A new cohort joined the program late Spring 2015. Having survived the rigor of that first summer, this group of six professionals is well on the way to a successful first year. Read their impressive bios here:

Sarah Brant-Rajahn is a Professional Middle School Counselor whose research interests include racial trauma among adolescents. Within this field she is particularly interested in prevention, effective counseling, and school based programming. Sarah belongs to GSCA and will be presenting at the annual conference.

Natalie Edirmanasinghe is an 8th grade Professional School Counselor whose research interests include counseling support for immigrant families, as well as access to college for immigrant families. She expects to attend and present at ASCA.

Regina Finan is an academic specialist in the Counseling and Psychological Services Department at Georgia State University. Her research interests include multiracial/multicultural families, racial justice, and microaggressions. She plans on attending ACES and ACA this year and is exited to present at ACA with Dr. Singh.

Bobby B. Queh is a High School Counselor whose research interests focus on African American males. While working with this group he is particularly interested in facilitating counternarratives, while supporting students’ development of meaning and purpose. He is a member of GSCA and will be presenting at the conference this year.

Alexandra Huguelet is an Elementary School Counselor whose research interests include creative and expressive arts in school counseling. She is also interested in ally identity and classroom in education. Alexandra belongs to GSCA; ACES, and ACA and will present at the GSCA conference this year.

Travis McKie-Voerste is a coordinator of counseling and career services. His research interests include counseling supervision, common factors, and client-counselor factors. He is a member of ACCA and received the Stacie Mathewson Foundation Grant.

The Newest Cohort

Fall 2015 NEWSLETTER
Editors: Sarah Jones and Dr. Anneliese A. Singh

In this issue:
- Introducing the newest cohort
- Faculty accolades
- Faculty in the spotlight: Laura Dean
- Reflections: Program Alum—Kim Hughes, PhD
- CSPS on Social Media

2015 FACULTY ACCOLADES

Dr. Bailey: Promoted to full professor July 1, 2015; Received Liberty Bell Award from the Western Circuit Bar Association for his work with Empowered Youth Programs

Drs. Cooper and Dean: Primary Investigators for the Assessment of Emory Integrity Project, part of The Emory Integrity Project (EIP); Integrating and Assessing an Integrity Initiative in University Education and Student Life from the Templeton Foundation, 2014

Dr. Dean: Recipient of NASPA Region III Outstanding Contribution to Student Affairs through Teaching Award, 2015 and Paul K. Jahr Award of Excellence, Georgia College Personnel Association, 2014. Co-author of book coming out in spring: Assessment in student affairs (2nd ed.).

Dr. Griffith: Published 9th Book: Creative Career Education, 2015

Dr. Haskins: Recipient of ACES Outstanding Teaching Award for 2014

Dr. Singh: Received an NIH 5 year longitudinal grant exploring transgender identity development with partners in Columbia University and University of San Francisco
Before attending UNC-G you were working in higher education admissions. What helped you decide to pursue student development and counseling for your master’s then doctoral degrees?

Admissions work made it clear to me that I really wanted to keep working on college campuses. I loved the environment; I loved working with the students, but I became frustrated with the fact that I would work with them through their matriculation process, then about the time they arrived on campus, I left again to hit the road to do the next round of recruiting. Because I think being an administrator in our field is grounded in understanding students and being equipped to help at the individual and institutional level, it led me to believe that what I wanted was training as a counselor with a focus on student development in higher education.

I noticed there have been a few times in your career when you were both a student affairs practitioner and a faculty member. Was that experience like and what advice do you have for others who want to practice and teach?

The best example was when I was working at Pfeiffer University and I taught a few years at UNC-G. I was teaching Organization & Administration of Student Development Services. It was really crazy and really intense. When I look back at where I was as a hour of the nature of the primary task of standards development, which can be very detailed and labor-intensive, but for one piece I am that I believe in it philosophically and conceptually. I believe that having well-articulated standards of practice in the field is very important for how we do the work. These standards are the only reliable tool that students don’t get with other types of professional association work. CAS’s mission is very clear, and we do other things around the edges of it, but they are all in support of developing and disseminating standards of practice.

I had the chance to work with people from different professional associations on something tangible and positive. It was the best professional development I’ve ever had. Every meeting I went to I learned things. It was a huge networking opportunity and it looked like I had expertise in this area. I should have went with the colleges and it was a huge leadership challenge. [CAS gave me] the satisfaction of being involved in something so mission driven and that I believe in so much.

What do you think are the most pressing concerns in higher education today?

Obviously there are a lot, but there are two things that I would classify as most pressing because they affect so many other things. The first is in the macro public discourse and political disagreement and sometimes skepticism about the purpose of higher education. We are not as unified as one was around the value of college. So much of the conversation today is about how much money you are investing in your education. Certainly economics are always one of the reasons someone would go to a degree, but I think historically there was also a lot about being a educated person and having a different quality of life. I think this is not the current agreement, or maybe there is an increasing disagreement. Because of this, there is disagreement about appropriate priorities, structure, staff, and use of resources. This disagreement drains our energy and creates some policy and legal situations that are of concern because they can reflect a fairly narrow and very vocational approach to higher education. Vocational education is part of where we started, but I think we are in a mindset that prioritizes training over education. I think the other thing is the cost of so many versions of higher ed. It’s simply not possible anymore to work your way through a bachelor’s degree. This means that there is an increasing disparity of access and if you look at the numbers over the last 30 or 40 years, it is shocking. The cost of higher education has gone up exponentially compared to many other things. [In the 1970s] you could pay your tuition from a summer job. Now you can’t. And I let you that as a graduate student, I was working late into the summer to pay for summer courses. I think this is one piece of the problem. We see students increasingly looking for alternatives to traditional four-year residential programs, which is understandable, but two years at a community college and then transferring to a four-year institution are not quite the same as a four or five year experience at one institution. It’s not less; for many students it is a great choice—it’s different. It’s not rare anymore to see yet another institution come up with a three-year degree, which is understandable because cutting a year out of the traditional four-year degree, but to graduate as an associate degree at 21 or 22 is different than graduating at 21 or 22. That one year of development makes a difference. And shortening the academic program is an option but I don’t hear a parallel conversation about how to also work on the developmental, emotional, psychosocial aspects of things that go along with what college graduates are ready for. I think I can be traced back to costs, which is not a simple thing.

In a previous program newsletter, you told us that self-care included a good book. What good books have you read recently?

I just started reading one of my favorites that I haven’t read in years and years. It’s a book called: The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. Le Guin. It’s a sci-fi, which is fascinating and thought provoking. And I also read a sci-fi fantasy that one of my former students wrote and a mystery that my brother’s college roommate wrote. I read them because I knew the people that had written them and I could get them on Amazon, which I thought was just a kick.

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Laura Dean

Dr. Dean, associate professor in the Counseling and Human Development Services Department at UGA, spoke to me in September. During our interview we discussed her professional journey in education as a student, teacher affairs administrator, and faculty member, current concerns regarding higher education, and reading for self-care.
Back to School Back to Writing: 2nd and 3rd year students share their favorite tips

Make an outline for each section! It's simple but incredibly helpful. (Falon Thacker, Cohort 2014)

Keep going. Life will happen, so learn to persevere through tough times and write in advance—do not procrastinate.

Set a consistent schedule and stick to it. Find the time of the day that you are most alert and write at least 5 days per week during this time for 1 to 2 hours.

Do something. Engage in the writing process whenever you have small breaks and even when you do not feel like writing.

Outlines are your best friend!! Create one before starting each paper and revise it as needed. (Ashlee Perry, Cohort 2014)

My best tip is to get up early and crank out papers before the day gets stressful—especially if working full time. I find I can write much more quickly at 6AM than in an afternoon or evening! (Peter Paquette, Cohort 2014)

First, prep with an outline of some sort, whether you write it down on paper or create it in your mind. A plan of action helps me to begin and stay on course.

At the end of each writing session, assess your progress and then set small, specific goals for the next day. After reaching a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly goal, reward yourself (Tia Jackson-Truitt Cohort 2013)

Great writers are often great readers. (Tameka Oliphant, Cohort 2014)

Set up a consistent schedule and stick to it. Write for an hour or two each day consistently

Do not worry about your draft being perfect—just write. (Suzanne Voight Cohort 2013)

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First, prep with an outline of some sort, whether you write it down on paper or create it in your mind. A plan of action helps me to begin and stay on course.

Second, determine your block or duration of time. I know I need at least three hours to get in the mood of writing and to get something started. Lastly, write during your most optimal times when you have energy and no interruptions. I am at my best in the morning or late at night with coffee...lots of coffee. (Jean So, Cohort 2014)

Great writers are often great readers. (Tameka Oliphant, Cohort 2014)

Always write on a full stomach and in close proximity to the coffee. (Michael Drew, Cohort 2014)

Alumni and Student Accolades

Christy Land: Accepted an assistant professor position at the University of West Georgia
Michael Drew: Accepted proposal for 3rd annual student leadership conference and he published an article in Firehouse Magazine
Lakiesa Cantey Rawlinson: Selected to present at SACSA and appointed to serve as co-chair of Clayton State University’s Division of Student Affairs Assessment Team
Tia Jackson-Truitt: Received an Intel awarded CEED (Center for Engineering Education and Diversity) grant that allows her to coordinate programs for twice as many students
Suzanne Voight: Presented a roundtable at the National Career Development Association
Margie Gill: Appointed student representative for the Human Rights Committee of ACA
Falon Thacker: Interim promotion for the 2015-2016 academic year at Georgia State University
Ashlee Perry: New Middle School Lead Counselor for Clarke County and will be presenting at ACES
Jean So: An article she collaborated on has been accepted for publication
Claire Davis: Three proposals for conference presentations have been accepted
Lauren Moss: Current faculty at Kutztown University; received ACES research grant for her work with preservice, school counselors
Gerry Crete: Began an Assistant Professorship in the counseling department at Argosy University
Ijeoma Nwaogu: Recived the North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education & Supervision Social Justice Award at ACES.
Regina Finan: Submitted an essay theme for ACA competition, which was selected.
Faculty Life after Graduation

A recent graduate of the CSPS program, Kim Lee Hughes, PhD just accepted and began a tenure track, assistant professorship at the University of Texas, San Antonio (UTSA). We recently spoke about her new role, the transition from doctoral student to faculty member, and her plans for the future. During our interview, she shared bits of wisdom and advice for current cohort members.

Dr. Hughes related her current position as a new faculty member at a research-intensive university to her first semester in the CSPS program. Like that first semester, she is receiving much information and learning how to work within the new structure. While she is trying to make meaning from it all, she knows she will not be in the thick of things right away. Today she is navigating her way minute by minute and identifying the privileges (i.e., budget for research) and challenges (i.e., expectations to produce manuscripts) associated with a new faculty role.

Dr. Hughes is proud to be a UGA bulldog and believes the program gave her an opportunity to work with and learn from motivated peers and strong, networked faculty. Her work in the program set the stage for her current position and she encourages students to get involved with professional organizations, in order to make connections to other faculty before job searching. Involvement is one way doctoral students can set themselves apart from others, which is necessary since, as Dr. Hughes reiterates, “At the doctoral level, we are all exceptional—we don’t finish a doctoral program by being average.” She suggests attending conferences to create professional relationships. Because of her commitment to professional organizations during the program, Dr. Hughes is currently on the board of AMCD and will be chairing the committee for A Day of Service (held during ACA conference). Additionally, she serves on the ALGBTIC (ACA) task force and will host a webinar in February on counseling with queer people of color.

As we spoke it was apparent that Dr. Hughes is quite grateful for the opportunities presented while being a student in the CSPS program. Because she took advantage of her student identity and collaborated with faculty she was ready to transition into a faculty role upon graduation. Though she is learning to meet new expectations, she cannot help but feel humbled and honored for her past experiences at UGA and her current position. She told me, “I could not have dreamed this up as an African American woman.” However, as a result of this program Dr. Hughes was mentored by outstanding professionals, worked with national leaders in ACA/ACES, and secured a position at a research intensive school after graduation. She will work to continue the legacy of UGA as she is reminded of an African Proverb, “To whom much is given, much is expected.”

Kim Lee Hughes, PhD will be attending ACES in a few weeks and hopes to network with all UGA students. She is also looking for volunteers and committee members for her Day of Service at ACA in Montreal. (French language speakers are particularly encouraged to contact her). All interested can reach Dr. Hughes at KimLee.Hughes@utsa.edu.

Congratulations Spring and Summer Graduates!

Brandee Appling
Barbre Skwira Berris
Loni Crumb
Rebecca Eaker
Amy Hopkins Mason
Kim Lee Hughes

Amy Hopkins Mason
Taryne Mingo
Shauna Nefos Webb
Ijeoma Nwaogu

Ijeoma Nwaogu: Since graduating from the Ph.D. program, I completed the first three months of my new position as the Assistant Director of Multicultural Affairs at Fordham University. Immediately after completing the CSPS program in May 2015, I began an Adjunct Professor position at Monroe College in Bronx, New York teaching Fundamentals of Communication. In September 2015, my article titled Improving Dialogue Facilitation was published in the NARACES Newsletter, Summer 2015 edition. Recently, I submitted four session proposals to present my dissertation research at upcoming national conferences.

Follow us and stay connected to each other and up to date on program news!
CSPS is now on Facebook and Twitter: UGA_CSPSPHD
Follow, post, and look for a Twitter interview with Shauna Nefos Webb shortly!