

The University of Alabama Graduate School

A Newsletter Serving Current &
Prospective Graduate Students

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HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA!

Health insurance benefits for UA graduate assistants will begin in fall 2006. Dean Ron Rogers led efforts over several academic years to make these benefits available to graduate assistants.

Full details of the program and who qualifies for the benefit will be available soon. In the meantime, graduate assistants should check with their departments to obtain criteria and enrollment information.



Dr. Ronald Rogers
Graduate School
Dean (Retired)

Resolution of The University of Alabama Graduate Council for Dean Ronald Rogers

The Graduate Council adopted unanimously the resolution below commending Dean Ronald Rogers for his outstanding leadership as Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School.

WHEREAS, Dr. Ronald Rogers has faithfully served The University of Alabama as Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School since August 16, 1991; and

WHEREAS, as Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Rogers provided outstanding leadership and exemplified the highest ideals of graduate education; and

WHEREAS, Dean Rogers showed a strong and steadfast commitment to the highest quality of teaching, research, scholarship, and service to the benefit of graduate students and graduate faculty; and

WHEREAS, Dean Rogers provided continual guidance and support to the Graduate Student Association and African-American Graduate Student Association; and

WHEREAS, Dean Rogers provided exemplary leadership of the Graduate Council and its committees;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the 2005-2006 Graduate Council recognizes Dean Ronald Rogers for his outstanding service to the University, expresses its sincere and heartfelt thanks to Dean Rogers, and wishes Dean Rogers all the best for his retirement.

UA Graduate Program Spotlight:

School of Library and Information Studies

- **Degrees Offered:** Master of Library and Information Studies, MLIS Online Degree Program; MFA in the Book Arts; Ph.D.
- **Program Description:** SLIS prepares the next generation of library and information professionals to utilize and develop the exciting new array of information technology tools. More importantly, this new generation of professionals will be given the ability to manage the technology, to create a vision, and to articulate this vision in a leadership role. These abilities will enable our MLIS graduates to continue the tradition of service for which the profession is known. The MFA program develops book artists who have well-honed technical knowledge of the various facets of contemporary bookmaking, and who have an understanding of the historical evolution of the book including its materiality — and the role of the book in society.
- **Areas of Study:** Library and Information Studies, Book Arts, School Library Media
- **Course of Study:** The MLIS degree program requires a minimum of 36 semester hours of credit. Students must complete all work with a grade average of “B” or better. A thesis is not required.
- **Students Enrolled:** 260
- **Faculty:** 12 Full-time Faculty Members
- **Contact Person:** Dr. Elizabeth Aversa (eaversa@slis.ua.edu)
- **Website:** <http://www.slis.ua.edu>
- **Address:** School of Library and Information Studies; Box 870252
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0252
- **Phone:** 205-348-4610



UA Graduate School News

UA Professor Receives Two Esteemed Awards from Alabama Library Association

Dr. Annabel Stephens, a professor in the School of Library and Information Studies at The University of Alabama, recently received the annual Eminent Librarian award and an award for Lifetime Achievement from the Alabama Library Association. The Eminent Librarian award is given annually to someone who has made an exceptional and enduring contribution toward the development of library service within Alabama. The Lifetime Achievement award is given only on rare occasions where it is evident an individual has made significant contributions to library studies during a career. For more information about the SLIS program, visit page 2 of this newsletter or on the web at <http://www.slis.ua.edu>.

UA Scientists' Discovery Pays Off 13 Years Later

Thirteen years ago Dr. Marcus Brown, associate professor of computer science at The University of Alabama, and one of his now former graduate students were awarded a patent for their novel invention which identifies a person by how they type their name. The graduate student, Joey Rogers, built his master's thesis around the invention, and Brown got the satisfaction and excitement that go along with being the first person to discover something. The pair had, however, gotten little else. Brown and Rogers each recently received checks for approximately \$15,700, as their share of the proceeds from the sale of the patent.

UA Student to Work for United Nations

University of Alabama doctoral student, Jane Munga, has been awarded a summer internship with the United Nations to be based in Sanaa, Yemen. Munga, who is doctoral student in UA's political science program, is majoring in international relations with minors in public policy administration and economics. She will be working until Aug. 20 with the United Nations in collaboration with the Yemen government to realign their mine recovery program to the U.N.'s best global policy practices. Born and raised in Kenya, Munga relocated to Tuscaloosa in 1996 to further her education. She attended Stillman College to study business administration and international studies and earned a master's degree in economics and management at UA before pursuing her doctoral degree.

Master of Social Work Students at UA Work to Fight Poverty

Through a thoughtful class assignment, social work students at The University of Alabama recently worked together to improve the quality of life for families in developing countries. As part of a distance learning Social Work with Communities course, UA master of social work students were instructed to choose an international organization for a fund-raising and community education project. Students in one group raised \$1,848 for Heifer International, an organization that purchases livestock for needy families. The money will help buy three cows and other animals for less-fortunate families in developing countries. The families who receive the livestock become self-sufficient by selling the products produced by the animals. Parents are able to provide food, clothing and shelter for their children, as well as send them to school. Advocacy Field Coordinator for CARE USA, Derreck Kayongo personally thanked the students for their contribution. He spoke to the students about his childhood in war-ravaged Africa and inspired them to learn more about poverty in other countries and continue educating others. For more information about the agencies go to <http://www.heifer.org/> or www.care.org.

Workshop for New Graduate Teaching Assistants



BACKGROUND

Since 1987, the Graduate School has offered special training for graduate teaching assistants. Each August more than 225 new GTAs complete the “Workshop for New GTAs.” The Workshop is required for all new GTAs, including those who have not yet completed the 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching field required before the GTA can be responsible for teaching a class and/or assigning grades.

The Workshop is held at the Paul W. Bryant Conference Center on Thursday and Friday of the week before fall classes begin. It includes a variety of formal presentations and interactive activities. Please check out latest GTA Workshop Programs at http://graduate.ua.edu/events/workshop_gta_program.html.

FORMAL PRESENTATIONS

Faculty and staff who have been recognized for their superior teaching provide formal presentations on topics such as syllabus and course preparation, the advantages and disadvantages of the lecture format for college teaching, effective communication by classroom and laboratory instructors, the effective use of collaborative learning techniques in both small and large classes, using multimedia and the Internet in college teaching, and legal issues for GTAs. Below are the links to these presentations:

- [Important Policies and Legal Issues for GTAs](http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/gta_policy/GTA_policy.html)
http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/gta_policy/GTA_policy.html
- [Helping Undergraduates Learn](http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/help_ug/Help_UG_2002.html) |
http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/help_ug/Help_UG_2002.htmlPower Point Slides
- [Syllabus and Course Development](http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/syllabus/SyllabusCourse2003_files/frame.htm) |
http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/syllabus/SyllabusCourse2003_files/frame.htm
- [Leading Group Discussions](http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/lgd/LGD2003_files/frame.htm) |
http://graduate.ua.edu/publications/slides/lgd/LGD2003_files/frame.htm

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

Graduate Teaching Fellows, who are experienced GTAs recognized for superior teaching in their respective colleges, lead one day of sessions at the Workshop. The Fellows videotape all new GTAs who have prepared a short presentation. Each GTA receives both written and verbal analyses of teaching strengths and areas for improvement. The new GTAs then have the opportunity to analyze videos that show some of the most frequently occurring problems in the classroom. The Fellows conclude their day with the new GTAs by discussing important University policies such as services for students with disabilities, sexual harassment, academic misconduct, academic grievances, and the confidentiality of student records.

For more information about the Workshop for New GTAs, call (205) 348-8283 or email jschmitt@alan.ua.edu.

Graduate School Preview Day

Explore your future in a UA Graduate Program!
Preview Day will assist you in learning about Graduate School

Thursday, September 21, 2006, 3:00 p.m.
Ferguson Student Center on the UA Campus, Tuscaloosa, AL

Opening Session (Ferguson Theater) 3:00- 4:00 pm

“The Benefits of Investing in a Graduate Education”

Presented by UA faculty, staff, and graduate students

Small Group Information Sessions (Various Locations) 4:15- 5:00 pm

Assistant and associate deans, graduate program directors, and other college representatives will talk about UA’s many graduate degrees. Select one of the following sessions to attend:

*****All Sessions To Be Held In Ferguson Center*****

<p>Natural Sciences & Math (Anderson Room/302) Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Geography, Geological Sciences, Marine Science Program, Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy</p>	<p>Communication & Information Sciences (313) Advertising and Public Relations, Communication Studies, Journalism, Book Arts, Library and Information Studies, Telecommunication and Film, Mass Communication</p>
<p>Social Sciences (Forum/360) American Studies, Anthropology, Communicative Disorders, Criminal Justice, Economics, History, Political Science, Psychology, Women’s Studies</p>	<p>Graduate School of Business (Ferguson Theater) Accountancy, Economics, Finance and Legal Studies, Information Systems, Statistics and Management Science, Management and Marketing, MBA</p>
<p>Fine Arts & Humanities (312) Art, English, Modern Languages and Classics, Music, Theatre and Dance</p>	<p>Human Environmental Sciences (305) Clothing, Textiles, and Interior Design, Consumer Sciences, General H.E.S., Human Development & Family Studies, Health Studies, Health Education and Promotion, Human Nutrition</p>
<p>Engineering (309) Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics, Chemical and Biological Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering</p>	<p>Education (301) Elementary, Secondary, Kinesiology, Music Education, Educational Psychology, School Psychology, Special Education, Counselor Education, Educational Administration, Educational Leadership, Higher Education Administration, and Educational Research</p>
<p>Capstone College of Nursing (358)</p>	<p>Social Work (204-B)</p>
<p>McNair Scholars Program (307)</p>	<p>Law School (300)</p>

Select one of the following two sessions on **graduate admissions tests**. You should attend the seminar on general testing strategies if you are not pre-registered for a Kaplan Practice Test.

Seminar: General Testing Strategies (Ferguson Theater) 5:30- 6:30 pm:

“Preparing for the GRE, GMAT, MAT, and Other Tests”

Kaplan Practice Tests (Ballroom) 5:30- 8:30 pm:

GRE (Ballroom); **GMAT** (Ballroom); **LSAT** (Ballroom)

A Personal Search for Professional Growth

By Jason Lange, Graduate Ambassador, Masters student in Geography

The path to graduate school begins for diverse reasons and travels in many different directions. There are various reasons why one may choose to continue his or her studies past an undergraduate degree and it is important to be fully aware of one's reasons to become a graduate student in order to make the experience a complete success. In my opinion there are two main reasons for attending graduate school: either to better prepare oneself for a chosen profession, or to eventually earn a PhD, and become an instructor or professional scholar. I have just completed my first year of graduate studies, and my path so far is likely similar to those of many prospective and current graduate students.

I originally became interested in graduate studies because I wished to gain additional professional knowledge about my chosen field, civil engineering, and to enter the job market at an elevated level. Upon completing my B.S. in engineering, I immediately entered graduate school. As can be the case for many graduate students, an increase in education is more valuable than directly entering the job market or the other alternative of "taking time off."

However, during my first semester of graduate school I realized I was unsure about my decision to pursue this graduate degree. The predicament once again arrived, as it likely does for so many high school and college students, of what shall I choose to do for a living. I no longer was interested in the field of civil engineering, but instead took advantage of this opportunity to change directions and pursue my new interest in urban and environmental planning. The UA Geography Department offered one such program and the transition went smoothly. I have completed my first semester in the department and enjoy my new major.

Despite not taking one of the conventional routes through graduate school, it has been an extremely worthwhile experience, and hopefully will result in a successful new direction. Thankfully, through the studies in graduate school, I am able to obtain a higher level education and degree in a field different than that of my undergraduate studies. The opportunities presented by attending graduate school are limitless, all the way from becoming a leader in your profession to just finding out whom you will eventually become.

When Life Happens

By Kathryn Roberts, Masters Student in Higher Education Administration

Many events in life seem to occur unexpectedly no matter how well you have planned. Entering graduate study in the Fall of 2005, I planned my graduate career with precision and flexibility. I would complete the required hours within my discipline and graduate in December 2006 or May 2007, if necessary. I planned to live in Tuscaloosa for the duration of my graduate study and begin my career in the city with the best job opportunity after graduation. I write “planned” when describing these events because they have now drastically changed.

Plans have changed because of my recent engagement and intentions to marry during the Spring of 2007. In addition, my fiancée is in the final stages of writing his dissertation while looking for a job in the field of Higher Education and Student Affairs. The job search recently proved to be quite fruitful with an employment offer for my fiancée and an offer from the institution to assist me in gaining experience in my field.

With only two classes needed to complete my degree, my fiancée and I decided we would both make the move to another state twelve hours from Tuscaloosa later this summer. Much thought and consultation from mentors and others in our field helped us make the decision. However, it was not until I spoke with my adviser, reviewed the upcoming schedule of classes for my department, and visited the UA Graduate School that we made the final decision for me to finish my UA degree from out of state.

My advisor suggested what courses I could take to complete my degree including weekend courses, online courses, and independent study. She also advised me to keep close contact with her and others in the department via our departmental listserv, email, and phone calls. This would enable me to be adequately prepared for comprehensive exams in October 2006.

In reviewing the schedule for my department, I found that weekend classes are offered in a way that will minimize travel time and maximize the learning experience. While there were no online classes offered in my particular department, there were online courses in other departments closely related to my areas of interest. Knowing my options regarding classes, I was now able to proceed to the UA Graduate School.

The Graduate School offered guidance on applying for graduation and the necessary deadlines that must be met. They directed me on how to pay graduation fees and who to contact regarding graduation paraphernalia. Living in another state and submitting all necessary information for graduation is not as intricate as I initially expected.

After gathering all information and knowing the opportunities that wait, the decision to move was quite simple. However, I also understand that my situation is unique and all departments are different, but I feel lucky to be in my program. Although I am nervous about moving to a new town, I am comforted in knowing that my last semester of graduate education at The University of Alabama is well-planned.

Resources & Events for Prospective & Current Graduate Students

- Consultation with UA Graduate Admissions Staff:
Call (205) 348-5921
- Consultation with UA Financial Aid Staff:
Call (205) 348-6756
- Electronic Viewbook for UA Graduate Applicants:
<http://graduate.ua.edu/viewbook/>
- UA Online Graduate Application:
<http://graduate.ua.edu/applicants.html>
- A Student Guide to Preparing Theses & Dissertations:
<http://www.graduate.ua.edu/thesis/manual/>
- The Graduate Assistant Guide:
<http://www.graduate.ua.edu/publications/ga/>
- Online Forms for Current Graduate Students:
<http://graduate.ua.edu/academics/forms/index.html>
- Online Checklist for Current Graduate Students:
<http://graduate.ua.edu/students.html>

If you would like to obtain more information regarding the application process, please attend one of our upcoming Graduate School Seminars "How To Apply" tentatively to be held September 6, October 4, November 1, and December 7, 2006 from 2:00pm until 3:00pm in 102 Rose Administration Building.

Graduate School Calendar & Deadlines

AUGUST 2006

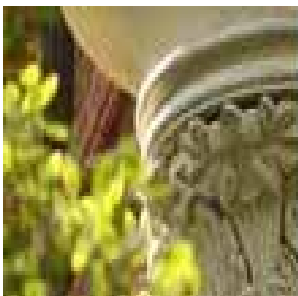
- 09 Summer II term classes end.
- 17-18 Workshop for new Graduate Teaching Assistants: Bryant Conference Center from 8 am - 4 p.m. each day. Contact the Graduate School at 348-5921 for more information.
- 22 Late registration/add/drop for Fall semester.
- 23 Classes begin for Fall semester.

SEPTEMBER 2006

- 04 **Holiday**- Labor Day observed
- 06 Graduate School Seminar-"How to Apply to Graduate School"-2:00 p.m. in 102 Rose Administration. Contact Carl Williams at 348-5921 for more information.
- 13-14 **Seminar on:** "*Completing a Thesis or Dissertation*"
Sep. 13, 2006: 12:00-12:50, Location TBA
Sep. 14, 2006: 3:30-4:20, Location TBA
- 15 Deadline for international applicants currently in the U.S. to have complete applications for Spring Semester, unless the desired department has an earlier deadline.
- 21 Graduate School Preview Day 3:00p.m.-8:00p.m. at Ferguson Student Center.

OCTOBER 2006

- 04 Graduate School Seminar-"How to Apply to Graduate School"-2:00 p.m. in 102 Rose Administration. Contact Carl Williams at 348-5921 for more information.
- 19-20 **Mid-Semester Study Break** (Classes Dismissed)
- 30 Last day to submit Thesis or Dissertation to the Graduate School. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**



In Focus

Crossroads Community Center Through a Multicultural Lens for Graduate Studies

by Nelda Sanker, M.Ed. Student in Higher Education Administration

Each issue, the newsletter will focus on a department or unit that serves as one of the many resources here at UA.

There are many things I liked about my undergraduate college experience. The one thing that helped me get through my college career in the most positive way was its multicultural center. Coming from a biracial background, I wasn't sure what to expect at college but the multicultural student center exceeded my expectations in the way it not only included people from all backgrounds but helped them to understand each other's perspectives. I know I would not be the person I am today without the center.

When I came to The University of Alabama last year to obtain my graduate degree, I was very excited to hear that a similar center was opening here called Crossroads Community Center. As soon as I heard about it, I introduced myself to Bettina Byrd-Giles, the center's inspiring director. She told me about some of the programs and goals she had in mind for the center and right away, I felt at home again.

Crossroads opened in October 2005 as a way to prepare students, including graduate students, for a global society. Byrd-Giles sees Crossroads as a way to not only lead the campus in cultural programming but in intercultural education as well.

One of Crossroads' major projects was *Through One Hundred Lenses: A Depiction of The University of Alabama* which gave 100 undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to take honest pictures of their experience at UA. Their pictures were artistically placed on a mural which now hangs in front of Crossroads in the Ferguson Center. *One-Hundred Lenses* assisted Crossroads in understanding campus culture through the eyes of students from different backgrounds and generated discussion about the UA culture.

Discussion was further generated by *Building Bridges Between Communities: A Forum on Islam*. Byrd-Giles and Joshua Buford, a Crossroads graduate assistant, showed the audience a series of images and had them write down their initial reactions. The images were then placed in their correct context and shown again to illustrate how preconceived cultural notions influence the way people are seen.

I believe that through these programs and initiatives many graduate students will find Crossroads a great place to prepare for a global society, expand their minds and build cross-cultural relationships. For details on how you can get involved in Crossroads Community Center, please contact the center at (205) 348-6930 or refer to their website at <http://crossroads.ua.edu>.

Future Crossroads programs planned for the 2006-2007 school year include:

- Sustained Dialogue
- Dinner for 12 Strangers
- Multicultural Certificate
- ISC-Global Simulation Workshop
- Alt-Alabama

Important Contacts in the Graduate School



U.S. applicant questions, please contact:

Louise Labosier
labosier@alan.ua.edu

International applicant questions, please contact:

Libby Williams
lwilliam@alan.ua.edu

Non-Degree applicant questions, please contact:

Sheryl Tubbs
stubbs@alan.ua.edu

General questions, please contact:

Debbie Eads
deads@alan.ua.edu

Questions about degree programs and financial assistance, please contact:

Carl Williams, PhD
cwilliam@alan.ua.edu

Enrolled students' questions about registration and graduation, please contact:

Beth Yarbrough
byarbrou@alan.ua.edu

Questions about Assistantship/Fellowship Stipends and Academic Common Market, please contact:

John Chambers
jchamber@bama.ua.edu

<http://graduate.ua.edu>

THE UNIVERSITY OF **ALABAMA**

GRADUATE SCHOOL

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This newsletter serves current and prospective graduate students at The University of Alabama. It is published throughout the year and contains information pertinent to graduate life here at UA.

If you are interested in writing a featured article in future newsletters, please contact Samantha at brigg005@alan.ua.edu.

Disclaimer: Articles in this newsletter reflect the opinions of the contributing authors and do not reflect the opinions, endorsements, or policies of The University of Alabama or the Graduate School.