



WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of English

Fall 2023 Newsletter
Volume 1, Issue 1

STUDENT BEAT





STUDENT BEAT

About Us

Student Beat is the semiannual newsletter to inform students about the English Department. From stories by students to student/teacher updates, Student Beat is the place to find everything about the Wayne State University Department of English!

Edited by Nyana Allen xBA '24.

Please email ENGMSA@WAYNE.EDU with events and news items for our next issue.

Contents

02 Letter from the Chair
A letter from the chair of the English department, Dr. Caroline Maun

03 Club Spotlight
Article on Kino Club 313 by Dr. Chera Kee

04 Student Spotlight
Visualizing a Reformed Writing Classroom, Kristi Morris

05 Notable Events
Reports on WaynePop conference and the Rushton Journal

06 Notable Events
Report on the Humanities Commons grand opening

07 News & Notes
Course recommendations, Departmental updates, Alumni news, and Awards

09 News & Notes
Professors, Poets, and Pies showcase article and Department accolades

Save the Date!

January 15, 2024 – MA and PhD applications are due (with funding consideration)

Apply Now

Did you know?

The English Department has 4 journals for students to submit several types of written work for publication.

WAYNE LITERARY REVIEW

Criticism: a Quarterly for Literature and the Arts

THE RUSHTON JOURNAL
(for undergraduate students)

THE WOODWARD REVIEW

Letter from the Chair

Dr. Caroline Maun



I'm delighted you are reading the inaugural Fall 2023 newsletter for the Wayne State University English Department, Student Beat, Volume 1.1. Thanks to Graduate Program Specialist Laurean Butcher, and to our student assistants Nyana Allen xBA'24 and Rayan Elzein xBA'25, it is comprehensive, informative, and beautifully designed. The newsletter is a testament to the department's commitment to fostering a holistic educational experience for its students.

Our academic programs are distinguished by a robust and diverse curriculum that emphasizes interdisciplinary study. We are committed to challenging our students intellectually and equipping them with the skills necessary for successful careers in academia, education, publishing, and other fields. A prime example of this commitment in action is the work of Ph.D. Candidate Kristi Morris xPhD'24. Kristi is preparing to defend her digital dissertation next month, a significant milestone as it represents the first multimodal dissertation at Wayne State. Her innovative work not only contributes to the academic community but also demonstrates how our program supports students in deepening and expanding their professional practices. Kristi's upcoming presentation at the Modern Language Association showcases the department's encouragement of scholarly engagement and professional development.

Complementing the academic rigor of the coursework are the extracurricular activities that the department encourages students to engage

in. The newsletter features Kino Club 313 and the Wayne English Graduate Organization (WEGO).

We highlight the annual WaynePop conference as a notable event that showcases the department's focus on student leadership and scholarly exchange. The event featured a keynote address from Dr. Robin R. Means Coleman, complemented by a screening of the 2019 horror film *Sweetheart*. Additionally, the newsletter celebrates the opening of the Humanities Commons, a new collaborative space on campus, and the upcoming Rushton Journal, which provides students with an opportunity to contribute to the department's scholarly community by editing and publishing their work.

We celebrate the success of our recent graduates and the active participation of our students in national conferences. We are proud to note appointments of recent graduates that reflect the high caliber of our program and their readiness to excel in their professions.

This newsletter serves as a source of inspiration, encouraging you to forge new connections, engage in scholarly, academic, and extracurricular communities, initiate innovative projects, and align your academic pursuits with your broader aspirations and dreams. We are committed to supporting you as you thrive.

Kino Club 313

by Dr. Chera Kee, Director of Graduate Studies

While the Department of English provides many opportunities for students across the university to explore their interests and develop new skills in our courses, the department is also proud of the student organizations we support. These clubs encourage undergraduate and graduate students to connect with each other and often provide opportunities for our students to apply their academic skills outside of the classroom.

One of the department's oldest student groups is Kino Club 313 (pronounced "key-noh"). Founded in 2012, this Film & Media Studies student group is named for Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov's 1924 film *Kino-eye* (or "Cinema eye") and was started as a way to build a sense of community among undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in Film & Media Studies. One way club members have done this is through free public film screenings curated by student members.

The public screenings are not the only outward-facing element of Kino Club 313. Since 2015, the club has also sponsored an annual pop culture conference, #WaynePop. The most recent pop culture conference took place in October, 2023, and included a keynote talk on "Black Horror, Uncivil Disobedience, & Reclaiming the Urban," by Robin R. Means Coleman of Northwestern University. All aspects of the #WaynePop conference—including these keynote lectures—are organized by student volunteers. These students work hard to secure funding to support the advertising and coordination of multiple events.



Kino Club meeting, September 28, 2023

They also produce a call for papers, evaluate applications, organize panels and workshops, and manage volunteers for the conference.

Also under the umbrella of WaynePop are other clubs that meet monthly. Knit Lit gathers knitters, crocheters, and anyone interested in learning to work on fiber arts projects and talk about the latest books they have read. Warrior Gaming meets to play games ranging from board games like D&D to video games such as *Until Dawn*. Students from across Wayne State are welcome to attend, and no experience is necessary.

Kino Club 313, as well as other student organizations, provide opportunities for our undergraduate and graduate students to meet other Wayne State students, as well as to engage with students and scholars from across the globe. These groups also provide a means for our students to connect with the wider Wayne State and Detroit communities while learning valuable skills that will serve them well after graduation.

Visualizing a Reformed Writing Classroom: PhD Candidate Kristi Morris designs multimodal instruction for undergraduate writers

by Colleen Hart xPh.D. '24



Fifth year Ph.D. Candidate Kristi Morris is a long-time Wayne Stater: “I was drawn to WSU, because it is situated in the heart of Detroit. I love working with the faculty and even more with the diverse student body. There are opportunities to learn and grow in ways that other R1 institutions may not offer merely because of student demographics.”

A Dearborn native, this mother of four has lived and taught in metro-Detroit her entire life. Coming from a K-12 teaching background, Morris wanted to pair her degrees in art history with a deep dive into the teaching of writing: “I research multimodal instruction and visual rhetoric, especially in writing program administration and implementation in the first-year writing classroom.”

In January, Morris will present her digital dissertation, *Focusing into Design and Blurring Out Traditional Writing: A Mixed-Method Student-Centered Study of Multimodal Composition*, hosted on her website, designingfyc.com, at the annual Modern Language Association convention taking place in Philadelphia, PA in 2024. Her presentation is part of a unique opportunity to share the “Next-Gen” of dissertations in doctoral humanities research.

A dissertation isn’t built in a vacuum—friends and family create a support system to help get the work done. In regards to important relationships she’s built at Wayne State, Morris cites her dissertation director, Adrienne Jankens as a major influence on her success in the PhD program in Rhetoric and Writing Studies. Going against the traditional format of a written dissertation has not come without its challenges, but she shares, “Dr. Jankens has been the answer to my every question and the voice of much needed support. She is not only my guide, but a source of inspiration.”

As the creator of the first multimodal dissertation at Wayne State, Morris recognizes the impact has had on her success at Wayne State: “I have had hundreds of students, many of whom have forged great working relationships. [Through our relationships] I have learned so much about myself as an instructor, but more importantly, I have recognized the ways that student practice can inform my approach to the classroom.”

WAYNEPOP CONFERENCE



September 28 and 29, 2023

WaynePop, the student group that includes Warrior Gaming, Knit Lit, and Kino Club 313, hosted its 8th annual Pop Culture Conference at 5057 Woodward. The conference began with a screening of *Sweetheart* (2019), a 2019 horror-survival film, selected by the keynote speaker, Dr. Robin R. Means Coleman of Northwestern University. On Friday the 29th, the conference kicked off with several panels exploring this year's theme of "Culture...Reanimated!" The conference highlighted numerous Wayne State scholars as well as scholars from Illinois State and the Calayan Educational Foundation. The conference concluded with a presentation by Dr. Coleman entitled "Black Horror, Uncivil Disobedience, & Reclaiming the Urban," which explored uncivil disobedience as a response to oppression in films such as *Get Out* (2017) and *Soul Vengeance* (1975).

THE RUSHTON JOURNAL OF UNDERGRADUATE HUMANITIES RESEARCH

Inaugural Issue to be published in Winter, 2024

The English Department is proud to announce the first issue of the newly-developed Rushton Journal of Undergraduate Research. Throughout the Fall 2023 semester, Wayne State students started work on this new journal, developing publishing policies, reviewing over twenty manuscripts for the first issue, and assembling digital and print versions of the journal. The goal with the first issue was to identify well-written arguments that are intellectually compelling to students and members of Wayne State University, as well as the broader Detroit community. Students interested in taking part in the journal should contact its coordinator, Joe Torok at joseph.torok@wayne.edu, for more information.



HUMANITIES COMMONS

GRAND OPENING

September 21, 2023

Welcome to the brand new and uniquely collaborative addition to our campus! The Humanities Commons, located on the 2nd floor of the Undergraduate Library, features rotating exclusive art exhibits and group workspaces dedicated to hosting events and classes under the Humanities umbrella. These exhibits and events will highlight the importance of the humanities here at Wayne State. Many thanks to Associate Professor of Teaching M.L. Liebler and the members of the English Department and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences who have brought this to life and brought the arts to our students. This initiative was made possible through the support and leadership of Dean Stephanie Hartwell of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.



Photos by Rayan Elzein xBA '25

Consider these courses for Spring/Summer 2024

Undergraduate:

ENG 5035: *Topics in Gender and Sexuality*

Advanced course on issues of sexuality and gender as mediated through literary and cultural study. Attention to critical theory as well as various literary and cultural forms. Monday & Wednesday, 6:30 – 9:00pm. Synchronous

ENG 3140: *American Literature after 1865*

Historical survey of American Literature from the Civil War to the present. Understanding the range and variety of our national literature as it has developed. Tuesday & Thursday, 10:30am – 12:00pm. Synchronous.

Graduate:

ENG 8998: *Prospectus and Dissertation Chapter Workshop*

Intensive workshop in creating a dissertation prospectus and/or dissertation chapter. Attention to invention, development, peer support, and developing material for academic publishing audiences. Monday, 6:00 – 8:00pm. Synchronous.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

- Serve on the new Wayne English Grad Organization board
- Suggest themes for monthly graduate workshops
- Attend Knit Lit, Warrior gaming, and/or Kino Club 313 meetings



WaynePop Meeting, September 15th, 2023
Photo by Nyana Allen xBA '24

Contact Dr. Chera Kee (ckee@wayne.edu) for more information

New Positions

- Dr. Walter Lucken PhD '23- Associate Professor, Queens College, CUNY
- Dr. Kevin Ball PhD '19- Associate Professor, Wesleyan University



2022-2023 Graduates

- Elia Newsom, Ph.D.
- Mariel Krupansky, Ph.D.
- Walter Lucken, Ph.D.
- Kelly Plante, Ph.D.
- Sukayna Davanzo, MA
- Katie Green, MA
- Elisa Gurule, MA
- Ken Jackson, MA
- Kalimah Johnson, MA*
- Lynn Losh, MA
- Saima Mirza, MA
- Keiko Narisako, MA
- Grace Walter, MA
- Lena Hakim, MA*
- Nariman Hawily, MA*

*continuing in Ph.D. program



New faces

- Hired! Dr. Ola Oladipo, Ph.D. '23 UW-Madison, English RWS post-doc
- Admitted! 6 new Ph.D. students and 2 new MA students started in the fall

Department Updates

The 10th floor Lounge and large conference room was cleaned, painted, and re-carpeted for a fresh new look, a CZUR book scanner was installed in the English front office, and a Meeting Owl was purchased to facilitate multi-speaker Zoom calls from anywhere!



Publications and Presentations

- E. Carbonara presented a paper at the Shakespeare Assoc. of America Conference
- K. Johnson presented on a panel at Northeast Modern Languages Conference
- K.M. Begian-Lewis presented a paper at the Conference of Collegiate Composition and Communications
- A. Wright attended the Conference of Collegiate Composition and Communications
- V. Perrone and I. Pickell attended the Association of Writers and Poets conference
- C. Hart attended the Rhetoric Society of America Summer Institute
- M. Spalter attended the American Comparative Literature Association's annual meeting
- H. Tuinstra presented a paper at the SCMS conference

PROFESSORS, POETS, AND PIES

FACULTY SHOWCASE

by Vincent Perrone, MA '23



On Monday, Nov. 29, the Wayne State Humanities Commons debuted its first "Professors, Poets & Pies" event. The Poets & Pies event was a terrific display of the English department's unparalleled talents. Set in the buzzing UGL—in a cozy corner—the event welcomed students, alumni, and faculty to enjoy new fiction from Professor Natalie Bakopoulos, new poetry from Professor Robert Laidler and Dr. Caroline Maun, as well as original poetry set over music from Professor M.L. Liebler. Plus, of course, coffee and pie. It was enthralling, moving, and perfectly orchestrated, displaying the wide span of creative work being done at WSU.

Look out for upcoming Poets & Pies events and other unique programs during the winter term at the Humanities Commons. The space is located on the second floor of the Undergraduate Library (UGL) and is open to all, providing a safe environment dedicated to discussions on disabilities and resilience.

Photo by Rayan Elzein xBA '25

Department Accolades

- Professor Walter Edwards was named Distinguished Service Professor
- Professor Ljiljana Progovac was named Distinguished Professor
- Professor Jonathan Flatley was appointed to the Wayne State University Academy of Scholars
- Professors Hilary Fox and Michael Okpanachi were awarded Josephine Nevins Keal Faculty Fellowships
- Professor Kelly Plante won the Women's Caucus Editing and Translation Prize
- Professor Grace Williams received the 2023 General Education Teaching Award
- Professor Natalie Bakopoulos was awarded the 2023 President's Award for Excellence in Teaching
- Professor Natalia Rakhlin received the 2023-2024 Career Development Chair Award
- Professor M.L. Liebler was awarded a 2023-2024 Board of Governor's Distinguished Faculty Fellowship
- Professor KM Begian-Lewis received a fellowship to Ithaca S+R
- Professor Jaime Goodrich was selected for membership in the 2022-2023 Academy of Teachers