Who’s My GPSA Rep?

Every academic department and professional school at UNLV that offers a graduate or professional degree has a position available for a representative in the GPSA. While a few council seats are still vacant, the majority of the seats are occupied by students who serve as liaisons between their departments/schools and the GPSA, communicating GPSA information to their constituents, as well as presenting the GPSA with issues relevant to their constituents.

GPSA representatives participate in committees that organize community service and social activities for graduate and professional students, evaluate applications for GPSA grants, awards and scholarships and write and publish these very newsletters.

In this issue, take some time to identify the person who represents your department or professional school in the GPSA. If you have any issues, questions, announcements or suggestions relevant to graduate or professional students, contact your representative and start a conversation.

If your department or professional school does not currently have a representative, contact the GPSA at gpsa@unlv.edu or (702) 895-2261 and ask how you can get involved.

Who’s My Rep? continued on page 2

State of the University Address – A Leaner Future for UNLV

by Jennifer Liese

More tuition hikes are proposed in response to the worst budget crisis in Nevada history; however, President Neal Smatresk fought diligently to protect GA positions, tenure for faculty, and core academic programs. Remaining optimistic, President Smatresk wrote in a July 6, 2011 letter to UNLV on the budget updates, “I want to assure you that UNLV will emerge from this crisis stronger and more focused.”

“We have lost $73 million dollars and over 700 positions since 2007. Furlough and salary cuts have been implemented. Our students are paying 13 percent more in tuition.” – President Smatresk,

During the State of the University Address on Sept. 22, 2011, President Smatresk recommended another tuition increase. This will raise $6.5-$8.5 million in funding to be used for the following:

- 30 high impact faculty hires,
- an increase in Ph.D. stipends for Fall 2012,
- Instructional Technology (IT) planning and implementation,
- to resolve barriers to student graduation, and other programs.

State of University continued on page 6

As we have since 2004, the University will suspend all nonessential business operations between the observed holidays at the end of the calendar year. This year that suspension and the observed holidays will cover Saturday, December 24, 2011 through Monday, January 2, 2012. The observed holidays fall on Monday, December 26, 2011 and Monday, January 2, 2012 and the University will be officially closed on those days.

VIEW PRESIDENT SMATRESK’S STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS ONLINE!
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WluRDZQLDQ
School of Allied Health

KINESIOLOGY and PHYSICAL THERAPY have vacant positions

College of Business

ACCOUNTING, ECONOMICS, and MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS have vacant positions

School of Community Health Sciences

College of Engineering

Who's My Rep? continued from page 1

Healthcare and Physical Therapy have vacant positions.

College of Business

Accounting, Economics, and Management Information Systems have vacant positions.

School of Community Health Sciences

College of Engineering

Who's My Rep? continued on page 3
College of Hotel Administration

HOSPITALITY ADMINISTRATION
Xi (CeCe) Leung
yux4@unlv.nevada.edu

Law School

LAW
Benjamin K. Reitz
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College of Liberal Arts

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PSYCHOLOGY
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College of Science

CHEMISTRY
Sarah Wood
woods33@unlv.nevada.edu

GEOSCIENCE
Alison Sloat
sloata@unlv.nevada.edu

MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES
Mason McElroy
mcelroym@unlv.nevada.edu

LIFE SCIENCES and PHYSICS have vacant positions

College of Urban Affairs

COMMUNICATION STUDIES
Monika Bertaki
bertakim@unlv.nevada.edu

CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Jeremy Waller
wallerj2@unlv.nevada.edu

SOCIOLOGY
Jennifer Reed
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WOMEN’S STUDIES has a vacant position

School of Nursing

NURSING
Rhone D’Errico
derricor@unlv.nevada.edu
College of Urban Affairs (cont.)

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JOURNALISM & MEDIA STUDIES
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GPSA MANAGER
Rebecca Boulton
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This newsletter brought to you by the
Publications Committee:
Chair Carol Servino, Monika Bertaki,
Jacob Cassens, Jared Goode &
Jennifer Liese.
The UNLV Cares Food Pantry is not designed to support the homeless; rather, it supports the UNLV Staff and Student population. In response to the crippling economic crisis, a $19 million dollar budget cut, faculty and staff pay cuts, and tuition increases, the UNLV Cares Food Pantry emerged to fulfill the most basic need, food. Vice President of UNLV Cares, Kyle Kaalberg remarked: “The food pantry is for our community at UNLV to help show our support for students and staff during these tough economic times.” To date the UNLV Cares Food Pantry has distributed food to 427 UNLV community members.

The Food Pantry gathers non-perishable food donations to assist UNLV staff and students. The goal is to be self-sustaining by donations from fellow students, staff, and the community. Currently, the Food Pantry is surviving due to generous donations from NFA (Nevada Faculty Alliance), Graduate and Professional Students Association (GPSA), faculty, staff, and students.

The UNLV Food Bank was envisioned two years ago by the Classified Staff Council (CSC), an advisory group to the president at UNLV. The UNLV Food Bank has found a home and the program is beginning to cultivate more members and support. Currently, the program is diligently working towards becoming a 501(c) an American tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation or association. Once UNLV Cares Food Pantry can acquire the non-profit status its board will be able to solicit and receive donations from a plethora of institutions and programs.

The UNLV Cares Food Pantry is located at the Promenade Office Building on the NE corner of Maryland Pkwy & Harmon at 4440 S. Maryland Parkway, Suite 213, Las Vegas NV 89119. For more information, please call 702-895-2261, or go online http://www.facebook.com/unlvcaresfoodpantry

Upcoming food distribution times are: Wednesdays 3pm-7pm, Thursdays, from 11am-3pm, and Fridays from 3pm-7pm.

Upcoming food distribution dates are: November 30th through December 2nd, and December 14th through 16th.

Norm Bedford, Director of Student Financial Services, spoke at the November 7th GPSA Council meeting. He said, graduate and professional students “came out on losing end of federal legislation” last summer after Congress dealt with the budget deficit and passed a budget control act in 2011 to protect the federal Pell grant program. Effective July 1, 2012, instead of seeing subsidized loans, graduate students will see unsubsidized loans, which accrue interest.

Graduate and professional students still will able to borrow $25,000, he said, but all loans will be unsubsidized and will be subject to loan origination fees. The legislation he spoke of affects graduate students at every university; it does not affect undergraduate students. More information may be found on the UNLV Student Financial Services web pages; the office is planning to send emails to all affected grad students with subsidized loans via their Google e-mail accounts, as well as through the US mail. http://finaid.unlv.edu/loans/subsidized-eliminated.html
UNLV recently took a $19 million dollar budget cut, and 215 positions were slashed permanently. All employees took a 2.5 percent pay cut and tuition was raised 13 percent for students. In response to millions missing, UNLV is looking to lose about nine academic departments and 18 degree programs. As bad as that sounds, some believe UNLV was actually fortunate. The initial budget cuts proposed by Governor Brian Sandoval were double that amount at $32.6 million dollars.

The plan for the future of UNLV (from slides shown during the State of the University address):

- More selective with an emphasis on student success and freshman enrollment
- Better learning and research environments for an increasingly qualified and diverse student and faculty body.
- Increased emphasis on scholarship and research to build reputation and improve extramural funding.
- Expanded commitment to economic diversification through focused hires and programs.
- Focused growth around a core of sustainable programs.

President Smatresk wrote in an email to the UNLV campus on March 8, 2011, “We need to continue to make our case clear to our Governor and the Legislature and I encourage you to share your commitment to higher education, our children’s future, and your concerns about the proposed cuts with all of our elected officials.”

Las Vegas has received the hardest economic blow in the U.S.’s current economic catastrophe. Our poverty rate has doubled since 2010. Nevada went from having the lowest unemployment rate in 2006 at 4% to the highest now at 13.4%; U.S. unemployment rate is 9.1%. In these disastrous economic times education is essential for Las Vegas to move forward. An inspirational video was shown to conclude the State of the University Address. The final lines were: “This is our future. This is our community. This is our University.” UNLV has never been more important to Las Vegas’ future as it is today in creating a more prosperous and sustainable future.

Medical Hardship Scholarships

Students who find themselves unable to manage school-related expenses due to an unforeseen serious illness or other severe medical situation may qualify for a medical hardship scholarship. Eligible applicants are full-time graduate and professional students in good academic standing who have suddenly incurred the financial burden of unexpected medical hardship. Scholarships will cover expenses resulting from a hardship up to six months prior to the application, with a maximum amount of $1,000 funded per person, a maximum of $2,500 awarded per semester. In extreme cases, the committee may award funds to cover expenses incurred up to a year before the submission of an application.

Students are eligible to receive this scholarship once every two years and funds are awarded at the discretion of the GPSA Scholarship Committee. Applicants must fill out an application and submit a letter with supporting evidence explaining the circumstances that lead to their financial emergency. They must also prove that their financial need exceeds other funding options. Medical hardship scholarships do not cover anticipated future expenses or financial burdens resulting from ongoing medical conditions.

Application deadline for spring 2012 is April 1st. For the application and more information on the scholarship: http://gpsa.unlv.edu/grants/

In the fall of 2011, the GPSA awarded its very first medical hardship scholarship!
Graduate and professional students are encouraged to participate in mental health and support groups offered free of charge by UNLV's Student Counseling and Psychological Service (CAPS), located on the 3rd floor of the Student Recreation and Wellness Center. The group offerings for fall 2011 are as follows:

- Midweek Mindfulness for Stress Management
- Mindfulness and Acceptance Group for Anxiety
- Mindfulness and Yoga for Well-being
- Building Social Confidence
- Relationships Group
- Graduate Student Support Group
- First Generation College Support Group
- A Group for Every Body (Body Image Group for Female Students)
- Academic Support Group
- Family Members of Military Persons Student Support Group
- Military Students Support Group

Before joining a group, all students must complete an initial intake. Appointments can be made by calling 702-895-3627. As slots book up quickly, students are advised to call CAPS as early as possible during operating hours to schedule an intake. The office is open Monday-Thursday, 8-6 p.m. & Friday, 9-5 p.m.

For more information, visit Student Counseling and Psychological Services on the web:
http://healthwellnessandrec.unlv.edu/programs/mental/index.html

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We’ve all been there. You want to sit down and make the final touches to your midterm papers at the library, and someone sits down at the last computer and starts watching the football game. Fortunately, the GPSA provides a computer lab and lounge specifically designed for UNLV graduate and professional students to avoid just such hassles!

There are 39 Windows XP computers available in the lounge, loaded with programs ranging from Adobe Suite and Microsoft Office to AutoCad and SAS, and easily accessible by simply activating a unique lab account on site. Printing is also available there at the rate of $.03 per page when you finish working on those papers.

So what if you already have the ideal workspace elsewhere, and don’t think the computer services are essential to your studies? The GPSA lounge still has you covered! Snacks and water are available at an affordable rate of $.50 each, and there is also a refrigerator and microwave for you to use while working.

The lounge even has group study areas for when you have group activities to complete. The entire lounge is designed to cater specifically to graduate and professional students, which makes it much easier to settle in and get work done, but also to find printed materials nearby.

The lounge’s hours of operation differ from those of the library. You can always check the website at http://gpsa.unlv.edu/labs/ to find accurate information about hours of operation even if you decide you only need to use the lab once in a while or just want to stop by and purchase some snacks. There is a sign-in sheet at the entrance that is used to track how often the study area is used.

For some the lounge is a place to get things done; for others, it offers a truly quiet place in the library to relax, whether at a computer, a desk, or one of the sofas and chairs. Whether you decide you only really need to use the lounge during busy midterm and finals weeks, or you utilize it every day, it is a valuable asset that graduate and professional students have at their disposal, and it is worth your time to stop by and see what it has to offer.

The GPSA lounge/computer lab is located in Lied Library, room 3251 (third floor). The hours are posted on the GPSA website, http://gpsa.unlv.edu/labs/, which also lists computer programs and other services available.
Grants Writing Workshop

The GPSA hosted an incredibly successful grants writing workshop on October 14. Organizers counted 61 students in attendance (more than any in the past), making it clear that the current economic climate – including higher education budget cuts – has prompted a larger number of students to look for grants to help finance research and conference travel. The primary goals of the grants writing workshop are to:

- Provide students with general knowledge about grants and funding opportunities
- Provide students with tips for effective grant writing
- Provide insight from the GPSA Grants Committee
- Provide a forum for students to ask questions about grants

The GPSA would like to extend tremendous appreciation to faculty advisor Dr. Adam Simon for his smart, funny, and helpful delivery during October’s grants writing workshop as well as his willingness to go above and beyond for the graduate student community.

The Grants Committee, led by Chairperson Thom Bussey, played a pivotal role in making the workshop an outstanding event. With the support of his stellar team, Thom organized the workshop in the midst of his comps. That is dedication! The Grants Committee requires an incredibly high level of commitment from its members, and the GPSA thanks each and every representative on the committee for their invaluable contributions.

Every year, fall to fall, the GPSA Grants Committee awards graduate and professional students $125,000.00 in grant money. Individual applicants can receive a maximum of three grants per year, with a total not to exceed $1750. There are three grant cycles per year and any finances requested outside of those cycles would be considered emergency grants. Emergency grant funds will not be awarded to any application that should be part of one of the regular application cycles.

- Deadline for Summer 2012 grant applications: March 15, 2012
- Deadline for Fall 2012 grant applications: April 15, 2012

More information on GPSA grants may be found on the web at http://gpsa.unlv.edu/grants/grants.html.

GPSA Annual Research Forum
Spring 2012

The GPSA will host its annual research forum on the second floor of the student union on Saturday, March 17, 2012. All graduate and professional students at UNLV are welcome to participate. The research forum provides an opportunity for graduate and professional students to share their research with peers and faculty through either a poster or oral presentation. All GPSA grant recipients for the 2011-2012 school year must present at the forum. The deadline to register for the GPSA forum is Friday, February 17, 2012, and abstracts will not be accepted after this date. At the close of the event, awards are presented in recognition of outstanding presentations. For more information or to register for the forum go to the GPSA webpage http://gpsa.unlv.edu/forum/
Bald? Beautiful!

UNLV supports St. Baldrick’s mission to fund childhood cancer research

The GPSA Community Service Committee urges and encourages students to join other student groups on campus in their support of fund-raising events (including shaving your head or getting a trim) sponsored by the St. Baldrick’s Foundation. St. Baldrick’s is a volunteer-driven nonprofit organization that raises funds for childhood cancer research. The first awareness event for the UNLV community grew out of a class project and was held on Oct. 26 in Pida Plaza. During the event local business owner Brian McMullan addressed a small crowd and President Smatresk challenged students. If they raise $5,000 for the organization he would shave his head. In spring students are looking to create an event to unify campus and community support for the organization. Stay tuned for more details.

According to the non-profit organization’s website, funds have been distributed to more than 230 institutions of the Children’s Oncology Group (COG) for laboratory research and clinical trials. Its first fund-raising event was organized by three friends who shaved their heads as part of a fund-raising challenge 11 years ago on March 17, which is St. Patrick’s Day, in a NYC pub. The idea was to find sponsors for shavees. Hoping to raise $17,000, they raised $104,000. The idea has caught on and the group funds more childhood research grants than any organization aside from the government. Last year St. Baldrick’s funds also supported 11 St. Baldrick’s Scholars, 9 St. Baldrick’s Scholars, 5 Supportive Care Research Grants, 14 Research Grants and 25 Infrastructure Grants. http://www.stbaldricks.org.

Graduate Student Spotlight

A PhD student in the Mechanical Engineering department, Stacy Nelson, a UNLV alumna, is currently working on her dissertation which focuses on developing new methods for the computational simulation of explosively loaded structures. To put it simply, she calculates new ways to use lighter materials for explosive structures. Just this past summer she conducted experiments at Picatinny Arsenal Army Lab in New Jersey to test lighter material bomb tanks. Her research is also nationally recognized as she took 3rd place in a student paper competition last spring at a materials conference.

Stacy is also a member of the UNLV chapters of American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and the President of Society for the Advancement of Material and Process Engineering (SAMPE). As a member of ASME, she competes in the annual conference with her team to design and build efficient and highly engineered human power vehicles for everyday use.

On top of her academic schedule, Stacy also finds time to mentor local high school students and organize local competitions including the First Robotics Competition (FRC). She acts as a technical mentor as well as a motivator to encourage and educate young students, especially women who aspire to be engineers.

As she approaches graduation, Stacy hopes to continue her research through a faculty position to further mentor students and do what she does best.

Stacey was the GPSA 2008-2009. Mechanical Engineering Department representative She was also a GPSA grant recipient in Spring 2010.

Graduate College Scholarship/Fellowship Applications for Fall 2012 - Spring 2013

The Graduate College is now accepting electronic submission of scholarship/fellowship applications for Fall 2012/Spring 2013. Applications will be accepted Nov. 15, 2011, through Feb. 1, 2012. All scholarship/fellowship applications must be submitted through the Apply Yourself (AY) Portal by Feb. 1. Please visit the fellowships and scholarships page on the Graduate College website for detailed information on each award and specific requirements. For additional information, please contact Brianne Heinle at 702-895-3970 or emailgradfi-naclesvc@unlv.edu
Graduate & Professional Student Association
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
4505 S. Maryland Parkway
Phone: 702-895-2261
Fax: 702-895-2158
gpsa@unlv.edu

Noteworthy UNLV / GPSA Dates

December 5  GPSA Meeting 2 p.m. in SU Room 208A
December 8  Human Trafficking documentary movie (UNLV campus – details TBA)
            *Sex+Money: A National Search for Human Worth* is a documentary about domestic minor sex trafficking and the modern-day abolitionist movement fighting to stop it.
December 9  End of semester social at Macayo, 1375 E. Tropicana, 702-736-1989 5 to 8 p.m.
            (food provided with cash bar for beverages).
December 12 -16  Finals week - Bagels and coffee in the Graduate Lounge in Lied Library
January 16 – 19  Back to school week - Bagels and coffee in the Graduate lounge in Lied Library
January 25  PhD Movie in Student Union Theater
February 6  GPSA Council Meeting 2 p.m. in Room 208A
February 10  Ethel M Chocolate Factory Tour and Botanical Garden Lights
February 17  Research Forum application deadline: [http://gpsa.unlv.edu/forum/](http://gpsa.unlv.edu/forum/)
February 25  Alumni Tailgate UNLV v. Airforce (possible display for Research Posters)
March 5  GPSA Council Meeting, 2 p.m. in Room 208A
March 15  GPSA Summer Grant Deadline: [http://gpsa.unlv.edu/grants/](http://gpsa.unlv.edu/grants/)
March 17  Research Forum, Student Union 2nd floor 8a.m.—3p.m.
March 25  GPSA Council Meeting, 2 p.m. in Room 208A
April 9  GPSA Council Meeting, 2 p.m. in Room 208A
April 25  National Denim Day
April 28  Red Rock Canyon Hiking
April 30  GPSA Council Meeting, 2 p.m. in Room 208A
February 17  Research Forum application deadline: [http://gpsa.unlv.edu/forum/](http://gpsa.unlv.edu/forum/)
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April 28  Red Rock Canyon Hiking
April 30  GPSA Council Meeting, 2 p.m. in Room 208A

In Memory of
Graduate Student, Adam Goodstein
1976 – 2011
School of Social Work

MORE Changes in the Grad College!

**Staff:** As of September 2011, new staff positions have been filled in the graduate college. Kara Wada - Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions & Data Coordinator joins the team along with Brianne Heinle – Graduate Assistantship Program Coordinator.

**Thesis/Dissertation:** Changes also have occurred in the thesis/dissertation process. The graduate college has worked to simplify the review. Graduate students can now drop off their thesis/dissertation materials for review and receive electronic approval. The graduate student timeline may be the best source to ensure that you are staying on track and completing all required forms on time.


**Graduation:** Applications can now be completed through MyUNLV two semesters in advance. There is a $75 graduation fee. If you pay the fee and do not graduate the anticipated semester, the fee will roll over to the next semester one time. Further delay of graduation will result in an additional $75. For complete details, you can call (702) 895-3320 or visit: [http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/](http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/).

Winter Commencement is December 17th @ 9:00 a.m. at the Thomas & Mack Center.