UAMS Academic Mission Prepares for ‘New Normal’

As UAMS prepares for a hoped-for return to in-person classes and educational activities for students, those working in the academic mission — in the colleges, Academic Affairs and institutional support services — are making sure classrooms and campus public spaces are ready.

In recent weeks, the Office of Academic Services, which manages campus classroom and teaching labs, assessed maximum capacity of those spaces when recommended social distancing is measured. At the same time, Academic Affairs and college leaders worked through multiple contingencies for continued online education delivery, in-person classes or a combination of the two for the fall 2020 semester. Potential scenarios could include continuing online instruction for some courses, adding additional sections for certain courses and staggered or alternate attendance strategies for classes or classes taught in off hours (evenings or weekends).

In-person classes and educational activities were suspended in March, one day after the first case of COVID-19 was reported in Arkansas. Colleges and programs quickly moved to alternative forms of instruction, including online, conference call or interactive video.

“We hope that it will not be necessary to cancel all in-person classes again this fall/winter,” said Provost Stephanie Gardner, Pharm.D., Ed.D. “In the mean

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Accolades

Congratulations to Center for Health Literacy faculty Jen Gan, M.B.A., and affiliate faculty Kristie Hadden, Ph.D., who authored these recently published articles:


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Graduate School Dean Bobby McGehee, Ph.D., regularly refers to this time of year as “Commencement Season,” a period when classes are finishing for the semester and pre-graduation festivities are held in each college. The excitement culminates in the Simmons Bank Arena in North Little Rock for the UAMS Commencement Ceremony.

It is the high point of the academic year. It is always rewarding and fun to see our graduates celebrate completion of their academic journey. Hundreds of new health care professionals walk across the stage in front of our faculty, their families and friends. It is joyous.

Yet, this year, the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to social distance forced cancelation of large events, including commencement. It was a sad but necessary step to reduce the risk of exposure and virus spread.

However, in a time of adversity, those members of Team UAMS in our colleges and across our academic mission came together to make sure our graduates were able to graduate on time or be positioned to graduate as soon as possible.

In the last two months, we adapted. We persevered. We got creative.

We found alternative ways to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2020. We celebrated graduates from our dental hygiene program who completed 1,500 hours of service to underserved communities while completing their education. We celebrated our dietetic internship students who created a two-week menu and shopping lists for people who were quarantined.

As I watched some of the virtual commencement events held by the colleges, it was even more clear to me that despite the challenges we found a way to make the day meaningful for our graduates. I saw mom’s able to pin their daughters with the lapel pins given by our College of Nursing for completing the BSN program. I saw families get to place the hoods signifying completion of a doctoral education on their loved one’s shoulders.

It was joyous.
**Commencement**

**Colleges Stage Virtual Ceremonies for Graduates after Commencement Cancelation**

As the COVID-19 pandemic forced UAMS to cancel the large annual commencement ceremony, its colleges and programs found alternate ways to celebrate their graduates at a distance.

Despite the distance, the virtual ceremonies — some of which are yet to be held — produced moments of laughter, fun, emotion and celebration even via video. Convocations, along with hooding and pinning ceremonies still brought college faculty, graduates, friends and family members together for events staged over interactive video connections and broadcast on the internet.

UAMS also produced a digital commencement program in the same format as its traditional printed program given out at the ceremony. It can be found online at [http://commencement.uams.edu/files/2020/05/2020-UAMS-Graduation-Program.pdf](http://commencement.uams.edu/files/2020/05/2020-UAMS-Graduation-Program.pdf).

"I imagine this is not the commencement any of you envisioned when you made the monumental and selfless decision to undertake an education in health care," wrote Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, in a letter to graduates in the digital commencement program. "However, it is in times like these, with our country at the epicenter of a global pandemic, that we are reminded exactly why we chose the path we did. Now is the time to put your education, training and individual aptitude to work because the world needs you."

Here's a roundup of some of the celebrations:

**College of Medicine** – For the first time in the 141-year history of the College of Medicine, the annual Honors Convocation was held over videoconferencing platform Zoom, connecting the 163 graduates with college leadership. The whole event was then broadcast live on Facebook. The circumstances added a layer of symbolism since the college was unsure every graduate’s commencement robe and hood would arrive in time for the event. So 125 previous graduates and faculty members lent regalia to ensure all graduates had regalia.

"In this ceremony so filled with symbolism, the fact that you are wearing the robe and soon the hood of one who came before is certainly symbolic of your joining the profession and passing of the torch to a new generation," said James Graham, M.D., executive associate dean for academic affairs. [Read more about the ceremony here.](http://commencement.uams.edu/files/2020/05/2020-UAMS-Graduation-Program.pdf)

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Office of Educational Development

Chancellor’s Teaching Award Presented to Tiffany Huitt, Ph.D.

Tiffany Huitt, Ph.D., has received the 2020 Chancellor’s Teaching Award for Teaching Excellence at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS).

Huitt is director of research and an associate professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies in the UAMS College of Health Professions.

The award is traditionally presented annually during commencement, but the ceremony was canceled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The teaching award is coordinated through the Educators Academy in the Office of Educational Development.

"Dr. Huitt is a model of excellence in education and scholarship as a mentor and master teacher," said Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA.

The award was established in 2004 to recognize outstanding teaching among UAMS faculty. The Teaching Excellence Award recognizes direct teaching, mentoring or educational scholarship between a faculty member and any learner. It can be in all settings, including the classroom, online, clinic or laboratory.

Huitt joined UAMS in 2013 as an adjunct assistant professor while the physician assistant program was under development and became full time in 2015, contributing to the program’s successful accreditation in 2016. She was appointed the program’s first associate program director in 2017.

Huitt was awarded the UAMS Physician Assistant Faculty of the Year Award in 2018 and received the 2017 College of Health Professions Excellence in Teaching Award.

Division of Academic Affairs

Ward named Associate Provost for Faculty

Wendy Ward, Ph.D., ABPP, FAPA, was recently appointed Associate Provost for Faculty in the Division of Academic Affairs. She will start in this role on July 1, 2020, succeeding Jeannette Shorey, M.D., who retired Feb. 29.

Ward, a professor in the College of Medicine’s Department of Pediatrics, joined the UAMS faculty in 2003. She is a board-certified psychologist with research interests in chronic pain management and the prevention/treatment of obesity. Leadership roles within the department have included associate director of the Section of Pediatric Psychology, director of faculty wellness, director of leadership development, co-director of faculty development and associate director of faculty affairs. Ward also served as president of the UAMS Women’s Faculty Development Caucus. She received the Chancellor’s Teaching Award for Society and Health Education Excellence in 2015.

In 2016, she was appointed interprofessional faculty development in our Office of Interprofessional Education — a role in which she will continue.
# Office of Educational Development

## eLearning Team Takes Blackboard Classes Online for June

All Blackboard classes will be online in June, however, the eLearning Team is always available via Blackboard-Help@uams.edu. See the class schedule below.

### June 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>6/8/20</th>
<th>4:30-5:30</th>
<th>Using Groups in Collaborate Ultra</th>
<th>online</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/9/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Basic Blackboard Grade Center</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/9/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Respondus Products for Exams (4.0, LockDown Browser &amp; Respondus Monitor)</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6/10/20</td>
<td>noon-1pm</td>
<td>Advanced Grade Center in Blackboard</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6/10/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Basic Collaborate Ultra with Security Settings</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>6/11/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Blackboard Communication Tools - Engaging Learners</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>6/11/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Collaborate Ultra Tools &amp; Tips for Interactivity</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>6/15/20</td>
<td>noon-1pm</td>
<td>Getting Your Blackboard Course Ready: the Basics (Blackboard Get Ready Training)</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>6/15/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Respondus Products for Exams (4.0, LockDown Browser &amp; Respondus Monitor)</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Office of Educational Development

#### eLearning Schedule
*Continued from Page 6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/16/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Basic Collaborate Ultra with Security Settings</td>
<td>online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/16/20</td>
<td>noon - 1pm</td>
<td>Asynchronous/Synchronous Discussions: Blackboard Discussion Tool/Breakout Rooms Collaborate Ultra</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6/17/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Blackboard Groups &amp; Smartviews</td>
<td>online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6/17/20</td>
<td>noon - 1pm</td>
<td>Building a Team Based Learning (TBL) Activity in Blackboard</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>6/18/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Building Interactivity in Blackboard Courses</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>6/18/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Collaborate Ultra Tools &amp; Tips for Interactivity</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/23/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Asynchronous/Synchronous Discussions: Blackboard Discussion Tool/Breakout Rooms Collaborate Ultra</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/23/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Basic Collaborate Ultra with Security Settings</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6/24/20</td>
<td>noon-1pm</td>
<td>Managing Course Content in Blackboard</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6/24/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Collaborate Ultra Tools &amp; Tips for Interactivity</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>6/25/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Building &amp; Grading Assignments in Blackboard with the new Annotate Tool</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>6/25/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Collaborate Ultra Tools &amp; Tips for Interactivity</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>6/26/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Blackboard Rubrics for Assignments or Skills</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>6/26/20</td>
<td>noon-1pm</td>
<td>Collaborate Ultra Tools &amp; Tips for Interactivity</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>6/29/20</td>
<td>noon-1pm</td>
<td>Asynchronous/Synchronous Discussions: Blackboard Discussion Tool/Breakout Rooms Collaborate Ultra</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>6/29/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Student Presentations in Collaborate Ultra</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/30/20</td>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td>Managing Course Content in Blackboard</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>6/30/20</td>
<td>4:30-5:30</td>
<td>Using SoftChalk in Blackboard Courses</td>
<td>online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RSVP to reserve a spot at CarleMarthaH@uams.edu. You will receive a calendar invite. The day before training session you will receive a Collaborate link to join the session.

**Please make your reservation by noon the day before the session.**
Office of Educational Development

For new faculty or faculty needing basic Blackboard training:

Comprehensive Blackboard (Bb) Training

Comprehensive Bb Training is available by request carlemarthah@uams.edu. Sessions are 2 hours and are available online only. When you register you will be sent a calendar invite and a link for joining. Individuals or small groups can be scheduled.

*Session #1 includes Overview to Blackboard; Communication tools; Assignments; and Rubrics.

*Session #2 includes Testing in Blackboard and Respondus products (Lock Down Browser, Respondus 4.0; Respondus Monitor) and EAC Visual Data.

*Session #3 includes the Grade Center; Groups; Course Analytics; and Collaborate Ultra.

UAMS Library

Renovations Close Active Learning Center for the Summer

Library also asks visitors to check in at front desk

Renovations to the Library physical spaces and technology are moving forward and we are excited at the progress being made. While progress is underway, we have temporarily limited or closed access to some of these spaces to allow construction teams to complete their work.

The Student Success Center is expanding and additional testing spaces are scheduled to be configured on the 3rd floor this summer. At present, this space is closed for construction and we anticipate an August completion date for this project.

Additionally, the Active Learning Center on the first floor in the Library is under renovation in preparation for classes to resume in the fall. Classroom Technologies is upgrading the audiovisual system, installing microphones, loudspeakers, and cameras for each team table and adding videoconferencing capabilities to allow interaction with a planned Active Learning Center on the Northwest campus. The anticipated completion date is Aug. 3. Until the project is complete, the ALC is closed and evening and weekend access to the 24/7 area is the Library is not available.

Lastly, in an ongoing effort to ensure proper social distancing throughout the library, we are now requesting that all library patrons visit the service desk to ‘check out a space.’ We determined the library capacity that can enable appropriate social distancing and will issue ‘visitor passes’ to patrons to ensure we don’t exceed the capacity required to comply with social distancing.
Society for the History of Medicine and the Health Professions Hosts Virtual Lecture on 1918 Influenza Pandemic

As COVID-19 continued its trek across the U.S., finally entering Arkansas in early March, event after event was cancelled. The Society for the History of Medicine and Health Professions, the friends’ organization for the UAMS Library’s Historical Research Center, recognized the interest in online programming on historical topics while Arkansans were staying at home to stay safe. With that idea, the Society’s “Stay-at-Home” Lecture Series was born.

Tim Nutt, director of the Historical Research Center, conducted the three presentations in the series so far. The most attended (87) was on the 1918 Influenza pandemic, which has been used as a comparison tool with the current COVID-19 pandemic. The 1918 “Spanish Flu” (so named because of where it was first reported) outbreak is considered one of the deadliest global outbreaks in recorded history, with an estimated 50-100 million deaths. In Arkansas, officials estimated 7,000 people succumbed from influenza complications. The African American community was particularly hard hit.

Influenza made its appearance in Arkansas, beginning in Little Rock, in late September 1918. Even though U.S. health officials downplayed the severity of the outbreak, the flu steadily advanced throughout the state. Within 10 days of it first being reported in Little Rock, the city of Carlisle, 35-miles east of the capital city, was placed under quarantine. Camp Pike (now Camp Robinson), too, was soon placed on lockdown. The base, with personnel totaling 52,000, tried to contain the flu’s spread through a quarantine that ended up lasting almost the entire month of October 1918. Despite these precautions, ultimately nearly 14,000 soldiers contracted the flu. There were so many deaths—nearly 500 in total—the local funeral home employed night and day shifts and the Army assigned nine government embalmers to assist in arrangements.

State health officials placed the entire state on lockdown in early October, cancelling all public gatherings, including entertainment events, church services, and streetcar operations. Classes in the state’s public schools and universities were canceled. Much like today, the stay-at-home orders affected every aspect of people’s daily lives, interrupting routines and social interactions. Despite the inconvenience, the quarantine had the desired effect of slowing the spread of the flu. Restrictions were completely lifted on November 1. By the end of 2018, the state had seen over 250,000 cases of influenza. Another wave of influenza swept the state in early 1919, but it was not nearly as deadly or widespread as the earlier one.

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It’s natural to look to the past for guidance and information as we process current events. The Society and the Historical Research Center is proud to offer these programs as we all navigate this “new normal.” The “Stay-at-Home” lectures will continue on the first and third Thursdays in June and July, from 7-8 p.m. The link for all the lectures will remain the same at: https://zoom.us/j/97223974167

Nutt also will serve as the inaugural presenter for the Central Arkansas Library System’s “Monday Maladies” lecture series focusing on medicine and disease, beginning June 8 at 7 p.m. His topic will be pandemics and the spread of disease throughout Arkansas history. More information will be posted on the CALS’ website, cals.org.

— Tim Nutt
Centers for Simulation Education

Centers for Simulation Education Zooms to Remote SP Encounters During Pandemic

When all students were required to leave the UAMS campus in March due to the pandemic, the Centers for Simulation Education found new ways to complete educational tasks.

Simulation Education staff members immediately began working with faculty to reimagine interactive learning that usually occurs face-to-face in the Simulation Education centers. Simulation educators gathered information from institutions across the country that were in the same situation and shared ideas. Our processes for working with the different UAMS colleges quickly shifted online. We continue to learn and evolve as we provide our services to UAMS.

Here are some examples of our team’s innovations:

- The College of Pharmacy had scheduled a few more in-person applicant mini-interview sessions just as the college moved to virtual learning. The college asked the center to develop a way to conduct some interview sessions via the Zoom video conferencing platform. Judi Casavechia and William Wagner of the Clinical Skills Center worked out a schedule to conduct some of the sessions via Zoom. These sessions are conducted once or twice a week using our Standardized Patients, who have taken to the new platform wonderfully.
- UAMS’ Dietetics and Genetic Counseling programs worked with simulation health care educator Michae Orfanos to arrange for administering their SP encounters through Zoom. Even with modifications made for the new tele-health simulations, the students were able to complete their patient encounter requirements.
- Each spring, third-year medical students participate in a practice event at the Clinical Skills Center for their STEP2 board exam. This year that process was cut short, literally, since in the midst of taking the exam the students were told to leave campus. Faculty stepped up to collaborate with the Clinical Skills Center staff and focused their energy on innovative ways to continue the process. Together along with some enthusiastic M3s and Standardized Patients, they piloted a remote event with the intention of administering the remote practice exam to the remaining students. What at first seemed like an insurmountable task turned into a bump in the road for our third-year medical students.
- The Simulation Center assisted in developing a new interprofessional simulation for the COVID19 call center via Zoom. Each session had approximately 20 participants from different disciplines. There are three different scenarios using three SPs to portray different affects and situations. After the three scenarios, everyone returns to the meeting for a mass debrief as well as feedback from the SPs.
- An interprofessional simulation that has been offered for years, “Gero-Caring for the Older Patient,” moved to an online format. The simulation included two scenarios: a home visit involving students from nursing and pharmacy, and then the discharge from the hospital that involves nursing, pharmacy, and medicine. The learners watched a video of the home visit and debriefed afterwards. The discharge scenario was conducted remotely using Collaborate and concluded with a debrief session for all participants.

Now is a time to look forward at a new normal for simulation education. We at the Centers for Simulation Education are striving to acclimate and contribute to that future.

– Michae Orfanos and Judi Casavechia

Accolades

Continued from Page 1


From the Library: Susan Steelman, MLS, AHIP, Professor, Library Education and Research Services department, co-authored “Mobile Spaced Education in Surgical Education Settings and Specialties: A Scoping Review.” Authors include Carol R. Thrush, Karina R. Clemmons, Susan C. Steelman, Tamara Osborn & Mary Katherine Kimbrough, all from UAMS. Current Surgery Reports, Volume 8, Article number: 5 (2020). This report discusses the application of mobile spaced education in surgical specialties and highlights key findings to date across the surgical education continuum.
**Center for Health Literacy**

**CHL Convenes Virtual Focus Groups**

As a part of our service offerings, the UAMS Center for Health Literacy tests the language in health materials to ensure they are understandable and actionable for anyone, including those that are more likely to struggle with health information.

Our typical method of testing materials is through an in-person focus group where we get feedback from potential users on health material we are developing. Several scheduled focus groups had to be postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings. Over the last few weeks, the CHL team worked to find alternatives for in-person focus group sessions to continue our work and just recently held our first virtual focus group via BlackBoard Collaborate.

The session objectives were met, with rich discussion resulting in edits that will improve the likelihood of readers being able to understand and act on the material. We listed a few of the tips below, which might help groups looking to convene users who are not accustomed to video meetings.

We thought of some of these in advance, but others are lessons learned through our pilot:

- Test the connection with each user in advance to make sure their device settings allow for sharing their camera and microphone.
- During the testing call, teach each person 1:1 how to use features (e.g. chat box or raising their hand).
- Use the platform’s tools to help facilitate discussion. For example, have participants put an X in the chat box when they have something to share. In a focus group like ours, in which we are seeking to build consensus, we asked participants to use the “hand raise” button in BlackBoard Collaborate to indicate that they agreed with what another participant was saying.
- Have a member of your team on standby to help participants with any last minute needs.
- If your platform has a telephone number as a backup to system audio, have it handy so you can share it if needed.

**New Normal**

*Continued from Page 1*

At the time classes were moved online, clinical rotations and experiences also were paused.

“Decisions about students returning to clinical areas is being determined at the college level, and is dependent on a number of factors including accreditation guidelines, availability of preceptors, and willingness and capability of the clinical area to support the logistics for students returning (PPE, social distancing, etc),” Gardner said.

As decisions are being made regarding classes, colleges and academic programs will communicate that information with their students. Another source will be a special website that will include items such as masks, face shields, Level 2 isolation gowns, hand sanitizer along with requirements and procedures for using and getting replacements.

"The fall semester will be unlike any in the 140-year history of our institution," Gardner said. "We want to be as thoughtful and as thorough to ensure the least amount of disruption possible for our academic experience while to the best of our ability protecting the safety and health of our learners, faculty and staff.”
Commencement

Continued from Page 3

College of Nursing – For its traditional pinning and hooding ceremony, the College of Nursing also held a Zoom-connected event broadcast on Facebook. The virtual nature of the event created more personal moments for each graduate. Nursing graduates received the lapel pins symbolizing completion of their undergraduate education or the hoods symbolizing completion of graduate education not from college leaders but from themselves or a spouse, parent or family member who was with them remotely. Watch the recorded broadcast of the event on the college’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/UAMSCollegeofNursing/videos/1338042166394065 (Note: the broadcast does not start until about 17 minutes into the recording)

College of Pharmacy – The College of Pharmacy virtual Convocation is scheduled for June 13. Watch it on Facebook or YouTube (check pharmacy.uams.edu for the links). The college also posted photos and information for its Class of 2020 on Facebook.

College of Public Health – The College of Public Health celebrated its graduates with an image on a digital billboard on Interstate 630 that featured photos of each grad. The college also posted photos and information on each Master of Public Health graduate on its Facebook page while hoping to hold an in-person event later this year.

Graduate School – In addition to the virtual hooding of about 60 graduate students, Graduate School Dean Robert McGehee, Ph.D., himself delivered bottles of champagne to each graduate for toast during the event – a nod to the champagne brunch the Graduate School usually hosts the morning of commencement. More than 130 signed up to join in the virtual celebration, including faculty, mentors and family and friends of the graduates. Follow the links to read more about the ceremony or to watch a recording of the event on YouTube.

College of Health Professions – The varied programs within the College of Health Professions have been holding virtual events with some still scheduled in the months ahead.