

# GRAD IN FOCUS



UNIVERSITY of  
**LOUISIANA**  
LAFAYETTE\*

Graduate  
School

NOVEMBER 2023



## Message from the Dean

DR. MARY FARMER-KAISER

Along with some stellar grad students and faculty, I spent time last week at the SREB Institute on Teaching and Mentoring. It is a meeting and experience that refuels me.

Stephen Pruitt, president of the Southern Regional Education Board, quoted part of the poem "Our Deepest Fear" at the conference. While I have included an excerpt to the right here, take time to google it.

As I listened in this moment, and throughout the conference, I reflected much on the promise and power of our grad students, faculty, and the work that they have undertaken. Each of you has a purpose—your why—that led you to grad school, to research, and/or to teaching. That purpose is powerful. And it's easy to lose sight of that purpose, especially at this time of the semester. We're buried in the hard work that is grad school. We worry about not meeting expectations—both our own and those that others have of us. And, yes, we may even be frightened as we consider what happens next when we meet (or exceed) those big expectations.

But, oh my, it's time to dig deep and remember your why. Let go of whatever is holding you back and take the step forward. Let your light shine bright—and liberate others to do the same.

Dr. MFK



"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness That most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?" Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the World....

And as we let our own Light shine, We unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we're liberated from our own fear, Our presence automatically liberates others."

OUR DEEPEST FEAR  
Marianne Williamson





# Upcoming Events in November

## **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 the coffee, breakfast treats, and quiet. You provide the focus and progress. Parking is easy. No registration is required.

## **11/1 - 3MT® Workshop**

Join us online at 3 p.m. for a virtual info session to learn more about the 3MT® Competition and how you can participate! We'll quickly cover the rules, prizes, and competition dates then turn our attention to a deep dive into tips and strategies for d and refining your presentation. First-time competitors, 3MT® veterans, and those still considering whether to participate are welcome. Register in advance on the Grad School website to get the Zoom link.

## **11/2 - Spill the Beans with David Squires and Beth Stauffer**

Join us at Réve Coffee Lab (downtown) at 3 p.m. for a cup of coffee (on us!) and conversation with inspiring people in our grad education community. Each month we invite a new special guest. No presentation, only open dialogue. Hear their story and ask questions as they "spill the beans" about how they got their start, why they love what they do, how they stay focused and inspired, and much more. This month will introduce you to two inspiring guests, Dr. David Squires (ENGL) and Dr. Beth Stauffer (BIOL). What a treat! No registration is required.

## **11/6 - Lunch and Learn: First-Gen Grad Students**

Dean Farmer-Kaiser will lead a conversation about what it's like being a first-generation grad student. Taking place in Moody 103A at 12:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Register [here](#).

## **11/8 - Manuscript Workshop for Students**

Join us online from 10-11 a.m. for an intro to what to expect and how to prepare when submitting your defended manuscript to the Grad School for final review and approval. Register in advance to get the Zoom link.

## **11/15 - Money Matters: Side Hustles**

Join us for lunch and a Money Matters conversation with Dr. Brian Bolton focused on the unique financial situations that entrepreneurs frequently face. If you are an artist, a musician, a hobbyist, a consultant, an advisor, or a master of the side hustle, you are an entrepreneur and you'll want to be in Griffin Hall 315 for our conversation at 12-1:30 p.m. (we'll start lunch at 11:30). [Advance registration required.](#)

## **11/21 & 11/22 - 3MT Prelims**

The preliminary rounds of our 3MT® competition will take place on Tuesday 11/21 (2-3 p.m.) and Wednesday 11/22 (12-1 p.m.) in Moody 103. Plan to come and cheer on the grad students who have accepted the challenge. Grad faculty, if you're interested in being a judge, let Dr. Philip de Mahy in the Grad School know!

## **11/28 - Money Matters: Career**

Our last Money Matters event of the semester will be about how your academic, professional, and financial goals fit together in grad school. Join us in Griffin Hall 315 for lunch starting at 11:30 and conversation from 12:00-1:00p.m. [Advance registration required.](#)



The Three Minute Thesis® competition celebrates the exciting research being done at UL Lafayette by grad students.

## *THE CHALLENGE?*

Explain your research in **three minutes** (or less), in a way appropriate for a **non-specialist audience** with only **one static slide**

Learn more at the last info session on Nov. 1 and then get ready to compete in the preliminary rounds of competition on Nov. 21-22. Finals will be when we come back in January!

# October Events

# R E C A P



While we'd love to see you at our events, we know that sometimes it's just not possible to attend. Here's a little recap to share some of the good.

## Spill the Beans with Dr. Davide Oppo

Last month's 'Spill the Beans' at Rêve Coffee Lab introduced Dr. Davide Oppo to a great group of students. Dr. Oppo, the Pioneer Production Endowed Professor of Geology, is the recipient of the 2023 AAPG Foundation Inspirational Geosciences Educator Award, and we got to learn firsthand what moved Gracie Babineaux, a PhD student in the Earth and Energy Sciences program, to nominate him for this recognition that honors faculty who have "creatively and with excellence inspired their geoscience students." Dr. Oppo shared stories about his professional journey that began in Italy, took him to Ireland, and ultimately landed him in Louisiana. Perhaps to no one's surprise, he listened intently to students' questions and provided meaningful, candid answers. We left inspired! Dr. Oppo, thank you for embracing the opportunity to help us foster, in your words, "a stronger connection between faculty and students, creating a more inclusive and engaging academic environment."



## Money Matters: Roth IRAs

This workshop brought together graduate students for a discussion on the intersection of financial, family, and career plans. Led by Dr. Brian Bolton, Professor of Finance, the workshop spent time on Roth IRA accounts and their role in long-term financial planning. Attendees learned about risk assessment, investment strategies, account setup, and key investment principles. Looking to kick start your retirement savings journey as a grad student? Check out Chapter 5 of Personal Financial Planning for Grad Students workbook on Dr. Bolton's website at <https://business.louisiana.edu/financeispersonal>.

## Charting Our Vision Together: Graduate School Alumni Chapter Kickoff

The mission is simple. We want to foster a vibrant, connected community of Grad School alumni who come together to support one another, our graduate education community, and the next generation of graduate students at UL Lafayette. But how do we do it? On October 19, you helped us start to envision how his new community could take shape. We received great ideas at this Homecoming event that had everyone charting individual and collective visions together. And 2023 Homecoming Queen Faryal Atif is all in! But we'd still love to hear from you! What would a grad alumni chapter look like to you? Drop us an email to tell us what you think!





Thank you to our sponsors!

- Super 1 Food
- Planet VR
- Ragin Nutrition
- Sundays Soda Fountain
- Louisiana Crawfish Time
- Raising Canes
- Acadiana Gelsoft
- Whiskey & Vine
- Bon Temps Grill
- Kart Ranch
- Cabelo Salon
- Sky Zone
- Tropical Smoothie Cafe
- Ragin Cajun Athletics
- Saketini Sushi
- Oakbourne Country Club



The return of **Grad Bingo Night** was a big success, with an abundance of **prizes, pizza, and eager participants**. The auditorium in Griffin Hall never looked so good! Thank you to everyone who placed their trust in us to deliver an **enjoyable Friday evening during Homecoming!**



Winners



Participants



Campus Diversity

James Jackson Community of Scholars



University of LOUISIANA LA FAYETTE

Graduate School



Guest Callers



## BREAKING NEWS

# GSO



Special thanks to all members of the UL Lafayette graduate student body who submitted applications to join the GSO Executive Board as our Public Relations Officer. After careful deliberation and meeting with multiple finalists, we are excited to share that Tessa Rock (BIOL) is our new GSO PR Officer. To note, our PR Officer oversees our communications with everyone in the graduate student body, so be prepared to see her handiwork very soon! We cannot wait to see the great work she has in store! --Clement Okolo, GSO President



## There are still some GSO vacancies!

- Accounting
- Chemistry
- Counselor Education
- Educational Curriculum & Instruction

Any graduate student can start the process of joining the GSO as their department's representative by reaching out to their graduate coordinator.

Come join us and be a part of making UL Lafayette better for all grad students!



Both the Graduate Student Organization and the Student Government Association serve graduate students in important ways.

- Funding
- Advocacy
- Awareness
- Finding and Navigating Institutional Support

Learn more about GSO at [gso.louisiana.edu](http://gso.louisiana.edu)  
Learn more about SGA at [sga.louisiana.edu](http://sga.louisiana.edu)



Pictured from left to right: Mynmayh Khamvongsa, Darian Cheramie, Grayson Stepanek, and Andre Pittman

## BREAKING NEWS

# SGA



“My fellow grad students, I’m so excited to lead this next year as your SGA Graduate College President! This is the first time in YEARS that all of our Graduate College positions have been filled, and my amazing senators and I are so excited to get to work. We’ll be working with Dean Farmer-Kaiser, Dr. de Mahy, and other University administrators, faculty and staff to better the UL Lafayette experience for ALL graduate students and will be focused on four major pillars, affectionately called GRAD: Growth, Resources, Accessibility, and Diversity. If you need funding, advocacy for a grievance, or anything else pertaining to your graduate school experience, please let one of us know! We are here for you.” --Grayson Stepanek, SGA President

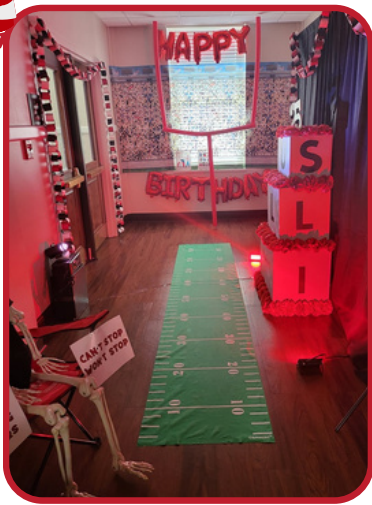
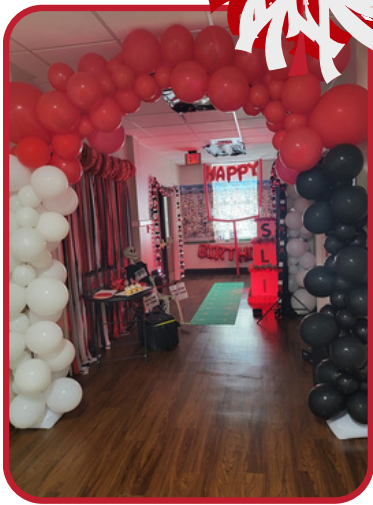
### SGA Graduate College Contact Information

-Grayson Stepanek (MBA), President:  
[grayson.stepanek1@louisiana.edu](mailto:grayson.stepanek1@louisiana.edu)  
-Andre Pittman (MBA), Senator:  
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-Darian Cheramie (MBA), Senator:  
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-Mynmayh Khamvongsa (ENGR.), Senator:  
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cheers to  125 Years!



WINNER



# Looking Ahead to December

- 12/1 - Last day of classes!
- 12/4-12/8 - Final Exam Week
- 12/11 - Grades Due
- 12/14 - Doctoral Hooding Ceremony
- 12/15 & 12/16 - Fall Commencement Ceremonies

The Grad School totally rocked the Homecoming Door Decorating contest in the dynamic category, and oh boy, we're on cloud nine! Teamwork made the dream work, and we're now proud owners of THE 1st place certificate. 🏆 How did we pull it off, you ask?

Well, it involved countless store runs, mountains of streamers and pom-poms, a handmade cake that was a labor of love, enough balloons to lift us off the ground, tape for days, letters that practically danced, a dedicated and very stylish skeleton, red lights, a touch of fog for that extra flair, a 'Find the Dean' wall that had everyone guessing, cupcakes to satisfy our sweet tooth, and awesome grad school swag. Our door was the true definition of dynamism, and our hearts are bursting with pride. What a journey, and what a sweet victory it turned out to be!





## #ULGradGoodNews

Katarina Brankovic (Ph.D. candidate in Francophone Studies) recently organized a month-long Disability Awareness Exhibition at the Dupre Library. Get the full story [here](#).

We want to know about your #ULGradGoodNews too! Share your recent accomplishments, cool projects, moments of inspiration, or the outstanding work of your colleagues and mentors.

Your stories inspire us, so don't hold back. Share the good, and let's celebrate together! Go to [gradschool.louisiana.edu/GoodNews](https://gradschool.louisiana.edu/GoodNews) to tell us something good!



It's almost time to celebrate our graduates and their incredible effort and perseverance. Commencement is coming!

### Thursday, December 14

Doctoral Hooding Ceremony

### Friday, December 15

- B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration
- College of Nursing & Health Sciences
- College of Engineering
- College of the Arts

### Saturday, December 16

- College of Liberal Arts
- University College
- Ray P. Authement
- College of Sciences
- College of Education & Human Development

## Grad Education in the News

"Writing Retreats Through a Professional Development Lens," Inside Higher Education, 23 October 2023.

"7 Ways to Fix Ph.D. Advising on the Job Market" Chronicle of Higher Education, 16 October 2023.

Your  
LOW RISK  
way to  
learn how  
to build a  
startup  
with HIGH  
REWARDS.



LAUNCH  
WEEKEND

November 3 - 5, 2023

Lafayette, LA

Opportunity Machine

Learn more or register at [bit.ly/LaunchWeekend2023](https://bit.ly/LaunchWeekend2023)

Looking to dip your toes into the world of startups without the risk of actually creating a startup? **Launch Weekend** is the perfect opportunity to experience what it's like to build a startup with no risk, and the potential for high rewards!

- Here's what you'll get out of Launch Weekend:**
- Practical, hands-on experience validating & pitching startup ideas
  - Opportunities to expand your network by meeting business mentors, successful entrepreneurs, & other startup enthusiasts
  - A chance to win up to \$5,000 in cash prizes with your final pitch

Go to <https://opportunitymachine.org/events/launch-weekend/> to register for the ultimate startup learning experience.

**Students receive FREE registration using code ULStudent!**





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University of Louisiana  
at Lafayette Graduate School

give  
and be  
thankful



🍌 Join the UL Lafayette  
**Campus Cupboard Thanks for Giving Food Drive** this November! Help support students, faculty, and staff by placing a donation box in your office. **Add an item each day**, then deliver it to the Campus Cupboard between December 5th and 7th. See the list of **needed supplies here**. Your small contribution can make a **BIG DIFFERENCE!**

## Important Dates and Deadlines

11/8 - College of Education & Human Development 125th Anniversary Academic Lecture at 4:30 p.m. at the LITE Center



11/13 - Last day to submit DEFENDED theses/dissertations for Grad School review and final approval

11/23-11/24 - Thanksgiving Holiday

11/27 - Last day to submit FINAL theses/dissertations/synthesis projects. Last day to complete graduate written and/or oral examinations.

## 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

**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: [go.louisiana.edu](http://go.louisiana.edu) and [sga.louisiana.edu](http://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