

December 2021



Leadership *Matters*

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The Newsletter of the Lott Leadership Institute at The University of Mississippi

A Note from LSAB

As we come to the conclusion of yet another year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we hope to take a moment to acknowledge the work which has been done, and the long road ahead. With the loss of so many of our friends and family, we must consider the precious few moments we're able to share with one another more dear than ever before. Please know that the Lott Student Advisory Board is always here as a resource if you need anything, even just to talk.

We hope this semester did something for you: opened your eyes, drove you to new heights, or inspired you to see the goodness in others. The goal of this newsletter is to highlight some of the important work done by our students, alumni, and friends as the world around us continues to spin out of control. Inside, you will find a variety of ways that our students have identified and rose to the occasion in the face of problems they see.

As we navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead, remember three things. First, what you are doing is important, and *you* are important. Second, you are not alone: Lott stands ready, as a community, to support and help whenever possible. Third, know that we know, even if you are unsure as of yet, that you each have the power, potential, and passion to change the world. We hope, and believe, that in a world in desperate need of leadership, your efforts to improve it will pay dividends beyond your wildest imagination.

Take this time to rest and reconnect with those you hold dear. Enjoy the break, and we'll see you in January. Lotty Toddy!

Yours,
The Lott Student Advisory Board

PPL 101 Mock Congressional Hearing: Bringing 'The Hill' Home



(from left to right): 'Senators' Joseph Jiles, Caroline Stanford, Wade Roberts, Jackson Scruggs, Ross Cohen, and Chloe Binford address the chamber; 'Senator' Joseph Jiles delivers closing remarks

December 1, 2021. On a humid evening in North Mississippi, D.C. made an appearance in the most unexpected of ways. Members of Dr. Jody Holland's PPL 101 classes, acting as Senators, witnesses, and researchers, hosted a full mock Congressional hearing. Despite the artificial nature of the gathering, anyone in attendance who has worked in and around the Capitol would tell you the issues and mannerisms were a shockingly realistic facsimile.

The 'Senate Committee on the Judiciary's Subcommittee on Criminal Justice and Counterterrorism' met to examine the militarization of police forces around the country, through the federal 1033 program's provision of military-grade weapons to localities. Witnesses represented a variety of real viewpoints and backgrounds, from police to academics to relatives of victims of police violence.

The event originated from a class project—Dr. Holland had hosted intra-class exercises in both the 10a and 11a PPL 101 classes. It was the work of the students (including a reportedly moving display of a witness in one class) which sparked the idea to hold an inter-class scrimmage. Students did have skin in the game: while both classes received extra credit towards the final for their participation, a panel of judges decided a 'winner' between the 'Blue' and 'Red' teams.

In a close decision, the Red team came out ahead, but it was an impressive showing by all. Not just a performance or class assignment, these types of events further dialogue about important policy issues in the Lafayette-Oxford-University (also known as the LOU) community. Congratulations and well done by all students who participated, and special thanks to Dr. Holland, the PPL Department, and the College of Liberal Arts for their support.

See Important Announcements, Leadership Stories, and more inside





Celebration of Graduates and Medaling Ceremony

Since 2018, the Lott Student Advisory Board, with the help and support of Lott Institute staff, has held a medaling ceremony for graduating public policy leadership students. On 22 April 2022, at 5:30pm, the Celebration of Graduates and Medaling Ceremony for 2022 Lott Graduates will take place in the Ballroom of the Gertrude C. Ford Student Union.

This ceremony serves as a capstone for the community experiences the Lott Institute provides its students. This celebration offers opportunities to reflect on and look forward to the accomplishments of the cohort and its members.



Morgan Cannon (PPL '19) delivers invocation at 2019 Lott Graduation Celebration

The Lott Institute and Lott Student Advisory Board closely monitor public safety requirements and recommendations when making decisions on programming. To preserve the safety of our educational community, the ceremony will be limited to graduating students, faculty, and staff. Despite these limitations, the Lott Student Advisory Board is committed to holding this ceremony for our graduates.

The event will feature speakers from the graduating cohort, chosen by Institute staff, the Board, and the graduating students. More details on speakers to come.

The past few years have been exceptionally difficult for many, and completing a degree is no easy task. We are so proud of all of our 2022 graduates, and we are eager to see what our graduates do in the future.



Olivia Heuser (PPL '19 & Chair, Lott Student Advisory Board) shakes hands with Director Gottshall at 2019 Lott Graduation Celebration

Graduating students: Fill out the form in our LinkTree to tell us about your plans after graduation!

Also, keep an eye out for a form as we start to compile the graduation newsletter!



Katherine Sistrunk (PPL '19) walks to receive congratulations at 2019 Lott Graduation Celebration





Better every day: Lott students improving campus, and Mississippi Movements out of moments: #HelpSaveHELP

Along with classes on policy and leadership, Lott students find themselves on the frontlines of work which should not be theirs to complete, and this year is no different. In November this year, the Mississippi Postsecondary Board furthered a proposal to replace the state's existing financial aid programs, including the HELP Grant, the only need-based grant for Mississippi students. Many students, most prominently Lott student Andy Flores (LSAB Vice Chair), began organizing a movement to oppose these changes. Months of effort have formed a coalition of HELP recipients and allies around the state and nation. Stay tuned for updates as the Mississippi Legislature meets this spring to consider the Postsecondary Board's proposal.

To learn more about this issue or to join the movement, follow @helpsavehelp on Instagram, or email helpsavehelp@gmail.com.



Katelin Hayward (LSAB Student Affairs Chair) with #HelpSaveHELP signs used by Devan Williams and Lott student Bennett Matson at ESPN College GameDay to increase awareness.

Examining inequities in Greek life: Lott's microgrant recipients share findings

The Lott Student Advisory Board is committed to leveraging available resources to advance the common good. As recipients of the College of Liberal Arts' Small Grant Competition, the LSAB created a 'microgrant' program for students interested in studying diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) on campus. The awardees of the microgrant, Jonathan Amlong, Carley Horner, and Bennett Matson, have used these funds to investigate DEI attitudes in new members of UMiss Greek life. One of the researchers, Carley Horner, said, "we have had great success in working with [Greek houses]" and are in the process of analyzing the data gathered. We look forward to spreading the results of these Lott students' research with everyone when the project is concluded early next year.

Global movements, local work: Lott students work to address period poverty



To learn more, check out Period@UM at Instagram (@period.um), email periodatum@gmail.com and stay tuned for donation drives held by LSAB in partnerships with the organization.

Period poverty, the lack of access to menstrual products and menstrual hygiene information, affects 1 in 10 college students. Mississippi has one of the highest 'tampon taxes', compounding period poverty in the state. This semester, Lott student Maggie Walker started Period@UM, a local chapter of a global non-profit organization fighting to end period poverty and stigma through service, education, and advocacy. Walker's organization raised money and gathered thousands of sanitary products for distribution both in the LOU community and in Jackson, MS.

Period@UM is serving UMiss students through the distribution of menstrual products on several buildings on campus, starting with the Student Union this fall and expanding others, including the Lott Institute (in partnership with the LSAB) in the spring. As Period@UM Advocacy Chair, Lott student Lila Osman is working to address the 'Pink Tax' in Mississippi with the organization. We're proud of the work done by these two students, and all the other Lott students engaged in advocacy and service through this organization.





Open Doors for Others: in other words, Lead

By: Morgan Atkins, 2021-2022 Associated Student Body President

Leading is an action, not a state of being. It is a process, a skill which is learned and developed over time. Your tenure at Lott will give you important skills in researching, grant writing, and policy analysis, but many of the 'soft skills' you'll develop are more important than anything on a final. Your growth in communicating, empathizing, and understanding will serve you well, making you a better person as well as more effective leader.

Leaders must be able to connect with the people they serve, because without it, so called 'leaders', these people are simply titleholders, not the change agents our world so desperately needs.

I have been fortunate enough to be part of a community that has

poured into me from the moment I stepped foot on campus. This community has encouraged me to take up leadership roles in spaces that pushed me out of my comfort zone. Strong female role models have been the cornerstones of my UMiss experience, but they have always been honest with me about the challenges leadership presents, particularly for women. Leading in spaces not meant for you can be extremely lonely and confusing, especially when trying to redefine what these positions look like. As only the seventh woman in The University of Mississippi's history to serve as President of the Associated Student Body, I was extremely wary of taking up this position. I was painfully aware of the stereotype for this position's occupants, and even more aware how, in many ways, I was an exception from a 'rule'.

I chose to pursue President not only because I have the communication, empathy, and understanding it takes to be an effective student leader, but also because I wanted to play an active role in dismantling the elitist stereotype of who can be leaders and what leadership is. Real leadership requires opening doors for those after you, and this has been at the center of many of this year's initiatives. I am thankful for my fellow leaders in ASB who have felt this calling, and I hope that this legacy is what we leave behind us when our terms expire.

More importantly, I want to stress each of you is qualified to lead if you have the conviction to do so. Do not let anyone or anything deter you from pursuing what you are passionate about. Our campus desperately needs compassionate, understanding, and committed leaders, and I know those traits lie with you.



Morgan Atkins is a senior studying public policy leadership, international studies, and political science from Olive Branch, Mississippi.

Our Mission

The educational mission of the Lott Leadership Institute rests upon a premise of responsibility. The goal of the program is to cultivate and inspire honest, compassionate, and responsive leaders. A key foundation for our organization is the belief that the essence of leadership is stewardship and that students and other individuals must be encouraged to accept responsibility for the betterment of the world around them.

Is there anything you want to see in the next edition of LeadershipMatters?

Email us at lottadvisoryboard@go.olemiss.edu, or call us at (662) 915-3799.





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