



Michael Chasar wins the national CGS/UMI Distinguished Dissertation Award for his dissertation "Everyday Reading: U.S. Poetry and Popular Culture, 1880-1945."

UI Graduate College alumnus wins nation's top dissertation award

University of Iowa alumnus Michael Chasar has won the nation's most prestigious honor for doctoral dissertations, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS)/UMI Distinguished Dissertation Award. Chasar, who earned his doctorate in English last summer, earned the award for his dissertation, "Everyday Reading: U.S. Poetry and Popular Culture, 1880-1945," a study of how ordinary readers read and consume verse.

Selected above all other humanities and fine arts dissertations completed nationally within a two-year period (July 1, 2005-June 30, 2007), Chasar's study of poetry scrapbooking, poetry radio broadcasts, and advertising poetry was honored at a ceremony during the CGS 47th annual meeting December 6 in Seattle, Wash. He received a certificate, a \$1,000 honorarium, and travel expenses to attend the award ceremony.

Chasar's dissertation was directed by UI English Professor Dee Morris, with Ed Folsom, Garrett Stewart, Loren Glass, and Kembrew McLeod, all faculty in the UI's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, on the dissertation committee. Chasar completed additional dissertation preparation through the UI Center for the Book certificate program, an interdisciplinary arts and research unit that fosters the study of the book in society. Chasar is currently a visiting assistant professor in the UI's Department of English, teaching undergraduate courses in American literature and culture.

Chasar also won the UI Graduate College's 2007 D.C. Priestestersbach Dissertation Prize for best dissertation in the humanities and fine arts, an award that placed his work in the running for the national award as the UI's nominated dissertation. In March, he will receive the Priestestersbach Prize honors, along with \$2,500, at a special UI reception held in conjunction with the James F. Jakobsen Graduate Research Forum, organized by the Graduate Student Senate.

Winners of the UI's Priestestersbach Prize have fared exceptionally well in the national competition. Only Yale University, with four winners, has been recognized as often as the UI since the inauguration of the national competition in 1981. The other UI recipients of the national prize were: David Lasocki, music, most outstanding dissertation in the nation in the humanities, 1984; Matthew P. Anderson, physiology and biophysics, most outstanding dissertation in the biological sciences, 1993; and Susan Behrends Frank, art history, most outstanding dissertation in the humanities, 1997. Ten other UI nominees have been finalists in the national dissertation competition.

"The success of the UI's candidates in the national competition is a tribute to the exceptional standards of excellence met by doctoral research conducted at this university," said UI Associate Provost and Graduate College Dean John Keller.

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Graduate College staff member Eunice Prosser honored for 40 years of service to the UI

The Graduate College honored Eunice Prosser for 40 years of service to The University of Iowa at a luncheon held October 24, 2007.

Associate Provost and Graduate College Dean John C. Keller offered congratulations to Eunice, as well as thanks for her years of service to the university. Graduate College Associate Dean Dale E. Wurster also commended Eunice for her work. Guests included former Graduate College Associate Deans David Wiemer and James F. Jakobsen.

Eunice, in a variety of roles for the College, has served as a vital communications link between the Graduate College, graduate students, and their programs. Her knowledgeable assistance to graduate students has helped shape a culture of service among Graduate College staff.

Currently, Eunice serves the Graduate College as assistant to Associate Dean Wurster in the Office of Academic Affairs for graduate students. Among other functions, the office provides support for students as they write and publish their theses or dissertations, take comprehensive exams, and prepare to meet the requirements of their degree programs.



From left: John C. Keller, David Wiemer, Eunice Prosser, James F. Jakobsen, Dale E. Wurster

Graduate College News

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The University of Iowa
 Iowa City, IA 52242
www.grad.uiowa.edu
gradcoll@uiowa.edu

Office of the Dean
 205 Gilmore Hall
 319.335.2143

John C. Keller, Ph.D.
 Associate Provost and Dean
 Professor, College of Dentistry
 335.2142 — john-keller@uiowa.edu

Caroline Mast
 Assistant to Dean Keller
 335.2142 — caroline-mast@uiowa.edu

Daniel Berkowitz, Ph.D.
 Associate Dean of Student &
 Administrative Affairs
 Professor, School of Journalism
 and Mass Communication
 335.3492 — dan-berkowitz@uiowa.edu

Kathy Klein
 Assistant to Associate Dean Berkowitz
 335.3492 — kathy-klein@uiowa.edu

Minnetta Gardinier, Ph.D.
 Associate Dean for Graduate
 Recruitment & Professional Development
 Director, Interdisciplinary Graduate
 Program in Molecular & Cellular Biology
 Associate Professor, Pharmacology
 335.2147 — m-gardinier@uiowa.edu

Paul Meintel
 Assistant to Associate Dean Gardinier
 335.2147 — paul-meintel@uiowa.edu

Donna Welter
 Director of Human Resources & Finance
 335.2145 — donna-welter@uiowa.edu

Office of Academic Affairs
 6 Gilmore Hall
 319.335.2144

Dale Eric Wurster, Ph.D.
 Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
 Professor, College of Pharmacy
 335.2137 — dale-e-wurster@uiowa.edu

Caren Cox
 Associate Director of Academic Affairs
 335.2135 — caren-cox@uiowa.edu

Eunice Prosser
 Assistant to Associate Dean Wurster
 335.2137 — eunice-prosser@uiowa.edu

Iowa's Summer Research Opportunities Program

Since 1986, The University of Iowa Graduate College has assisted underrepresented scholars as they prepare for graduate school. The Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) offers students the chance to study with top scholars and researchers. SROP is a program facilitated by the CIC (Committee for Institutional Cooperation—a Big Ten consortium) in partnership with academic institutions across the country.

Iowa's SROP 2007 attracted 30 scholars from a wide variety of fields. The students studied directly with graduate faculty mentors, an important opportunity for undergraduates preparing for graduate studies. They also prepared research papers and presented their findings at the Graduate College's Summer Undergraduate Research Conference and the national SROP Conference held at Purdue University, July 27-29, 2007.

2007 UI SROP mentors and scholars

Each summer, graduate faculty members serve as SROP mentors, welcoming talented undergraduates into their research labs and classrooms. The Graduate College thanks these faculty for their generosity and fine professional guidance for SROP scholars.

Faculty mentors for summer 2007 are listed below, with the names of the SROP students and the students' research abstract titles.

Dr. Elizabeth Altmaier, Counseling Psychology

Courtney Cornick, Iowa State University
Racial Differences in the Processes of Forgiveness

Dr. Lee Anna Clark, Clinical Psychology

Milissia John-Baptiste, Southern University A & M, Baton Rouge
Relations between the SNAP-Y and MMPI-A in a Clinical Sample

Dr. Stewart Ehly, School Psychology

Tanee Mason, Roanoke College
Mum is the Word: Increasing Vocalizations in a Child With Selective Mutism

Dr. Kristine Fitch, Communication Studies

Tasha Williams, Pepperdine University
Intercultural Communication

Dr. Laura Frey Law, Physical Therapy

Ayanna Porter, McKendree College
The Relationship between Personality Variables and Pain Perception during a Dynamic Fatigue Task

Dr. Kathryn Gerken, School Psychology

Domonique Casper, Grambling State University
Outcome Data for Teen Parents: A Longitudinal Study
Shannon Hutcheson, Ohio State University
Outcome Data for Teen Parents: A Longitudinal Study

Dr. Greg Gray, Epidemiology

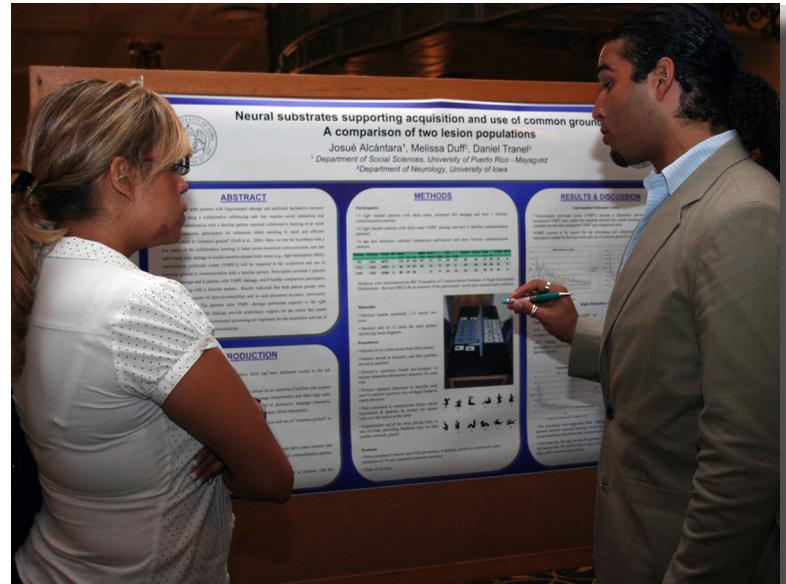
Osarumen Okunbor, University of Missouri, Columbia
Evaluation of Light Diagnostics Human Metapneumovirus Direct Immunofluorescence Assay on Clinical Specimens

Dr. Charles Grose, Microbiology

Clarissa Brown, University of Central Missouri
Identification of Viral Surface Proteins by Different Imaging Technologies

Dr. James Hall, Social Work

Lavonna Connell, Oakwood College
The Association of Adolescent Victimization and Substance Use



Josue Alcantara Marte, 2007 Iowa SROP scholar from Puerto Rico, presents his research in neuroscience. His UI mentor was Daniel Tranel.

Grad College Diversity

SROP is an important recruiting tool for the UI, helping attract talented underrepresented students for Iowa's graduate programs. Iowa SROP is part of the Graduate College Office of Graduate Ethnic Inclusion.

Office of Graduate Ethnic Inclusion

Minnetta Gardinier—Director

Paul Meintel—Assistant to Associate Dean Gardinier

Diana Bryant—SROP Coordinator

Joseph Henry—Outreach Coordinator

Iowa Biosciences Advantage

Sarah England & Vincent Rodgers—Co-directors

Jodi Linley—Assistant Director

Jessica Tellez—Program Assistant

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Graduate College Department of Urban and Regional Planning

City planning researchers offer valuable analysis of affordable housing initiatives

University of Iowa faculty researchers Richard Funderburg and Heather MacDonald, in the Graduate College Department of Urban and Regional Planning, offer a new approach to gathering accurate data on the impact of Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects.

The LIHTC program, created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, provides funding for affordable housing. Funderburg and MacDonald work with communities in an ongoing study to examine economic impacts of new construction LIHTC projects.

Why study LIHTC?

Since the LIHTC program's inception, its projects have been instrumental in increasing the supply of affordable housing nationwide. City officials, developers,

community planners, and others have vested interests in the benefits of LIHTC projects. MacDonald explains, "Cities are interested in attracting businesses. Businesses require a qualified workforce, and that workforce needs quality, affordable housing. Some of that housing may come from LIHTC projects."

Until now, the impacts of such projects have remained largely unknown. Many studies have been too small, and reports have been written based on combined data from a variety of projects. "Some attempts to analyze the impact of the LIHTC program have amassed data on

dissimilar projects, lumping together information on the impacts of projects ranging from housing for the elderly to housing for low income," says Funderburg.

The research protocol developed by MacDonald and Funderburg provides the planning structure cities need to determine whether an LIHTC project will slow or accelerate the valuation of neighboring single family homes.

Significant differences also exist between projects for rehabilitating existing structures and projects involving new construction, causing similar problems with analysis. In addition, other studies have failed to control for the wide range of factors

A look at the impact of UI research

What are Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects (LIHTC)?

- Tax credits attract investment in affordable housing.
- Local housing and community development agencies use these credits to increase the supply of affordable housing in their communities.

Who is interested in the impact of low income housing tax credit projects?

- City officials
- Appraisers
- Developers
- Neighborhood residents

How does UI Urban and Regional Planning research on LIHTC projects aid society?

- Provides accurate information on the real impact of the projects
- Allows city planners and community developers to identify, pursue, and plan LIHTC projects that will have the most positive impact on their communities
- Helps neighborhood residents understand how LIHTC projects would affect the value of their homes

For more information about research in Urban & Regional Planning, visit www.urban.uiowa.edu.

that can affect the value of housing. The lack of accurate information poses problems for LIHTC project planners.

New analysis model

To solve this problem, Funderburg designed a natural experiment that matches properties near new LIHTC projects with otherwise similar homes farther away. Econometric controls enable them to isolate the effects of an LIHTC project on single family home valuation.

How cities in Iowa benefit

The research protocol developed by UI researchers MacDonald and Funderburg creates a comprehensive picture of LIHTC projects. Their work gives city planners insight into the factors that determine whether an LIHTC project will slow or accelerate

the valuation of neighboring single family homes.

MacDonald explains, “Cities are very interested in data that show the real impact of these projects. It’s difficult to get current residents to support LIHTC because of perceived effects on property value. It’s the ‘not in my backyard’ syndrome.”

Faced with this, cities seek thorough research that will identify why projects may have negative or positive impacts. “Cities know they lack the information to make decisions, so they are coming to academics for answers,” says MacDonald.

Cities also look to academic institutions for access to resources too expensive for most municipalities. Funderburg says, “We are in constant contact and collaboration with cities.

Through our work, The University of Iowa Department of Urban and Regional Planning offers communities across Iowa access to spatial analyses that rely on Geographic Information Systems (GIS).”

This and other computing technologies can help communities understand the implications of the decisions they make. And, as the Funderburg/MacDonald research reveals, a well-planned LIHTC project is likely to make a significantly positive impact on surrounding property values.

MacDonald and Funderburg will be presenting their research results to Iowa legislators in Des Moines, with plans to continue providing information for community development projects across the state.



Richard Funderburg, Ph.D.

Specializing in:

- Regional science
- Economic development policy
- Spatial analysis using GIS

Heather MacDonald, Ph.D.

Specializing in:

- Housing and community development
- Land use
- Gender and urban/rural development

To support UI research on affordable housing, visit us online at www.uifoundation.org/graduate/ Find the Urban & Regional Planning giving page by clicking on “**Make your gift online now!**”



John C. Keller
Associate Provost for Graduate
Education and Dean of the
Graduate College

Letter from the Dean

Graduate College shows progress toward strategic goals

The Graduate College plays an important role in maintaining the high quality of graduate and professional education and research at The University of Iowa. This role is increasingly important as more employers seek to hire those with graduate degrees.

In 2005, the UI Board of Regents established a series of progress indicators as part of a five-year plan for measuring performance at The University of Iowa. Four of the

indicators measure progress toward goals regarding graduate and professional education and research.

The Graduate College is pleased to report positive progress toward **all** four goals.

Number of graduate students winning national fellowships or awards

- **Goal:** 30 new awards in each of the next five years
- **Results:** In just two years (2006 and 2007), 80 new awards have been reported.

One of those awards was the national CGS Dissertation Award winner, Michael Chasar (see cover story). This makes Iowa top in the nation with four Dissertation Award winners, tied with Yale.

Time to Ph.D. degree

- **Goal:** Decrease the average number of years to earn a UI Ph.D. from 6.7 to 6.4 years

- **Results:** The UI's annual records from 2003 to 2007 show a positive trend, decreasing steadily each year. Average time to degree moved from 6.6 years in 2003 to 6.2 years in 2007.

Graduate assistant salary & tuition scholarship levels

- **Goal:** Increase to top third of peer group (11 institutions, including other Big Ten institutions plus the University of Chicago)
- **Results:** TA salaries increased in 2007, moving Iowa's ranking from sixth to third-highest in TA salaries among our 10 CIC peer institutions.

Graduate fellowships & scholarships

- **Goal:** Reprioritize fund distribution among graduate programs, with an emphasis on support for the recruitment of higher quality graduate students
- **Results:** The Graduate College is in the last year of a 3-year process to revise funding policies to prioritize support for our prestigious fellowship programs, and for strategic initiatives to enhance the recruitment, retention, and timely matriculation of high-quality graduate students.

This positive report is the result of hard work and collaborative efforts of graduate programs across the entire campus. The Graduate College looks forward to continued diligence on behalf of our graduate students and alumni.

Sincerely,

John C. Keller
Associate Provost for Graduate Education
Dean, Graduate College

More about UI graduate research

Graduate Student Senate

The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) plays an important role on campus, bringing together the graduate student community for interdisciplinary discussions, governance, and peer support. The organization consists of senators from nearly all the graduate programs at Iowa. Find further information about GSS at www.uiowa.edu/~gss.

James F. Jakobsen Conference 2008

As part of a week-long focus on graduate education at the UI, the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) will host the tenth annual James F. Jakobsen Conference March 28-29. The conference highlights UI graduate research across all graduate programs at Iowa. The conference is open to the public. To view the schedule, visit www.uiowa.edu/~gss/conference.

UI SROP mentors and scholars, summer 2007

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Asale Hubbard, Iowa State University
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Suncerrae Perry, University of Wisconsin, Whitewater
Ethnic Minority Students' Perceptions of Honors Programs
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Michael Alvarez, University of Puerto Rico, Humacao
- Dr. Bruce Johnson**, Accounting
Cyprian Alaribe, Truman State University
How Fair is Fair Value Accounting?
- Dr. Erika Lawrence**, Clinical Psychology
Rosaura Orengo, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras
Do Conflict Recovery Skills Buffer the Effects of Marital Conflict on Marital Satisfaction?
- Dr. Michael Lovaglia**, Sociology
Dorian Cowan, Wake Forest University
The Role of Identity on Social and Self Perception
- Dr. Pamela Noel**, Social Work
Amy Epps, University of Miami
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Rachel Cuevas, California State University, Long Beach
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- Dr. Anne Helene Skinstad**, Community & Behavioral Health
Kevin Montes, California State University, Dominguez Hills
Student Gambling at The University of Iowa
- Dr. Geb Thomas**, Industrial Engineering
Chelsey Daniels, Elizabeth City State University
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- Dr. Daniel Tranel**, Neuroscience
Josue Alcantara Marte, University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez
Neural Substrates Supporting Acquisition and Use of Common Ground: A Comparison of Two Lesion Populations
Jose Rodriguez-Romaguera, University of Puerto Rico, San Juan
Psychosocial Stress: Sex Differences in Cortisol Response and Speech Productivity
Antu Schamberger, Loyola Marymount University
Development of Common Ground in Social Communication in Patients with Light Hemisphere Damage
- Dr. Ed Wasserman**, Clinical Psychology
Cristal Martinez, University of Texas, El Paso
Auditory Categorization by Pigeons
- Dr. Fred Woodard**, English
Angela Watkins, DePaul University, Chicago
Zora Neale Hurston: *Memory, Identity, and Performance*

New Ph.D. grads

The Graduate College welcomed 147 newly hooded doctoral grads to its alumni ranks on December 21, 2007. The college held a reception in their honor at the Levitt Center for University Advancement.

For a complete list of December 2007 doctoral graduates, visit www.grad.uiowa.edu, or search the UI online community, www.OnIowa.com.

OnIowa.com
CONNECTING U

Marion Doherty Hayden, Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), with friend Marie von Behren of Iowa City. Dr. Doherty Hayden travelled from Ireland to attend her doctoral hooding and commencement.



Virginia Armstrong, Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), with her mother, Betty Armstrong.



Graduate College staff member Diana Bryant congratulates two mother-daughter pairs: Elsie Newton and Lanese Kwegyir Aggrey, Ph.D. in education, and Beth Richter, Ph.D. in education, and Mary A. Richter.



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Contributions of \$100 or more to the Graduate College are recognized in *Graduate College News*.

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