Department welcomes new faculty members

This year we welcomed three new colleagues to the department: Dr. John Schneiderwind, Dr. James McQuiston and Dr. Amber Overholser.

**Dr. John Schneiderwind** joins the department with a BA in East Asian Languages and Cultures and an MA and PhD in Modern East Asian History, all from the University of Kansas. He comes to SAU after three years as a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Central Arkansas where, in addition to world and Asian surveys, he taught topical courses on Japanese imperialism and war memory, Japanese film, and the mythos and legacy of the samurai. Stemming from his dissertation, titled *Invading Sexuality: Perception and Response in Postwar Japan, 1945-1957*, his continued research interests surround sex and gender in Japan, popular culture, and transnational war memory.

When he is not teaching or researching, he spends his time patiently awaiting Nebraska football’s return to national splendor, spending time with his wife, daughter, and three dogs, smoking various meats in his backyard, and serving on the Board of Members of the Rutger Hauer Starfish Association, an international HIV/AIDS charity run by the Dutch actor.

**Dr. James McQuiston** attended DePauw University, receiving a BA in Political Science and Latin in 2005. He completed his PhD in Political Science from Kent State University in 2013. His dissertation, *Social Capital in the Production Gap*, analyzed the relationship between social networking services and civic engagement. His current research interest surrounds student satisfaction in online MPA courses, variation in IT course content in public administration programs, and the usage of social media in presidential communications.

He lives with his wife, Danica; daughter, Olivia; and a Siamese cat, Murray. In his spare time, James likes to hike, work out at the SAU gym, explore deteriorating commercial centers, and writing for a personal magazine, *NeuFutur*.

**Dr. Amber Overholser** graduated from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas with a degree in Public Affairs. She is the current faculty and program manager for the MPA program. Her research is focused on national monuments, community organizing, and public organizations.

Near and far, students gain valuable internship experience

This summer three students – Sabrina Yeasky, Amanda Chewning, and Dawson McGonagill – applied what they learned within the department at separate facilities during their valuable internships.

**Sabrina Yeasky** worked as the summer intern this year at the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives (SARA) in Washington, Arkansas. While at SARA, she learned how to process archival material and worked primarily on a project to help reorganize SARA’s various collections of early Hempstead County court records. “It’s much like being able to step back in time,” she shared. Sabrina would like to thank SAU for providing her with this opportunity and the SARA Foundation, Inc., SARA’s friends group, which was responsible for sponsoring the summer internship.

**Amanda Chewning** accepted an internship in Washington, D.C., to work in a congressional office alongside Arkansas Senator Boozman.

Her responsibilities included answering phone calls, sorting and assigning mail, giving congressional tours of the U.S. Capitol Building and assisting staff with research and office tasks.

Chewning would like to thank the Department at SAU for giving her the education to pursue and attain this internship. She would also like to thank the SAU Foundation and its generous donors for helping her financially in order to travel and live in Washington.

Internships continued on following page...
Join the 2018 SAU group tour of China
May 15-26, 2018

The SAU History, Political Science, and Geography Department is organizing a group tour of China open to students, faculty and community. Alumni are also encouraged to join the tour.

Stroll through the famous Forbidden City, enjoy a dragon boat ride, admire the Great Wall of China and the Terracotta Warriors of Xi’an, sample wonderful cuisine in Shanghai, and relax in the spectacular gardens.

If you have questions or would like to sign up for the trip, please contact:

Dr. Carla Bryant at cdcbryant@saumag.edu
Dr. Svetlana Paulson at sepaulson@saumag.edu

Dr. Victoria Bynum delivers Walz Lecture

Victoria Bynum delivered the annual Robert B. Walz Lecture in Arkansas and Regional History on Sept. 19 at SAU’s Reynolds Center.

Dr. Bynum’s presentation was, "The Free State of Jones: The Politics of Race, Class, and Memory."

Dr. Bynum is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History at Texas State University, San Marcos. An award-winning author and National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, she is the author of The Free State of Jones: Mississippi’s Longest Civil War, and numerous other works that analyze class, race, and gender relations in the Civil War Era South.

On her blog, Professor Bynum explains how she came to write The Free State of Jones: “As both a historian and an individual, I am on the hunt for ordinary people who commit extraordinary acts. I am especially drawn to those who confront systems of power in unlikely ways alongside unlikely allies.”

In 2016 the story of Newton Knight’s armed rebellion against Confederate authorities in southeast Mississippi was depicted in a film starring Matthew McConaughey and Mahershala Ali.

Dr. Bynum’s other books are Unruly Women and The Long Shadow of the Civil War.

History of the Walz Lectureship

Dr. Robert Walz taught history at SAU from 1958 to 1987. He promoted the study of Arkansas history through his scholarship, preservation of historic photographs, and leadership in state organizations. The Walz Lectureship was established in 1995 with a bequest from the estate of Mrs. Curtistine A. Walz in honor of her husband's long service to the University. The lecture was sponsored by the College of Liberal and Performing Arts at Southern Arkansas University. The audience was invited to attend a reception for Professor Bynum in the Reynolds Center following the lecture.

Julianna Williams elected student government president

Julianna Williams, a junior political science major from Little Rock, was recently elected president of the SAU Student Government Association. The department is proud of her accomplishment and wishes her success in the coming year.

Williams reported her goals for the year: “As the 2017-2018 president of the SAU Student Government Association, the continuous growth of our student population and expansion of our University are welcomed occurrences.

I, along with the newly elected executive members, will execute plans and fresh methods for expanding our reach and communication as a unified voice of the student body. With the increased diversity in social backgrounds among freshmen students, it has become more vital to convey the ever changing desires of students to faculty and staff in a clear and effective manner.

I am confident that with collaboration and persistence, SGA will be able to acutely tackle student concerns as well as convey administrative policies to our peers.”

Internships continued from cover story...

Dawson McGonagill worked as an intern for the Bowie County District Attorney's Office under District Attorney Jerry Rochelle.

As an intern he was able to gain valuable experience participating in the prosecution of various criminal cases ranging from minor felony drug charges to murder cases. On one of the cases, the state is seeking the death penalty. Throughout his time at the District Attorney's Office, he was tasked with everything from organizing 20 years of medical files to analyzing dash cam videos, research of things pertinent to cases, and observing voir dire and sitting through court. He reviewed autopsy photos, interviewed witnesses, paneled jurors, put together cases, reviewed cases being appealed, created PowerPoint presentations, typed out the docket, and reviewed evidence pertaining to upcoming cases.

“This was a very good experience for me,” said McGonagill, a pre-law student. “I was able to make valuable connections with judges, lawyers, and many other positions within the legal system within in my area. Most importantly, however, I was able to receive a glimpse as to what my future could possibly look like and really grasp the real world application of my degree program.”
SAU was the recipient of a state grant from Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council totaling $150,000 to transform the historic Ozmer House to its original glory. The restoration of the house and grounds will create a working farmstead in the heart of campus. The house was built in 1883 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. According to University Archives, alumnus W. Derrell Rogers donated the house to SAU in 1986. Its original location was near the intersection of highways 82 and 79 before it was relocated to the eastern boundary of the SAU farm. Last November the house was carefully moved to the empty lot that faces Washington Street between Childs Hall and the Agriculture Center. Refurbishing work has already begun and is expected to be finished by the spring of 2018.

The Ozmer family will exhibit furniture the family donated to the University, as well as items the family might still have in their Ozmer home relocated to new ‘farmstead’ at SAU

possession. The farmstead will “be a place to share the story of the Ozmer family while exhibiting early practices of the rural farmer,” said SAU President Trey Berry. Exhibit space will also showcase the history of Agriculture Education at SAU, utilizing text panels and photographs to tell the story of the program and the development of agriculture from family farmsteads to commercial operations. This project will be done with the assistance of the Department of History, Political Science and Geography.

The Alexander House, built in the 1850s, was also moved from its former location 10.5 miles east of Magnolia to the heart of SAU. It will join the historic Ozmer House as a prominent feature of the campus and honor a family proud of its Columbia County roots. The two houses tell of a remarkable period in Arkansas history, sharing the families’ stories while exhibiting early practices of the rural farmer.

The SAU Master of Public Administration program is being overhauled to keep pace with the needs of our students, local government, and area employers. The program has been changed to be entirely online in order to accommodate demanding schedules and allow our students to gain practical skills they can use in their communities. Other recent changes to the MPA program include offering Public Personnel Administration more often, the addition of a stand-alone Program Evaluation course, and bringing the entire program into alignment with what other MPA programs are offering throughout the region.

“The MPA is the primary degree for those who choose to work on behalf of the public good,” said Dr. Overholser. “Our program appeals to those in all levels of government as well as the nonprofit sector. We strive to offer practical skills backed up by the latest research and theory and we look forward to increasing our program offerings in the future.”

To find out more about the SAU MPA program, contact Overholser at 870-235-4270 or amberoverholser@saumag.edu, or visit https://web.saumag.edu/academics/program/master-of-public-administration/

Big changes to SAU MPA program
In Memoriam

Last year, the department was saddened by the loss of two long serving members. Claudell Woods had been on faculty for over twenty years, teaching courses in political science and serving as department chair since 2001. He was a local attorney, graduating from University of Arkansas Law School. He also held degrees from Southern Arkansas University and served in the Arkansas National Guard.

Charles Keller received his BA and MA at Oklahoma State and his PhD at the University of Kansas. He joined the department in 2004, after having taught at several other institutions. He specialized in Modern Chinese History and was instrumental in establishing the Asian Studies minor at Southern Arkansas University.

Their presence is greatly missed.