

# GRADUATE STUDIES UPDATE

**Happy Holidays To Our Readers!**

**Editor: Callie Frieler**  
Student Affairs  
Administration Student  
and Graduate Assistant in  
the Office of Graduate  
Studies

**Inside this issue:**

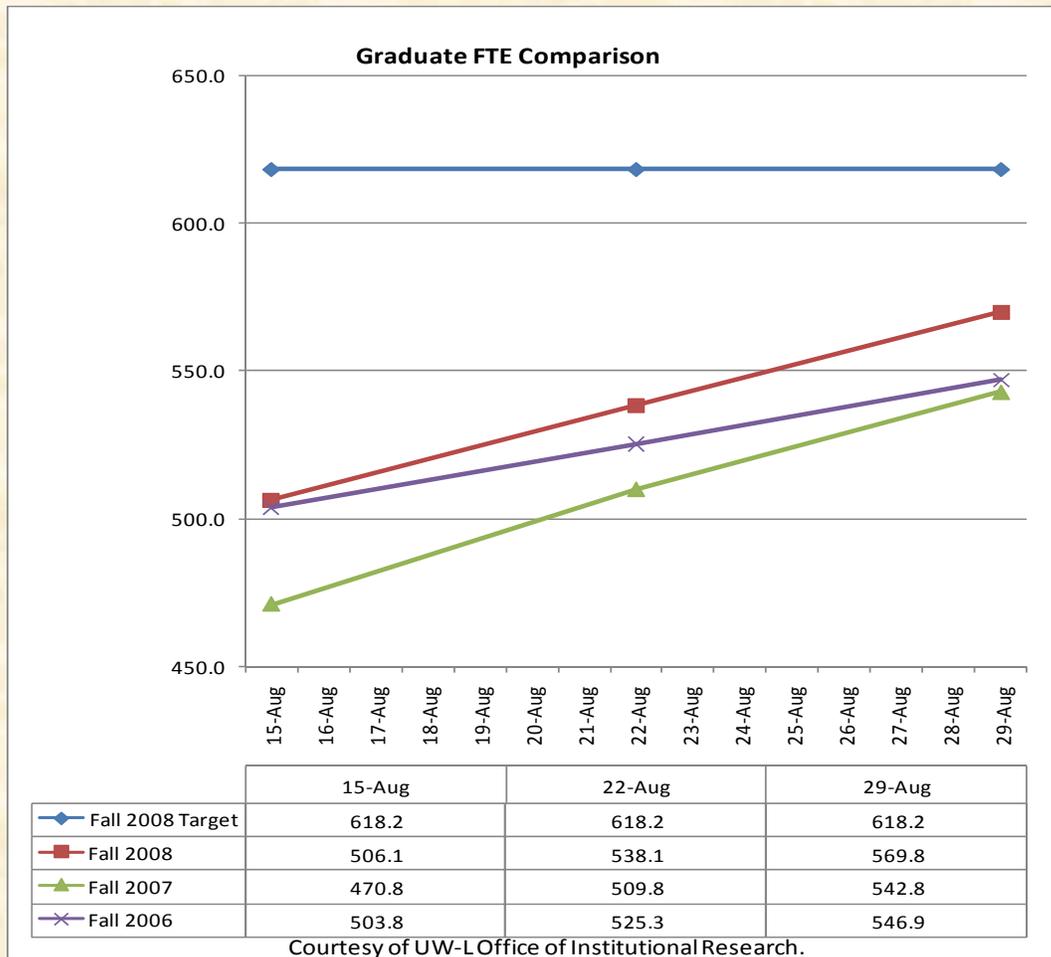
- Graduate Student Organization Updates Review
- Highlights about M.S. in Biology and School Psychology
- Grants and Research Celebration
- Interview with Provost Enz-Finken
- Upcoming Graduate Student Survey



Note: Suggestions to improve the layout/content of this update are welcome and should be directed to:

Vijendra (VJ) Agarwal  
gradstudies@uwlax.edu

## Graduate Enrollment



**Congratulations to UW-L graduate students who will receive their degrees in the commencement ceremony on December 14, 2008.**

**“Top Three Action Steps”**

- Secure long term allocation of existing Academic Initiative revenue for graduate students
- Develop consistent web presence for UW-L Graduate programs
- Develop a public relations structure for UW-L graduate studies

# GRADUATE STUDIES UPDATES

## Biology Program in Review

The departments of Biology and Microbiology at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse have several programs leading to a Master of Science in Biology, currently enrolling 61 graduate students. UW-L offers several formal concentrations for the Master of Science (M.S.) degree in Biology, including Aquatic Sciences, Cellular and Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Clinical Microbiology, Nurse Anesthesia, and Physiology. We work in close collaboration for the Clinical Microbiology concentration with Gundersen Lutheran Clinic of La Crosse, the Marshfield Clinic in Marshfield, and the State Laboratory of Hygiene in Madison. The students spend 8 weeks each at the first two hospitals with an additional two weeks at the State Lab of Hygiene. A number of students are

also mentored through their research programs at the two hospitals in cooperation with researchers there.

UW-L Nurse Anesthesia program is conducted in cooperation with Franciscan Skemp Healthcare in La Crosse, where the actual anesthetizing takes place. Students may also earn a M.S degree in Biology with no declared concentration. For the most part, students engage in a very flexible course of study. Many students design their own plan of study in cooperation with specific faculty members in our departments- we have faculty engaged in a wide variety of research in most areas of biology and microbiology, with 24 faculty and staff in Biology and another nine in Microbiology. All students except the Nurse Anesthetists are required to write a MS thesis.

In the past five years, four of our students have been awarded “best thesis” at UW-L. Our students have also received many honors and awards for presentations at conferences, including best poster (four



times) at the Mycological Society of America meeting, and several at American Society for Microbiology

meetings. About 40% of UW-L graduates go on for Ph.D.'s or to professional schools, while others get interesting jobs in their fields. For more information see <<http://www.uwlax.edu/biology>>.

*(Article contributed by Tom Volk)*

## Graduate Studies Organization (GSO) Updates

This year the GSO leadership is comprised of Graduate Council Members, Co-Chairs Carly Andersen and Ellie Ahmann, Student Senator Bonnie Sweeny, and Graduate Council Members Ashley Olsen and Scott Swedeen. Facebook and UW-L My-Orgs have served as ways of getting information out to all students and there is currently a link from the Graduate Studies webpage: <http://www.uwlax.edu/Graduate/> with GSO information.

**Orientation:** This fall the Graduate Student Organization hosted an orientation for new graduate students on August 27, 2008. Approximately 40 graduate students attended the program from a variety of disciplines. Chancellor Gow, Provost Enz Finken, and Associate Vice Chancellor Agar-

wal attended the afternoon meet and greet. The orientation included time for graduate students to get to know each other, information about University Centers, and a tour of campus and the library.

**Grant Writing Workshop:** GSO co-sponsored (with SURSCA) the event for graduate students this semester. A Grant Writing information session was presented by Amery Bodelson, UW-L Grant Writer. This session was very helpful to all who attended. Thank you to those who supported this event.

**Digital Thesis:** GSO also sponsored a discussion of digital thesis publication issues with Proquest's Dr. Marlene Coles on Thursday evening, November 20. The discussion was very informational.

**Future Events:** Other future events may include a resume workshop, networking opportunities, and a leadership night for UW-L graduate students interested in learning about campus involvement. If you would like more information, please email GSO at [gso@uwlax.edu](mailto:gso@uwlax.edu).

**Funding Received:** GSO and the Office of Graduate Studies received \$23,000 from the Academic Initiative Oversight Committee, primarily to fund RSEL grants for the current school year. Additional funds were provided by the Provost and Academic Deans. The Office of Graduate Studies and the GSO also received \$6,600 from the Apportionment Committee largely to fund professional travel grants.

# GRADUATE STUDIES UPDATES

## School Psychology Program Update

Academic readiness. Emotional stability. Engaging instruction. Academic accountability. These are hallmarks of effective instruction and learning and School Psychologists are there to provide a supportive role to the children and adolescents coming to school not ready to learn because of learning difficulties or mental health concerns impacting educational opportunity. School Psychologists are advocates for children and work with parents and other professionals to create supportive learning environments for all students. They are experts in assessment of children, educational interventions, and in the development of children academically, socially, and emotionally.

The UW-La Crosse graduate program in School Psychology, which began in 1969, now offers an Education Specialist degree. UW-La Crosse's program is unique in that graduate students are placed in local schools as early as their second semester. From the beginning of prac-

tica experiences, students are involved in actual casework that involves the appropriate assessment and intervention to the barriers that impact an individual's educational progress. Since the inception of the school psychology program, all of the students who have completed the program requirements have secured employment as school psychologists. Some graduates go on to positions in education administration or related fields.

The UW-La Crosse School Psychology program has three full-time faculty members. Dr. Robert Dixon is the current Director of the School Psychology Program at UW-La Crosse, joining the UW-La Crosse School Psychology faculty in 2001. Dr. Dixon, a licensed psychologist and school psychologist, spent several years working as a school psychologist prior to university teaching. Dr. Betty DeBoer joined the UW-La Crosse School Psychology faculty in 1997 after completing research and clinical fellowships at Washington

University in St. Louis and at Johns Hopkins University's Kennedy Krieger Institute. The newest addition to the staff, Dr. Joci Newton, joined the UW-La Crosse staff last year. She completed her Ph.D. in school psychology in 2007 at Ball State University. Previously, Dr. Newton worked as a school psychologist within the Cobb County School District in Atlanta, Georgia for two years.

This spring UW-La Crosse school psychology students will be traveling to Boston, MA to attend the National Association of School Psychology 2009 Annual Convention. Students will have a more intimate and in-depth learning experience by participating in the ultimate professional growth and networking opportunity. They will also have the chance to present their current research projects at the conventions poster presentation. *(Article contributed by Rob Dixon)*

## Graduate Student Grants Awarded

There were a record number of graduate student applicants this fall. Thirty one students applied for the Research, Service and Educational Leadership (RSEL) grants.

Graduate Council approved funding for twenty four proposals totaling about \$23,000. The grant recipients represented Clinical Exercise Physiology, Clinical Microbiology, Biology, Physical Education Teaching, Student Affairs Administration, Human

Performance, Masters of Public Health/Community Health Education, Occupational Therapy, Recreation Management/Therapeutic Recreation and School of Psychology.

In addition thirty three students were approved for professional travel grants totaling \$3,160, to present at or attend, a conference in their field of study.

UW-L programs that were repre-

sented in these grants included Physical Therapy, Student Affairs Administration, Physicians Assistant, Sports Administration, Recreation Management, MEPD, Clinical Microbiology, and Physical Education.

The Graduate Council also approved to fund up to \$50.00 per presenter toward poster presentations for the Celebration of Student Research event on campus.

**Professional Travel Grants:** Applications due December 12, 2008

March 13, 2009 and May 15, 2009

**RSEL Grants:** Applications due February 13, 2009



# GRADUATE STUDIES UPDATES

## Provost to Review Graduate Programs

With the new school year came the new provost, and new ideas for UW-L Graduate Studies. Provost Kathleen Enz Finken started her position in May of 2008 and hasn't stopped working since.

Enz Finken's goals coming into her provost position were to evaluate and review each of the graduate programs as a whole. This is exactly what she is doing. Currently working with deans and directors from many of the graduate programs to assess their current

status and needs, Enz Finken is making headway.

"I view our programs as very strong, with an exciting future," said the Provost.

After reviewing each graduate program's current status there will be efforts to allocate resources such as possible increases in marketing and promotion of each of the graduate programs, increases in scholarships, grants, and assistantship will be reviewed as well.

"It has been a long time since UW-L last evaluated the funding for these aspects of the graduate 'package,' and we need to provide increased support in these areas if we hope to remain attractive to the highly-qualified students."

With Enz Finken's strong understanding of the importance of Graduate Studies, she is sure to continually support and develop a strong future for UW-L Graduate Studies.

## Graduate Student Survey in January 2009!

The Office of Graduate Studies would like to better know UW-L graduate students!

Graduate Programs, whether on campus, on-line, or through learning communities are very vital to the UW-La Crosse community. Due to the vast array of demographics of our graduate students it is difficult to obtain each and every student's opinion about their graduate experience.

The survey is designed to gather graduate students thoughts about programs, assistantships, graduation rates, etc. With this information coming directly from the students, the Office of Graduate Studies can more effectively advocate for resources to meet the needs of graduate programs.

The survey will be launched and available to students on around January 27, 2008. Student's opinions are

extremely important in this process. Completely anonymous and confidential, this survey is intended to make us more aware of our graduate students needs.

This survey has been approved by IRB (Institutional Review Board). The results of this study will be published for public viewing, making participation and opinion all the more important!

## 12th Annual Celebration Of Research And Creativity

Its time to Celebrate! The 12th Annual Celebration of Student Research and Creativity is scheduled for April 3, 2009 and is fast approaching!

Each year UW-L hosts this event to give undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to showcase their research accomplishments.

Historically about one hundred UW-L students have showcased their research at this event. There is also a strong attendance of the UW-L community with an average of seven to eight hundred viewers walk through the venue throughout the day. This is a great opportunity to have students research, scholarly and creative activities

noticed and recognized by the UW-L community.

All students are strongly encouraged to present their research at this unique opportunity. Your hard work matters and deserves recognition.

**Show It Off!**

**Celebration of Student Research and Creativity Event:** Friday, April 3, 2009: Abstracts due: Wednesday, February 18, 2009

**Now you can request up to \$50.00 toward your poster for presentation at the Celebration of Student Research! Starting January 2009 visit the graduate studies website for more information!**