

# Clio's News

Volume 1, Issue 1

April 20, 2008

**Phi Alpha Theta  
Gamma-Upsilon Chapter**



*Clio* by Samuel van Hoogstraten, 1678

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## Welcome to Our Inaugural Edition!

"New knowledge is the most valuable commodity on earth. The more truth we have to work with, the richer we become." ~ Kurt Vonnegut

Welcome to the first newsletter published by the Gamma-Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. Since this is our inaugural addition, it seemed appropriate to focus on other "new things" within the history department. President Camillia Rodger's note summarizes just a few of the very successful events that our chapter sponsored this year, including some first-time efforts. Additionally, new faculty members Ruth Wallis Hurdon and Steven Ortiz share some background information on themselves as well as some insights into the history profession.

Be sure to check out treasurer Matt Bloom's concise explanation of how PAT obtains and utilizes its revenue, Master's candidate Steve Badenhop's featured article on being a successful student. Don't miss the PAT elections info on the back page, nor some useful tips regarding research and professional development funding.

## From the President's Desk



### 2007-2008 Officers

Camillia Rodgers, President

Elizabeth Schneider, Vice President

Matt Bloom, Treasurer

Amanda Dennison, Secretary

Steve Badenhop, Archivist

Christine Eisel, Historian

Don Eberle, Public Relations

Dr. Beth A. Griech-Polelle, Faculty Advisor

Greetings! The 2007-08 school year has truly been an amazing year for the Phi Alpha Theta (PAT) chapter here at BGSU. As president, I am thankful to have had the opportunity to serve this organization over the past year. It has been a pleasure to work with this year's officers and advisor. Without their commitment and dedication to this organization it would not have been possible to accomplish as much as we did in 2007-08.

In holding with the theme of this newsletter, there were many "new things" or firsts that PAT achieved this year. One of our new accomplishments was holding the fall book sale on the veranda of Williams Hall during Campus Fest. It was a huge success! Also, the organization now has a banner, which can be used at all PAT activities and can be passed on year after year.

This spring we tried something new by coordinating our annual speaker with the Expanding America series, which brought to campus Dr. Stacey Robertson who talked about her research on women abolitionists in the old northwest. In the fall of 2007, we organized a panel discussion with presenters from the Wood County Historical Center & Museum and Sauders Village to discuss with students alternative careers in History. Both of these events were well-attended by both graduate and undergraduate students.

In addition, another exciting new event that PAT looks forward to this year is the combined Phi Alpha Theta initiation ceremony and History department awards ceremony banquet on April 20th. We hope that this event will provide a space where the faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate award recipients can enjoy a night of intellectual stimulation and socialization.

In closing, my hopes for Phi Alpha Theta in 2008-09 are to see more "new things" and creative ideas on the horizon. I encourage the incumbent officers not to be afraid to try "new things." Change can be good! I hope the new officers will carry on this legacy of enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment into the upcoming year. Above all, I would like to see this organization continue to honor its commitment to promote the study of History, to strive towards excellence, to hold true to the ideals of Phi Alpha Theta, which can be found "in the words *Philia, Anthropos, Theos* — Love, Humanity, God," and ultimately I would like to see the organization prosper.

All the best,

Camillia Rodgers,  
President, Gamma-Upsilon Chapter



***“The key, when writing a master’s thesis, is to start early on it and work on it often – stay committed.”***

## Feature Article

# How to Graduate in Four Semesters with an M.A.

by Steve Badenhop

Master’s students struggle with the prospect of graduating in a four semester cycle. Most need the extra summer session to complete their workload. However, three little words can help you accomplish this feat without the help of an extra summer term – commitment, commitment, commitment! These are probably not the inspiring words you hoped to hear, but with their guidance you can complete the daunting task of graduating in only four semesters. If you are, however, already off this course maybe this can help put you back on the graduation track.

The key, when writing a master’s thesis, is to start early on it and work on it often – stay committed. In your first semester you must find an advisor in the subject area you believe you want to write about and then settle on a topic. Above all make sure this is a topic you enjoy, which will help facilitate commitment. The

next two semesters and during the summer you should start to research your topic, so that by the time that fourth semester rolls around you can start writing, and this is absolute must and necessity. It is in that last semester that you really need to buckle down and commit yourself to completing your thesis and graduating in that fourth semester. In this final semester it is important to only take thesis hours. This will help you stay committed to your project.

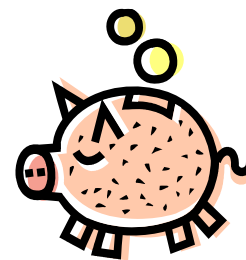
Throughout these four semesters you need to set goals for yourself and plot out your plan of attack with your advisor. When you start out, make monthly goals that will help you start researching – reading secondary sources, arranging to visit archives, availability of primary sources, etc. – then as you get closer to that fateful fourth semester make weekly goals. Weekly goals are crucial in the fourth semester.

You have to say to yourself, “I’m going to write this chapter in two/three weeks” – depending on how many chapters you have and live up to your goals. Your advisor can help you stay committed by meeting regularly. This will help to motivate you and stay committed to your goals. If you stray off track just re-adjust and plan accordingly to achieve your larger goals. Setting goals and working hard to meet your objectives can and will ensure that you graduate in just four semesters. Even if you find all of this unattainable, hard work and commitment to your goals will help you graduate in a timely manner. For those of you out there that say graduating in four semesters is impossible and don’t believe me, well, I did it!

## A Note from the Treasurer’s Counting Desk

Phi Alpha Theta at BGSU gets its money from three main sources: book sales each semester, a yearly allocation from the Student Budget Committee of the University, and assistance from the History Department’s Foundation Account. These funding sources provide the group with money to host outside speakers to discuss historical careers and scholarship as well as fund social events such as the History Department Welcome Back Picnic and the Annual Initiation/Department Awards Banquet. The group is always looking for fresh ideas on making money and spending it on activities that promote historical scholarship, inquiry, and good teaching.

Matt Bloom  
Treasurer



## What’s New? An Interview with New Faculty

The History Department welcomed two new full-time faculty this year, Dr. Ruth Wallis Herndon and Dr. Steven Ortiz.

Dr. Herndon comes to BGSU after eleven years of teaching at the University of Toledo. Here at BGSU she is teaching courses in early America. Dr. Herndon explains that her teaching and research are focused on marginal people, those people that have been “pushed out of the limelight, that get pushed to the edge of the page.” The challenge she faces in researching soldiers, sailors, children, the poor, slaves, servants and people of color is that they have left few records which leaves her to rely on “unusual sources.”

Dr. Herndon is excited to be at BGSU in a department which boasts a large and diverse faculty, a healthy graduate program, and a collective attitude that emphasizes both good teaching and good scholarship

When asked how she sees the state of history as a profession and as a field of study, Dr. Herndon relates her thoughts on her students, on teaching, on research, and on the field of history in general. Regarding her students, Herndon states that

while the story they learn may stay the same, the methods with which they will learn will continue to change. As technology changes, students will expect more “experiences” and less lecture. This leads to much higher expectations for educators to not only relate information, but to understand the student learning process. Dr. Herndon thinks this can be accomplished by equating good educators with good scholarship. Those conducting new scholarship will face challenges. As material becomes easier to obtain because of increasing digitization, the expectations for scholars will be laden with a heavy emphasis on good analysis, says Herndon.

Dr. Steven Ortiz, professor of 20th-Century US, Political, and Military history, comes to BGSU from Stroudsburg University in eastern Pennsylvania. When asked what drew him to the position at BGSU, Dr. Ortiz replied that the equal emphasis the department gives to both research and quality teaching was a great incentive. On a personal note, he explained that he likes the small-town atmosphere of Bowling Green and finds it a perfect place in which he and his wife can raise their daughter.

Dr. Ortiz sees the profession of history over the next five years as one in which historians will take the abundant research that has resulted from “a blossoming of specialization” over the past forty years and create new scholarship that “pulls the pieces back together.” He explains that the history department at BGSU is in a perfect position to contribute to this trend because of its focus on policy history, a niche that can be at once “transnational and comparative.” Ortiz goes on, stating that policy history is unique in that it can serve as an avenue that can “bridge the gap between social and political history” as well as engage diverse historians in conversation.

Both Dr. Herndon and Dr. Ortiz think that the department at BGSU has a great opportunity to anticipate and take on the challenges of a changing field by continuing to emphasize methodology, historiography and good teaching in not only its graduate program but in programs that reach out to K-12 teachers as well.

Welcome to Dr. Herndon and Dr. Ortiz!

***Dr. Ortiz sees the profession of history over the next five years as one in which historians will take the abundant research that has resulted from “a blossoming of specialization” over the past forty years and create new scholarship that “pulls the pieces back together.”***



Dr. Steven Ortiz

## PAT to Elect New Officers

The Gamma-Upsilon Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta (PAT) will be holding elections for all executive committee positions on Tuesday, April 22nd at 10am. If you are interested in running for a position for the 2008-2009 school year, please send an email to Don Eberle at [deberle@bgsu.edu](mailto:deberle@bgsu.edu).



## Phi Alpha Theta Gamma-Upsilon Chapter

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Submit article suggestions to Chris Eisel, Historian  
E-mail: [ceisel@bgsu.edu](mailto:ceisel@bgsu.edu)

## In the Know: Funding for Research and Professional Development

Did you know that the History Department helps with funding student research? According to Graduate Secretary Dee Dee Wentland, the department has a fairly flexible policy on funding. Generally speaking, PhD candidates get first priority and can receive up to \$500 for regional research trips, \$1000 for national research trips, and \$1500 for international research trips. Ms. Wentland explains that valid expenses include airfare or gasoline, photocopying expenses, parking and toll fees, ground transportation, and hotel accommodations. In order to be considered for research funding, students should notify the department for approval before the trip. This can be done in a brief memo to Dr. Walt Grunden, Graduate Coordinator, that includes an explanation of the research and an outline of a tentative budget. After the trip, student

should turn in all valid receipts.

In addition to funding for research, graduate students are also eligible to receive funding for professional development. Students presenting conference papers are eligible for up to \$100 for regional conferences, \$200 for national conferences, and \$300 for international conferences. Valid expenses include travel expenses as well as registration fees.

Ms. Wentland also encourages students to seek funding via other sources, including the Graduate College, the Graduate Student Senate, and other outside sources.

Now you know!

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### Phi Alpha Theta Mission Statement

**"We are a professional society whose mission is to promote the study of history through the encouragement of research, good teaching, publication and the exchange of learning and ideas among historians. We seek to bring students, teachers, and writers of history together for intellectual and social exchanges, which promote and assist historical research and publication by our members in a variety of ways."**