THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA® | College of Education

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION ENEWSLETTER
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SORRA ORGANIZATION

SORRA (Students on Restorative Relations Assemblage) is an arts-based and activism-oriented organization dedicated to the mission of social justice. Dr. Karen Spector (left) and doctoral student Briana Gilbert Kidd founded the organization in 2015, drawing inspiration from the Student Group on Race Relations (SGORR) in Shaker Heights, Ohio. While the program was previously housed at Hillcrest Middle School and Bobby Miller Activity Center, it has moved to Eastwood Middle School this year. SORRA students participate in spoken word, open mic poetry nights, read great books, and imagine community-wide arts projects. All major projects begin with ideas that SORRA participants dream up, including public service announcements, sites of memory and erasure tours, and oral histories. Watch for news of SORRA's big community arts event highlighting the history of civil rights in Tuscaloosa and featuring a STAMPEDE of decorated elephants, testaments to Alabama's historical memory.

DEVELOPING LEADERS IN SCIENCE EDUCATION

The Department is pleased to announce a new program for science educators. Developing Leaders in Science Teaching (LIST) is aimed at B.S. graduates and provides students $17,100 in scholarship money for a one-year Master of Arts (M.A.) degree. An additional $10,600 salary supplement will be awarded each year for four years if the teacher works in a high-needs school system. Nearly 95% of Alabama school systems qualify as high needs. LIST will be funded from 2017-2023. During the program, students will be placed with the same cooperating teacher and two faculty mentors: one from science education and one from biology, chemistry, or physics.

Primary features of the program include professional learning communities, micro-badging/credentialing (credentialing the students in particular strategies and skills through individual sessions), and lesson study. The primary aim of LIST is ensuring not only certified science teachers, but teachers certified at the graduate level who will also become leaders in the field, go into public school classrooms. This program is aimed at graduating more biology, chemistry, and physics teachers and following them through four years of induction in which they will move into the role of a mentor teacher. According to Dr. Dennis Sunal (left), the Project Director, science teaching positions experience high turnover rates. School administrators often are unable to hire certified candidates to fill positions. The scarcity of physics teachers in the state, for example, is so pronounced that Sunal estimates nearly 25% of Alabama public schools are unable to offer physics because there is no one to teach the coursework. The LIST program seeks to combat this crisis by providing an incentivized pathway with many levels of support for science teacher candidates to become highly qualified teachers, remain in the profession, and become leaders in the field.

UA RECEIVES NSF GRANT FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE TEACHING PREPARATION

The University of Alabama will now offer more comprehensive training opportunities for computer science education thanks to a grant from the National Science Foundation, which is part of the new "CS for All" program. The grant, involves Drs. Jeremy Zelkowski (left) and Jeff Gray, providing $300,000 over two years to fund extensive training opportunities for secondary mathematics education majors interested in teaching computer science education. The program will give up to 30 students each year $1,500 to take an upper-level computer science course focused on curriculum and pedagogy. After completing the course, the grant will provide an additional $1,500 to about 15 students each year who wish to complete summer training by the College Board certifying them to teach AP computer science. After teaching computer science in the public schools for a year, students who went through the pathway may use additional grant funding to present their experience at a national conference. The project addresses a large demand for educators who can teach AP computer science courses.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION FACULTY HOST DATA NIGHT FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

On September 12th, three elementary education faculty members, Julianne Coleman, Tracey Hodges, and Holly Swain, hosted a Data Night for undergraduate students to learn about, and engage in, research. At the event, students briefly heard about the importance of integrating research and classroom practices and then worked on a large database created from the U.S. Classroom Libraries Project. This project is a collaboration of researchers from five different states who are exploring differences in the quality and quantity of books located in classroom libraries. Specifically, the researchers are analyzing differences among books found in high-performing and low-performing schools, across 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade and across states in the North, South, and Midwest.

Two graduate students, Behzad Mansouri and Claire Schweiker, co-coordinated the event and provided mentorship and guidance to the undergraduate students. At the Data Night event, 43 undergraduate students in the elementary education program assisted the research team in cleaning and organizing information for approximately 6,000 picture books. The undergraduate students searched the Library of Congress, Scholastic, and other known publishing sites to locate ISBNs, book titles, authors, publication years, and genres for the books found in classroom libraries. By the end of the three-hour event, undergraduate students had a better understanding of one approach to engaging in research in elementary classrooms, and how that research impacts their development as future teachers.

JANIE HUBBARD SERVES AS NEW PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The College is pleased to introduce the new program coordinator for Elementary Education, Dr. Janie Hubbard (left). She joined the UA faculty in 2009. Hubbard earned her B.A. at the University of Montevallo, M.A. and Ed.S. at UAB, and doctorate at The University of Alabama. She also brings many years of early childhood, elementary, and middle school teaching experience to the position (including experiences teaching in Egypt, Indonesia, and Argentina). Hubbard is excited to work with such a collaborative and productive team as exists in elementary education. In this new position, she hopes to help grow elementary education graduate programs and continue to foster the inclusive culture that exists within the department and among our students. Hubbard is currently teaching a doctoral course called *Teachers and Teaching Practices across the World* and working on a grant proposal for funding to provide in-service teacher professional development for teaching civil liberties in K-12 schools. Her research interests include collaborative learning communities, diversity and cultural issues, and social studies methods.

PARTNERSHIP WITH TIANHUA COLLEGE, SHANGHAI NORMAL UNIVERSITY

The Department is delighted to welcome three visiting scholars from Tianhua College, Shanghai Normal University: Drs. Chris Gong, Binbin Wu, and Joyce Yang. They are here during the fall semester observing a number of undergraduate courses in the College of Education, including courses on assessment, literacy, and language arts education in elementary grades. Additionally, they will visit local elementary schools.

Since 2014, the Department has enjoyed a partnership with Tianhua College. This is the fourth semester during which scholars from Tianhua College have visited UA. Additionally, UA elementary education faculty members have visited the college. In 2016, Tianhua College began offering a program for pre-service elementary school teacher education, which culminates in a year spent at UA. The first cohort will come to UA in the 2019-2020 school year. UA faculty will provide one third of students' total instruction for this program. Due to the increasing popularity of international schools in Shanghai, preservice teachers' exposure to American teaching practices and resources is vital, according to Gong and Wu.

At Tianhua College, Gong is the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Wu is the head of the international program of elementary school education, and Yang is a lecturer in the psychology department and focuses on educational psychology.

NEW FACULTY INTRODUCTIONS

Dr. Tracey Hodges, assistant professor, is a 2015 graduate of Texas A&M University where she earned her Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in literacy education and advanced research methods. After graduating, she earned her first tenure-track position as an assistant professor at the University of Southern Mississippi where she taught undergraduate and graduate courses in elementary education and literacy. Hodges' research interests focus on writing instruction, teaching text structures, and preparing writing teachers for grades K-8. She also researches instructional methods for integrating children's and young adult literature into literacy and content area instruction. Finally, she examines teachers' beliefs about teaching and content, and how those beliefs impact their classroom practices and longevity in the teaching field. During the fall semester, Hodges is teaching CEE 478, the Language Arts course, which includes theoretical, conceptual, and practical methods for instructing writing in elementary schools. When she is not researching or teaching, she enjoys walking her dog, Jack, cooking new foods, reading, and traveling.

Dr. Alison Hooper, assistant professor, completed her Ph.D. in May 2017 at the University of Delaware in human development and family studies with an emphasis on early childhood education. While in Delaware, she taught kindergarten and worked as a project coordinator for early childhood research projects. Her research focuses on how to measure and improve child care quality and how access to high-quality early education can act as a buffer for children at risk. This semester she is teaching a section of CEE 491, Early Childhood Curriculum and Instruction. She is looking forward to getting involved with early childhood practitioners and policymakers in Alabama.

Dr. Jee Suh, assistant professor, earned her Ph.D. from the University of Iowa in May 2016 and then worked as an adjunct assistant professor at the University of Iowa for one year. During her doctoral work in science education, she also earned a master's degree in educational measurement and statistics. Before she came to the U.S., she earned her B.A. and M.S. in science education in Korea. Her doctoral research sought to improve understanding of the impact of teacher beliefs on science teaching. Her current research focuses on developing a model of teacher change explaining the relationship between epistemic orientation and other knowledge bases for teaching science. She has also worked for the Science Writing Heuristic project, which aims to help teachers implement the Immersive Argument-Based Inquiry approach in their classrooms. This year, Dr. Suh is teaching CEE 304, Teaching Early Childhood and Elementary School Science.

Dr. Jonathan Shemwell, associate professor, has joined UA after six years on the faculty of the University of Maine. Shemwell holds a Ph.D. in science education from Stanford University and an M.S. in physics from Johns Hopkins University. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and served for seven years as a nuclear submarine officer before leaving the Navy to work as a mechanical engineer and then a high school teacher. Shemwell's research generates ideas and innovations for more effective science teaching and assessment. He recently received a National Science Foundation research grant for a project to improve instruction on scientific modeling in Alabama high schools. This semester, Dr. Shemwell is teaching CSE 486, Teaching Secondary School Science, and CSE 489, Clinical Experience in Secondary School.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

For nearly 30 years, Dr. Teresa Lloyd has had the pleasure of working in the field of education, and serving 20 of those years as an administrator. She was Principal of DeArmanville Jr. High School for 5 years, and served as Assistant Principal of Liberty Park Elementary, Walter Wellborn Elementary, and Saks Middle schools over a 15-year span. Lloyd earned her B.S. and M.S. in Elementary Education from Jacksonville State University in 1991 and 1993. She attended The University of Alabama in 1996 and 1999 and obtained an Ed.S. and Ph.D. in Elementary Education.

Before becoming an administrator, Lloyd taught first grade remedial reading at Weaver Elementary, fifth grade mathematics and social studies at Saks Middle and was a substitute teacher for Calhoun County School System. In addition to teaching at the primary and secondary grade levels, Lloyd has also taught on the college level at the University of Montevallo, The University of Alabama and Jacksonville State University (current theories of curriculum instruction and assessment).

Lloyd's professional experience also includes 17 years of experience in building based student support team experience, 10 years in Professional Educational Personnel Teacher Evaluation and as a School Financial Management School. She also has experience as an Alabama Math Science and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) Trainer, Professional Developer, and Title I School Leader. She has also received specialized training in administration and supervision at Jacksonville State University in 1997, attended the Superintendents Academy at The University of Alabama in 2004-2005.

Lloyd has received numerous awards honoring her dedication to education. She was the recipient of the Jacksonville State University College Commerce and Business Administration Award: 1998, "Excellence in Economic Education" 1996-1997, Elementary School Economics Teacher of the Year Finalist, 1997, Elementary School Economics Teacher of the Year Finalist, 1998, Alabama Safe School Award for Excellence: 2003-2004, and First Place-Best Builders Club in America-2003. While Dr. Lloyd has been on the receiving end of many awards, she has also given back to the practice of education by writing several grants totaling over half a million dollars to create 21st century learning centers, with computer, overhead calculators, and math computer software.