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Arts & Letters: The Magazine of Potter College at Western Kentucky University

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Graveyard Archaeology Class

The Magazine of Potter College at Western Kentucky University

Graveyard Archaeology Class
View of the student union at University of Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa, one of three universities that faculty participants of the Zuheir Sofia Endowed International Faculty Seminar (ZSEIFS) visited during the summer 2015 program.

Photo credits: Tyler Essary, Photojournalism, '15
Welcome to the Fall 2015 edition of Arts & Letters! Writing about a fellow poet, T. S. Eliot once remarked that the beauty of his verse was in “making the strange familiar, and the familiar strange.” Eliot’s phrase applies equally well whether we are talking about poetry or anthropology or any of the other academic disciplines in Potter College. A broad and liberal education makes us look at the world in new ways, by asking new questions of old landmarks and making ourselves at home in new territory. And it is that embrace of both the familiar and the strange that makes Potter College such a special place for faculty and students.

You will get a flavor of that transformative work in this issue. You will travel across the Bluegrass with Prof. Walton-Hanley and her students from the Glasgow campus as they “experience Kentucky” in new ways. Dr. Darlene Applegate gives us a fascinating glimpse into the crypt as part of her graveyard archaeology course exploring historic cemeteries of rural Kentucky. And speaking of strange and out of the way places, we will also learn about how Dr. Audrey Anton takes philosophy to the prison as part of her NEH grant, and we will look ahead as WKU celebrates the “Year of South Africa.” Finally, Dr. Rob Hale introduces us to the next generation of young poets and novelists who are a part of our first student cohort in the new MFA in Creative Writing program.

This is a year of transitions for Potter College as it celebrates its Golden Anniversary and anticipates the next fifty years. After 29 years in the Office of the Dean, Dr. David Lee has stepped down to assume the role of University Provost. In so many important ways, Dean Lee was the face of the college as he led the faculty through its greatest period of growth. It seems appropriate, then, that this issue would also include a couple of brief retrospectives on his legacy.

Dr. Lee often talked about the task of the university as one of “creating the future.” I trust that you will see that Potter College is still doing just that. So, sit back and enjoy this issue. And may you, too, experience the thrill of learning as the strange becomes familiar and the familiar becomes strange.

Sincerely,

Larry Snyder
Interim Dean, Potter College of Arts & Letters
Contents

Greetings from the Dean .............................................. Left
Larry Snyder

Tribute to Former Dean David Lee ................................. 4
Larry Snyder and Richard Weigel

Graveyard Archaeology Class .............................. 8
Darlene Applegate

Why Are Bad People Bad? .............................. 12
Audrey L. Anton

View From the Hill: Reflections of Life at WKU-Glasgow 16
Jennifer Hanley

From South America to South Africa .......................... 20
Addie Cheney

M.F.A. in Creative Writing ........................................... 24
Rob Hale

Faculty Award Winners ............................................. 28

New Faculty and Staff .............................................. 34

Arts @ WKU Calendar .............................................. 38

Potter College Class Notes ..................................... 40

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Tribute to
David Lee

BY LARRY SNYDER

ARTS & LETTERS 4 FALL 2015
Elvis has left the building. After 23 years as the Dean Potter College, Dr. David Lee became the new Provost of WKU on August 31. Dr. Lee left the Department of History in 1986 to join the staff of then-Dean Ward Hellstrom. Following two years as interim dean, David was appointed as the fourth Dean of Potter College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences in 1992. As the college celebrates its golden anniversary this year, it is worth noting that David Lee served in the dean’s office for more than half of the lifespan of the college. For so long and for so many, he simply was the face of Potter College.

In so many ways, David had a remarkable tenure as dean. I say remarkable because 23 years is very long time to hold a deanship in today’s academy. Indeed, the national average is about five years. Folks either use these positions as stepping-stones to higher administrative appointments elsewhere, or they wear out and return back to the warm embrace and relative safety of a faculty office. By contrast, David has spent his entire career in the service of WKU.

Dean Lee’s tenure was remarkable not only because of its duration, but also its success. The college thrived under his leadership. As the university’s senior dean, he brought stability and direction to what became until only recently the university’s largest academic unit—and by far its most irascible. The college boasts twelve very different departments, representing almost 40 different majors, each with very different academic cultures. He worked with three presidents and three very different academic VPs during that time. And, he handled those challenges with grace and good humor. David’s unique ability to work with various and often competing constituencies both inside and outside the college is a testament both to his skill as an academic administrator and his character.

Over the past twelve years in the Dean’s Office, I have observed that David genuinely believed and acted as if it really wasn’t about him. He did not need to be the star attraction. And frankly, that actually tells much about what made him successful. The deanship was never about power or...
Looking back over the past 29 years in Potter College, what stands out most is the overwhelming turnover of both faculty and staff, while top leadership in the Dean’s Office has remained relatively stable, particularly in the position of David Lee as Assistant Dean, Interim Dean, and then as Dean for the past 23 years.

During this period, David accomplished too many things to list, but I will name a few: Chair of the General Education Task Force in 1998; Winner of “Spirit of Western” award in 2006; Chair of the University Bicentennial Committee; Chair of the Cultural Enhancement Committee for 19 years. I remember one time when David answered the question of why he enjoyed administration by saying that he liked to help people solve problems. What stands out for me is his willingness to listen calmly to anyone, whether department head, faculty member, staff member, student, or parents, and to hear whatever they have to say. In addition he regularly demonstrated his interest in whatever performance, lecture, exhibit or other event one of his departments was involved in by attending and expressing his appreciation for what they were doing. That says a lot!

It has been too many years since David Lee departed Cherry Hall for the heights of the Dean Dome (FAC) and Wetherby, and he just needs to remember to keep the sunglasses on his head and that his real home is still in the Department of History.
Cemeteries fascinate people. For some, it is their silent mystery. Others crave the macabre, seeing cemeteries as the perfect settings for ghost stories. To some, cemeteries are green spaces for exercising or engaging with nature. For Darlene Applegate, associate professor in the Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology, cemeteries are evidence of peoples’ worldviews, values, and heritage. She uses her training in anthropology and archaeology to study historic cemeteries and graveyards across south-central Kentucky’s rural landscape.

“I have always been interested in cemeteries,” Applegate explains. “As kids we were always playing and exploring in the huge city cemetery that was just two blocks from our house. It wasn’t creepy—it was just part of our neighborhood. We all had our favorite tombstones. We loved to make up stories about the people buried there.”

Applegate’s academic interest in cemeteries and graveyards—terms used to distinguish burial grounds that are and are not, respectively, currently in use—began in 2001 when she was walking her dogs on her farm in Butler County. Applegate recalls, “Just over the fenceline on the adjacent farm, I saw a large square rock in the middle of a badly overgrown wooded area. I thought it was a water well and that there was a historic homestead site on the property. Upon closer examination, however, I saw that it was a headstone in an abandoned graveyard.” Having recently completed a workshop led by Lynette Strangstad, a pioneer in the field of professional burial ground documentation and preservation, Applegate got permission to conduct research on the graveyard. She created a new course called Graveyard Archaeology and recruited 14 students to assist with the work.

Many months of meticulous field work, archival research, and interviewing followed. After clearing the vegetation, the team used several archaeological field methods to investigate the family burial ground. Probing, which involves inserting a long metal pole into the ground in a grid pattern across the site, resulted in the discovery of grave stones that had become displaced and buried below the surface. Soil coring helped to identify the locations of grave shafts. The team used laser surveying equipment to map the exact locations of each standing gravestone and broken marker fragment before moving and re-erecting the stones. The field work did not involve excavating any of the burials and instead focused on the surface and near-surface features of the graveyard.

“The graveyard was documented in the 1970s by a high school student, who recorded 10 headstones,” Applegate explains. “We uncovered an additional 12 buried headstones that had fallen and become buried, effectively doubling the number of people known to be interred there, plus uncarved field stones marking the graves of about 60 more people.” One elderly descendent, who had been to the graveyard numerous times in search of her great-great-grandmother, became quite emotional upon learning that the team found the headstone about approximately four inches below ground. The team also discovered headstones for three children not recorded in historical documents. Careful mapping revealed that the graves are arranged in two clusters corresponding to the families of two brothers.

The research project demonstrates the great wealth of information—beyond simply recording names and birth/death dates—that can be learned from studying surface and near-surface features of historic cemeteries and graveyards. Genealogical
Excavating a metal casket at McCutchen-Downey Graveyard in 2004.
relationships among individuals are indicated not only by headstone text like “son of John and Mary,” or “consort of William,” but also by the locations of graves relative to one another. The artwork on grave markers can convey cultural information like broad societal views of death and gender, as well as an individual’s religion, profession, and community affiliations. Ethnicity can be reflected in cultural vegetation and grave decorations, such as the placement of shells or “killed” pots on African American graves. Information about craftsmanship, or the manner in which gravestones were produced and manufactured, is reflected in marker forms, tool marks, and raw material selection. Studying commercially produced gravestones reveals past patterns of trade and consumerism. Social phenomena and cultural events, such as disease outbreaks and armed conflicts, are reflected in individual marker inscriptions, as well as the numbers and pattern of graves across the entire burial ground.

with active geological processes, soil deposition can bury overturned markers up to one foot below the ground surface. These patterns may be applied by other researchers in graveyard documentation projects, aiding in the efficient location and recovery of broken and displaced grave markers.

Dr. Applegate has worked at graveyards in Butler, Warren, Hart, Logan, Allen, and Monroe counties. One of her most interesting discoveries was made at a small, nineteenth-century family graveyard in Simpson County, where she had the unique opportunity to do deep archaeological investigations. The graveyard had been so badly damaged by vandals, livestock, and farm machinery that all of the grave markers were uprooted and moved. Family descendants asked for her help in re-erecting the stones on the appropriate graves.

After careful investigation, she and student Tiffany Best determined that the displaced stones would have to become memorials placed along the fence line, rather than grave markers, because there was no way to match them with the graves. Applegate recalls, “I told the family that the only way I could determine where the stones go is by exhuming the bodies from the graves, studying the bones, and matching them with the information on the headstones, fully expecting the family to reject the idea offhand. Without hesitation, one descendant replied, ‘I can’t think of a finer thing to do.’ So that’s what we did.”

Dr. Applegate obtained the appropriate permits and excavated three of the graves, assisted by students in her Graveyard Archaeology class. One grave shaft was empty and likely corresponded to the burial of a daughter-in-law who was moved to a different cemetery. The other two contained skeletal and artifactual remains, which Applegate and two of her forensic anthropology students, Misty Plotner and Matthew Davis, studied at WKU over the next year.

“A cemetery is a history of people—a perpetual record of yesterday.”

—Anonymous

Using her background in geology, Dr. Applegate also conducts research on graveyard formation processes, which are natural and cultural processes that affect the condition and location of gravestones and other artifacts. For example, based on her local research, cultural processes like agriculture have more effects on the physical integrity of gravemarkers than do geological or biological processes. Tablet-shaped markers are more likely to be broken than other forms of markers regardless of the types of formation processes impacting a graveyard. It is equally likely that commercial headstones and footstones, despite their different sizes and shapes, will become displaced by gravity, frost heaving, tree falls, and other formation processes; further, the distance of lateral displacement is comparable. Livestock move overturned markers an average of about six feet from their original locations, but the distance can be as much as 22 feet. In graveyards
“We determined that one individual was the patriarch of the family, who had been buried in a wooden casket lined with cloth secured by copper thumbtacks. The other individual matched the characteristics of the matriarch, who died in 1861. Clothing remnants indicated she was buried in a buttoned nightshirt and wrapped in a cotton cloth secured with over three dozen copper straight pins. A hard rubber decorative comb, the only personal item found with the remains, likely was a back comb used to keep elaborate hair braids in place.”

The matriarch was interred in a beautiful, well-preserved rectangular metal casket with a separate lid featuring a viewing glass. Sixteen finials with fleur-de-lis designs adorned the top edges of the casket, which was painted with a red base coat covered by a white top coat. The casket was buried inside its wooden shipping crate, many fragments of which were recovered.

“The metal casket was totally unexpected. It’s not the kind of burial container I would expect to find in a rural family graveyard. What is particularly impressive is that this Simpson County family had the commercial connections and financial resources to purchase this imported casket several months into the Civil War. It is a real demonstration of the respect and esteem they held for their family matriarch,” says Applegate.

That’s the lesson that Applegate hopes others will take from her research: Graveyards are not simply burial grounds. They are bundles of information about the lives, relationships, and accomplishments of the people buried there. They are clues to historical trends on local, regional, and national scales. And they are reflections of broader societal values, beliefs, and traditions. In reality, they are not-so-silent testaments to our heritage.

A WKU faculty member since 1998, Dr. Applegate teaches courses in archaeology, biological anthropology, and cultural resources management. Besides graveyards and cemeteries, she conducts research on cave and rockshelter archaeology, saltpeter mining, mineral spring resorts, stone tools, and human skeletal remains. She is an active member of the Kentucky Organization of Professional Archaeologists and the award-winning Living Archaeology Weekend Steering Committee. Dr. Applegate has served as principal investigator on several grant-funded projects, including an archaeological site stewardship program at Mammoth Cave National Park and an archaeological survey of the WKU Green River Preserve. In her spare time, Dr. Applegate enjoys gardening and hiking.
It started with a question—an enduring question, to be exact: why are bad people bad? When writing a grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities’ (NEH) prestigious Enduring Questions initiative, Audrey Anton wondered whether the question was a legitimate question. Was it a loaded question? Did it presuppose that there are bad people? But then again, she asked, aren’t there bad people?

In the spring of 2013 the NEH saw the value in funding Anton’s exploration of this enduring question through two years of research, and the development and offering of a course addressing it. The funding is about to end, but the work stemming from it will have an ongoing positive impact.

Initially, Anton did what any academic does at the start of an inquiry—she hit the books. The summers of 2013 and 2014 were spent researching various sociological and psychological theories of vice, evil, and depravity as well as delving into classical works of literature that illustrate the themes. She took Dr. Carrie Trojan’s (Sociology) graduate seminar on Criminology and Law, and learned the many ways a society uses law to try to deter bad behavior, encourage rehabilitation, and protect its citizens when those efforts fail. Anton also attended the conference “Evil Incarnate: Manifestations of Villains and Villainy” at Case Western Reserve University to hear presentations by experts in literature, corrections, and law.

A philosopher by training, Anton was committed to offering an interdisciplinary course at WKU—one that would be of interest to all students regardless of their majors or future aspirations. After all, the question is one everyone should consider. People ask how to be a good person. However, as her grant proposal discussed, Anton believes that the alternative question of “how to be bad” is equally pressing, as it is just as important to learn how to avoid falling into bad habits as it is to know how to develop good ones. To paraphrase Aristotle, virtue is but one route, the roads to vice are infinitely many.

After all of this research, Anton had a template for the first offering of Philosophy 211: Why Are Bad People Bad? The course is divided into several units based on questions related to the course’s enduring question.

The first unit, “Are People Bad By Nature?,” investigates philosophical perspectives on the idea that people are born bad. Like each unit that follows, it includes information from philosophy, religion, sociology, psychology, political science, and neuroscience. Students ask whether all humans are fundamentally bad, and whether some humans are naturally worse than others. They consider different viewpoints from the doctrine of original sin to contemporary scientific findings in neuroimaging. In the second unit, students ask whether environment, nurturing, and custom impose the badness a person exhibits. Students compare case studies to the theories presented and debate possible conclusions during classroom discussions. The third unit asks questions concerning free will and moral responsibility. Students considered whether bad people choose to be that way and what it would mean to have such a choice. The fourth unit considers whether certain attitudes precipitate becoming bad—attitudes such as the seven deadly sins, resentment, and ambition. Finally, at the end of the course, students ask what it means to be bad on a larger scale. They ask the question: Why do people hate (each) other(s)? Students contemplate prejudice and discrimination as systematized, collective
Bad?
ways of being bad. In pursuing an answer to the final unit question, students read accounts of survivors of genocide as well as studies concerning implicit bias.

By the time she developed the course, Anton understood that the original enduring question, “why are bad people bad?” was loaded, as it presumed that there was such a thing as a bad person. Whether one believes that there are bad people, or simply acknowledges that there are bad acts done by people, the question in its various forms remains worth asking. The pilot version of the course launched in the fall of 2014.

Anton experienced another new beginning in the fall of 2014. Dr. Kate King, recently retired from WKU’s Department of Sociology, had learned of Anton’s project and invited her to join her prison think tank at the Lois M. DeBerry Special Needs Facility, a men’s maximum security prison, in Nashville. Anton and King drove to the facility weekly to meet with incarcerated think tank members who wanted to make a positive difference. The think tank aimed to identify issues of need and social justice and figure out how to help. The group organized a re-integration hotline for formerly incarcerated people, manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week by trained volunteers.

The group also held a workshop called “Teaching the Teachers,” where the think tank members educated local K-12 teachers on specific challenges that children of incarcerated people face in school. Additionally the group raised money for WKU’s food bank to support students in need. The think tank continues to embark on new projects and continues to inspire Dr. Anton.

When she announced her retirement, King invited Anton to continue a different tradition that King had started. King had been teaching Inside-Out classes at the DeBerry prison for the past four years, where half of her students were incarcerated. The other half were WKU students who travelled with King to the prison for class. While King’s expertise is in criminology, she felt it would be a good addition to the program to offer a philosophy course. Anton agreed and discussed the possibilities with the incarcerated members of the think tank, many of whom were also King’s students. Much to her surprise, the men unanimously elected for Anton to offer PHIL 211: Why Are Bad People Bad? Anton at first struggled to ask the question politely, and finally blurted out: “Are you sure the topic isn’t too close to home?” The men laughed. One of them explained, “No! We have SO many ideas on the topic already!” That
settled it—one of the two sections of PHIL 211 in the spring of 2015 included both WKU students and incarcerated students.

Before she taught the course, Anton took King’s advice and participated in a 60-hour training for teaching in prisons offered by the Inside-Out prison teaching initiative in Philadelphia, PA., with the generous support of Anton’s department and Potter College. At the training, Anton learned not only about the history of the program and essential logistics of teaching in a prison, she also learned how to teach via the experiential model from Inside-Out members of Graterford Prison. The members of this training explained how to facilitate a class in prison without inadvertently falling into the “us-them” trap of othering the incarcerated members of the class. After having conducted her research and working closely with the think tank members at DeBerry prison, Anton became convinced that if there are inherently bad people, they are not necessarily found where one might expect (i.e., they are not all in prison). At the same time, many people in prison—even people who have done horrible, bad things—are good people who have made bad choices.

This is what Anton’s students came to find as well. Each week they drove over an hour to class, passed through metal detectors, electronics detectors, were “patted down,” and then finally permitted to pass through a litany of electrified gates and a final guard check, all just to sit with classmates on the inside. In the visiting room, inside and outside students met face-to-face and sat side-by-side during lecture, discussion, and group activities. Each week the three hours of class passed quickly. Students from both sides of the fence were surprised by what they could teach each other.

While no student—inside or out—is required to divulge facts about their past, several students related the class materials to real life events. For example, one of the incarcerated students shared that he had engaged in a mediated interview with his victim’s son at the son’s request. He shared the story of his crime and his reasons for granting the interview. He explained his remorse and how he needed to take responsibility for his actions. This student answered other students’ questions concerning how he felt he had transformed over the past decade and a half. During that particular class period, all the students learned a great deal about themselves and their fellow students. It must have been difficult to share his past with this group of peers who knew him as a very different person. But he did it with dignity and without excuses. As he spoke, it was as if a weight had lifted from his shoulders. He was certainly not proud of what he had done, and it was clear that he was relieved to have been able to help others understand how humans can go so wrong.

On more than one occasion, another inside student commented, “Y’all are so good! And you make it look so easy! You inspire me.” What he didn’t realize was that the feeling was mutual. The outside students admired the imprisoned students’ honesty and motivation to do better. It was often noted how easily the tables could have been turned. Being born or raised under different conditions, being exposed to good role models and an adequate education, or even merely exhibiting an impulse in a volatile situation could make all the difference in the world.

At the final meeting, one WKU student commented, “I wish there was a way for this class to touch everyone the way that it has me . . . there’s no way of describing the first-hand experience each one of you have given me.” An inside student expressed, “I pray that everybody has appreciated my honesty and learned from my mistakes. Before . . . I wondered if I was smart enough to be able to overcome my past. Sitting around ya’ll every week has convinced me that I have started to write a new chapter in my book. Whether y’all know it or not, y’all motivate me to do better for myself each and every day.” He added, “This class is my ray of sunshine peeking through the thunderclouds I’m surrounded by.”

So, why are bad people bad? Students will spend a semester in PHIL 211 working to construct an answer. One thing is certain—many people are much better (and better off) for having asked the question.

Audrey Anton is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Western Kentucky University. She joined the faculty in 2011.
Reflections of Life

at WKU Glasgow

BY JENNIFER WALTON-HANLEY
In March 2015, a group of 19 students and seven faculty members left the Glasgow Regional Center (WKUG) parking lot at 6 am for a Spring Break trip across the Bluegrass. Over the course of six days their journey took them across their home state and exposed them to the myriad of cultural and economic differences that make Kentucky unique. Called the “Kentucky Experience,” this study-away trip was the first for the Glasgow campus, WKU’s largest group traveling that Spring Break, and roaring success. For the students, this was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that challenged them to leave their comfort zones, families, and preconceived notions of what Kentucky was like for the people living outside of the main WKU service area. For the faculty, this trip provided a chance to interact with students beyond the walls of the classroom and to offer an interdisciplinary approach to subjects ranging from history and geography to math and social work.
In many respects, the Kentucky Experience offers a representative cross-section of what teaching a humanities course at one of WKU’s three regional campuses is like. Most importantly, the majority of the WKUG student body, even those who fall into the “traditional” age group of college first-year students, have non-traditional circumstances that make it challenging for them to pursue their degrees. Of the 19 students on the Kentucky Experience, for example, at least half of the students had never been away from home for more than one night. Several of them had left young children at home in the care of spouses and relatives, and there was one mother-daughter pair—both of whom attend the WKUG campus.

Of the 19 students on the Kentucky Experience, at least half of the students had never been away from home for more than one night.

Additionally, the vast majority of those who took advantage of this study away opportunity were Elementary and Middle Grades Education majors. In short, this group demographic is a fairly typical one for arts and humanities courses at the WKUG campus—a majority of non-traditional students blended with more typical college attendees, a large percentage of education majors, and place bound students whose ultimate goal is to permanently reside in their hometowns armed with their newly minted degrees.

For faculty in the humanities, especially those in history, communication, English, and folk studies, the unusual classroom make-up offers more opportunities to interact with students of different majors than one might typically see at the Bowling Green campus. Although the predominant major in upper division history classes for example is usually education, it is not unusual to work with students from other colleges and disciplines like nursing, computer programming, and business.

There are two primary reasons non-majors take upper division courses in history. The first is the small number of upper division course offerings available at the WKUG campus. Students must take a minimum number of upper division Colonnade courses and the limited selection at WKUG makes it necessary to take courses online, try new courses in different disciplines, or travel to the Bowling Green campus for classes. For the students, this is a fantastic opportunity to immerse themselves in the up and coming STEAM initiative that emphasizes the value of combining science and math with the arts and humanities. The creativity, critical thinking, and writing skills that are developed in history and English courses, for instance, offer these students a competitive edge in the job market that sets them apart from other applicants. The second reason students take upper division courses not required by their major is because of their experiences with the professors teaching general education courses. Since the number of offerings is limited faculty at WKUG develop a strong rapport with their students as first-year students.

For the faculty at regional campuses, one of the most rewarding aspects of their jobs is the relationship that develops between educators and students. Because the campus is small, faculty have the opportunity to follow their students’ progress from the first-year survey all the way through graduation, which is celebrated at two special graduand ceremonies in December and May.

As the WKUG campus has shifted and changed over the past several years, there are a few things that have remained constant. Dr. Sally Ray, the Regional Chancellor, is a staunch student advocate and has tirelessly offered her guidance and support for various community-building endeavors and much-needed student services. In Spring 2013 renowned Kentucky author Bobbie-Ann Mason gave a reading from her novel The Girl in the Blue Beret with support from WKUG, Barren County High School, and the History Department. The event was well-attended by a mixture of faculty, students, and staff. Through Ray’s efforts, various speakers from Potter College of Arts & Letters including Professors Tom Hunley, Mary Ellen Miller, Loretta Murrey, and David Bell (to mention but a few) have visited the campus and given lectures.
shared poetry, and talked about their work. Ray's commitment to community-building also brought U.S. Senator Rand Paul to campus to speak to Dr. Jennifer Hanley's U.S. History class and Mr. David Duchov's Sociology class, offering students a rare opportunity to interact with a politician and hear his views on education, foreign policy, and a myriad of domestic issues.

In addition to a variety of guest speakers, Ray has also provided space, resources, and funding (with help from the Potter College of Arts & Letters and the Departments of English and History) for a much-needed writing center on campus. Each semester students bring several hundred papers to the Writing Center, where peer mentors work to help them improve their writing skills. The success and merit of the writing center speaks for itself. In history classes the average paper grade has improved by 10 percent because of this service. Ray's commitment to this project echoes and reflects her commitment to the student body at Glasgow.

In response to a need for a student voice in government, the WKUG campus has its own version of student government—the Glasgow Student Body which has a seat on the faculty senate. In addition, two WKUG History students have received recognition for their writing and academic accomplishments. Jake Delk was the first WKUG undergraduate student to present a paper at WKU’s Student Research Fair in the spring of 2014—his paper was chosen as the best in his group. In the spring of 2015 Jordan Chapman won the Carlton Jackson Award for the best student paper in American history. Several history students have received recognition at the WKUG Graduand ceremonies, taking the WKUG Scholar Award three times and the WKUG Spirit Award twice. Finally, a Sociology major, Angela Briggs, was awarded the President’s Award for Sustainability and recognized at President Ransdell’s annual opening convocation. Moreover, these students are just a few of the many success stories that characterize the WKUG experience.

Ultimately, teaching at the WKUG campus is a rewarding but challenging experience. Many of our students have special circumstances that make it difficult for them to achieve their goals and many of them are underprepared for the rigors of a college education. But, for engaged professors—those who went into academia because of a passion for their subjects and who love being in the classroom—the WKUG campus offers the chance to play a significant role in a student’s success.

Jennifer Walton-Hanley is an Associate Professor of History at the WKU-Glasgow Regional Center. In her seven years at the WKUG campus, Jennifer has taught a variety of courses ranging from General Education survey courses to upper division courses in the history major.
From South America to South Africa

BY ADDIE CHENEY
Photos by Tyler Essary
Following the 2014-15 focus on Ecuador for the inaugural International Year Of…., the Office of International Programs (OIP), in collaboration with more than 25 WKU units and community organizations, began preparing for a campus-wide shift in emphasis from South America’s smallest country to the southernmost country of Africa. The 2015-16 International Year of South Africa brings the complex history and diverse culture of South Africa to WKU in the form of enhanced academic courses, cultural performances, exhibits, and lectures on topics ranging from the economic impact of the 2010 World Cup to wildlife conservation to the growing South African alcohol industry.

Boasting participation from all six academic colleges, the inaugural IYO presented more than 40 co-curricular events and generated approximately 30 academic courses with Ecuadorian emphases. From the outset, Potter College has played a vital role in shaping this new internationalization initiative. With multiple faculty serving on the IYO Ecuador planning committee [Drs. Holli Drummond (Sociology), Marc Eagle (History), Cecile Garmon (Communication) Loup Langton (School of Journalism & Broadcasting), and Sonia Lenk (Spanish)], it seemed inevitable that IYO Ecuador would reflect the values and themes so central to Potter College.

The 2015-16 International Year of South Africa will bring the complex history and diverse culture of South Africa to WKU.
IYO Ecuador gained additional momentum from the first annual Zuheir Sofia Endowed International Faculty Seminar (ZSEIFS), a critical and complementary piece of the IYO program that brings together faculty from different disciplines to collectively and individually investigate the target country. Dr. Melissa Stewart (Spanish) led 8 faculty to Ecuador in the spring of 2014. Among those first ZSEIFS participants were two PCAL colleagues, Drs. Donielle Lovell (Sociology) and former WKU faculty member Kelly Conroy (Spanish), who leveraged that experience to introduce Ecuadorian content into their own courses and service during the IYO Ecuador.

The trend of PCAL involvement is likely to persist during the forthcoming yearlong focus on South Africa. Dr. Bella Mukonyora (Philosophy and Religion), who served on the IYO South Africa planning committee, spent much of the IYO Ecuador laying the groundwork for the succeeding country of focus. In addition to organizing multiple events, Dr. Mukonyora will be teaching three courses featuring South Africa next year.

Both the IYO South Africa curriculum and co-curriculum will receive an added boost from the associated ZSEIFS, which took ten WKU faculty, included among them, Drs. Andrew McMichael (History) and Saundra Ardrey (Political Science), on a nearly three-week journey through South Africa. For the participants, the program was the culmination of a semester of work and the start of a long-term engagement with the African country. Dr. McMichael has already given South Africa-focused presentations at local elementary schools, even connecting with several classes while in South Africa. Dr. Ardrey, whose fall Women and Politics course received a South Africa makeover, will present on issues related to South African politics throughout the coming year.

Plans for WKU’s third installment of the IYO are already underway for South Korea in 2016-2017. Dr. Tim Rich (Political Science) will be leading the associated ZSEIFS to South Korea in early summer of 2016.

“IIt has been an honor designing for the International Year Of… program for over a year and I hope to continue giving back to my university. Go Tops!”

–Jeremy Copeck (’14, Visual Arts)

Addie Cheney is the Assistant Director of International Programs at WKU. In this role, she oversees the International Year Of… and ZSEIFS programs. Addie earned her M.A. from Ohio State University in Germanic Languages and Literature in 2006.

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**Featured IYO South Africa Events**

9/8 –1/31
Conscience of the Human Spirit: The Life of Nelson Mandela Exhibit
Kentucky Museum

11/10, 6 p.m.
Women of the Anti-Apartheid Movement: Quilting as a Political Act
Kentucky Museum
Presented by Dr. Saundra Ardrey

11/17, 5 p.m.
Africa: Building New Leadership in the 21st Century
Gary Ransdell Hall Auditorium
Presented by Dwight Hopkins, Ph.D.

2/10, 7:30 p.m.
Cultural Enhancement Series presents Ladysmith Black Mambazo
Van Meter Hall

*To learn more about the IYO South Africa or the ZSEIFS or to view a full calendar of events, visit wku.edu/iyo.*
M.F.A. IN CREATIVE WRITING

BY ROB HALE
This August, WKU’s English Department welcomed the first class for the new Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing. Six new students hailing from Arizona, California, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Texas, are fully funded with teaching assistantships for the two-year, residential course of study. Students will have options to study the craft of writing their own fiction, non-fiction, poetry, or scripts and complete a comprehensive core curriculum designed to improve their professionalization.

The program is built upon the outstanding work of English faculty over a number of years. As Professor Mary Ellen Miller notes, “A lot of people worked long and hard both in the past and in the present to bring this new M.F.A. into being. I wish pioneers like Wanda Gatlin, who started our creative writing magazine, ZEPHYRUS, were alive to see it. Many of our retirees like Frank and Peg Steele and Joe Survant are very much alive and contributed enormously to the quality of our undergraduate program. That quality is what gave us the impetus and ultimately the success in launching our new degree.”

At the request of then-Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Gordon Emslie, the English Department began considering an M.F.A. in 2012-13, and a faculty committee subsequently developed a preliminary proposal. Due to other WKU priorities and the transition to a new department head, the proposal launch was delayed until August of 2015. This past fall, the original proposal was re-crafted and revised to align with new curriculum procedures at WKU and Kentucky’s Council on Post-Secondary Education, and parallel versions were shuttled through those processes. Soon after its approval by the Board of Regents and CPE, another version was sent to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges for ratification.

Former Provost Emslie sees the M.F.A. as a “game-changer” for WKU: “This full-residency program builds on several well-established strengths in the Department of English to provide a terminal-degree opportunity to cohorts of advanced students, who will liaise closely with their faculty mentors during their sojourn with us. Our M.F.A. students will not only contribute to the scholarly and creative activity of the University, but will also, through their role as advanced graduate teaching assistants, contribute very meaningfully to the educational experience for our undergraduates.”

Current Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and former Dean of Potter College, David Lee believes the M.F.A. has potential to benefit the entire Commonwealth: “The creative arts are increasingly important to Kentucky’s economy, generating approximately 60,000 jobs across the Commonwealth. The new M.F.A. program will enhance WKU’s strong leadership in preparing students for a world that increasingly values imagination and creativity.”

Head of English, Rob Hale says that the potential of the M.F.A. was one of the opportunities that attracted him to WKU two years ago, and he has been impressed with how well faculty have worked together to create a curriculum that benefits all of the department’s concentrations: “M.F.A. students will mostly work with creative writing faculty, but they will also take courses with our literature and composition faculty. Our Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Certificate could be particularly attractive to M.F.A. students. Some students will likely earn the TESOL Certificate.” Professor of English and Director of ESL Endorsement/TESOL Graduate Certificate Programs Alex Poole says, “The Graduate Certificate in TESOL allows writers to live all over the world without having to worry about how to make a living while they complete their novels, collections, or screenplays.”

The program has a number of distinctive features. From the beginning of the conversation, and before the curriculum was designed, faculty insisted on full funding for students. “Some M.F.A.
Director of Creative Writing and Associate Professor of English David Bell notes, “Obviously we are going to place a strong emphasis on workshops and the craft of writing, but we’re also going to emphasize practical experience through internships as well as secondary areas in the classroom so that the students come out of the program in a position to pursue a wide variety of professional opportunities.” Consequently, students will complete course work in one of three secondary concentrations that are more career-related: the literature concentration will prepare them for teaching jobs; the composition/rhetoric track will also prepare them for work as composition teachers, editors, and professional writers; the Teaching English as a Second Language track will prepare them for work in a high demand field in this country or abroad. All students will tutor in the Writing Center, take a course in the pedagogy of composition and rhetoric, and normally teach four undergraduate classes before graduation to prepare them for possible teaching jobs and/or make them attractive Ph.D. candidates. Students will also complete two internships related to creative writing.
and/or their career interest to give them real-world experience outside of the classroom so that they may better position themselves for professional work and create opportunities for community engagement.

Another distinction of WKU’s M.F.A. is an emphasis on scriptwriting, a niche that many programs do not include. The M.F.A. and WKU’s strong and growing film major will complement each other. English professor and co-founder of the WKU film major, Ted Hovet says, “The interest in telling stories through scripts—whether for film, TV, or web-based media—has never been higher than right now. Writers are aware that the current cultural environment offers unprecedented opportunity to find audiences for creative combinations of word and image. The scriptwriting courses in the WKU M.F.A. program will provide students an opportunity to enhance their skills in writing for the screen, as well as offer opportunities to collaborate with the already thriving WKU Film major.”

The M.F.A. will undoubtedly enhance geographic diversity at WKU. Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in English Wes Berry observes that “In just this first year, we’ve accepted applicants from Pennsylvania, Texas, Arizona, and California. At best, they’ll bring with them distinctive regional voices, knowledge of folkways and particular landscapes and make that real life in other places come to life in their creative work and also for our undergraduates when these M.F.A. candidates teach in year number two of their programs. Diversity of voices and accents = more flavor.”

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Associate Professor of English Jane Fife is optimistic about how the M.F.A. could improve the community of all writers at WKU: “I hope the M.F.A. brings more reflection and conversation about how writers write. With more people (students, faculty, and guest writers) talking about their writing practices in more classrooms, workshops, reading events, and casual conversations, I look forward to a richer awareness for our whole community of writers about how we shape our writing environments and activities to meet our varied goals.”

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The department also hired fiction and creative non-fiction writer Rebbecca Brown. Dr. Brown holds a Ph.D. from University of Louisiana- Lafayette and an M.A. from California State University-Northridge. She is the author of Starcherone Prize finalist They Become Her, a novel fictionalizing the life of Delia Bacon, the first person to propose multiple authorship of Shakespearean texts. A former Fulbright Fellow in India, Brown comes to WKU from Hunter College (City University of New York). Brown says the design of the program was one factor that attracted her to WKU: “WKU’s M.F.A. stands out among many others in that it provides the opportunity for students to focus on a secondary area of study while fully funding the educational experience—what this suggests to me is a unique program that distinctly cares about the future of its graduates.”

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To support scriptwriting, the department hired screenwriter and poet Shane Book who joined the department in August. Book completed an M.F.A. in Screenwriting from Temple University in 2013 and produced the film Praise and Blame, which has been featured at many film festivals. Book also earned an M.F.A. in Poetry from The University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop in 2002 and has published two acclaimed collections of poetry, most recently Congotronic, which landed him on the shortlist for the prestigious Griffin Poetry Prize for 2015.

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Kristina Arnold

Each year WKU’s faculty members are evaluated on three specific areas of professional activity: research, teaching, and service. These activities are usually easy to discern and evaluate as separate silos of professional endeavor, but not in the instance of Professor Kristina Arnold. As this year’s selection for the Potter College Faculty Service Award, the review committee likely found that bouncing back and forth across those three boundaries was a distinguishing characteristic of Professor Arnold’s submitted materials. Perhaps no faculty member in the College envisions those three roles as holistically as Professor Kristina Arnold. Look to her teaching and there is community engagement embedded in student assignments; view her personal efforts in installation art and find, again, socially relevant topics presented to the public for debate or to increase awareness. As practiced by Professor Arnold, teaching and making art are vehicles used in service of community building and mutual understanding.

A significant portion of Kristina Arnold’s professional obligation to the university involves directing the Department of Art’s two main galleries and all that it entails to meet a busy calendar of exhibitions. That commitment is extensive, requiring her to maintain a schedule that ensures shows go up and come down on time, that visiting artists are well informed and attended to, and that campus and community members are aware of the gallery’s latest exhibitions. The tasks are non-stop, with much of what is required of her going unnoticed by the public. What should be noticed is her intent to frame the exhibits as more than a brief respite for students and faculty heading to class, but as a teaching and outreach resource for our service region. Diversity and the richness provided through inclusion has been one of the hallmarks of the gallery’s mission during Professor Arnold’s tenure. In the past few years, our community has been exposed to Ecuadorian, Afghani, Mexican, Native American, and Korean art sensibilities, as well as art expressing African-American, Feminist, and LGBTQIA perspectives.

Five years ago she and a handful of faculty and staff envisioned the development of an arts program at the WKU farm. In typical fashion, Prof. Arnold laid much of the groundwork for the initiative’s funding requests, as well as floor plan development. The resulting first-stage building now provides students and community members opportunities to experience wood-firing in community education and formal university ceramic classes. Soon it will do the same in the glass arts.
In her remaining time, Professor Arnold commits to art associations in our region, always with the hope of integrating WKU’s programming and galleries with the surrounding art community. ARTworks, the Bowling Green Gallery Hop, the U.S. Bank’s Celebration of the Arts, and the World’s Greatest Studio Art Tour are just a handful of grass-roots organizations that she continues to be involved in, often as a planning member or committee chair.

The phrase, “no good deed goes unpunished,” comes to mind where evidence of Professor Arnold’s success in one realm has been recognized and tapped by others within the university and community. Recently her commitments have extended to the role of an advisor to the Downing Museum collection where her awareness of conservation techniques have helped guide the museum’s resurrection of smoke-damaged works created by Joe Downing. Her expertise at honing the focus of discussions and energizing participants has also been recognized by the University’s Kentucky Museum, who recently requested she accept an appointment to the Museum’s Board of Directors. She, of course, agreed. She also serves on the Provost’s Faculty Research Review Committee, and if that isn’t enough, as her alter-ego “Rembrat,” she has been instrumental in growing two local women’s roller derby teams, the Vette City Vixens and Bowling Green HotBroads who take time out from bruising bouts to help clean up our Lost River Cave Park.

Professor Arnold’s selection for this year’s Potter College Faculty Service award is appropriate and inspirational. Clearly she is dedicated to helping improve our university and region. What makes her efforts so impactful is her ability to draw on so many varied skills sets and envision links where none existed before. Through creativity and teaching she finds ways to join those links together for a common good.

Alison Langdon

Associate Professor of English Dr. Alison Langdon has been awarded the Potter College of Arts & Letters Award for Outstanding Teaching and was selected from among all of WKU’s college winners as the recipient of the University Award for Outstanding Teaching.

After the announcement, Langdon said, “In the day-to-day life of teaching we don’t often see the long-term impact we might have on our students, so it is particularly moving to receive these awards. I am especially honored to be recognized in a department that places strong emphasis on teaching and student mentoring. Much of my success can be attributed to the incredible students at WKU and to fantastic colleagues who foster a spirit of collaboration.”

Dr. Langdon earned Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in English from Arizona State University and a doctorate in medieval literature from the University of Oregon. Before coming to WKU in 2007, she held a position as Assistant Professor of English at Valparaiso University in Indiana. Dr. Langdon regularly teaches Early Survey of British Literature, Medieval Literature, Chaucer, Dante, Introduction to English Studies, and Writing in the Disciplines.

Rob Hale, Head of English, says that Langdon is “particularly adept at managing classroom discussion and leavening the classroom conversation with mini-lectures to provide a dynamic learning environment.” One student concurs, “Professor Langdon encourages participation and manages class discussions admirably well. She is observant and thoughtful, making sure students who don’t often speak out get a chance to speak when they do venture to put forth their opinions, and keeping those who are
more vocal from inadvertently stepping on other students’ toes without suppressing them. She has made an art of mediation.”

A number of students have stated that Dr. Langdon challenges them to learn more and to produce better work. The kind of learning she has fostered has not only been at the academic level, but it has been life-changing. One student remarked that “she helped me rediscover what I thought literature and art could be. I can confidently say that I would not be the same person had it not been for this revelation.”

Along with stimulating actual thinking, she fosters students’ desire to learn. Another student says that “everyone finds this class engaging and entertaining as well as educational” and many students describe how infectious her passion for the material is and how she inspires them: “Dr. Langdon has given me a new appreciation for medieval literature, so much so that I want to continue studying it after the semester ends.”

Another marker of superior teaching is comprehensive knowledge in one’s field, and Dr. Langdon certainly has that. She has published 11 articles and book chapters on medieval literature and two articles on pedagogy. At the national and international level, she is active in professional and learned societies in her field. Since 2000, she has presided over or organized 14 panels at academic conferences, is a member of five academic organizations, is the co-editor of the journal Ennaratio, and has served as a manuscript reviewer for three other journals. She recently co-edited with David Sprunger a special issue of Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching and is editing a collection tentatively titled Animal Languages: Interspecies Communication in the Middle Ages. On sabbatical in spring 2016, she will complete a book manuscript exploring the ways that dogs occupy a unique space in the construction of human identity in the imagination of the Middle Ages.

Dr. Langdon transfers her enthusiasm for research to students by creating venues for publication and encouraging them to produce their own scholarship. In 2012, Langdon, with the help of colleagues Lou-Ann Crouther, Jane Fife, Walker Rutledge, and Beth Weixel, founded an undergraduate research journal, The Ashen Egg, which publishes work on literature, rhetoric, linguistics, film, and popular culture. Three issues have been published, and the journal continues to grow and prosper—she will likely expand the journal’s reach with an electronic edition in the near future. Six of Langdon’s students have published in The Ashen Egg, five have presented at national and regional conferences, nine have presented at local conferences, and one student recently received a Faculty-Undergraduate Student Engagement grant to support her research. For someone who has only been at WKU for eight years, these numbers are particularly impressive.

Along with her contributions to teaching and research, Dr. Langdon has supported the institutional welfare of the university. In the English Department, she advises around 70 literature students every year, helping to devise new procedures that help majors gain more from their course work. She has been a go-to person for many of the important tasks in the department, serving on the department head search committee, various other search committees, and recently chairing a very successful search for a new Early Modern professor. At the college and university level, her contributions have been both numerous and influential—highlights include the serving on the Potter College Advising Council and the University Senate, and as Chair of the Senate Academic Quality Committee.

Dr. Hale says that “Langdon is the ideal combination of learned scholar, servant leader, and compassionate teacher. She brings humanistic pursuits to life in ways that challenge students to make meaning out of the great texts from the
medieval period to today. As so many of Alison’s students have noted, she spends countless hours challenging and counseling students to produce their very best work. She truly embodies all of the qualities that constitute a superior teacher.

Yvonne Petkus

A female nude, thigh deep in a swirl of acrid greens and blues, has the posture of someone running. The background’s colors sweep across her extremities, obscuring or revealing portions of her limbs akimbo, in unsettling scale shifts that are slightly too large or small for the torso’s position. The whole of the body’s gestures are impossible to hold and uneasy to view, yet there are vignettes of colors that describe warm flesh and substantial muscles within the surrounding turbulence. In the paintings of Professor Yvonne Petkus life presses out from uncertainty and claims its ground.

This scene and variations of it have been the central subject matter of Professor Petkus’ artistic production for the past decade. She has engaged it in a variety of media, through drawings, paintings, and prints. She has explored the compositional possibilities of this same singular figure in a variety of poses time and again, centered, left and right of center, or pressed to the composition’s edge. Like the Modernist master Giorgio Morandi, who never tired of painting the same handful of bottles and bowls, Yvonne Petkus finds new meaning and new questions to pursue through the act of engaging this nude figure and its desolate surroundings.

As this year’s designee for the Potter College Award for Research and Creative Activity, Professor Petkus is an appropriate choice, her artworks are truly a balance of research and creativity. If one listens to her speak of art-making, and the term “process” quickly becomes part of the discussion. Process, as it relates to the artist, includes step-by-step progress, where every mark, every paint stroke is a considered gesture. Process also relates to controlled investigation, where one aspect of a composition remains resolute so that variables elsewhere become the focus for experimentation. Most importantly process describes the absorption, weighing, and editing of ideas, to discern what is meaningful. The act of creative processing is in fact the aim of Professor Petkus’ professional pursuits and she rarely goes a day without engaging that purpose in the form of painting.
Yvonne Petkus’ selection for this particular award is not a surprise to those who have followed her rise on the art scene. Her research and creativity agenda has consistently warranted support from within the Department of Art and Potter College of Arts & Letters. She has received grants totaling more than $4,000 for five presentations in the past five years. She has also applied for and been awarded one of WKU’s prestigious RCAP II Awards for $8,000. The result of this last internal funding provided her printing equipment that facilitated her on-going investigations of process as it relates to vision, artistic practice, and intent. She has steadily gained the notice of regional, national, and now internationally significant gallerists and museum curators. From invited solo shows as divergent as Davidson College in North Carolina, to Viridian Arts in New York City, the Elisavat Gallery in Naxos, Greece, and top-tier exposure at Art Basel in Miami, Florida, Professor Petkus can truly claim WKU’s goal of “international reach.”

Such high profile venues are not Professor Petkus’ sole exhibition pursuits. She recognizes the importance of the role she has as an artist/educator and so consistently displays her art in juried group exhibitions in art centers and educational galleries throughout the nation as well as the local region. These exhibitions offer a richer experience for viewers because of the aesthetic quality and depth of thought she brings to her contributions.

Parallel to her artistic creations Professor Petkus has consistently been selected by respected peers to present papers at national conferences that include the College Arts Association and the Southeastern College Art Conference. Each conference is noted for its competitive selection processes. To have one paper accepted is a high compliment, to have five such invitations over the past few years, as Yvonne Petkus has had, speaks to her eloquence and relevance in the field. Educational institutions often express a similar level of respect for her insights where she has presented artworks and gallery talks. One such response from Cort Savage, Professor of Art at Davidson College, is common: “Yvonne’s artist lecture confirmed everything the paintings suggested I would hear; an engaging professional who was clear, articulate, focused and certain of her path. Her presentation was intelligent, closely linked to contemporary concerns and practices and at the same time personable. She made complex ideas appear simple.”

Without fail, institutions that invite Professor Petkus to their campus conclude their meeting with appreciative notes of thanks for her displays as well as for the value of the insights she brings to students. WKU’s Department of Art is extremely fortunate to have her as a role model for studio majors, as well as a spokesperson for the value of a life dedicated to the visual arts.

**Beth Plummer**

Professor Beth Plummer believes that “advising begins the moment a teacher meets a student.” For her, good teaching and advising are inseparable. Both also require a faculty member to listen closely to students, making sure that they are prepared to learn. Beth’s interest in advising began in graduate school, where she volunteered for an experimental program in peer mentoring for students from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds to help with the transition to college. She continued to pursue her interest in advising as she joined the History Department at the College of Charleston and later moved to the faculty at the University of Maryland University College at Schwäbisch-Gmünd in Germany. UMUC-SG was a small university campus with students from around the world who depended a great deal on the faculty to help them navigate in a foreign environment. Upon the sudden closing of UMUC-GS after the events of 9/11, Beth was able to guarantee that 180 students could graduate on time without losing credits.

During her first years at WKU, Beth participated in a series of advising training courses offered through FaCET. She also gained a detailed understanding of WKU’s curriculum by serving on the University Curriculum Committee for five years, including two as chair. Beth also served a two-year term on the Graduate Curriculum Committee, including a year as chair. All of these experiences helped Beth develop a clear philosophy of student advising and gain the necessary institutional and curricular knowledge.
and advising experience necessary to be an effective adviser. During her time as graduate adviser, Beth has worked to improve the History Department graduate program in three key areas: advising and developing curriculum, creating a community for online and campus students, and developing professional skills. To meet the first goal, Beth makes certain that students received regular advising about their courses and degree programs so that they could make progress towards graduation. To help create a greater sense of community among the graduate students, Beth’s first created a space the graduate students could call their own. With help from the department’s office associate and the graduate students, the graduate student office was transformed from a room full of miscellany into a functioning office with space for formal and informal meetings, places for the students to keep their things, and the equipment they need to do their work. The result is that the GA office is now constantly in use, and often filled with laughter and conversation. To achieve the third goal of helping students develop better professional credentials and skills, Beth concentrated on improving professional training for our graduate assistants. She established regular weekly GA meetings on Friday afternoons to discuss professional development and work related matters. Besides helping faculty with their research, graduate students also spend time each week tutoring undergraduates enrolled in the History Department’s survey courses. Faculty are encouraged to have graduate assistants lead short discussions and give lectures in their classes, allowing students to develop a teaching portfolio.

Beth’s biggest innovation was the creation of the Graduate Colloquium. The idea was to get students into the habit of presenting their work to an audience outside of the classroom. The colloquium has become an important forum for students to practice giving conference papers and to present early stages of their research. Graduate students are also encouraged to present papers at local, regional, and national conferences. Given the growing pressure on financial resources in the academy, Beth has graduate students apply for research grants and national fellowships. These efforts are meeting with growing success and the students develop grant-writing skills that they will use throughout their careers.

One of her former students writes, “Beth Plummer has done exactly what universities dream teachers and advisers will do: mentor students from timid high-schoolers into self-assured, capable adults, and in a few cases, colleagues. Over six short years I went from entering my first college class, Western Civ. With Dr. Plummer, as a bushy-eyed youngster to chatting in her office about entering the M.A. program at WKU, then about applying to Ph.D. programs in history, and finally about careers in history. Looking back on my time at WKU from my current position as a Ph.D. student, I know my academic and professional success owes a great deal to Dr. Plummer.”
James Barker is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion. He earned his Ph.D. in New Testament and Early Christianity from Vanderbilt University (2011), and he previously taught at Roanoke College (2011-2012), Luther College (2013-2014), and Rhodes College (2014-2015). James' research focuses on the production and reception of the Gospels, and in 2014 he received the Paul J. Achtemeier Award for New Testament Scholarship. His first book, John's Use of Matthew, is forthcoming from Fortress Press, and he has articles appearing in Journal of Biblical Literature, Early Christianity, and Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.

Scriptwriter and poet Shane Book comes to us most recently from Temple University where he completed an M.F.A. in Film and Media Studies in 2013 and has served as a screenwriting instructor since then. While at Temple, Shane also produced his film Praise and Blame, which stars Costas Mandylor from the Saw franchise. This summer, Shane was on the shortlist for the prestigious Canadian Griffin Prize for his most recent collection of poems Congotronic, published by University of Iowa Press. A former Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University, M.F.A. graduate of the University of Iowa's Writer's Workshop, and recipient of a Cave Canem Fellowship, Shane also published Ceiling of Sticks, which won the 2009 Prairie Schooner Book Prize for Poetry.

Laura E. Brown, who received her Ph.D. in 2015 from the University of Texas at Austin, is excited to teach students about interpersonal and health communication, and to help students identify and develop their personal and professional communication strengths and talents. Laura studies how individuals manage identity and personal information in conversations with others about health, illness, and wellness. Currently, she is pursuing two lines of research: Processes of disclosure and avoidance in patient-provider relationships, and managing health-related uncertainty in close relationships. Her work, ranging topically from LGBTQ health disparities to online cancer support communities, appears in publications such as Communication Monographs and Health Communication.

Fiction Writer Rebecca Brown comes to the Department of English most recently from Hunter College, part of the City University of New York system, where she has been an instructor since 2009, and where she won a Fulbright Fellowship to India in 2013. Rebecca holds a Ph.D. from University of Louisiana-Lafayette and an M.A. from California State University-Northridge. Her novel They Become Her (What Books Press 2014) was a finalist for the Starcherone Prize. The novel fictionalizes the life of Delia Bacon, the first person to propose multiple-authorship of Shakespearean texts, and features characters named Rebecca Brown, Rebecca Brown, and Rebecca Brown. A triple threat, Rebecca has published essays, poetry, and fiction in journals such as The Southwestern Review, Confrontation, and Truck.

Nicolette Bruner Olson worked part-time as the Robert Penn Warren fellow and as an English instructor for the department last year. This year she joins the Department of English in a full-time capacity for an expanded, one-year position as Robert Penn Warren Fellow. Nicolette will run day-to-day operations and improve the Center's outreach efforts. She will also teach general education courses and do some advising in the Honors Program. Nicolette earned her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan last year and has published ‘Judge, Professor, Chronicler of Fairyland: James Campbell’s Legal Imaginary in Journal of Law, Culture and the Humanities. Nicolette also holds a law degree from the University of Michigan.

Andrea Cole (Coordinator, Information Technology) graduated from Western Kentucky University in 2011 with a B.S. in Information Technology Systems Management. She has held positions in the IT support field since graduation, most recently as the IT Support Coordinator for Martin Management Group in Bowling Green where she provided the first line of support for all company IT issues. She has already attended a national Mac instructional seminar, prepared all of the School’s labs for the fall semester and participated in the student radio upgrades.
Lhouie Guerwane joins Modern Languages as an Instructor of Arabic. He is a native of Morocco who earned his undergraduate degree at WKU and his M.A. at Morehead State University. He has extensive experience teaching languages in Morocco, Spain, and in the United States. He developed the first K-12 multi-level Arabic program in Jefferson County Public Schools. He also taught Arabic in the WKU Gifted Studies VAMPY Program for three consecutive summers, with top-notch reviews from students and colleagues. Mr. Guerwane will coordinate first and second year Arabic instruction. The department is very pleased to have him.

Karen Hume comes to the Department of Sociology after 15 years in the nonprofit world, serving as the Executive Director of the Capitol Arts Alliance, Executive Director of Operation P.R.I.D.E and marketing associate at SkyPAC. She has managed offices in commercial real estate, environmental oil and gas clean up and worked as the corporate sales manager and import agent for an international distribution corporation. She has also volunteered with many community organizations in the area, like Orchestra Kentucky and Downtown Business Association. In her spare time she enjoys cooking, camping, fishing and football. Karen is very excited for the beginning of football season so she can cook up some good stuff with friends and watch her favorite teams, WKU and Clemson. She is very happy to be in the Sociology Department and PCAL, and is enjoying the friendly and helpful environment at WKU.

Gillian Knoll comes to the Department of English from Washington, D.C., where she was Director of Educational Mentoring at Thinking Organized. Gillian received her Ph.D. in English from the University of Maryland at College Park in 2012, where she won the Alice Geyer Dissertation prize for Conceiving Desire: Language, Thought, and Love on the Renaissance Stage. Her research focuses on the ways in which conceptual metaphors such as stasis and motion, permeability and containment, shape erotic desire in Elizabethan drama. Gillian has published an article on Lyly’s Endymion in Shakespeare Quarterly and an article entitled “Binding the Void: The Erotics of Place in Antony and Cleopatra” is forthcoming in Criticism.

Meghen McKinley has an M.F.A. in dance performance and choreography from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and a B.F.A in dance performance from the SUNY-Buffalo. She is a modern dancer, choreographer, and educator. Recent choreography and performances include Wreckage, a collaborative Skype choreography with Teal Darkenwald at East Carolina University, Inside These Walls at Champaign Art Salon and the Zodiacque Dance Company, Fly Away at Dance 14, and All Around Us, a multi-regional Dance Film. Her professional credits include performance work with Germaul Barnes’ Dance 4 U Project/Black Bones in NYC, Dance, Martha Dancel, Bernier Dance, DeXdance Contemporary Dance Company in New York City, and the Orlando International Fringe Festival. She is Co-Director of Convergence Dance Theatre in Honolulu, Hawaii. Meghen’s research interest is in the relationship between media and dance. She has presented her choreography, research, and master classes at ACDA Baja Region and ACDA Central Region. Meghen is also a board member of the non-profit organization Collaborative Dance Foundation, which works to promote dancers and artists in the local community.

The Department of Art is delighted to welcome Ms. Connie McNeil as the new Office Associate. Ms. McNeil’s professional background includes serving in similar capacity to her present position, overseeing the budgetary and scheduling needs of Natcher Elementary School for the past eleven years. Ms. McNeil hails from Greenburg, Indiana where she completed her high school degree before taking courses at IUPUI at the Columbus, Indiana campus. Her favorite pastimes including learning American History, having family gatherings, reading, and singing for a variety of occasions. Of her present position Ms. McNeil states, she is excited to be on WKU’s campus and looks forward to helping solve art student and faculty problems as they arise. Her new job offers “the perfect balance of life and career.”

Samuel Moody is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish. He earned his Doctorate in Modern Languages at Middlebury, with an emphasis on Spanish and Italian. His 2013 dissertation is a study of gastronomic lexicology during the Golden Age in Spain. He brings broad experience teaching Spanish language, literature and culture at all levels. He is...
passionate about proficiency development and the use of the target language in the classroom, and looks forward to supporting the Spanish Program in a variety of ways this academic year.

**Katie O’Leary** holds an M.A. in English from the University of South Dakota and joins the Department of English on a one-year appointment as a full-time instructor. Katie has recently taught general education courses for the department online and has taught first-year and advanced composition courses and introductory literature courses at South Dakota. She also worked as a writing consultant at USD.

**Luke Pennington** joins the School of Journalism & Broadcasting after having taught as an adjunct professor for WKU and EKU this past academic year. He received his B.A. in Theatre and Drama from Indiana University, and then completed his M.F.A. in Film and Television Production at the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts in August 2014. Before attending USC, Luke spent 10 years in Los Angeles in the film industry and theatre community as a working professional. He co-founded the Lame Dog Theatre company where he oversaw the production of three seasons of stage plays and the Simpatico Films production company where he worked in the roles of producer, actor, director and editor on the company’s first film, *Hit Men*.

**Amelia Rollings** holds a Ph.D. in Vocal Pedagogy from The University of Kansas and a M.M. in Voice Performance and Pedagogy from The Pennsylvania State University. A dramatic soprano, she has performed in musical theatre, opera, and oratorio, including Sondheim’s *Sweeney Todd*, Verdi’s *Requiem*, Menotti’s *The Consul*, and Maury Yeston’s *Nine* in Brugge, Belgium. Amelia maintains an active voice studio and teaches both individual and group voice lessons in a variety of musical styles including musical theatre and opera. An active researcher in vocal pedagogy, she has presented her research in such refereed venues as The Voice Foundation Symposium, The International Phenomenon of Singing Symposium, and The Ohio State Voice Forum. Her primary research interests include musical theatre and contemporary commercial music (CCM) vocal pedagogy, female middle voice phenomena, group voice teaching, and the effects of shoe heel heights, head position, jaw opening and other aspects of body alignment on acoustic and perceptual measures of singing efficiency. Amelia is a member of the Musical Theatre Educators’ Alliance, the National Association of Teachers of Singing, The Voice Foundation, and the American Guild of Musical Artists.

**Kayla Riley** joins the Department of Communication as a dual credit instructor. She graduated from Murray State graduate, and is originally from Marion, KY. After earning a B.S. in Organizational Communication and Public Relations in 2008, she earned an M.S. degree in Organizational Communication in 2010. She worked at Madisonville Community College and then became a part of the WKU family in 2012. She is a self-proclaimed foodie- sports fan that enjoys cooking, eating, traveling, the outdoors, exploring locally, and my state of Kentucky. Kayla currently lives in Bowling Green with her dog, Bella. She is looking forward to the coming year, and being a part of PCAL.

**Virginia Siegel**, a native of Ohio, comes to the position as a recent alumnus of WKU, having completed her M.A. in Folk Studies this past spring. She also holds a B.F.A. in Historic Preservation with a minor in Architectural History from Savannah College of Art and Design. Her background work has included experience in museum, archive, and preservation non-profit settings and she is an AmeriCorps alumnus. While a graduate student at WKU, Virginia received a research fellowship for her thesis work on New York City Puerto Rican casitas, completed in cooperation with the American Folklore Society’s Working Group on Folklore and Preservation Policy. Last year, she was named Potter College of Arts and Letter’s Outstanding Graduate Student.
Linguist **Trini Stickle** comes to WKU from Madison, WI, where she is completing her dissertation entitled “Don’t Ask Those Questions! The Co-construction of Not-Knowing in the Talk of Person’s with Dementia,” a project that will contribute to best-practices strategies for caregivers of persons with dementia, and which she will defend in early October. She has published articles on the demographics of regional English and multi-modal practices in the workplace. Trini joins us on the pedagogical tenure track at Glasgow where she will teach general education and linguistics courses. Trini is an accomplished instructor having taught a variety of English Language Learners, and linguistics, grammar, composition, and literature students at a number of levels.

**A. Ashley Stinnett** received her Ph.D. from the School of Anthropology at the University of Arizona, with a minor in Media Arts. Before coming to WKU, she was a postdoctoral research associate for the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA), where she was the Internship Program Coordinator and a Lecturer in the School of Anthropology. Her areas of specialization are linguistic anthropology and applied visual anthropology specializing in community-based research. Her collaborative work spans initiatives with the Pima County Public Library – Seed Library, local refugee community organizations, Southern Paiute tribal intersections with the National Park Service and the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona. Her independent research focuses on the meat industry in the United States, primarily with small-scale heritage butchers. In the fall she will be teaching Introduction to Cultural Anthropology and a course on Visual Anthropology.

**Brian St. John** joins the WKU music faculty as Conductor and Music Director of the WKU Symphony and Assistant Professor of Music. The 2015-2016 season is Brian’s 22nd year as a professional orchestra conductor. Prior to joining the faculty at WKU, Brian was at the University of Evansville as Director of Orchestras, where he led two orchestras and taught courses in conducting and composition. Additionally, Brian served as the Assistant Conductor for the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra and Music Director for the Evansville Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. Brian holds a bachelor’s degree in viola performance, a master’s degree in orchestral conducting from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Orchestral Conducting from Arizona State University. He has composed and premiered eight fully-staged ballets. His 8th ballet, The Little Mermaid, was filmed by WNIN television in Evansville and broadcast over regional PBS stations in 2014.

**Yertty Vandermolen** is an Instructor of Spanish on the WKU Glasgow campus, where she largely teaches first-year Spanish courses. A native of Peru, she has master’s degree in Spanish earned at the University of Northern Iowa. She taught in Glasgow since 2013, where she helped strengthen Dual Credit offerings in Spanish, started the tradition of the annual Festival Cultural Hispano at WKU Glasgow, and created a successful professional development network called “Manos a la Obra” for high school teachers in Glasgow and in surrounding counties. She joins the faculty now in a continuing instructor position.

**Pavel Vasiliev** earned his Ph.D. from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, for testing the major utilitarian and extrajudicial explanations of the incarceration rates change in the U.S. at the state-level between 1980 and 2005. Pavel’s teaching and research interests include criminological and sociological theory, corrections, comparative criminal justice, and global gambling. His current research explores the post-recessionary criminal justice policy adjustments in the U.S. at the state-level. Recently, Pavel has been developing a course on social network analysis and its applications in criminology. His work appears in the Gaming Research and Review Journal.

**Huiqiang Zheng** is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Chinese. She has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from Purdue, an M. Ed. in Chinese Pedagogy from Shaanxi Normal University, and a Ph.D. in Chinese Linguistics from Xiamen University. She joined the Chinese Program in the Department of Modern Languages just a few weeks after the academic year 2014-2015 began. In addition to teaching all levels of Chinese, she facilitates the Confucius Institute (HSK) testing and scholarship program for undergraduates. She has already shown herself to be an excellent contributor to a lively and growing Chinese major/minor program at WKU.
November 18 – December 12, 2015; Graduating Seniors Exhibition
This group exhibition presents the work of the Department of Art’s Fall Seniors graduating in both the Studio Art and Graphic Design tracks.

January 25 – April 3, 2016; Art Education Exhibition, curated by Dr. Miwon Choe

April 13 – May 14, 2016; Graduating Seniors Exhibition
This group exhibition presents the work of the Department of Art’s Spring Seniors graduating in both the Studio Art and Graphic Design tracks.

November 18 – December 12, 2015; Graduating Seniors Exhibition
This group exhibition presents the work of the Department of Art’s Fall Seniors graduating in both the Studio Art and Graphic Design tracks.

January 25 – February 24, 2016; Dan Hernandez: Genesis
Dan Hernandez visually explores the fictions and inventions created when layers of history are combined with contemporary experience.

March 2 – April 6, 2016; Tim Smith: Connections
Tim Smith’s paintings present “moments when elusive associations are made unexpectedly from familiar places, events, or persons,” using formal qualities to make these thoughts and feelings tangible.

April 13 – May 14, 2016; Graduating Seniors Exhibition
This group exhibition presents the work of the Department of Art’s Spring Seniors graduating in both the Studio Art and Graphic Design tracks.

Summer Exhibition (Dates TBA); Artworks Members Show
This group show is open to all members of Artworks, the Bowling Green community visual arts organization.

TEATRE & DANCE MAINSTAGE SEASON
November 20 – 22, 2015
A Holiday Extravaganza
Featuring Sleeping Beauty
Van Meter Auditorium
Friday & Saturday at 7:00 p.m.
Sunday at 2:00 p.m.
Adults $15 / Students $12 / under $10
(Special priced school day performance on Friday, November 20th at 9:30 a.m.)

April 1 – 3, 2016
Guys and Dolls
Van Meter Auditorium
Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m., Sunday at 3:00 p.m.
Adults $18 / Students $15
(Special priced school day performance on Thursday, March 31st at 9:30 a.m.)

April 14 – 17, 2016
New Works Festival 2016
Lab Theatre, Gordon Wilson Hall
Thursday, Friday & Saturday at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday at 3:00 p.m.
Free Admission. Donations accepted.

April 29 – May 2, 2016
Evening of Dance
Russell H. Miller Theatre, FAC
Friday, Saturday & Monday at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday at 3:00 p.m.
All Tickets $12

WKU THEATRE & DANCE TICKETS
NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE
It’s now easier than ever to get your tickets for our show!
www.wku.showare.com
Season packages available.
Details online.
Fine Arts Box Office: 270-745-3121
Monday through Friday, Noon – 4:00 p.m.

THEATRE & DANCE NEXT STAGE SERIES
November 23, 2015
Last Chance to Dance
It’s our turn! WKU Dance students take the stage with their own exciting and innovative choreography.
Van Meter Auditorium
Monday at 4:00 p.m.
Free Admission

February 12 – 14, 2016
The Dance Project
WKU Dance students choreograph and perform original pieces with unique stories and styles!
Lab Theatre, Gordon Wilson Hall
Friday and Saturday at 8:00 p.m.
Sunday at 3:00 p.m.
Admission: $6.00

May 3, 2016
Last Chance to Dance
It’s our turn! WKU Dance students take the stage with their own exciting and innovative choreography.
Russell H. Miller Theatre, FAC
Tuesday at 4:00 p.m.
Free Admission

No tickets are available or needed for Last Chance to Dance. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Doors open 30 minutes prior to the performance.

For tickets to The Dance Project, visit www.wku.showare.com or call the WKU Fine Arts Box Office at 270-745-3121. Accepting calls Monday through Friday, Noon – 4:00 p.m.

CHILDREN’S THEATRE SEASON- FALL 2015
December 4 – 6, 2015
The Emperor’s New Clothes
By Jeanine Dwinell Henry and Meg Bryant Davenport
Lab Theatre, Gordon Wilson Hall
Friday at 4:00 p.m. / Saturday & Sunday at 3:00 p.m.
All Tickets $5.00
Suitable for all ages

www.wku.showare.com
Purchase your tickets online at no additional charge!
Or call the WKU Fine Arts Box Office at 270-745-3121
Monday through Friday, Noon – 4:00 pm

WKU CULTURAL ENHANCEMENT SERIES
February 3, 2016
Martha Graham Dance Company
The Martha Graham Dance Company has been a leader in contemporary dance since 1926.

February 10, 2016
Ladysmith Black Mambazo
Ladysmith Black Mambazo is a male choral group from South Africa that sings in the vocal style of isicathamiya and mbube. They rose to worldwide fame as a result of singing with Paul Simon on his album, Graceland and have won numerous awards, including three Grammy Awards.

FREE Admission. All events will be hosted at Van Meter Hall and begin at 7:30 p.m. CT. Seating is limited and first-come, first-served.
www.wku.edu/go/ces
Fine Arts Box Office: 270-745-3121
cultural.enhancement@wku.edu
THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM
& BROADCASTING GALLERY
August 24 – November 20, 2015
The Secret Beneath the Ridge: How a small Southern town helped end World War II
A collection of images that explore the historic photographs of DOE photographer Ed Westcott and WWII marine Joe O’Donnell. Westcott worked for the U.S. government in the Oak Ridge, Tennessee, area during the Manhattan Project in the 1940s and was one of the only people allowed to have a camera in the Oak Ridge plants during this secretive time of the development of the atomic bomb. O’Donnel was a photojournalist for the United States Information Agency. As a marine, he was one of the first foot soldiers on the ground in Japan immediately after the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

MMTH Gallery and Atrium
August 24 – Nov 20
Mon – Wed 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Thurs – Fri 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Sun 3:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

MUSIC
FALL
November 14, 2015
Violin Fest Participants Recital
5:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

November 14, 2015
WKU Jazz Bands
7:30 p.m., Instrumental Rehearsal Hall

November 15, 2015
Delta Omicron Musicales
6:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

November 20, 2015
Symphonic Band
7:30 p.m., First Baptist Church

November 21, 2015
Opera Theater
7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

November 22, 2015
Shelby Wooldridge Senior Recital
5:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

December 5, 2015
University Choirs Winterfest
6 p.m., Holy Spirit Catholic Church

December 6, 2015
Holiday Pops, The Symphony
1:00 p.m., Van Meter Hall

December 9, 2015
Performer of the Semester
1:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

MUSIC
SPRING
January 22, 2016
PRISM
8:00 p.m., Van Meter Hall

January 31, 2016
WKU Alumni Chamber Choir
4:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

February 14, 2016
Delta Omicron Musicales
6:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

February 26, 2016
The Symphony at WKU
7:30 p.m., Van Meter Hall

February 28, 2016
University Choirs
3:00 p.m., Van Meter Hall

March 1, 2016
Concert Band
7:30 p.m., Van Meter Hall

March 3, 2016
Wind Ensemble
7:30 p.m., Van Meter Hall

March 16, 2016
Zachary Lopes Faculty Piano Recital
7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

March 20, 2016
John Cipolla Faculty Saxophone Recital
3:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

March 22, 2016
Clarinet and Saxophone Studio Recital
7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

March 23, 2016
String Trio Recital
7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 2, 2016
Guest Artist Marianne Gedigian Flute
1:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 3, 2016
Sam Rouster Graduate Conducting Recital
7:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 9, 2016
WKU Jazz Bands
7:30 p.m., Van Meter Hall

April 10, 2016
Ching-Yi Lin Faculty Violin Recital
3:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 10, 2016
Jacob Sturgeon Graduate Conducting Recital
7:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 15, 2016
Taylor Dant Senior Recital
7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 16, 2016
Abigail White Senior Recital
7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 22, 2016
Wind Ensemble/Concert Band
7:30 p.m., Van Meter Hall

April 23, 2016
Single and Double Reed Day
8:00 a.m. Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

April 24, 2016
University Choirs
3:00 p.m., Van Meter Hall

April 29, 2016
The Symphony at WKU
7:30 p.m., Van Meter Hall

May 1, 2016
Performer of the Semester Recital
1:00 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall

Visit www.wku.edu/music for more information, or contact:
The Department of Music
phone - (270)-745-3731
e-mail - music@wku.edu

Tickets for the Symphony at WKU can be purchased at www.wku.showare.com or by calling the WKU Fine Arts Box Office at 270-745-3121.
1970s

**Cathy Dorton Fyock** (’76, Music) of Louisville, Ky., has authored a new book with coauthors Dr. Lyle Sussman and Kevin Williamson. *Hallelujah! An Anthem for Purposeful Work* is a leadership parable offering strategies to engage the hearts and minds of employees in order to build high performance teams. To learn more about the book, visit www.HallelujahTheBook.com.

**Jill Metz** (’74, Political Science and Psychology) of Chicago, Ill., was honored by the Chicago Bar Foundation, the charitable arm of The Chicago Bar Association, with the Edward J. Lewis Pro Bono Award. This award distinguishes attorneys who display a deep commitment to equal justice through outstanding pro bono service.

**Melvin D. Rowe** (’73, Art) of Sulphur, Ky., an accomplished ceramicist, has authored the book *Making Potter Functional: 200 Pottery Items and How to Make Them Work*. The book, which is intended for the advanced ceramics student, outlines project ideas and offers tips Rowe has collected over his 45-year career working with clay.

1980s

**Dr. Ken Ellis** (’83, Philosophy and Religion) of Lawrenceville, Ga., has been elected Associate Professor of Christian Ministry and Moral Rehabilitation (Ministry-Based) at Leavell College, the undergraduate program of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Perry Jones** (’81, Journalism & Broadcasting and Communication) of Florence, Ky., has retired after nine years in food service management and 24 years of service with the Internal Revenue Service, where he most recently served as the Editor in Chief of the Cincinnati IRS Compliance website. Perry plans to spend his retirement with his family and volunteering with Lions Club International.

**R. Barkley Payne** (’87, Journalism & Broadcasting and Psychology) of Chicago, Ill., was recently named Executive Director of the American Medical Association Foundation. Payne also serves as President of the 2014-2015 Board of Directors for the Association Foundation Group.

**David Toczko** (’81, Political Science) of Elizabethtown, Ky., received two Gold ADDY awards at the Tri-State Advertising & Marketing Professionals event for his books *South Union Shaker Village*, released in March 2014, and *Buffalo Trace: Carving the Trail to Great Bourbon* was released in September 2014. *Buffalo Trace* also received the Judges Special Citation for technical skills in photography, and Toczko was awarded the Best in Creativity Award at the annual American Advertising Awards Show.

**Dr. James Flynn** (’86, Communication) of Franklin, Ky., Superintendent of Simpson County Schools, was named the 2015 Kentucky Superintendent of the Year by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators. Flynn was selected for his enthusiastic and iconic devotion to improving the achievement levels for all students and for the inspiration he provides his staff and colleagues.

**Bob Young** (’87, Political Science and History) of Bowling Green, Ky., a partner at English Lucas Priest & Owsley, LLP, was elected Chair of the Law Practice Division of the American Bar Association. He will serve a one-year term.

**Lydia Raglin Williams** (’81, Music) of Lithonia, Ga., has been selected as the runner up for Atlanta Public Schools High School Teacher of the Year. She has served as a choral director for 30 years, and she is a Georgia Music Educator’s Association Adjudicator and an active member of the National Association for Music Education.
1990s

Christina Mitchell Bentley ('95, English and Sociology) of Corbin, Ky., is the new Web/Special Pages Editor for the Times-Tribune in Corbin, Ky. She is also an Adjunct Professor in the English Department at Lincoln Memorial University.

Timothy Bischoff ('98, Journalism & Broadcasting and Philosophy and Religion) of Lexington, Ky., has been named Chair of the PBS Digital Advisory Council for 2015. Council members are selected from among key leaders at public television stations nationally. Members collaborate with and advise PBS in the development of websites, apps and other digital services that deliver trusted, high-quality public media content whenever and wherever audiences expect. Bischoff, who serves as KET’s Senior Director of Marketing and Online Content, first joined the Digital Advisory Council in 2013.

Jason Brewer ('93, Political Science and Sociology) of Denver, Colo., has joined Divorce Matters, a Colorado Family Law firm devoted to individuals in transition who require specialized attention and services.

Jinger (Davis) Carter ('95, Communication) of Sturgis, Ky., has been named Director of Human Resources for Henderson County Schools. Carter most recently served as the Director of Assessment and Accountability.

Steven Carter ('96, History and Mathematics) of Sturgis, Ky., has been named Assistant Superintendent of District Wide Services for Union County Schools. Carter more recently served as the Director of Student Support Services and Pupil Personnel.

Jason Scott Embry ('94, '95, Economics and Music) of St. Louis, Mo., and Elizabeth Schwaab were married on Aug. 30, 2014. Jason has also been named Director of Advancement for the Today and Tomorrow Educational Foundation.

Marc Francis ('90, Journalism & Broadcasting and Kinesiology) of Woodstock, Ga., has joined Veeam Software as the Video Production Manager where he will manage all video production and post-production efforts for Veeam’s Global Marketing Team.

Michelle James ('98, Journalism & Broadcasting and Psychology) of New York, N.Y., has been promoted to Vice President, 360 Consumer Marketing & Brand Strategy for BET Networks. She was recognized for her execution of cross-functional, multi-platform original initiatives and award-winning marketing strategies.

Command Sgt. Maj. Sheryl Lyon ('90, Modern Languages and Biology) of Bellevue, Neb., has been named the next senior enlisted leader for U.S. Army Europe, breaking new ground for a position that until now has always been held by male combat arms soldiers. Lyon, who has spent most of her career in military intelligence, is currently the senior enlisted leader for Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska.

2000s

Caelin (Smith) Anderson ('08, Communication) and Jason Anderson of Louisville, Ky., celebrated their wedding in Louisville on June 7, 2014. Caelin, a former Spirit Master and former employee of WKU, is the Associate Director for Student and Young Alumni Programs in the University of Louisville Office of Alumni Relations & Annual Giving. Jason is the Program Director and Afternoon Host for ESPN 680 in Louisville.

Shailen Bhatt ('01, Economics and History) of Dover, Del., has been named Executive Director for the Colorado Department of Transportation. Bhatt most recently served as Cabinet Secretary for the Delaware Department of Transportation where he directed a nearly billion-dollar budget and managed 2,800 employees and the state’s transportation system.
Alexandra Booze (‘09, ’10, Journalism & Broadcasting and Political Science) of Washington, D.C., was recently named the Director of Communications for Washington Legal Foundation, a private non-profit that advocates for freedom and justice in Washington, D.C.

Cayla Duncan (‘09, ’11, Communication and Sociology) of Bowling Green, Ky., has been named Catering and Event Sales Director at The Club at Olde Stone.

JT Henderson (‘05, History and Kinesiology) of Louisville, Ky., accepted the position of Vice President of Resource Development at Family & Children’s Place, a Louisville-based non-profit that protects children and families from abuse and violence.


James “Jed” Kerkhoff (‘05, Communication) of Lexington, Ky., a Vice President at Assured Neace Lukens, has been named a 2015 Rising Star by Employee Benefit Adviser. Kerkhoff was chosen as one of 20 to receive this national award that recognizes top benefit advisers, age 35 and under, who are making a difference in the benefits industry.

Nick Lowe (‘08, ’13, History) of Bowling Green, Ky., is the new Athletic Directory at Greenwood High School. Lowe, who also serves as the Cross-Country Coach, is entering his sixth year as a teacher at Greenwood.

Jace Lux (‘00, ’05, ’12, Journalism & Broadcasting and English) and Brandy (Trescott) Lux (‘99) of Bowling Green, Ky., announce the birth of their son, Connor Brendan, on Jan. 19, 2015. He weighed 8 pounds, 10 ounces and was 20 inches long. He was welcomed by his big brother, Colton, who is 4 years old.

Daniel McCoy (‘02, ’05) and Leslie (Peek) McCoy (‘05, ’07, Journalism & Broadcasting and Communication) of Bowling Green, Ky., were married Dec. 22, 2014. He is employed by Ohio County Schools, and she is employed by Bowling Green Independent Schools. She was also recently recognized by the National School Public Relations Association as one of the Top 35 Under 35 school public relations professionals in America.
Jon Porter ('08, ‘13, Music) of Scottsville, Ky., is the new Assistant Principal at James E. Bazzell Middle School. Porter most recently taught in the Warren County Public Schools district.

Matthew Ransdell ('06, Political Science) and Sandra (Harrell) Ransdell of St. Petersburg, Fla., were married on April 24, 2014, in the Chandler Memorial Chapel on WKU’s campus. Matthew is the son of WKU President Gary Ransdell and Julie Ransdell. Matthew and Sandra both practice law in St. Petersburg.

Rachel (Davis) Riddell ('02, Communication) and Kurt Riddell, of Pewee Valley, Ky., announce the birth of their son, Samuel Davis, on Nov. 12, 2014. He weighed 8 pounds, 15 ounces and was 21 inches long. Sam was welcomed by his big brother, Jack.

Jeremy Richey ('08, English) of Nicholasville, Ky., is the co-creator, along with his wife and former WKU student Kelley Avery Richey, and Editor of Art Decades, a quarterly print publication that features critical, historical and personal articles on a variety of topics including film, music, fashion and beyond. Art Decades also features exclusive interviews with both up and coming and established artists, filmmakers, performers, musicians and photographers.

Matt Villmer ('06, Communication) of Charlotte, N.C., is one of the founding attorneys of the new Business Litigation Practice Group of Sodoma Law, P.C. Prior to joining Sodoma Law, he was the youngest attorney in Florida history to argue before Florida's 1st District Court of Appeals. Villmer was also lead counsel in the largest claim filed against BP after the 2010 oil spill.

Hank (‘09) and Kelly (Cohen) Wilson (‘09, Art) of Bowling Green, Ky., welcomed their son, Hanley Michael, on Aug. 8, 2014.

Sarah Davasher-Wisdom ('04, ’06, Journalism & Broadcasting and Political Science) of Louisville, Ky., joined Greater Louisville, Inc., the Metro Chamber of Commerce, as Vice President of Government Affairs & Collaboration. She most recently served as the Government Relations Manager for the Kentucky district of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

2010s

Curtis Burge ('13, Journalism & Broadcasting) of Lawrenceburg, Ky., received the State of Oregon’s Student Employee of the Year Award and Portland State University’s Employee of the Year Award. He recently completed his Master of Science degree in Educational Leadership and Policy at Portland State University.

Jordan Campbell ('13, Theatre and Dance) of Mount Sterling, Ky., recently served as a White House Intern in Washington, D.C. He worked with arts and education policy portfolios and was also active with youth and family activities. Campbell was also selected to portray the Eastern Bunny at the White House Easter Egg Roll.

Julia Bright Crigler ('11, Political Science) of Pewee Valley, Ky., has been named the Kentucky State Directory for Americans for Prosperity.

Karen Hopkins ('10, Journalism & Broadcasting) of Hoboken, N.J., is working as a Casting Director for reality TV production company Departure Films in New York City.

Tyler Lockhart ('14, Journalism & Broadcasting) of Houston, Texas, recently joined CBS Radio as an Account Executive.

Sydney Lutsch (‘14, Communication) of Nashville, Tenn., recently joined Brooksource as a Technical Recruiter.

J.R. Nimmo ('14, Art) and Rebecca (Stinnett) Nimmo ('11, ’14, Folk Studies and Anthropology) of Bowling Green, Ky., announce the birth of their daughter, Penelope Lane. She was born Jan. 30, 2015, and she weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was 19 inches long.
Kaitlen Osburn (‘10, Theatre and Dance) of Franklin, Tenn., has received the 2014 Gant Gaither Theatre Award from the Princess Grace Foundation. Kaitlen is currently pursuing her Master of Fine Arts degree in Ensemble-Based Physical Theatre at Dell’Arte International in Blue Lake, Calif. Osburn is the first current student at Dell’Arte to win a scholarship from the Princess Grace Foundation. The award is a theatre scholarship that will cover tuition for her final year at Dell’Arte International.

Brad Stephens (‘13, Journalism & Broadcasting) of Winchester, Ky., is a Sports Reporter for the Bowling Green Daily News covering WKU women’s basketball and high school sports.

Randa (Sawyers) Young (‘13, Communication) and Justin Lee Young (‘07) of Bowling Green, Ky., were married on April 26, 2014, at The Club at Olde Stone in Bowling Green, Ky. Randa is currently the Office Assistant for the WKU Doctor of Physical Therapy Program and will return to WKU in the Spring of 2015 to pursue her master’s degree in Organizational Communication. Justin works as a Professional Civil Engineer at the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, where he has been employed for seven years.

Christopher Wenger (‘13, Journalism & Broadcasting) of Buckner, Ky., has accepted a position with The Rawlings Group as a Subrogation Analyst.

Tyler Wittmer (‘13, Philosophy) and Alicia (Beach) Wittmer (‘14) of Bowling Green, Ky., were married in 2014. Tyler recently became a licensed minister at Living Hope Baptist Church.

John Ridley (‘74), Managing Director/Investment Officer, Derek Hull (‘93, Communication), CFP®, First Vice President-Investment Officer, and Katie Beard Stinnett (‘09, Journalism & Broadcasting and Political Science), Financial Consultant, all of The Ridley and Hull Financial Consulting Group of Wells Fargo Advisors, were invited to attend the Barron’s Top Advisory Team Summit in recognition of their accomplishments in 2014. All three team members are graduates of WKU, reside in Bowling Green, Ky., and are actively involved with the University and a wide range of community philanthropic causes.

Tucker Publishing based in Evansville, Ind., Tucker Publishing Group has employed several WKU graduates since the company was formed in 1999. “From the very start we have had a strong WKU legacy,” Kristen K. Tucker is the Editor and Publisher. Emily Patton (‘12, Journalism & Broadcasting) has been promoted to the position of Managing Publisher. She previously served as Staff Writer since December 2013. Trista J. Lutgring (‘08) joined Tucker Publishing Group in March 2015 as a Staff Writer.
We hope you've enjoyed this edition of Arts & Letters and are as excited as we are about the accomplishments of Potter College's students, alumni, and faculty. Please make a gift today supporting the Potter College of Arts & Letters Dean's Fund for Excellence. Your financial support will provide increased academic opportunities for students within Potter College, including student support for study abroad, research and creative activity, and innovative learning opportunities beyond the classroom. We greatly appreciate your gift. It's an investment in the future.

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PeiJu Chien-Pott of the Martha Graham Dance Company in "Echo" by Andonis Foniadakis. Photo and copyright by Hibbard Nash Photography.

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