

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

at Mississippi State University[®]



Campus Tours

Need assistance with campus tours?
Contact Lindsey Shelton
(lshelton@grad.msstate.edu) or Natalie
Parrott (nparrott@grad.msstate.edu).

Upcoming Events

The 19th Graduate Student Research Symposium will be held virtually Feb. 27, 2021 and will include oral and poster presentations.

Image of Research is a new competition for graduate students that will take place in the Spring 2021 semester. This is a nationwide and worldwide competition that highlights research. For this competition, students are asked to submit an image of their research with a short caption. "Research" is defined broadly to include creative and scholarly work in all fields. Finalists will be displayed in a gallery on campus.

Kudos

MSU's chapter of Phi Kappa Phi receives "platinum designation".

Opportunities

The Office of Thesis and Dissertation Review is pleased to offer 11 online formatting workshops during the spring semester. Please visit [this link](#) to sign up today. Additionally, there are a number of prerecorded tutorials on subjects such as Differences in Templates, Mac Common Issues, and Setting Up View Modes available on the library's YouTube channel. If you need any assistance, please contact Danny (662-325-8756) or Teri (662-325-2170), or email etd@library.mstate.edu.

Dear Colleagues and Friends of the Graduate School,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all back to campus for the Spring 2021 semester. It was a wonderful surprise to wake up on the first day of classes to a snowy winter's day and see the campus looking its best covered in a carpet of snow. It certainly created a calming and serene setting that many students took advantage of to play in and build snowmen.

The COVID-19 pandemic still looms large in our daily lives. To ensure the safety of ourselves and others on campus, we should continue wearing masks, washing hands, and maintaining social distances as appropriate. One is hopeful that life will return to near-normal as the availability of the COVID-19 vaccines increase. We take a moment to thank the Health Center and University staff that continue to provide on a daily basis services that create and maintain a safe environment for us all who live, work and study on campus.

I wish all a healthy, happy and successful semester and start to the new year, and I look forward to seeing and hearing about the great scholarly accomplishments of our students and faculty in the coming months.

Respectfully,

Dr. Peter Ryan
Executive Vice Provost and Dean – The Graduate School

Faculty Spotlight:

This month's spotlight is focused on two outstanding professors, Dr. Renee Clary (Geosciences) and Dr. John Ball (Electrical & Computer Engineering).

Dr. Renee Clary

Dr. Clary discusses having to adjust to teaching during the pandemic and how she continues to find ways to connect with her students. When asked about this transition, Dr. Clary shared, "The pandemic forced instructors to make multiple accommodations if we must migrate most (or all!) of our classroom activities online. I learned that my migrating on-campus classes to online environments required me to critically analyze what is important in the course. I had to identify what aligns most closely with the primary course objectives, and what information and activities can be pared down. My Community Engaged Learning components also moved online with virtual video interviews, posted resources, and question and answer sessions. The synchronous virtual sessions have been challenging, though, since everyone's schedule is unique. The more that I can do to communicate the content—reading assignments, videos, online discussions—the more opportunities I create for students to learn. Not all our on-campus students have an online routine established, so I try to post multiple announcements as reminders of upcoming deadlines, and what content we are covering that particular week. Athena Owen Nagel and I implemented weekly meetings with our graduate students several years ago, and we realized in the pandemic that these meetings are still helpful and needed, especially since our regular scholarly discussion opportunities are diminished. Our group meets on Webex every week to discuss graduate deadlines, research progress, challenges, and whatever students would like to share and discuss. These virtual meetings allow us to keep in touch and "see" each other until we are able to sit together around a conference table again."



Dr. Renee Clary

Dr. John Ball

Dr. John Ball provides us with an inside peek on how incorporating multiple teaching methods has created a learning environment that works regardless of the delivery method.

"I use many methods to engage graduate students; amazingly, all of them work for in-person and online (synchronous or asynchronous) classes. Here I discuss three of them. First, I heavily utilize active learning. Second, I utilize discussion boards to engage both local and distance students. Third, I incorporate project-based learning (PBL) assignments into the class. These methods all require a little extra up-front planning but are usually well-received by the students."

"Active learning involves students actively working on a small problem during class and reporting their findings. Often, the reporting is done via discussion forums, so the asynchronous distance students can also participate. An example of this exercise involves giving them some data and having them run an algorithm (that we have previously discussed) on some relevant data. The students go into a separate group chat (on Microsoft Teams), run the analysis, analyze the results, draw conclusions, and report their results in a succinct way. Afterwards, we rejoin in the main Teams group, and discuss (as a class) each group's findings. My PBL classes typically involve three mini-projects in the class. For instance, in Sensor Processing for Autonomous Vehicles, the first mini-project involves using simulated and real-world scenes that are processed to detect signs such as stop, yield, etc. The students use a state-of-the-art deep learning method and assess its performance. These activities end in a group report. Students learn how to perform a literature review, write an abstract, write the experiments, results, and conclusions sections, and how to cite literature. Sometimes I require a short video showing the main things the students learned."



Dr. John Ball

BULLY'S

CL[👔]SET & PAN[📦]TRY

Bully's Closet and Pantry (BCP) is a collaborative effort between the university's Division of Student Affairs and the Student Association. As part of the MSU Food Security Network, a broader initiative to meet the basic needs of students, BCP provides nutritious food, toiletries, professional clothing, school supplies, and other necessary items to current MSU students free of charge.

Donations (see list below) can be made online and in person:

- Through the Foundation by clicking [here](#)
- The Graduate School located in 617 Allen Hall, Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 5:00
- At BCP located on campus at 120 Morgan Ave, Monday - Friday from 1:00 - 6:00

Students interested in shopping at BCP can [reserve a block of time](#) on Monday, Tuesday or Friday from 1:00 - 6:00 p.m. Students who prefer curbside pickup can complete the [online form](#) and come by Wednesday or Thursday from 1:00 - 6:00 to receive their order. Students in need of additional resources can click [here](#) to learn more.

Block By Block

The Block by Block Program (BBB) is a partnership between Aramark, the Dean of Students' Office, and Student Association. It serves to provide short-term assistance by allocating meals to students in need. Any students with a valid meal plan can donate up to three block meals per semester by clicking [here](#).

Active students (currently enrolled) that do not have a valid active meal plan or flex dollars are eligible to apply and take part in the Block by Block Program. Aramark and the Dean of Students' Office reviews the application, determines eligibility, and notifies the student with a decision. If students qualify, their card will be loaded with 15 block meals (15 meals) that can be used at the Perry Cafeteria and/or the Fresh Food Company.

Request Meals [Here!](#)

Most Needed Food Items

- Meals in a can (beef stew, chili, chicken noodle soup)
- Single serving meals (hamburger helper, raman noodles, macaroni and cheese, etc.)
- Canned proteins in water (tuna, salmon, chicken)
- Peanut or other seed butters (crunchy and smooth)
- Canned foods with pop-top lids
- Hot/Cold cereals
- 100% Fruit juices in single serving boxes
- Canned fruit
- Granola bars or light popcorn
- Unsalted peanuts, other nuts, or mixed nuts
- Apple sauce

Personal Care Items

- Toothpaste & toothbrushes (individually wrapped)
- Soap or body wash
- Deodorant
- Feminine hygiene items
- Paper towels, napkins, tissues
- Laundry detergent pods, fabric softeners
- Diapers (all sizes)

School Supplies

- Spiral notebooks
- Loose-leaf paper
- Graphing paper
- Pens, pencils, highlighters
- Folders, binders
- Subject dividers
- Index cards
- Planners
- Backpacks
- Post-it Notes
- Hole punch
- Stapler, staples
- Tape
- Pencil pouch
- Graphing calculator

Student Spotlight:

Lauren Lindsey receives Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

Lauren Lindsey, is working on a Master's in Agriculture with a concentration in Poultry Science and serves as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (TA) for Genetics I. She was recently recognized by the College of Arts and Sciences Student Ambassadors (CASA) with the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award. Although not a member of the College of Arts and Sciences, CASA members who had Lindsey for a class felt her efforts were important to recognize as she helped ease the burden of this challenging fall semester with her dedication to the students. When asked what she enjoys most about being a TA, Lindsey said, "I honestly believe the most rewarding thing about being a TA for Genetics I is getting to see the students learn and grow, and knowing that they want to learn. They want to achieve. During what has been a difficult semester for many people, it was so encouraging to see the students still taking initiative, asking questions, and furthering their education. I am so proud of them, for their dedication, perseverance, and diligence this semester."

Click [here](#) for the full article!



Lauren Lindsey
Plant & Soil Sciences

Deadlines

Spring 2021 Semester Deadline Information

January 16-February 15: Graduate Student Research Symposium Registration

January 18-March 12: Image of Research Registration

February 18: Graduate Student Association General Body Meeting

February 27: Graduate Student Research Symposium

March 19: Last day for thesis/dissertation defense for May graduation.

March 22-April 1: Image of Research Exhibition

April 1: Last day for initial submission of thesis/dissertation to the Library for May graduation.

April 23: Last day to submit Library-approved thesis/dissertation to the Library for May graduation.

April 28: Deadline to pass thesis/dissertation defense after all other requirements are met except thesis/dissertation submission to Library.

April 28: Last day for non-thesis comprehensive exam for May graduation.

“Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.”

-Winston Churchill



175 President Circle
617 Allen Hall
Mississippi State, MS 39762



662-325-7400



gradapps@grad.msstate.edu



grad.msstate.edu



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