



Academic Affairs Newsletter

by Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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New Faculty Spotlight

Ryan Zayac is a new Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology. He previously spent two years in the same position at Central Washington University. Ryan grew up in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, and attended Allegheny College, obtaining a bachelor's degree in psychology and neuroscience. He later attended Auburn University where he received his Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology with an emphasis in Applied Behavior Analysis. Ryan is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), whose present activities primarily focus on individuals with developmental disabilities. Specifically, he is interested in the development of behavioral programming (e.g., social skills, daily living skills, etc.) for college students with Asperger's Syndrome or other developmental disabilities. He is also interested in reading instruction for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), the use of motivating operations, video-modeling and behavioral skills training with children with ASD, risky-sexual behavior in adolescents, and evidence-based teaching methods.

Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation

Two UNA faculty members, Tom Coates and Lee Renfroe, were recently elected to the Board of the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. They join Mike Hall who is already a board member. To have three faculty members from one university on a state-wide board is pretty impressive. Good Work!

Liberty Tree Initiative Grant

The Department of Communications recently received a \$5,000 grant from the Liberty Tree Initiative to support a spring 2011 First Amendment Celebration. The feedback from the selection committee indicated the UNA proposal was a unanimous first choice of the judges. Congratulations to Chair Greg Pitts and the department for their initiative on behalf of UNA and the First Amendment.

Grants

With the retirement of Priscilla Holland in the spring of 2010, we took that opportunity to revisit the campus support structure for grants and sponsored research. Tanja Blackstone, Associate Professor of Economics, who worked closely with Priscilla, was asked to lead efforts to create and direct an Office of Sponsored Programs. The function of the office is to assist faculty in securing external funds to advance the academic mission of the University. Assistance is available for all aspects of the grant process, including identification of funding sources, review of preliminary proposals and budgets, human subject reviews, liaison work between investigators and funding partners, and post award administration of the grant.

It is university policy that the Office of Sponsored Programs be contacted regarding grant proposals prior to their submission. This initial contact ensures that any matching fund issues or institutional compliance matters are addressed. It also affords an opportunity to review the proposal and offer suggestions if needed. Tanja Blackstone is located in Room 208 of Bibb Graves Hall. Her phone is 765-4523 and her email is tfblackstone@una.edu. External funding is

an excellent way to counter the decline in institutional resources as a result of reduced funding. I encourage you to take advantage of it. Even if you don't have a grant proposal, but just an idea, please share it with Tanja and see where it leads.

Geography Department

I am pleased to report that Lisa Keys Matthews will serve as Acting Chair of the Department of Geography during the spring semester. Dr. Bill Strong is on professional development leave. The initial response to the new master's degree has been great. Thanks to the faculty for their hard work to get it started.

Lion Alert

The recent closure due to the snow reminded us of how important it is to be on the Lion Alert notification system so you can receive immediate notification. If employees have not registered, please do so through <http://www.una.edu/lionalert>.