



Academic Affairs Newsletter

by Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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NEW FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Leah Graham is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at UNA. Leah was born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma, later moving to Böblingen, Germany to study art and German. Leah earned her B.A. (2001) from Drury University in Springfield, Missouri then went on to receive her M.A. (2004) from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. She completed her Ph.D. last August from University of Missouri, Columbia. Her degrees are in Political Science with subfield emphasis in Comparative Politics and International Relations and area specialization in the Middle East and North Africa. Leah's early field research on Lebanon's Hezbollah and other groups fueled her later dissertation on the environmental and structural forces that influence when a group will use political violence and when it will use peaceful means of politics. The analysis compared the experience of Hezbollah to the IRA, ETA, Hamas and others. Leah has also authored and coauthored research on relationships between a state's human rights record and its record of aggressive international behavior and the role that state property rights regimes play in economic and political development. Leah is the faculty advisor for UNA's new model United Nations club that plans to compete in Atlanta and St. Louis next year. Dr. Graham spends her free time reading really bad novels or exploring and playing with her husband, Lucas Klotzbach, and their two year old son, Auston.

Dr. Sarah Franklin joined UNA in fall 2010 as Assistant Professor of History, teaching Latin American history. She earned her Ph.D. in 2006 from Florida State University, and was previously at the University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Franklin's research focuses on gender and slavery in nineteenth-century Cuba. She has previously held an American Fellowship from the American Association of University Women, and is currently revising her manuscript for publication with the University of Rochester Press. She is very excited to be back in her native Alabama.

NEXT GENERATION LEARNING CHALLENGE GRANT

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the University of Central Florida (UCF) have been awarded a \$250,000 grant for this program. Funding comes from the Gates Foundation and the Hewlett Foundation. UNA is one of twenty institutions participating in the project. The purpose of the grant is to investigate blended learning courses and the value of a toolkit developed by UCF that utilizes best practices in blended learning. Thanks to the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science and Chair David Muse for agreeing to participate in the project on behalf of UNA. For more information, go to http://www.aascu.org/media/media_releases/release11apr7.htm.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF GEOGRAPHERS

UNA is strongly represented at the AAG meeting scheduled this week in Seattle. Seventeen from our campus are in attendance. That includes twelve students, ten undergraduate and two graduate, and five faculty, all attending and presenting papers. Thanks to the Geography Department for setting a high standard for student and faculty research.

NEW ADDITION

Phyllis Underwood has been working part-time with several campus offices doing imaging work using Banner Extender. She has also been assisting the SACS effort. Her workload eventually reached full-time, so her position has been converted to fulltime in the Academic Affairs Office to reflect that load. We welcome her to the office and to UNA.

SGA INDUCTION

The induction of news officers for SGA was held on Monday, April 11. Ralph Akalonu was installed as the new president and is the first international student to serve as SGA President. Cory Hamilton passed the gavel after a year of excellent leadership. He will attend Auburn in the fall to work on a master's degree in finance.