

GRAD IN FOCUS

OCTOBER 2025



UNIVERSITY of
LOUISIANA
L A F A Y E T T E

**Graduate
School**

Message from the Dean

MARY FARMER-KAISER, PH.D.

I'm writing today's message from an airport after a week of powerful moments with students, community partners, faculty, and other higher ed leaders committed to graduate education. In each, I've been reminded that while timing matters, meaningful innovation also demands courage: the courage to act, to engage deeply, and to stay grounded in our values—even in times of uncertainty.

That theme was especially present at last week's Accelerate to Industry (A2i+) event, co-hosted with Opportunity Machine, where grad students heard from Grant Schexnaider (Empath Legal), Prabhakar Vemavarapu (RXMedix), and Bob Miller (IR Games). These entrepreneurs shared how they transformed ideas through research, discipline, and principled action. The common thread? A relentless willingness to test, learn, and build—what Destin Ortego described as stacking the evidence “until you know your idea can stand on its own.” Innovation emerges when ideas are grounded in learning and moved forward with purpose.

That theme carried into another space: the 2025 Global Summit on AI in Graduate Education, hosted by the Council of Graduate Schools. There, I joined 35 grad education leaders from around the world to explore how AI is reshaping pedagogy, research, and training—without replacing the human intelligence, engagement, and action at the heart of what we do and why we do it.

Our discussions were rich. They centered on supporting grad students as both creators and users of AI tools, avoiding skill erosion, cognitive offloading, and intellectual homogeneity, and anchoring innovation in values that cross borders, disciplines, and institutions.

Across contexts, consensus emerged around some core principles: academic integrity and ethical awareness, accountability and authorship, disclosure and transparency, equity and access, trust between students and faculty, and more. AI may change how we teach and learn but not—we agreed—the expectations or responsibilities of graduate education. It is a tool to be used with discernment, not deference.

As Aleksandra Kanjua Mrčela (Univ. of Ljubljana) put it, we must “engage with both the ethical implications and the practical opportunities of innovation.” And Joshua Barker (Univ. of Toronto) grounded us beautifully in continuity and shared values, reminding us that we do so because “we exist to serve the public good... we value collegial governance and scholarly peer review... we educate.”

In the days ahead, I'll be with Louisiana graduate education leaders and also part of ongoing campus conversations about our University's fiscal health. I know that these moments will be similarly grounded in purpose and focused on you.

Wishing you spaces filled with purpose and a shared commitment to meaningful human-centered innovation, and some courage too.

Dr. MFK

“Speed of
learning and
executing
on solid ideas
is critical.”

DESTIN ORTEGO

Executive Director
Opportunity Machine





Upcoming Events

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, support from our editors, and quiet. You provide the focus and progress. Parking is easy. No registration is required.

10/7 - A2i+ Career Insights: Using Professional Development to Strengthen Immigration Portfolios



This virtual workshop, hosted from 1-2 p.m. for international scholars covers what an immigration portfolio is, the key documents needed, and professional development opportunities that meet immigration criteria. Learn strategies to organize and showcase experiences that strengthen future applications. Registration Required.

10/7 - 3MT® Information Session

Get all the details for this year's Three Minute Thesis® Competition in Moody 103 at noon. We'll provide lunch and go over all the basics, including competition rules, tips, and strategies. Advance registration is required.

10/9 - Money Matters: Entrepreneurship

Join us for lunch and a Money Matters conversation with Dean Brian Bolton and Jonathan Shirley (LEED Center) focused on cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. in FG Mouton Room 207, and the discussion starts at noon. Advance registration is required.

10/9 & 10/22- Manuscript Workshop For Students

Join us online from 10-11 a.m. on October 9 or 12-1 p.m. on the October 22 for an intro to what to expect and how to prepare when submitting your defended manuscript to the Grad School for review and final approval. Register for the 9th, Register for the 22nd.

10/15 - 3MT® Virtual Information Session

Get all the details for this year's Three Minute Thesis Competition in our virtual zoom information session. We'll go over all the basics, including competition rules, tips, and strategies. Registration is required to obtain the zoom link.

10/31 - A2i+ Career Insights: How I Got Every Job I Really Wanted



Breaking into industry isn't luck—it's strategy. See how a recent grad used curiosity, intentionality, and a willingness to learn to land every job she wanted. 11-12:30 p.m. Registration required.

10/30 - 3MT® Workshop

Join us online at 3 p.m. for a virtual workshop about the 3MT® Competition! We'll focus on tips and strategies to help you refine and perfect your presentation. Whether you're a first-time competitor or a 3MT® veteran, you're welcome to join. Register here.

World Mental HEALTH DAY



Caring Across Cultures: A Mental Wellness Gathering for Our International Students and Scholars



Friday
October 10
11 am - 12 pm



Global Engagement
Office, Student
Union, Room 136



Dr. Ismatara Reena
(Assistant Professor in
the School of Kinesiology
Reem Ahmed (Graduate
Student in Counseling)

live
HEALTHY

Writing Tips & Tools

with Jamie Benner, Ph.D.



In our September newsletter, we introduced new **Graduate School** guidance on the use of **generative artificial intelligence (GAI)** in graduate research.

We are a Carnegie R1 institution responsible for preparing the next generation of researchers. Our guidance emphasizes **transparency, faculty involvement, and ethical awareness**, acknowledging that these tools are built on data that raise concerns about **authorial consent, intellectual property, and academic integrity**.

As GAI becomes increasingly embedded in our academic landscape, both institutions and individuals share responsibility for upholding these standards. To that end, the **university has developed additional guidance on responsible GAI use from the classroom to the social media sphere**.

For those who teach, the Division of **Academic Affairs provides Guidance on Generative Artificial Intelligence in the Classroom**, outlining scope, purpose, and practical resources for instructors.

The **Office of Distance Learning offers AI Tools & Use**, covering the basics of teaching with AI in digital environments and strategies for both encouraging and limiting its use.

The **Office of Communications and Marketing has created Artificial Intelligence Guidelines**, which include guiding principles and examples of acceptable and prohibited uses for AI in communication. The first principle states: *"We believe in the transformative power of AI—and that it can only reach its full potential when it is paired with human expertise and ingenuity."*

For all its potential, **GAI cannot replicate human creativity, insight, or discernment**. That's where you come in.



Ragin' Cajun Writing Collaborative

The Ragin' Cajun Writing Collaborative (RCWC), created through funding from the Louisiana Board of Regents grant, will be opening soon! The goals of this project include developing and facilitating writing workshops for graduate and undergraduate students on various writing-related topics. We want to hear from you! Take a moment to [fill out this survey](#). The results of this survey will be used to design workshops to best fit your needs. Thank you in advance, and we look forward to hearing your input!



Click or Scan



The Three Minute Thesis (3MT®) competition challenges you to present research in just three minutes, using only one static slide. The goal is to communicate complex ideas clearly and engagingly to a general audience, explaining the significance and impact of your work. It encourages creative, concise, accessible communication.

Upcoming 3MT® Information Sessions are included page 2!

Learn the What, When, Where, Why & How!

Watch last year's presentations!



Our 2024-2025 Winners

- **Cash prizes** are awarded
- UL Lafayette winner **advances to the regional 3MT® competition** at the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools annual meeting in February 2026
- Regional winner **advances to the national 3MT® showcase** at the Council of Graduate Schools meeting in December 2026

Looking Ahead to November

Learn more and register at louisiana.edu/graduateschool

11/12 & 11/13 - 3MT® Prelims

11/6 - Manuscript Workshop

11/18 - F-1 Visa Essentials: Staying Compliant & Planning Ahead

11/19 - Money Matters

11/27 & 28 - Thanksgiving Break

✨ New Blog Series for Grad Students by Grad Students!

The Graduate School has several **rock-star doctoral students who are part of as our--or, really, your--manuscript success team**, and they have published **four brand-new blogs** inspired by breakout sessions from the Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship Orientation. Whether you're a **student or a graduate assistant**, these blogs offer **valuable insights and takeaways** worth your time. Check them out!

- [Managing Anxiety as both Grad Student and Grad Assistant](#)
- [Finding Our Footing in the Classroom: Lessons on Teaching and Engagement](#)
- [Building a Culture of Research and Integrity at UL Lafayette](#)
- [Supporting Accessible Classrooms](#)



Dupré Library Deep Dive Series

*Discover hidden treasures in new resources and databases
with Dupré Library faculty*



Explore Special Collections' new
interface allowing for easier
discovery of archival materials.

Archive Space
Oct 22nd
12 PM

Register
Now!

Dive into Dupre Library's new
streaming database
specializing in video content
for research and instruction.

Films on Demand
Nov 19th
12 PM

#ULGradGoodNews

Ph.D. Student Selected for Prestigious Residency in Montréal



Jonathan J. Mayers, a Ph.D. student in Francophone Studies and University Doctoral Fellow, has been chosen to take part in Résidences croisées 2025 — a month-long literary residency exchange between Lafayette, Louisiana, and Montréal, Québec.

The program is supported by le Salon du livre de Montréal, CODOFIL, le Conseil des arts à Montréal, le Centre de la francophonie des Amériques, the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, and la Fondation Louisiane.

This fall, Mayers will connect with Franco-Ontarian author Marie Demers, who will spend October in Lafayette during Festivals Acadiens et Créoles. In November, Mayers will represent Louisiana in Montréal, participating in the renowned Salon du livre de Montréal. While in residence, he plans to create new works in both French and Kouri-Vini — Louisiana's endangered Creole language — and share his writing through readings and presentations. Well done, Jonathan!

Grad Education in the News

"Completely shattered.' Changes to NSF's
graduate student fellowship spur outcry."
Science, 25 September 2025.

"How to Convince More Readers That Your
Ideas Matter," Chronicle of Higher
Education, 10 July 2025.

"Higher Ed's H-1B Visas in 4 Charts,"
Inside Higher Education,
29 September 2025.



**Your stories inspire us,
so don't hold back.**

Hey awesome grad students!
From new knowledge and
creative projects to exciting
opportunities, we want to hear
your good news. Ph.D. student
Jonathan Mayers shared his —
now it's your turn.
Tell Us Something Good!

**Share the good, and let's
celebrate together!**

Use
<https://bit.ly/ULGradGoodNews>
to tell us something good!



@ULLafayetteGraduateSchool



@ULGradSchool



@ULGradSchool

University of Louisiana
at Lafayette Graduate School



Get Outside get Involved

Downtown Alive!

October 3 @ Downtown Lafayette

Latin Music Festival

October 3-4 @ 200 Garfield St. Downtown

Yoga in the Park

October 10 @ Moncus Park

Festivals Acadiens

October 10 - 12 @ Girard Park

Language Cafe

October 16 @ Moncus Park

Bach Lunch

October 17 @ Downtown Lafayette

Acadiana Eats Festival

October 26 @ Downtown Scott

Important Dates and Deadlines

10/2 & 10/3: Holiday-Fall Break

10/27-11/7: Advising for the Spring Semester

10/29: Debt holds added to accounts with outstanding balances

10/30 - Academic Resources Trick or Treat

11/10 - Registration begins for Winter intersession



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

Uwill Student Mental Health & Wellness offers free immediate access to teletherapy. Help is available 24/7/365. Scan the QR code to get started using your UL email.



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

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 Shopper Shuttle runs on Friday afternoons on the hour from 2-7pm from campus to Walmart. Location: Catch the shuttle at the Union or Cajun Village

The Writing Lab 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