

ANNUAL REPORT
GRADUATE SCHOOL AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
CALENDAR YEAR 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Calendar year 2016 was a productive year for the units of the Graduate School and International Education. We were again in the spotlight for international education, hosting the Fulbright Prize Ceremony at the 39th Annual Fulbright Association Meeting and serving in a variety of ways on international boards, committees and conferences. On July 1, the Rome Center began reporting to our unit, with an aim to explore how to maximize this excellent resource. International education was also highlighted on campus and in the community through the efforts of International Students and Scholars and Sponsored Student programs. Graduate student numbers and degrees continued to grow, and our interdisciplinary programs continue to be exemplary. Unfortunately, as a percentage of total University enrollment, graduate enrollment again declined, as did the percentage of domestic graduate enrollment attributable to underrepresented minorities. Testing Services again served many members of the University and community, and was granted certification from the National College Testing Association, one of only 129 centers certified in North America. Although there is always room to improve and we continue to identify and work on those areas, the efforts of an exceptional GSIE staff contributed to a most productive year.

SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHANGES

Notable achievements and changes

- In April, Dean Needy was inducted into the Arkansas Academy of Industrial Engineering as an Honorary Member
- Curt Rom was hired as a full-time Associate Dean for International Education, after serving for a year in a half-time position
- Along with Dean Rom came responsibility for the Rome Center, which was previously housed in the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design
- Over 100 U of A students studied at the Rome Center during the 2015-16 academic year; this was a 13% increase from the previous academic year
- In addition to Dean Rom, we welcomed new staff members Jacob Hiatt, Suzie Greer, Samina Yasmin, Melissa Moon, Katie Sabo, and James Flammer, along with the staff and faculty of the Rome Center
- During calendar year 2016, we said good-bye to staff members Kayla Anderson, Michelle Bachelor, Bart Betnar, Nick Daehn, and Alfred Dowe
- DeDe Long hosted the first annual breakfast meeting of SEC Study Abroad directors at the 2016 annual NAFSA conference in Denver, attended also by Kim Needy and Curt Rom
- DeDe Long served on the 2016 Fulbright Association Conference Committee which resulted in a major sponsorship by the University of Arkansas for the Prize Ceremony
- Yassaman Mirdamadi, Director of Testing Services, received the Service Recognition Award for Professional Contributions to the National College Testing Association again this year, for the eighth consecutive year

- She was also invited by the NCTA president to join the test center certification team and serve as an evaluator for the test centers seeking national certification
- The National College Testing Association granted certification to our Testing Services Center, one of only 129 centers certified in North America
- DeDe Long, Director of the Office of Study Abroad and International Exchange, was asked to serve on the search committee for the next executive director and chief executive officer of NAFSA: Association of International educators
- Several staff members presented at regional NAFSA conferences
- Lynn Mosesso, Director of Graduate and International Admissions and Recruitment was recognized by the Office of Sponsored Programs as the Outstanding Staff Member
- Amanda Cantu, Director of the Office of Graduate Student Retention and Graduation/GSIE Communications was named the Graduate Student Congress staff ally of the year
- Leigh Marshall, Student Application Specialist, was named Employee of the Quarter and Employee of the Year by the Staff Senate
- Audra Johnston, Associate Director of the Office of International Students and Scholars, was selected to serve on the NAFSA Trainer Corps
- Julie Rogers, in the Office of Graduate Retention and Graduation, was elected to the Staff Senate
- David Vitale, Director of the Rome Center, was awarded the distinguished service award from the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design
- Karl Anderson, Associate Director of International Recruitment, is chair-elect for NAFSA region III

Graduate School

- Fall 2016 graduate enrollment was 4,275, a 1.3% increase over Fall 2015; however, as a percentage of the total University enrollment, graduate student enrollment fell from 15.9% in Fall 2015 to 15.7% in Fall 2016
- Graduate enrollment of under-represented minorities was 18.63% of total domestic graduate enrollment in Fall 2016 compared to 19.73% in Fall 2015
- In 2015-16, there were 1,367 master's, specialist and doctoral degrees awarded, a decrease from the previous year. However, there was an increase in the number of doctoral degrees awarded, compared to the previous graduation year
- Amanda Cantu organized the University's second annual Three Minute Thesis competition
- Amanda Cantu published an article about a student that was listed among the top ten most-read articles in the University of Arkansas newswire for 2016 and wrote several press releases which were picked up by a variety of news outlets
- The paperless workflow for the graduate and international admissions process was fully implemented. UA faculty and staff may view applications and associated documents, graduate programs may set up and manage their own degree program application requirements checklist; applicants now have the ability to upload documents directly to UA Connect and check on the status of their application via a new Applicant Center, and graduate coordinators may admit/deny directly in UAConnect. The new system has populated over 44,000 student records and more than 50,000 emails were sent to prospective students

- The Graduate School and International Education partnered with the Black Graduate Students Association to host prospective graduate students from historically black colleges and universities and Hispanic-serving institutions to learn about U of A graduate programs during the annual *Attracting Intelligent Minds* Conference in February
- There are 249 doctoral fellows and eight SREB state doctoral fellows. Nine doctoral fellows also hold NSF graduate fellowships
- The Office of Testing Services tested approximately 14,000 students and prospective students in 2016

International Education

- World events influenced the enrollment patterns of international students at the University of Arkansas. The economic and political downturn in Brazil caused a drop in enrollment of international students at the University of Arkansas for the first time in over a decade (1,466 international students in Fall 2016, 79 fewer than in fall 2015) However, there was an increase in the sponsorship of international scholars on the campus with the number of H-1b employees and J-1 student interns growing
- International students represent 5.4% of the total University headcount; international graduate students comprised 16.5% of the total graduate population
- In Fall 2016, there were 226 enrolled sponsored students, representing 15% of the international headcount
- International students represented 112 countries in Fall 2016
- A total of 101 students actively participated in the International Culture Team (ICT), presenting their culture in at least two events. An additional 208 students/scholars presented in one event totaling 301 presenters for the year. These students represented 60 different countries. Through 95 events (a 30% increase), ICT members presented 928 times (18% increase), reaching 9,806 campus and Northwest Arkansas community members. This year we significantly increased our number of cultural presentations but reached smaller audiences overall
- On February 27, 2016, the University of Arkansas hosted the Russian Immersion to celebrate the spring festival, Maslenitsa. The festival included traditional pancakes called bliny, a snow ball fight, the parade with “Lady Maslenitsa,” sweepers, fortune tellers, music and booths for crafts and purchasing souvenirs. The festival concluded with the burning of “Lady Maslenitsa” on the Union Mall to welcome in spring
- 130 international students and scholars were matched to 125 Friendship Families and individuals from the NW Arkansas region for friendships in the Friendship Family Program
- Representatives from the Office of Sponsored Student Programs met with the executive directors of four Fulbright Commissions, those from Taiwan, Japan, Brazil and Austria, as well as the President of the Fulbright Alumni Association Board of Directors
- The University of Arkansas welcomed the sixth cohort of 18 PAPSS scholars (from Panama) to campus in August 2016. The total number of scholars enrolled at the U of A in 2016 was 108, with 18 enrolled at SILC, for a total of 126 students. The Fall 2016 cumulative GPA for the PAPPSS scholars is 3.11 and the retention rate is 95.5%.
- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security redesigned the form I-20 requiring schools to print new forms for every active student with a deadline of July 1, 2016; the Office of International Students and Scholars was able to meet this deadline

- Financial support from private gifts helped to fund arrival services for new students and scholarships for outstanding International Culture Team members
- Spring International language Center hosted 45 Panamanian teachers of English as a foreign language in two eight-week teacher training programs
- Study Abroad and International Exchange assumed responsibility for the coordination of all U of A study abroad programs offered by the Rome Center; expanded partnerships with institutions in Australia, Denmark, Greece, Mexico, and Sweden; administered 37 short term faculty led study abroad programs and the summer campus at the UA Rome Center; coordinated reciprocal student exchange programs with 19 foreign institutions and administered new study abroad programs during the January Intersession for the first time, sending groups to Vietnam and Prague-Vienna.
- 1,022 students completed a study abroad experience in fall 2015, spring, intersession and summer 2016 (compared to 900 the year before - a 13% increase); 48 countries were visited
- 92 students were enrolled in reciprocal exchange programs in 2015-16: 45 inbound and 47 outbound.

Interdisciplinary Studies

- Fall 2016 enrollment in interdisciplinary graduate programs was 262, a 3.6% increase over Fall 2015
- In the 2015-16 graduation year, GSIE awarded 28 interdisciplinary master's degrees and 21 interdisciplinary doctoral degrees
- The Ph.D. program in Cell and Molecular Biology remained the largest Ph.D. program on campus in Fall 2016 enrollments; only the professional Doctor of Nursing program enrolled more doctoral students in Fall 2016
- The Public Policy program remained the most diverse doctoral program among our top 15 programs, with 35.5% minority students (out of total domestic students in the program Fall 2016) and 18.4% international students (our of total students in the program, Fall 2016)
- Elizabeth Saxman Underwood, an alumna of the Public Policy Ph.D. program, was selected as one of the most powerful women in Arkansas by *AY Magazine*
- Diana Chen, a doctoral student in the Environmental Dynamics Ph.D. program, was named a 2016 *Graduate Research Fellow* in the Society of Ethnobiology