

From the Department Head:

As we recover from the Thanksgiving holiday, classes will end this week and exams will begin, and thus the semester break and the holidays are not far away. The BESS holiday party is scheduled for Monday, December 15 from 2 pm to 4 pm in the Hollingsworth Auditorium. This annual event (or the prospects of holiday cookies) typically attracts a number of departmental retirees and perhaps an alumnus or two, in addition to the departmental faculty, staff and students. If you received this newsletter you are invited as well, and hope you will join us to celebrate the season and upcoming new year.

---Eric Drumm



Faculty Profile



Deputy **M. E. ESSINGTON**, a Patrolman (Reserve) with the Knox County Sheriff's Office, might be better known to you as Dr. Michael E. Essington, Ph.D., Soil Scientist, a professor in our department. We got to see him in uniform this week, as he stopped by the office on his way home after patrol duty. Michael's reputation as a serious lecturer with high standards in the classroom makes him especially suited for his volunteer duties as an officer of the law. Michael has been affiliated with the Sheriff's Office since 2005 as a member of SCAN (Senior Citizen Awareness Network). SCAN officers perform weekly checks on the elderly and shut-in population of Knox County. Michael was accepted into the Reserve Officer Training Academy in the summer of 2007, and was commissioned in November of 2007. Earlier this year, Michael completed the Intermediate Patrol Officer's Training Academy and is able to participate in nearly all aspects of law enforcement in the county. He said that Sheriff's officers have been pretty busy with several burglaries to investigate, as well as other complaints. Unfortunately, crime is on the rise, and the Sheriff's Office appreciates all the time that the Reserve Officers can give. Reserve officers are required to put in at least 16 hours per month, but Michael said that he has been able to help about 30 hours per month lately, on weekends and on days off, mainly in the forensics unit.

Be safe out there!

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 FOR IMPORTANT
 NEWS ON:**

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Please submit news items to
 Darla O'Neill at
doneill1@utk.edu
 BESS NEWS is issued on 1st &
 3rd Mondays of each month.
 Archived issues will post to our
[departmental website](#).
 To subscribe (or unsubscribe),
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Congratulations!

Eric Drumm and William Hart were honored at the UTIA Service Awards Reception December 1. Both have 25 years of service at UT!

Faculty Meetings

December 3 BESS Faculty Retreat; Tenure & Promotion meeting afterward



The PLANT, SOIL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CLUB has a new website: <http://pse.ag.utk.edu> .

The site contains club information, activities, a photo album, and useful links for students. The club is open to any student pursuing an Earth Science related degree.

If you have any questions or comments about the club or the website, please contact Brian Lester at blester@utk.edu .



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December 2	Last day of classes. Deadline for total withdrawal from the University <i>Undergraduate students:</i> Last day to apply for Summer 2009 graduation
December 3, 6, 7	Study period. UT GO opens for grade submissions (open 7 am to midnight Monday through Saturday; noon to midnight Sunday)
December 4, 5, 8 – 11	Final Exams schedule: HTTP://REGISTRAR.TENNESSEE.EDU/ACADEMIC_CALENDAR/FALL08EXAM.PDF
December 12	Final grades due for graduating doctoral students, fall semester 2008
December 12	Graduate Hooding Ceremony
December 13	UT Commencement
December 16	UT GO closes for fall semester grade submission; last submission by noon

UT-K & COE INFO & CALENDAR

Cost savings

As the budget crisis deepens, it is becoming increasingly important for faculty to help with cost-saving measures. A few weeks ago, I sent a message regarding the Switch Your Thinking campaign:

<http://environment.utk.edu/news/swtanouncement.html>

With full participation, this campaign can enable UTK to save a million dollars in energy costs.

The present message is to suggest two other ways in which faculty can help. First, a "Report Energy Problems" link has been added to the Switch Your Thinking website. If your office or classroom is too hot or too cold, if your windows are leaky, if your lighting is inefficient, or if you are aware of other kinds of energy inefficiencies that can be addressed by repairing or upgrading facilities, please report these problems to UT's Sustainability Manager, Gordie Bennett, by using this link.

Second, Interim Chancellor Simek has added to his website a link for suggesting ideas for new efficiencies in UTK operations generally:

<http://chancellor.tennessee.edu/budget/feedback/index.shtml>

If you know of a helpful way to cut costs, please let the Chancellor know.

The money we save will help to minimize further reductions in operating funds and in faculty and staff positions.

Best wishes,

John Nolt, Professor and President, Faculty Senate, Philosophy Department

DoD BAA Postings

COE Faculty,

The office of research has created a page with links to DoD BAAs for a convenient one-location doe DoD opportunities. <http://research.utk.edu/funding/baa.shtml>

---Dr. J. Wesley Hines, Interim Associate Dean for Research and Technology, College of Engineering

Attention Faculty and Students:

There has been a change that you need to know about! **HBB** is the new abbreviation for the James A. Haslam II Business Building, formerly known as the Glocker Building. Timetable, Astra, and students' schedules should be reflecting this change effective immediately. If you could spread the word to your faculty and students, that would be a big help before Spring classes begin!

Thanks, and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Best wishes!

Jennifer M. Hardy, Associate Registrar

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO ALL CONTACTS

Agricultural Risk Management Education Competitive Grants Program Strives to Reach Producers Southern Region Risk Management Education Center Announces Request for Application of 2009 Agricultural Risk Management Education Competitive Grants Program

STEPHENVILLE, TX--The Southern Region Risk Management Education Center (Southern Center), <http://srrme.tamu.edu>, is seeking Agricultural Risk Management Education Competitive Grants for educational projects to agriculture producers.

The Southern Center, hosted by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, is seeking proposals to fund. The grant monies are available 2008-2009 for comprehensive risk management education for agricultural producers in the Southern Region's 13 states, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands.

Risk management education is providing training that improves the ability of agricultural producers and their families to effectively manage risks associated with their farming and ranching business in financial, legal, production, marketing, and human resources.

The 2008 Farm Bill, in Section 12026, amends this program by placing a special emphasis on risk management strategies, education, and outreach specifically targeted at:

- A. beginning farmers or ranchers;
- B. legal immigrant farmers or ranchers that are attempting to become established producers in the U.S.;
- C. socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers;
- D. farmers or ranchers that
 - a. are preparing to retire; and
 - b. are using transition strategies to help new farmers or ranchers get started; and
- E. new or established farmers or ranchers that are converting production and marketing systems to pursue new markets.

Section 133 of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act (ARPA) established the continuing intent of the program, which is to *educate agricultural producers about the full range of risk management activities*. All organizations serving agricultural producers, especially those serving the special emphasis audiences, are strongly encouraged to apply. Applications must clearly identify how agricultural producers will improve their risk management as a result of participating in the proposed project.

Individuals wishing to be considered for funding must submit a pre-proposal using the on-line proposal application form available under the **Available Grants** tab on the Southern Center's website

<http://srrme.tamu.edu>

Online pre-proposals must be submitted by 5:00 PM (CST) **December 11, 2008**.

For more information, contact: Ken Stokes, (254) 968-4144, kstokes@ag.tamu.edu

The Southern Region is comprised of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Southern Center is part of the Extension Risk Management Education Program seeking to improve the risk management capabilities of producers in the United States of America.

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Carol B. Faulkenberry
Extension Program Specialist II
Southern Region Risk Management Education Center
Texas AgriLife Extension Service
1229 N US Hwy 281
Stephenville, TX 76401
254-968-4144
254-965-3759 fax
cfaulkenberry@ag.tamu.edu
<http://srrme.tamu.edu>

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FY 2009 International Science and Education RFA

From: Fulton, Patty

Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2008 11:29 AM

To: Senior Leadership - CSREES Distribution List

Subject: FY 2009 International Science and Education RFA

I would appreciate your assistance in spreading the word that the FY 2009 RFA for the International Science and Education competitive grants program has been published. All U.S. 4-year institutions that award BS level degrees are eligible to apply.

The ISE supports research, extension, and teaching activities that will enhance the capabilities of American colleges and universities to conduct international collaborative research, extension and teaching.

ISE projects are expected to enhance the international content of curricula; ensure that faculty work beyond the U.S. and bring lessons learned back home; promote international research partnerships; enhance the use and application of foreign technologies in the U.S.; and strengthen the role that colleges and universities play in maintaining U.S. competitiveness.

The RFA can be found on the CSREES website at:

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/educationinternationalscience.cfm>

The closing date for this program is **January 16, 2009**. The only change in the FY09 program from the previous year is that the maximum amount per award has been increased from \$100,000 to \$150,000. If you have any questions, please contact me at pfulton@csrees.usda.gov <<mailto:pfulton@csrees.usda.gov>> or 202-690-3852.

Thank you. Patty Fulton, International Programs, CSREES, USDA, Phone: 202-690-3852, Fax: 202-690-2355

Annual Soil and Forage Testing Recommendation Work Group Meeting

Dear Colleagues:

You are invited to participate in the annual soil and forage testing recommendation work group meeting on Monday, Jan. 12, 2009 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 PM) in the conference room of the Soil, Plant and Pest Center, Nashville, TN. Other possible dates include Jan. 14 or 15. Please let me know if you have a conflict with Jan. 12 but would like to attend and present some research information relevant to our recommendations.

The purpose of this meeting is for a review of current recommendations and new research in order to provide up to date, technical, research-based information to support efforts of the "soil and plant tissue testing portion, including forage testing" of our Soil, Plant and Pest Center located in Nashville, TN.

We will review changes implemented during the last year as a result of previous meetings and discuss changes needed during 2009.

If you have new research information that suggests needed changes to our current program or recommendations then please let me know of your desire to present it and I will include time for you on our meeting agenda. I need your topic title and approximate amount of time needed to present your information to our group by Monday, **Dec. 15, 2008**.

Some topic areas (add your own if you feel it can benefit our programs) where we can use additional information are:

1. Presently needed changes (currently available resources) to our current Testing Procedures/New diagnostic tests and equipment needed to meet the diagnostic challenges of our changing agricultural systems and home owner encountered production problems. Plant tissue testing. Forage testing. Determination of Appropriate Liming Rates.
2. New developments/ "Alternative Funding Opportunities " (what do we need to prepare for in the future) in funding, instrumentation or extraction procedures that might benefit our anticipated programs.)
3. New Research based information suggesting changes to our current lime and fertilizer recommendations or testing procedures. Presentation and Approval of lime notes. Changes to Wildlife plot recommendations. Changes to K recommendations for hybrid bermudagrass hay.
4. OTHER????

We welcome your input. Should other topic areas be included that are not currently listed?? Please forward this to anyone that I may have inadvertently overlooked. A final agenda listing specific topics, presenter and time of presentation, will be sent out in late-december so that you may better plan to stay for all or part of the work group discussions. We look forward to visiting with you all in Nashville.

Sincerely,

Hubert J. Savoy, Jr.

Associate Professor

Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science

University of Tennessee, Extension

865 974 7266

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SUPER Deadlines

1. **January 2, 2009** is the cut off for entering calendar year 2008 activity reports into the SUPER Delivery module. and
2. **February 2, 2009** is the due date for 2008 statewide impact statements.

Final Candidates to be Interviewed for Extension Assistant Dean

The Search Committee for the position of Assistant Dean-Agriculture, Natural Resources and Resource Development, has identified four candidates to be interviewed. Those are:

Dr. D. Alan Barefield
Dr. Gary E. Bates
Dr. Ray W. Burden
Dr. Steven G. Isaacs

The candidates' curriculum vitae have been posted on the Search website -

<http://utextension.tennessee.edu/asstdeansearch/meetingsandminutes.htm>

We have scheduled December 1, 2, 3, and 4, 2008 for interviews. Each candidate will present a seminar in Knoxville, which will be webcast and archived for later viewing. Tentative times for the seminars are:

December 2 - 8:30 ET - Ray Burden
December 2 - 10:00 ET - Gary Bates
December 3 - 8:30 ET - Alan Barefield
December 3 - 10:00 ET - Steve Isaacs

All four candidates will also interview in Franklin, TN on Thursday, December 4.

A final interview schedule for each candidate will be posted on the website in the near future.

USDA, DOI, EPA Transition Teams Announced

Members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) transition teams for President-Elect Barack Obama have been announced. Overseeing the efforts of all three transition teams is David Hayes, chair of the Environment, Land and Resources department at the law firm Latham and Watkins. Hayes served as Deputy Secretary at DOI during the Clinton Administration.

Chosen to lead transition efforts at USDA are Bart Chilton, currently a commissioner with the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, and Carole Jett, a former NRCS employee. Chilton has previously served with the Farm Credit Administration and was deputy chief of staff to Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman in the Clinton Administration, government relations staff for National Farmers Union and an advisor to Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD). Jett recently retired from NRCS after a 33-year career with the agency. In her most recent capacity with NRCS, she served as National Farm Bill Coordinator where she oversaw the agency's efforts on the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills.

Leading transition efforts at DOI are Keith Harper and John Leshy. Harper is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and practices Native American law with the firm Kilpatrick Stockton. Leshy is a law professor at the University of California, previously served as staff on the House Natural Resources Committee and was a member of the DOI transition team for the Clinton administration.

And leading efforts at EPA are Cecilia Estolano, Lisa Jackson, and Robert Sussman. Estolano is currently CEO of the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles and has previously served as staff advisor on air and radiation at EPA. Jackson is Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and previously managed Superfund in EPA's New York regional office. Sussman is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress and previously served as Deputy Administrator at EPA from 1993-1994.

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454 Sequencer in place now at the Joint Institute of Biological Sciences housed at ORNL

Dear Colleagues,

As many of you know, there is a 454 sequencer in place now at the Joint Institute of Biological Sciences housed at ORNL. Apparently, the instrument is now ready for use. I have asked Sujata Agarwal, the Genomics Hub Scientist, to be the UTIA conduit for our PIs wishing to run samples there .

She will attend a 454 sequencing meeting at JIBS on **December 9th at 9:00** on our behalf—those of us at UTIA who are interested in pursuing 454 sequencing in 2009. At this meeting there will be a discussion of a timeline for starting sequencing, sequencing cost, sample submission and data handling. They will also have a Roche representative present to answer question about supply needs.

I would like to hold a meeting on Dec 8 for all faculty, students and postdocs interested in using the 454 so we can make Sujata aware of our needs and to help answer questions. Please let me know if you are interested in attending and I'll coordinate a time where most people can attend.

Please spread the word to any of your colleagues who might wish to learn more and take advantage of this powerful technology.

We have already 454 runs at another university and have 100,000s of sequences at about 200 bp reads from cDNAs. It will keep us in the business of gene hunting for some time and certainly provides a lot of data for the dollar. We've also learned a few things about data handling.

Please spread the word to any UTIA people who might be interested, including students and postdocs.
cheers,

C. Neal Stewart, Jr., Racheff Chair of Excellence and Professor, Plant Molecular Genetics, 865 974 6487
nealstewart@utk.edu, www.clu-in.org/conf/tio/serdpfunding.

FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

ARLINGTON, VA, November 6, 2008-The Department of Defense (DoD), through the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP), is seeking to fund environmental research and development efforts. The development and application of innovative environmental science and technology supports the long-term sustainability of DoD's installations and ranges, as well as significantly reduces current and future environmental liabilities. Proposals responding to focused Statements of Need (SON) in the following areas are requested:

* Environmental Restoration - innovative technologies for the detection, characterization, containment, and remediation of a wide range of contaminants in soil, sediments, and water.

* Munitions Management - advanced geophysical sensor and signal processing technologies for the detection, discrimination, and remediation of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and technologies for range clearance and reduced generation of UXO.

* Sustainable Infrastructure - natural resources (e.g., ecosystem-based management; threatened, endangered, and at-risk species; land management and watershed protection; and maritime sustainability), facilities (e.g., installation/regional sustainability, energy, noise, air and water quality, and facility waste), and cultural resources.

* Weapons Systems and Platforms - advanced alternative environmentally benign technologies and materials that reduce, control, or eliminate the waste and emissions associated with the manufacturing, maintenance, and use of DoD weapons systems and platforms.

Proposals responding to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 SONs will be selected through a competitive process. The Core Solicitation provides funding in varying amounts for multi-year projects. For the Core Solicitation,

PRE-PROPOSALS FROM THE NON-FEDERAL SECTOR ARE DUE BY THURSDAY, **JANUARY 8, 2009**.

PROPOSALS FROM THE FEDERAL SECTOR ARE DUE BY THURSDAY, **MARCH 12, 2009**. The SONs and detailed instructions for federal and private sector proposers are available on the SERDP web site at www.serdp.org/funding.

SERDP also will be funding environmental research and development through the SERDP Exploratory Development (SEED) Solicitation. The SEED Solicitation is designed to provide a limited amount of funding (not to exceed \$150,000) to investigate new environmental technologies with innovative approaches that entail high technical risk and/or have minimal supporting data that provide risk reduction and/or proof of concept. For FY 2010, proposals are being requested that respond to one SEED SON in each of the following focus areas: Munitions Management, Sustainable Infrastructure, and Weapons Systems and Platforms.

ALL SEED PROPOSALS ARE DUE BY THURSDAY, **MARCH 12, 2009**. The SEED SONs and detailed instructions for both federal and non-federal proposers are available on the SERDP web site at www.serdp.org/funding.

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All Aboard! The Holiday Express at the UT Gardens

The event opens Thanksgiving weekend and will be open to the public 1-9 p.m. November 26-29 and 1-6 p.m. November 30.

After the opening weekend, the Holiday Express will be open 5-9 p.m. Fridays, 1-9 p.m. Saturdays, and 1-6 p.m.

Sundays through January 4, 2009. Large group viewings are available and interested parties should call 865-584-7666.

Cost is \$5 per person; children under 4 are admitted free.

Ten garden-scale model trains, thousands of lights and a miniature landscape featuring rivers, waterfalls and more than 100 buildings decorated for the holidays will delight visitors young and old at a new event that kicks off November 26 at the UT Gardens.

Holiday Express at the UT Gardens, an event for the entire family, features the trains running simultaneously on a quarter-mile track that winds through the fictional town of Ravensford. Visitors will wonder at the elaborate landscape, which includes replicas of existing East Tennessee architecture. The hand-crafted display is located on the Friendship Plaza at the entrance to the UT Gardens off Neyland Drive.

The Holiday Express is sponsored by the Knoxville News Sentinel and WBIR.

In addition to your attendance, we need your help getting the word out! If you are able to volunteer an hour or two of your time to distribute windshield flyers and posters during the kickoff week, please call Lorna Norwood at 865-974-7141. We also need your help putting up posters around your office, public spaces, student areas, or even around where you live, shop and worship. Please visit <http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/HolidayInfo.html> to download and print posters. Get on board and help us make this first-ever Holiday Express a success!

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NEW COURSE OFFERING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Global Seminar

FWF 590 (section 004) – 3 credits

9:40 – 10:55 TR, Ellington 125

This new class is an opportunity for Seniors and Graduate Students to participate in a global classroom to explore issues related to sustainability and the environment. The course description below is from the main website for the seminar series (<http://www.globalseminar.org/>):

The critical issues of sustainability transcend national boundaries. Food security and its relationship to sustainable development have increasingly become issues of global concern. Therefore this course offers students around the world an opportunity to examine, discuss, and formulate positions to case studies on sustainability issues concerning population, the environment, natural resources and food systems. Each case study is analyzed from the following perspectives: a) Social/Cultural; b) Political; c) Economic; d) Technical; e) Health; f) Environmental; and g) Ethics/Philosophical. Students will focus on a variety of topics that demonstrate the dynamic interrelationships among population demographics, natural resources management, and food production.

Our partner institutions in this year's Global Seminar Cluster 4 will include (depending on each university's academic schedule): Univ. Autonoma de Guadalajara, Mexico; University of Florence, Florence, Italy; Delaware State University, USA; Tompkins Cortland Community College, New York; Virginia Tech University; and NPSUT, Taiwan

In this class a case study approach to content, international student teams, and Internet, video, satellite and telephone technologies are combined to meet the challenge of having a successful global classroom of students spread among institutions around the world. Our learning approach aims to promote critical reflection and experiential learning through the use of case studies of real events and people. The case studies are presented through videos, readings, and other documentation, which give realism and credibility and complements background materials. The seminar relies heavily on the use of modern information and communication technologies to provide students the opportunity to interact with their global classmates and professors. This year the seminar includes three interactive videoconferences to discuss case studies, continuous asynchronous discussions throughout the semester using an online discussion board and email, and short written assignments.

We will review one case at the beginning of the semester as a class and then participate in three case studies via videoconferencing with the other institutions. The three global cases will involve Bioprospecting, Bluefin Tuna, and Genetically-Modified Foods and Environmental Considerations.

Please contact Don Hodges (974-2706; dhodges2@utk.edu) for more information.

NEW COURSE OFFERING ANNOUNCEMENT

Biofuels and Bioproducts Engineering

CBE 494/590

Instructor: Abhijeet P. Borole.

Tue, Thu 5:10 PM – 6:25 PM

Description: The course will cover processes involved in transformation of biomass and other resources into biofuels and bioproducts. This will be an applied course, with focus on existing and upcoming technologies for bioconversion of renewable resources, description of current roadblocks and exposure to future needs. Intended primarily for senior class and graduate students from various disciplines, the course considers the emergence of biofuel/bioproduct engineering as a coherent field of research and practice. It will include a distinctive blend of elements ranging from molecular bioengineering and biotechnology to process design, resource assessment and life-cycle analysis. Biofuels such as ethanol, biodiesel, biohydrogen, and bioelectricity will be covered. A range of bioproducts from low volume, high value products to high volume low value products (biocommodities) will be discussed. Examples are biopolymers, renewable chemicals such as propanediol, lactic acid, etc. Among the biofuels, ethanol production will be the primary example, with coverage including feedstock production and logistics, biomass recalcitrance issues and unit operations within biorefineries. The course may include a few lectures from local experts on specific topics. The course will require the students to present a paper which can be on the general topic of bioproduct/biofuels or very specific targeting a single aspect of bioproduct development. Teams of students with different backgrounds (eg. Molecular Biology and Chemical Engineering or Biosystems Engineering) may jointly propose topics or choose from a list provided by the instructor.

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Dissertation Workshop Sponsored by UT Libraries and Graduate School - January 6, 2009:

On **January 6**, 2009, the Graduate School and the University of Tennessee Libraries will once again host a co-sponsored event: **"The Dissertation and Scholarly Inquiry: A Workshop for Doctoral Students."**

The day-long list of activities will include information and resources on topics, such as completing and publishing a dissertation, intellectual property rights, and ethics in research. Morning and afternoon refreshments and lunch will be provided as well. The focus will be on students who have just begun a doctoral program and who have not yet started writing the dissertation. More advanced students working on the dissertation are welcome to register, provided space is available.



All of us at BESS wish all of our students the very best this holiday season. For those who are graduating, please remember you have friends here! Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can help you in your new endeavors. For those returning after the break, we'll see you again soon! And for all, please know how much we value each and every one of you. You are the reason we are here and you are very special to us.

Take care and have a wonderful break!

--BESS Faculty and Staff

