



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

THE GRAD CONNECTION

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Greetings,

I attended summer commencement which punctuated a very important milestone for the university. Ninety-five doctoral students participated in the ceremony representing 55% of the 172 doctoral students who had their dissertations cleared for graduation by the Clearance Advisor in The Graduate School. This is the largest group of doctoral students to ever be cleared for graduation in a single semester. At the Ph.D. reception held on the Friday preceding commencement I met many of the graduates and was pleased to learn of the various positions they were headed off to with academic institutions, government, non-profits, and industry.

Their success stems from their own hard work and the efforts of many other people at the university. Compared to previous semesters this number of students represents an increase of almost 50% in one semester. This means that major professors and committee members had far more manuscripts to read; staff in departments, the academic colleges, and university offices had more student forms to process for graduation; and the Clearance Advisor had many more manuscripts to check than ever before. So I want to take this opportunity on behalf of the University to thank them for their contributions.

With summer behind us I am looking forward to New Graduate Student Orientation and welcoming a new class of graduate students. The Graduate School staff has undergone quite a bit of change in the last few months. In particular, we bid farewell to two employees, Donna Wieckowicz and Jamie McCranie, each of whom had worked in the office for more than twenty years. And Jack Tyndall, our Clearance Advisor for almost three years will become a student again. I am excited with our new team and look forward to another productive year.

Sincerely,

Nancy Marcus



THE GRAD CONNECTION

FSU DOCTORAL STUDENT AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

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By Jill Elish
June 2010

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. A Florida State University graduate student who is pursuing a doctoral degree in social work has been awarded a competitive fellowship to pursue research on the needs of military veterans who have suffered from a traumatic brain injury.

David Albright was one of 24 students to be selected for participation in the RAND Graduate Student Summer Associate Program from a field of more than 500 applicants. He is conducting his research at RAND's Santa Monica, Calif., headquarters and will receive a stipend of about \$14,000.

"I was so excited upon learning of my selection to the program," Albright said. "How many other programs immerse you in an organizational culture built on nonpartisanship and interdisciplinary cooperation, provide you with the funding and tools to effectuate your objectives and near autonomy during the process? But what really interested me was the opportunity to conduct research in a critical area that will have immediate policy implications."

During his three months at RAND, Albright will be working in the Center for Military Health Policy Research to evaluate the educational needs of service members and their families about traumatic brain injury (TBI). TBI results from a force to the head where portions of the brain are damaged and functioning is impaired.

"It's a real concern for military service members facing the threat of improvised explosive devices, land mines, road-side bombs and rocket and mortar shells," he said. "It's also problematic for military families who are often unprepared for the challenges of living with and/or caring for a loved one with a TBI."

The RAND Graduate Student Summer Associate Program is unique in that it matches graduate students with RAND senior research staff members who have the same academic background and will mentor the students. Students are selected for the program only if there is a good match between the student's interests and skills and the needs of an ongoing RAND research project.

Albright is working on the TBI project with RAND researchers Lisa Meredith, a senior behavioral scientist, and Andrew Parker, an associate behavioral and social scientist.

A military veteran who has already earned a master's in social work from Florida State, Albright expects to continue pursuing research focusing on the needs of military service members and their families after he earns his doctorate in 2011. He is simultaneously working on a master's degree in measurement and statistics.

Social Work Professor Bruce Thyer, Albright's major professor, said Albright is well deserving of the appointment to the RAND program.

"It is a tribute not only to David's significant accomplishments as a Ph.D. student but also to the high standards of the Florida State University Graduate School that he has been appointed to this highly selective research position with the Rand Corporation in California," he said. "All of us within the College of Social Work are extremely proud of David and his work."

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision-making through research and analysis. The institution conducts research on a wide range of national security problems and domestic and international social policy issues.

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FORMER FSU FELLOW SPOTLIGHT:

MERRY LYNN MORRIS FSU DANCE GRADUATE MFA (1998)

My path since graduating from FSU has experienced many creative evolutions. The graduate program faculty in dance at FSU facilitated my technique and artistry in dance and helped to equip me with the skills and confidence to launch into a professional career in the dance field. Specifically, my work with Lynda Davis in Dance Repertory Theatre (DRT) was a formative experience which further developed my creative and improvisational skills supporting the interdisciplinary work in which I am significantly involved. I currently teach Dance Improvisation, Research in Dance, and Dance Kinesiology at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida as well as serve as the Academic Advisor (Theatre & Dance).

Interdisciplinary research and collaboration has always intrigued me, and it is no surprise that my path has led me towards forging these types of opportunities. Currently, the most unique collaborative activity in which I am involved is the interdisciplinary project I initiated in 2006 with the College of Engineering at USF which involves re-conceptualizing human mobility and the devices used to physically transport the body through space (<http://rdc.arts.usf.edu>). One of the direct objectives of the project is to design and build a “hands-free” mobility chair for individuals with physical (lower body) disability to expand movement possibilities in dance performance. I work with a mixed ability dance company (REVolutions Dance) in Tampa, FL integrating individuals with and without disability and as a caregiver over a 21 year period to a disabled father, I have always had a personal interest in disability issues/needs.

I am extremely thankful for the University Fellowship and the Departmental Assistantships that enabled me to pursue graduate studies at FSU and to my supportive thesis advisors Patty Phillips, Dr. Tom Welsh, and Dr. Tricia Young. While my dance background may appear targeted towards dance performance/choreography only, it has enabled me to understand human motion in unique and imaginative ways, complementing my research interests in movement science and technology.

The current prototype chair recently received a U.S. patent and I am working with the School of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation, and the Department of Mechanical Engineering (USF) on research and further development. A presentation at the International Association of Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS) will occur in October 2010 (UK).




Photo courtesy:
Joseph Gamble/USF



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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY'S BLACK GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION



The Florida State University's Black Graduate Student Association is a consortium of minority students distributed throughout the ranks of the graduate school. The goal of the organization is to provide social, network, and academic support to minority students as they matriculate through the graduate process. The FSU Chapter works under the auspices of the Congress of Graduate Students and the National Black Graduate Students Association. Over the last decade, the organization has worked diligently and tirelessly to assist these students in the acclimation process through many different endeavors, which include: Workshops and forums ranging from maintenance of health to financial stability in graduate school; social and networking events that allow students to meet other professionals in their areas of expertise; and, community outreach projects, including service and educational initiatives within the

Tallahassee area. To be a member, individuals simply must be registered as a student at Florida State University. If you are interested in becoming a member, please email John Williams (jwilliams@bio.fsu.edu) for more information.

DOCTORAL DEGREE RECEPTION

The summer 2010 Doctoral Degree reception was held on August 6, 2010, in the Beth Moor Lounge of the Longmire Building. Graduating doctoral students, their major professors, and their friends and family were invited to celebrate the students' successes. The Doctoral Degree Reception is held each semester, the Friday before commencement, and is coordinated by The Graduate School and the Office of the President of The Florida State University. For more information about the Doctoral Degree Reception, please contact Jonathan Hakes (jhakes@fsu.edu; 850-644-3501).



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STAFF SPOTLIGHT: JENNIFER FELTMAN



This past June, Jennifer Feltman, joined the Graduate School as a Coordinator of events and professional development for graduate students. Her primary responsibilities include planning and organizing the new Graduate Student Orientation that takes place every August, directing the Fellows Society and events for Fellows, organizing the Professional Development Workshop series, and editing the Graduate School's newsletter. As a Ph.D. candidate in Art History at Florida State University, Jennifer brings to this position a passion for interdisciplinary research and a keen awareness of the concerns of graduate students for their preparation both as students and as future faculty. She has taught undergraduate courses as an instructor in the Department of Art History since 2005 and has served the interests of graduate students nationally as the chair of the Graduate Student Committee of the Medieval Academy of America. Jennifer is currently completing her dissertation, which addresses the relationship between new developments in the theology of penance/confession and sculptures of the Last Judgment in thirteenth-century France. Her hobbies include kayak fishing, yoga, and martial arts. She is married to Wade Feltman and has two rambunctious Boston terriers, Rosie and Suzy.

THE FELLOWS SOCIETY

The Fellows Society is Florida State University's organization of individuals who have held or currently hold University-wide competitive fellowships administered through The Graduate School. The Fellows Society provides a forum for interdisciplinary interaction among fellowship holders in order to foster their professional and academic development and to encourage service to the University. At the beginning of each Fall semester, new members are inducted into the Fellows Society at a pinning ceremony and are provided leadership training along with the current Fellows. On August 20th, Dr. Laura Osteen, Director of The FSU Center for Leadership and Civic Education, addressed professional networking in a talk entitled, "Making the Connection: Relationships as Knowledge." Fellows are encouraged to develop proposals for The Graduate Dean's Fund, which supports interdisciplinary workshops, colloquia, or symposia. Proposals are due November 1, 2010. This Fall, a reception is being planned for the Fellows at the FSU Museum of Fine Arts. For more information on the Fellows Society, see <http://gradschool.fsu.edu/Professional-Development/Fellows-Society>



Graduate Student Orientation



This Fall, over 1800 new graduate students will begin their courses of study at FSU. The Graduate School welcomed them at its annual Graduate Student Orientation on Tuesday, August 17th. The orientation assisted the new students in their transition into graduate school and provided the tools they need to continue on the path to success in their careers. Two separate Orientation Sessions were offered: one designed for students who are attending FSU for the first time and another for students who were undergraduates at FSU. Multiple workshops were offered throughout the day, covering topics such as Funding and Financial Aid, Fellowships, Grants and Awards, Steps to the Degree, and the Congress of

Graduate Students. In addition, current graduate students from the Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and STEM fields conducted round-table panels where they discussed their experiences as graduate students at FSU, providing insights from a graduate student's perspective. Throughout the day, new students learned about over 30 different campus and community organizations at a table fair set-up under the HCB Breezeway. A "BBQ Picnic on the Green" was provided for all graduate students who attend the Orientation session, courtesy of Seminole Dining. The large tent, tables, and chairs were provided by the Congress of Graduate Students. Tours of the FSU campus and guided tours of Stroz Library's Scholars Commons were also offered.

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PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY PROJECT (PFF)



In 1994, the Florida State University, along with a group of fifteen doctoral universities and their partner institutions, was awarded a grant to participate in the Preparing Future Faculty program. The Preparing Future Faculty project (PFF) is a joint effort by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Council of Graduate Schools.

The Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program at the Florida State University supplements the academic program experience by providing additional opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to prepare for academic careers.

Through participation in coursework, workshops, career development, and mentoring, PFF Fellows increase their awareness of expectations for faculty performance and of resources available in scholarly careers, and build their readiness to address research, teaching and related demands of faculty life. PFF goals include enhancing the placement of FSU students in university positions and supporting the finest scholarly accomplishments of FSU's graduates in their future careers.

FSU-PFF has five components: Research; Teaching; Career Development; Mentoring; and Portfolio. The program is offered by The Graduate School with the cooperation of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Office of Research, Career Center, and numerous academic departments and colleges on the Florida State University campus.

All FSU doctoral students and doctoral degree graduates are eligible to participate, as are post-doctoral associates and adjunct/visiting faculty. Students in terminal master's degree programs (e.g., MFA) who plan to seek faculty positions after graduation are also eligible. Fellows who meet specified requirements (following page), often involving participation over a two-year period, are awarded a PFF Completion Certificate, but graduate students, doctoral degree graduates, FSU adjuncts, and post-doctoral associates may participate in PFF events without the intent of earning a Completion Certificate.

Individuals interested in taking part in PFF activities, regardless of whether they seek to identify as Fellows or earn Completion Certificates, should self-register for the Preparing Future Faculty organization site in the FSU Blackboard system (after login, select Organizations tab, then search "Preparing Future Faculty").

Descriptions of the FSU PFF program and the PFF Completion Certificate may be found on the FSU Graduate School website and the PFF Blackboard® site. Questions about FSU's PFF program may be directed to Dr. Judith J. Devine (jdevine@fsu.edu; 850-644-3501).

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