This past Wednesday April 1st, graduate students across multiple disciplines participated in the 8th Annual Graduate Student Symposium. Thank you to all students who participated, the university community who helped make the event possible, and our faculty judges who reviewed all of the work. The event was a huge success for all who were involved and I was inspired by the scholarship and creative work done by the graduate students at UNI. I want to personally congratulate our award winners in the poster presentation, oral presentation, and creative performance categories, which are listed below, on their outstanding presentations and performances. This event is a true testament to the quality of our graduate students, faculty, and programs. Visit the Graduate College webpage at www.grad.uni.edu to see the full Symposium program.
Somtochukwu (Stanley) Ebede, originally from Nigeria, is a second-year student pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Leisure, Youth & Human Services with an emphasis on Nonprofit Administration. He is currently seeking his Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP) credential and will receive certification in 2015. Ebede works as a Graduate Assistant in the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Program at the School of Health, Physical Education & Leisure Services. He is also currently working as the Program Development Intern at the Boys & Girls Club located in Waterloo, Iowa. He earned his undergraduate degree in October 2012 in English and Literary Studies from Anamba State University in Nigeria.

As a graduate student, Ebede appreciates the tremendous help and support of Dr. Dwight Watson, Dr. Doris Corbett, Dr. Julianne Gassman and Dr. Christopher Edginton in pursuit of his advanced degree. He stated that UNI provided him many opportunities to attend and make presentations at conferences. His research presentation on “Students’ Perception of Fundraising Though Personal Solicitation” received First Place Graduate Research at the Alliance Management Institute in Jan. 2015. His ultimate professional goal is to promote health and well-being. Following graduation, he aspires to work as a health counselor in an international nonprofit organization. Ebede plans to focus on helping children and youth explore feelings and emotions often related to diet, nutrition, and health, which will reduce confusion and enable them to make positive changes in their lives.

Due to his involvement in different student organizations at UNI, Ebede is busy working on his thesis that focuses on the impact of student organizations on the development of core competencies. He plans to explore what skills are developed via participation and involvement in student organizations. Further, he sees his participation at the 8th Annual Graduate Student Symposium as an opportunity to facilitate new ideas that will contribute to generalizable knowledge. Being far from home, Ebede uses most of his free time to video call his family. In addition, he enjoys playing ping-pong, running, and bowling. His favorite educational quote is “Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, patience and passion to reach for the stars to change the world”- Harriet Tubman.

UNI professor and Associate Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Sciences, Dr. Kavita Dhanwada, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology from the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign in 1986. She went on to earn her Ph.D. in Microbiology/Immunology from Loyola University of Chicago in 1992. From there Dr. Dhanwada became a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Eppley Institute for Cancer Research and then later at the University of Iowa. As a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Iowa, Dr. Dhanwada served as an academic advisor in the Academic Advising Center. During this time, she was also an adjunct Biology instructor at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, before accepting a position at UNI. Dr. Dhanwada said she was attracted to UNI because she wanted to work at an institution where she could not only do research and continue her work in that area but she also wanted a place where she would be able to teach students, especially undergraduate students. She was excited that UNI would give her these opportunity. Dr. Dhanwada currently has two areas of research that she is focused on. The first one being the effects of pesticide exposure on human cells and the second most recently being two projects relating to cancer research in collaboration with colleagues in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at UNI. She explained that in one of the projects they are evaluating the cellular effects of an organic metal compound on human tumor cells to determine if it has the potential to serve as a chemotherapeutic, and in the other project they are analyzing several genes to determine if they can serve as potential biomarkers in the diagnosis of pancreatic cancer.

When talking about her other research she has conducted, Dr. Dhanwada said she continues to work in the area of pesticide research and has focused on how pesticides [chemicals meant to harm pests and weeds] may have effects on cells/organisms they are not supposed to harm. She also continues to analyze several compounds and study the effects on human cell growth and is working to develop a mechanism of action of these compounds in non-target human cells. Dr. Dhanwada explained that she is very excited to continue her work she has been doing here at UNI with undergraduate and graduate students and she feels very fortunate to collaborate with colleagues not only in her department but also with others on and off-campus.
SHANNON MCCLINTOCK-MILLER

Shannon McClintock Miller received her undergraduate degree from UNI in Elementary Education and Art Education in 1994. After graduating, McClintock-Miller used the next 13 years to stay at home and raise her children. She never believed she would become a librarian until a position at the Van Meter Community School district opened her eyes to a new array of possibilities. She would have the chance to work with books and technology in all kinds of creative and fun ways. McClintock-Miller graduated from UNI again in 2010 with a Master of Library Studies degree. The fact that she had previously been the student library assistant in the Youth Collection at the Rod Library for almost three years also helped with her decision to pursue this career path. McClintock-Miller attributes Dr. Lucille Lettow and Dr. Sandy Wilkens for teaching her so much while working in the Rod Library. McClintock-Miller also noted that two professors in particular, Dr. Karla Kruger and Dr. Jean Donham, influenced her in her graduate studies at UNI. She was very grateful for both them and said they made a difference in her life.

When asked about her experience in graduate school, McClintock-Miller explained that the classes she took prepared her for the overall experience. McClintock-Miller said she would encourage graduate students to work on making connections as a graduate student and recommended using Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social networks as they will prove to be valuable to students in many ways. Being a connected educator will also change the lives of your students and you will be able to take down the four walls of the library and let the world in.

After serving as the K-12 District Teacher Library at Van Meter Community School for 8 years, she decided to pursue a career as a consultant in the summer of 2014. McClintock-Miller is currently speaking and consulting all over the country and the world as she is going to Australia and Amsterdam this year. As a consultant for Mackin Educational Resources, Cantata Learning, and other publishing and educational companies, she is also the Executive Director of Library & Educational Services for Biblionasium and the Skype Educational Ambassador. Along with public speaking, McClintock-Miller also enjoys writing on her blog, The Library Voice, several times each week and writes for other forums and journals as well. She is currently working on two books. One for the American Library Association and one for Corwin Press in the Connected Educators Series.

Aside from work, McClintock-Miller enjoys spending time with her family. She has three children, Brianna who is 20, Brady who is 18, and Hagan who is 9. They live in Denver, Colorado now and says they love visiting family back home in Iowa when they get the chance.
GIVING AND RECEIVING WRITING CRITICISM

By Cate Palczewski, Professor of Communication Studies

In order to respond productively to criticism, it helps to understand the intent and function of the criticism. Below, I describe my writing assignments, why I critique writing the way I do, and how to work through criticism you might receive.

I assign progressive papers: a 20-25 page research paper written in multiple 5-page stages. Each stage is folded into the next paper. I use this approach for three reasons.

1. It highlights writing as a process, because I believe a 20-page paper should be written in stages, and not in a single session at the computer.

2. It encourages students to focus on the function of each part of a paper (e.g., introduction, literature review, methods, etc.).

3. It provides an incentive to incorporate my editing; as students move onto the next paper, they have to incorporate edits on the previous one.

When providing edits on a progressive paper, I offer a range of suggestions at each stage. Substantively, I provide edits that I hope help students refine their arguments. I offer alternative wordings, refutations of the claims they advance, or a completely different argument that their evidence might support. I try to offer edits that induce students to think about what, exactly, they want to argue.

Stylistically, I edit grammar, paragraph development, and word choice. My goal with the edits is not to make students write formally, but to encourage them to write with precision and vivacity. I think teachers often default to teaching formality in writing, because it appears to be an easy path to precision, but precision can be achieved without formality and while encouraging each student to develop a unique voice. In terms of vivacity, I encourage students to use active voice wherever possible. I also edit citations and reference format because this can develop attention to detail, a transferable skill for anyone who has to attend to decimal points on a spreadsheet or formatting on a single page flyer.

The end result is a paper that students describe as having been “bled all over.” The paper is covered with marks, comments, questions, additional citations, alternative organizational patterns, etc. So, how should a student process this?

First, students should read comments as professorial love notes. Comments represent the work of a teacher committed to your learning. Editing papers is a way we teach, and professors teach because we love the process of learning. Comments are always encouragements for you to do better and offer pathways for that improvement. You should welcome, rather than fear, the marked-up paper. Students should expect, and demand, that their instructors provide extensive and detailed feedback on papers, not just at the end of the semester, but throughout the semester so that students can improve their writing.

Second, students need not incorporate every edit. If an editor offers a comment that is inconsistent with the argument you are trying to advance, or the style manual you are using, you need not incorporate the edit. Instead, use the edit as an indication that your existing argument is unclear. An edit that takes you away from your main argument is still useful because it points to a place where your writing is leading readers to a conclusion you did not intend. If an editor offers an alternate wording, but you do not like it, use the edit as an inducement to devise yet another way to word your point.

Third, when incorporating edits from multiple sources (professors and peer editors), students should select a main document and transfer all the edits to that single document. Then, begin incorporating the edits into your working draft. By having a single document containing all the edits, you can see where multiple editors have commented on the same passage, compare and contrast the suggestions, and make a final editorial decision. If you do not take time for this consolidation step, you may end up doing, and then undoing, edits.

Fourth, look for patterns in the edits. Are you making the same types of mistakes repeatedly? If so, grab a style manual and read the section about that issue. Then, as you write future drafts, pay special attention to avoiding that error. Patterns that recur include: run-on sentences, passive voice, citation errors, failure to introduce quotations, paragraphs that jump through multiple topics rather than develop a single point, lack of preview paragraphs for major subsections, and thesis sentences that simply name a topic rather than advance an argument.

Ultimately, writing is a process. Writing well takes work, attention to detail, and a willingness and ability to see the various ways to craft a sentence, a paragraph, and a paper. Thus, as a professor, I make choices that I believe will help students improve their writing on a particular paper, as well as their writing processes overall.
The Multicultural Graduate Student Association (MGSA) has been officially reinstated with the goal of offering a support system to multicultural and international graduate students at UNI. The MGSA will assist in providing opportunities that contribute to the professional development of all multicultural students. Programs are designed to support their continued academic, social, and professional excellence.

The MGSA was proud to host its first bi-annual Social Mixer on Jan. 17, 2015. In attendance were Graduate College Dean, Dr. April Chatham-Carpenter, and Dr. John Fritch, Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences. Approximately 20 students were present for an evening of music, food, and friendship. A short presentation was given by MGSA President, Kenneth Reid, Vice President, Robin Summers, and Programming Chair, Lisa Smith. Students mingled and shared stories about their lives as students at UNI.

Additionally, MGSA members and friends attended the Tim Wise lecture together on Feb. 2, 2015 in the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center. Tim Wise is a prominent antiracist writer and educator and speaks about civil rights movement, electoral politics, white privilege, youth/student activism, and concepts of multiculturalism. After the event, many students were able to purchase books, talk personally with Wise and take photographs.

If you are a graduate student, consider joining MGSA. All students are welcome and encouraged to participate. MGSA general council meetings will be held on April 7; April 21; and May 5 at 1pm in the Center for Multicultural Education (CME) conference room. Don’t forget to “Like” the MSGA on Facebook at facebook.com/mgsauni! If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact MGSA at MGSAUNI@gmail.com. We hope to see you soon!
CAREER SPOTLIGHT: THE VIDEO INTERVIEW

Video interviewing is an evaluation tool used by employers in business, education and the non profit sectors in the selection process. Spark Hire is an example of such a tool used to review candidates and eliminate phone interviews with the goal of streamlining the selection process. During your job search, take the time to prepare for a potential video interview especially if you are applying to a job where hiring managers may be looking through upwards of a hundred or more résumés or applications. During your job search, you may be asked to complete a one-way interview in which you pre-record video answers to a company’s specified questions. One-way interviews serve as a pre-screening opportunity to stand out from other candidates and be selected for a face-to-face interview. Live interviews are also possible using Spark Hire. While preparing for your job search, practice potential interview questions using your computer’s webcam and play them back to get a sense of your tone, volume, confidence, and presence.

To learn more about this career spotlight, please visit the following links:
http://jobsearch.about.com/od/jobinterviewtypes/a/videointerv.htm
http://www.quintcareers.com/acing_online_video_interview.html
http://jobsearch.about.com/od/interviewsnetworking/a/videointerview.htm

School Counseling Students Attend Advocacy Event

Stephanie Schulte and Coleen Tanyag, graduate students in the School Counseling program, recently attended the Iowa Association for College Admissions Counseling Visit the Hill Day on Feb. 25, 2015. Held in Des Moines, Iowa, the event includes an opportunity for current and future school counselors to hear about legislation affecting schools and learn to advocate for students. Attendees at the Visit the Hill conference heard from Brad Buck, Director of the Iowa Department of Education. Breakout sessions included information on topics such as student financial aid, advocacy training, bullying legislation, and counseling diverse students. After the morning breakout sessions, both Schulte and Tanyag had the chance to put their advocacy skills into practice at the State Capitol and spoke with senators and representatives about issues facing Iowa students. Schulte said, “I found this experience to be very exciting and I felt that I was really making a difference. Understanding what is going on in the legislature can help us educate those around us and increase awareness of student issues.” Congratulations to both Stephanie and Coleen as they help represent Iowa school counselors!

UPDATE YOUR RESUME AND CV

As a graduate student, keeping your resume or curriculum vitae (CV) updated is important and a resource when applying for internships, practicum experiences, seeking jobs and applying for scholarships or other sources of financial support. The Graduate College offers appointments by phone and in-person to assist you in revising and improving these documents. To make an appointment, call 273-3044 or email your documents to Susie Schwieger, susan.schwieger@uni.edu and she will share comments and individual advice. Post your resume or CV on the Career Services Job Board http://www.uni.edu/careerservices/ to stay connected with employment and internship opportunities.
GRADUATE COLLEGE STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

To submit articles for consideration in the UNI Grad Student News fill out a submission form on our website. With any questions or concerns feel free to contact the Graduate College staff listed below.

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The Graduate College | 110 Lang Hall | (319) 273-2748 | www.grad.uni.edu

Dr. April Chatham-Carpenter
Interim Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Interim Dean of the Graduate College
april.chatham-carpenter@uni.edu

Dr. Shoshanna Coon
Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs
shoshanna.coon@uni.edu

Susie Schwieger
Director of Graduate Student Life
susan.schwieger@uni.edu

Lisa Steimel
Secretary IV, Assistantships and Scholarships
lisa.steimel@uni.edu

Janet Witt
Clerk IV, Thesis and Dissertation Review
janet.witt@uni.edu

Cheryl Nedrow
Secretary II
cheryl.nedrow@uni.edu

Abbie Gacke
Graduate Assistant for Student Publications and Technology
ackeraab@uni.edu

Scotti Hagensick
Graduate Assistant for Online Content
schonsaa@uni.edu

RaeAnn Swanson
Graduate Assistant for Graduate Professional and Community Development
swansraa@uni.edu