

# UNI GRAD STUDENT NEWS

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## Message from the Dean



Welcome to the start of the spring semester. For those students returning from the fall semester, I hope you were able to recharge your batteries over the break, and that you're ready to resume your work. For those students who are starting a graduate program this spring, welcome to graduate education at UNI!

I was so happy to be able to personally congratulate so many graduates at the commencement ceremony in December. One of my favorite things about serving as Dean of the Graduate College is the opportunity to greet students on stage and offer a hearty "congratulations". It's fun to be part of such a great moment in your lives.

I know graduate students are busy – I sure was – but I would like to remind you of opportunities for students that the Graduate College sponsors. These are really investments to help you be more productive and successful, and so a little time spent now can pay big dividends later. As you plan out your semester, please take a moment to consult the Graduate College website at [www.grad.uni.edu](http://www.grad.uni.edu) and click on the calendar on the right side, or read the "News and Announcements" portion of the home page. The Graduate College sponsors many workshops, brown-bag presentations, and other meetings designed to support graduate students. Also, don't forget to register to present your work at the Graduate Student Symposium! It will be held on April 1, and all graduate students are invited to participate. It's a great way to meet new people and to get some practice presenting or performing your work. You can get more information and register at [www.grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium](http://www.grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium).

Technically, it's the "spring" semester now, so keep those warm thoughts coming!

Mike Licari  
Dean, Graduate College

## { UPCOMING EVENTS }

### THE GRADUATE COLLEGE WILL BE PRESENTING THE FOLLOWING BROWN BAG LECTURES FOR THE SPRING 2014 SEMESTER

**Katherine van Wormer**  
Department of Social Work  
"The Maid Narratives: A Presentation for Black History Month"  
Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014  
Location: Residential Room  
Noon to 12:50 p.m.

**Patrick Pease**  
Department of Geography  
"The Prodigious Barrier of the Sand Sea: Discovering the Source of Sand for Wahiba Sand Sea."  
Monday, Feb. 24, 2014  
Location: Oak Room  
Noon to 12:50 p.m.

**Jack Yates**  
Department of Psychology  
"Changing Minds, Changing Behaviors, and the Changing Climate"  
Monday, March 3, 2014  
Location: Oak Room  
Noon to 12:50 p.m.

**Marybeth Stalp**  
Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology  
"Guerilla Knitters, Yarn Bombing, and Craftivism in Contemporary North America"  
Wednesday, April 2, 2014  
Location: Oak Room  
Noon to 12:50 p.m.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Résumé Writing for Graduate Students**  
Wednesday, Feb. 05, 2014  
Noon – 12:50 p.m.  
State College Room

**CV Writing for Graduate Students**  
Thursday, Feb. 6, 2014  
3:15-4:00 p.m.  
State College Room

**CV Writing for Graduate Students**  
Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2014  
12:15-1:00 p.m.  
College Eye Room

**Résumé Writing for Graduate Students**  
Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014  
3-3:50 p.m.  
Presidential Room

**For important information on Graduate College events and deadlines visit the Graduate College website at [www.grad.uni.edu](http://www.grad.uni.edu).**

**GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE:****JAMIE MINNAERT-GROTE**

**Jamie Minnaert-Grote**, a master of science in biology student, has taken several interesting paths in her graduate education. During her last semester as an undergrad, Jamie completed her final biology courses at UNI, transferred her credits to George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., and received her bachelor's degree in biology from George Mason (2012). She specifically enjoyed the course Plant Systematics with Dr. Steve O'Kane

and decided to pursue a future career in the area. Jamie has gained valuable experience as a teaching assistant in the UNI Biology Department as well as a herbarium assistant in the greenhouses, both at UNI and George Mason University. Pursuing her graduate degree at UNI was an easy choice for Jamie since she enjoyed her previous coursework at UNI and living in Cedar Falls. Additionally, one of Jamie's two sisters, who both attended UNI, also majored in biology. Her sister's experiences and knowledge of the biology program solidified her decision. Currently, Jamie is focused on completing her thesis, "The Phylogenetics and Systematics of the *Physaria kingii* Complex," in anticipation of her May 2014 graduation and also seeking a career in her field. Transitioning to the program was easy for Jamie: setting small goals and using a calendar to stay on track has allowed her to excel during her time as a graduate student. Outside of school, Jamie is busy with her three daughters and enjoys reading novels during her free time.

**GRADUATE FACULTY PROFILE:****DR. REBECCA BURKHARDT**

**Dr. Rebecca Burkhardt** graduated from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas with a bachelor's of music in 1980. She went on to receive a master's of music education at the University of North Texas (UNT) in 1983 and later completed her higher education at UNT in 1993 earning her doctorate in music theory with an emphasis in conducting. Before accepting her position at UNI, Dr. Burkhardt served as an Assistant

Instructor at Southwestern University, a Graduate Assistant and Instructor of Music Theory and Conducting at the University of Texas at Austin, an Associate Director of Bands for Aldine High School in Houston, and a Graduate Assistant to the Bands at University of North Texas. What attracted her to UNI was the position of Orchestra and Opera Conductor. Dr. Burkhardt has composed two musicals and numerous songs for a blues CD, "No Place Else to Go," worked on an award-winning film score for the documentary, "Waterloo History of Place: Sons of Jacob Synagogue," and continues to compose works for orchestra and chamber ensembles. She also enjoys playing guitar in a local blues band. Dr. Burkhardt hopes to continue to produce high quality opera, orchestra, and musical theater performances at UNI. She also has plans to pursue national and international touring of the UNI Orchestra as well as international conducting opportunities.

**GRADUATE ALUMNI PROFILE:****ASHLEA AHRENHOLTZ**

**Ashlea Ahrenholtz**, a spring 2013 graduate with a master's in elementary education, is focused on achieving her goals as a fourth grade teacher in the Carroll Community School District. Ashlea earned her bachelor's in elementary education in 2006 from Buena Vista University with concentrations in language arts and endorsements in both reading and early childhood. After graduation, Ashlea taught for several years in

Carroll, Iowa before moving to Annandale, Minn. Since then, Ashlea, her husband Matt and two-year-old daughter Lily, have returned to Carroll, where her family considers "home." According to Ashlea, UNI's strong history and national reputation for staying current with education and challenging their students to achieve high standards, motivated her to pursue the advanced degree. UNI challenged her to think about her own teaching experience and what she could do to achieve the highest levels of learning in her classrooms. In October 2013, Ashlea presented "Cultivating

Active Citizenship Through Service-Learning: Proposing a Future Dog Park in Carroll, Iowa," at the Iowa Council for the Social Studies Conference. Her work focused on the facilitation of a student-led service-learning initiative project to create a recreational dog park. Ashlea and her students collaborated with local government officials and community leaders, in addition to completing fundraising and research to promote the project. As both a recent graduate student at UNI and current educator, Ashlea attributes much of her success to Dr. Sarah Montgomery, assistant professor in curriculum and instruction. Besides collaborating with her on the Social Studies Conference presentation, Ashlea believes Dr. Montgomery naturally draws her students in by challenging traditional teaching methods and inspiring innovative methods of engagement in the classroom. Ashlea encourages all UNI graduate students to be open to new ideas and asking questions. She believes that working closely with your cohort and professors are rare opportunities that allows graduate students to take advantage of vast amounts of knowledge and experience. Outside of her classroom, Ashlea enjoys running, reading and scrapbooking.

# 7TH ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT SYMPOSIUM FAST APPROACHING

The 7th Annual Graduate Student Symposium is scheduled for April 1, but the registration deadline of Feb. 7th is rapidly approaching. The event offers the opportunity for all graduate students, including December graduates, to showcase their research, projects and creative works.

In addition to prize money for the first place awardee in each category, participants receive valuable feedback from graduate faculty, and engage in networking and professional development. At the 6th Annual Graduate Student Symposium in 2013, Xingzimin Pan, a master's of music student, performed his original composition "Kaiden" which earned first place. Xingzimin said, "Performing at the Symposium was one of the highlights of my graduate education and created the opportunity to bring me to gate of my professional career."

For more information or to register, visit <http://www.grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium>.

Questions can be directed to [gradlife@uni.edu](mailto:gradlife@uni.edu).



# CURRENT AND FORMER EDUCATION GRADUATE STUDENTS COLLABORATE WITH FACULTY ON PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Graduate students Caralee Doak, Stacey Jambura, Jason Knittel, Ben Olsen, Ksenia Zhbanova, Harun Parpucu, and Zaid Alkouri who participated in Dr. Audrey Rule's spring 2013 course titled, Studies in Problem Solving: Theory and Practice, have published two papers in peer-reviewed journals related to group projects undertaken during the class. A third manuscript authored by additional graduate students from the class, Phyllis Gray, Carrie Elser, and Julie Klein is being prepared for submission to a refereed journal. Listed below are the published works of the graduate students:

Doak, C. K., Jambura, S. M., Knittel, J. A., & Rule, A. C. (2013). Analyzing the creative problem-solving process: Inventing an item from a given recyclable. *Creative Education*, 4(9), 592-604.

Olsen, B. D., Zhbanova, K. S., Parpucu, H., Alkouri, Z, & Rule, A. C. (2013). Pop-up constructions motivate and reinforce science learning for upper elementary students. *Science Activities*, 50(4), 1-15.

Doctoral students Julie Klein and Phyllis Gray presented a poster on a research project they conducted during June 2013 with their advisor, Dr. Audrey Rule, and with Dr. Ksenia Zhbanova, at the Fourth Annual Iowa STEM Teacher Educators' Conference in Des Moines. The presentation was titled, "Learning Form and Function of Animal Skulls through Paper Engineering and Creativity". They also presented this research study at the Creative UNiversity Conference and Celebration at UNI in December 2013.

Ksenia Zhbanova, an Ed. D. alumni is an Education of the Gifted, teacher for the CAM Community Schools District in central Iowa. She recently published a paper with her advisor, Dr. Audrey Rule, and with Mary K. Stichter titled, "Identification of Gifted African American Primary Grade Students through Leadership, Creativity, and Academic Performance in Curriculum Material Making and Peer-Teaching: A Case Study, in the *Early Childhood Education Journal*".

Angela Naomi Webb, an Ed. D. alumni is now a second grade teacher for the Waterloo Community Schools District, also published a paper with Dr. Audrey Rule titled, "Effects of Teacher Lesson Introduction on Second Graders' Creativity in a Science-Literacy Integrated Unit on Nutrition", in *Early Childhood Education Journal*

Kimberly Jennings, is a graduate who completed her MAE in Education of the Gifted has a refereed journal article in press for March 2014 for the *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education* with her advisor, Dr. Audrey Rule, and second reader, Dr. Sarah Vander Zanden. The article is titled, "Fifth Graders' Enjoyment, Interest, and Comprehension of Graphic Novels Compared to Heavily-Illustrated and Traditional Novels".

Tabatha Klopp, is a graduate who completed her MAE in Gifted Education, has authored a refereed journal article with Dr. Audrey Rule, her advisor, Dr. Jean Schneider, and Dr. Robert Boody that was published in *International Journal of Science Education*, titled, "Technology-Integrated Projects Should Not Supplant Craft Projects in Science Education".

## GRADUATE STUDENTS ACCEPTED FOR "20TH TESOL ARABIA CONFERENCE"

Daryl Veatch and Kyle Talbot, graduate students in the TESOL program, have recently been accepted to present at the "TESOL Arabia Conference" to be held in Dubai in March 2014. Kyle and Dr. Tammy Gregersen, associate professor of languages and literatures, are scheduled to present on affective alternative assessment and Daryl will present information on creatively engaging young learners. The conference's theme, "Methods and Means in ELT," focuses on pursuing the goals in teaching English to speakers of other languages and will offer several international speakers and break-out sessions.

Congratulations to Daryl and Kyle on your success!

## THESIS AND DISSERTATION SPRING DEADLINES

Thesis and dissertation deadlines are fast approaching for the spring 2014 semester. Previews are to be scheduled and completed no later than March 14, 2014. Final submissions are due in the UNI Graduate College by March 28 in order to be eligible for spring graduation.

For more information about deadlines, forms and instructions regarding a thesis or dissertation, visit <http://www.grad.uni.edu/thesis-dissertation> or email Janet Witt, [janet.witt@uni.edu](mailto:janet.witt@uni.edu), Thesis and Dissertation Reviewer.



## ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTER SERVICES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate students can find a wide range of services at the Academic Learning Center (ALC) related to the skills necessary for completing their current coursework, as well as resources to prepare for future academic and professional programs. At the ALC, students can find individualized coaching and tutoring by appointment in a friendly, supportive environment at the College Reading & Learning Center, Math & Science Services, and the Writing Center (008 ITTC). In addition to one-on-one appointments, the College Reading & Learning Center offers workshops on time management, effective study strategies, and effective reading of journal articles.

The Writing Center's one-on-one appointments can help students develop or refine literature reviews, proposals, theses,

dissertations, personal statements, and other written documents that might be required in students' graduate programs.

The ALC also houses Examination Services in 007 ITTC. Examination Services offers certification examinations and most major national college and professional school entrance exams including the GRE. GRE preparation is offered individually with coaches and tutors or through the GRE preparation course in the summer and fall each year.

For complete workshop schedules and registration, see [www.uni.edu/unialc/](http://www.uni.edu/unialc/). To schedule an appointment call 319-273-2361. Most ALC services are free to currently enrolled UNI students.

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## GRADUATE COLLEGE STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

To submit articles for consideration in the UNI Grad Student News contact [gradlife@uni.edu](mailto:gradlife@uni.edu).  
With any questions or concerns feel free to contact the Graduate College staff listed below.

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