



**2019 NSEE Awards of Excellence  
Dissertation of the Year**



**Dr. Kristina Phillips & Dr. Jennifer Saxon**

University of Mississippi

“Increasing Access to High-Impact Practices: A Case Study on Internships at the University of Mississippi”

**Dr. Kristina Phillips** is the Assistant Director of College Programs, which oversees Study USA, Internship Experiences and iStudy, at the University of Mississippi. She completed an Ed.D. in Higher Education in 2018 where her companion research study was entitled, “Increasing Access to High-Impact Practices: A Case Study on Internships at the University of Mississippi.” The study focuses on interdepartmental collaboration on internships for underrepresented groups. The study was sponsored by the B.A. Rudolph Foundation.

Because the dissertation was focused in practice, Kristina’s role in overseeing the UM Internship Experience provided insight in supporting students as they prepare for internships in Atlanta, Washington, DC, and New York. She and Dr. Saxon presented their dissertation findings at the 2018 National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) Conference in Savannah, GA. Kristina will present her work on implementing a new University of Mississippi staff organization, the UM Internship Coordinators Network, at the Mississippi/Louisiana Association for Colleges and Employers. She serves on The Office of the Provost’s Completion and Student Success (CASS) Advisory Board, served as the chair of an AAC&U working group on high-impact practices and student success, and was a member of the 2019 QEP Implementation Team.

Kristina’s master’s degree in higher education is also from the University of Mississippi. She enjoys serving her community with the Upsilon Iota Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Sorority and spending time with her husband, Tyson, and 10-year old son, Preston.

**Dr. Jennifer Saxon** is in her fourth year at Ole Miss, currently serving as the Associate Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Enhancement. Saxon joined the Ole Miss Athletics team in 2014 after a five-year stint at South Carolina State where she served as Senior Women’s Administrator and Assistant AD for Athletics Academic Enhancement.

Saxon, who has a bachelor’s in physical education/health education services, as well as a master’s in counselor education/secondary education from South Carolina State, recently completed her doctorate from Ole Miss in higher

education personnel, where she completed a dissertation in conjunction with Dr. Kristina Phillips entitled "Increasing Access to High-Impact Practices: A Case Study on Internships at the University of Mississippi." The study was sponsored by the B.A. Rudolph Foundation. Dr. Saxon and Dr. Phillips presented their dissertation findings at the 2018 National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) Conference in Savannah, Georgia.

The Orangeburg, South Carolina, native brings a wealth of experience in student-athlete development to Ole Miss. She oversees Ole Miss Student-Athlete Enhancement, and Saxon spearheaded the establishment of the Ole Miss Training Program, which provides student-athletes with an opportunity to gain valuable professional experience while maintaining their respective athletics schedules.

Saxon is a 2018 graduate of the NCAA/Women Leaders in College Sports Institute for Administrative Advancement and a 2013 graduate of the Dr. Charles Whitcomb Leadership Institute. She holds memberships in the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics (N4A), Minority Opportunities Athletic Association MOAA and Women Leaders in Colleges and Sports.