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## UM Professors Earn Tenure and Promotions

Four academic departments, Croft Institute and Sarah Isom Center are under new leadership

AUGUST 19, 2016 BY EDWIN SMITH

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Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Communications

OXFORD, Miss. – Four faculty members within the **College of Liberal Arts** at the **University of Mississippi** have been promoted to administrative positions, and more than 50 faculty members across campus have been granted tenure or rank promotions.

Also, Gregg Roman has been hired as chair and professor of biology, and Rebekah Smith has been hired as chair of the **Department of Psychology**.

Luca Bombelli, associate professor of **physics and astronomy**, has been named chair of the department, and Michael Barnett, associate professor of lighting design, is the new chair of the **Department of Theatre Arts**. Oliver Dinius, associate professor of history, is the new executive director of the **Croft Institute for International Studies**, and the **Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies** is under the direction of Jaime Harker, professor of **English**. All appointments became official this summer.

"I am pleased to announce the outstanding faculty that will assume these very important administrative roles within the College of Liberal Arts," Dean Lee Cohen said. "I am confident that each of these units will flourish under their new leadership and I am excited to begin working with them.

"I would also like to thank those individuals who these individuals are following – all of whom served their respective units with exceptional leadership and resourcefulness."

Though new to the university, Roman comes with both short- and long-term goals for the **Department of Biology**, which includes growing its faculty and increasing the number of high-impact research projects in diverse areas of the life sciences.

"Our team will accomplish this goal through a multipronged approach that includes improving our ability to conduct state-of-the-art research with new shared-use instrumentation facilities Roman," said. "We are increasing our efforts at recruiting and retaining academically excellent, driven and curious graduate students. We will also increase the level of discourse with discipline specific journal club courses, a bolstered research seminar series and a departmental retreat.

These increases in research communication will help generate more innovation and provide both incentives and tools for even higher levels of multidisciplinary research, he said.

"By encouraging our faculty to work together in these tasks, we will elevate our research and develop national and international recognition for the areas of strength present in the biology department," he said.

A member of the Department of Physics and Astronomy faculty since 1996, Bombelli said he is fortunate to have stepped into the position at a time when the department has seen an increase in the number of regular, tenure-track faculty members.

"This has strengthened our already very active and prominent research groups, and put us in a position to attract even higher levels of funding," he said. "We are a relatively small, friendly department, in which faculty carry out very exciting research, and we plan to use this to raise the quality and diversity of our applicant pool, in both our undergraduate and graduate programs."

In terms of course offerings, the recent increase in faculty size has been offset by the number of sections needed to teach to serve a much larger overall student population.

"So my goal is to increase the size of the faculty further, to reach a level at which we can teach a really

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## Campus Briefs

### 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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## Thank You To Our Donors

### 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.

attractive variety of courses,” Bombelli said. “In the short term, this will require the development of a clear vision and expansion plan.”

Before coming to Ole Miss, Smith was professor and chair of psychology at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

“My goals are to provide leadership for growth in the department within the environment of UM as a leading research university by supporting faculty and students and through creative problem solving,” she said. “I am fortunate to have a strong positive foundation to build on, thanks to the work of Dr. Michael Allen, who served as department chair for 14 years and who continues to provide invaluable advice during the transition in leadership.”

Barnett joined the faculty in August 2007 and has served as assistant professor of lighting design, assistant chair of theatre arts, vice-chair of the Faculty Senate and chair of the Faculty Senate for the last four years.

“The department will work to ensure that our students have the resources to create wonderful pieces of theater, film and dance,” Barnett said. “They will learn about the artistry, professionalism and critical thinking necessary to generate substantive pieces of work and discover the ways in which they can make a positive difference in our community through the representation of our regional, national and global stories.”

Through collaboration with the other fine arts departments, the Department of Theatre Arts will serve as a cultural corridor through which the community is able to connect with the university, he added.

Dinius, who has been a UM faculty member since 2004, said his first and foremost goal is to make sure that the international studies major remains a program that stands for academic excellence as the number of students continues to grow.

“The Croft Institute now accepts 50 percent more students than it did in 2010, but its faculty has not grown, which means that we have to use our resources very wisely to give students the true ‘Croft’ experience and inspire them to perform at the highest level,” Dinius said.

“Over the next few years, I would like to reshape the curriculum in the international studies major to be more global in outlook, building on our strength in the study of four particular regions – East Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East – and finding ways to think beyond those regions.”

Another priority of Dinius’ would be to place even greater emphasis on undergraduate research, a skillset that has proven to lead to exciting careers for alumni, often in areas of the private sector that one might not immediately associate with research.

“In terms of Croft’s contribution to the university at large, I want to see us even more engaged in the internationalization of our campus,” he said. “This would include expanding the number of international events working with other units on campus, such as the Honors College, the Department of Modern Languages and the Office of Global Engagement, among others.

“Greater internationalization of campus benefits our majors, the student body at large and the Oxford community.”

Harker joined the faculty in 2003 and has been an assistant professor and associate professor of English. She was director of undergraduate studies in English, the department’s assistant chair and interim director of the Isom Center in 2014-2015.

“Our short-term goals include increasing the availability of courses in gender studies to serve the student body, creating partnerships with groups on campus and in the community regarding gender and sexual studies, and building financial support for programming and education,” she said. “We will build on partnerships with the Oxford Film Festival, the Powerhouse, the Center for Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Engagement, and many others within and outside of the university.”

Harker said her long-term goals are to extend the reach of the center’s educational programs through podcasts, social media and online programming, move to more accessible and visible space in Lamar Hall, and build a stronger endowment to support its educational mission.

Other faculty members earning tenure and/or rank promotions are:

- Kim Griffin Adcock was promoted to professor of pharmacy practice and is director of faculty and academic affairs in the Department of Pharmacy Practice
- Abbas Ali was promoted to principal scientist at the National Center for Natural Products Research
- Alan Louis Arivee was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of theatre arts
- Robert William Barnard was promoted to professor of philosophy
- Edmond Boudreaux was granted tenure
- Cecilia Botero was granted tenure
- Qingying Bu was promoted to professor of mathematics
- Joe Turner Cantu was promoted to professor of theatre arts
- Tucker Carrington was promoted to associate professor of law and is director of the Innocence

“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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Project

- Amber Jean Carpenter-McCullough was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of curriculum and instruction
- Virginia Rougon Chavis was promoted to professor of art and is chair of art and art history
- Allen Stanley Clark was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of modern languages
- Svjetlana Curcic was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of special education
- Charles Clay Dibrell was promoted to professor of management and is William W. Gresham Jr Entrepreneurial Lecturer
- Victoria Lynn Dickinson was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of accountancy
- Conor M. Dowling was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of political science
- Micah Paul Everett was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of music
- Joshua First was promoted to Croft associate professor of history and international studies
- Laurie Warrington Fleming was promoted to clinical associate professor of pharmacy practice
- Jennifer W. Ford was promoted to professor and is head of Archives and Special Collections at the J.D. Williams Library
- Karen Forgette was promoted to lecturer in the Center for Writing and Rhetoric
- Richard John Gentry was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of management
- Kristy L. Gilliland was promoted to professor of law and is director of the Law Library
- Bradley T. Goodwiller was promoted to research and development engineer II at the National Center for Physical Acoustics
- Joan Hall was promoted to senior lecturer in English
- Ralph Hugh Hamilton was promoted to instructional associate professor of management
- John David Heffington was promoted to senior research and development engineer at the National Center for Physical Acoustics
- John A. Holleman was promoted to clinical associate professor of higher education
- Kate Hooper was promoted to lecturer in the Center for Writing and Rhetoric
- Guy Krueger was promoted to lecturer in the Center for Writing and Rhetoric
- Cecille Alista Labuda was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of physics and astronomy
- Christopher J. Leary was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of biology
- Theresa Hilary Levitt was promoted to professor of history
- Soumyajit Majumdar was promoted to professor of pharmaceuticals and research professor in RIPS and is associate dean for research and graduate programs and associate director of the PII Center for Pharmaceutical Technology
- Charles D. Mitchell was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of journalism and new media and is assistant dean
- Sathyanarayana Narasimh Murthy was promoted to professor of pharmaceuticals and research professor in RIPS
- Ahmed Mohamed Galal Osman was promoted to senior scientist at the National Center for Natural Products Research
- James J. Pitcock was promoted to clinical associate professor of pharmacy practice
- Charles K. Ross was promoted to professor of history and is director of African-American studies
- Stefan E. Schulenberg was promoted to professor of psychology
- Carrie Smith was promoted to instructional associate professor in psychology
- Rebekah Smith was granted tenure
- Daniel Stout was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of British literature
- Natascha Techen was promoted to senior scientist at the National Center for Natural Products Research
- Anne S. Twitty was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of history
- Randy Mack Wadkins was promoted to professor of chemistry and biochemistry
- Yanhong Wang was promoted to principal scientist at the National Center for Natural Products Research
- Ivonne Whitehead was promoted to senior lecturer in modern languages
- Kathleen Wickham was promoted to professor of journalism
- Louis George Zachos was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of geology and geological engineering
- Yaoxin Zhang was promoted to senior research scientist at the National Center for Computational Hydroscience and Engineering

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