



“The Doctor” McNair Scholars Program

18th Annual MKN McNair Heartland Research Conference



Lydia Ibarra, Mai Huynh, Rosa Palacio, Tuyet Ha, Ashley Cervantes, Joy Foster, LaWanda Holt-Fields

On September 19, 2014, five McNair and EPSCoR scholars attended the 18th Annual McNair Heartland Research Symposium at the Country Club Plaza Marriott Hotel in Kansas City, MO.

The conference gave students an opportunity to present their research to McNair students from across the country and learn about research being conducted by their peers.

The conference also included a graduate school fair, allowing students to interact with admissions representatives from various colleges and universities.

McNair Student Achievements

McNair students are active on campus and in the Wichita community. Featured below are a few notable student achievements this semester.



Lindsey Stillwell presented her current research at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting in October. She was also accepted to present at the National Association of African American Studies & Affiliates National Conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in February.



Martina Salerno won several awards in the 22nd Annual Elements Multi-Media Art Competition sponsored by Cadman Art Gallery, including best of show and audience choice. Martina was chosen as a designer for Keepers on Parade, an arts initiative sponsored by Together Wichita.



Jose Esquivel was elected vice president of his fraternity Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Jose designed the fraternity's banner for both the Convocation and Shocktober Fest banner competitions. Sigma Alpha Epsilon took 2nd place in both competitions.

Happy Birthday! *to those celebrating during the months of December, January, and February:*

Joy Foster • Dec. 1 Vicky Raymundo • Dec. 31

Rosa Palacio • Dec. 2 Nephi Escobar • Jan. 3

Joshua Wills • Dec. 24 Julie Mohamed • Jan. 8

Tuyet Ha • Dec. 25 Martina Salerno • Jan. 23

Riana Cole • Dec. 30 Zachary Pearson • Feb. 5

Wesley Alexis • Feb. 8

Nicholus Cox • Feb. 13

Angula Moss • Feb. 18

Kerisha Broadus • Feb. 23



Grammatically Speaking: Tips for Concise Writing

Conciseness

The goal of concise writing is to use the most effective words. Concise writing does not always have the fewest words, but it always uses the strongest ones.

Writers often fill sentences with weak or unnecessary words that can be deleted or replaced. Words and phrases should be deliberately chosen for the work they are doing. Like bad employees, words that don't accomplish enough should be fired. When only the most effective words remain, writing will be far more concise and readable.

Often, writers use several small and ambiguous words to express a concept. Ideas are better relayed through fewer, specific words. As a general rule, more specific words lead to more concise writing. Brainstorming or searching a thesaurus can lead to the word best suited for a specific instance.

The Paramedic Method

Use the Paramedic Method (originally developed by Richard Lanham in *Revising Prose*) to edit your professional

writing. The Paramedic Method will make your prose easier to read. Sentences that are easy to read are more persuasive and more user-centered.

Professional writers understand the need for clear, concise prose. When you use the Paramedic Method, you will reduce your word count by eliminating unnecessary words and create more active sentences by eliminating passive voice and redundancies.

Follow the seven steps below to improve the readability of your sentences.

1. Circle the prepositions (of, in, about, for, onto, into)
2. Draw a box around the "is" verb forms
3. Ask, "Where's the action?"
4. Change the "action" into a simple verb
5. Move the doer into the subject (Who's kicking whom)
6. Eliminate any unnecessary slow wind-ups
7. Eliminate any redundancies.

Sources: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/572/01/>;
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/635/01/>

Examples: Notice that the examples below actually convey more as they drop in word count.

1. *Suzie believed but could not confirm that Billy had feelings of affection for her.*

Revision

Suzie assumed that Billy adored her.

One specific word

Several small words

(Original word count: 14. New word count: 6)

2. *The politician talked about several of the merits of after-school programs in his speech*

Revision

The politician touted after-school programs in his speech.

One specific word

Several small words

(Original word count: 14. New word count: 8)

3. *It is widely known that the engineers at Sandia Labs have become active participants in the Search and Rescue operations in most years.*

Revision

In recent years, engineers at Sandia Labs have participated in the Search and Rescue operations.

eliminate slow wind-ups

Action in the sentence

The doer is in the subject

(Original word count: 24. New word count: 16)



Reminder

Literature reviews are due January 30, 2015.

You should have a minimum of 10 sources, with at least one written page per source.

Congratulations Graduates!

McNair would like to give a heart-felt congratulations to our fall 2014 graduates



Robriana (Riana) Cole
Anthropology (Summa Cum Laude)

Cree Enna
Ethnic Studies



Leadership Discovery Summit

Fourteen McNair students participated in the Leadership Discovery Summit on November 21, 2014. Kenni Fitzpatrick, Joy Foster, Kevontrez Jones, Timothy Rollings, and Jose Esquivel are pictured above.

Student Involvement hosted this half-day workshop designed to give students the chance to identify their leadership abilities and learn how to better apply their skills to help both WSU and their communities.

Events to Come

FEBRUARY

6 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
Grad Prep (2 - 3 p.m.)
Dr. Mark Glaser, "*Critical Thinking Skills*"
Research Assembly Meeting (3 - 4 p.m.)
McNair Staff, "*Methodology and Data Collection*"

13 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
McWrite (2 - 3 p.m.)
McNair Staff, "*Integrating Sources*"

18 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
Faculty Led Seminar (10 a.m. - noon)
Dr. Michelle Redmond, "*Writing for Publication*"

25 Wichita Country Club
Etiquette "*Mind Your Manners*" (4:30 p.m.)

MARCH

4 Clinton Hall, Rm. 210
Grad Prep (Wednesday, 3 - 4 p.m.)
Career Services, "*Resume Building*"

6 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
Grad Seminar (2 - 3 p.m.)
McNair Staff, "*The Back-up Plan*"
Research Assembly Meeting (3 - 4 p.m.)
McNair Staff, "*Parts of a Manuscript*"

7 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
Faculty Led Seminar (10 a.m. - noon)
LaWanda Holt-Fields "*McNair Alumni Panel*"

27 Devlin Hall, Rm. 103
Grad Seminar (2 - 3 p.m.)
Gretchen Holthaus, "*Managing Debt in Grad School*"

APRIL

3 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
McWrite (2 - 3 p.m.)
McNair Staff, "*Writing in Review*"

Research Assembly Meeting (3 - 4 p.m.)
McNair Staff, "*Research Concerns*"

11 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
Faculty Led Seminar (10 a.m. - noon)
Dr. Robert Weems "*What It Took to Get My Doctorate*"

24 Devlin Hall, Rm. 106
Grad Prep (2 - 3 p.m.)
Connie Dietz, "*Portraying a Professional Image*"

Someone Like Me



Kofi M. Odame,
Assistant Professor of
Engineering, Thayer
School of Engineering at
Dartmouth

I've always been creative. As a child I liked to paint and draw a lot, and then as I went through school it turned out that I had an affinity for solving analytical problems. Engineering turned out to be a very nice blend between creativity and solving analytical problems.

I'm very interested in health and in artificial intelligence. I'm looking at the way our neural systems work and applying that to engineering and to a more potent artificial intelligence. The idea is to have extremely intelligent computers that are very power-efficient and yet very small.

One of my current projects has to do with a cochlear implant that is controlled by the brain's electric signals. The idea is to have electrodes that are sitting on a patient's skull record EEG signals, and decipher these signals to determine what the patient wants to hear.

My vision is to create sophisticated yet cheap electronic intelligence that can fit in the palm of your hand. Such technology could enable a more decentralized model of healthcare delivery, which would allay the rising cost of healthcare in the United States.

Even more critically, decentralized healthcare delivery might present the only practicable option in remote parts of the developing world. Imagine computational ability that is so cheaply available that a nurse in a village in Ghana can input a blood film to an "intelligent" camera phone, which then makes a preliminary diagnosis of malaria or some type of hematological condition.

Engineering is a discipline that deals with a lot of balance and a lot of trade-offs. Given a particular problem, there is no one absolutely correct solution. Each solution to any given problem has its own positives and negatives, and when you consider any solution, you need to carefully go through the list of all the different advantages and disadvantages of that solution.

Teaching engineering forces you to go through this process methodically because you're trying to convince a class of students that one solution versus another is better. When you go through this process, you can come up with better solutions — or your students can come up with better solutions.

Sources:

1. <http://engineering.dartmouth.edu/magazine/the-new-guard/>
2. <http://engineering.dartmouth.edu/analoglab/people.html>

“Engineering turned out to be a very nice blend between creativity and solving analytical problems.”



Odame graduated magna cum laude with a B.Sc. in electrical engineering and a minor in computer science in 2002. He studied as a Cornell African Development Fellow to receive the M.Sc. in electrical engineering, under Bradley Minch in 2004. He then worked in Paul Hasler's lab at the Georgia Institute of Technology, earning the Ph.D. in electrical engineering in 2008.

Grad-Connect: Working with your Mentor



Dr. Michael Birzer, director of the School of Community Affairs, presented the Grad Seminar Meeting, “Selecting a Mentor/Professionalism” on October 24, 2014. Birzer provided students with information about choosing and working with their research mentor.

When choosing a research mentor, students should consider several factors, including how their mentor may mesh with their own personal learning style and whether they have sufficient availability.

Birzer offered several tips for how to effectively work with a mentor:

- Remember, faculty time is important; respect appointment times by being on time.
- Create a list of topics or questions you would like to address during each meeting.
- Follow up by emailing a summary of the tasks that have been accomplished since the last meeting.
- After each meeting, consider emailing your mentor a summary of new tasks so that they can respond if anything appears incorrect.
- Read any books or articles your mentor recommends and fulfill assignments on time.
- Ask for clarification when needed.

Birzer advised students to discuss current research and methodology in their discipline with their mentor and to explore the potential practice and policy implications of their own research. He stressed that students should submit sections of their work periodically for feedback. Finally, he suggested that students arrange regular meetings with their mentor to help keep them motivated and on track.

McNair Events



Kevontrez answers a question during the November McWrite session “The Literature Review.”



McNair students shared information about themselves during the October Faculty-Led Seminar “Personal Statement Writing.”



EPSCoR student Mai Huynh finds out more about graduate programs at Portland State University during the 2014 McNair Heartland Research Conference.



Rosa and Maria pose with author Christo Brand. Brand shared his experiences as Nelson Mandela’s jailer.

The two developed a close friendship during Mandela’s imprisonment and after his eventual release.



WICHITA STATE
UNIVERSITY
TRIO PROGRAMS
McNair Scholars Program

McNair Scholars Program

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2014 marked the 50th
Anniversary of TRIO and the
Upward Bound Program.

McNair Facts Did You Know?

Near the end of his doctoral program, McNair lost all the data for his doctoral thesis, an accumulation of two years specialized laser physics research findings.

In an Ebony magazine article for May 1986, his doctoral thesis adviser, Michael Feld, said McNair never complained about the misfortune and that “the second set turned out better than the first set of data. This was typical of the way he worked to accomplish goals.”



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