental health resources to the people in the community.

The clinical psychology program has two main ways that the community is served. The first is through a campus clinic, called the Psychological Services Center. Here low-cost therapy and assessment services are provided. This is not only for individuals from the campus community but also for those from the broader community, in the county, and even some from out of state.

“We serve children all the way to older adults and a lot of what we do is therapy for things like anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar conditions, substance abuse disorders, and more,” said Dr. Todd Smitherman, professor of psychology and director of clinical training.

“Our program also sends the students out into community placements, like state-run mental health facilities, private practices, and even research-focused hospitals like St. Jude,” said clinical psychology Ph.D. candidate Katelyn Sharpe from Wiggins, Mississippi. The clinical psychology program partners with about 10 different agencies in the community where one or more of the graduate students work and gain hands-on experiences.

Graduate students are also able to gain hands-on experience through the Clinic for Outreach and Personal Enrichment (COPE). Here students within the counselor education program work with

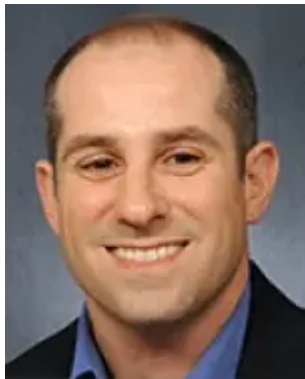
students, faculty, and staff and other members of the community.

“We are free, and clients do not have to be affiliated with the University – it’s open to anyone,” said Dr. Alex Kerwin, associate professor of counselor education and clinical coordinator at the COPE. For community members to be able to access free mental health services is valuable and not something available everywhere.

Due to COVID-19, the COPE is currently only offering telehealth services.



Katelyn Sharpe



Dr. Rick Balkin, interim department chair of the Department of Leadership and Counselor Education and professor of counselor education.

“Students are able to use our clinic and our HIPPA compliant system to offer telemental health delivery. All a kid needs is an iPad or a laptop, even a cell phone, anything that allows Zoom,” said Dr. Rick Balkin, interim department chair of the Department of Leadership and Counselor Education and professor of counselor education.

The staff at the COPE is made up of about eight counselors, who are all master’s students. These master’s students are then supervised by doctoral students who are licensed counselors.

One of the doctoral students is Kami Tran, from Arkansas.

“I work under a grant that Dr. Balkin received, called the Governor’s Emergency Education Response (GEER) Fund and our program specially provides telehealth to students in Mississippi, and we’ve partnered with three different school districts to provide telehealth resources,” said Tran.

Connecting with the community is not only important for student learning, but it sets the University’s programs away from the rest.

“I have particularly enjoyed the ability to pursue avenues that most interest me, rather than follow a cookie-cutter path to graduation,” said Sharpe.

Jeff Pavlacic, a clinical psychology Ph.D. candidate from St. Louis, Missouri, echoed the importance of the program’s distinction. “I chose the University of Mississippi due to the excellent clinical and research



Kami Tran



Jeff Pavlacic

opportunities, as well as the opportunity to continue working with patients in rural settings.”

As mentioned, services at the COPE are free and open to anyone in Mississippi at this time. The on-campus Psychological Services Center operates on a sliding scale fee which means that pay for a session is based on income and life situation.

For more information on the COPE please email cope@olemiss.edu or call (662) 915-7197 and for the Psychological Services Center please call (662) 915-7385.

Graduate School

Life as the learning laboratory: The inaugural IMC Connect! translates classroom learning opportunities into real-world experience

By: Margaret Savoie



Crisis Communication panel led by Dr. Timothy Coombs

The UM School of Journalism and New Media's Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) residential master's program hosted the inaugural IMC Connect!: A Roundtable Experience on March 31st and April 1st. This event was part of a new course added for the spring semester, IMC 580: Event Planning and Management, led by first year Assistant Professor of IMC Dr. Amanda Bradshaw. Bradshaw and her 25 graduate students hosted this roundtable experience which welcomed ten VIP

guests.

These guests included:

- **Chris Chiames**, Chief Communications Officer, Carnival Cruise Line
- **Stephen Holmes**, VP of Corporate Communications and External Affairs, The Home Depot
- **Reade Tidwell**, Director of Corporate Communications, Chick-fil-A
- **Renee Malone**, President & Founding Partner, KQ Communications
- **Jenny D. Robertson**, Senior VP, Integrated Marketing & Communications, FedEx Services
- **Dr. Timothy Coombs**, Professor in the Department of Communication, Texas A&M University
- **Dr. Rebecca Britt**, Associate Professor in the College of Communication & Information Sciences, The University of Alabama

- **Dr. Candice Edrington**, Scholar-Activist and Assistant Professor of Journalism and Mass Communications, The University of South Carolina
- **Dr. Debbie Treise**, Professor in the Department of Advertising, The University of Florida

“This class provides a unique educational experience,” said Bradshaw. “We are one of only a couple universities in the country that use this model; research shows that most event planning classes are focused on hypothetical situations versus this hands-on experience with a real event.”



IMC 580 Class with the VIP Guests to kick off 2022 IMC Connect!

The 25 graduate students were divided into teams of five, each to be representatives to and in charge of two guests. The students also divided into three other groups with specific tasks such as writing, logistics, and design. Students were able to use their skills to conquer the needed tasks and details that went into planning this event.

“Through IMC 580, we have had hands-on experience planning a real event. This gives us the experience we will need if any of us decide to go into event planning in the future,” said Kelsey Hanley, a second year Master of Science in IMC graduate student.

There were many tasks to be done before the event. Some of these tasks included figuring out travel to and from the Memphis airport for guests, calling catering companies, working with print shops for advertising material, creating digital promotional media, making sure to stay within budget, and more.

“Planning this event is so much fun but also so humbling to realize just how much work goes into planning an event,” said first year IMC graduate student, Haughton Mann.

“Opportunities to bring together leading researchers and practitioners can be quite valuable in sparking innovation. The synergy from the guided and spontaneous exchanges we witnessed was memorable,”

said Dr. Robert Magee, associate professor of IMC and a co-chair for this event. "I've heard wonderful feedback from participants and graduate students, alike, on how valuable the event was."

IMC Connect! consisted of five different panel sessions. The topics included

- Q&A Job Prep Panel: The Connection Between Research and Practice,
- Crisis Communication: Keep Calm and Sail On!,
- Social Media and Big Data Analytics,
- The Role of Advocacy and Social Justice in Public Relations, and
- Advertising and Building Your Brand: Developing Consistent Strategic Messages that Resonate.

Planning the event is not where the class stopped. Once it finally came time for IMC Connect! students were the ones driving and coordinating guest travel during the event, in charge of event registration/check-in, facilitating tours of both Rowan Oak House and the campus for the guests, and being present for the different panels.

Dr. Marquita Smith, assistant dean of graduate programs and associate professor of IMC, said, "The graduate students in Dr. Amanda Bradshaw's event planning course had the opportunity to tackle a variety of tasks and experiences in a team environment. The students were exceptional as they worked together to show hospitality and care for the guests and conference participants. I believe the students pushed each other and each group to greater heights."

The first IMC Connect! was seen as a success by all of those who were involved. Even though the conference was small, it offered students, faculty, staff and industry professionals the opportunity to share ideas and industry best practices. The School of Journalism and New Media is eager to start planning for the next IMC Connect!

Recognizing our outstanding clinical psychology program

By: Margaret Savoie

This past year the University of Mississippi's clinical psychology doctoral program once again showed why it is among the most sought-after doctoral programs on our campus. The program was reaccredited, receiving approval for the next 10 years, the maximum allowed. In addition, the program extended its outstanding performance for matching doctoral candidates to prestigious internships. The Department of Psychology has had a 100% match rate for multiple years now and students are matched to very competitive internship sites.

The program's accreditation is received from the American Psychological Association (APA). This accreditation is important because it allows students, prospective and current, to know that the program has met the basic standards of the psychology profession.



Dr. Todd Smitherman, professor of psychology and director of clinical training

Dr. Todd Smitherman, professor of psychology and director of clinical training, explained that accreditation is very important because it is essential for getting licensed as a psychologist and essentially is a means of quality control in terms of the curriculum and practicum training that students get.

The accreditation process first involves submitting a self-study. This is a document that details every course, every student, every requirement and how each of these requirements match with the competencies that APA wants students in the program to develop. After the self-study is submitted there is a period where APA can request additional information. Once this information is approved, it is time for a visit from APA. Due to COVID-19, these visits were completely virtual.

Since the last time the program was under review for reaccreditation (which was also successful), the APA changed their standards for accreditation. This has required significant work to align the program

with those changes over the past few years. The success with reaccreditation, receiving the maximum number of years allowed (which is not guaranteed and not all programs receive the full 10 years of reaccreditation), demonstrates that the program faculty effectively adopted the new standards. The reaccreditation process, especially when completed under the new standards for the first time, require a significant investment of time from the program faculty and Dr. Smitherman capably led this effort.

“It’s exciting,” said Smitherman, “it means all of the students in our program will be attending an accredited program and it makes their licensing efforts much, much easier as well as helps us recruit graduate students because these students want to go to an accredited program.”

To complete a Ph.D. in clinical psychology, students must complete a yearlong pre-doctoral internship. Students move away, usually (though not always) out of state, and work full time at a facility. This is intended to be an immersive clinical experience.

“This is part of their doctoral training; the students have to successfully complete a yearlong pre-doctoral internship before they can have their Ph.D. confirmed,” explained Smitherman. The process of obtaining an internship mirrors that generally used to “match” to a residency for medical school graduates. It is time consuming and competitive, especially for the sites of interest to students in the UM clinical psychology program.

There has been an imbalance between internships and matching in the world of clinical psychology with the number of applicants who want a position exceeding the number of positions. In addition, not all internship sites are accredited (which is important for licensure, just as is true with the accreditation of the doctoral program). This imbalance has improved over the years, but remains a significant concern for many doctoral students in psychology across the U.S. What the clinical psychology program here at the University of Mississippi has done is to offer a seminar every fall for their graduate students who are applying for internships that year. These seminars are taught by faculty within the program. The intention of these seminars is to review all the students’ application materials, give feedback and even conduct practice interviews.

Alexandra Gilbert, a Ph.D. candidate from Florida, said that she felt prepared for her yearlong internship. She is one of six students who matched to accredited internships this year. Gilbert started at the University of Florida and earned a B.A. in psychology in 2015. While applying to graduate schools,



Alexandra Gilbert

she pursued a post-bac research position at an anxiety disorder clinic for one year. She then applied to the University of Mississippi and was accepted in 2017.

Gilbert was interested in the University of Mississippi because of her advisor's research interests and the opportunity to serve underserved, rural communities. She continued, "I also really appreciated the collegial nature of the department and got along well with others in the lab; everyone was very welcoming."

"I had a great interview experience," said Gilbert when asked about the offered seminar on preparedness for the internship application process.

Looking back, some of Gilbert's favorite memories and experiences within the program have been attending conferences with other students and the department's Research Day as well as assisting with the program's own LGBTQIA+ support group. These same favorite experiences, encouraged by program faculty, also helped make Gilbert competitive during the internship application process.

This year the Department of Psychology is proud of all six students who were matched in the first round of the process.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Graduate School

The 2022 Graduate Student Council Research and Creative Achievement Symposium

By: Margaret Savoie

This year the Graduate Student Council (GSC) changed the name of its annual Research Symposium to “Research and Creative Achievement Symposium” to welcome more graduate students to participate and present their work.

“What we absorbed from the past data is that because of its name as a research symposium, students from liberal arts, business, or law school, they do not even try to present their work and we wanted to give this opportunity for all the graduate school disciplines,” said Kritika Gupta, Director of Academic and Professional Development for GSC.

2022, the 12th year for the symposium, was the first year in which there was representation from the School of Business and School of Law. In total, 82 students signed up to present their work, research, and achievements this year.



University of Mississippi alumnus Sly Spencer Lee, 2022 Symposium keynote speaker

University of Mississippi alumnus Sly Spencer Lee was a featured keynote speaker. Spencer Lee, a Forbes “30 under 30” honoree, earned a bachelor’s degree in pharmacy in 2010 and a master’s degree in pharmaceutical science with an emphasis in environmental toxicology in 2012. More than just being an alumnus of the university, Spencer Lee connected with the symposium as a former winner of the GSC poster contest.

“The two people who have made this whole entire thing possible are Kritika and Elizabeth Tettleton Mason – they are the two people that without this could not have been possible,” said Ethan Booker, GSC 2021-2022 President.

Gupta expressed gratitude for “this year’s entire executive board that poured their heart and soul into this symposium.”

A name change was not the only improvement to the symposium. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion awards were also given out in each category. This helped to recognize more students than just first, second, and third place in the categories. The GSC raised \$10,000 to pay for the symposium costs, in addition to the usual amount paid for the symposium from their annual budget.

As his term is coming to an end, Booker reflected on his hope for the GSC.

“My hope is that in the years to come, the GSC will continue the work that we have started this year and keep the momentum going with all the opportunities for growth – they are endless.” Booker continued, “I also hope that the future administrations will build to continue to work on relationships with the university, strengthen those relationships with university officials and continue to be the voice of graduate students.”

This year’s winners are:

Podium Presentation

Group A

First: Alaa Qrareya – Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences with an Emphasis in Pharmacology

Second: Matthew Saucier – Ph.D. in Chemistry

Third: Ryo Kataoka – Ph.D. in Health and Kinesiology

DEI award: Maliah Wilkinson – M.S. in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Group B

First: Vickie Wong – Ph.D. in Health and Kinesiology

Second: Liya Abera – Ph.D. in Engineering Science with an Emphasis in Environmental Engineering



Kritika Gupta, Director of Academic and Professional Development for GSC.

Third: Salahuddin Mohammad – Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences with an Emphasis in Pharmacology

DEI award: Alonya Castillo – M.M. in Music with an Emphasis in Musicology

Pitch Presentation

First: Savannah Draud – Ph.D. in Biological Science

Second: Nate Juda – M.C.J. in Criminal Justice

Third: Natasha Wood – Ph.D. in Psychology with an Emphasis in Experimental Psychology

DEI best presentation award: Odinaka Eze – M.A. in History

Poster Presentation

First: Amelia Craze – Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences with an Emphasis in Environmental Toxicology

Second: Samir Senapati – Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences with an Emphasis in Pharmaceutics

Third: Mohammed Ahmed – Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences with an Emphasis in Pharmacognosy

DEI award: Bethany LaValley – Ph.D. in Education with an Emphasis in Secondary Education

Creative Achievement Presentation

First: Noel Quiñones – M.F.A. in Creative Writing

Second: Danielle Buckingham – M.A. in Southern Studies

Third: Dayna Drake – M.A. in Journalism

DEI award: Joshua Nguyen – Ph.D. in English with an Emphasis in Creative Writing

Graduate School

GSC Newsletter

Hello all,



Ethan Booker

My name is Ethan Booker, and I am the outgoing President of the Graduate Student Council (GSC). First and foremost, I want to thank you all for an amazing school year! It was such an honor to serve as your President. I have always said that this university is great because it has the best people. You all have proved this correct once again. I am continually inspired by the hard-work, innovation, and perseverance of our graduate students.

Last spring, when this administration took over, we had two goals for GSC: 1) build upon our current foundations and 2) effectively advocate for the diverse interests of all students. I feel confident that we met these goals, and I am proud of the executive board's work. Some of our accomplishments include:

- increased director's pay from \$800/year to \$1,000/year
- expanded the total number of directors from 3 to 5 (including Director of Inclusion and Director of External Affairs)
- increased the overall GSC budget by 170%
- appointed our Treasurer to the Student Activity Fee (SAF) comptroller board
- restructured our budget to allow for more symposium allocation
- our Director of External Affairs helped us raise donations from the community – a first for GSC!
- re-ignited philanthropy efforts by partnering with the university's Athletics for the Stronger Together Campaign
- created the first annual GSC Alumni Reunion weekend with a reception at the law school and a football tailgate at the school of pharmacy

- served on all chancellor's standing committees, effectively communicating the concerns of graduate students
- recommended graduate student members for and served on the graduate student stipend taskforce, charged by the Chancellor, which gave a formal recommendation to Chancellor Boyce on increases
- worked with Associated Student Body (ASB), Staff Council, and Faculty Senate to create a Joint UM Governing Bodies standing meeting to increase communication
- helped create the Southeastern Conference Graduate Student Council Coalition, including all SEC schools
- expanded the Annual GSC Research Symposium to include all areas of study and renamed it the GSC Research and Creative Achievement Symposium
- increased the scholarship amounts for awards at the symposium
- had a record number of abstracts submitted for the largest research symposium in school history
- brought in a keynote speaker, Sly Spencer Lee, to the symposium
- saw record voter turnout for GSC elections

By no means is this exhaustive, but it highlights some of our key accomplishments. None of this would have been possible without an incredible team of senators and executive board members. I am thankful for each of their leadership!



Vice President – Chad Diaz, II

Treasurer – Chancey Mullins

Secretary – Jennifer Bagby

Director of Student Affairs – Benjamin Salvador

Director of External Affairs – Elizabeth Tettleton Mason

Director of Inclusion – Jazmine Kelley

Directors of Academic and Professional Development – Kritika Gupta & Preethi Lakkala

As the school year comes to an end, my administration is officially passing things off to your new leadership team. I can confidently say that GSC is in great care with this incredible group of new student leaders who will continue to build upon this past year and bring GSC to incredible new heights.

I hope you all have a fantastic summer!

Hotty Toddy,

Ethan Booker