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Internship Helps Political Science Student Prepare for Graduate School

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Internship Helps Political Science Student Prepare for Graduate School

NSF program provided intensive academic atmosphere and research opportunities

SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 BY KELLEY NORRIS



Jacob Smith presents his research on human trafficking at the National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates in Civil Conflict Management and Peace Science at the University of North Texas.

OXFORD, Miss. – University of Mississippi political science major Jacob Smith was accepted to the National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates in Civil Conflict Management and Peace Science this summer at the University of North Texas.

Smith, a senior from Corinth, was recommended to the program by his UM mentor, Matt DiGuseppe, assistant professor of political science. DiGuseppe describes Smith as an ideal candidate for the program that exposes and prepares exceptional undergraduates for graduate programs in conflict management and peace science.

“Jake can often find the core of an argument very quickly and offer his own, often on point, critique,” DiGuseppe said. “In other words, he not only digests class material but has sharp critical thinking skills that are necessary to generate, instead of consume, research. Knowing that Jake had plans to attend graduate school, I thought this program offered the opportunity for him to hone his skills and provide him with a competitive advantage over other graduate school applicants.”

Faculty members in the UM political science department were readily available to answer questions and offer advice on participating in such an intensive academic atmosphere, Smith said.

“The University of Mississippi did an excellent job of preparing me for the rigors of a condensed NSF program that describes itself as the first year of graduate school in an eight-week program,” he said. “I was as prepared as I could possibly be for the amount of work required on a daily basis due to the excellent teaching of the Ole Miss staff.”

The eight-week residence program hosted by UNT’s renowned political science department provides eight undergraduates with opportunities to engage in graduate-level empirical research and present their results at local and national conferences. Participating students receive a \$4,000 stipend, free room and board, and paid travel expenses.

Smith’s research focuses on human trafficking, a topic he says is a fairly under-researched area of political science. With plans to pursue his doctorate, he hopes to expand his research to include new variables such as how geographical features effect human trafficking. Smith plans to present his project at the Midwest Political Science Association Conference in April 2016.

After completing the program, Smith took a much-needed vacation to visit a high school friend in Vancouver, Canada. Although it gave him little time to prepare for the upcoming semester, he was able to relax and explore Vancouver.

Smith encourages other students to seek learning experiences outside their comfort zones.

“Don’t be afraid to take opportunities you don’t feel that you are prepared for,” Smith said. “Oftentimes the journey will prepare you better than the classroom ever could.”

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Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children’s play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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Ole Miss In the News

Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith’s Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school’s first African-American student.

“James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier,” a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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