

# Academic Affairs Newsletter

by Office of the Provost  
and Vice President for Academic Affairs



University of North Alabama

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## SACSCOC

UNA is one of eight universities invited to have its reaffirmation report (from the 2012 SACSCOC evaluation) in the Resource Room at the annual conference in December. This allows other universities and colleges to review model reports. Over 4000 educators attend the meeting. Congratulations to the UNA community—our SACSCOC success keeps on giving.

## New Faculty

Dr. Chanho Kang is an Assistant Professor of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. He received his master's degree and Ph.D. degree in Sport Management from Texas A&M University. Before this he worked as a sport marketer for five years in Korea. With a strong emphasis on implications for marketing strategies, he is expanding upon his prior research interests in psychological factors influencing sport consumer behaviors to build expertise in market segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Moreover, his current research agenda stems from an interest in testing theoretical models of brand personality, self-concept (actual, ideal, social, and ideal social self-image), self-image congruity, and functional congruity that are effective in understanding a variety of sport consumer behavior phenomena (e.g., brand attitudes, brand choice, brand preference, brand loyalty, brand purchase, and brand satisfaction).

## Graduation Requirement Revision

The University Curriculum Committee recently approved a proposal from the Chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences to allow departments that wish to do so the ability to reduce the number of hours required for a degree to 120. The current requirement is 128. Some explanation may be helpful to understand the rationale for that change. For many years, 120 hours was the standard for a degree. The idea at one time was that students would take an average of 15 hours a semester for 8 semesters and earn a degree. That rather simple approach produces 120 hours. Returning to that number for those programs that wish to do so benefits students. A 128 hour program almost inevitably requires students to stay an extra semester or even year and they incur significant cost to do so, not only in terms of attendance costs but also delay in entering the job market. As tuition has risen, we, as a university community, must be sensitive to containing costs and a reduction in hours required for a degree is an important step. It is also noteworthy that eight of 11 universities in the state reside at the 120 minimum. Moreover, that is also the minimum established by SACSCOC. When the proposal was discussed in UCC, many valid issues were raised about why the proposal might be problematic for certain sectors of the campus, but ultimately our responsibility as a university community is to do all that we can to serve the best interests of our students and the 120 hour minimum is a response to that high purpose. I applaud the College of Arts and Sciences chairs and dean for taking this step and encourage all departments to use this as an opportunity to revisit graduation requirements for their programs. There are legitimate reasons why certain programs can't be reduced and that is readily acknowledged in the language of this policy.

## Congratulations to Grant Recipients

Jill Englett, Prema Monteiro, and Lewis Yuille, Department of Human Environmental Sciences, were awarded \$17,369 from the State of Alabama Department of Agriculture. The grant will be used to develop an aeroponic greenhouse in Northwest Alabama and an aeroponic education center for local growers, hobby gardeners, individuals, restaurateurs, future culinary professionals, and university students. Crops from the aeroponic greenhouse will be used to conduct research on ways to increase university students' consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Dr. Gregory Pitts, Chair of the Department of Communications, has been awarded a \$5,000 grant to increase campus and community awareness of activities to support First Amendment rights. The grant comes from the 1 for All First Amendment Education Group, the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, and the American Society of News Editors (ASNE). The award allows the Department of Communications to provide events and activities focusing on the five freedoms of the First Amendment, to create informed citizens, and to understand why these freedoms are not always available globally. *Can you name the five freedoms in the First Amendment? Not sure? Go here: <http://1forall.us/>*

Carolyn Barske, Department of History and Political Science, and Sunhui Sim, Department of Geography, were awarded \$31,998 by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, American Battlefield Protection Program. The award focuses on the preservation of the Sulphur Trestle Fort and surrounding historical landscape. Using available historical documentation and GIS mapping, the project will assist in preserving the resources at the Sulphur Trestle Fort site by establishing firm boundaries for the battlefield. The Preservation Project will accomplish two goals. First, as a result of research conducted at the site a re-evaluated National Register of Historic Places Nomination will be submitted to the Alabama SHPO (original submission 1973), focusing on the historic battlefield landscape instead of just focusing on the Sulphur Creek Trestle itself. Second, the project will be constructing a database including historical census and cartographic documents. The data will be geo-referenced and dynamically updated in a Desktop versus Web Geographic Information System. The interactive web-forum will contain multimedia interactive maps and descriptive information on the site.

## Alumni Awards

Congratulations to Drs. Larry Adams and Tera Kirkman. Both received service awards from the UNA Alumni Association at its annual banquet Friday night. Dr. Adams received his undergraduate degree from UNA in 1989, and Dr. Kirkman in 1998.



## Critical Thinking Skills in Action

