14th Annual Graduate Research Forum
Sponsored by the Academic Research Committee & Office of Graduate Studies
Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 6:30 p.m.
Germany Lecture Hall, MCC

Welcome & Opening Remarks  Dr. David H. Magers, Chair, Academic Research Committee

Presentations  [Time Limit, 15 Minutes]

Cheli Brunson, English  David G. Miller, Ph.D., Introduction
Convert, Hypocrite, Coward: Mark Twain’s Religion of Performance in
A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court
Research Director: David G. Miller, Ph.D.

Mark Twain’s incredible talent to perform created an American celebrity, but his desire to be taken seriously failed to reconcile with his need to perform before an audience. When Hank Morgan finds himself catapulted to celebrity status in sixth century England in A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court, he also faces the tensions between the roles of reformer and performer. Neither Hank nor Twain overcomes the fear of being rejected by the audience as both performers ultimately find damnation, not redemption, as they progress from convert, hypocrite, to coward in Twain’s self-professed religion of performance.

Tina Brown, Law  Mark C. Modak-Truran, Ph.D., J.D., Introduction
Religion of the Land- A View of Ownership: Can Religion and Secularism Truly Coexist?
Research Director: Mark C. Modak-Truran, Ph.D., J.D.

Native American Indians maintain a complex set of religious beliefs; those beliefs are often at odds with existing federal laws and governmental policies. It is a difficult task to find the exact view of Christianity yet it is common to assume that the law should stay as far away from it as possible. Most legal scholars believe law and religion belong in different spheres and the demarcation of church and state renders some sacred certainties, such as land to the American Indian, invisible to the protection of U.S. law. This is openly revealed by the 1988 Supreme Court’s decision in the landmark case, Lyng v. Northwest Indian Cemetery Protective Association. This decision represented the convergence of religion, law, and land and demonstrated that the legislation had no firm grasp understanding the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) or the protections it futilely promised.

Malinda Brown, Communication THIRD PRIZE AWARDED  Tim Nicholas, Ph.D., Introduction
Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire: Analysis of Preschool Programming with the Use of Interpersonal Deception Theory
Research Director: Cliff Fortenberry, Ph.D.

Preschool age children who watch television receive a number of educational and cognitive development cues from the characters in the programs. But do children see their favorite characters involved in acts of deception? If so, do they understand deception and how it is being used to teach moral lessons? This study examines one popular animated program. Using the Interpersonal Deception Theory propositions, a survey of parents of preschoolers is conducted to analyze whether children are exposed to deception, are parents and children aware of such deception, and are children learning from these deceptive acts in a positive way.

Mariel Mohns, Biological Sciences FIRST PRIZE AWARDED  George Howell III, Ph.D., Introduction
DDE to Diabetes: The Metabolic Implications of Organochlorine Pesticide Exposure
Research Director: George Howell III, Ph.D.

Recent epidemiological data indicate that this is a significant, positive correlation between elevated serum concentrations and increased incidence of obesity and diabetes. However, a cause and effect relationship between the two has not been demonstrated. Our current studies employ a murine model of DDE exposure, the bioaccumulative metabolite of the organochlorine pesticide DDT, to determine the relationship between elevated serum concentrations of DDE and the occurrence of obesity and diabetes. Following exposure, DDE treated animals displayed a significantly increased amount of weight gain from baseline as well as fasting hyperglycemia when compared with control animals. Thus, our current data support the hypothesis that exposure to organochlorine pesticides, namely DDE, promotes the occurrence of obesity and diabetes.

Jason Snider, Health Services Administration  Rosie Lee Calvin, R.N., D.N.S., Introduction
Charcot-Marie Tooth in Men and Women: The Long-Term Effects and Management in Adults
Research Director: Melanie Fortenberry, RN, BSN, MHS.

Charcot-Marie Tooth (CMT) disease is a form of muscular dystrophy and is caused by abnormal nerve conduction and may result in poor or no reflexes, sensory loss, foot deformity and muscle weakness and atrophy. Charcot-Marie-Tooth is genetically inherited and exhibits itself in five different groups of genetic deficiencies. There is not a cure for CMT. The purpose of this study is to determine the long-term effects and management of Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease in adults.

Intermission – 15 minutes
This study examined the effect of teacher certification on reading achievement of elementary students in an urban school district as measured by mean scores on the reading/language arts Mississippi Curriculum Test, Second Edition (MCT2). The purposes of the study were: a) to determine if there was a significant difference between teacher certification and students’ reading achievement in urban schools, b) to determine patterns or trends which may exist when the final results are compared across third through fifth grade levels in student achievement in reading, and c) to determine the difference between the type of licensure and the performance of students in reading.

Kent Mummert, Graphic Design

Stephen D. Cook, M.F.A., Introduction

Four Graphic Design Pioneers and Their Timeless Lessons for Future Graphic Designers

Research Director: Stephanie Busbea, Ph.D.

This research explores the historical foundations of Graphic Design with particular regard to four individuals who made significant contributions to the field. It details the primary concepts forwarded by each person and the lessons they imply that future graphic designers can incorporate in solving contemporary design problems.

Patrice S. Guilfoyle, Communication

Tim Nicholas, Ph.D., Introduction

Communicating Change in an Ever-Changing Health-Care Environment

Research Director: Tim Nicholas, Ph.D.

Communicating change in an organization has generated a wide array of interest from researchers over the last 20 years. As organizations have grown increasingly large and complex, how to communicate changes to employees and through what channels may be vital to building support for those changes. Health-care organizations are facing vast change at a time of insurance reforms, budget pressures, and employee growth. This qualitative study examines the communication channels in one medical center and whether one-way or two-way communication methods are preferable to relay change information to employees. It also looks at which method best facilitates acceptance of changes.

Abel M. Tsegga, Law

Richard Meyer, J.D., LL.M., Introduction

Horror Song: How the U.S. War on Terror Has Led to Acts of Genocide in the Horn of Africa

Research Director: Richard Meyer, J.D., LL.M.

After receiving billions of dollars and acting at the behest of the U.S. government, the Ethiopian government, led by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, has committed numerous acts of genocide while working towards eliminating regional terrorist cells and securing U.S. interests; and since the Ethiopian forces are acting on behalf of the U.S., the United States is complicit in all international wrongs committed by the Ethiopian government, especially for acts of genocide.
Both Foman and Nita Musselwhite taught Jeannie Lane’s mother, Mary Pollan Lane, in the 1950’s. In the 1970’s they taught three of Mary Lane’s four children: Mari Jo Lane Williamson, Jeannie M. Lane, and Raymond D. Lane.