

University of Mississippi

eGrove

Newsletters of the Graduate School

Graduate School

Spring 2014

Newsletter Spring 2014

John Kiss

Tyler Carter

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/gradschool_news

Recommended Citation

Kiss, John and Carter, Tyler, "Newsletter Spring 2014" (2014). *Newsletters of the Graduate School*. 11. https://egrove.olemiss.edu/gradschool_news/11

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Newsletters of the Graduate School by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

Graduate School

Dean's Message

Dear students, friends and colleagues:

Welcome to the second edition of the Graduate School newsletter! I hope you enjoy our featured stories such as the one about our two exceptional graduate students, Amanda Waters and Caroline Turnage-Butterbaugh, who are serving as class marshals this year.

As this academic year comes to a close, I am very pleased to note several areas of significant progress in the Graduate School. First, effective fall semester 2014, there will be an increase in the minimum stipend rates for graduate students from the current \$7,200 for full-time students to \$10,000. The funds for this increase will come from central sources through the Office of the Provost as well as from Graduate School resources. Of course, we still need to be working on increasing stipend support in many areas of graduate education, but I believe this is a step in the right direction. I thank Provost Stocks and others in the administration for their continued support of graduate education.

The Graduate School also is pleased to announce a new parental leave policy for graduate students that is effective immediately. Under the new policy, a full-time graduate student with a quarter- or half-time graduate assistantship is eligible for six weeks of leave from his/her graduate program. The underlying philosophy of this policy is that we are committed to a diverse graduate student body, which includes graduate students with children. I want to acknowledge the efforts of the Graduate Student Council and Associate Dean Christy Wyandt in developing and implementing our new policy.

I am pleased to report that the first Three Minute Thesis Competition (3MT) at the University of Mississippi was very successful. This program challenges graduate students to present a compelling talk on their research thesis topic (to nonspecialists) and its significance in just three minutes. The 3MT competition promotes vital communication skills that are a common need across all graduate programs. Harish Chandler, our grand prize winner from the Department of Health, Exercise Science and Recreation Management, represented us at the regional competition at the Southern Conference of Graduate Schools (CSGS) in San Antonio earlier this spring.

Thanks for reading our newsletter, and please continue to send us suggestions and ideas. We welcome story concepts from students and faculty, and we would love to hear about the successes of our

graduate alumni. We appreciate your support of the Graduate School at the University of Mississippi!

John Z. Kiss

Dean of the Graduate School

Professor of Biology

Class marshals chosen for excellence in graduate work

Story by Tyler Carter

Class marshal Caroline Turnage-Butterbaugh

The University of Mississippi Graduate School has selected two outstanding students — Caroline Turnage-Butterbaugh and Amanda Waters — to serve as class marshals for this year’s doctoral hooding ceremony on May 9 and university commencement on May 10.

Turnage-Butterbaugh is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Mathematics who excels in her field of endeavor. Currently, she has an academic paper published with her adviser and a paper under review titled “Consecutive Primes of Tuples.”

Graduate students don’t have much leisure time, but Turnage-Butterbaugh makes sure to make time for herself.

“I really enjoy Pilates,” she said. “I take the Pilates and Spin [fitness] classes. It’s a good time to go and let your mind reset, and it gives me time to relax and get away from the math for awhile.”

Turnage-Butterbaugh won both the Graduate Student Achievement Award in Mathematics 2013 and the Graduate Instructor Excellence in Teaching Award. She was floored about receiving the teaching award since teaching is a passion of hers.

“This award really hit home for me because it is rewarding teaching and helping students who are willing to put in the time and effort to understand something they feel is really confusing,” Turnage-Butterbaugh said. “To be there for [students] when they turn the light bulb on for themselves is rewarding.”

Opportunities are flowing in for Turnage-Butterbaugh while she is deciding what may be next for her after she completes her Ph.D.

“This summer, I will be working at an REU (Research Experience for Undergrads) in math at Williams College in Massachusetts, where I will be working with undergraduate students with research projects,” Turnage-Butterbaugh said. “I am interested in having that kind of opportunity because I really want to work with undergrads and gain a research component so they can have an idea of what a mathematician is.”

Turnage-Butterbaugh will begin a postdoctoral fellowship at North Dakota State University in the fall, and from there, she eventually hopes to obtain a tenured position doing research.

She said she appreciates the opportunities she gained while being at UM. She received the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need fellowship that allowed her to travel to attend conferences as well as network with people, which has helped her when applying for jobs. Turnage-Butterbaugh also would like to thank Micah Milinovich, assistant professor of mathematics and her adviser, for pushing her to understand things she did not previously, helping her with her writing, teaching practices and his willingness to take her on as his student so soon after earning his Ph.D. and joining the faculty.

Class marshal Amanda Waters

The second class marshal representing the UM Graduate School is Amanda Waters.

Waters graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in chemistry and then decided to attend UM in fall 2009 to pursue graduate studies in pharmaceutical science with an emphasis in pharmacognosy. In Waters' first year, she served as a research assistant for Mark Hamann, professor of pharmacognosy, where she gained experience in natural product isolation and elucidation from marine microbial sponge sources, microbial culture techniques for marine sediment, as well as writing and submitting grant applications.

In spring 2011, Amanda served as a teaching assistant for the department, assisting with two courses: PHCG 422 (Natural Product Derived Pharmaceuticals) and PHCG 425 (Poisonous Plants and Mushrooms). That semester, Waters was also awarded the prestigious National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship to continue her graduate studies in the department.

Students change their fields of study for numerous reasons, but for Waters, the path to obtaining her bachelor's degree in chemistry was an interesting one.

"When I was in my senior year of high school, I originally wanted to be an accountant, but I changed directions and took my first chemistry class and fell in love," Waters said. "I decided to pursue the type of chemistry that helps people, so I decided to embark on the medicinal chemistry track, and I fell in love with the natural products. Since hearing my adviser speak about natural products my freshman year at Oklahoma, I have been in it since that day."

Waters said she was enticed by the prestige of UM's pharmacognosy program.

"It is ranked as the number three or four best program in the nation," Waters said. "I wanted to focus on pharmacognosy and the marine side of things, and Dr. Hamann was really well known for marine and natural products so that's why I wanted to come here."

Waters' story is a true testament to how life as a graduate student is almost strictly about the books.

When asked about her hobbies, she said, "There's downtime? Graduate school has been very constant,

80-hour work weeks. There is a lot of research that gets done, a lot of long hours, but when I do have free time, I like to read. Free time is a foreign concept to me.”

The amount of time Waters spends on her work reflects her dedication to research and her commitment to helping people.

“You don’t notice the hours or time,” Waters said. “I told my family early on, the day that I don’t get up feeling like going to work is the day I will get out of it. I get up every morning and no matter what else is going on, I want to be in the lab, I want to be researching, I want to hopefully find the next cure for cancer.”

In the fall, Waters will matriculate to a position with the National Cancer Institute, where she will be a postdoctoral fellow there for at least two years. She is also considering academic research.

Waters said she appreciates the pharmacy school staff members who give their all in trying to help her as well as other graduate students in their career and research endeavors. She noted the supportive community of advisers and professors who genuinely want their students to succeed and said she is thankful for that.

Currently, Waters has four manuscripts published and expects to have four more published by late summer or early fall.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Graduate School

Doctoral program recognized campuswide for 'inclusiveness'

John Z. Kiss (center), Graduate School dean, presents a framed certificate that celebrates Excellence in Promoting Inclusiveness in Graduate Education to Dean W. Mark Wilder (right) and Associate Dean Dale Flesher.

UM's 2013 Excellence in Promoting Inclusiveness in Graduate Education Award was presented to the Patterson School of Accountancy during the university's doctoral hooding ceremony last year on May 10.

Don Cole, assistant to the chancellor for multicultural affairs, introduced Dean W. Mark Wilder and Associate Dean Dale Flesher, and complimented the accountancy school for being chosen to receive the inaugural award.

"Over the years, this academic unit has been quietly building expertise in diversity while 'unquietly' building a national premier reputation academically," Cole said. "In their application (for this award), the school maintains that 40 percent of their on-campus Ph.D. students are from diverse populations (African Americans), a statistic that caught the attention of the selection committee. Moreover, they lead all other Southeastern Conference schools in this statistic."

The award was established as a result of the Graduate School receiving a national award several years ago, recognizing its efforts to create an inclusive environment for graduate education. In its award application, the school proposed annual recognition of an individual or program that best exemplifies the ideals of enhancing inclusiveness in graduate education, explained Graduate School Dean John Z. Kiss, who presided at the ceremony.

"An important goal of the Graduate School is to promote diversity in our student body and academic programs," Kiss said. "The university is proud of the success of its minority and international students and attempts to provide a supportive environment for all graduate students."

Ph.D. candidate represents the university at CSGS conference

Story by Tyler Carter

Harish Chander participated in the Three Minute Thesis competition for graduate and professional students at Ole Miss in which he won the grand prize. That prize included an all-expenses paid trip to the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS), where graduate and professional students presented their thesis research in front of a panel of judges as well as their peers from other CSGS schools.

Chander, who will be defending his doctoral dissertation this May and graduating with a Ph.D. in biomechanics (health & kinesiology) this summer, said he enjoyed this academic experience and opportunity to meet and network with his peers. The goal of the Three Minute Thesis is to challenge graduate students to present their research in three minutes or less to an educated but nonspecialist audience.

“It was an amazing feeling and opportunity to compete and just to be present there, listening to and learning [about] what other research graduate students do in various fields of education. My personal mindset was to excel in everything I do, and I was very proud that I was the only graduate student that did human subjects research ‘in vivo.’ It was a great learning experience overall.”

Chander’s research is unique, and his engaging presentation of his research is what earned him a win in the three-minute thesis competition.

“My line of research, right from my physical therapy school days to my master’s and now in my Ph.D., has been analysis of human balance and gait,” Chander said. “I use 3-D motion capture systems, balance machines, force platforms and electromyography muscle activity to assess human balance and gait. The focus of my graduate school research has been on ergonomics (occupational biomechanics) and prevention of falls and fall-related injuries in the workplace.

“The thesis I defended at the competition was my master’s thesis titled “Impact on Balance while Walking in Occupational Footwear,” where I looked at how standing and walking for prolonged periods

(four hours) affected human balance and muscle activity while wearing different industry standard footwear. We ended up finding that even minimal workload as standing and walking that are exposed over prolonged duration affects balance, and high-top industry shoes were beneficial in balance maintenance and thereby preventing falls. Right now, I am collecting data for my Ph.D. dissertation focusing on the "Biomechanics of Slips."

This experience served Chander well, and he is excited about not only future endeavors but also was excited to represent the University of Mississippi at this prestigious conference.

"I am extremely glad that I got an opportunity to compete, present my research to other scholars and, above all, represent Ole Miss at the CSGS regional competition. I personally want to thank Dr. Jay Garner and Dr. John Kiss for all the opportunities and exposure that I have had with my experience in grad school at Ole Miss."

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Graduate School

Graduate student's first article published in international journal

Story by Tyler Carter

Troy Wellington Smith, a graduate student at the University of Mississippi, recently traveled to Nottingham, U.K., to attend "The Romantic Byron," a one-day conference held by the Newstead Byron Society and Nottingham and Trent University.

At the conference, Smith presented his paper titled "P.L. Møller: Kierkegaard's Byronic Adversary." The paper theorized that the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard turned against the English poet Lord Byron because of the metonymy between him and his (Kierkegaard's) frenemy, the poet and critic P.L. Møller.

The former editor of *The Byron Journal* suggested that Smith send his revised edition to the new editor of the publication. After expanding on the original, Smith did just that. Last month, he heard from the editor that the reviewer recommended the essay for publication, and it is scheduled to appear in the June 2014 issue of the journal. This is Smith's first publication and recommends this experience to any graduate student who wants to visit this conference as well.

"Anyone interested in Lord Byron should consider a trip to Nottingham. It is not far from Byron's ancestral home, Newstead Abbey," said Smith.

John Z. Kiss, dean of the Graduate School, said he is very proud of the academic endeavors graduate students take on in the classroom as well as bettering their crafts through research outside of the classroom.

"Publication in peer-reviewed journals is an important part of success in scholarly endeavors," Kiss said. "I am always pleased to learn that our graduate students are publishing articles in journals. This accomplishment signifies to me that our graduate programs are working well in training students and that they are creating new knowledge through their efforts in research."

Smith, who obtained his Bachelor of Arts in English literature and history from Swarthmore College in 2005 and his Master of Library Science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania in 2012, said he knew

that this great achievement would not be possible without the help of the graduate school and his department.

"I thought I should write to share the good news and to thank you all for making this possible," said Smith. "I really appreciate it!"

Football player triumphs over adversity

Story by Tyler Carter

Deterrian “D.T.” Shackelford was struck by misfortune during his junior year as a football player at the University of Mississippi. After tearing his ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) twice within the span of two years, he called the ordeal, “one of the toughest moments in my life.”

One of the things my grandmother always says is, “Lord, let your will be done, not mine,” Shackelford said.

Although he had aspired to become a professional football player at an early age, he used his injuries as motivation not only to return to top shape but also to pursue a master’s degree in higher education.

Shackelford has had many memorable and rewarding experiences at Ole Miss, but his most memorable was winning the Chucky Mullins Award as a junior. This award is given annually to the most courageous senior defensive player who displays leadership qualities. Being the first to win this coveted award as a junior, Shackelford said he felt honored to be among so many greats and was appreciative of the admiration his coaches and teammates had for him and his efforts.

Many student athletes are afforded the opportunity to play professional football after college, but Shackelford knows that that opportunity will not come to fruition for him.

“After football, my plan is to affect the lives of youth in some kind of way,” Shackelford said. “I plan to look into becoming an athletics director or a high school principal. I know that my purpose in life is to positively impact the lives of teenagers and young adults.”

Shackelford recently took a mission trip with other members of the football team to Camp Marie, Haiti, where they helped to widen a narrow gravel road enough to allow trucks to pass through so the community could improve the transport of its primary financial resource, the papaya fruit.

While he is passionate about football, Shackelford believes that his membership in Omega Psi Phi fraternity has been instrumental in helping him to become the greatest man he can be. His hobbies include basketball and watching and reading documentaries of great figures in and outside of sports.

Shackelford grew up in an environment that rarely produced college graduates, let alone those who would pursue and obtain a master's degree.

“My hope for my future children, nieces and nephews is [for them to say] that, ‘Deterrian did it the right way, and he is the reason I know that achieving success in life is possible,’” he said.

Volunteers work to improve language skills of international students' partners/spouses

Story by Tyler Carter

Kate Batson is one of many students who volunteers her time and expertise to help international students and their families adjust not only to campus but also American life.

The free English as a Second Language (ESL) program for partners/spouses of UM faculty began in fall 2013, originally developed by Tamara Warhol, associate professor and linguistics graduate program coordinator for Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). It falls within the Department of Modern Languages, where Warhol is director of the Intensive English Program (IEP).

The ESL program is designed to help partners/spouses of UM faculty improve their English language skills while gaining practical knowledge about living in the U.S.

"This program is definitely a personal passion for me as well as my fellow graduate students," Batson said. "I believe that I would be in the wrong profession if it wasn't a personal passion. From having spent time abroad, I understand that it is sometimes difficult to integrate into a new culture, especially when it is believed that you don't possess the language skills to do so.

"I feel that the community ESL program gives the ESL program students a place where they can feel comfortable in practicing and improving their English language skills that can be put to use in the larger community. The program also allows graduate students like myself to learn from and offer services to the international community, a vital part of the University of Mississippi."

The classes are taught by TESL graduate students each Monday night from 6-8 p.m. in the IEP building, allowing the students to gain valuable practice in teaching ESL courses.

Around 19 TESL graduate students volunteer in this program, and those who are not teaching for the night also provide free child care for the students in the program. Although the program is relatively new, it is quickly expanding. About 30 students attend the class (a considerable increase in enrollment from last semester), with new students joining as the semester progresses. Not only are the program's

members collaborating with the UM community-engagement organizations, but they also hope to expand their services to the larger community soon.

This program is the only one of its kind in the state of Mississippi. Warhol wanted to start this program to build on the best practices in language teacher education developed at private Ivy League institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University Teacher's College. Additionally, given the UM 2020 flagship goal for internationalization, Warhol thought this would be a way for the TESL program to contribute to university internationalization. Students in this program not only build a bridge of companionship but also are contributing to the substantial goal of globalization of the university.

While Batson and other graduate students are teaching the international participants, they are also gaining insight from them as well.

"Not only are they learning from us, but we are also learning a lot from our students," Batson said.

"Every Monday night, the graduate students gain new insights into the kinds of cultural and linguistic differences they bring to our classrooms. We are able to take these insights and use them to improve the overall classroom experience and learning outcomes of the community ESL students."

Graduate School

Graduate Student Spotlight

Jake Rubin is a Master of Fine Arts graduate from the University of Mississippi. Rubin authored a book titled *The Poser*, which was sold to Viking Press and will be published in early 2015. Rubin said he is very excited and grateful to the MFA program for all the help and support. *The Poser* is the coming-of-age story of Giovanni Bernini, a child born with the uncanny urge and ability to imitate anyone he meets. Set in an imaginary country that resembles America of the 1950s and '60s, the novel follows Bernini's adventures from the seaside town of his childhood to the nightclubs of the city to the sound stages of a western city called Fantasma Falls. Those who populate his journey include his theatrical mother, an exuberant manager, a mysterious chanteuse and an enigmatic psychoanalyst. The novel is simultaneously a love story, first-person confession and poignant bildungsroman.

M.O. Walsh is also an alumnus from the Master of Fine Arts program here at the University of Mississippi. Walsh has written a book titled *My Sunshine Away*, sold to Amy Einhorn at Amy Einhorn Books (forthcoming spring 2015). Walsh's novel has already been published in more than five countries! Author Tom Franklin had this to say about Walsh's work: "*My Sunshine Away* is that rarest find, a page-turner you want to read slowly and a literary novel you can't look away from. At times funny, at times spine-tinglingly suspenseful and at times just flat-out wise, this novel is also a meditation on memory, how it can destroy or damn us but redeem us as well. It's a book to read and reread, one that will only get better with time, like its writer."

Congratulations to these Graduate School scholars and alumni!