Chancellor Robert Barish that opens with: The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) is dedicated to the education of all of its students regardless of citizenship, immigration status, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or national origin. UIC is dedicated to and proud of its diversity and its history of successfully creating educational opportunities for first-generation and immigrant students. We will always hold true to our core mission of serving our students, staff and scholars in an environment that embraces our differences and utilizes them to make a positive impact on our community and our world. The entire statement and a summary of resources dedicated to supporting our most vulnerable students can be found here.

Graduate Student Services and New Course Offerings

One of my primary goals as dean has been to provide UIC graduate students with ample opportunities to develop and refine the skills they require to be successful in graduate school and in their future careers. In this issue, I remind readers of the implementation of the Professional Success Program (page 4) and I am pleased to announce both the annual Graduate Student Appreciation Week and the university’s first Three-Minute Thesis competition, which encourages graduate students to communicate the essence of their scholarly work to a diverse audience (see page 3). These events are spearheaded by Theresa Christenson-Caballero, Director of Graduate Student Professional & Career Development.

The Graduate College is also home to a new certificate, “Foundations of College Instruction,” that was created by Dr. John Coumbelley, and now is being taught in conjunction with Dr. Tanya Prewitt-White, (both from the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition). The courses that comprise this certificate provide graduate students with both didactic and practical training in college level teaching, as well as insight into the best practices of UIC faculty. (See page 2.)

Meanwhile, the Graduate College continues to meet rising and varied demand for courses. To help students who struggle with the basics of writing, the Graduate College has created GC 512 “Written Communication and Presentation Skills” that will be expanding to include sections for both STEM and non-STEM students. The International Teaching Assistant program, directed by Vandana Loomba Loebele, has created a new course, GC 509 “Advanced Pronunciation for International Teaching Assistants,” which will be offered this summer (page 2). Furthermore, Cindy Klein-Banai, Associate Chancel-lor for Sustainability, and Tom Theis, Director of the Institute for Environmental Science and Policy, have created and are currently offering a new course GC 550 “Principles of Sustainability” (ibid.).

Celebrations

Later this fall, the Image of Research competition will celebrate a decade of showcasing still and moving images that depict the amazing research of our graduate students. Graduate students in museum studies have also demonstrated their scholarly innovation by creating and producing a new journal entitled Field Museums (see page 7). In this issue we also celebrate the life of a wonderful scientist, mentor, and human being, Dr. David E. Featherstone, who was taken from us too soon (see page 8).

Final Request

With the state budget crisis and likely cuts to any future funding to the university, our graduate students need help more than ever to fund their education. With this in mind, we continue to think about how we can increase the impact of our awards and fellowships while also seeking external funding. (See page 5.)

This past fall, the Graduate College participated in #Giving Tuesday and sent out its first annual fundraising letter followed by a request connected to our Summer Research Opportunities Program. I personally matched many of those gifts dollar for dollar. I encourage you, too, to support graduate student fellowships and career development.

Happy Spring!

Karen J. Colley
Dean and Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics

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New GC Course: Principles of Sustainability

The Graduate College and the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee of the Chancellor’s Committee on Sustainability and Energy are pleased to announce a new graduate course entitled Principles of Sustainability (GC 550).

GC 550: Principles of Sustainability (3 credit hours)
Target audience: All UIC graduate students

The three-credit-hour elective debuted this term and will be offered annually in the spring. Developed and co-taught by Dr. Cindy Klein-Banai, associate chancellor for sustainability, and Dr. Thomas Theis, director of the Institute for Environmental Science and Policy, GC 550 is open to all students with graduate standing at UIC.

The course aims to provide a common foundation for students who wish to understand the basis of sustainable systems, who seek to incorporate sustainability into their scholarly pursuits, or who require an elective to round out their graduate coursework. This multidisciplinary course examines the three pillars of sustainability: economic development, social drivers, and environmental and human health.

More information about the course, including a weekly outline, can be found at http://grad.uic.edu/principles-sustainability.

Campus Certificate Focuses on College Instruction

Institutions of higher education increasingly demand evidence of the ability to teach at the college level. Meanwhile, graduates of PhD programs face an increasingly competitive job market for positions on and off the tenure track. And yet, the majority of tenured and tenure-track professors state that they never received formal training, while in graduate school, on how to teach at the college level.

Spearheaded by Dr. John Coumbe-Lilley, clinical associate professor of kinesiology and nutrition, and assisted by Dr. Tanya Prewitt-White, visiting clinical assistant professor of kinesiology, the Graduate College’s post-baccalaureate campus certificate, entitled Foundations of College Instruction (CFCI), seeks to fill this gap in training.

The three-course sequence is designed to raise student awareness of the roles, responsibilities, practices, and possibilities of college teaching.

For a full overview, please visit our website. Application procedures can be found by clicking here.

ITA Adds New Course

The International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Program in the UIC Graduate College continues to uphold the State of Illinois Bill 1516 by meeting the English Oral Proficiency certification standards for all International Teaching Assistants (ITAs) that are providing instruction at UIC. The ITA Program largely does this in two ways:

- conducting oral proficiency assessments for current and prospective ITAs, and
- offering classes to help students improve their oral communication.

ITA staff members have completed 200 oral proficiency assessments this academic year and will begin testing again this summer. We have seen a sizeable increase in the number of departments participating this year, thereby increasing compliance across both East and West campuses, and we are excited to push for more compliance throughout the next year. For more information about the oral proficiency assessment, please see the OCI section of our website.

The program currently offers two courses: GC 510 Communication and Teaching Methods for International Teaching Assistants and GC 511 Communication and Interaction Skills for ITAs. While GC 510 focuses on ITAs’ clear communication in the classroom, GC 511 is a content-oriented course focusing on developing students’ academic discussion and interaction skills. Both three-credit-hour courses emphasize experiential learning by having students conduct teaching demonstrations and engage in real-time academic discussions. For more detailed information on these courses, please see GC 510 and GC 511 on the Graduate College’s website or the online course catalog.

This summer, we are pleased to offer a new course: GC 509 Advanced Pronunciation for International Teaching Assistants. It is designed for current or prospective international teaching assistants who want to improve their English pronunciation. Students will work on making their pronunciation of American English more understandable by practicing individual sounds (like vowels and consonants) and sounds within sentences (like rhythm and intonation). Students will engage in interactive lessons and receive feedback from instructors and peers. The course can be taken (and repeated) for one or two credit hours. More information will be available on our website in May.

Post-Baccalaureate Campus Certificate in the Foundations of College Instruction:

GC 593: Foundations of College Teaching (3 hours) +
GC 592: Seminar in College Teaching (3 hours) +
GC 594: Practicum in College Teaching (3 hours)
Can you effectively explain your research in everyday language in a mere three minutes? Students enrolled in a master’s or PhD program with an original research project may compete in this novel competition.

This March, master’s and PhD students at UIC will have the opportunity to participate in our first ever “Three-Minute Thesis (3-MT) competition. The Three-Minute Thesis (3MT®) is an academic research communication competition developed by the University of Queensland, in Australia. The competition celebrates the exciting research conducted by graduate students and cultivates academic, presentation, and research communication skills. Students are permitted three minutes and one static image to impress a non-specialist audience with their research.

Winners will receive a monetary award and the first-place winner will have an opportunity to represent UIC in the 3-MT competition held at the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools Conference in April. More information will be forthcoming via email and on the Graduate College website.

We Heart Graduate Students!
The Graduate College will be hosting its third annual Graduate Student Appreciation Week, March 6-10, 2017. Graduate students from east and west campuses are invited to attend a number of sessions that range from personal wellness and professional development and networking to teaching skills and grant writing. There will also be social activities. For example, the week will begin with a kick-off breakfast with giveaways, prizes, free massages, food, and more. Updates and programming specifics will be announced soon. Make sure to let graduate students know how much you and we appreciate them!

Both are 2016 Image of Research submissions. See the article on page 4.
STUDENT SUCCESS

The image of research

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Image of Research competition. This signature initiative allows UIC graduate students to showcase their scholarship, and to compete annually for prizes and bragging rights. Organized by the Graduate College and the University Library, the interdisciplinary exhibit competition demonstrates the breadth and diversity of graduate-level research at UIC.

Each year, students enrolled in a graduate or professional degree program at UIC are invited to submit an image they created along with a brief précis of how the image relates to the student’s overall research. A multi-disciplinary jury reviews each submission for originality and the research represented; the relationship between the image and the research; and the overall aesthetic appeal of the image. Last year, there were 104 submissions.

The winning images are fêted at the annual reception hosted by the Graduate College and the University Library and their creators are invited to speak about their entry and how it reflects their research. Winning entries are also displayed temporarily in the Library of Health Sciences, featured on light pole banners across campus, and then posted to an online gallery in the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI).

Details regarding this year’s competition and reception were not yet finalized as we went to press. For more details, please contact Kevin M. Monahan, Coordinator for Image of Research Exhibition via email at kmonahan@uic.edu or visit the web page.

Pictured on this page are three submissions from the 2016 Image of Research competition. Top: Benjamin Linder, "Cosmopolitan Space in Kathmandu," 3rd place. Middle: Sarah Schram, "Abnormal Microglial Activation in ALS." Bottom: James Paul Marks III, "Copper Planet."

Professional Success Program (PSP)

The Graduate College is invested in your success and committed to helping its students enhance their career and professional development. Success in graduate school and in a future career requires a plan; thus, graduate students are invited to take advantage of resources and opportunities to develop skills and explore career options. Active participation in professional development programs at UIC sets the foundation for life and future employability.

The Graduate College works together with other units on campus as well as in the greater Chicago area to provide guidance, resources, workshops and programs to support you academically and professionally.

As announced in the fall, the Professional Success Plan (PSP) is required for University and Abraham Lincoln Fellowships (only four-year doctoral and two-year master’s fellows) winners in the Fall 2016 and subsequent terms. All graduate students are encouraged to participate.

PSP participation operates on a points system with points awarded only under the following conditions:

1. The professional development is offered by the Graduate College or designated affiliates through seminars, workshops, and certain Graduate College (GC) courses.
2. Workshops and courses are designated a numerical amount of points based on the amount of time and commitment for each session.

Fellows are required to attend a session devoted to the Individual Development Plan (IDP) (3 points) and then PSP participants must choose events from at least two different categories below to achieve an additional 7 points.

- Planning For Success (Category A)
- Expanding Your Skills (Category B)
- Developing Your Career (Category C)
- Teaching Enrichment (Category D)
- Leadership (Category E)

Under certain circumstances, PSP credit may be given to a non-Graduate College UIC or external workshop. Approval should not be assumed and must be requested at least two weeks before the event will occur. Documentation about the event must be provided. For more information, please visit http://grad.uic.edu/graduate-college-professional-success-program-psp.
AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Winners of the Chancellor’s Graduate Research and Provost/Deiss Awards Announced

Thirty-eight students won a Chancellor’s Graduate Research Award during the Fall 2016 competition, which was the first after a major revamping.

In an effort to maximize impact for our graduate students, the Graduate College revised the Chancellor’s Award: the monetary amount for what is now a one-year award was raised, focus is now on pilot projects, and applicants must now justify financial exigency and articulate plans for seeking external funding.

The $5,000 awards are paid out over five months: February 16 – June 16th. There is no tuition/fee waiver, nor will there be renewals. The electronic submission deadline remains in the fall. For more information, please click here.

Seventeen students won an award during the Fall 2016 competition in the Graduate College’s longest-running mechanism for supporting research, which is collectively called the Provost/Deiss Award. The Provost’s Award for Graduate Research is open to all graduate students currently enrolled at UIC and the W.C. and May Preble Deiss Fund for Biomedical Research Award is for graduate students engaged in clinical or basic medical sciences research. Students apply on a competitive basis for awards of $1,000 to $3,000 to support their research. Awards are made in two competitions annually, once in Spring semester and once in Fall semester. There is no tuition or fee waiver. More information on this competition can be found here.

Fellowships Office

The Graduate College Fellowships Office works with UIC graduate students applying for internal and external fellowships. Interested students can find information not only about funding provided by the Graduate College, but also learn about external funding for graduate study and beyond, meet with fellowship advisors, and receive assistance with the processing of awarded fellowship packages.

The Fellowships Office can assist in the application process by reviewing proposals, essays, and providing award-specific guidance. The office does not advise students regarding financial aid packages or taxes. For questions about government financial aid, contact the Office of Student Financial Aid.

The office also administers Graduate College waivers; however, it does not handle waivers associated with graduate, research, or teaching assistantships. These GA, RA, and TA waivers are administered by the Office of Financial Aid, which is notified by campus Human Resources when a student holds a position that provides a waiver. Graduate College waivers, on the other hand, are awarded to students by three mechanisms:

1. allocated waivers given each semester to individual departments in small fixed amounts by the Board of Trustees (BOT);
2. fellowship waivers provided to graduate students who have won qualifying external and internal fellowships;
3. training grant waivers for students selected as trainees under externally-funded training grants (e.g., an NIH T32).

For BOT waivers, students must speak to their Director of Graduate Studies—students do not and cannot directly request such a waiver. Students eligible for a fellowship waiver should complete this online form. Note: waivers have registration requirements.

For more information, visit grad.uic.edu/funding-your-education. To make an appointment, contact Marie Khan at (312) 355-3456 or mkhanj@uic.edu.

These word clouds (Chancellor’s Award on the left, Provost/Deiss Award on the right) were created with keywords from the winning titles from the fall 2016 competitions. Courtesy of Ellen Weiss.
Office of Recruitment and Diversity Recruitment Initiatives

Fall and spring recruitment efforts have included several visits to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions. Most recently, Graduate College recruiters visited Morehouse College in Atlanta, to present to the McNair Scholars, and the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras. At both schools, they met applicants to the Graduate College’s Summer Research Opportunities Program and graduate programs.

During the fall, GC staff members also participated in several regional and national McNair conferences as well as the SACNAS and ABRCMS conferences; both organizations (Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Sciences and the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students) are dedicated to fostering the success of underrepresented students in attaining advanced degrees, careers, and positions of leadership in STEM fields.

In September 2016, we also organized the first-ever LAS National Open House which was attended by McNair and Maximizing Access to Research Careers scholars representing over 12 universities from across the country. This open house was unique in that all 52 visiting scholars were graduating seniors.

IALHEA Diversity Dialogue and Research Forum

You are cordially invited to the Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance (IALHEA) Diversity Dialogue and Research Forum, which will be held Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at the UIC Forum, 725 W. Roosevelt Road.

The Forum’s goals are to increase faculty-student research collaborations; facilitate mentor relationships between faculty, professional staff, and students of color; and increase the persistence of students-of-color in academia and enhance their research skills.

The event will showcase the scholarly work of underrepresented students from Illinois. This year’s theme is "Building a Community of Scholars."

The event is free and open to the public. The conference schedule can be found at https://tinyurl.com/IALHEA2017 and registration is open at https://tinyurl.com/IALHEA2017-registration.

Pictured left are Jesbaniris Bas Concepción, an undergraduate student at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus and Prof. Scott Shippy shortly after he personally told her that she has been admitted into the PhD program in chemistry at UIC.

iThenticate Report Form

The Thesis Office wishes to remind students, faculty, and staff that the iThenticate Report Form, http://grad.uic.edu/ithenticate-review-procedures, should be completed before the student’s defense and shared with the committee. When the committee members sign the Examination Report at the defense, they are indicating that they have viewed the report and approve of it. After the entire process has been completed, the form should be uploaded to the same Box folder containing the student’s iThenticate scan results and shared with the Graduate College at thesischeck@uic.edu.
Overseen and advised by the Dean of Students, the Graduate Student Council (GSC) is the elected student government body representing graduate students at UIC. The GSC represents any graduate student in good standing, currently enrolled in the Graduate College at UIC. Each department of the Graduate College shall provide GSC with a representative and an alternate representative to represent their graduate students. The GSC holds monthly meetings on the first Thursday of every month during regular semesters to inform department representatives across the campus of events, administrative and financial changes within the university, and of important campus and off-campus resources for graduate students.

The GSC also provides monetary awards. It subsidizes graduate students who travel to present original work at professional meetings and conferences and it offers financial assistance to graduate student organizations to complete a service project. Lastly, the GSC hosts academic and non-academic social events to foster the mingling of graduate students from across the university.

The GSC officers for the academic year 2017-18 are:
• Vidyani Suryadevara, President, Bioengineering;
• Melanie Norwood, Vice-President, Criminology, Law, and Justice;
• Laura Nieves, Treasurer, Latin American and Latino Studies;
• Vineeth Kumar Gattu, Secretary, Materials Engineering.

GSC officers serve on various campus committees including UIC Faculty Senate committees, Higher Education Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation committee, Student Fee Advisory committee, UIC student advocacy, ITGC research committee, student health committee, and the sustainability committee. In addition, the officers also consider issues of concern affecting graduate students. During the 2016-17 academic year, monthly meetings have focused on sustainability, health at UIC, career services, and campus safety. During the fall term, the organization held events such as a speed reading workshop, Pokémon GO event, free outdoor yoga, Halloween night with pumpkin carving and a costume contest, and bowling night. A campus-wide interfaith diversity day will be held later in Spring 2017.

The Museum and Exhibition Studies (MUSE) graduate program proudly unveiled the first issue of *Fwd: Museums* in September 2016. Appropriately entitled “Inaugurations 2016” and published by StepSister Press, the graduate student-run journal critiques museums and reimagines the social justice underpinning of the work done inside--and outside--of museums.

What started as conversations between MUSE faculty and students, ultimately sparked what is now the first issue of *Fwd: Museums*. Beginning with a core of five graduate students, the publication team has grown to fifteen members with the expectation of continual growth now that the journal and its preparation is embedded in an interdisciplinary course open to all graduate students at UIC: AH 546 Fwd: Museums Publication Team, which is taught by Prof. Theresa Quinn, associate professor of art history and director of MUSE.

The first issue of *Fwd: Museums* includes critical, cultural, and digital scholarship such as the Visitor of Color tumblr, created by nikhil trivedi and Porchia Moore, #FERGU-SON_SEA on social media and responsive programming by Leilani Lewis and Chieko Phillips, and Dilyana Ivanova’s Virtual Museum of Bulgarians in North America. With submissions from Ecuador to Finland to California, this first issue centered, fittingly, on beginnings, firsts. To peruse “Inaugurations,” visit our website or check out a copy at the UIC Daley Library.

The Call for Submissions for “Small” 2017 recently closed and the editorial team is in the process of reviewing submissions. This year’s theme inspires feelings, experiences, theories, embodiments centered around the word “Small.” Past contributions and current submissions to the journal range from photography to poetry to messages of transformation and resistance. Our call for submissions welcomes any form, by anyone, from anywhere, with connections to the work of the journal and its annual theme. For more information, please visit the website.

--Sarita Hernández
Dave Featherstone’s passing has shocked us all.

He had a unique viewpoint on nearly every topic and was not shy about sharing it. His commitment to his graduate students was well known. Dave was broadly trained. A neuroscientist who studied genes that control glutamate receptor abundance, he began his career as an artist before pursuing science (zoology, toxicology, and neuroscience). After a postdoc at the University of Utah, Dave and wife, Janet Richmond, joined the Department of Biological Sciences.

In his 15 years at UIC, Dave became one of the most creative and successful scientists and celebrated teachers. He was so successful that his chosen faculty mentor eventually decided it might make more sense to reverse roles, or just have lunch and talk science. Caring deeply about his department, he worked creatively and thoughtfully in a variety of administrative roles at UIC. The Graduate College remembers Dave for his tireless (and witty) work as a reviewer on the Awards Committee and for the Chancellor’s Award, for training neuroscientists, and for initiating, organizing, and bettering a conversation on “alternative academic” careers that was hugely attended by graduate students.

To honor him, a scholarship in his name has been established. If you wish to contribute to the David E. Featherstone Memorial Scholarship Fund, make a check payable to the “University of Illinois at Chicago” and in the notes section write “DEF Scholarship Gift.” Please mail or hand deliver the check to Thomas Lagen, Director of Finance, UIC-Biological Sciences, MC066, 845 W. Taylor St., Rm. 3370 SES, Chicago, IL 60607.

There is a memorial website to share comments, pictures and memories. A campus memorial event is being planned.

Editor’s note: This photo is an homage to Dave. It is borrowed from his lab’s website, which included this explanation: Regarding the photo... You might be thinking; ‘This is not Dave. This is his hand.’ Should this website show a photo of Dave’s head? But Dave’s head is just a small part of Dave, like his hand. What makes the head special? Why do we talk to each other’s heads? Think about that, the psychosocial consequences of cephalization, and how we define the ‘edges’ of an individual person.

Dave Featherstone will be sorely missed.

(Adapted from an obituary by faculty in biological sciences and used with permission. For the original text, please visit http://bios.uic.edu.)
UIC boasts one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse campus communities in the country.

UIC promotes doing good and giving back.

The lack of a state budget critically endangers the Graduate College’s awards and fellowships and it hampers our attempts to grow programming.

You can help.

This past fall, the Graduate College stepped up its fundraising. In conjunction with alumnus Jochen Arndt (PhD, 2015), we developed our very first “annual fund” letter, which was sent to select alumni, faculty, and staff to raise funds for fellowships. Furthermore, to celebrate the first 30 years of the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP), Dean Colley and SROP Director Allen Bryson signed a fundraising letter sent to SROP alumni and friends to raise funds for a future award for SROP participants who enroll in UIC graduate programs. Finally, the Graduate College participated again in the #GivingTuesday campaign.

In all three cases, Dean Colley raised the bar by personally pledging to match all donations to the Graduate College, dollar for dollar, up to $3,000. We are pleased to announce that the pledge succeeded! It is not, however, too late to donate! In the current budget climate, philanthropy is crucial. To better understand our needs and the impact a gift can make, please visit http://grad.uic.edu/supporting-graduate-education. Online gifts to our fellowships and dean’s funds can be made through the Graduate College’s website: http://grad.uic.edu/giving. More targeted gifts can be made at https://give.uic.edu/StartGivingUIC.html, for example, you can write in “UIC Graduate College - Research Support” to support the SROP award under “Or, choose a fund....”

Specific questions can be addressed to contact Benn Williams, assistant director of interdisciplinary programs and development, at (312) 413-2389 or bwilli7@uic.edu.