

# Welcome to the Department of Secondary Education Newsletter

*2016 October~December Issue*

## Dates to Remember

**\*Contact your  
education advisor for 2017  
Spring Registration NLT  
November 7, 2016**

**October 1** Dragonboat  
Festival

**October 7-9** University Closed - Fall  
Break

**October 14** Mid Term

**October 15** Homecoming

**October 21** Last Day of "W" Period

**October 22** Begin "WP/WF" Period

**November 23** End of "WP/WF"  
Period, Last day to drop a class or  
completely withdraw

**November 23-27** University  
Closed - Thanksgiving Holiday

**December 8** Study Day

**December 9-14** Semester Exams

**December 15** Fall Preregistration  
Closes

**December 17** Commencement

## Important Links

[Department of Education and Hu-  
man Sciences](#)

[Visit our webpage!](#)

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UNA Educator Preparation  
Program



## Department of Secondary Education Our Faculty

(From Left to Right): Dr. Jeff Cornelius, Associate Professor; Dr. Felecia Harris, Associate Professor; Dr. Jessica Mitchell, Assistant Professor; Dr. Lamont Maddox, Associate Professor; Dr. Joy Brown, Professor; Dr. Leah Whitten, Associate Professor/Department Chair; Dr. Gary Padgett, Assistant Professor

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## The Bridging Divides Project

The Bridging Divides Research and Professional Development Project, led by Drs. Lamont Maddox (University of North Alabama) and Jay Howell (University of Southern Mississippi), is entering its first full implementation year after successfully completing a pilot study phase.

The project is supported by grants from the National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) and both affiliated universities. The focus of the project is on improving geography education in secondary schools through an intensive lesson study professional development process. Social studies teachers were recruited from Hattiesburg, MS and North Alabama and organized into two design teams. A six-day summer seminar was held at UNA in June and USM in July to introduce the teachers to a problem-based geography instructional model and engage participants in lesson study. During lesson study, teachers designed a research lesson that examines and attempts to address specific problems of practice. The Bridging Divides Project's version of lesson study brings together teacher educators, social studies teachers, and project geographers to collaborate in designing the new curriculum materials.



*Teachers at the UNA Lesson Study*

The Bridging Divides Project is best described as design-based research with the dual purpose of developing innovative problem-based geography curricula while also determining effective ways to support teachers as they adopt inquiry-based instructional practices. Design-based research is similar to the research and development projects conducted by corporations. The goal is for researchers to work collaboratively with teachers to design, test, and refine curriculum innovations through multiple implementation cycles. This approach allows space for researchers to test how pedagogical ideas work in a variety of “messy” real world classroom settings before scaling them up for broader use and evaluation by more traditional experimental means.

So far, The Bridging Divides Project has prepared research lessons on the topics of population change and globalization. Each research lesson is designed to help secondary students develop the critical thinking skills needed for competent democratic citizenship. Teachers in Hattiesburg

implemented their research lesson with 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in September. The Florence team is working with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and will start its instruction in April 2017. It will be exciting to see these students experience geography in a deeper way as a result of the hard work and dedication of their teachers.



*Participants at the USM Seminar*

# Oklahoma Trip

Over the last three years, a relationship has been developed between the University of North Alabama's College of Education and Human Sciences and the tribal communities of North Eastern Oklahoma. This year, seven students from the College of Education traveled to Tahlequah, Oklahoma to participate in and experience the Cherokee Nation Holiday. This year was unique as two current secondary teachers were included in the trip. Not only were the teachers able to experience Cherokee culture, they were also able to serve as mentors to the pre-service teachers. The current teachers, Andrew Franck (St. Joseph Regional Catholic School) and Jordan Franck (Hibbett Middle School) stated that, "We were honored and humbled by this experience to travel to Oklahoma. As educators we could not have asked for a more inclusive life and educational opportunity than the one offered to us by this trip. Our students will have a more profound understanding of the Cherokee people because of our ability to immerse ourselves in the life, culture, and traditions of the Cherokee." It was great to see our current teachers get as much out of the trip as our Secondary Education students.

Once in Oklahoma, they played stickball, attended a pow-wow, and toured a recreated historical village and museum. Dalia Gerardo-Rendon, Elementary Education, said that "Our trip to the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma was truly an adventure. I had never traveled that far west so the region was new to me. The Native American culture is often overlooked or excluded from history courses; this trip was a great way to go beyond that. I learned so much from this rich culture. My favorite parts were being able to improve my basket weaving skills, playing stick ball, and

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attending the pow-wow. Through stick ball and the pow-wow, I came to realize how tight this community is. I also realized how welcoming and open they are. They had no problem with us entering their game of stick ball, and they invited everyone from the audience to dance in the inter-tribal dance in the

pow wow. I was so honored to be able to participate in both of these events and experience the Native American culture from a new perspective. It was fascinating to see that they wanted everyone, even strangers, to experience their culture. I, honestly, cannot wait to return." Return visits, either as part of UNA or their own school sites, are what will help us to continue to build strong relationships with the native communities in Oklahoma.

They also met the current chief of the Cherokee Nation, Bill John Baker. As educators, they were excited to visit Oaks Indian Mission and tour the schools. While learning about the tribal communities around Tahlequah, they spoke with many people about the University of North Alabama. This year we participated in the Cherokee Nation Parade, carrying the banner of UNA and discussing our various majors with

people who showed an interest.

It is true that the trip was intended to expose the participants to another culture, but they also learned a lot about themselves. Collin Burns, Secondary Social Studies Education, echoed this by saying, "The trip to Oklahoma was everything I was wishing it could be. I enjoyed every second of growing closer to the group that we went with and the complete inclusion that we experienced at the hands of the Cherokee Nation." Jessica Danielowicz, Secondary English Education, agreed, and said that, "I came into the trip a little nervous, a little shy, and very excited. I left with a van full of new friends, a heap load of happy memories, and a new understanding of Cherokee culture that I can take with me into the classroom and beyond. This has been one of my favorite experiences during my time so far at UNA!" Developing a well round program, that teaches about others and yourself, is one of the goals of this program.

Jonathan Barnett, Secondary Family Consumer Science Education, however, had the most to say about this experience. Based on his experiences, he says, "I completely enjoyed my experience in Oklahoma. I am not trying to sound cliché; however, it was amazing getting the opportunity to learn so much about a culture outside of my own. Growing up, we always hear stories of The Trail of Tears and how immigrants came across vast oceans and took the land from indigenous peoples. The trip was different from what I

expected. My perception of Native American culture was a bit misconstrued due to books, movies, and other outlets that I have been around. For example, when touring the replica village, I had expected to see nothing but teepees and animal skin guys. Maybe that's from my own ignorance but that's what I was expecting. It was pretty nice being able to take a step in their shoes, to walk in their homes, and even march in the parade. The trip as a whole felt somewhat sacred or spiritual and was very eye opening. And I am appreciative for the opportunity!"

The impact this trip had on our local teachers and undergraduate students seems to have been profound. It can only be hoped that we had a similar impact on those that interacted with in and around Tahlequah. If nothing else, they will remember UNA from the parade, and Tahlequah will echo with sound of undergrads chanting "Tell them where we're from, y'all, tell them where we're from..."



# Keller Kids

On June 23rd, students in Dr. Padgett's ED 603, ED 382, and ED 292 courses participated in the beginning of the Helen Keller Festival in Tuscomb, Alabama.

This part of the festival, called Keller Kids, is designed to present students the opportunity



to experience the loss of a particular sense. This year, more than 70 children in grades 3-6 participated in this annual program. UNA students created stations that provided lessons on hearing, vision, touch, smell, and taste. Our preservice and current teachers had this to say about participating in Keller Kids:

*"I greatly enjoyed Keller Kids, and I thought our activity went well. The kids had fun, and we were able to teach them how the ear works, what it is like to have a hearing impairment, and how important it is to protect their ears. Anna was a great partner and I enjoyed working with her."*

*"Keller Kids was an interesting experience to teach students a glimpse into the life of a person with a hearing disability. Kids were mesmerized with what the inner ear looks like, and even more eager to show us how to play Simon Says. When we brought out the ear plugs to add a twist to Simon Says, kids were in shock and didn't want to remove them. It was incredible to listen to the kids apply what they learned only a few moments ago to their own personal experiences—they talked about their grandparents and their friends with hearing impairments. Before the next switch, we tried to debrief the kids on their experience—how to take this small experiment on hearing out into the world."*

***"It was incredible to listen to the kids apply what they learned only a few moments ago to their own personal experiences."***



*Also, Keller Kids was a good investing time to pour into others and show them what life would be like without all 5 senses working to their maximum potential."*

*"Keller Kids was a great opportunity to be able to interact with children in our community, and I hope they learned as much from us as we learned from them."*

*"I'd never heard of Keller Kids before this class which is kind of odd since I've been in the Shoals area since 1977. It was a*

*good experience and I enjoyed seeing the kids react to trying to figure out*



*what they were tasting with their noses closed."*

Each year, UNA students create bigger and better stations. We look forward to working with Keller Kids next year and providing our students, and those of the communities we serve, with another outstanding experience.



*Human Growth and Development (ED 299) is a course designed to explore the characteristics of and interrelationships among the physical, mental, social, and emotional aspects of human growth and development.*



As education majors take this course as a general education requirement, this course is often the first “step” in exploring the specific grade band of students in which they wish to receive certification to teach. For some students, this decision has already been made, and this course provides the chance to add to their knowledge base of best practices for their chosen grade band. For others, this class provides an opportunity to examine the key characteristics of each stage of development to determine where they see themselves contributing to the community as a professional. While self-exploration is certainly an important aspect of the course, this course also seeks to prepare future teachers for the diverse experiences of students they will likely encounter in their own classrooms.

On Thursday, September 22, 2016, the class hosted guest speakers from the community to speak about the special populations of clients they serve. Erica Volentine, Child Advocate for Safe Place, Inc., discussed domestic violence in the community and how teachers can identify and refer students for services. Dr. Jimmy Shaw, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction for Florence City Schools, discussed the Alabama Reading Initiative and how cultural interpretations can differ between teachers and students. Jessica Hill, Children’s Librarian for the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, discussed the development of the children’s library program to serve the needs of the community and how preservice teachers can volunteer for service opportunities.

By providing opportunities for students to connect with community partners, students in ED 299 not only have opportunities to explore the ways in which they can use their degree in education, but they also have the opportunity to discuss ways in which they can better help the population of students they serve. As Dr. Jimmy Shaw said, “If you are a teacher, or a helping professional, you are in the business of people. You don’t choose your students. Your students come to you.”

# EDUGATORS

(College of Education & Human Sciences team)

## PUT IN A VERY STRONG SHOWING AT THE 2016 SHOALS DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL



Congratulations to all members of the 2016 Edugators! Our team went through to the 3<sup>rd</sup> round for the 1<sup>st</sup> time ever (the only team representing a college to do so this year) and took 7<sup>th</sup> overall out of 32 teams. Important to note—only two other UNA teams scored a higher rank—one of the two basketball teams and the ROTC team. This was a feat and we could not be more proud of our paddlers!

*“This is fun, but winning is funner!” –Dr. Padgett*



2016 Shoals Dragon Boat Festival  
Overall Results

| FINAL ROUND RANKING |                             |            |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Ranking             | Team                        | Final Time |
| COLD                | SeaBiscuits                 | 01:03.830  |
| SILVER              | Smoke on the Water          | 01:04.531  |
| BRONZE              | UNA Army ROTC               | 01:07.717  |
| 4                   | Row'r Lions - Purple        | 01:08.451  |
| 5                   | Hunka Hunka Blazing Paddles | 01:09.302  |
| 6                   | Off Shore Bankers           | 01:09.352  |
| 7                   | UNA Edugators               | 01:10.253  |
| 8                   | Row'r Lions Gold            | 01:10.303  |
| 9                   | United Way                  | 01:10.954  |
| 10                  | Holy Rowers                 | 01:12.038  |
|                     | Rum Rowers                  | 01:12.555  |
| 11                  | Flo-Riders                  | 01:13.139  |



# *...September Student of the Month...*



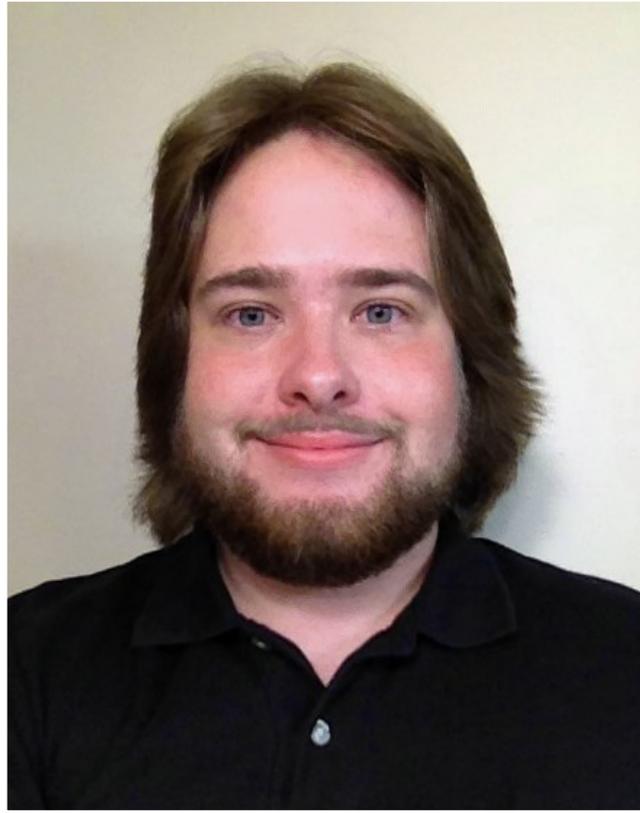
**Rachel Sweigard**

Rachel Sweigard is a senior majoring in English/Language Arts Secondary Education. She chose Education as her career path because she felt like she should pay back all the countless hours that her teachers invested in her during her time as a student and ELA as her content area because she's always had a passion for reading and writing. She is currently completing her student teaching internship at Florence Middle School and is excitedly awaiting graduation in December.

Upon graduation, she hopes to take a position teaching middle school ELA and plans to pursue a Masters degree in either Administration or ELA Secondary Education.

***CONGRATULATIONS FOR BEING SELECTED AS THE SEPTEMBER STUDENT OF THE MONTH!***

# .....*October Student of the Month*.....



**Brandon Conley**

I am an Alt-A Master of Education student. My content area is English language arts. After earning my bachelor's degree in English, I completed an internship at the Marshall Space Flight Center Education Office, where I became interested in teaching. I have worked for the past year as an ACT prep instructor at ScorePlus Academics. I plan to graduate in May 2017 with my master's degree and teaching certification. I hope to teach high school English language arts somewhere in North Alabama.

**CONGRATULATIONS FOR BEING SELECTED AS THE OCTOBER STUDENT OF THE MONTH!**

# ...November Student of the Month...



## Holly Jolly

I received my Bachelors in Elementary Education from Auburn University, my Masters in Library Media from the University of West Georgia, and am now working on my Education Specialist degree with a Teacher Leader certification from UNA. Although I have held diverse positions throughout my 13-year career, I have embraced each with the primary goal of ensuring student success. Currently, I serve as the media specialist at Florence Middle School where I strive to promote reading, teach students about the many facets of digital citizenship, and support a collaborative learning environment. I am especially proud of the media center's Makerspace which provides students with innovative tools and exciting technologies that support both educational goals and personal interests. I thoroughly enjoy collaborating with classroom teachers to plan innovative instructional units that require students to work together on authentic, technology-driven projects that have real-world connections. I credit UNA's Teacher Leader curriculum for successfully enhancing my leadership and collaborative planning skills, and I intend to learn much more between now and my anticipated graduation this summer.

After graduating, I hope to begin pursuing my doctoral degree. Education is my passion, and I have always entertained the idea of becoming a professor so as to share my love of teaching with future educators. Up until recently, I had dismissed the notion due to financial costs and family obligations. Within the past four months, however, I have been encouraged and reenergized by two of my UNA professors, Dr. Cornelius and Dr. Wiginton, whose commitment to learning and devotion to student success is inspiring. I hope to one day be a professor who is as engaged and motivating as they are.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my husband and four children for supporting me in my quest to further my education. The fulfillment of my dreams has required sacrifices from each of them, and I am truly grateful for their understanding, unconditional love, and kind words of encouragement.

**CONGRATULATIONS FOR BEING SELECTED AS THE NOVEMBER STUDENT OF THE MONTH!**

# Tips for the **UNA** College Student

*After coming to UNA, fresh out of high school and entering a whole new world, it can be intimidating and challenging to find a balance between adolescence and adulthood. As a student, you are responsible for coordinating a variety of tasks including scheduling appointments with your advisor, setting up your financial aid and finding your place overall. While it's a big adjustment to be made, we are here to help you be more prepared and informed. Here are some tips to consider.*

There are endless suggestions of everything that is available to students at UNA. Always use your resources and look for ways to succeed while attending UNA. There will always be someone on campus to help, but take it upon yourself, as the student, to seek out what resources are available to you.

- ◆ **Be mindful of deadlines that are set for submitting important documents or assignments.** The UNA website has calendars and links that are helpful to follow at <https://www.una.edu/calendar/#/academic> or <https://www.una.edu/registrar/Calendars/index.html>.
- ◆ **When contacting a professor or instructor, expect at least one full business day for a response.** If an e-mail or phone call has been placed on a Friday afternoon, expect a response on Monday. If there have been 2 or more attempts of contact with more than 48 hours of no response, contact the departmental administrative assistant for help.
- ◆ **For changing a major, it is helpful that the student make that change in the department that they are changing to.** For example, if a business student is changing to secondary education, then the student should come to the secondary education department to fill out the form and be assigned a new advisor and then the form will be sent to the Registrar's office.
- ◆ **Connect with new friends to learn about the student organizations on campus.** Check the UNA website for all of the organizations that are offered. This is a good way to meet new people as well as gain experience for the future.
- ◆ **For on-campus residents, get familiar with the Department of University Residences.** Visit their web-site at <https://www.una.edu/liveon/>. Know what rights you have and how to handle complications when they arise.
- ◆ **Keep in mind to allow plenty of time for parking on campus.** Many times students do not allow enough time for parking and cannot find a space to park and then end up running late for class. Several times students will park in faculty parking (green lines) and be ticketed. An alternative could be the Lion's Way Express. The UNA website has the bus schedules and timelines available at: <https://www.una.edu/police/bus-routes.html>. This would be a good alternative and can also cut down on driving in circles to park.

***Good Luck and ROAR Lions!***

# Something to Brag About

The Department of Secondary Education would like to congratulate Amy Bolding, 2014 UNA Secondary Education Alternative Masters Graduate, for being named Teacher of the Year at Allen Thornton Career Technical Center. Way to go, Amy!

We are so proud of you.

## Important Dates

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- December 15** Fall Preregistration Closes
- December 17** Commencement
- December 22-January 4, 2017** University Closed - Holiday

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*Make sure to mark your calendar!*

