Dean's Column

Spring's fructive energy always drives the semester and the standard academic year to a dizzying close. Initiatives and plans that were promising (or promised) last fall suddenly re-sprout, while new committees spring up as quickly (and often as welcomed) as dandelions. Some of my activities last month helped me to slow down, however, and to think about the seriousness of our common project of graduate education rather than rushing to the next meeting or the next email.

I had the good fortune to be part of the LSU in DC group visiting our legislators in mid-month, a visit that was a sequel to one made in December with the Council of Graduate Schools. DC in springtime, even when the cherry blossoms are not quite in full bloom, is always extraordinary. This visit was spent mostly indoors however; listening to, and talking about, how and why LSU's research mission would be affected by proposed cuts to NIH, NEA, and NEH, as well as the urgency of reauthorization for the HEA. The alphabet-soup of abbreviations (National Institute of Health, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Higher Education Act) signalled the staccato urgency of changes that would affect education, health, culture, and the environment in Louisiana and across the nation. That LSU's graduate research mission is part and parcel of Louisiana's well-being was abundantly clear, whether people were talking about diabetes or coastal erosion. That we must all insist that neither science nor knowledge has borders was still more so for me, as I had the chilling vision of us as a university, a nation, and a culture without these institutions.

The second event that brought some hard thinking wrapped in pleasure was the viewing of "Hidden Figures," co-sponsored by the Colleges of Engineering and Science. In a central scene, Mary Jackson, one of the "computers" referred to in the film's title, petitions a judge to allow her to attend a segregated high school in order to take the extension courses that will prepare her to become the first African-American woman to be a NASA engineer. In approaching the originally reluctant judge, Jackson points out to him that he too has been a "first" in his family: first to serve in the Armed Forces, first to go to college, first to be a state judge. In a deeply satisfying filmic moment, the judge agrees to her enrollment.

Many of you are also "firsts:" first in your families or your towns to be in graduate school, but also first in what you have discovered or will discover. And as I thought about the impact you will have upon our world, President Kennedy's 1962 speech, shown in the film, about a literal moon shot framed what we all must hold dear as we pursue knowledge: "We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people. For space science, like nuclear science and all technology, has no conscience of its own. Whether it will become a force for good or ill depends on man [and woman] . . . . But why, some say, the Moon? . . . We choose to go to the Moon! We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard; because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one we intend to win." In pursuing graduate education we have all chosen something that is hard, a challenge that we are willing to accept--and something that we will win.

Cordially,

Michelle Massé
Graduate Students in the Spotlight

Graduate School hosts inaugural Graduate Mentor/Mentee Mixer

After the conclusion of the Dean’s Summer Institute for the Future of Graduate Studies last June, it became clear that graduate students wanted more mentoring and that there were faculty more than willing to mentor students not only in their own disciplines, but also in departments across the university. After circulating the initial call for mentors and mentees, we were delighted to see we had 150 faculty and graduate student participants for 2016–17. The paired mentors and mentees have been meeting individually throughout the fall and spring semesters, and on February 27, we hosted a mentoring mixer to allow all participants to meet each other as well as the SREB and Perkins fellows at LSU. As 40 attendees mingled over snacks and beverages, connections were forged in all directions and even included moments of peer mentorship. Lindsay North, who is in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, said, “This mixer should take place every year, maybe even twice a year! I left with a new mentor in the form of a fellow student. Walking up to a higher education student as a counseling master’s student myself, I did not expect a volunteer, internship, and conference opportunity to be thrown into my lap. Yet that is exactly what happened. Having had such a great experience, I will definitely be attending this event in the future.” If you’re interested in signing up for the 2017–18 mentoring program, send an email to gradmentor@lsu.edu. The formal announcement and sign up instructions will be sent out early in the fall semester to all graduate students and faculty.

LSU Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society holds 87th Awards/Initiation Ceremony

The Louisiana State University Chapter of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi held its 2017 Awards and Induction Ceremony on at the Lod Cook Alumni Center at Louisiana State University. Richard Vlosky, Chapter President, presided over the ceremony. The guest keynote speaker was Michelle Massé, Dean of the Graduate School. Nearly 200 students, faculty members and instructors, and staff became members this year. The following graduate faculty and students received awards at the ceremony: Outstanding Master's Student - Kelli Gatti; Outstanding Terminal Degree Student - Thu Nguyen; and 2017 National Graduate Fellowship Nominee - Nikka Khorsandi. The following graduate faculty members received awards: Non-Tenured Faculty Award winners (co-sponsored by the LSU Alumni Association) Rendy Kartika (Department of Chemistry); Elias Goldstein (School of Music and member of the 2016 Summer Institute on the Future of Graduate Studies); and Josh Grimm (Manship School of Mass Communication).
Graduate Students in the Spotlight

LSU’s Coast and Environment Graduate Organization hosts the 2017 Gulf of Mexico Graduate Student Symposium

LSU’s Coast and Environment Graduate Organization (CEGO) organized the 2017 Gulf of Mexico Graduate Student Symposium (GSS) at the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON) on March 17-19. The Graduate Student Symposium has been an annual spring event since 1999, when graduate students from the University of South Alabama, the University of Southern Mississippi, and LSU joined together to create an opportunity for students in marine, biological, and environmental sciences to present their research to their peers. The three founding universities take turns hosting GSS each year. Students from LSU, Tulane, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, University of South Alabama, University of Southern Miss, and Texas A&M presented their research. Students got to know each other while learning more about the research conducted at nearby universities. It was a great opportunity for students to present parts of their theses and dissertations and receive feedback from colleagues. One participant commented, “I thought GSS provided a really excellent forum for practicing conference presentations, with a chance to be constructively critiqued in a low-pressure setting. Instead of the intimidation that often marks networking at large meetings, interactions at GSS were driven purely by interest in the work of peers who can relate to your experiences and goals.” The symposium was funded by Student Government, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, Department of Environmental Sciences, NOAA, and SeaGrant.

A celebration of the contributions of the Coates family

On Thursday, March 16, members of the Department of Chemistry, the Department of Physics & Astronomy, the Cain Department of Chemical Engineering, and the LSU Graduate School gathered with descendants of Dean Charles E. Coates (1886-1939) to celebrate the donation of Coates’ restored plantation desk to the Department of Chemistry. Later that day, a symposium was held in the Grand Salon of the French House in celebration of the Dr. Charles E. Coates Memorial Fund, which continues to provide support for graduate student research and travel. Dean Michelle Massé welcomed attendees while a slideshow of the Coates family and the history of Chemistry at LSU played in the background. There were three short talks by graduate students representing the three beneficiary departments: Bijeta Prasai (Chemistry, McCarley Group), Eva Caspary (Chemical Engineering, Wornat Group), and Kundan Kadam (Physics & Astronomy, Clayton Group). Dean Cynthia Peterson spoke briefly on “A Culture of Philanthropy for LSU,” and Associate Professor Donghui Zhang (Chemistry) was chosen to deliver the keynote address on her research in polypeptoids.
Graduate Students in the Spotlight

Flores MBA candidates earn individual awards at the 13th Annual KeyBank and Fisher College of Business Minority MBA Student Case Competition

Flores MBA candidates JoLena Broussard, Luke Zhu, and Dominique Houston competed in the 2017 KeyBank Minority MBA Case Competition in Cleveland, Ohio. They had to provide recommendations to mitigate cyber security and fraud threats and turn it into a competitive advantage for KeyBank. JoLena, Luke, and Dominique competed against more than 20 universities for prizes totaling more than $18,000. During the competition, JoLena earned the “Best Presenter” award, and Dominique earned the “Best Q&A” award. LSU was the only team to win both best presenter and best Q&A in their respective bracket.

Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology graduate student wins first place in graduate student contest

Congratulations to Favio Herrera, graduate student in Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology, for winning first place in the Ph.D. section of the Graduate Student Contest at the National Sweetpotato Collaborators Group annual meeting in Mobile, Alabama. Favio is a native of Ecuador and came to LSU after completing undergraduate work at the University of Zamarano in Honduras.

Southern Region Education Board Fellows

Southern Region Education Board (SREB) fellows Aubry Kyle, Philip Richard, Cristian Nunez and Abigail Issarraras demonstrate what a well-balanced group they are by doing stand-up paddle boarding. SREB fellowships have been offered since 1993 to foster the number of minority students who receive Ph.D.’s and continue on to teach in universities.
Graduate Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Ofer Mintz - Department of Marketing - Flores MBA Program

1. What brought you to LSU?
Foremost, the excellent reputation of the university and the Ourso College of Business. The opportunity to teach both MBA and undergraduate courses and be part of a great marketing faculty cohort was also exciting.

2. What is your current involvement with the LSU graduate student community?
Primarily I am involved in three different aspects:

- Teaching a core class to the full-time MBA students in the first semester of their program, where I try to get my students into a managerial mindset by requiring them to be involved in real-world projects from nearly their first day;
- Advising doctoral students on their dissertations; and
- Providing guidance and advice when graduate students are attempting to enter the job market.

3. If you could travel back in time, who would you like to meet and where would you want to go?
If I knew there would be no adverse consequences, I would love to go back and travel with Magellan and explore the world. I love traveling and exploring, and I think it would be pretty fascinating to see all those new places and people, with the caveat that I knew everything would end up being okay (unlike it was for Magellan).

If I could travel back to any place I have already been, without worrying about any of the costs, I would love to take my wife, as well as my kids, back to the island of Bora Bora in Tahiti. That place is the definition of paradise!

4. What is your favorite book and why?
My favorite book I read when I was younger was Ender's Game. It was a great combination of sports, action and drama, which of course are a kid's favorite things. The book, in my mind, has not yet been surpassed.

5. Can you think of an event that changed your life in a significant way?
When both my kids were born! Those were the best days of my life. They have led to so much fun as well as a lack of sleep.
Frequently Asked Questions

Thesis and Dissertation Formatting and Submission Information

The Graduate School has a handbook, Guidelines for the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations, which provides instructions for preparing, formatting, and submitting your document. You will need to prepare your document according to these instructions before you submit your thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School. Sample documents, as well as a LaTeX template, are available for you to consult. Instructions are also available on how to convert your thesis or dissertation into PDF format.

When you are ready to prepare your manuscript for submission and prepare for your defense, complete the following steps in order.

1. Read the Guidelines for the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations to learn about the various parts of your document, how to put it together, and how to submit it. Prepare your document according to the directions in this manual.
2. Schedule and hold your defense as early as possible in the semester of graduation. Make the corrections and/or revisions that are required by your committee and secure final approval of your document from your committee and major professor.
3. To begin the turn-in process, ensure that all required forms (application for degree, etc.) have been submitted to the Graduate School by logging in to myLSU and selecting “Graduate Milestones” under “Student Services.” Additionally, you will need to fill out and complete the thesis or dissertation checklist and the access request form when you request your ETD logon id. This logon id and password is how you will submit your electronic thesis or dissertation to the ETD website. You must use the logon id and password provided by the Graduate School.
4. The ETD reviewer will review the document and inform you via email of any necessary corrections. Make all corrections with your word processor, convert your final file to a .PDF and submit in a single file electronically through the ETD site for final approval. If additional corrections are necessary, and/or when the document is approved, you and your advisory committee will be notified by e-mail.
5. When completing the submission page on the ETD site, be sure to include all committee members and their e-mail addresses in the proper boxes. List their names, in mixed case letters, as “Doe, John” or “Smith, Susan.” Do not use professorial or honorary titles such as Dr., Miss, The O.K. Allen Distinguished Professor of Buildings.
6. For current semester graduates, after receiving the e-mail approval notice, you have completed the ETD process. For students registering for Degree Only for the upcoming semester, further steps are necessary to complete the Degree Only registration.

Be aware that if substantial additional corrections are needed at this point, you may not be able to meet the submission deadline for the current semester and may have to graduate in the following semester.

A special thank you to the more than 100 graduate thesis and dissertation writers who attended the Graduate School’s Spring 2017 Thesis/Dissertation Workshops.


Credits
Editor-in-Chief: Madalina Robison
Assistant Editor: JoLena Broussard
Assistant Editor: Stacey Amo
INTERNATIONAL FUSION

The International Student Association invites you to see the world at LSU through international student performances!

This event is free and open to the public.

WHEN
April 7, 2017
Cultural Exhibition at 5:30pm
Performances at 6:30pm

WHERE
LSU Union Theatre
310 LSU Student Union

PLEASE JOIN US AFTER THE PERFORMANCES FOR INTERNATIONAL FOOD AND MUSIC AT THE INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CENTER
3365 DALRYMPLE DRIVE