

FALL 2007  
DATES TO  
REMEMBER:

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

SEPTEMBER, 2007

- September 20 is the last day for students to file "Application for Advanced Degree"
- November 27 is the deadline for approval of theses or dissertation by the Division of Graduate Education.
- November 27 is the last day to complete the comprehensive exam/defense/final exam for Spring 2007 graduates.

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## Graduate Education: A Critical National Need

As a nation, America faces serious and intensifying challenges to our global competitiveness and standard of living. The National Academies Report entitled, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future," paints a clear picture of today's "flat, highly competitive, and rapidly changing world." The United State's position as the sole global economic leader is being challenged by the growing economies in China, India, Ireland, and a dozen or more other countries. Even in the high technology products sector, the U.S. has become a net importer. Our trade balance in high tech manufactured goods has shifted from a positive \$33B in 1990 to a negative \$24B in 2004.

A key element of global competitiveness is a highly skilled, highly innovative, and strongly entrepreneurial workforce, particularly in

fields such as science, mathematics, and technology that underpin much of the new knowledge based economy. Graduate education, the major source of a highly skilled workforce, is the "backbone of American competitiveness and innovation" that must be advanced and supported to insure a secure future for the U.S. Congress has taken action and recently passed the bill, "America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES Act)" (H.R. 2272). The COMPETES Act includes:

- Nearly \$40M for new graduate fellowships at the Department of Energy
- \$125M in FY 08 and succeeding years for master's degree programs in teaching math, science, or critical foreign languages
- \$250M in funding for the Na-



tional Science Foundation's (NSF) Integrative Graduate Education and Research Training ((IGERT) program

- Over \$350M for NSF graduate research fellowships
- 37M for a Professional Science Masters (PSM) program at NSF.

The COMPETES Act begins the process to put America on the path to a bright and secure future. With this kind of support, our graduate students will be the best and brightest talent in the world.



"It was an amazing experience for me to interact with the present and future scientific researchers from all over the world," excitedly stated Sutapa Barua, a master's student in Chemical Engineering.

Barua was nominated as one of the young scientists in the 57th Physiology/Medicine meeting in 2007 at Lindau, Germany.

## Sutapa Barua Attends 57th Meeting with Nobel Laureates

The one week meeting was attended by Nobel Laureates and 560 young researchers from 62 different countries. Barua was selected based on her excellent research, publications, teaching record, and other academic accomplishments.

"As a participant, I found that the Laureates are very intelligent and wise researchers. They are constantly thinking about how their inventions can help the general public, especially in the area of curing diseases," commented Barua. Some of the discussions centered on such topics as cell cycle

regulation and its implementation in cancer disease, RNA solencing and interference, the role of nitric oxide in preventing disease, and the future of biofuels.

"The best part of our discussions focused on how scientist's discoveries can reach the general people and use them for public welfare. I sincerely acknowledge Montana State University for the travel fund that was managed by the Division of Graduate Education, College of Engineering, and the Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering for giving me the opportunity to attend this wonderful meeting."

*“The best leader is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and the self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it.”*

**Theodore Roosevelt**



*“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”*

**John F. Kennedy**

## Bruce Maxwell—Graduate Coordinator



If you are out for a morning hike, don't be surprised if you encounter Dr. Bruce Maxwell while he's training for the annual 20 mile Bridger Ridge Run. A former alpine Ski Team member of the United States Ski Team in the 1970's, Maxwell's passion for outdoor sports, as well as his commitment to MSU, has been a constant theme in his life.

Maxwell is a professor of Weed Ecology/Agroecology, as well as the new graduate coordinator in the

Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences. He received his B.S. degree in Botany from MSU in 1977, his M.S. degree in Agronomy from MSU in 1984, and his Ph.D. in Crop Science/Forest Science from Oregon State University in 1989.

Originally from Montana, Maxwell returned home in 1992 and was hired as the Assistant Professor of Weed Biology and Ecology. His research focuses on the design and development of non-chemical weed management strategies for annual and perennial weeds in cereals, row crops and forage cropping systems, as well as management and land use planning. He has published over 50 scientific journal articles and has been a member of two National Research Council Committees on Agriculture.

Maxwell mentors graduate students, post-doctoral research scientists, and research technicians, who work in his lab on various aspects of precision agriculture, agroecology and ecologically-based pest management.

What does Maxwell like best about working with graduate

students? “What I enjoy most is the mentoring, getting to know the students and finding out about their various backgrounds.” Graduate students who work with Maxwell stated that “he is very approachable and cares sincerely for the well-being of all of his students.” What they appreciate is the fact that he's always willing to take time to make sure they understand the science behind their projects.

Jon Wraith, Land Resources and Environmental Sciences department head says, “Bruce is a perfect example of the great faculty that MSU can attract and develop; he's internationally known for both his research and teaching, but he loves the Montana outdoor lifestyle and the opportunities for close interactions with students that we have here. He's a real asset.”

## Peter Faggen Studies Tibetan Culture

A former sports writer for the Bozeman Chronicle newspaper, Peter Faggen decided to switch gears. He left the Bozeman Chronicle in 2003 and adventured on a three week cultural tour of the Indian Himalayas. His travel to India rekindled an interest in Tibetan culture and upon his return, Faggen entered MSU graduate school in the Department of History, Philosophy and Religious Studies.

Over the next two years, Faggen journeyed back and forth to the Himalayas staying over two months in Dharamasala, the exile home of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama of Tibet. While researching a project for his

master's degree, Faggen returned to India for six months in 2006. During this time, Faggen interviewed numerous Tibetan men and women about their experiences as refugees. Faggen's thesis “Tibetaness in Dharamasala” analyzes Tibetan changes in government, education, economy and religion. Faggen says, “Tibetan identity is anything but fixed or imagined, but rather it is a part of a fluid process of becoming Tibetan.”

After receiving his master's degree in May 2007, Faggen entered an intensive language institute at the University of Virginia to begin further study of Tibetan culture. He intends to spend



much of this year in India, becoming more familiar with the Tibetan culture for future scholarly research. He is currently applying to Ph.D. programs across the US, both in Cultural Anthropology and Religious Studies.

## Lynn Taylor—Graduate Student Support



For Lynn Taylor, Graduate Program Administrative Assistant in the College of Nursing, hard work and commitment are the keys to her success in keeping the department running smoothly. Taylor, a seventeen-year veteran of the College of Nursing, is known as a prime organizer and great connector.

"I simply enjoy the work, enjoy the students, and enjoy helping people," said Taylor. Faculty who teach in the graduate program rely upon Taylor's expertise.

They know that she will have the answers to their questions regarding deadlines, required paperwork for comprehensive exams, thesis or project defenses, and other important information related to degree requirements and graduation.

Gretchen McNeely, Associate Dean of the College of Nursing commented, "Lynn not only works hard, but always brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to each of the many tasks we complete, from grant proposals to new curriculum approvals and program implementation. Students often tell me how friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful she is when they are trying to get their applications submitted or register for their courses."

"What I enjoy the most about my job is what could be considered the most stressful," says Taylor. "It's a tremendous challenge working with faculty and students from each one of our four locations which, in addition to Bozeman, includes Billings, Great Falls, and Missoula. It would be easy to become overwhelmed, but I take one day at a time, or one project at a time, and prioritize by deadlines."

What advice does she have for other administrative associates who work with graduate students? "Don't assume students are going to remember deadlines," says Taylor. "They have too many things going on. Keep in touch with them."

Remarks from students who work with Taylor say, "Taylor's ongoing assistance and support make a tremendous positive impact in their experience as graduate students and they are forever grateful."

It's a well known fact that having a deeply committed staff is part of what makes Montana State University a great place to go to school. The backbone of the university is the staff who not only does the job but believes in the job as well. Lynn Taylor is a prime example of this commitment and DGE appreciates the dedication and the support she provides to our graduate students.

Contact Lynn Taylor, College of Nursing  
lynnt@montana.edu



## The University Graduate Council (UGC) Makes Exciting Changes in AY 2007

The University Graduate Council (UGC) completed a highly successful year in AY '07. With strong leadership by Chair, Dr. Mark Nelson, the UGC advanced graduate education at MSU through the following actions:

- UGC is now chaired by a faculty member.
- A second graduate student representative was added to the UGC.
- New Ph.D. and Master's degrees in Ecology and Environmental Sciences and Clinical Nursing were approved by the Board of Regents.

- A new graduate certificate in Nursing Education is in place.
- The minimum credit requirement for the doctoral degree was increased to 60 post-baccalaureate credits.
- 400 level courses can now be co-convened with 500 level graduate courses.
- GRE is no longer required for admissions per Board of Regents action.

The UGC is looking forward to an exciting new year and anticipates making further changes to move graduate education forward at MSU. MSU University Graduate Council Members include the

following:

**Michele Hardy**, Agriculture  
**John Brittingham**, Arts and Architecture  
**Priscilla Wisner**, Business  
**Mark Nelson, Chair**, Education, Health & Human Development  
**Robert Maher**, Engineering  
**Carl Fox**, Graduate Education  
**Robert Rydell**, CLS, Letters  
**Yves Idzerda**, CLS, Science  
**Rita Cheek**, Nursing  
**Ed Dea**, Grad Student Rep.  
**Seth Humphries**, Grad Student Rep.

## Graduate Student Seminars—Tuesdays at Noon

Please remind students to bring their lunch, and join us for our Tuesday noon Seminars. Check our website for topics and locations @[www.montana.edu/gradstudies](http://www.montana.edu/gradstudies)

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Student ETD's are now published on a new website  
 To View the new ETD website  
 Visit.....  
<http://etd.lib.montana.edu/etd/view/index.php>

# Outstanding Graduate Achievement Award

Each year, the MSU Foundation awards the Outstanding Graduate Achievement Award to one recipient within three different categories: Outstanding Doctoral student, Outstanding Master's student, and Outstanding Native American student. The awards are based on faculty recommendations that speak to the nominee's distinction as a graduate student. The nominees this year were all exceptional, shining in their research, community outreach, and teaching.



The adjectives "driven" and "motivated" as well as "gifted" and "sharp" reoccurred in the numerous letters of support from faculty members. It is obvious to

the DGE staff that there are many well respected, high achieving graduates students at Montana State University. Narrowing down the nominations to three winners was a struggle, but the three chosen were truly outstanding. The recipients were presented with a plaque and a cash stipend at the pre-commencement banquet held May 11, 2007. The DGE is proud of all those recommended for the award and is honored to recognize the following students.

## Outstanding Doctoral Student: Frankie Jackson

After a 25 year educational hiatus, Frankie Jackson completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Montana in 1992. Since co-authoring her first paper in 1997, she has conducted research around the world, publishing over 20 papers on fossil eggs, nesting grounds, and dinosaur reproductive biology. Her dissertation research compares the sedimentology and paleontology of dinosaur nesting sites in Argentina and Spain.



She has also been an invited speaker for several international conferences on dinosaur biology and scanning electron microscopy.

An adjunct instructor and research scientist within the Department of Earth Sciences since 2003, Frankie teaches paleontology field and laboratory classes.

In addition, she is currently employed as a lead scientist on the Big Sky Science Project and a content specialist for Electronic-Mentoring for Student Success, developing curriculum content and conducting professional workshops for teachers in Montana and other states.

## Outstanding Master's Student: Megan Raby



Megan Raby graduated Spring, 2007 from the MSU History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies Department with a Master's in History. She also received her B.S. in Earth Sciences at MSU. Her work focused on the historical role of place in shaping science, specifically ornithology in the nineteenth-century American West, and was based on research at and funded by the Smithsonian Institution Archives. In the fall, Raby will enter the Ph.D. program in the History of Science Department at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. There, she has been awarded a fellowship through the CHANGE

(Certificate on Humans and the Global Environment) program, a National Science Foundation IGERT (Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship) intended to prepare Ph.D. students to work successfully within interdisciplinary contexts on issues of environmental sustainability. She is currently interested in the nineteenth and early twentieth-century history of national and international efforts to understand global climate change.

## Outstanding Native American Student: Whisper Camel

Whisper Camel is a 2007 Montana State University graduate and this year's recipient of the Graduate Achievement Award. She began her college experience in 1996 at Salish Kootenai College (SKC) in Pablo, Montana.

"Starting at the Tribal College was integral in being able to perform successfully at the university level," says Camel. The learning skills and maturity she gathered at SKC helped her in her 1999 transition to the University of Montana

in Missoula, MT. Whisper studied Wildlife Biology at U of M and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 2003. She was awarded a fellowship to attend MSU and joined a wildlife study along US highway 93 on the Flathead Indian Reservation, home of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT), of which she is an enrolled member. The fellowship was jointly funded by the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Western Transportation Institute. Whisper studied where deer were crossing and colliding with vehicles along a 56-mile stretch of

US 93 that is being upgraded with Wildlife Crossing Structures to reduce these collisions in the future. She is currently employed as a Tribal Wildlife Biologist with the CSKT Wildlife Program in western Montana.

