

ANNUAL REPORT  
GRADUATE SCHOOL AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION  
Academic Year 2017-18

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017-18, we continued to negotiate turbulent international waters, shared our dean with the Office of Research and Innovation, implemented a number of new initiatives, hosted a regional conference, participated in a research project funded by the National Science Foundation and the Mellon Foundation, and saw several of our staff and faculty honored in a number of ways.

## SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHANGES

### Notable achievements and changes

- Kim Needy was principal investigator for a grant, “*Understanding Ph.D. Career Pathways for Humanities and STEM Program Improvement at the University of Arkansas*,” funded by the NSF and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation through the Council of Graduate Schools. This grant will run from July 2017 to June 2020.
- Kim Needy was asked to serve on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of the GRE Board and serves on the Executive Committee of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools; she is the President-Elect of the CSGS.
- Audra Johnston and Sedivy Reigh were named Employees of the Year and Amanda Cantu, Melissa Erwin, Heather London, Sarah Malloy and Julie Rogers were named Employees of the Quarter.
- Curt Rom was selected as an Association of International Education Administrators 2017-18 Presidential Fellow.
- Patricia Koski received the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools’ award for *Outstanding Contributions to Graduate Education in the Southern Region*.
- Bill McComas, Amanda Cantu, and Lisa Kulczak were the recipients of the *Collis Geren Award* for faculty, GSIE staff, and University staff, respectively.
- Bruce Ahrendsen, Fran Hagstrom and Cynthia Smith received the 2017 *Hoyt H. Purvis Award for Service in International Education*.
- Kim Needy’s student, Dr. Rufaidah Al-Maian, was the 2017 winner of the Industrial Engineering and Operations Management International Conference Dissertation Award.
- The University of Arkansas was a sponsor of the Fulbright Association annual conference in Washington DC in November 2017 and served as the major host for a reception at the Canadian embassy with Senator John Boozman, Congressman French Hill and Congressman Steve Womack.
- DeDe Long was elected to the Fulbright Association Board of Directors.
- *Great Value Colleges* named the U of A’s study abroad programs the fourth best in the nation, based on variables including affordability and the variety of programs available.
- The U of A was awarded a Foundation Year grant from the SABIC organization.
- Study Abroad and International Exchange received an \$8,000 grant from the *University Study Abroad Consortium* to invest in Curriculum Integration, which maps program opportunities by major.
- We hosted the annual meeting of the *Conference of Southern Graduate Schools* in Fayetteville with 230 in attendance and for that conference, developed a state-wide booklet to highlight graduate education across the State of Arkansas.
- At that conference, Julie Olsen, GSIE Director of Development, was invited to co-facilitate a workshop on *Best Advancement Practices for Graduate Schools*.

- We organized our most successful Three Minute Thesis competition yet, having solid student participation from most colleges and good audience turnout at the contest final; the winner of the UA competition, Malachi Nichols, won the People’s Choice award for his heat at the *Conference of Southern Graduate School’s* regional contest.
- 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 ninth consecutive year
- Douglas Rhoads, University Professor of Biological Sciences and Director of the Cell and Molecular Biology Program, was selected as the University of Arkansas GSIE Outstanding Mentor.
- Peter Ungar, Director of our interdisciplinary Environmental Dynamics Ph.D. program, was selected as the University of Arkansas SECU Professor of the Year.
- JoAnne Kvamme, Assistant Director of the Environmental Dynamics Ph.D. program, was awarded the 2018 Service Award from Fort Valley State University for her work to increase diversity and inclusion.
- We implemented the Graduate Recruitment Assistance Fund to assist departments with their recruitment efforts; 18 best practices in graduate education training sessions were held with 67 people attending; 45 applications were approved for funding totaling \$55,666.
- Several staff members presented at regional NAFSA conferences.
- Laura Moix, Office of Graduate Fellowships and Student Support, was named the Graduate Student Congress staff ally of the year.
- Michael Rau, in the Office of Special Programs, was elected to the Staff Senate.
- We hosted the largest Graduate Research Opportunities Forum ever, in March 2018. We welcomed 12 faculty and administrators from the following minority serving institutions: University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Philander Smith College, Haskell Indian Nations University, Central State University, Johnson C. Smith University, Utah Valley University, North Carolina A&T, University of New Mexico, Jackson State University and Claflin University.
- The *Attracting Intelligent Minds* (AIM) conference was held in February 2018. AIM is a diversity recruitment initiative that is sponsored by the Black Graduate Students’ Association (BGSA) and the Graduate School and International Education (GSIE), with support from select faculty, staff and administrators.
- We hosted more than 200 doctoral fellows, guests and faculty members at the Doctoral Fellows reception in January.
- The Office of Sponsored Students Programs held the annual Welcome Reception with the Chancellor in September for new and continuing SSP students along with their faculty advisors and international educators.
- We honored interdisciplinary faculty at the first-ever recognition reception in April.
- In January 2018, Karl Anderson, Associate Director of International Recruitment, assumed responsibility as the Chairperson for NAFSA Region III.
- The Graduate-Professional Student Congress (GPSC) was selected to host the 2018 national conference of the *National Association of Graduate-Professional Students*. Vicky Hartwell serves as the advisor to the GPSC.
- We created a “You are Welcome Here” video which reached nearly 31,000 people and earned nearly 10,000 reactions on social media upon its initial launch.
- A news article about graduate student Megan Laughlin’s research, written by Amanda Cantu, was circulated across the nation; multiple people contacted Laughlin to learn more about her research and to express their gratitude for her work.
- A news article about graduate student Willy Mulimbi Byamungu, written by Amanda Cantu, reached an international audience when it was promoted by the Fulbright Program across the organization’s communication channels.
- Total Campaign Arkansas fundraising for GSIE/VPRI was \$2,578,058 as of June 30, 2018.

## Graduate School

- Fall 2017 graduate enrollment was 4,161, a 2.7% decrease from the previous year. As a percentage of the total University enrollment, graduate student enrollment decreased from 15.7% in Fall 2016 to 15.1% in Fall 2017.
- Graduate enrollment of under-represented minorities was 18.3% of total domestic graduate enrollment in Fall 2017 compared to 18.6% in Fall 2016.
- In the most recent graduation year (2016-17), we awarded master's degrees to 1,192 students (10 more than last year) and 168 doctoral students (ten fewer than last year).
- Graduate School staff completed 153 thesis and dissertation pre-checks and cleared 1,350 students for degrees.
- There are 261 doctoral fellows and seven SREB state doctoral fellows. Six doctoral fellows also hold NSF graduate fellowships. There are 50 Benjamin Franklin Lever Fellows.
- The Office of Testing Services tested approximately 20,000 students, prospective students, and other clients in 2017 and received a positive rating of 96.4% on 242 responses on the Test Taker Satisfaction Survey.
- Testing Services has partnered with some new companies this year to offer additional tests such as Foundations of Reading, Real Estate, Insurance, etc.
- The Salesforce/Pardot CRM imported 31,967 new leads, sent 165,425 automated emails and recorded 18,950 inquiry form submissions.

## International Education

- In Fall 2017, international students comprised 5.3% of the University's on-schedule enrollment; international graduate students accounted for 17.5% of the total on-schedule graduate population. The enrollment of international graduate students increased over Fall 2016 by 20 students, from 706 to 726, but the population of international undergraduate students decreased from 757 to 730.
- National events influenced the work of the International Students and Scholars office this year. The "travel ban" Executive Order was signed by President Trump in January 2017. The first of these travel bans caused at least 3 Iranian students to be delayed in their arrival to the United States. Extreme vetting for certain non-immigrant visas also caused major delays in visa approvals for students and scholars from India and China. Then the "Hire American, Buy American" Executive Order created a large amount of documentation for every H-1b petition. Hurricanes and earthquakes also created stress among students, especially from Dominica and Mexico.
- 368 students studied at the Rome Center in Fall 2017, Spring 2018 and Summer 2018, producing 3,809 semester credit hours.
- In May, the Custom and Short-Term Programs (CSTP) office was created as a division of the International Students and Scholars office. This office consolidated the Visiting Student Program, Inbound Exchange Students, Summer Research, and Special Programs under the new position of Assistant Director for Custom and Short-Term Programs.
- Participation in International Education Week extended to more academic departments and campus services this year including the Music Department, Chartwells, the School of Art, the College of Education & Health Professions, and many others.
- Two new UA programs in Communication and Journalism began at the Rome Center.
- A total of 88 students actively participated in the International Culture Team (ICT), presenting their culture in at least two events.
- 115 international students and scholars were matched to 102 Friendship Families and individuals from the NW Arkansas region.
- The University of Arkansas welcomed the seventh cohort of 28 PAPSS scholars (from Panama) to campus in August 2017. The total number of scholars enrolled at the U of A in 2017 was 134. The Fall 2017 cumulative GPA for the PAPPS scholars was 3.11.

- In Fall 2017, there were 209 sponsored students.
- 1,125 students had study abroad experiences in 56 countries, a new record; total study abroad enrollment increased by 3% over the previous year.
- We established the Peace Corps Prep Certificate program on campus to make students' applications more viable in the Peace Corp application process.
- 150 students were enrolled in reciprocal exchange programs in 2017-18: 85 outbound and 65 inbound.

#### Interdisciplinary Studies

- Fall 2017 enrollment in interdisciplinary graduate programs was 266, a 3.5% increase over Fall 2016.
- In the 2016-17 graduation year, the Graduate School awarded 28 interdisciplinary master's degrees and 22 interdisciplinary doctoral degrees.
- The Ph.D. program in Cell and Molecular Biology remained the largest Ph.D. program on campus in Fall 2017 enrollments, with 83 students. In fact, for all degree-seeking students, only the master's degree in Operations Management (414 students), the MBA degree (190 students) and the Master of Engineering degree (84 students) enrolled more students.
- Cell and Molecular Biology students and faculty generated \$3,128,905 in continuing grant support, \$6,730,271 in new grant support, 54 peer-reviewed publications, 66 presentations/seminars and 19 honors/awards for current or past graduate students.
- Cell and Molecular Biology and Public Policy underwent program reviews this past year.
- The Public Policy program is the second most diverse doctoral program, with 31.6% minority students (out of total students in the program Fall 2017).
- Larry Roe was named the graduate coordinator for the Space and Planetary sciences graduate program.
- Rick Wise was selected to participate in the 2018 Professional Awareness, Advancement and Development (PAAD) program on campus.
- Microelectronics–photonics students authored/co-authored 67 papers/presentations and had one provisional patent filed in calendar year 2017.
- 62 faculty from 20 departments participated in the Statistics and Analytics program.
- Students/recent graduates in the Space and Planetary Sciences program published five refereed scientific journal articles and presented 29 papers at national or international conferences.
- The quantitative social sciences concentration in Statistics and Analytics presented two well-attended and well-received workshops.
- Students in Statistics and Analytics presented 29 papers at professional conferences and published four peer-reviewed journal articles.
- Students in Public Policy published or had accepted for publication 13 peer-reviewed journal articles and one book. The book, by David Tolliver, was co-authored with Michael Miller, Dean of the College of Education and Health Professions.