



**Featured Graduate Student Lecture Series: Andrew B. Conteh Student
Academic Conference (SAC) Conference Date: April 21, 2026**

**Criteria and Call for Applications for Featured Graduate Student Lecturer
Application Deadline: March 18, 2026**

- **Description:**

- Note: For applicants not chosen to be a Featured Graduate Lecturer, your application to the [online SAC website](#) serves as the avenue to present as a regular speaker at the conference, or you may change to a poster session by [contacting the conference planners](#).
- MSUM's [Student Academic Conference](#) (SAC) provides graduate students with an opportunity to present their research and/or scholarly projects to faculty, administration, peers, and the community in a formal academic setting. Click on "learn more" and then "application" menu to review instructions.
- Each year, the University Graduate Council makes a call for Featured Graduate Student Lecture Series applications. The Featured Graduate Lecturers will present their work at SAC either in person or via distance technology. If selected for this honor, the student will be recognized in promotional materials and given a 30-minute timeframe for podium or remote presentation on the day of the conference.

- **Criteria for Applying**

- Any current graduate student (masters/doctoral) or alumni who have completed their graduate program within the last year are eligible to apply.
- The applicant must be in good standing with the graduate program (cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and not on probation/suspension).

- **Application Process**

- Complete the following:
 - **Statement:** One page statement submitted by the graduate student that addresses:
 - Significance of the work to the student's field of graduate study.
 - Relationship of the project/presentation to the student's career preparation.
 - Appeal to a broad audience (beyond the student's field of graduate study).
 - **CV/Resume:** Current curriculum vita or resume'.
 - **Endorsement:** A brief endorsement statement (100 words or less) by a Graduate Faculty chair, advisor, or program coordinator that includes support for the student's appropriateness for student lecturer and significance of the student's work within her/his field of study.
 - **Video Elevator Speech:** A short (<3 minute) video "elevator speech" by the student.
 - While summarizing their work, students should demonstrate:
 - Professionalism
 - Good communication skills
 - High-level scholarship.
 - Note: The focus is on the content and professional delivery, not on the type of video platform. Students may use technology of their choice to record and submit the video (via hyperlink preferably). Suggested platforms include:
 - YouTube
 - Kaltura Media Space
 - <https://mediaspace.minnstate.edu/>
 - All students have a Kaltura account through MSUM. Please contact support@mnstate.edu (ask for Brandyn Sauer) if you need help with your video.

- **Submission Process**
 - See deadline at the top of this document.
 - The applicant should electronically forward the complete application package (with all four items listed above) to the Graduate & Extended Learning Office: graduate@mnstate.edu.
 - In addition, the applicant should submit the regular online application required by the SAC: <https://my.mnstate.edu/sac/>. This is important as it is the platform from which you will be notified of SAC communications and schedules for the conference.
 - Note: For applicants not chosen to be a Featured Graduate Lecturer, your application to the [online SAC website](#) serves as the avenue to present as a regular speaker at the conference, or you may change to a poster session by [contacting the conference planners](#) at acconf@mnstate.edu.
- **Selection Process**
 - The University Graduate Council appoints at least three Graduate Council faculty to serve on the Graduate Student Lecturer Committee.
 - The Graduate Student Lecturer Committee evaluates applicants based on the following factors:
 - Content of one page statement including:
 - Significance of the work to the student's field of graduate study.
 - Relationship of the project/presentation to the student's career preparation.
 - Appeal to a broad audience (beyond the student's field of graduate study).
 - Content of the nominee's resume'.
 - Content of letter of endorsement from graduate faculty member.
 - Content of the video:
 - Professionalism
 - Good communication skills
 - High-level scholarship
 - Typically, 2 students are selected.
- **Delivery (on day of conference)**
 - Students selected as the Graduate Student Lecturer should prepare a presentation to share research or a project completed during the nominee's graduate studies at MSUM. Students from online programs may request to present from a distance. The information shared should be useful to the field of study and usually involves a formal lecture, however depending upon the major area of study, a creative presentation, performance, or some combination may be appropriate.
 - Details regarding time allotment (typically 20-30 minutes) and time of day will be provided closer to the time of the Student Academic Conference.
 - Please reserve Student Academic Conference date (at the top of this document) in your calendar.

Questions about submitting the materials may be addressed by Graduate Studies at contact above.

Questions about the application process may be directed to the Graduate Council subcommittee for the Featured Graduate Lecture:

Nancy Paul paulnan@mnstate.edu
 Brandi Sillerud brandi.sillerud@mnstate.edu
 Lisa Stewart stewart@mnstate.edu