

The GSO Can Help!

The newly restructured Graduate Student Organization (GSO) promises to be the voice of graduate students on the ODU campus.

The GSO was founded in 2007 and aimed to meet graduate student needs and establish a sense of solidarity among ODU graduate students. Today, the organization not only seeks to provide a sense of community among busy graduate students, but also provides them with a place to go when school gets too stressful.

“We are your shoulder to lean on,” says Kyonna Withers, the president of the GSO. Withers believes the strength of this organization is its students. “We are students too, and are going

through the same things,” says Withers. The ability to have the opportunity to talk to your peers about graduate school can be helpful.

The GSO students do much more than talk. They provide thesis help and dissertation guidance. The GSO acts as a link to many other graduate organizations that ODU offers. If they cannot help you, they have the contacts of the people on campus who can.

As a graduate student, you can follow the GSO on Twitter (@ODU_GSO) to stay up to date with events and request help. You can also “like” their Facebook page to stay informed.

The GSO meets once a month and all graduate students are encouraged to attend. For more information contact the GSO at their email MonarchGSO@gmail.com.



GSO Executives

Kyonna Withers– President
Pete Sasso- Vice President
Danielle Forest- Secretary
Taia Reid- Secretary
Sherrell Hendrix- Treasurer
Brandon Brown- Public Relations Chair

GSO Meetings:

2/16 Portsmouth Rm.
 3/15 Lynnhaven Rm.
 4/19 U Center Conference Rm.
All meetings are at 11:30 am in Webb Center

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Preparing Future Faculty Program



ODU’s Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program is something many graduate students may have heard about, but not taken full advantage of.

The ODU program is part of a national initiative sponsored by the Council of Graduate Schools and the Association of American Colleges.

PFF uses workshops to provide graduate students with the experience and knowledge necessary to move into an academic career.

Usually, two work shops are held per semester. Previous workshops include: *Ethical Dilemmas in Teaching*, *Grant Writing*, and *Balancing Faculty Responsibilities*. Each of these workshops provides students with the skills needed to build successful academic careers.

Dr. Elaine Justice, Chair of the PFF program steering committee and a professor psychology, believes that all students should be aware of the PFF. It is especially beneficial to graduate students

wishing to pursue a career in academia. Students receive a certificate for completing a certain number of workshops. “The certificate can be valuable on your CV when applying for a teaching position,” says Justice.

Rasika Jayatillake participated in the PFF program and received a certificate in 2011. Jayatillake is currently working on her dissertation and works as a teaching assistant.

“Participation in the PFF program is a way to reflect your commitment to teaching on your resume,” says Jayatillake. She believes that her involvement in the workshops directly prepared her for the challenges she faces as a teaching assistant.

Upcoming PFF Workshops:

“Working with students with disabilities”

- Feb 10: James River Rm.

“The Academic Job Search: Discipline Specific Issues”

- March 23: Potomac York River Rm.

All workshops are in Webb Center from 12 pm -2 pm

Outstanding Faculty Member



Above: Dr. Hentosh at the Biomedical Engineering Society Annual meeting, October 2011

Do you know a faculty member who you think should be highlighted in the Graduate Newsletter? Please send your recommendation to Nicholas Benson at nbenson@odu.edu.

Dr. Patricia Hentosh a professor in the college of Health Sciences, comes from Ohio. She did her undergraduate work in Zoology at Ohio State University. She received her Master's and PhD in both radiation biology and cancer biology from Harvard University School of Public Health.

Dr. Hentosh's research has progressed from investigating how anti-leukemia drugs work on a molecular level, to currently looking at how plant derived products prevent abnormal cell growth. "Our findings are important because they indicate that diets rich in fruits and vegetables likely provide protection against cancer development," says Hentosh.

Although Dr. Hentosh's research is important, it is her relationship with students that makes her an exceptional faculty member. "She truly cares about her student's successes, and helps them through their failures," says Tabetha Sundin who is Dr. Hentosh's advisee. Sundin believes she owes much of her success in graduate school to Dr. Hentosh. "Even though I have worked full-time and have two children under the age of 5, I am completing my PhD in 4 yrs with a 4.0 GPA due to her countless hours of guidance and instruction," says Sundin.

Hentosh credits ODU's fantastic graduate students as well as cooperative faculty members from all colleges for her progress in the field of cancer research. She urges professors in all colleges to help students think "imaginatively, creatively and logically." As for graduate students her advice is simply to work hard. "Work as hard as you can so that you can graduate quickly -- there is little merit in spending seven years in school."

Celebrating Alumni



Kimberly Floyd earned her PhD in Special Education from ODU in 2009. She is currently an assistant professor in the department of Special Education at West Virginia University. Floyd believes her decision to attend ODU truly changed her life for the better. Besides providing her with the ability to put the skills she learned into practice, the faculty was a key factor in her success. "They taught me that kindness and goodness is a virtue, not a weakness and to never

give up," says Floyd. She warns graduate students of the changing landscape in academia. "Positions are highly competitive and often require moving quite a distance." However, Floyd assures graduate students that ODU prepares them for the challenges ahead by creating very well rounded students.

Floyd encourages faculty to mentor students and help them grow into the next generation of leaders. Her advice for students is to "write with a purpose" and allow writing to become a natural part of your life. What Floyd learned in her time as a graduate student is that everyone feels overwhelmed at times, and that's why, when she completed her dissertation, she got a tattoo that just said "Breathe," to remind her it's all she, or anyone needs to do.



LT James Speckhart graduated from ODU in 2005 with his Master's in Environmental Health. When Speckhart decided to pursue a degree in applied public health, ODU's national reputation along with its close proximity to Speckhart's family made it the obvious choice for graduate study. Currently, Speckhart works as an Environmental Health Officer with the US Public Health

Service on assignment to the US Coast Guard. He believes that ODU has prepared him for the challenges he faces every day. "ODU has provided a foundation through quality faculty who are competent in their field of study," says Speckhart

During his time at ODU, Speckhart took every opportunity that came his way. He was a graduate research assistant, he did a summer internship with the Newport News Shipyard, and he was the secretary of the student environmental health club. "Students should constantly be seeking learning opportunities that enable them to formulate an evolving professional vision," he urges.

Speckhart believes that finding the balance between academic responsibilities and your personal life is the key to success in graduate school.

VMASC: How can it help you?

VMASC

The Virginia Modeling Analysis and Simulation Center (VMASC) is a university wide multidisciplinary research center that emphasizes modeling and simulation in research and education. The goals of the simulation center are to support the development of research in modeling and simulation, support the academic programs here at ODU, and support economic development in the Hampton Roads area.

VMASC is one of three similar facilities throughout the country. However, VMASC is the only center in the country that promotes an interdisciplinary approach to modeling and simulation. What this means is that although the development of models and certain

technologies in the center might be done by engineering students, the center can be useful to graduate students in any college who wish to conduct research.

Graduate students at VMASC



worked with the College of Business and Public Administration (CBPA) to model the real-estate foreclosure market. This research went on to win the governor's technology award in 2011 for Cross-Boundary Collaboration in Modeling and Simulation. The project was led by Michael J. Seiler, professor and Robert M.

Stanton Chair of Real Estate and Economic Development in ODU's CBPA, and Andrew J. Collins, research assistant professor with VMASC.

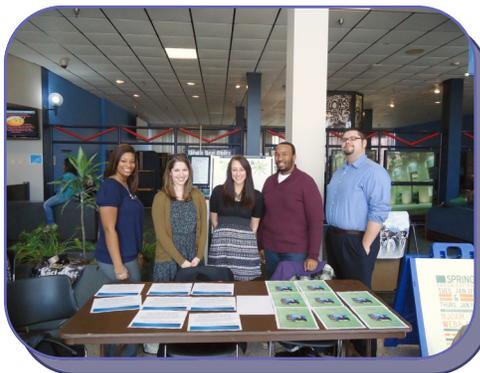
Dr. Sokolowski, the Executive Director of VMASC has been with the project since its inception. He is very proud of the facility's ability to work across disciplines and provide research assistance to many different kinds of students. "There is an increasing need to use technology to train people in different fields," says Sokolowski. "Live training can become expensive and in a constrained fiscal environment the need for simulation will increase."

Also, graduate students can find internship opportunities as well as research positions available through the Old Dominion University Research Foundation. For more information about VMASC please visit their website www.vmasc.odu.edu.



Above: December graduates at the Master's and Doctoral Graduate Reception on Dec. 14th

Graduate Photos



Left: From left to right Kyonna Withers (president) Danielle Forest (secretary) Liz Kociolek (general member) Brandon Brown (PR chair) Pete Sasso (vice president) assist GSO at the spring organization fair on January 17th



Above: Teaching Assistants gather at GTAI Institute on January 5th

Right: Students watch the bio comedian Tim Lee on January 26th, at an event presented by the Graduate Student Organization.





Did You Know?

- **Counseling Services offers a dissertation support group for PhD students at ODU.**
For More information Contact Dr. Frank Kuo (757) 683-4401
- **ODU offers online resources to aid in the academic job search.**
Videos and FAQ's can be accessed here: <http://www.odu.edu/ao/gradstudies/development/pff/arm.shtml>
- **The GSO is holding a fun social event for graduate students.**
@ Buffalo Wild Wings (MacArthur Location) Feb 23 @ 7pm

Feature MFA Work

American Diet

*Who is the devil who came up with dieting?
No one likes celery by itself. It's the white
athletic sock of vegetables. Even peanut
butter only makes it marginally edible.*

*Baked potato chips, baked cheese curls,
low sodium pretzels. Let's just take all the
fun out of living. We're all fat and unhappy,
unhappily eating our Lean Cuisines.*

*Let's run until we redden and pass out
like beached whales on the living room
floor, only to gather enough strength to eat
iceberg lettuce complete with fat-free dress-
ing.*

*The French eat cheese, drink wine, down
macaroons and still barely stretch their boat
neck shirts. Italians are the thinnest in Eu-
rope, even surrounded by pasta, pizza,
gelato.*

*Where have we gone wrong? Why do I see
people driving their cars to their mailboxes?*

*We birthed the diet and never lost the baby
weight, we've murdered the joy of eating
while eating rice cakes from our La-Z-Boys.*



Emily Bonner is a third year poet in the MFA creative writing program. She currently works as a dental assistant and expects to graduate in May 2012.

Get Recognized!

If your graduate department has something you think is worth sharing please send information to the email below. *Graduate News* is here to spread the word about the wonderful things that ODU graduate students and faculty are accomplishing.

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Graduate News is online!
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