



# Literature & Criticism

## FROM THE DIRECTOR:



Higher education in the U.S. is undergoing some seismic shifts that will leave many institutions and programs looking dramatically different in twenty years than they do today. Calls for transparency and proof of value are happening at all levels and across a variety of fields, and in the humanities disciplines, especially, the need to articulate our continuing relevance and value—for students, for our institutions, and for society more broadly—is high. IUP's L&C program is responding!

This year three students signed on to be the first L&C Professional Development Fellows (PDFs). They received mentoring related to personal assessments they completed at ImaginePhD, and the L&C Program covered memberships fees to Beyond the Professoriate for them. Over the course of a year they participated in online workshops, career conversations, and “mini courses” designed to help them explore a range of career possibilities outside of traditional faculty roles. They then shared what they were learning with peers through a series of workshops designed to open up the career diversity conversation at a variety of levels. In “L&C Student Explore Alternate Career Paths”, they share their “lessons learned” and take-aways on the year-long experience.

We also had a group of three participate in the 2019 Georgetown Certificate in the Engaged & Public Humanities. The three-day intensive workshop in Washington D.C. helped participants to understand the strengths of their graduate training in the humanities, to articulate the value of their work to a variety of audiences, and to think about how their research might be made to be more accessible to publics outside of colleges and universities. You can read more about their reflections on the experience on page three.

This year for the first time we also supported three students to develop creative, engaging, public-facing projects as part of their Graduate Assistantships. A recap of their first semester of working on these projects can be found on page seven, and we're excited to continue a few of these student-designed, publicly-engaged GAs next year too! Moving our passion out and beyond the university classroom, into public spaces, helps us to expand access to the humanities, acquaint a broader community with our research, and connect with each other in new ways. Whatever path your career aspirations and actualities take you—from the classroom to the boardroom—the ability to design engaging projects that have wide appeal will serve you well.

What each of these professional development forays have in common is that they encourage and position us to think about how we can translate the values and skills we develop as English Studies researchers and practitioners to people outside of our immediate academic, professional and disciplinary families. It reminds us that we need to stay attuned to what we bring to the table and be ready to share those strengths inside and outside of the academy, unapologetically. And they encourage us to see ourselves in a variety of places—professionally, socially, and personally—where our vantage points, training, and values might be usefully deployed. This is what we are all called to do as humanistic scholars. This is what we are

preparing ourselves to do as graduates of the L&C program who will work, live, and play all over the world.

On a related note, we really do want to know how well your graduate degree is working for you. So as a program we're moving into the next phase of outreach to L&C alum. Over the next year we'll be reaching out to invite some of you L&C "Lit Critters" (thanks again to Jim Cahalan for that one!) back to share your career journey with current students. We want to hear from a wide swath of you—those who landed in academia and those who chose other paths; from those who graduated twenty or more years ago to our more recent grads. Your stories are part of L&C; we want to be able to tell our story—past and future—with you in mind!

Finally, as I shared in an earlier newsletter, we are now on a couple of social media platforms. We have a private group, IUP Literature & Criticism, on Facebook where we celebrate our successes, network and share professional opportunities, and generally stay connected. So if you haven't gotten an invite, look us up on FB and request to be added, or drop me a line so we can send you an invite. You can also follow us on Twitter, @IUPLitCrit.

In the Literature & Criticism program, our students are the stars. You all dream big, step out boldly, imagine new futures, and push us to meet you where you are so that we all can climb higher together. I wouldn't change that for the world.

Veronica T. Watson, PhD

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- From the Director (Cover Piece)
- Reflections on the Public Humanities Program at Georgetown University
- From the Director of the M.A. Programs
- Meet Our MA Students!
- Graduate Assistants Work Across the Discipline
- An Interview with Dr. Veronica Watson
- EGO: A Letter from the President
- Banned Books Week 2019: Censorship Keeps Us in the Dark, Keep the Light On
- The Power of a Good Grad Conference
- Teaching Incarcerated People
- What Else? The Column for Curious Seekers of PhD Paths
- Meet Our New PhD Cohort!
- Voices of Experience: Pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Literature & Criticism
- Student and Alumni News!
- Faculty News
- Congratulations Graduates! Thesis and Dissertation Titles
- Dates to Remember

**Literature & Criticism Website:** <http://www.iup.edu/english/grad/literature-criticism-phd/>

**Registration Web Address:** <http://www.iup.edu/myiup/>

**Graduate Literature E-mail Address:** [grad-engl@iup.edu](mailto:grad-engl@iup.edu)

**L&C Twitter:** @IUPLitCrit

**Graduate Literature Telephone:** (724) 357-2263

**IUP Academic Calendar:** <http://www.iup.edu/news-events/calendar/>

#### Newsletter Editors

Joseph Sanpietro  
[wnxy@iup.edu](mailto:wnxy@iup.edu)

Lindsey Moser  
[mflbc@iup.edu](mailto:mflbc@iup.edu)

## Reflections on the Public Humanities Program at Georgetown University

By: Rachael Warmington, Sahar Al-Shoubaki, and Sheila Farr

In June 2019, Rachael Warmington (L&C 7th year), Sahar Al-Shoubaki (L&C 5th year), and Sheila Farr (L&C 7th year) attended Georgetown University's Graduate Certificate in the Engaged and Public Humanities. We each received a \$1,000 Humanities Ambassador Fellowship in addition to advanced training that helped us more deeply understand the value of the humanities and how to communicate those values to the public.

One issue addressed at the program was the misconception that humanists do not have a connection to the world outside of the university. Dr. Leonard Cassuto, the keynote speaker for the 2019 program, stated "we should think about how we can communicate to the outside world what work that we do in academia and consider all of the work that we do outside of academia because we are ambassadors of academia." He also explained that before we engage with the public "we need to know who the public is and how to talk to them." The humanities are grounded in the human condition and can be used to foster relationships, guide our actions, inform our schema, and enable us to move beyond disciplines and boundaries. The humanities also expose us to value systems and skills, such as critical thinking, empathy, research and project management, writing, and multimodal approaches to fostering civic and community engagement.

In addition to attending workshops and listening to keynote speakers who specialize in engaged and public humanities, we had the opportunity to develop ideas for public-facing projects, a broad term that describes initiatives designed to appeal to and engage audiences outside of colleges and universities.

Rachael's project is informed by her experience teaching Core English courses at Seton Hall University. Her participation in the Georgetown Certificate program not only provided her with additional knowledge and skills for engaging her students with content, but also has inspired her to create a platform for herself and others to share

resources that promote public engagement with the humanities.

Rachael decided to create a web-based toolkit that assists people in engaging with the humanities, (<https://buildingbridgesthroughthehumanities.org/>). The website will include activities and assignments that are designed to foster an appreciation of the humanities, create awareness of the way that they shape and reflect our world, and demonstrate how the humanities can transform and elevate communities. There will be standalone assignments as well as scaffolded assignment sequences, and the activities housed there will utilize multimodal approaches that promote collaboration across curricula as well as with local communities. Each page of the website will also be printer friendly so that the resources can also be shared offline, and the whole site will comply with the Standards for Accessible Design outlined in the American Department of Disabilities Act. Rachael's website is currently under construction.

Sahar's project is inspired by her dissertation research on Palestinian American women writers and the different aesthetic and formal strategies they use to historicize the story of Palestine. Because these narratives often reflect her own family's story and history, Sahar believes it important to tell the story of Palestine not only in fiction, but also in oral history and life-writing. Four days of intensive workshops encouraged Sahar to develop a plan for an oral history project to preserve the untold stories, histories, and experiences of Palestinians living in Palestine and the diaspora.



The project will document testimonies and life narratives of Palestinians talking about their memories and experiences about Palestine before, during, and after

different turning points in the history of Palestine like the 1948 Nakbeh (catastrophe), the 1967 Nakseh (the setback), the first intifada (uprising) in 1987, the second intifada in 2000, and the blockade of Gaza in 2006. The collected testimonies will be published on a WordPress website using different formats-visual, audio, and written. This will create an online space that preserves Palestinian history and makes it accessible to a global audience.

The project Sheila presented at the program was one that she has been part of since 2014. L&C faculty member, Dr. Tanya Heflin, received a Faculty Professional Development Grant from the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education to create the Women's Diary Digital Archive. The goal of the project is to uncover and recover the marginalized voices of women by digitizing their diaries, letters, and other types of life-writing. Through this project, their ordinary lives become extraordinary and help to broaden our understanding of women's experiences in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America.

Because Sheila had worked in the Special Collections and Archives department, she was brought on to assist with selecting and digitizing the texts. She emphasized in her presentation that the Women's Diary Digital Archive is a collaborative effort among the archivist in Special Collections, IUP's Digital Humanities Center and its director, and IUP graduate students, who have specialized knowledge and experience with archives and digital humanities projects.

Speakers and workshop leaders for Georgetown University's Graduate Certificate in the Engaged and Public Humanities stressed that the humanities disciplines provide a strong foundation for any career, inside or outside of the academy. Through many site visits, we networked and held informational interviews with humanities-trained professionals who are employed in academia, government organizations, NGOs, and the corporate world. Site visits to the Library of Congress and the Folger Shakespeare Library were especially encouraging, as many of those who shared their time held doctoral degrees in humanities fields. They all were engaged in interesting and fulfilling work, such as working with manuscripts or organizing educational and outreach programs for the public.

One of the biggest benefits of this program was that we learned to value our doctoral education and degrees no

matter the career path we choose to follow. More information about the 2020 Engaged and Public Humanities Graduate Certificate Program at Georgetown University can be found at <https://publichumanities.georgetown.edu/homepage/cert-2020-certificate/>.

## From the Director of the MA in Literature and the MA in Composition and Literature Programs



Every year marks a new stage for our MA in Literature and our MA in Composition and Literature students. Our strong sense of community as scholars, teachers, and innovative researchers provides support and guidance for the many career opportunities our profession offers you and for the many transitions and innovative ways of thinking that these opportunities stimulate. Once you latch on to these opportunities, your life changes.

First, we begin with congratulations to Emily Rupp (MA in Literature '19), Kimberly Bressler (MA in Literature '19), and Diana Forry (MA in Composition and Literature '19) for winning admission to doctoral programs at Lehigh University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Duquesne University. Diana, Emily, and Kim all received generous funding from these institutions, and all three of them are now teaching in the classroom. For those of you who aspire to teach as doctoral students as you make your way towards your professional goals in higher education, their example can serve as inspiration that will put much air under your wings! Congratulations also to Elizabeth Pedder (MA in Literature '19) as she finishes her third year teaching at Butler Community College and to Julie Babal, Danielle Rishell, Cassie Cook, Katie Super, and Rachel Newbury (all MA in Composition and Literature '20) as they manage a heavy dual workload as professional educators and MA students.

There is not space to recognize the many students from our 2018-2019 cohort who presented papers at local,

regional, and national conferences, but I think they would all agree that the experience of presenting their work in public to a large audience was both stimulating and transformative.

Our MA students also continue to hold important service roles in our profession. Kaitlynn Sass (MA in Composition and Literature '19) continues to Eastern Region Student Representative for the Sigma Tau Delta Honors Society. Kimberly Bressler and Jedidiah Fetterman (MA in Literature '16) are now President and Vice President of the English Graduate Organization at IUP. Combining professional presentations, service and scholarship in innovative ways will be an important initiative in the years to come, as indicated in Dr. Watson's column on page one.

Speaking of innovation, please join me in welcoming our new 2019-2020 cohort!

MA in Literature – Sarah Beecham, Joshua Calandrella, Maria LaRotonda, and Evan Sakowicz

MA in Composition and Literature –Shelbe Ferry, Anthony Frontino, Erin Kline, Elizabeth Laughlin, Daniel Pintos, Tommy McConnell, Jesse Rice, Jenny Russell, Wendy Scaife, and Mattison Thornton.

This group brings determination and energy to our program as they widen the scope of our research initiatives to include the Blairsville Underground Railroad Museum, connections between Arabic and Romantic literatures, the influence of medieval Spanish, Arabic, and Hebrew poetry on literary history, as well as explorations of feminist science fiction, religious movements and literary traditions.

As we partner with the IUP Myth Collaborative, the IUP Writing Center, and members of other departments, we will all gain new teaching and research skills that we can then share with others throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, within professional organizations both national and international, and around the larger professional worlds that beckon us. Let's enjoy the journeys!

Michael T. Williamson, PhD



## MEET OUR MA STUDENTS!



*Far back: Michael Williamson, Director; back row (left to right): Allison Miller (visiting student), Sarah Beecham, Shelbe Ferry, Elizabeth Laughlin, Mattison Thornton, Wendy Scaife, Jenny Russell; middle row (left to right): Sarah Bradshaw (MATESOL), Evan Sakowicz, Jesse Rice, Erin Kline; front row (left to right): Tommy McConnell, Josh Calandrella, Daniel Pintos, Sina Semsar. Not pictured: Maria LaRotonda, Anthony Frontino*

**Sarah Beecham** (MA in Literature) is interested in British Romanticism, 19th Century British Literature, Modern Poetry, and Feminism. In her ENGL 625 Introduction to TESOL course, she is conducting research on ways in which media (music, movies, literature, etc.) can benefit non-native language learners in the classroom.

**Joshua Patrick Calandrella** (MA in Literature) primarily studies the English, Spanish, and Arabic languages and literatures. His current academic interests include translation studies; representations of religion in literature featured through historical intersection of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in social, cultural and spiritual movements. He aims to produce scholarship on classical Arabic and Hebrew poetry that increases the visibility and awareness of global literature in English departments.

**Maria LaRotonda** (MA in Literature) is studying pedagogical theory, science fiction, and feminist theory. She is also working on Middle Eastern poetry. Her main goal is to become an English professor so she can create and find open-ended challenges for her students. She is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps.

**Shelbe Ferry**, (MA in Literature and Composition) is interested in 17th to 18th century British literature as well as women writers and is currently working on the first drafts of a conference abstract.

**Anthony Frontino** (MA in Composition and Literature) is interested in Spanish medieval literature. He is also currently conducting research regarding secret runaway slave paths and trails that go through Cambria County, and he is hoping to stockpile enough information regarding this project to create a short book on the topic.

**Erin Kline** (MA in Literature and Composition) is interested in Shakespeare, feminist criticism, and nonfiction creative writing. She is currently working on a project on Kathleen Norris for her GA assignment.

**Liz Laughlin** (MA in Literature) is interested in Modernist writers such as Virginia Woolf, Ezra Pound, and T.S. Eliot, as well as Romantic works--especially Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. She is doing her graduate assistantship on Modernist Holocaust literature and working on a paper on Octavia Butler's *Lilith's Brood*.

**Tommy McConnell** (MA in Composition and Literature) is a graduate of Juniata College currently working for an educational software company. His current interests include science fiction and young adult literature.

**Daniel Joseph Pintos** (MA in Composition and Literature) research interests include contemporary poetry, fantasy, and science fiction. He is currently working on a poetry collection and beginning a fantasy novel.

**Jesse Rice** (MA Composition & Literature) is interested in humor studies and Gothic literature.

**Jennifer Russell** (MA English Literature and Composition) is interested in Emancipatory Narratives, 19th century Gothic Literature, and global fairy tales. She is working on the interpretation of historical documents to understand the Johnstown, PA connection to the Underground Railroad and co-teaching with the IUP Digital Storygame Project in local schools and presenting. In November 2019 she presented at the MAPACA conference on parody and horror pastiche in author Jane Webb-Loudon's 1827 novel, *The Mummy! A Tale of the Twenty-Second Century*, a futuristic science fiction novel written before this genre was recognized.

**Evan Sakowicz** (MA in Literature) is working toward his MA in Literature and teaching certification during his first semester. He is interested in teaching literature to students with a focus in science fiction and fantasy. He is currently writing a conference paper focusing on a theory detailing child rearing and agency.

**Wendy Scaife** (MA in Composition and Literature) is not sure where her interests lie, but she is leaning towards a career in editing and publishing. She would like to do more work on science fiction, as she discovered a new love for the work of Octavia Butler.

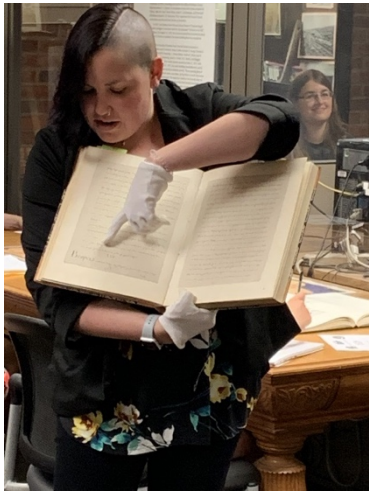
**Mattison Thornton** (MA in Literature & Composition) interests include Young Adult Literature, Modern Drama, and Women and Gender Studies.



## Graduate Assistants Work Across the Discipline

By: Jesse Rice

While reading, research and lectures may be the first thing one thinks about when it comes to graduate school, graduate assistantships can also be a valuable learning experience. And they can be more than simply laying the groundwork for someone's else's research agenda, as three IUP students – Marquel Sherry, Caroline Speller, and Jennifer Russell – can attest.



Marquel Sherry, in her second year of coursework in the Literature & Criticism program at IUP, is working with IUP's special collections to help more people see the artifacts the university holds. "I've been working at the (IUP) library for three years now as a student worker, and I've watched lots of people

come in and look at artifacts in Special Collections," Sherry said. "They have a lot of cool stuff back there. My idea was to get some of the weirder stuff, the things that people don't see very often, and showcase them through literature, since that's my background and area of expertise."

Sherry's idea has taken shape into the form of a once-a-month event entitled Into the Archives, which she designs in collaboration with IUP's Special Collections Department. The first event had a medieval theme.

"We brought out facsimiles, since the originals are really expensive and old and fancy," Sherry said. "But we had texts like the Gutenberg Bible, Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," and Beowulf. And the really cool thing about facsimiles is that people can touch them, and we can show them around in detail and people can look through them." Sherry also read from the texts, which she found exciting, to give people a chance to "hear the words coming right out of these unique books."

Sherry manages the events with Dr. Harrison Wick, Special Collections Librarian and University Archivist, and she brings in different faculty based on the pieces selected and professor's strengths. Sherry has plans to continue the presentations through the spring semester, and she hopes someone else will take it from her after that. When asked how she came up with the idea, Sherry responded, "I just really wanted the experience of presenting to classes of people I didn't know." The teaching aspect plays into Sherry's eventual hopes to become a tenured professor.

Sherry is not the only one using her assistantship to reach a broad audience. Caroline Speller, in her second year of coursework in the Literature & Criticism PhD program, is using her GA to introduce people to Russian film.

Speller was already taking an independent study class on Russian literature and she liked the possibility of weaving film into her work. She explains, "I worked with Dr. Tom Slater last year [as a GA], and he thought augmenting what I learned in the independent study to develop a free class on Russian cinema, offered for IUP students and Indiana community members alike, would be a great project." So she ran with it. "I wanted films that represented the best of Russian filmic art, but also films that are accessible to a general audience, that they could watch without any background information, historically or artistically," she said. "I wanted the films to be entertaining but also visually stunning to look at."

The course is spread out over the fall semester, but people can pick and choose which films they want to watch and discuss. The course offers supplementary readings online, but students do not have to do the readings to attend the film. For every film, Speller gives a brief introduction and leads the discussion afterward. "It's a free, non-credit thing," she said, "A no-stakes, if-you-want-to-learn-about-this-thing-without-having-to-pay-for-credits-or-worry-about-a-grade, sheer learning-for-the-sake-of-learning sort of thing."



After graduation, Speller said her hope is to be a literature and cinema teacher. She believes the assistantship will be good for her CV, but says it is also allowing her to refine her teaching and her course development skills. But just as importantly, she is able to share with the public pieces of literature and film that are important to her.

Jennifer Russell, a first year MA student in the Literature and Composition program, hopes to do something similar, but her subjects are the stories of the

Underground Railroad around Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Russell became inspired about the topic during a class with Dr. Veronica Watson over the summer.

“I really saw a need for more research into the Underground Railroad because so much of it has been glossed over or not looked into fully,” she said. Soon after, she found the story of a group of runaway slaves who escaped through Johnstown on their journey north on the Underground Railroad. The two brothers escaped and hid in a barn, and the people of Johnstown assisted in their



escape. Slavecatchers attempted to sue several townspeople for assisting in the escape, but the Johnstown court system dropped the suit. “It is amazing how the people of Johnstown stood up to the slavecatcher,” she said. “I like how they came together and were strong. They didn’t just do this with these two men, but with many people seeking to escape slavery.” Russell hopes to use this story as a springboard to talk about the broader Underground Railroad stories in the Johnstown area. She will start this by holding interactive presentations at the Johnstown Museum and by pulling together material for an Underground Railroad exhibit. The exhibit will feature her own research along with local items she will gather from various sources in the area.

“The presentations will be four Wednesdays for one hour each, with close and distant reading of Fredrick Douglass and Colson Whitehead,” she said. “It is definitely not a lecture; it is very much a discussion. Very interactive.” Russell originally did the project on her own, not as an assistantship. She reached out to the Johnston Museum after her summer class. However, when she told Dr. Michael Williamson, the director of the Literature and Composition MA Program, about it, he was interested. She said Williamson was impressed that the Johnston

Museums were involved, along with the Johnstown Library and the African American Heritage Association, and he wanted to support this project.

Russell hopes through this project that she can help people to better understand the history of the area and of the Underground Railroad. “When I was in public school back in the 1970s, a lot of the history they told almost made it sound like slavery was a good thing and it was positive and everyone was happy,” she said. “That’s obviously absolutely false. Since then there have been a lot of improvements, but there’s still a lot of work to be done.”

Russell said she would not have gotten this unusual Graduate Assistantship had she not been involved in the community and willing to bring her love of literature and history out of the traditional classroom.

This was a common theme among the three interviewees. Speller said new students should be clear about their interests and academic advisors will work to pair them with a professor who is interested in helping them. Then the assistantship can be beneficial to both the GA and the professor. Sherry said IUP is a great school to develop assistantship projects that are publicly-engaged, but she also told students not to give up hope if they do not immediately get an assistantship they want.

“Anything can be used to your benefit,” she said. “If you just get a crappy student worker job that you feel like might be of no help, you could turn it into something super useful, or even a whole project.”



## An Interview with Dr. Veronica Watson By: Caroline Speller

**Caroline Speller:** *I understand you have an exciting project coming out next year, so congratulations! Tell me a bit about it.*

**Veronica Watson:** I’ve been working on a collection of short stories by Frank Yerby. He was immensely popular writer during his time, authoring thirty-three novels—almost a novel a year—over the course of his career. His



first novel, *The Foxes of Harrow*, was published in 1946, but he actually got his start by writing short stories and poetry while in college. This book will be the first-ever collection of his short fiction. It includes sixteen short stories, only five of which were previously published. All the rest were held at the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center at Boston University, which houses his archive. I'm really excited about the collection because it's not what you might expect. Frank was a great storyteller and a beautiful writer. He had a lot of interests, which a many people don't know because his novels are largely of one genre or style. The short stories, though, are different. There are ghost stories, murder mysteries, and noir; urban locales, international scenes, as well as the settings that he is more well known for—pastoral, historical, and quintessentially Southern, liberally sprinkled with a scandals and mayhem and with just a hint of ironic disdain and historical critique. They are all very different, very interesting, and a lot of fun to read.

**CS:** *How did you come to the project?*

**VW:** Well it started with my first book actually. At the end of every semester I want to read something for the “pure joy of story,” and a friend recommended *The Foxes of Harrow* to me. I thoroughly enjoyed it and somewhere in the process of reading I realized he was an African American writer. I remembered I had read another of these oddities—a book by a black writer about white characters—when I was in grad school. That one was *Seraph on the Swanee* by Zora Neale Hurston. That got me wondering, “How many of these books are out there?” The search for answers to that question became the genesis of my first book, *The Souls of White Folk*. *Foxes* was central for one of the chapters of that book, so I was researching Yerby and his work, which led me to his literary archive at the Gotlieb. While there I found all these short stories that he had written, but that was not the project I was working on so I filed it away in my brain.

After *Souls* was published, I was looking for my next project and really wanted to get *Foxes* back into print. But the book is long and Yerby is still fairly unknown, so no publisher wanted to take that chance. That's when I remembered all of those short stories, and slowly turned my attention to them. As I started to look into them I found that only nine of the twenty-five or so stories he had written had been published. So, of course, I began to

wonder, “why are all of these here?” An interview he did with *Ebony Magazine* gave me a clue; he said he was working on a short story collection. That's how I came to work on the collection. I guess I'm trying to finish what Frank started.

**CS:** *How long has this project taken?*

**VW:** Six years or so since I first saw the stories, but about four years since I started thinking of it as an actual project.

**CS:** *What were some of the complications you encountered or any interesting developments along your research journey?*

**VW:** Frank's literary estate is complicated. It is what's known as an “orphan estate,” meaning Yerby left no clear directions on what to do with his writing after his death. He was married and had four children with his first wife, and then divorced and remarried. He did not leave a will. He lived most of his adult life as an expatriate, and once he remarried, he spent the last 30+ years of his life in Spain, eventually getting dual citizenship there. When he died most of his estate passed to his Spanish wife, Blanca Calle Perez Yerby. But he had set up his archive here in the U.S. at Boston University, and one of his

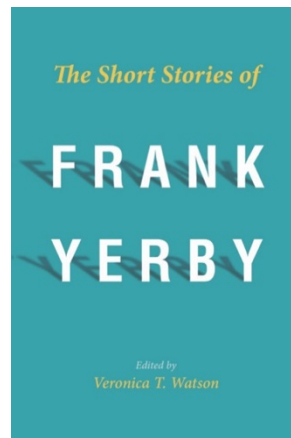
children is listed as the permission holder there. So there are two branches of the family a claim to parts of his estate.

Interestingly, his son only found out his role as custodian of part of his father's literary estate when I contacted him in 2014. The estrangement between Frank and his children eventually made the project more personal. I wasn't just trying to get some of his writing back into print for a new generation of readers, I was also “filling in the gaps” for his children, who did not know him well because he largely left their lives when they were fairly young.

**CS:** *When I saw you in Boston over the summer at the American Literature Association conference, you said you were doing research there as well as presenting. Was that work related to Yerby?*

**VW:** Yes. I was Boston University doing final checks on the manuscript. And the conference seemed like the right place to present on Yerby since his archive is there, so my approach for the presentation was to reintroduce Frank by explaining, “Who is Frank Yerby and why should we care?”

Part of the answer to that question is that he was a contemporary of Zora Neale Hurston and Richard Wright



and other writers of racial realism. But Frank wanted to make his living as a writer and didn't think he could do so writing protest fiction. He also didn't like the racial politics and oppression of the U.S., so as soon as he could, he left. He spent the last forty years of his life abroad and the last 30 years in Spain--Franco's Spain. Intellectuals and writers and progressives of all sorts were being thrown into prisons, exiled, and executed, but Yerby found that a more hospitable land than the U.S. That's telling. But as a result of his professional choices and expatriation, many scholars and critics thought Yerby abandoned the fight for racial and social equality in the U.S. I hope my work, and that of others, will lead to a reevaluation of his place in American and African American literature.

**CS:** *It sounds like you got to know him really well.*

**VW:** I feel like I did. There are letters and notes and marginalia all over the proofs of his novels. You can tell a lot about people through those writings. I also talked to people who knew him in Spain and his hometown of Augusta, Georgia, learned more about the communities that shaped him, and researched the realities he lived. He hated racism, and wanted the ability to do live how he saw fit in whatever society he was in. But he was also a man of his times in many ways. He was complicated in the way we now say Zora Neale Hurston was.

**CS:** *How close is the project to being done?*

**VW:** It's done! I think the University Press of Mississippi is shooting for a May 2020 release. The short story collection is timed to come out with a critical collection on Yerby edited by Matthew Teutsch; UPM is publishing that one, too. I have an essay in that collection, focusing on a reading of black masculinity in several of his short stories.

**CS:** *As any scholar knows, research is often not the most straightforward process, and it can vary widely from project to project. What has the process been like for you?*

**VW:** Each of my books has been a different experience. One was literary criticism, next was an edited collection, and this one is recovery work. I had a different relationship with editors and publishers for each. This short story collection was all about securing the needed permissions. It will also be released as a trade book, so the writing process was not strictly focused on reaching a scholarly or academic audience. It was an interesting change to write for the person who picks up a book because it looks like an interesting read.

**CS:** *What's next for you?*

**VW:** Good question. I'm waiting to see if Frank's done with me yet! Until then, I'm focusing on making sure students in our graduate programs have solid experiences that prepare them for whatever the next steps are in the educational or professional paths they want to pursue.



## EGO: A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

“That is part of the beauty of all literature. You discover that your longings are universal longings, that you're not lonely and isolated from anyone. You belong.”

— F. Scott Fitzgerald



Whether it is your first or last semester in the English Department, a prospective student or somewhere in between, I extend my warmest welcome to you. By way of introduction, a paraphrase of F. Scott Fitzgerald perfectly describes the mission of EGO: we strive to build a scholarly community within which everyone belongs and can find solace from this crazy world through shared literary experiences. With this in mind, our goals for this year are centered around the student experience. Our aim is to provide all English graduate students—from the first semester master's student to the dissertation phase doctoral student—with the support and resources needed for their particular place in the program.

In broad terms, the role of EGO has always been to provide students with the necessary opportunities to grow professionally and socially while completing their degrees.

While every year is a little different, this year's officers are an extremely dedicated bunch who have ensured that EGO is firing on all cylinders to make this mission a success.

The EGO board spent a significant amount of time deciding on workshops that address the needs we hear every day. The final slate of topics for the year include: a self-care and nutrition workshop in order to ensure that all students are capable of functioning at their best and highest capacity; a deep reading workshop to equip students with a skillset they are regularly called on to use in our graduate programs; and an online teaching workshop to help prepare students for blended and distance education job opportunities. Each of these workshops serve a distinct purpose, to challenge and support our graduate students in various areas of their academic and professional careers.

EGO is also dedicated to creating social events that bring together all members of the department and create a sense of community. As several of the English professors proclaim, our department is a community of scholars, and EGO aims to embody that. We kicked off the semester with a successful picnic in the English department that drew in professors and students alike. The amount of support we received proved to us that graduate students are receptive to EGO's direction for the year, and for that we are extremely grateful. In the fall, we also hosted a Halloween event that included games, food, and a costume contest.



While we believe these organized events are important, I would like to emphasize that community is not simply an event. Community is built when we take a classmate out for coffee to discuss a class or host a prospective student in our homes. This is the sense of comradery that EGO aims to support and foster, so we encourage all students to take the initiative

to create this sense of community regardless of an organized event.

EGO recognizes that there is a need more than ever before for the English department to spread the love for literature and teach others in the university the power of language. So, just as in years past, EGO held our annual book sale in the lobby of the Humanities building in early November. We see the book sale as a service to the university community and through it, EGO aspires to reach people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Many undergraduate and graduate students from across the university took advantage of the low-priced books.



Perhaps the most well-established EGO event is our annual conference held in the spring semester. Each year, the officers of EGO organize this conference in order to foster the IUP scholarly community, as well as give students an

opportunity to share their research with outside scholars. This year's theme is "Work and Leisure, Noise and Sound," which asks participants to explore and analyze the connections between these concepts. The CFP was released in October and can be found on the UPenn Call for Papers site. We also organize a smaller conference during the summer sessions to provide opportunities for Summers-Only students to share their work as well.

I would like to recognize Dr. Michael Williamson, the advisor of EGO, for his constant dedication to the organization. It is due to his dedication to his students that EGO thrives each and every year. Furthermore, each and every officer this year deserves a hearty thank you for your constant zeal and devotion to the mission at hand. So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you to: Jedidiah Fetterman, our fearless conference organizer for this year and vice president; Marquel Sherry, the best secretary any organization could ask for; Danielle Rishell, the treasurer with a mission to keep us interesting and relevant; Taylor Jones, Kelly Stewart, Nedrick Patrick, Joseph Sanpietro, Yahia Tahat, our hardworking and creative workshop coordinators; Lindsey Moser, the most energetic and

driven historian we could ask for; and Olivia Maderer and Eric Wentz, two of the most accommodating webmasters ever. Each and every officer this year has gone above and beyond the call to action for the English Graduate Organization. It has been a true joy working with them, and I look forward to the semester ahead with them.

Finally, I would like to thank the English department and all of the students and professors who support an organization like ours. Without your continuous support and advice, we would truly be at a deficit. If anyone is interested in more information about EGO or upcoming events, please feel free to reach out to me via email at [lvvx@iup.edu](mailto:lvvx@iup.edu).

Best,  
Kimberly Bressler  
President, English Graduate Organization



## THE BANNED BOOKS WEEK 2019: CENSORSHIP LEAVES US IN THE DARK: KEEP THE LIGHT ON BY: MATTISON THORNTON

In the early days of this past September, a news story broke that read like it should have been printed ten years ago. A catholic school in Nashville, Tennessee banned the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling on the grounds that it contained evil spells that could be duplicated and that it might encourage young readers to explore and embrace the occult. It should be worth noting that the last book in the series was published in 2007, and the final movie in 2011.



It might shock some to read that the Harry Potter is still being banned in 2019, but, in fact, it is just one of

many books and series that are blocked and embargoed in schools and libraries all across the United States. That's why it couldn't be more important for the American Library Association (ALA) to have established Banned Books week. Promoted nation-wide, it is a time for universities, libraries, high schools, and elementary schools to acknowledge and celebrate frequently banned books, as well as to have meaningful discussions on censorship and the right to read. This year's theme was "Censorship Leaves Us in the Dark: Keep the Light On."

A well-loved tradition at IUP since 2012, this year's Banned Books Week at IUP featured a Read-Out and Banned Books Roundtable Discussion. The event was sponsored by the IUP Libraries in partnership with the English Graduate Organization (EGO) and the IUP English Department. Caution tape lined the floor of the library, leading students and faculty to the Reading Nook where the event was held. Desserts and drinks were set up at a nearby table, and the spaced buzzed with a quiet excitement that only reading enthusiasts could manage.

The Read-Out was the first event of the week and took place on September 25th. EGO President Kim Bressler kicked it off by thanking the Library and English Department for their cooperation in organizing the event. A time where students, faculty, and any participants could read excerpts from a banned book to the audience, the Read-Out began with Dean of Libraries Erik Nordberg reading from *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Provost Timothy S. Moerland was next, and he appropriately selected a passage from *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*. He prefaced his excerpt by explaining that before Harry Potter, most books were challenged on the basis of sexual content in realistic fiction. Rowling's work was banned because it brought to life a world where magic and the occult reigned. His point was to highlight that beyond the content, banning books really stems from a fear of the power of words, ideas, and what people might do with them. Other selections read were from *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, and *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison, to name a few.

The Roundtable Discussion was the final event of the week, and perfectly encapsulated the theme of how "Censorship Leaves Us in the Dark: Keep the Light On." Four PhD students were each given a seven minute slot to speak, and a thirty minute open discussion followed. Subjects such as erasure, propaganda, freedom of ideas,

science-fiction, classics, queer literature, book burnings, race, and childhood innocence were discussed. When asked how censorship leaves us in the dark, the panel responded eloquently, explaining that the only way we can understand the true nature of our world is to have access to every kind of story. When you erase one side, you're only getting a partial picture. Kim Bressler wrapped up the event by encouraging everyone to take cookies and desserts home with them, as well as to continue the conversation outside of the library's walls.

Overall, the 2019 Banned Books Week at IUP was a well-attended, well-celebrated success. There was plenty of participation from students and faculty, and the discussions and conversations were enlightening and constructive. To bring it full circle, and to go along with the theme of "Censorship Leaves Us in the Dark: Leave the Light On," a quote from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* comes to mind: "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light." As more books continue to be banned each year in schools and libraries across the nation, let's hope that all those that experienced and participated in the Banned Books Week at IUP and across the nation remember to leave the light on for them. Perhaps even a little happiness might be found because of it.

For more information about IUP's Banned Books Week, visit the English Department website: <https://www.iup.edu/english/events/banned-books/>

## The Power of a Good Graduate Conference: The 2019 EGO & Composition and TESOL Association Interdisciplinary Conference in Review

By: Miad Alazmi

On April 5, 2019, the English Graduation Organization in conjunction with the Composition and TESOL Association held an interdisciplinary conference to bring into focus the different types of scholarship students

pursue across the graduate programs in English. As an annual conference, it provides an invaluable experience to students in the programs.

Dr. Mike Williamson and Dr. Matt Vetter, who are the EGO and Composition and TESOL Association advisors, respectively, presided over the conference by welcoming everyone and acknowledging the big step of introducing this inter-program conference. Although the EGO conference has always been open to any graduate student in the English Department and has historically drawn graduate presenters from other disciplines and universities, this was the first time in many years that the English Graduate Organization and Composition and TESOL Association collaborated to put on the annual event. The conference was organized in seven sessions with students presenting papers on a variety of topics related to the conference theme, *Transient Crossings: Exploring, Constructing and Deconstructing Borders*.

Session one was presided over by the opening moderator, Ebenezer Ylonfoun, who presented "Bridging the Gap and Breaking Barriers of Disability in the Composition Classroom," which had a powerful introductory effect that unified all in attendance. During this first session, other speakers spoke on the significance of honoring students' individuality. All presenters highlighted the need for courage from instructors in the English writing classroom.



In the second session, one panel moderated by Dr. Todd Thompson, highlighted the different forms of diversity in some of the works of N.K. Jemisin and Octavia Butler, and a concurrent panel moderated by Dr. Gloria Park challenged rigid ideologies of perfection. Papers in the third session, moderated by Dr. Tanya Heflin, focused on poetry and the thematics of individualism and separation,

and the fourth session, moderated by Dr. Matthew Vetter, explored the process of self-acceptance for students who cross various borders throughout their educational careers. The concurrent panels in the fifth session, moderated by Dr. Thomas Slater and Dr. Veronica Watson, presented strategies for negotiating with the external environment so as to peacefully make change, while the sixth session, moderated by Jimalee Sowell and Emily Rupp, presented ideas on how students could cross and eventually adapt to the national, cultural and social borders they encounter. Panels in the last session, moderated by Jialei Jiang and Emily Rupp, wrapped up the conference by showing us that the process of writing and interpretation begins when we encounter other narratives. As I reflected on the final panels, I realized again that to communicate effectively we need to identify social issues or problems and then imagine solutions that encourage us and others to overcome inhibitive social barriers.

The English Graduate Organization and Composition and TESOL Interdisciplinary Conference provided attendees and presenters with the invaluable experiences of getting to know the problems we work through as English Studies scholars and teachers, and provided an opportunity to consider how we empower students to communicate through reading and writing. The conference gave people like me a sense of freedom to know that we too can create our standards and communicate our ideas, and that English is only a tool for this communication. The final message seems to have been that the destiny of any individual can only be determined by that person. The closing remarks cemented the view that despite any form of diversity, the perfect peace can only be achieved if one gets to be at peace with the self. This conference allowed me to develop a clear understanding of literature and writing as a means of communicating social issues, and most outstandingly, it opened up the doors to a peaceful and free writing career, for which I will forever remain grateful.



## Teaching Incarcerated People By: Lindsey Moser

When I met Mauve Perle Tahat for our conversation about her experience teaching incarcerated people, she greeted me at the door with her 3-month old gurgling happily in his stroller. I enjoyed learning about one of her professional interests: teaching English classes for incarcerated people.

Mauve started teaching fairly early. She taught English as a Second Language until she earned her first Master's, then shifted to teaching composition classes. She was an adjunct at five different institutions over the course of several years, channeling her passion and energy into teaching English Composition 1 and 2. In 2016, Mauve decided to pursue her PhD in the Literature and Criticism program to develop her interests in literature and to hone pedagogies that are effective with nontraditional learners.

Mauve describes herself as “always involved in activist circles” during her educational career, but developed an interest, both academically and personally, in understanding the particular challenges faced by incarcerated people and their opportunities for education. Several people close to her had become a part of the carceral system, which moved it from the periphery of her attention to a primary focus. Her personal experience paired with the explosion of criminal narratives in popular culture and media prompted her to explore carceral logics as her doctoral research. She wants to challenge and deconstruct the public's mindset about incarcerated people. She says of her dissertation, tentatively titled, *Pedagogy of Abolition: Reading Futures in the Era of Mass Incarceration*, “If you're a scholar, you have to look at pertinent social issues...it's always been important for me to have an activist base and this seemed timely and important.”

For Mauve, it wasn't just about theorizing the carceral state and its impact on a variety of social institutions that helped develop her passion for teaching people, but recognizing the need for empathy and activism related to incarceration from academics themselves. She is involved with the Second Chance Pell Grant, a program which enables instructors at IUP to teach credit-bearing courses to incarcerated people, allowing students to graduate with an associate's degree and transferrable credits after they leave prison. The courses are offered as part of an

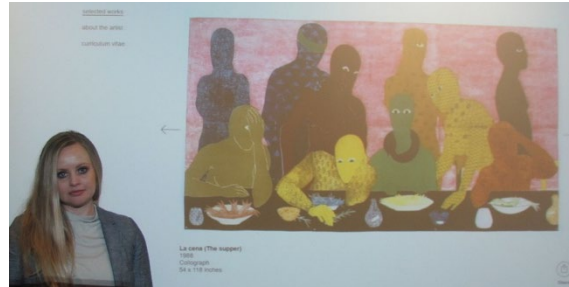
initiative that was launched at IUP in 2015. The grant was developed as part of the Obama Administration's efforts to reform the criminal justice system, to mitigate the impact of incarceration on families and communities, and to reduce recidivism rates.

Dr. Chauna Craig, faculty in the English Department, got involved with this opportunity in 2017. She said it "put to the test" her teaching experience because students did not have access to word processors or printers, and had difficulty receiving mailed instructional items like required textbooks. Dr. Craig said these restrictions forced her to be creative about maintaining the course objectives while navigating her students' learning situation. She is passionate about this demographic, though. She says, "I believe in educational access for everybody... Education is a route to opening more opportunities and these are all people who have done their time, who have not gotten in trouble, and who all want to be productive citizens who don't return to prison." The classes also offer a valuable way to occupy students' time. As Dr. Craig told me, "It was a blessing for them to have books in their cells, and it gave them a boost to their confidence." IUP currently offers ENGL 101 and 202 and works with two different institutions, Pine Grove and Houtzdale.

Mauve, telling me about her Composition I class, explains that it is "the same content that I would offer in a composition course [at a college or university]." The main difference for her is that teaching the class feels like one-on-one tutoring because of restrictions placed by the correctional facility. She is the only one that goes over reading reflections and assignments (posted on the secure D2L platform accessible only to students enrolled in the class), and students are not allowed to interact with each other. They learn how to conduct scholarly research and develop both low and high-order English skills, but its primarily through interactions with her rather than within a learning community. Mauve told me the reading reflections let her know that students were "upset when they found out they were not allowed to workshop with each other." Dr. Craig also touched on this, saying she had to reframe assessed components of her pedagogy because of these challenges.

Another difference Mauve has had to adjust to is the resistance that correctional facilities often exhibit to making this opportunity available to inmates. If she wants to provide supplementary materials from an online resource, she's not able to send students a link to an article

about it. All her materials have to be saved as a screenshot and uploaded as a PDF for students to read. On occasion, class materials have been intercepted. And sometimes the mentality seems to exist that incarcerated people shouldn't have access to education, posing a challenge to students' learning.



Despite challenges with resources, technology, or administrative hurdles, Mauve has been able to develop a course that resonates with the experiences of her students. The theme of her current Composition II class is hauntology, the idea that there are futures created from pasts, and that the past haunts our futures in ways that we need to understand so that we can pursue alternative futures. She tells me that her students are "really into it," talking about a range of interpretations: how the present is shaped by the African diaspora, issues with the continuation of racial segregation (as a form of haunting), and epigenetics ("ancestral karma"). Some of her students took their research in a different direction, talking about past musical trends in a new song ("sampling").

Although it is challenging to shape research methods without access to a library or internet resources, Mauve says her students' responses to assignments and composition of annotations are completely unique: "[Their work] fulfills the competency that I expect of my in-person students. The student become their own experts and synthesize the information in a way that becomes their own."

Students value the opportunity to pursue an education even though they are incarcerated, and the assignments become immersed and intertwined with their life experiences. During finals week one semester, Dr. Craig was asked by a student to have hard copies of their work sent to them. Other students wanted hard copies of assignments like resumes, letters to potential employers, and others. Ownership of their words, Dr. Craig told me, is a significant part of the learning experience for many of these students.

As we brought our conversation to an end, I asked Mauve about the misconceptions many people have about incarcerated people. Mauve believes that incarcerated students have more at stake in their learning. As an instructor, she feels this deeply: “You have to build a rapport with students who are used to everyone thinking they’re bad. They’re relying on you to not just deliver instruction, but also a little piece of the outside for them.” Mauve encourages those interested in learning more or getting involved to begin by understanding the humanity of incarcerated people, the need for education in prisons, and the significant social issues created by mass incarceration in the U.S. She also cautions us to remember, “[If] people go to prison, it’s easy to assume they have some kind of intellectual deficit. But all kinds of folks go to prison. Many scholars and activists had formative experiences in prisons.”

Educational opportunities like this help prepare incarcerated people for the day when they are released and building post-incarceration lives for themselves.



## What Else? The Column for Curious Seekers of PhD Paths

### L&C Student Explore Alternate Career Paths

By: Sahar Al-Shoubaki, Mauve Perle Tahat and Joe Sanpietro

**Q:** *What do Professional Development Fellows do?*

**Sahar:** Professional Development Fellows are responsible for creating an environment at our department where the value of your PhD is appreciated and celebrated. We meet on a regular basis with the program director, Dr. Watson, to discuss, organize, and plan for workshops to be offered in the department where we start a conversation that a PhD in English doesn’t mean that you’re destined to a single career path, but rather means that you have the foundation and potential to go into myriad directions. We

also stress the fact that the humanities teach you the skills necessary to get any job you want. We want everyone to realize that with the critical thinking and reasoning skills, communication and interpersonal skills we cultivate, a PhD in English (or any humanities major for that matter) can land you any career because these skills are what employers are looking for.

This fellowship gave us a free membership to Beyond the Professoriate, which is an online platform where we attend webinars, online conferences, take online courses that help us prepare for careers inside academia and beyond, and also listen to PhDs who have successful careers in different fields. Our workshops in spring 2019 varied to highlight the different learning that we encountered. Mauve offered a workshop that talked about academic adjacent careers in administration, student affairs, faculty development, etc. Joe offered a workshop that discussed careers in freelance, consulting, and advocacy. Sahar took a different direction and talked about how the skills we develop as PhD students and teachers can be transferred into a wide range of careers and actually make us top notch candidates for any potential job opening.

**Q:** *How are you looking at the career market now that you’ve had this experience?*

**Mauve:** Overall, I am more optimistic and equipped to handle my CV, interviewing, and networking in a variety of professional settings. My goal has been to foray my years of experience into other fields (publishing, community advocacy, business) and I feel supported by this program and the fellowship in particular. Not only did I receive access to Beyond the Professoriate, I am well versed to articulate my strengths.

**Joe:** I agree with Mauve. I came into the program to fulfill my goal of becoming a tenured professor at a Community College, but in this market, jobs are ultra-competitive. Being able to see the diversity of careers open to me, I can see many more paths for me to explore. It’s an exciting time to be in Lit & Crit and that’s more than just the classroom. I’ve worked in academic adjacent careers, but could never describe my classroom experience to the job market; I mean how does my experience with Shakespeare and Cervantes translate on an interview? Now I feel comfortable explaining my critical reading skills and my ability to close read are not



only translatable but needed across the board in the corporate world.

**Q:** *What is one thing you learned about yourself, in this process, that you had no idea about?*

**Joe:** I learned that I have a passion for advocacy as well as for teaching Literature. I have always been active in charitable endeavors and organizing meetings, but never saw myself working with organizations to help spread awareness and policy. Working with Sahar and Mauve in this gave me the confidence to become more active in the English Graduate Organization and also to start looking into volunteer work in Indiana and wherever I end up going forward.



## MEET OUR NEW PHD COHORT



*Back row (left to right): Sameer Hameed and Brian Sateriale;  
middle row (left to right): Lindsey Moser, Fatimah Eatayah,  
Laura Yevchak, Liz Moser, Arwa Albader and Jeff Ambrose;  
front row (left to right): Hanuel Kim, Sarah Victor,  
and Kimberly Bressler*

**Arwa Albader** - Arwa is from Saudi Arabia. Her motivation for further study and research on English literature comes from her deep passion of the same as well as her experience in a language teaching career. She wants to take the next step in her life and career, building on her strong academic foundation through doctoral work at IUP. After careful review of many programs in the US,

UK, and Australia, she believed IUP's L&C PhD program is one of the best in terms of her research interest. The feminism and gender studies offered in courses in the L&C program will support her research with theories applicable to many literary works. Arwa believes the diversity of courses, projects, and people are very appealing, and the skills she will acquire will prepare her to achieve my future career goals. To benefit IUP, she will bring a unique mix of strong academics and relevant work experience. Her ultimate aspiration is to contribute to her own society by advancing the voices of women and enriching the literary canon with interdisciplinary studies.

**Jeff Ambrose** - Jeff earned his MA in Literature at the University of Vermont in 2011 and then taught for eight years at Delaware County Community College before being accepted here at IUP. Jeff is a GA in the Thesis and Dissertation office. His scholarly interests include video game narratives, modern slam poetry, mystery and detective fiction, and the Harry Potter series.

**Mohammed Bashiri** - Mohammed is an EFL teacher and a freelance translator. He earned a BA in English at Jazan University, Saudi Arabia in 2008. He also completed a MA in Translation Studies at Kent State University in 2016. Additionally, he attained a Post Master's Graduate Certificate in TESL at Kent State University in 2019. He is currently translating a book titled "Global Warming" by Ayoub Abo Deyyah.

**Kimberly Bressler** - Kimberly is a first semester PhD student in the Literature and Criticism program. Her interests include Shakespeare studies and Surrealism. Going forward, her goal is to obtain a professorship in early British literature.

**Elizabeth Hall** - Elizabeth received her M.A. in English from Liberty University and her M.Ed. in Secondary Education from King University. She currently teaches 10/12 Literature in Charlotte, NC as well as Composition and Literature courses at SEU Concord. She loves working with students in the transition from senior in high school to freshman in college and considers it an honor to guide and teach them as they become adults. As a new student in the program, she has already gained invaluable knowledge and skills to help her in her current career, and she looks forward to new opportunities in higher education as she completes her degree.

**Hanuel Kim** - Hanuel is from Korea. She earned her MA from Dongguk University in Korea in 2016. Her scholarly interests lie in feminism and postcolonial literature.

**Lindsey Moser** - Lindsey earned her MA in English from the University of Auckland before beginning her studies at IUP. She has served as a minister for 7 years and is currently a chaplain in the United States Air Force Reserve. Lindsey's scholarly interests lie in medieval literature, especially 11th – 12th century monastic writing.

**Liz Moser** - Liz received her BA in English in 2008 from Geneva College and her MA in English in 2012 from Youngstown State University. She is currently in her twelfth year of teaching eleventh grade English and is also a Gifted Studies Coordinator at Butler Senior High School in Butler, PA. American Literature is her passion, especially Romanticism and Transcendentalism.

**Brian Sateriale** - Since receiving his Master's Degree in English with a focus in American Romanticism in 1999, Brian has taught at various institutions throughout the northeast, covering the full spectrum of intellectual capability - from basic composition classes to advanced literary theory. Brian's ultimate goal in achieving his doctorate is to become a tenured professor at a four-year institution in the beautiful state of North Carolina.

**Sarah Victor** - Sarah came to the US in 2017 and earned her MA in Creative Writing from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. As a scholar, her research interests are British and South Asian literature, but she is hoping that in the coming months she will be able to narrow it down to something which will contribute to the ongoing conversations in one of these areas. Upon earning her doctorate degree, she hopes to find a teaching position in academia.

## Voices of Experience: Pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Literature & Criticism By: Abdallah Aljdaitawi

I recently had the privilege of interviewing some new and experienced students. I appreciate them for sharing their own experiences with me. Jeff Ambrose is a first year PhD student, Jed Fetterman is in his second year, Sahar Al-

Shoubaki is writing her dissertation, and Sheila Farr is about to graduate. I asked them to share insights from their time in the Literature & Criticism program.

**Abdallah Aljdaitawi (AA):** *What are your area(s) of interest?*

**Jeff Ambrose (JA):** My primary areas of interest are Harry Potter studies, mystery/ thriller novels, and the narratives and portrayals of mental health in video games.

**Jed Fetterman (JF):** I'm interested in the intersection of science fiction and Renaissance studies right now, with a side focus on how board games are adapting and commenting on literary works.

**Sahar Al-Shoubaki (SA):** Arab-American Literature, Postcolonial and Multiethnic Literature, Diaspora Studies, Postcolonial Feminism, Identity Politics, Resistance Literature.

**Sheila Farr (SF):** 19th-Century British women novelists, Victorian fairy tales

**AA:** *Why did you choose to pursue your doctoral degree in English?*

**JA:** Honestly, I chose to ultimately pursue my PhD to allow more opportunities to become a professor. I had been teaching English as an adjunct at a community college for eight years before coming here. I enjoyed it, but there was no real job security and the pay is very low for adjuncts. I wanted to earn my PhD to open up more opportunities for me as a teacher of literature because I love sharing my passions and igniting interest in English in others.



**JF:** I have always been well read, and I wanted to find a way to really unpack and understand the things I am reading, which I felt the English PhD would help with.

**SA:** English literature is my passion. I find myself in literature, it's a world I have always enjoyed living in. To pursue the highest degree in English

literature and become a professor of English has always been my dream, and to look back in time and see how I worked hard to make this dream come truly makes me proud of myself. So yes, I feel it's a great decision because I feel self-fulfilled and content at heart to having pursued my passion and dream. I'm turning my passion into a profession. What more can I ask for?

**SF:** From early on in my undergraduate career, I knew I wanted to become an English professor. I had a wonderful advisor and English professors who opened many doors for me, both academically and professionally, and I wanted to do that for future students. A PhD in English was always part of my plan. It was a long journey, but I am beyond excited that I have finally achieved this goal.

**AA:** *Why did you choose the Literature & Criticism program at IUP?*

**JA:** It was a complete surprise to me that I found my way here. I applied to two PhD programs a couple years back and never heard back so I felt discouraged. But then one day one of my friends was trying to convince me to apply again and one of the local places (I'm from just outside of Philadelphia) he sent me a link for was IUP. I am very glad it all worked out!



**JF:** I am from the area, so I really liked the idea of being able to pursue graduate studies close to my family and friends.

**SA:** Three of my professors back in Jordan are IUP graduates. They were all very knowledgeable and helped me gain and develop various interests in a variety of fields. That is why I decided to follow their lead and seek more knowledge about my fields of interests from their alma mater, IUP. The L&C program at IUP offered me what I exactly wanted; the program has faculty members with robust knowledge about a wide range of fields. Taking their classes helped me enrich my learning and expand my interests. I also would've not been able to pursue my doctoral degree in L&C were it not for the financial support IUP offers through the graduate and teaching assistantships that I was lucky enough to get.

**SF:** While I applied to schools in the surrounding states, I was hoping to end up pursuing my doctorate at a Pennsylvania university to stay near my family. That's why I was thrilled when Dr. David Downing offered me acceptance into the Lit & Criticism program as well as a graduate assistantship. At the time of my acceptance, I didn't know how many opportunities studying and working at IUP would provide for me. There were so many different kinds of classes offered each semester and various professional opportunities for PhD students to become involved in the department.

**AA:** *What are your career aspirations as you start/end the program?*

**JA:** More than just becoming a professor, I want to become known as one of the big names in Harry Potter studies. John Granger, who I have been lucky to meet several times, holds the title of the Harry Potter Professor, and I would like to inherit that mantle with my own work in the future. Ideally, I want to return to my alma mater to teach, Chestnut Hill College, where every fall they host a Harry Potter weekend and academic conference. I have presented in it six times, but I would love to help run it as well.

**JF:** Right now, I'm spending a lot of time trying to figure out where I fit inside the field and also thinking about how I can develop the scholarly community at IUP.

**SA:** The field of Arab-American literature is still growing, and my goal is to be able to land a job where there is a need to teach and work in that field. So teaching Arab-American literature as a professor of English is one of my goals after I'm done with the program, but I have also been involved in a lot of professional development activities and workshops in the past four years that made me start exploring other non-academic professional careers that would allow me to use my degree and all my potentials and academic interests. I know I can still work within my field outside the academic job market, so I'm considering other options that involve working in NGOs, advocating for human rights, or anything related to Arab-American diplomacy and relationships. I now see myself as a scholar with interdisciplinary interests that would

open the horizons for me to be highly active and involved in and outside academia.

**SF:** Now that I have finished the program, I still plan to apply for 19th-Century British Literature positions, but I also plan to pursue jobs in university administration. I will be happy with whatever path I end up choosing.

**AA:** *What has been the most challenging thing you have had to do or face since starting the program?*

**JA:** It can feel very overwhelming trying to balance all my readings, assignments, meetings, and my GA position in the thesis office. But the friends I have made here have kept me sane and focused. Plus, I try to set aside one day each week to just not think about anything school-related and watch shows or movies, play some games, or maybe fit in some reading for fun.

**JF:** This semester the challenge has been finding a good work-life balance. I'm trying to get the most out of the opportunities and organizations that IUP makes available while still trying to be a human being.

**SA:** Okay, setting all the positive aspects of my academic experience aside for a moment, being a doctoral student



in any program is honestly exhausting. Having to deal with several burnouts throughout the past four years was my biggest challenge. There are several milestones that we're constantly striving to hit, starting with finishing two years of coursework, taking the candidacy and comprehensive exams, defending the dissertation proposal, and then writing and defending the dissertation itself. It's a very overwhelming journey that can easily consume and drain you of energy, but learning self-care and time management skills while also setting boundaries and surrounding yourself with a good support system should help you overcome the burnouts you might face.

**SF:** I'm sure I'm not alone in saying this, but it was challenging to persevere at times. Finishing a doctorate program is challenging, to say the least, and maintaining motivation for such a long time is difficult. Now that I am able to reflect back on these times of doubt, the rewarding moments outweigh the challenging ones. A successful defense helps to put things into perspective.

**AA:** *What do you appreciate most about the program so far?*

**JA:** My fellow PhD students have been incredible. I feel so welcomed and respected inside and outside each of my classes and those feelings mean everything to someone who has always been shy and anxious.

**JF:** There's really a great sense of community at IUP, and everyone I've talked to has been really friendly and helpful.

**SA:** When I talk to my friends who are doing their PhDs in different programs at IUP, we always talk about the classes we take and the faculty we work with and I always tell them that I am lucky to have amazing faculty members who, on top of being well versed in their fields, are very supportive and empathetic. While I hear some unfortunate stories about how my friends and others are struggling and having a hard time with their professors, I can write a journal about the countless times I felt supported and appreciated by my professors. I always say that my department makes me feel home away from home.

**SF:** Most recently, what I've enjoyed most is the euphoria I felt after my defense as well as the celebrations. But that euphoria was the result of a series of rewarding moments leading up to that occasion, mostly due to the relationship with my advisor, Dr. Tanya Heflin. Her encouragement to keep going and to set boundaries for writing time and her thoughtfulness in alerting me to professional and work opportunities, helped me to successfully get through the program.

**AA:** *Sabar and Sheila, since you have the most experience, what can you share with prospective and newer students in the L&C program?*

**SA:** You are about to embark on a life-altering journey that's full of possibilities. Be willing and open to growing intellectually and as a person. Build good relationships with your professors and seek out opportunities that will

advance your professional career aspirations. Take initiatives, participate in workshops, go to conferences, publish that article, invest in learning time-management and self-care skills, make sure you have a good support system, and don't forget to have fun along the way. Starting your doctoral study is like taking a rollercoaster; it's scary, thrilling, sickening, but also fun. Embrace all the emotions and enjoy the ride!

**SF:** Reflecting back on my experience in the doctoral program, I have three pieces of advice to share with newer students. First, become involved! Consider becoming an officer in EGO, volunteer to help with events put on by the English Department, find additional work opportunities on campus.



Participating in these kinds of opportunities will help to build your professional identity and will better recommend you for additional opportunities. But don't become so involved where you find yourself not making progress. This is my second piece of advice: maintain boundaries so that you can get your work done, whether that's coursework, Candidacy studying, or your GA tasks. It's okay to say "no" to requests that will cause you to be overwhelmed. And finally, find an advisor who will support your goals in both your research and career options. In my experience, it's more important to have a good relationship with your advisor than finding an advisor directly related to your field.

## STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS!

**Ahlam Abulaila** (L&C, 3rd Year) received an IUP Graduate School Travel Award to present at NeMLA's 50th Annual Convention at Washington, DC. Her paper, entitled "The Power of Writing: A Construction of Female Identity in Tsitsi Dangaremba's *Nervous Conditions*," focuses on how *Nervous Conditions* negotiates

woman's space within the patriarchal sphere of oppression and at the same time enunciates the cultural construction of woman's identity. In April 2019, she started as an editor at the Kathleen Jones White Writing Center's Graduate Editing Service as well as receiving the Best Graduate Paper Award (second place) at the IUP EGO-CTA Annual interdisciplinary Conference for her paper entitled, "The Borders Are Within Us: The Agonizing Effects of Borders in Mourid Barghouti's *I Saw Ramallah*."

**Abdallah Aljdaitawi** (L&C, 4th Year) recently joined the ARIN Center for Education as an Instructor in Adult Programs and is in the process of applying for different conferences and publications. He recently joined the Preparing Future Faculty Certificate Program at IUP, which is part of the Center for Teaching Excellence. This one-year program allows him to complete in class observations and guest lectures as well as well as participate in governance and workshops to hone his teaching skills for the academic job market.

**Sahar Al-Shoubaki** (L&C, 5th Year) was awarded a Humanities Ambassador Fellowship by Georgetown University, through which she attended the Georgetown Certificate Program in Public and Engaged Humanities in June 2019. She was also selected by her the program to serve as a Professional Development Fellow for 2019, where she is part of organizing and giving workshops that promote and encourage a conversation about career options inside and outside the academy. Sahar has also served as a committee member for President Driscoll's Commission on the Status of Women at IUP. For her scholarly work, she presented a paper and was a roundtable panelist at the 50th Northeast Modern Language Association Convention in Washington DC, where she discussed Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*. She presented her paper "American-Palestinian Women's New Narratives: A Form of Resistance" at the Graduate English Association Conference at the University of Toronto, Canada. She also presented "Collective Memory and Identity in New Arab-American Women's Writings" at the 17th Annual Graduate Forum Conference at Wayne State University, Michigan as well as "A Counter Narrative: Border Crossing and the Homeland in Selected American-Palestinian Literature" at IUP's English Graduate Organization conference. Sahar accepted an offer to write a chapter for the forthcoming edited collection *Emergent Genres and Forms: Representing Israel, Palestine, and the Middle East after the Second Intifada*, and she

is an active member of RAWI (Radius of Arab American Writers), where she is closely working with the founder, Dr. Barbara Nimri Aziz, to contribute to the organization's work.

**Megan Anderson** (L&C, 4th Year) has been promoted to Assistant Professor of English and Interdisciplinary Studies at Limestone College in Gaffney, South Carolina. She has taught there for the past six years, most recently as an Instructor. She also serves as Chair of the Interdisciplinary Studies Department and Coordinator of the Liberal Studies program.

**Lisa Elwood-Farber** (L&C, 5th Year) presented "The Visibility of Vocational Aspirations in a 19th century British writer: Charlotte Brontë" at the College English Association 50th Annual Conference in New Orleans in March 2019. This presentation discussed 19th century women writers and the literary history of the female vocational novel, challenging assumptions of women's literature and the domestic novel. Because so few autobiographical accounts of women's lives exist from the Victorian Era, it becomes necessary for literary critics to examine other ways we can understand women's aspirations for something beyond the domestic sphere. Lisa also had a paper accepted for publication: "Identity, Independence and Transatlantic Influence from Villette to Ruth Hall." This article will be published in an anthology about transatlantic women writers by editors, Elizabeth Kenney, Hannah Champion, and Whitney Womack Smith. Her article will begin with nineteenth century British woman author, Charlotte Brontë, and her last novel, *Villette*, which recounts the life-long pursuit of a female character's journey to find meaningful vocation. She uses Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Times* to reflect Brontë's influence beyond the shores of Great Britain., and thereby illustrates the relationship between women writers through a transcontinental lens, which she argues emphasizes the importance of a solid women's literary tradition.

**Sheila Farr** (L&C, 7th Year) recently passed her dissertation with distinction, which was entitled "And they lived happily-ever-after': The Seductive Narratives of Domestic Fairy Tale Adaptations in Popular Victorian Periodicals, 1850-1900." She will graduate in December 2019. She currently works as the graduate student assistant to the dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at IUP and as a Graduate Editor for the Kathleen Jones White Writing Center's Graduate Editing Service.

In June 2019, she attended the Graduate Certificate Program in the Engaged and Public Humanities at Georgetown University and received a \$1,000 Humanities Ambassador Fellowship. Additionally, Sheila also presented her paper entitled "Consuming Desire/Desire to Consume: Consumption In/Of Little Red Riding Hood in Victorian Periodicals" at the Victorians Institute Conference in November 2018 "And they lived happily-ever-after': Victorian Periodical Fairy Tales and the Popular Culture of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries" at the Mid-Atlantic Popular & American Culture Association in November 2019.

**Peter Faziani** (L&C, 6th Year) has managed to keep busy throughout the year. After accepting a lecturer position at Central Michigan University in the fall of 2018, he has continued to work on his dissertation, several publications, multiple conference presentations, and participated in the scoring session for the AP Literature test in Salt Lake City. Peter has worked on a variety of publications in the past year; he has contributed two entries, "The Black Christ and Other Poems" and "Plumes" to the forthcoming Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance; has contributed a review of Arthur Rose's *Literary Cynics: Borges, Beckett, Coetzee to Studies in 20th & 21st Century Literature*; presented his essay, "Ghosts in the City: Traumatic Memory and Ritual in Bao Ninh's *The Sorrow of War*" at CEA's annual conference in New Orleans, had a talk, "An American Abroad: Perceptions of Americans in Buchan's WWI Thriller, *Greenmantle*," published in the proceedings of the Armistice & Aftermath Symposium at Michigan Technological University; and has recently submitted a forthcoming chapter entitled "Everyday McCartney: Engaging the Ordinary" for inclusion in *Lyrical Music of the 20th & 21st Century* from Punctum Books. Peter also had a chapbook of poetry, his second collected poetry manuscript, *The City as Modern Mausoleum*, accepted for publication from Finishing Line Press. He collaborated with a musical composer at Michigan State University in writing the poems for *Dynamic Roads*, a poetic song cycle, which was first performed at IUP in April by Dr. Joe Baunoch. Peter has also recently developed and co-hosted a podcast for the Creative Writing program at Central Michigan University tentatively titled *Full Stop*. The first episode will be released on iTunes, Google Play, and Spotify at the end of October. Finally, Peter has continued his work as Editor-in-Chief of *Red Flag Poetry* thanks to the generous support from the IUP English Department. Since the fall of 2018, *Red Flag Poetry* has published three chapbooks,

one full-length collection, twelve poems through Poetry Express, and twelve postcard poems that remain free for IUP students, faculty, and staff to subscribe to at RedFlagPoetry.com.

**Diana Forry** (MA, Composition & Literature, 2019) finished her MA thesis entitled *The Dangers of Rhetoric: Nationalism in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries* and graduated from the English Composition and Literature, MA program in August 2019. She entered the doctoral program in English Literature at Duquesne University in the fall with a paid Teaching Assistantship. She works at the university writing center in addition to teaching one composition class. She is also finalizing an article that she originally presented at an EGO conference at IUP entitled, "Souls of Wakanda: The Intersection of W.E.B. Du Bois and Black Panther." Most recently, she was introduced to author and poet Toi Derricotte and is looking forward to having a small group dinner with her before Derricotte's scheduled poetry reading.

**Koichi Fujino** (L&C, 2015) had a workshop, "Teaching Faulkner in the Digital Age" with the other three Japanese Faulkner scholars, Prof. Arinori Mori, Prof. Satoshi Kanazawa, and Prof. Hiroaki Soda at the William Faulkner Society of Japan on September 14, 2019. This workshop features Fujino's book, *Studying and Teaching W.C. Faulkner, William Faulkner, and Digital Literacy: Personal Democracy in Social Combination* (Lexington Books, 2018) as a main topic to consider how to teach Faulkner's works to ESL students. Koichi Fujino is Professor of American Literature and Culture at Seinan Gakuin University, Japan.

**Karen Griscom** (L&C, 2nd Year) is an Associate Professor of English at the Community College of Rhode Island. She presented her paper "Songs of Praise and Wisdom for the Generations in the Poetry of William Wordsworth" for the panel session "Compressed Images in the Arts" at the IUP Literature and Criticism "Summer Spotlight" conference in July, 2019. She looks forward to presenting this paper in November for a panel called "Poetry's Politics" at the annual conference for The Society of Comparative Literature and the Arts in Atlanta, Georgia.

**Taylor Jones** (L&C, 2nd Year) presented at the British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies Conference in Savannah, GA as well as the IUP EGO summer conference. She presented her paper titled "Zitkala-Ša in Flux: Western and Indigenous Norms in American Indian

Stories" at Penn State's Liberal Arts Collective conference in October 2019. In addition to presenting her research, Taylor was elected as one of five Workshop Coordinators for EGO. In December 2018 and May 2019, she attended the Difficult Dialogues (DD) "training the trainers" series sponsored by IUP, where she learned techniques to facilitate tough conversations in classrooms. She will be leading a DD workshop for EGO members this coming spring semester. Be on the lookout for more information!

**Zebadiah Kraft** (L&C, 2nd Year) received the Nicole LaRose Travel Grant to attend the Society for Utopian Studies conference in East Lansing from October 17-19. His paper is titled "Approaching A New Paradigm: Transpacific Recognition in American Transcendentalism and Utopian Studies."

**Len Lawson** (L&C, 3rd Year) presented at the IUP L&C Graduate Program Summer Mini-conference in 2019. He will be on a poetry panel at the 2020 AWP Conference in San Antonio, TX, and looks to present on narrations of slavery with his IUP classmates at the CEA 2020 Conference in Hilton Head, SC. Len is also currently co-editing a poetry anthology on black comics and Afrofuturism featuring 50-100 poets from across the nation while preparing for Comprehensive Exams. Following the release of his first full-length poetry collection Chime in March 2019 through publisher Get Fresh Books, Len held his book launch at the Historic Langston Hughes House in Harlem, NY. He has held subsequent poetry readings at White Whale Books in Pittsburgh, PA, and the Sundown Poetry Series at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC, among several other venues. Len's poetry has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net Anthology. He has received fellowships from Callaloo Creative Writing Workshop, Vermont Studio Center, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, the Weymouth Center for the Arts, and the Emrys Foundation. His poetry appears in *Callaloo Journal*, *African American Review* (forthcoming), *Verse Daily*, *Ninth Letter*, *Mississippi Review*, and elsewhere. He currently teaches English at Florence-Darlington Technical College in South Carolina and has recently become a lecturer in the South Carolina Humanities Council Speakers Bureau to promote public humanities in the community. Find out more about him at [www.lenlawson.co](http://www.lenlawson.co).

**Lisa V. Mazey** (L&C, 3rd Year) has been hired as Temporary Faculty at IUP, teaching ENGL 121, Humanities Literature for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Lisa also presented “A Serious Mark Twain: A Contextual Historical Analysis of ‘Mark Twain on the Indians’” in the Native American Studies area of the Annual Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Popular & American Culture Association in November 2019. She submitted a manuscript entitled *Cinematic Women+, From Objecthood to Heroism, Essays on Female Gender Representation on Western Screens and Beyond*, for publication with Vernon Press. The collected essays stem from her session “Evolving Women in Film” at the March 2019 NeMLA conference. Her chapter on the film *Vertigo* is included with works that examine female roles in film and television.

**Reza Parchizadeh** (L&C, 2018) started working for the Free Iranian Security Research Center in Washington, DC, as a project manager, providing intelligence resources for departments of State and Treasury with regard to security threats that originate from the Middle East. He was also invited to US Congress to give advice on foreign policy, national security and promotion of democracy in Iran.

On the academic side, Reza became a contributing member of World Shakespeare Bibliography, the prestigious joint project of Johns Hopkins University and Shakespeare Association of America that constitutes the single-largest Shakespeare database in the world. Reza’s 2016 scholarly article for the *Journal of the Far West Popular and American Culture Associations*, “How Shakespeare Perpetuates the Tudor Myth,” was also catalogued in World Shakespeare Bibliography.

**Julie Pavlick** (L&C, 7th Year) has recently been promoted to the position of Operations Manager at Pennsylvania State Employee’s Credit Union. The position includes supervision of the daily operation of units, including productivity control, developing procedures to measure quality and quantity, and hiring new employees for the unit. Julie began her career with PSECU in 2017.

**Mary Reading** (L&C, 6th Year) recently started her first semester teaching at Odessa College (Texas) as a tenure track Assistant Professor. She teaches composition and British Literature classes. Mary redesigned the British Literature II class this semester to include Caribbean British writers such as Caryl Phillips, Zadie, Smith, and Derek Walcott. She is developing a CFP for the Caribbean Studies Association 2020 Conference which will focus on pedagogical approaches to fitting in

Caribbean Literature in various types of writing and literature courses.

**Carl Sell** (L&C, 4th Year) has accepted a tenure track position at Oklahoma Panhandle State University in Goodwell, OK. In addition to his new position, Carl serves on the Advisory Board of The Association for the Advancement of Scholarship and Teaching of the Medieval in Popular Culture and as one of the blog editors for the same organization. He presented two papers at the 54th annual International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, MI. Carl also presented at this year’s MAPACA and NeMLA conferences.

**Caroline Speller** (L&C, 2nd Year) has been hired as an adjunct faculty member for the Gussin Spiritan Division at Duquesne University. She was awarded IUP’s Julius P. Filcik Doctoral Fellowship for 2019-2020, as well as the Dean’s Merit Scholarship for Summer 2019. As part of her TA position, Speller offered a free film course entitled “Masterpieces of Russian Cinema” complete with screenings and introductory presentations. She presented a paper on Shirley Jackson’s short story collection *Let Me Tell You* at the American Literature Association Conference in May 2019.

**Rochelle Spencer** (L&C, 2019) is teaching AfroSurrealism in the graduate creative writing program at Sarah Lawrence College and online at Fisk University. Her book *AfroSurrealism: The African Diaspora’s Surrealist Fiction*, is due out December 2019 from Routledge.

**Yahia Tahat** (MA Literature, 2nd Year) has been working on a comparative study mainly concerned with classical Arabic poetry, Hebrew poetry and nineteenth English poetry, as his GA assignment. Taking the advantage of this project, he developed a paper juxtaposing Shakespearean Studies with the concepts of self-composure and self-tranquility and presented at EGO conference in April 2019. He has been awarded a travel grant to present “Hamid’s Changez: in Search of Identity” at the Youngstown Conference. He has also been invited by the PAMLA conference (San Diego) to present a paper titled, “The Impact of Baby Gender on the Social and Marital Status of Arab Mothers.” He has serves as the Social Event Coordinator for EGO, and is currently working on a “collective trauma” research project, examining the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the recent Arab revolutions.



**Samantha J. Vertosick** (L&C, 6th Year) In November 2018, Samantha had a book chapter published in *Inside the World of Harry Potter: Critical Essays on the Books and Films*, a collection edited by Christopher E. Bell. The chapter was titled “Beyond the veil: The Narrative Functions of Death” and explored character deaths within the Harry Potter book series. More recently, Samantha was honored to receive the 2018-2019 Westmoreland County Community College Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Teaching Award. She continues to work at WCCC as a part-time faculty member.

**Rachael Warmington** (L&C, 7th Year) was hired as a full-time lecturer in the Department of English in the College of Arts and Sciences at Seton Hall University in August of 2019. She earned her B.A. in English from Montclair State University, M.A. in English from Seton Hall University, her MFA at CUNY City College and she is a doctoral candidate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Rachael completed Georgetown University’s Graduate Certificate in the Engaged & Public Humanities on a Humanities Ambassador Fellowship in June of 2019. Within this program she began developing a website for herself and others to share resources that promote engagement with the humanities. In addition, she was invited to participate in a grant project funded by the Booth Ferris Foundation. This joint program between

Seton Hall University and Ramapo College faculty began this fall and runs through the academic year. The Booth Ferris Foundation Grant focuses on ways the digital humanities can successfully impact undergraduate education. As part of this program Rachael is implementing additional digital humanities components into her teaching. She presented her paper “Throwing Down the Gauntlet: Challenges in Arthurian Legend” at the 40th Annual Medieval and Renaissance Forum in April, “Covered Navels and Missing Scales: Redefining Medieval Women Warriors in Contemporary Film and Television” at the Fifty-Fourth International Congress on Medieval Studies in May and “Critical Thinking and Credible News: Teaching Critical Analysis of News Outlets in the Age of Media Distrust” at the New Jersey Writing Alliance in June. She will also be presenting her paper “Mad Woman on the Dragon and Women of Color in Chains: Misogyny and Racism in *Game of Thrones*” and giving a talk titled “Challenging and Perpetuating Racism: Duality in Medievalisms” on the Racism Roundtable at the 2019 Mid-Atlantic Popular and American Culture Association Conference. Rachael will be presenting her paper “Spells, Miracles, Potions and Salves: Healing Practices in Arthurian Legend” at the 55th International Congress on Medieval Studies. She is the editor-in-chief for the academic journal *Watchung Review*, which launched its third volume in September.

### A FEW EXTRA SHINY L&C STARS!

**THE JULIUS P. FILCIK DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP** is designed to attract new students who demonstrate strong academic preparation, potential for excellence in teaching and research, and the energy and intellect to contribute to the community of doctoral scholars at IUP. This prestigious award is given to only two graduate students at IUP a year. This year, we congratulate one of our own, **Caroline Speller**, on being awarded The Julius P. Filcik Doctoral Fellowship!

**THE PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY (PFF) CERTIFICATE** provides graduate students with an opportunity to gain experience and skills necessary to pursue faculty positions after completing their graduate degrees at IUP. The Certificate is provided through the Center for Teaching Excellence and the School of Graduate Studies and Research, though students must have approval from their specific graduate program coordinators. This year we congratulate several Lit & Crit Students who were accepted into this competitive certificate program. They are: **Abdallah Aljdaitawi, Brett Berquist, Jedidiah Fetterman, Taylor Jones, Joseph Sanpietro and Marquel Sherry.**

Congratulations to **DR. DEBONAIR OATES PRIMUS** on being selected as the graduate student speaker for the IUP December Graduate Commencement ceremony!

**Stephen M. Zimmerly** (L&C, 2016) published a monograph, *The Sidekick Comes of Age: How Young Adult Literature is Shifting the Sidekick Paradigm*, through Lexington Books (2019; can be found on their website <https://rowman.com/>). He also presented at the 46th International Conference of the Children's Literature Association, and this year's Indiana College English Association Conference. Since 2017, he has been an Assistant Professor at the University of Indianapolis, where he teaches Young Adult literature.

## FACULTY NEWS!

**Dr. Susan Comfort** has an article, "Resource Wars and Resourceful Resistance: Gender Violence and Irreal Oil Environments in Two Global Novels by Women," that will be published in the Spring 2020 special issue of *Modern Fiction Studies* on "Literature and Extraction." The special issue, edited by Alok Amatya and Ashley Dawson, seeks to contribute, in their words, "to the burgeoning fields of Environmental and Energy Humanities by investigating the unique capacities of literary representation (and adjacent genres) to depict social struggles linked to extraction and to imagine post-extractivist futures . . . and climate justice." Comfort's article examines two novels by global women writers that feature resource wars over oil, Nigerian writer Buchi Emecheta's *Destination Biafra* (1982) and Iraqi-Scottish writer Betoool Khedairi's *Absent* (2005). Adopting a comparative method with a focus on the world-ecological theme of oil, Comfort suggests that the two novels may be considered experimental works of feminist 'petroliterature', blending realism with 'irrealist' narrative to uncover missing stories of oil—particularly stories of gender violence surrounding oil's expropriations of women's labor and commons resources in world-system extraction zones. Indeed, through portrayals of 'resourceful resistance', the two novels anticipate major challenges to petro-violence today, while they also offer critical visions of sustainability and environmental justice especially relevant in our Anthropocene Age. This article grew out of a paper presentation that Comfort delivered last year at Petrocultures 2018, an international multi-disciplinary conference on oil cultures and the Energy Humanities, held at the University of Glasgow, Glasgow, Scotland, from August 29 to September 1, 2018.

**Dr. Mike Sell** has recently completed the manuscript of *Systemic Dramaturgy: From Zeami to The Legend of Zelda*. He and co-author Michael Chemers of UC-Santa Cruz designed the book as a "conceptual handbook" for dramaturgs who want to better understand the complex, long-lived, and culturally diverse relationship between theatre and technology—or who want to apply their dramaturgical expertise to other interactive art forms, such as immersive entertainments and videogames. It will be published by Southern Illinois University Press in 2020. Their essay "Sokyokuchi: Historiographic Foundations of Systemic Dramaturgy" will appear in *Theatre History Studies*, and their essay "From Systemic Dramaturgy to Systemic Pedagogy" will appear in the Routledge anthology *Teaching Critical Performance Theory in Today's Theatre Classroom, Studio, and Communities*. They presented an overview of their work at the University of Pittsburgh's Humanities Center in September. Dr. Sell speaks at the Yale School of Drama in spring 2020. "The Avant-Garde: Race Religion War" describes an interdisciplinary, performance-focused methodology that evades the endemic disciplinary and regional parochiality of the field of avant-garde studies. His essay on the pioneering environmental theatre director and performance studies theorist Richard Schechner is part of the multi-volume Great North American Stage Directors series, to be published by Methuen in 2020. And he is editor of the 1960s volume of another Methuen theatre history series, *Decades of Modern American Drama: Playwriting from the 1930s to 2009*, published in 2019.

Students of Dr. Sell know that he is a passionate student of "playable literatures." In addition to the chapters on videogames in *Systemic Dramaturgy*, he and Dr. Chemers are developing another project focusing on critical approaches to playable texts. *Dungeons, Dragons, & Dramaturgy* will provide critical perspectives, practical advice, and playable materials for players of *Dungeons & Dragons*, the most popular tabletop roleplaying game in the world. Additionally, Sell is writing a series of D&D adventures set in a universe that mashes up *The Nutcracker*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and *Adventure Time* (contact him if you're interested in test playing the first of these, the holiday-themed "Curse of the Sugarplum Fairy"). His essay "Playing the Avant-Garde: The Aesthetics, Narratives, and Communities of Video Game Vanguard" will appear in 2020 in a special issue of *Modernism/Modernity*. With Megan Amber Condis of Texas Tech University, he is developing an anthology on literary representations and adaptations of videogames,

videogame players, and videogame cultures. With Alan Filewod of the University of Guelph and Kimi Johnson of the University of Minnesota, he is developing an anthology on theatre and videogames. And he has begun work on his own book on the literature of videogames. You can take a look at his initial forays into that topic at his blog, *This Professor Plays: Exploring the Interface of Literature, Theatre, & Videogames* (<http://iblog.iup.edu/thisprofessorplays/>).

Sell is the founder and leader of the IUP Digital Storytelling Project. Since 2015, IUP undergraduate and graduate students have collaborated with Pennsylvania public school teachers to teach students how to create original interactive digital “storygames” using the open-source software program Twine. This year, they are expanding the project to nine Pennsylvania school districts and developing standards-based learning materials and assessments. Dr. Sell also co-leads the Critical Play Union, an organization of IUP students, faculty, and staff that promotes game-focused scholarship, pedagogy, community building, and fun. If you’re interested in being part of either of these projects, please contact Dr. Sell. You can follow him on twitter at @mike\_sell.

**Dr. Kenneth Sherwood** collaborated with artist and faculty colleague Dr. Bob Sweeny to produce a multimodal, code-poetry installation, exploring the expressive side to digital humanities. *Code/Coal/Nodes* situates the participant within layers of sound, image, and poetic language--algorithmically combined using Javascript programming--evoking past and present Western PA as a space and culture grounded in fossil fuel: from ancient dead organisms, to historical remnants of 19th century mining, to current landscapes and social transformations in the era of “clean coal,” green energy, and fracking. Sherwood and Sweeny developed the project over the course of a year, following a series of workshops on Creative Coding. Taking Sherwood's volume of poetry *Code of Signals* (Locofo/Moria, 2017) as a kind of source text, they asked, how can a volume of poetry be “remixed” as an immersive image and sound experience within a gallery space? In other digital humanities work, Sherwood is convening the second year of the MyDomainIUP project which introduces IUP honors college students to digital literacy practices through the creation of their own web spaces. He published an algorithmic print poem in *Festschrift* for retiring U Penn poet and Bollingen prize winner Charles

Bernstein. He is in the initial phase of working with UCLA colleague Daniel Snelson to prepare a digitized, public access version of the historic Black Mountain Review and is beginning a new code-poetry project related to Buckminster Fuller. He is looking forward to the Spring semester graduate course which focuses on the Black Mountain School. He also continues to serve as co-director of the Center for Digital Humanities, faculty chair of the Academic Computing Policy Advisory Committee, and the college's Digital Projects Coordinator.

**Dr. Tom Slater** is continuing his scholarship on the work of silent-film screenwriter June Mathis, whose career covered over 120 scripts from 1915-1927. His current work includes an essay, “Who is a Writer? Whose Voices Get to Be Heard?: June Mathis and the Erasure of Women from Film History and War History.” He’s submitted the draft to the *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* and to the Arts and Action Conference at Oxford planned for March. Part of the inspiration for this work came from the course on Middle Eastern Film and Literature he taught in Spring. He has also offered a proposal about the relationship between the body and silent film writing for the Cinema and Media Studies Conference in Denver in April. Research continues as these essays are part of a larger project on a manuscript about the life and work of June Mathis. At one point, she was called the most powerful woman in Hollywood. But her tremendous amount of work, the high positions she held, and the influence she possessed have all been forgotten as part of the erasure of women from early film history. Slater was gratified to see his work praised by Columbia University film scholar Jane Gaines in her new book *Pink Slipped: What Happened to Women in the Silent Film Industries?*

Within the program, Dr. Slater has recently helped one doctoral candidate complete his dissertation on queer family representations in mainstream animation. He is also directing the work of students focusing on speculative literature and the grief process; violence in cinematic magical realism; transgender characters in film and series programs; and erotic cinema. He is also very happy to be working with Abdallah Aljdaitawi in the Preparing Future Faculty mentoring program and providing additional opportunities for other graduate students to gain some teaching experiences in his undergraduate classes. Dr. Slater is also sponsoring two graduate-student run film series this semester. One is a five-film series on Masterpieces of Russian Cinema created by Caroline Speller. For the series, Caroline

selected the films, which she introduces and leads a discussion of afterwards. She also created a WordPress blog providing a space for further discussion and related readings for further knowledge. In addition, Naemah Alrahsheedi has taken over as director of the International Film and Music Society which is offering two films with discussion this semester.

Outside of school, Dr. Slater keeps involved with his community through Calvary Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh where he serves as an usher, member of the alter guild, and occasional meal provider at the East End Community Shelter. He also works with the Episcopal Diocese Social Justice Committee which has been focusing on fighting single-use plastics, helping prisoners return to society, and diminishing drug addiction.

**Dr. Todd Nathan Thompson** published two entries—on “David Ross Locke” and “William Newman”—in 2019 in the *American Political Humor: Masters of Satire and Their Impact on U.S. Policy and Culture* (ABC-CLIO, ed. Jody Baumgartner). Additionally, nine students from Thompson’s summer 2017 graduate course also published entries in this reference book after drafting these entries as a class project. Thompson also published a review of *The Political Thought of America’s Founding Feminists* (New York UP, 2017) in *Legacy: A Journal of Women Writers*. He has four other essays, book chapters, or reviews forthcoming. In summer 2019 Thompson spent a two-week residency at Quarry Farm, Mark Twain’s summer home in Elmira, NY, as a recipient of a Center for Mark Twain Studies (CMTS) Quarry Farm Fellowship. While there, he gave an invited lecture, titled “‘We must annex those people.’ Mark Twain, Hawaiian Annexation, and the Culture of Reprinting,” as part of the CMTS “The Trouble Begins at Eight” lecture series. Thompson has also given several conference presentations over the past year: “‘At this they laughed exceedingly’: Contact, Comedy, and Resistance in the Imperial Pacific” at the American Studies Association, Honolulu, HI, November 2019; “‘Our Local Melange’: Haole Satire on Hawaiian Politics in the 1880s” at the American Literature Association, Boston, MA, May 2019; “Viral Jokes and Fugitive Humor in the Nineteenth-Century Culture of Reprinting” at the Modern Language Association, Chicago, IL, January 2019; and “Addressing the Access Gap in the Digital Archive: Progress through Partnerships” at the Bucknell University Digital Scholarship Conference, Bucknell University, October 2018.

**Dr. Veronica T. Watson** is looking forward to the publication of *The Short Stories of Frank Yerby*, due out in May 2020. The collection includes ten previously unpublished short stories by Yerby, who was one of the most prolific and popular African American authors of the mid-twentieth century. The stories were researched and transcribed by three L&C graduate assistants: Nedrick Patrick, Lisa Mazey and Taylor Jones. The project was also supported by numerous travel fellowships and a \$10,000 research grant from the Faculty Professional Development Council which enabled Dr. Watson to conduct research in Madrid, Spain, Yerby’s home for over thirty years. She presented “‘I ain’t no man!’ Blackness, Wartime Masculinity and the Protest Tradition in Frank Yerby’s Short Fiction” at the American Literature Association conference in May 2019, and a chapter of the same title will be published in *Rediscovering Frank Yerby*, edited by Matthew Teutsch. The short story collection and volume of critical essays are set to be released in tandem by University Press of Mississippi. She is excited to be part of the scholarly recovery of this understudied African American expatriate.

In January 2020 Dr. Watson will be participating in a by-invitation-only MLA workgroup, New Horizons in Humanities Graduate Education, a preconvention working group on doctoral education and careers. She has also been invited to be a plenary speaker for an upcoming MLA bootcamp for graduate programs that are developing/enhancing career diversity and career development efforts in their programs. She was keynote speaker the Aspiring Faculty Workshop at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania in May 2019 where she presented: “So You Want to Be a Professor? Strategies for Success in the 21st Century Academy.”

Dr. Watson continues to serve as the statewide Convener of the Frederick Douglass Institute Collaborative. In partnership with IUP, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education renewed funding to the FDI Collaborative with a two-year, \$155,000 grant. The Collaborative will continue its signature programs, the annual Douglass Debate Society Tournament and Conference and Douglass Scholars Fellowships, as well as continue to prioritize the creation of partnerships to provide internship opportunities to graduate and undergraduate students across the System.

**Dr. Michael T. Williamson** is Director of the MA in Literature and the MA in Composition and Literature Programs. He is Faculty Advisor to the English Graduate Organization, Faculty Co-Advisor to the IUP Student Democrats, and a Robert E. Cook Honors College faculty member and advisor. He published an essay, "Holocaust Poetry and Literary History: Abraham Sutzkever's Prophetic Mode of Witnessing," in *The CEA Critic* 2019. This essay argues survival of Abraham Sutzkever's serves as both evidence of the prophetic power of witnessing and as a ghostly marker of our estrangement and alienation from pre-Holocaust Jewish life. This is the first of a series of essays about Sutzkever, one of which will consider illustrated editions of Sutzkever's work by the fine print book maker Ed Colker. These editions are housed in the IUP Special Collections and University Archives. Dr. Williamson also presented a paper on "Troubling the Holocaust: Interwar Yiddish Literature and Literary Theory" at the British Modernist Studies Association conference in London, UK, and a paper on "Staging Nineteenth Century Jewish Literary and Religious Culture in the Face of Disaster" at the International Space Between: Literature and Culture, 1914-1948 conference. He also gave a lecture on the Venice Bomberg Study Bible (1525) housed in IUP's Special Collections Department as part of a series, "Into the Archives," organized by L&C doctoral candidate Marquel Sherry (IUP MA in Literature '18). His ongoing projects include an essay on "Surrealism Against Totalitarianism," an essay on "The Legacy of Jane Porter's Nineteenth Century Historical Fiction," and a co-authored essay with Dr. Issam Al-Dowkat (L&C '18) on the Romantic Poet Robert Southey's engagements with Arabic literature. His most recent service project involves setting up and serving as Co-Director (with Dr. Holm) of the IUP Myth Collaborative. Projects on classical poetry, deep geological time, and science fiction will be part of this collaborative. Dr. Williamson is Editor of the literary journal, *Pennsylvania English*. Volume 40.1 of the journal will feature an essay by Jill Silvius (L&C '09) entitled "Searching for 43%: Problematizing Narratives of Time in Julian Barnes's *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*."

**Dr. Lingyan Yang** will present her paper, "Asian American Magical Realism in the Americas in Karen Tei Yamashita's *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*," in the MLA national convention in Seattle in January 2020. MLA is the largest and the most prestigious professional organization and national convention in all fields of English, languages and literatures. Dr. Yang's paper is

part of the Studies of American Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S. (MELUS) panel. The paper is a portion of one of the chapters in her book, *Asian American & Asian Diasporic Aesthetics and Form*, which she continues writing. Dr. Yang's Asian American feminist pedagogy article, "Teaching Asian American and Asian Diasporic Women's Literature in the Undergraduate English B.A. Curriculum," was published in volume 39.2 of the journal of *Pennsylvania English* (Winter/Spring 2018). In Summer 2019 Dr. Yang completed national professional service as an invited reviewer for Rowman & Littlefield, a reputable national trade publisher. A former director of IUP's Women's Gender Studies Program from 2012-2015, she is a member of the WGS Steering Committee for Fall 2019 - Spring 2020. As a dedicated Asian American feminist, she joined women citizens in the Indiana area to Celebrate 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in IUP's 2019 Homecoming Parade, dressed in white like all other suffragettes. From June 2018 to September 2019 she finished directing three doctoral dissertations in her specialized areas of American multiethnic women's literature, postcolonial and global women's literature, 20th and 21st century critical cultural theories, and contemporary literature. She also serves as the faculty mentor for one student in the Preparing Future Faculty Certificate Program, which is a new and rigorous initiative at IUP, and is the teaching mentor for four Teaching Associates or Temporary Faculty from the L&C program. In Spring 2019 Dr. Yang was one of the 20 graduate faculty from IUP and PASHHE System to take the 9-week inaugural online class of Leaders in Graduate Student Education. She thanks Dr. Hilliary Creely, Associate Dean of IUP Graduate School, for her leadership in coordinating this informative and invaluable initiative.



## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

### THESIS AND DISSERTATION TITLES

The following students successfully graduated in December 2018, May 2019, & August 2019

#### **M.A./Literature:**

Kimberly Bressler, Erika Hodges

#### **M.A./Composition and Literature:**

Anne Betz, Chelsea Carter, Cody Dunmire (posthumous)



#### **December 2018**

- Sultan Alghofaili, “The World of Post-9/11: Neo-Orientalism, Islamophobia, and the Crises of Religious Identity” (Dr. Christopher Orchard, Director)
- Brandon Galm, “Defining Post-Katrina Literature: Hurricane Katrina and Experiences of Disaster, Race, and Environment” (Dr. Mike Sell, Director)
- Rezah Parchizadeh, “The Recurring Progress of English Political Thought in Shakespeare’s Histories” (Dr. Christopher Orchard, Director)
- Henry Yukevich, “New Historical Studies of Eighteenth-Century Prophecy from Swift to Blake” (Dr. Melanie Holm, Director)

#### **May 2019**

- Theresa Fitzpatrick, “Hyperrealities and Inverted Fakes: Purposes of the Otherworld Journey in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Alice in Wonderland, and American Gods” (Dr. Christopher Orchard, Director)
- Julia Galm, “Hyperprint: Exploring Modern Digital Ambivalence Through Mainstream Print Fiction” (Dr. Kenneth Sherwood, Director)
- Meghan Hurley, “Comply to Resist: Agency in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Feminist Dystopian Texts” (Dr. Tanya Heflin, Director)
- Elizabeth Jacoby, “Educating Citizens: Three Fictional Representations of American Higher Education from the Modern University to the 21st Century” (Dr. David Downing, Director)
- Maria Kranidis, “Powerful Silences: Examining New Women’s Femininity and Relationships in Silent Film” (Dr. Thomas Slater, Director)
- Wesley McMasters, “‘Brahmins in the Quaker City’: The Editors and Periodicals of Poe’s Philadelphia, 1838-1844” (Dr. Todd Thompson, Director)
- Gerardo Muniz Villalon, “New Weird Apocalyptic Narratives: Post-9/11 Representations of Disaster and Chaos in Fiction, Film, and Video Games” (Dr. Todd Slater, Director)
- Hediye Ozkan, “The Agents of Social Change: The Trope of Teachers in American Women’s Writing at the End of the Nineteenth Century” (Dr. Tanya Heflin, Director)

#### **August 2019**

- Diana Forry (MA Thesis), “The Dangers of Rhetoric: Nationalism in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries” (Dr. Michael Williamson, Director)
- Jamie Polnau (MA Thesis), “Tracing the Other in Metafiction: Narrative and the Absurd in Sartre, Nabokov, and Gide” (Dr. Michael Williamson, Director)

- Emily Rupp (MA Thesis), “Silencing Desire: Female-Female Relations and Heterosexual Apathy in Jane Austen” (Dr. Melanie Holm, Director)
- Aishah Alreshoud, “Gender Identities and Self Representations in Post 9/11 Global Arab and Muslim Women’s Literature” (Dr. Lingyan Yang, Director)
- Jessica Grimes, “Imagination as a Counterhegemonic Epistemology in Postcolonial Women’s Texts” (Dr. Lingyan Yang, Director)
- Nicholas Katsiadis, “Transforming Literary History into Romantic Myths in Comics: Neil Gaiman’s Sandman, Alan Moore and J.H. Williams III’s Promethea, and Mike Carey and Peter Gross’s The Unwritten” (Dr. Michael Williamson, Director)
- Lisa Marzano, “Making the White Folks Feel Better: Palliative Memory, Race, Collective Memory and Four Southern Novels” (Dr. Veronica Watson, Director)
- Nicholas Shaner, “Conceptions of Gender and Empire in U.S. – Mexico War Literature and the Borderlands” (Dr. Todd Thompson, Director)
- Kaitlin Tonti, “Domestic Shadows: The Fluidity of Spheres in Early American Women’s Life-Writing, 170-1810” (Dr. Todd Thompson, Director)



## DATES TO REMEMBER

### SPRING 2020

Candidacy Exam:	January 16 – 17, 2020
MLK Holiday: No Classes	January 20, 2020
Classes Begin:	January 21, 2020
Spring Recess:	March 9–15, 2020
May graduation applications:	April 30, 2020
Last day of Spring Classes:	May 4, 2020
Final Exams:	May 5 – 8, 2020
Commencement:	May 8, 2020

### FUTURE DATES FOR PLANNING 2020

Pre-Session 2:	May 18 – 22
Candidacy Exam:	May 28 – 29
Summer Session 1 classes:	June 1
Summer Session 2 classes:	July 6
Candidacy Exam:	August 20 – 21
Fall 2020 classes begin:	August 24

### APPLICATION DEADLINES

Priority review will be given to applications received by the following deadlines:

- For summer: November 15, January 15 for early decision or March 15 for second round.
- For fall semester: November 15, January 15 for early decision or March 15 for second round.
- Applications received after March 15 may be considered on a rolling basis, but only in the case that there are still openings in the program.

For more information into the English Graduate Programs at IUP and to apply online:

<https://www.iup.edu/admissions/graduate/programs/list/>

---

Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Director, Graduate Studies in Literature and Criticism  
English Department  
Humanities and Social Sciences Building 506A  
981 Grant St.  
Indiana, PA 15705-1087

4005315305