A Note from the Acting Graduate Director

I stepped in as Acting DGS last winter, when our “real” DGS, Dr. Michelle Rowley, received support for a year’s research leave. Serving in this position has been a privilege, a challenge, and an education. I’ll explain why—in reverse order.

It has been an education, because acting as grad director requires that you learn the lay of many lands. To name a few: the institution itself and its workings; the current state of the field; and above all, the current intellectual investments of our astonishingly diverse and multi-talented graduate student body. Most of all, come next semester, I will miss that last territory, and the sense of having a special vantage point from which to view your cumulative accomplishments.

It has been a challenge, because the job inherently means strategizing how to enhance both your success and your well-being, amidst the daily press of deadlines that always seem imminent. So for me, meeting you on the challenge course for a little team-building was, typically, both challenge and pleasure—a challenge because I was definitely out of my comfort zone, and pleasure because it was wonderful to laugh with you and to glimpse the many shapes of your talent and leadership beyond those that depend solely on the mind.

It has been a privilege, because getting to know you and your accomplishments has given me a reassuring sense that the future of women’s studies—or women’s, gender, race, and sexuality studies—or critical identity studies—or studies in culture and society, inequality and justice—is in excellent hands, whatever nomenclature we and the field ultimately adopt. As an attendee at the founding conference of the National Women’s Studies Association in 1975, where we knew we were inventing something (not just an organization but a field) that seemed both precious and fragile, I can honestly say that you and your work have exceeded that moment’s most hopeful dreams.

Meet our new cohort. From left to right we have Sumaya Ahmed, Cheyenne Stevens, and Sara Haq. We provide a more detailed introduction on pg. 2. Welcome to the Women’s Studies Department. We are all very happy to have you.

SOME STATS

- We have 26 current Ph.D. students
- 45% of admitted students have been women or men of color
- We have graduated 19 students with Ph.D.’s
- 3 of our graduates received highly competitive post-docs at top-tier institutions
- 3 (not the identical three!) received publishers’ awards for best first books
- 9 of our graduates currently occupy tenure-track positions at research universities, liberal arts colleges, and community colleges
- 6 occupy administrative positions at universities or community organizations
- 2 are currently visiting assistant professors

-Deborah Rosenfelt-
Our New Cohort...

Sumaya Ahmed
Sumaya received her M.A. from the University of Toronto in 2013 in Women and Gender Studies and a B.A. from Toronto in Criminology and Ethics. She is working on a comparative study of Canadian and U.S. immigration by South Asians since the 1970’s, considering how Canadian immigration policy constructs a model minority stereotype as part of an official multiculturalism, as opposed to the U.S.’s emphasis on exclusionary national narratives. She is particularly interested in the immigration experiences of working-class South Asian women, especially the mother-daughter dyad. She has an article related to this work forthcoming in the *Women's Studies International Forum*; it focuses on the suburb of Toronto where she herself grew up. She co-founded the Aboriginal Women and Women of Colour support circle at the Centre for Women and Trans People at the University of Toronto.

Sara Haq
Sara has an M.A. from George Mason University in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Women and Gender Studies, and a B.A. from the same institution in Psychology. She is interested in the intersectionalities of gender, “religio-spirituality,” and culture. Her M.A. thesis examined the concept of liminality in Islamic thought, and critiqued binary understandings of gender via this engagement. It focused on the *bijna* (“third gender”) community, as well as the notion of *barzakh* (intermediary state) in traditional Sufi writing, linking them to interrogate a range of gender/sex binaries. In the process, she analyzes Quranic concepts of the soul as well as Pakistani popular culture. Sara’s proposed project, to use Sufi thought to question marriage as an institution, seeks to push non-dualistic notions of Sufi love to argue for a more expansive notion of intimate relations. Ultimately, she hopes to use her positionality as someone rooted in both Eastern and Western contexts and her work on the junctures of feminist and Sufi thought to expand the boundaries of transnational feminist theory.

Melissa Cheyenne Stevens
Cheyenne received her B.A. in Ethnic Studies from UC San Diego in 2010, with a minor in critical gender studies. Her senior research honors project explored issues of food justice in poor communities of color, looking at issues of access to healthy food, and at the experiences of those who have adopted veganism for reasons of health and as a statement about political resistance and the rights of the vulnerable, both people and animals. Her focus here will be on queer of color feminist theory. She will continue to explore the complex relationships between the environment, social justice for humans, and animal rights, questioning traditional ideas of humanism that have constructed problematic race and gender narratives, underwritten colonial subjugations, and placed white male humans at the apex of models of value. The first person in her family to attend university, Stevens was an activist throughout her undergraduate career, co-founding Student Promoted Access Center for Education and Service, a student-run recruitment and retention center, and working with Queer People of Color to recruit and retain underrepresented high school and UCSD students.
Many congratulations are in order this year, as our students continue to make steady progress toward the Ph.D., receive recognition and awards for their work and their contributions to life and thought in their varying communities, and publish their exciting work.

**BENCHMARKS**

**Congratulations to:**

- Donnesha Blake, Avery Dame, Eve Grice, Tangere Hoagland, Sun Hye Kim, Sina Lee, and Justin Sprague, for passing their General Exams.
- Laura Brunner, Michelé Prince, and Jessica Vooris for passing their Major Field Exams.
- yh Patt, Jeannette Soon-Ludes, and Katie White, for successfully defending their dissertation prospectuses.

**AWARDS**

**Congratulations to:**

- Avery Dame, who received the Chesapeake American Studies Association Graduate Student Essay Award with co-author Cassy Griff
- Renina Jarmon, whose book *Black Girls are from the Future*, was recognized on TheRoot.com as one of the top 5 of “Black Feminist Books for Everyone”
- Bettina Judd, who received the Hudson Book Prize for best first manuscript in fiction or poetry for her book, *Patient*; and a Crossroads in the Study of the Americas Fellowship, Five Colleges, Amherst, MA
- Angel Miles, who received a competitive American Association of People with Disabilities Summer Internship and a Qualitative Research Dissertation Award from UM’s Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity
- yh Patt, who received the Graduate Student Research Award from the Latin American Studies Center
- Melissa Rogers, who received the Graduate Scholarship for the Digital Humanities Winter Institute

- Jeannette Soon-Ludes, who received a Center of Teaching Excellence Inclusion and Diversity Learning Community Award
- Jessica Vooris, who received a LGBT Equity Center Scholarship
- Katie White, who received a Center for Teaching Excellence Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award and a Graduate School Summer Research Fellowship
- Yuenmei Wong, who received a South East Asia Foreign Fulbright Award

**PUBLICATIONS**

Newly Minted Doctorates

Four of our students successfully defended their dissertations in AY 2012-2013. Their spirited defenses were well-attended by their colleagues, family, and friends. Congratulations to these recent graduates and to their dissertation advisors.

Julie Enszer’s dissertation, ‘The Whole Naked Truth of Our Lives’: Lesbian Print Culture in the United States from 1969 until 1989, examines lesbian print culture in the 1970’s and 1980’s. It demonstrates the centrality of lesbian writing and publishing to the women's movement and explores the way it contributed to producing, challenging, and elaborating complex identities. Enszer argues that lesbian print culture accomplished important work for feminist theory, for the literary canon, and for the community out of which it arose and should be more fully incorporated in movement historiographies and in literary histories. Enszer’s dissertation was co-chaired by Martha Nell Smith (English) and Deborah Rosenfelt.

Bettina Judd’s dissertation, Feelin’ Feminism: Black Women’s Art, Affect, and Politics, explores the way feelings of shame and pride, joy and grief, anger and ecstasy play out formally and create affective and embodied ways of knowing in the work of Black female artists, singers, and writers, including Lucille Clifton, Avery Sunshine, Renee Cox, and the author herself. Her defense included an exhibit of her own art. Judd’s dissertation was chaired by Elsa Barkley Brown.

Ana Perez’s dissertation, “Gueras, Morenas, y Prietas: Mexicana Color Lines and Ethnoracial Sameness-Difference,” is an interdisciplinary exploration of the ethnoracial identities and racialized experiences of women of Mexican descent in the greater Tampa Bay region of Florida, and of the multiple meanings that they assign to racialized color categories. It argues that terms like these are part of a culture of colorism that involves both a rejection of racial difference and a negotiated affiliation with particular identities produced in part through this vernacular terminology. It concludes that color can be re-animated as a category of analysis to consider the overlap of Indo-Hispanic and Afro-Latin American racial formations. Perez’s dissertation was chaired by Lynn Bolles.

Kimberlee Staking’s dissertation, Teaching Women’s Studies: Exploring Student Engagement in Technology-Rich Classroom Learning Communities, used a range of research methodologies to explore the experiences and perceptions of students in her own courses, including “Women, Art, and Culture” and “Women’s Health and Well-being” (offered simultaneously on four different campuses around the world). She argues for the centrality of student-centered learning through group exercises and projects in on-line as well as in-class communities. Staking’s dissertation was co-chaired by Katie King and Deborah Rosenfelt.

Bettina Judd at her defense, with her mother, Ella Juanita Taylor, and her grandmother, Laura P. Grissom.
Alumnae Corner: Recent Appointments

Barbara Boswell (Ph.D. 2010), after two years on a post-doctoral fellowship at the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African American and African Studies at the University of Virginia, has accepted a research position as Project Officer for the Young Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Leadership Project at the African Gender Institute, University of Capetown, South Africa.

Rajani Bhatia (Ph.D. 2012) has taken a position as Assistant Professor in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Department at the State University of New York/Albany. Her dissertation, *Lifestyle Sex Selection: Reproduction, Transnational Flows, and Inequality*, received a University of Maryland Distinguished Dissertation Award for 2013-2014. Congratulations to Rajani and her dissertation advisor, ARHU Dean and Professor of Women's Studies Bonnie Thornton Dill.

Julie Enszer (Ph.D. 2013) has accepted a position as visiting assistant professor in our Women's Studies Program here at the University of Maryland. She has recently published her book, *Sisterhood* (Sibling Rivalry Press, 2013), as well as two peer reviewed articles: “Whatever Happens, This Is: Lesbians Engaging Marriage” (*WSQ: Engage*, 2013), and “We Couldn’t Get Them Printed, ‘So We learned to Print: Ain’t I a Woman? and the Iowa City Women’s Press” (*Frontiers*, 2013). She is also the recipient of the Phil Zwickler Memorial Research Grant from Cornell University Libraries and the Catherine Prelinger Award from the Coordinating Council for Women in History.

Luh Ayu Saraswati (Ph.D. 2007) has moved from the University of Kansas to take an Assistant Professorship in the Department of Women's Studies at the University of Hawai’i, Manoa, where she also serves as Graduate Advisor. Her book, *Seeing Beauty, Sensing Race in Transnational Indonesia* (University of Hawaii Press, 2013) won this year’s National Women’s Studies Association’s Gloria E. Anzaldua Prize “for groundbreaking monographs in women’s studies that make significant multicultural feminist contributions to women of color/transnational scholarship.”

Kimberly Williams (Ph.D. 2008), author of *Imagining Russia* (recipient of the 2009 SUNY Press award for best first book) now serves as the Associate Director and Undergraduate Advisor of the Women and Gender Studies Program at George Mason University.
Teambuilding on the Challenge Course

Orientation for new graduate students included time on the challenge course at the Eppley Recreation Center. The event was designed to build ties across cohorts of students and help us get to know each other outside of the classroom. It worked—we laughed a lot, learned new things about each other's abilities, and problem-solved with spirit and flair (Melvin the Marble never made it into the bucket, but student-faculty teams of rope-pullers succeeded in walking Eve Grice on the A-frame from point to point).

Interventions: Women’s Studies on the Edge

2013 WMST GSA Symposium
For many months, graduate students in women's studies at UM worked together to plan a symposium featuring the work of students in women's and gender studies and related fields in and beyond the mid-Atlantic region. The conference, free to all attendees, became an exciting reality on October 16, offering successive panels of cutting edge scholarship on four main topics: Fashion and Performance, Narrative and Storytelling, Navigating within and against the State, and (Il)legible Identities. Papers addressed a range of methodological, ethical, ideological and substantive issues, exploring connections among identities, lived experiences, and representations. Dr. Ana M. Perez, who recently received her Ph.D. in Women's Studies from UM and who currently serves as Postdoctoral Associate in the Graduate School's Office of Diversity Initiatives, was the keynote speaker. The lunch hour provided, in addition to food, a showcase of creative work, including visual art and performance. The conference concluded with a reception. To see more photos of the symposium, go to: http://flic.kr/s/aHsjKV6UiQ

A Message from the Graduate Student Association

The Women's Studies Graduate Student Association at the University of Maryland, College Park was founded to promote collegiality and partnership among students, faculty, and staff in its parent department. The organization seeks a voice for graduate students and advocates working in partnership with faculty to resist hierarchical, non-transparent, profit-driven management practices in higher education. We are guided by the principles of feminism and social justice within our group and advocate for the enactment of those principles in the department, the college, the university, and the system of higher education in the U.S. and abroad. Our current President is Melissa Rogers (mrogers6@umd.edu).
Fellowships and Grants

**GRANTS, AWARDS, AND OTHER FORMS OF SUPPORT:**

**2013-2014 DEADLINES**

There are several major sources of support for graduate students’ research and travel, including the Women’s Studies Department, the College of Arts and Humanities, and the Graduate School. Generally, the Department attempts to coordinate its awards and its deadlines with other funding sources to maximize opportunities for students. For dissertation research, there are other, external fellowships for which students should consider applying (e.g. Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowships, AAUW Dissertation Fellowships, NSF Fellowships, etc.). Those deadlines are not listed here. Listed below are some of the main sources for campus funding; be sure to consult ARHU and the Graduate School sites for some additional opportunities and for guidelines and forms. For awards from the Graduate School: [http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/prospective_students/gs_fellowships.html](http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/prospective_students/gs_fellowships.html); for awards from ARHU: [https://www.arhu.umd.edu/graduate/fellowships](https://www.arhu.umd.edu/graduate/fellowships).

*All department deadlines are at 5 pm on the due date. Submit materials online to Clifford Pryor at chowards@umd.edu, with a copy to the DGS.*

**GRANTS AND AWARDS FOR RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP**

In consultation with their advisors, students should seek out appropriate grants and fellowships, and review requirements, qualifications, and deadlines. Before submitting a final application, students must compete at the department level in order to be nominated for most of these awards. The faculty reviews the proposals, selects nominees, and provides recommendations for revision. Together the student and the advisor prepare the final packet that is given to the DGS for submission to the appropriate committee.

This year WMST has two major deadlines for most applications (including most Graduate School grants). Department deadlines are earlier than published deadlines for ARHU and the Graduate School. Prepare separate proposals for each grant, depending on the guidelines, and submit them to the DGS with the fellowship work sheet in the current Graduate Student Handbook (Appendix II) for distribution to the faculty.

**Major Department Deadlines for 2013-2014: January 27, 2014, and February 14, 2014.**
**Summer Research Fellowships**

**The Graduate School** provides Student Summer Research Fellowships to outstanding doctoral students in “mid-career,” intended to enable students to prepare for or complete a key benchmark in their program’s requirements. Summer Research Fellowships carry stipends of $5,000. Each department may nominate two people.

**The Women’s Studies Department** provides summer research fellowships, which vary from year to year in amount and purpose. If our nominees to the Graduate School are not successful, we usually provide some department funding. In the past, the department has awarded funds for dissertation completion and funds for completion of key benchmarks like the prospectus or the field exam.

**Department deadline:** February 14, 2014; **Graduate School deadline for nomination packet, Wednesday March 12, 2014, at noon.** (Follow the guidelines for the Graduate School Summer Research Fellowships; submit only one application on February 14th for both the Graduate School and the Department awards.)

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**The Mary Savage Snouffer Dissertation Fellowship**

This fellowship is offered by the College of Arts and Humanities. It will support up to three fellowships for qualified students pursuing the doctorate in any discipline in the humanities, including the study of language, literature, culture, philosophy, history or the arts. Preference will be given to students in English, but scholarships can be awarded to students in other disciplines in the humanities and arts. Criteria for selection are based upon both academic merit and need. Proposals should be written with a non-specialist audience in mind. Applicants must have completed all course work and passed the qualifying examination for the doctorate degree.

**Department deadline:** January 27, 2014; **ARHU deadline:** March 14, 2014

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**Ann G. Wylie Dissertation Fellowships**

Ann G. Wylie Dissertation Fellowships are one-semester awards from the Graduate School, intended to support outstanding doctoral students who are in the final stages of writing their dissertation. Wylie Dissertation Fellowships carry a stipend of $10,000 plus candidacy tuition remission and $800 toward the cost of health insurance. The Graduate School awards approximately 40 Wylie Dissertation Fellowships per year.

**Department deadline:** TBA; **ARHU Deadline TBA; Graduate School deadline:** April 30, 2014.
Fellowships and Grants, Cont.

Endowed Awards from the Graduate School

The Graduate School currently offers four endowed awards: the Dr. Mabel S. Spencer Award for Excellence in Graduate Achievement; the Dr. James W. Longest Memorial Award for Social Science Research; the Michael J. Pelczar Award for Excellence in Graduate Study; and the Phi Delta Gamma Graduate Fellowship. For guidelines and nomination forms visit the graduate school website.

Department deadline for all four endowed awards: February 14, 2014. Graduate School deadline: Tuesday, March 12, 2014, by noon.

The Dr. Mabel S. Spencer Award for Excellence in Graduate Achievement carries an annual stipend of at least $15,000 and candidacy tuition remission (if not covered by other tuition remission).

Dr. James W. Longest Memorial Award for Social Science Research provides $2,000 to support doctoral dissertation research in the social sciences with potential benefits for small and/or disadvantaged communities. Candidacy tuition remission also will be granted for each of two semesters (if not covered by other tuition remission).

The Michael J. Pelczar Award for Excellence in Graduate Study offers $1,000 to an outstanding doctoral candidate who has demonstrated excellence beyond his or her course work, and who has served at least one academic year as a teaching assistant with a commendable performance.

The Phi Delta Gamma Graduate Fellowship offers $1,000 to a student who “best exemplifies interdisciplinary scholarship achievement.”

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Travel Grants

International Graduate Research Fellowships

The Graduate School is now accepting applications for the International Graduate Research Fellowships. These fellowships are to provide graduate students a meaningful research experience in an international context, broadening the student’s knowledge and perspective. The fellowships take advantage of ongoing collaborations between UMD faculty and their international colleagues, and, through graduate student exchange, also will enhance those collaborations. The fellowships facilitate and support research opportunities for doctoral students for a period of one to three months in another country. This period can be at any time during the year. The fellowships take the form of financial support for travel and living expenses and do not provide stipends. Students, in consultation with their advisors, apply directly to the graduate school.

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International Conference Student Support Awards

These awards from the Graduate School cover a graduate student’s conference registration fee up to $500. To be eligible, a graduate student must be presenting a paper, poster, or other research or creative material at a major, international scholarly, scientific, or professional conference that is held outside of the US. The graduate student must be enrolled at the University of Maryland at the time of travel to the international conference. Eligible graduate students are invited to submit applications for international travel through June 30, 2014. Funds will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis. Students are eligible to receive the ICSSA twice, once before candidacy and a second time after the achievement of candidacy.

Deadline: Rolling

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Jacob K. Goldhaber Travel Grant

These are Graduate School awards intended to help defray expenses incurred in traveling to scholarly conferences to present papers. Amounts vary. Visit the Graduate School site for guidelines and more information.

DEADLINE: Rolling
Fellowsips and Grants, Cont.

Women's Studies Department Travel Grants

When funds are available, the Women's Studies Department provides annual grants for professional travel to all students (in recent years $300 for travel within the United States). Awards are typically for research or presentations at appropriate conferences. The department chair or DGS will inform students about available funds early in the fall semester. Students may apply for funds at any time throughout the year, provided it is no fewer than 60 days prior to the date of departure. (See Appendix II, Graduate Student Handbook, for Travel Grant Request form.) They will receive decisions about their applications no more than thirty days after their completed applications are submitted to the DGS and the department chair. Prior to travel, students must fill out and submit the Travel Expense Reimbursement Sheet (See Appendix II).

DEADLINE: Rolling

Memberships

Annual Membership in NWSA

The Women's Studies Department's institutional membership in the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) provides us with three annual memberships. All students may apply for these memberships. Students may receive a membership no more than once during their time in the program. Preference will be given to students who are presenting at the annual conference. We will also give special consideration to advanced students, who will be on the job market in the coming academic year and will benefit from having their work in circulation as they approach the job market. Applications for memberships typically take place in the spring when students know if they will be attending the fall NWSA conference.

DEADLINE: To be announced in the spring.

INTERESTED IN APPLYING TO OUR PROGRAM?

Our application deadline is December 2nd, 2013. Our program has five areas of emphasis: Gender, Race, Racialization, and/or Diaspora Studies; Women's Movements, Global and Local; Bodies, Genders, and Sexualities; Gendered Labor: Households and Communities; Art, Culture, Technologies and Social Change. The University of Maryland requires you to apply to respective departments through the Graduate School. Our online admissions process can be found at http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/application. If you have any questions please contact Ms. Cliffornia Pryor at choward3@umd.edu, or Dr. Deborah Rosenfelt at dsr@umd.edu.
The *Interventions* Symposium & Fall Gathering

Symposium photos (right and middle) taken by Reed Bonnet.
Artwork Featured at the *Interventions* Symposium

Art by Crystal Prigmore and Ginnie McKnight (center and right of center)
Curators: Eve Grice and Michélè Prince
For artist info and more information on the *Interventions* symposium, please visit: [http://wmstgsaumd.wordpress.com](http://wmstgsaumd.wordpress.com)