Happy New Year and welcome back to UNI! I hope you had a great holiday break and a chance to relax and take some time for yourselves. The start of the new year is a time to reflect and for many, a time for making resolutions that can lead to improvements in our professional and personal lives. As your new semester begins and your focus is once again on academics, please consider taking part in some exciting professional development opportunities the Graduate College is offering throughout the coming semester.

Registration is open for the Ninth Annual Graduate Student Symposium on April 6, 2016. The Symposium is a great opportunity for students to present and highlight their work for UNI faculty and fellow students. Current graduate students and December 2015 graduates across all disciplines are invited to participate. The deadline for registration is February 12, 2016. Register at http://www.grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium.

To help you to prepare for the Symposium and other professional presentation opportunities, the Graduate College scheduled two workshops regarding poster and oral presentations: “Preparing and Presenting Poster Presentations for Professional Conferences,” on January 19 and “Preparing and Presenting Papers/Oral Presentations,” on January 27. Both workshops were in the Oak Room of the Maucker Union from 3:00-3:50 p.m. To view resources and handouts from these workshops, visit the Graduate College website at http://grad.uni.edu/symposium-workshop. In February, Susie Schwieger, Director of Graduate Student Life, will present a workshop on the best practices for developing your CV or résumé. Later in the semester, we will offer a workshop on using the social media networking site, LinkedIn, and how you can make your profile stand out.

Student membership in a professional association such as the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), National Association of Social Workers (NASW), American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), and many more is an additional opportunity for professional development. Consult your faculty advisor as to what association you should join. Student membership fees are generally at a greatly reduced rate and membership in organizations provide numerous advantages such as networking capabilities with professionals in your field, internship and employment opportunities, conference information, and current updates on what’s happening in your field. Plus, professional association membership is a great addition to your résumé or CV.

Professional development is an ongoing process and one which depends on your involvement. There are many ways for you to take the next step in advancing your academic and professional career. Take advantage of current and future professional development opportunities to position yourself for a successful future. Have a productive and satisfying semester in this New Year!

Kavita Dhanwada
CURRENT STUDENT PROFILE  

Mir Ashfaquzzaman is a graduate student in the Communications Studies Department. Originally from Bangladesh, Mir chose to study at UNI after his brother, Professor Mir A. Zaman of the College of Business Administration, recommended the program to him. Mir worked as a journalist at four English-language daily newspapers in Bangladesh from 1992, when he was pursuing his undergraduate degree in English literature from the University of Dhaka, until July of 2015. Mir said “At one point of my career, I felt that there was not much critical debate and discussion on journalism in Bangladesh although such debates and discussions were crucial for the profession’s wellbeing. I have always believed that the academia should initiate and lead such debates and discussions.” Mir continued, “At the same time, after so many years in journalism, I was kind of fatigued and wanted to take up teaching as a full-time profession, something that I have always wanted. So, it was, to me, a logical choice to get enrolled in a graduate program with emphasis on mass communication.” Mir also talked about the challenges and rewards of enrolling in graduate school after 20 years in the professional realm. Initially overwhelmed, Mir has found that participating in class discussion has been the most challenging and rewarding aspect, “It’s been challenging because, in my country, it’s generally one-way traffic - the teacher talks and the students listen - and rewarding because such discussions sometimes provide you with a whole new perspective to look at a particular idea or event or issue.” After receiving his degree, Mir intends to return to Bangladesh and teach at a private university. Outside of school, Mir enjoys reading non-fiction books, listening to music, and watching movies.

ALUMNI PROFILE  

Greg Halsor, originally from Cedar Falls, is a school psychologist with Keystone AEA in Oelwein, Iowa. He earned both his Master of Arts degree in Educational Psychology in 2011 and an Educational Specialist degree in School Psychology in 2013 from UNI. Prior to receiving his master’s, Greg completed his undergraduate degree at Wartburg College, earning a B.A. in Psychology in 1997. Greg mentioned that he can’t single out one faculty member because all of the professors in Educational Psychology at UNI provided valuable training. However, Dr. William Henninger of the School of Applied Human Sciences has been a personal friend of his for years. He has provided a great deal of encouragement, discussion, and advice thus providing a valuable resource outside of the classroom. When asked if he has any advice for current graduate students, Greg stated that “Since I entered the program after holding several full time jobs, I tried to approach my education with a similar mindset. I started my day in the morning at 8 and ended it at 5 (barring night class) regardless of my actual class schedule. This mentality allowed me to complete assignments in a timely manner while not taking up large sections of my evenings and weekends.” As a school psychologist, his position includes collaborating with teachers and students to improve academic and behavioral functioning within the educational setting. He mentioned that many of the skills he learned at UNI are regularly utilized within his career such as consultation, brief functional analysis, academic and behavioral assessment, intervention. He lives in Waverly, Iowa with his wife and three children. Greg enjoys spending time with family, watching sports, and participating in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.
Dr. Bingqing Liang obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in Geography Education from South China Normal University in China in 2002, and a Master of Arts and a Ph.D. in Geography from Indiana State University in 2005 and 2008, respectively. After graduation from Indiana State University, Dr. Liang joined Western Illinois University as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Geography Department. Between 2009 and 2011, Dr. Liang worked as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Geology at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. She then joined the Geography Department at the University of Northern Iowa in August 2011 as a Term Instructor. Dr. Liang has worked in the department as an Assistant Professor since 2013.

During her job interview for the Term Instructor position at the University of Northern Iowa, Dr. Liang was particularly attracted by the richness of facilities for research and teaching available in the department and was very impressed by the students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Dr. Liang found UNI, as a comprehensive university, to be a perfect place to work since it values both teaching and research.

Dr. Liang aspires to receive the tenure for the position of Assistant Professor of Geography. Additionally, Dr. Liang would like to earn the full rank of full professor and become a well-known scholar in the field of geospatial technologies.

Dr. Liang’s main research area focuses on the application of remote sensing, Geographical Information Systems, and spatial analysis for urban environment, demographic and social issues, and natural resource management studies. She is also interested in applying advanced algorithms for analyzing and interpreting remotely sensed images such as fractals, spatial metrics, artificial neural networks, and object-oriented classification. Currently, Dr. Liang is working on projects for the National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) – Interdisciplinary Research Experience in Hyperspectral Imagine grant, the Development of a Solar Potential Map and Web Mapping for Iowa grant, and the Macellus Shaele Gas Drilling Activities on Water Quality project.

Since her arrival at UNI in 2011, Dr. Liang has supported multiple undergraduate and graduate student presentations at the Research in the Capital professional meetings. Dr. Liang initiated the UNI Student Chapter for the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) and is currently the advisor for the group. In 2015, she was a recipient of the UNI’s Junior Faculty Award for Outstanding Effort in Seeking Sponsored Funding. Her research has been published in peer-reviewed journals such as *IEEE Journal of Selected Topics in Earth Observations and Remote Sensing* and *International Journal of Remote Sensing*. Dr. Liang also reviews manuscripts for more than twelve professional journals including *ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing*, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, and *IEEE Journal of Selected Topics in Earth Observations and Remote Sensing*. 
MAKING THE MOST OF THE 2016 SPRING SEMESTER

• **Plan to get involved this semester.** Take advantage of professional development activities offered to graduate students and monitor the UNI Graduate College calendar. Look at your upcoming schedule and pencil in monthly Brown Bag presentations, career development workshops and upcoming conferences or relevant off-campus opportunities. Consider getting in touch with a current professional in your area of study for a job shadow experience or internship. Join UNI Grad Chat on Facebook and follow @UNIGradCollege on Twitter to stay connected with your fellow graduate students and learn about upcoming events and opportunities.

• **Cultivate relationships with faculty.** Graduate school isn’t just about coursework – it’s about relationships. Be sure to communicate regularly with your professors and faculty advisors. Ask questions as needed and keep them informed on your progress.

• **Use ROD Library resources.** Talk to a reference librarian for help finding library materials for your research. Schedule a research consultation at [https://www.library.uni.edu/research-help/consultation](https://www.library.uni.edu/research-help/consultation).

• **Thesis/Dissertation Writers:** Communicate to your department early in the semester your intent to complete your thesis/dissertation. Janet Witt, Graduate College Thesis Reviewer, will email you regarding scheduling your preview. These deadlines are also posted on the UNI Graduate College website, found at [http://www.grad.uni.edu/](http://www.grad.uni.edu/). Do not wait to schedule your preview; the time slots near the deadline fill up quickly. The deadlines are enforced; requests for extensions are not approved. If you are writing a research paper, please check with your advisor regarding the procedure and deadlines.

• **Attend thesis and dissertation defenses.** Support your colleagues and learn what these events are like.

• **Build in time to balance studies and work.** For many graduate students, it’s not the coursework that’s difficult but the time management. Time management skills are extremely important to your success as a graduate student. Make a habit of studying for tests and completing upcoming projects early to avoid conflicts with work and other responsibilities.

CAREER SERVICES: INTERNSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Career Services offers a variety of resources and opportunities for graduate students nearing graduation or looking for professional experiences over the summer break, including numerous events for networking and recruiting between students and employers, training sessions, and a robust network of active recruiters. In addition, Career Services provides one-to-one advising on job search strategies and interviewing.

Internships provide an opportunity for a student to become career ready. If a student went directly from undergraduate to graduate school with no professional work experience, an internship will be required to be competitive. The ideal internship will be with the organization the student would like to work after graduation. If that is not possible, look at the next best situation with competitors or organizations who have similar types of positions. Students can discover opportunities through Career Services’ partnerships with multiple student organizations for services and training sessions. Additionally, all job postings are available on the UNI Job Board.

To join the UNI Job Board, students need to login to their MyUniverse and select Job Board. From there, students can go to [www.uni.edu/careerservices](http://www.uni.edu/careerservices) and login using their CatID and password. Students can add information to their profile, including a resume. The Job Postings section on the UNI Job Board has information on actively available jobs, while the Networking section has contact information for over 4,000 recruiters.

Upcoming Career Services events include the Spring Job and Internship Fair, on February 17 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. in McLeod. The fair will showcase a variety of job and internship opportunities from local and non-local businesses, organizations, and industries. Visit the Career Services website to view the participant list, tips on preparation for the fair, and to register: [http://www.uni.edu/careerservices/events](http://www.uni.edu/careerservices/events).
TRIOTA - WOMEN’S AND GENDER STUDIES HONOR SOCIETY

The University of Northern Iowa’s chapter of the national honor society Iota Iota Iota (Triota) welcomes all students interested in Women’s and Gender Studies to participate in future meetings and events. The Alpha Chapter of Triota at Metropolitan State University of Denver held its first induction ceremony in the fall of 1992. Since then, Triota chapters have formed across the country to recognize the achievements of students in Women’s and Gender Studies, as well as to encourage diversity, egalitarianism, and a supportive academic environment for all students. Established in the fall of 2015, UNI’s Triota chapter holds meetings on a monthly basis, allowing students an opportunity to discuss topics related to Women’s and Gender Studies in a setting that is both social and academic.

UNI’s Triota Chapter held its first induction ceremony for new members on November 30th, 2015. New members inducted during the ceremony include Megan Vogt, Rachel Gregory, Shera Steere, and Zoe Potter. Membership is open to undergraduate minors and graduate M.A. and certificate students in Women’s and Gender Studies, or any UNI student with a strong interest in Women’s and Gender Studies. To join, undergraduate students must have achieved third semester standing with at least 6 hours of Women’s and Gender Studies courses with a GPA of at least 3.0. Graduate students must have completed at least 3 hours of Women’s and Gender Studies courses with a GPA of at least 3.0.

Students who would like to join or learn more about this honor society should contact the Triota advisor, Dr. Heather Jerónimo at heather.jeronimo@uni.edu.
Graduate Student Symposium

Building Graduate Community

April 6, 2016

The Symposium is a chance to showcase your research or creative works in a conference environment.

- Opportunities to present include poster presentation, oral presentation, and creative performance.
- Gain presentation and performance experience while enhancing your CV or résumé.
- Receive feedback from graduate faculty judges.
- Network with the university community.

Registration is now open!
Submission Deadline: February 12
Register at http://grad.uni.edu/graduate-student-symposium
Questions? Email gradlife@uni.edu

GRADUATE COLLEGE STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

To submit articles for consideration in the UNI Grad Student News contact gradlife@uni.edu.
If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Graduate College staff listed below.

Dr. Kavita Dhanwada
Dean of the Graduate College
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
kavita.dhanwada@uni.edu

Dr. Barbara Cutter
Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs
barbara.cutter@uni.edu

Susie Schwieger
Director of Graduate Student Life
susan.schwieger@uni.edu

Lisa Steimel
Secretary IV, Assistantships and Scholarships
lisa.steimel@uni.edu

Janet Witt
Clerk IV, Thesis and Dissertation Review
janet.witt@uni.edu

Rubina Chowdhury
Secretary II
rubina.chowdhury@uni.edu

Carly Hanson
Graduate Assistant for Online Content and Electronic Media
hansocan@uni.edu

Cori Austin
Graduate Assistant for Graduate Professional and Community Development
austicab@uni.edu