

GRAD IN FOCUS



UNIVERSITY of
LOUISIANA
LAFAYETTE

Graduate
School

MARCH 2025

Message from the Dean

DR. MARY FARMER-KAISER

Mardi Gras is a celebration rooted in community—a collective expression of our culture and so much of what we love about it. As Chris Rose so beautifully explains, “It is the harmonic convergence of our food, our music, our creativity, our eccentricity, our neighborhoods, and our joy of living. All at once.”

Community is at the heart of another celebration for UL Lafayette. Our research community—with shared purpose and broad scholarly pursuits—has brought its many strengths into harmony to drive our recent redesignation as a Carnegie R1 institution. Achieving this distinction, which places us again among the top 5% of research universities in the country, was not the result of a single moment or effort, nor the work any one individual. R1 is the result of a dedicated research community, led by our faculty and fueled by graduate education.

At the heart of this achievement are countless collaborations between graduate faculty and graduate students. After all, a thriving research culture isn't just about the results—it's also about cultivating an environment where curiosity, creativity, and perseverance flourish every single day. Creating new knowledge and creative works is a process, and it is in that process that we—as researchers, scholars, and mentors—find meaning, purpose, and, in its own way, a love of life.

So take a moment to celebrate—not only our new R1 milestone, but also the collaborations and community that made it possible. R1 is a reminder that great things happen when people come together, whether it's to dance in the streets or to push the boundaries of our knowledge and creativity.

Dr. MFK



“Mardi Gras is the love of life. It is the harmonic convergence of our food, our music, our creativity, our eccentricity, our neighborhoods, and our joy of living. All at once.”

CHRIS ROSE

Columnist, The Times-Picayune,
and author





Upcoming Events in March

Mondays - Wake Up and Write!

Every Monday morning when the University is open, grad students and faculty write, read, and think at the Alumni Center Board Room from 8:30-10:30 a.m. The Grad School provides coffee, breakfast treats, and quiet. You provide the focus and progress. Parking is easy. No registration is required.

3/4 - A2i+ Career Readiness: Graduate Student to National Lab Scientist:

Join in to hear from an Idaho National Labs scientist who will share about her journey as an international graduate student to national lab scientist. Learn about key career transitions, visas, networking, conferences, and overcoming challenges in STEM. [Register here.](#)

3/6 - Spring Faculty Workshop for Manuscript Submission and Review

Faculty! Join us online on Thursday 3/6 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. to ensure you are up to date on the Guidelines and manuscript submission processes. We'll walk you through final manuscript review and approval procedures and answer questions about best practices for guiding your graduating students through this last step. [Register to get the Zoom link.](#)

3/12 - Spring Student Workshop for Manuscript Submission and Review

Students! Join us online on Wednesday 3/12 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. to hear from our editing team on topics including the Guidelines, formatting, manuscript embargoes, common issues, and the final review and approval process. Whether you're finishing this Spring or just starting, this workshop is for you! [Register to get the Zoom link.](#)

3/13 - University Women's Leadership Conference

This year's conference, themed "Moving Forward Together Women Educating and Inspiring Generations" will be held at the Cajundome Convention Center. Expect a full day of educational breakout sessions, inspirational award presentations, and empowering keynote speakers. [Register here.](#)

3/18 - A2i+ Career Readiness: Career Insights

Join in to hear from a Sandia National Labs scientist with experience in academia, industry, and national labs who will discuss career choices, pros and cons of different sectors, and key factors for grad students and postdocs to consider. [Register here.](#)

3/25 - Money Matters Lunch & Learn: Taxes Planning Strategies

Join us Tuesday, 3/25 for lunch and a talk on your tax reporting responsibilities as a grad student. Learn how to report and pay your 2024 taxes, and discover strategies for saving on taxes now and after graduation, including tips for 2025 planning. [Registration is required.](#)

3/29 - The Big Event with GSO

Grad students have joined the Big Event to do their part for UL Lafayette's largest day of service! We're teaming up with the Graduate Student Organization on Saturday 3/29 to lead an on-campus beautification project with Parish Proud. Register [here.](#)

Most Loved

GRAD PROGRAM



is off and running!

"Having kind and supportive people around makes the journey through graduate school so much easier."



"I truly appreciate the professors for always being available and willing to help."

"Our clinical supervisors offer constructive criticism without shaming us."

"The combination of supportive professors and a strong cohort fosters an atmosphere where everyone can thrive."

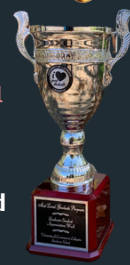
Students, faculty, alumni, and staff, tell us why you love your grad program:

- Post on your social channels using **#ULGradLove2025** and include
- **@ULGradSchool**



- Fill out [this form](#), which sends your thoughts directly to the Grad School

Win a **catered lunch** for your department (students, faculty and staff) and the **traveling trophy!**



Writing Tips & Tools

from Jamie Benner, Ph.D.



The writing challenges you face during your time in graduate school might seem overwhelming, but with determination and support, you can—and will—overcome them. As you begin developing your repertoire of writing strategies, practice drafting writing without inhibition. Drafting freely reduces anxieties associated with writing, allows you to take stock of what you already know, and helps you prioritize the writing process over the final product. At some point, though, you will need to develop a plan.

Mike Rose, author of *Rigid Rules, Inflexible Plans, and the Stifling of Language*, argues that writer's block stems from rigid rules, which he describes as fixed, inflexible ideas about writing that prevent progress. Instead, he suggests, writers should employ flexible and strategic plans.

Here's an example. Let's say you develop an outline with the following rule in mind: "For my work to be successful, my finished product must match my original outline." At best, this rule might somewhat aid your progress. At worst, it will actively inhibit your ability to write. Consider instead: "I will use an outline to organize my thoughts, and I can adjust the outline if it makes sense to do so." In contrast to a rule, this plan provides a course of action that facilitates improvement and growth.

As you work on your next project, examine your toolbox of writing resources—free writes, outlines, reverse outlines, techniques for argumentation, methods for incorporating sources, etc. Ask yourself what rules you've applied to these techniques in the past. Then, transform those rules into plans and watch your writing grow. Looking for more writing tips and tools? As the Grad School's Academic & Writing Support Coordinator, I'm here for you!

RESEARCH COMPETITION

GRAD STUDENT APPRECIATION WEEK



Enter to Win
Deadline
APRIL 1

1st = \$500
in two categories

2nd = \$300
in two categories

3rd = \$200
in two categories



To register and download the rules and guidelines, click [here](#).

You have research and creative works to share! We have cash prizes to share! **It's a win-win!** Now is the time to enter your research, creative works, and projects in the 2025 GSAW Paper and Poster Competitions!



GRAD STUDENT APPRECIATION WEEK

April 6 - 11, 2025

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SUNDAY

DINE LIKE A SCHOLAR: ETIQUETTE DINNER

THE GRAD SCHOOL IS PARTNERING WITH THE OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES & THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FOR THIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENT. ENGAGE WITH FACULTY AND INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS WHILE REFINING CONFERENCE & JOB SEARCH MEAL ETIQUETTE. ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING DINNER, BEGIN AT 6:00 P.M., WITH DOORS OPENING AT 5:30 P.M. IN THE STUDENT UNION BALLROOM. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

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MONDAY

GRAD GAMES & GOOD VIBES + GSAW KEYNOTE SPEAKERS & DOCTORAL CANDIDACY

JOIN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR SOME FUN AT THE ALUMNI CENTER FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M. -- THERE WILL BE FOOD, YARD GAMES, AND GOOD VIBES! HEAD TO THE LITE CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOTS (4:30-6:30 P.M.) FOLLOWED BY THE GSAW KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT 6:00 P.M. AND OUR PINNING OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS WHO HAVE ADVANCED TO CANDIDACY.

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TUESDAY

MONEY MATTERS LUNCH & LEARN: CAREER PLANNING

TRANSITIONING FROM GRAD SCHOOL TO A CAREER INVOLVES KEY FINANCIAL DECISIONS, LIKE SALARY NEGOTIATIONS AND RETIREMENT PLANS. WITH THE HELP OF DR. BRIAN BOLTON, WE'LL HELP YOU NAVIGATE THESE BIG LIFE DECISIONS YOU'RE IN CONTROL OF YOUR FUTURE. REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

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WEDNESDAY

RESEARCH SHOWCASE COMPETITION + A2I INDUSTRY INSIGHTS AT OPPORTUNITY MACHINE

THE RESEARCH SHOWCASE POSTER PRESENTATIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE LIBRARY ON WED. & THURS. AFTERNOON. FROM 6:00-7:30 P.M. ON WED., WE'LL HOST AN ACCELERATE TO INDUSTRY PANEL DOWNTOWN WITH THE OPPORTUNITY MACHINE AND LOCAL STARTUPS. REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

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THURSDAY

RESEARCH SHOWCASE COMPETITION + GRAD GLOW UP: MIND, BODY, NETWORK

START YOUR DAY WITH GRAD GLOW-UP: MIND, BODY, AND NETWORK IN BOURGEOIS HALL FROM 9:00 A.M. TO NOON, FEATURING YOGA, NETWORKING WALKS, AND MESSAGES! IN THE AFTERNOON, MORE GRAD STUDENTS WILL PRESENT RESEARCH POSTERS IN THE RESEARCH SHOWCASE COMPETITION.

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FRIDAY

GSAW AWARDS + SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL WILL ANNOUNCE THE RECIPIENTS OF THE GSAW AWARDS. PLUS 18 GRAD STUDENTS AND 26 FACULTY AND STAFF PRESENTERS WILL SHARE IMPACTFUL--AND BRIEF--PITCHES ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED RESEARCH AT UL LAFAYETTE. TIME AND LOCATION TBA.

Research EXCELLENCE



March 14



1:00 P.M.



LITE Center

The **Research Excellence Awards** will begin at 1:00 P.M. at the LITE Center, where faculty researchers from every college will be honored by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Innovation, & Economic Development. Award categories include: *Research Excellence Award, Rising Star Award, Outstanding Doctoral Student Mentor, Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentor, Outstanding Achievement in Externally Funded Research, and Outstanding Achievement in Innovation.*



Your participation in GSAW activities offers not only opportunities to learn from and with others in the grad education community, but it also contributes to the 2025 Most Loved Grad Program Competition.

Visit the Graduate School website for more info and other GSAW week programming.



Accelerate to Industry™

FOUNDED BY
THE NC STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Last month's A2i event, hosted by the Graduate School at UL Lafayette, featured Georges Antoun, Chief Commercial Officer at First Solar, who shared valuable insights on initiative in career growth.

Antoun gave an overview of First Solar's progress, noting that all manufacturing for U.S. plants is done in the U.S. while international plants serve their respective regions. He emphasized that initiative is essential at every stage of your career—even in graduate programs. Internships, he said, are a great way to enter the workforce, sharing that First Solar hires many interns—including a graduate assistant from our school who landed a full-time job after an internship!

Antoun also offered practical advice for job seekers, stressing the importance of a concise, one-page resume. (HR won't read a long one.) He recommended doing your research, being professional, and always following up. During interviews, be prepared to show your can-do attitude, willingness to learn, and accountability. Lastly, never get too comfortable in a job—there's always room to grow. His mantra: under-promise, over-deliver.

This event kicks off A2i's journey with industry partners to bring valuable programming to help students accelerate to industry. Join us for our next event on **April 9** during Graduate Student Appreciation Week at the **Opportunity Machine downtown from 6:00–7:30 p.m.** We'll focus on Job Search Strategies and how to market yourself within the Lafayette entrepreneurial ecosystem. Register [here](#). We look forward to seeing you there!

Looking Ahead to April

Learn more at

louisiana.edu/graduateschool

4/1 - Manuscript Workshop for Faculty Chairs

4/3 - Manuscript Workshop for Graduate Students

4/6-4/11 - Graduate Student Appreciation Week

4/8 - Money Matters Lunch & Learn: Career Planning

4/10 - Honors Convocation & Academic Excellence Awards

4/22-4/25 - Spring Break



Our Graduate Assistants for the Graduate School, Emily Boone and Courtney DeWeese, recently explored LinkedIn Learning, now available for free to all students, faculty, and staff. Emily took the "Leading Effectively" course to refine her leadership skills, while Courtney delved into "Project Management: Healthcare Projects" to enhance her expertise in healthcare administration. Both courses provide valuable certifications to showcase on your LinkedIn profile and resume.

Ready to level up your skills? Read Emily's blog [here](#) and Courtney's blog [here](#) to learn more.



Grad Education in the News

"Behold: The Administrative Postdoc," Inside Higher Education, 10 February 2025.

"The Healthy Research Teams & Labs Commitment, Executive Summary, and Promising Practices," Council of Graduate Schools, 2025.



Department Contact

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|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Accounting | Cheryl Metrejean, Ph.D |
| • Architecture | Professor Ashlie Latiolas. |
| • Business Administration | Robert Viguier, J.D. |
| • Educational Curriculum Instruction | Natalie Keefer, Ph.D |
| • Kinesiology | Scott Fuller, Ph.D |
| • Nursing | Christy Lenahan, DNP |

If your department does not have a GSO rep, students cannot receive GSO funding.



@ULLafayetteGraduateSchool



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University of Louisiana
at Lafayette Graduate School



Get Outside get Involved

Yoga in the Galleries

March 8 @ 11 AM Hilliard Art Museum

Second Saturday ArtWalk

March 8 @ 5 PM Downtown Lafayette

Louisiana Comic Con

March 8 & 9: All Day Cajundome

Trivia Night @ Moncus Park

March 13 @ 6 PM

Ragin Cajun Baseball vs. Troy

March 15 @ 2 PM - Russo Park

Rhythms on the River

March 27 @ 5 PM River Ranch

Lafayette Holi Festival

March 29 @ 11 PM - Girard Park

Important Dates and Deadlines

3/14 - GSO Funding Deadline

3/19 - Last day to drop or add a class in B-TERM

3/24 - 4/4 - Advising Session for Summer/Fall

4/1 - Deadline to register for the GSAW Research Showcase Paper and Poster Prize Competitions

4/22-4/25 - HOLIDAY: Spring Break

Key Resources for Grad Students

Campus Cupboard supplies free, nonperishable items to meet students' temporary food needs. Location: 210 E. St. Mary Blvd

Career Closet provides students with free, gently used professional clothing items for interviews, career fairs, and other professional networking events. Location: 210 E. St. Mary Blvd

Career Services provides services to students in career planning, development, and job-seeking strategies. Location: Agnes Edwards Hall, Room 104

The Counseling and Testing Center offers free counseling, crisis intervention, and short-term psychotherapy for individuals, couples, and groups. Location: Saucier Wellness Center, OK Allen Hall

The Office of Disability Services establishes eligibility and facilitates services and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Location: Agnes Edwards Hall, Room 126

The Statistical Consulting Center provides statistical support to UL Lafayette graduate students and faculty for research involving statistical methods. Location: 432 Maxim Doucet Hall

Graduate Student Organization and **Student Government Association** advocate for all graduate students and offer funding to help offset the cost of research and travel. Locations: gso.louisiana.edu and sga.louisiana.edu

The Writing Lab (formerly The Writing Center) offers a writing community for students and faculty with a comfortable space where writers work with other writers. Visit to discuss writing, receive feedback and help, and take advantage of tutoring services. Location: Dupré Library First Floor