Greetings! Welcome to the 2015 edition of the newsletter for the Department of Legal Studies in the School of Applied Sciences at the University of Mississippi.

The goal of the Department of Legal Studies is to provide a quality learning experience for students. The Department of Legal Studies offers a minor in Legal Studies, a Bachelors in Criminal Justice, a Bachelors in Paralegal Studies, and a Masters in Criminal Justice. Dozens of classes are offered in the fall and spring semesters each year to meet the needs of students. If you know of potential students for the Paralegal Studies or the Criminal Justice programs, please have them contact me at eglamber@olemiss.edu. We are always looking for people interested in studying the fields of Criminal Justice or Paralegal Studies. Both are dynamic and constantly changing fields that offer a wide array of rewarding career options. In addition, many students from both programs go on to graduate or law school.

I have often been known to say that the department takes great joy when students are successful in their academic endeavors and careers or that the department takes great pride when students graduate and go out into the community to make a difference. Many of the Department’s alumni work hard each day to make our communities a better place for all. I tip my hat to them for a hard job well done. If you are a graduate of the Department of Legal Studies, please stay in touch with the Department. If you know other graduates from the departmental programs, please encourage them to stay in contact with the Department. All of the members of the Department are thrilled to hear back from graduates from the program. Please keep in touch with the Department and your fellow students.

Another goal of the Department of Legal Studies and the University of Mississippi is to conduct cutting-edge, high quality research that will ultimately improve the fields of Criminal Justice and Paralegal Studies and make a difference in the lives of others. By conducting salient research, faculty members not only add value to the fields of Paralegal Studies and Criminal Justice, which can either directly or indirectly improve the society, but they also will be able to bring new and innovative ideas into the classroom.

We want to build stronger ties and bonds with our students and alumni. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to visit the Department and to visit our website at http://legalstudies.olemiss.edu/. Please feel free to send me updates about what is happening in your life or information that you feel would be important to current students and/or alumni. You can send me the information at eglamber@olemiss.edu. Not only do I want to hear from you, I am sure that your fellow students and alumni would like to hear from you and any new developments in your life. I am always looking for students and alumni to write articles for the departmental newsletter. If you are interested in writing an article, please contact me.
Another goal of the Department is fundraising, particularly for student scholarships. A key goal of the Department and one of my major goals is to increase the amount of scholarship funds available for Legal Studies students. I hope that you will give to the Legal Studies Development account. If you wish your donation to be used to provide scholarship funds for students, please indicate so on your donation card. There is a great demand among our students for financial support. Your donation will make a positive difference in the lives of Legal Studies students! Donations of any amount are appreciated. Please do not feel that you need to endow a full scholarship to make a difference. Alternatively, donating a relatively modest amount each month can lead to a considerable sum in time. I also ask that you let fellow alumni know about the effort to raise scholarship funds for students. For more information on how to give to the Department of Legal Studies, please contact Michael Upton, Director of Development for the School of Applied Sciences, at mupton@olemiss.edu or 662-915-3027. Working together, we can raise funds to help students pursue their education. Your generosity will help students and make a positive impact in their lives.

In my two years at the University of Mississippi’s Department of Legal Studies, I have enjoyed getting to know students, alumni, staff, and faculty. Again, welcome to the 2015 newsletter for the Department of Legal Studies. I invite you to become more active in helping the program strive to become even better. Your participation and support make a difference, especially in the lives of students. Working together we can build a better tomorrow for our students, alumni, and our community. I wish you and your loved ones the best wishes. Please stay in touch and Hotty Toddy!

Eric Lambert
Chair and Professor of Legal Studies
Sarah Katherine Morris, a 2011 graduate of the University of Mississippi, Bachelor in Paralegal Studies program, is a member of Florida Coastal Law School’s National Trial Competition team. The team was a finalist in both the 2014 and 2015 Region VI competitions. The organization that sponsored the competition stated, “The National Trial Competition was established in 1975 to encourage and strengthen students' advocacy skills through quality competition and valuable interaction with members of the bench and bar. The program is designed to expose law students to the nature of trial practice and to serve as a supplement to their education.” Sarah received the “Best Opening Statement” award in this year’s competition.

Sarah and her mock trial partner had previously achieved the top defense team score in a ten-day intramural competition. Sarah is also a Certified Legal Intern at the St. Johns County Public Defender’s Office.
Criminal Justice Internships

Criminal justice students are given the opportunity to complete an internship as part of their academic experience. Most students complete the 3 required hours (200 hours) during their junior or senior year at the University of Mississippi. This Spring 2015 semester, 63 students are enrolled in CJ 490. Last semester, 45 students were enrolled, and 54 students completed their internship during the full summer term.

Students are encouraged to complete the internship at a site related to their emphasis—Law Enforcement, Homeland Security, and Corrections; therefore, the locations vary throughout Mississippi and the nation. During the summer internship, many students choose to return home and complete the internship. Last summer’s students were representing the Department of Legal Studies and the University of Mississippi in Washington, D.C., Missouri, Tennessee, New Jersey, Utah, and Texas.

In the past, internship sites have included Oxford Police Department, Lafayette County Emergency Management, DeSoto County Sheriff’s Department, Northern District of Mississippi US District Court, the governor’s office, Tupelo Police Department, Mississippi Bureau of Investigation Cold Case Unit, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and various Mississippi Department of Corrections agencies.

It takes the efforts of hundreds of volunteer individuals to make the internship a successful experience for the students. These persons are serving as supervisors and mentors to our students and the Department of Legal Studies appreciates their willingness to give their time to ensure that students are prepared to enter the criminal justice field.

When asked to comment on their internships, students shared the following thoughts:

“To be honest, I thought the Internship was going to be a waste of time and just another brick in the wall, trying to keep me from graduating. As of now, it is probably the best thing that could have happened. . . . Again, this class has probably been one of the best things to happen to me. 200 hours is still a lot, but regardless, I am glad I am doing it.”

“My internship really made me realize that this is the career I want to go into.”

“A good education is paramount to being a good law enforcement professional, but the people skills learned by working in a jail dealing with all kinds of criminals is priceless.”

“Before my internship, I had only read about scenarios in a book; now I’m given the chance to experience them. Thanks to the Applied Science School for making this possible.”

“It’s honestly been my favorite academic endeavor at this university.”

If you or your agency would like to sponsor an intern, please contact Dr. Lorri C. Williamson at 662 915-7760 or ldwillia@olemiss.edu.
William "Gus" Neely left the University of Mississippi with a Bachelor's Degree in Paralegal Studies and a Criminal Justice Master's Degree, but he's still learning. He graduated from infantry school in April of 2013, then Ranger School in June, followed by completion of a Reconnaissance and Surveillance course in July and Airborne School in August of that year. Ranger School an intense combat leadership course oriented toward small-unit tactics. It is viewed by many in and out of the military as the toughest combat course in the world.

Gus took a break to marry Jodi Ferguson, another Legal Studies Department (Criminal Justice) graduate and for deployment to Afghanistan where he became a platoon leader. He is currently training with the Lithuanian Army in Lithuania as part of Operation Atlantic Resolve. That training has included completion of the Extreme Weather Survival and Evasion Training programs. His next assignment is reconnaissance platoon leader for his squadron.

Gus and Jodi do not sit still during training breaks. They have traveled to Prague, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Switzerland, the Greek Islands, Crete, France, Spain, and Germany.
The 2015 Legal Studies Award Ceremony was held on April 22, 2015. The 2014 Legal Studies Award Event was held on April 24, 2014. Below is a list of the award recipients for these two departmental award events. On behalf of the Department of Legal Studies faculty and staff, congratulations to the award recipients. Their hard work and accomplishments make a difference.

**Columbus B. Hopper Scholarship Endowment Award** - Lara Boston (2015 recipient) and Jasmine Williams (2014 recipient)

The requirements for this award are being a full time Legal Studies Majors at the senior level and a minimum grade point average of 3.75.

**Chief Richard Michael Popernik and Joan Grisham Popernik Legal Studies Scholarship Award** - Brittany McAfee (2015 recipient) and Kristy Garza (2014 recipient)

The requirements of this award are being a full time Legal Studies major at the junior or senior level. Recipients are selected based on academic excellence, community involvement, integrity, and commitment to the program. Selection is made by a committee which consists of the Legal Studies department chair, a professor of Criminal Justice, and Joan Popernik or her designee in consultation with the Dean of the School of Applied Sciences.


The requirements for this award are being a full time Criminal Justice major, financial need, and a minimum grade point average of 2.25.

**Robert T. Warren Outstanding Criminal Justice Student Award** - Marvin Hughes, Devin Martin, and Alex Stratton (2015 recipients) and Jessica Vinson (2014 recipient)

The requirements for this award are being a Legal Studies major. Recipients are selected based on academic excellence, integrity, and commitment to the program.

**Outstanding Legal Studies Graduate Student Award** - Joseph Sizemore (2015 recipient) and Whitney Hameth and Cassandra Janetzki (2014 recipients)

Requirements of this award are being an outstanding student in the Master of Criminal Justice program.

**Outstanding Criminal Justice Student Award** - Diamond Presswood, James Richardson, and Ray Sockwell (2015 recipients) and James Coleman and JarQuita Williams (2014 recipients)

The requirement for this award is to be a Criminal Justice major. Recipients are selected based on academic excellence, integrity, and commitment to the Paralegal Studies program.
Below are other noteworthy events involving Legal Studies Students, Staff, Faculty, and Alumni.

Marvin Hughes, Criminal Justice major and an Intelligence and Security Studies minor, was selected for the 2015 April Student of Month Award for the School of Applied Sciences. Mr. Hughes indicated that “to be a School of Applied Sciences Student of the Month is truly an honor.” The nomination material indicated that Mr. Hughes “is an outstanding young man who reflects the best attributes of the University. He maintains a high grade point average, while balancing academics, employment, and volunteer/community service. He is one of those exceptional students, always prepared for class and willing to participate. He is truly a pleasure to have in class.”

In March of 2015, Susan Shea, a Criminal Justice major and an Intelligence and Security Studies minor, received the Dr. Linda Chitwood Student Merit Award. A number of her accomplishments and honors include the Golden Key National Honor Society, a Who’s Who Student in American Colleges & Universities, and a member of the Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice Honor Society. She currently has a high grade point average at the University of Mississippi. Her nomination letter indicated that “she has always demonstrated the highest levels of judgment and decision-making.”

Dean Velmer Burton presents Susan Shea with the award.
In March 2015, several Criminal Justice students traveled to the 2015 annual meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, a national academic professional body for the field of Criminal Justice. The meeting was held in Orlando, Florida. The Legal Studies students also participated in the Alpha Phi Sigma part of the conference. Alpha Phi Sigma is a national honors society for criminal justice students.

Howard “Trey” Moore, a Criminal Justice graduate student at the University of Mississippi, was the 1st place winner in the Specific Topic Scholarship Examination and awarded $500 from Alpha Phi Sigma at the 2015 Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences conference. Mr. Moore was pleasantly surprised and pleased with winning and indicated that “support from the Legal Studies department was very important for my success.”

Michael Dozier, a senior in the Criminal Justice program, was awarded a $150 scholarship by Alpha Phi Sigma at the “Juveniles Convicted as Adults; Sentenced to Life” panel at the 2015 Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences conference. Dr. Keena, Associate Professor in the Department of Legal Studies, indicated that “I am really proud of the Alpha Phi Sigma students who attended the national conference. They represented Ole Miss in an exemplary manner. Their participation and achievements confirmed what I have always believed: the ultimate test of value of any membership organization lies in the accomplishments of its members.”

Additionally, Kelly McCall, a Criminal Justice graduate student, and Linda Keena, Legal Studies Associate Professor, gave a presentation entitled “Changes in Empathy among Criminal Justice Students in a Community Corrections Course.” Criminal Justice graduate students Howard “Trey” Moore and Ashley Richardson gave a presentation with Dr. Keena entitled “Restorative Path to Reentry: Lessons from the Ice House.” Drs. Michael Wigginton, Stephen Mallory, Carl Jenson, and David McElreath, coauthored a presentation entitled "There’s a riot going on but the police did not adequately respond."
Randy Sandifer, a graduate of the Criminal Justice program, was selected for the 2015 Thomas Crowe Outstanding Alumni Award. Mr. Sandifer was called to active duty in Iraq, where he was assigned duties as environmental scientist and soil scientist, providing environmental testing to ensure environmental standards were met. As an environmental scientist, he conducted environmental toxicological testing leading to the closure of several military bases and other institutions, most notable the Abu Ghraib Prison. As a soil scientist, he conducted soil stabilization test around Iraq and later creating a design that deterred the success rate of IED's in Iraq, saving untold lives, including of U.S. military personnel and Iraqi civilians. Additionally, part of his work in Iraq was to test for and clean-up any pollutants left by U.S. military forces. His work helped to clean up the soil and water for Iraqi citizens. For example, he tested for “hydrocarbon levels in the soil, which affected the local water supply.” His work also helped in the rebuilding of Iraq and helping Iraqi citizens live a safer and healthier life, while protecting their livelihoods. In an interview for a newspaper article, Mr. Sandifer stated, “I put down the M-16 and picked up the beaker, and still was able to make a huge impact without having a mindset of violence. It was more of a mindset of peace and humanitarianism, of having an impact without violence and making a difference and we did.” Mr. Sandifer was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his work to improve the environment in Iraq while part of the U.S. military. While he was not selected for the Nobel Peace Prize during this past selection round, it does not mean that his contributions have not significantly improved the lives of others.

Elizabeth Popernik, a graduate of the Criminal Justice program and a field officer with the Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) received an Extra Effort award from MDOC.

In May of 2014, Carol Forsythe, senior secretary in the Department of Legal Studies, was selected as the staff recipient of the University of Mississippi Frist Student Service Award. Ms. Forsythe was selected in recognition of her service to students. She was chosen from dozens of nominees who were submitted by students, alumni, faculty and staff. Chancellor Jones indicated that “it is always a pleasure to present the Frist Awards because they recognize service to students. Students are our reason for being and service is at the core of our culture. I am grateful for this year’s recipients and their commitment to serving our students.”
Interested in donating to the Legal Studies Department?

Individuals and organizations interested in contributing to the department can send checks with Legal Studies noted in the memo line to the University of Mississippi Foundation, 406 University Ave., Oxford, MS 38677. For more information, contact Michael Upton, development director, at 662-915-3027 or mupton@olemiss.edu.