We, the English faculty at GVSU, are committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, and we uphold the following values and principles:

Values

♦ We value the rigorous and comprehensive study of language, literacy and literature.
♦ We value the cultivation of critical reading and reflection.
♦ We value the production of excellent writing in a variety of forms.
♦ We value the ways the study of language and literature transforms our understanding of local, national, and international communities.
♦ We value teaching that will lead our students to participate in society as informed, responsible citizens.

Principles

♦ We will teach students to speak, read, and write effectively.
♦ We will teach a variety of literary, analytical, pedagogical, and theoretical skills.
♦ We will provide students in all three emphasis areas with a coherent curricular framework and relevant, well-structured choices.
♦ We will foster knowledge and love of literature and of language.

Mission Statement

The English Department strengthens the liberal education of students by developing a deepened understanding of language and literacy, the value of critical reading and effective writing, and the richness of literature, past and present.
This culminating event for the English Capstone Course requires that students publicly present a project that they have been responsible for shaping from its inception to its final form. The presentation will concretize the expertise that students have accrued in the research process and allow them to speak as authorities about their topic. No matter what career our students enter, public speaking is an essential skill, as is the act of distilling complex knowledge into a compact yet comprehensible package. Thus this final assignment of the Capstone course is the one that perhaps most clearly transitions students out of the major and into the next phase of their lives. We see this aspect of the course as a way to help students recognize each others’ accomplishments—and to help them be proud of their own as they move forward into their various futures.

The ENG 495 Capstone provides several important opportunities for English majors not offered elsewhere in the curriculum: the opportunity to reflect individually on the intellectual impact of majoring in English (intellectual autobiography); the opportunity to engage in the development and writing of an extended paper (senior thesis); and the opportunity to participate in the public presentation of the thesis work (departmental student conference).

This Capstone course underscores the Department’s principles and values: the cultivation of critical reading and reflection; the production of excellent writing in a variety of forms; the ability to speak, read, and write effectively; and the cultivation of literary, analytical, pedagogical, and theoretical skills.
Schedule of Events

9:00-9:50 am – Session One
10:00-10:50 am – Session Two
11:00-11:50 am – Session Three
12:00-12:50 pm – Session Four
1:00-1:50 pm – Session Five
2:00-2:50 pm – Session Six

3:00 pm

Please join us in 2270 Kirkhof for a reception honoring all of our presenters.
We thank you for attending our Capstone Conference today.

There are numerous lunch options available on-campus and off-campus. Please see page 28 for details.
Facilitators: Dr. David Alvarez  
Dr. Laura VanderBroek

Presenters:

**Anna Barrett—More than English: Encouraging Bilingualism in the United States**

The concept of bilingualism is important because as the United States grows, it is becoming more linguistically diverse. Through the examination of topics such as the complexity, social context, and controversies related to multilingualism it could be argued that bi-, tri, and multi-lingualism is nothing but beneficial. However, the U.S. is stuck in a rut when it comes to understanding the importance of bilingualism and accepting that the infamous concept of a “melting pot” is dissipating. In this paper I will assert that we should not confine ourselves to one culture or one language. Language is about more than communication; it is about expanding the cognitive capabilities of the mind, cross-cultural appreciation, and overall quality of life.

**Shelby Grzywacz—‘When You’re Here, Let’s Speak American’: The Racist Undertones of the Official English Policy Debates**

With the rising Mexican-American immigration population since the early 1980s there has been ongoing debate about border control and illegal immigration. These debates are punctuated by the threat that eventually Spanish language use will be more prevalent than English language use. This threat began the Official English movement in order to make English the national language of the United States. My thesis argues that the discourse used when discussing Official English policies are racist and attempting to limit Mexican-Americans socially by attacking their native language use. This study will use critical discourse analysis to look specifically at the 2016 Republican presidential campaigns and how the candidates speak about Spanish language use and the Official English legislation. For this presentation I will select a few key quotes and discuss how they are attacking the Mexican-American immigrant population instead of promoting bilingualism and cultural diversity.

**Erin Wantroba—Codeswitching in the Classroom: An Advocate for Training**

For my senior thesis, I focused on the teaching method of codeswitching from African American Vernacular English to Standard English in the classroom. Drawing on work by experts such as Wheeler & Swords, I discuss the various ways teachers may successfully adapt their practices to include codeswitching into lessons. My presentation will focus on research that advocates for teachers who speak Standard English to be trained to use African American Vernacular English through codeswitching themselves in the classroom. I will also discuss the teaching practices through codeswitching viewed as most beneficial to the academic achievements of the African American Vernacular English speaking students.
Session One - 9:00-9:50 am

Session 1B-Room 2266—Developing Approaches to Literacy

Facilitators: Dr. Pat Bloem
Dr. Brian White

Presenters:

**Alexandra Evans—Texting Is Totes Cool: The Academic Benefits of Texting and Inclusion into 21st Century Classrooms**

Texting continues to grow in popularity among adolescents, and it is no secret that there are many critics that say that texting is contributing to the demise of adolescents’ literacy. Throughout my thesis, I explore the many research studies that prove texting is not detrimental to students but in fact provides many advantages for literacy skills and why understanding texting is crucial for educators. If educators understand it, they can begin to build on the skills that it provides, use it to coincide with traditional literacy education, and prepare students for a world that relies on digital communication and a growing dependence on technology. My presentation will explain the benefits that texting has on literacy skills, and why it is important for educators to capitalize on the interests of their students.

**Mary O’Brien—Aliteracy of a Nation**

For my senior thesis, I focused on the teaching of reading in elementary classrooms. I argue that the growing aliteracy of our nation is one, if not the largest, of the factors greatly adding to the already difficult task. Aliteracy is defined as having the ability to read, yet being uninterested in doing so. My presentation will focus on the found reading habits of students from first grade to graduate school, including those who plan to go into the field of education, and how these habits are adding to the already challenging task that is teaching reading. I will then discuss how these habits can be broken and how we can again become a nation of readers in this age of technology.

**Amanda Smith—Supporting Literacy Achievement: Exploring Small Group Interventions for Struggling Readers**

This paper will explore intervention techniques for students struggling to obtain adequate achievement in literacy. Reading performance is a pivotal foundation for every child attending school today. How can administrators, classroom teachers, literacy specialists, and caring adults intercede for students unable to meet the rigor of current literacy benchmarks? Furthermore, this paper will highlight methodologies of reading acquisition, current theories of intervention practice, as well as, benefits of small group practice to sufficiently support and encourage underperforming students in literacy.
Olivia Smith—A Current View on Transcendentalism

For my thesis, I will be focusing on the current transcendentalism movement happening within my generation. I will mainly be drawing my ideas from Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden* and applying his thoughts about society and life into an adapted view that the current adolescent age group holds. I will also incorporate the work of other transcendentalists to illustrate the repetition of this movement throughout time. But, my main objective is to define what transcendentalism is today and how the youth has transformed this movement into one of their own. Ideally, I would like to find out what it truly means for one to “suck the marrow out of life.”

Stephanie Brzezinski—What Did Americans Know about the Holocaust and When?

The Holocaust has been discussed widely in conferences, schools, films, and literature throughout the world, but when did this awareness and interest begin? Was it immediately after World War Two, or did it take a while longer before Americans knew the reality of the Holocaust? In an analysis of The New York Times as well as several works of fictions, I found that the Holocaust did not enter into the American consciousness until more than a decade after World War Two had ended. The 1970s saw an explosion of interest, which continued to increase throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Each decade produced literature that often fit with the general feeling of the time, but many texts broke with history and instead presented a distorted image of the Holocaust for their many readers.

Brent Markowski—Out of One, Many: Independence from Children’s to Young Adult Literature

My paper will be focused on how both historical and societal aspects assisted in the development of young adult literature from children’s literature. Within this research, the exploration of the theme of independence and how it is portrayed in these genres will also be addressed. My research into independence will show how the focus of character independence in children’s literature changes from an individualistic standpoint to more of a communal standpoint in young adult literature. Within my research, the paper will focus on the connection between reader and literature and how that connection helps readers associate with the theme of independence.
Session 2A-Room 2259—Multicultural Classroom Advocacy

Facilitators: Dr. Pat Bloem
Dr. Laura VanderBroek

Presenters:

**Erynne Langejans—United Through Differences: Avoiding the Mono-Cultural Classroom**

Multicultural literature is literature that is representative of all students and their cultures in the classroom. Though this body of work tends to be well-regarded, my research indicates that it is not broadly utilized by educators. My research also asks why this is. Preliminary findings point to: white hegemonic privilege, lack of multicultural training, and personal choice when planning the curriculum. I will investigate these possible explanations and show how they lead to the negation of multicultural literature in the classroom and, subsequently, a lost opportunity for students. In this paper I will describe multicultural educational methods that specifically address the concerns I found among educators. Ultimately, multicultural literature benefits students by broadening their humanity through acquired empathy and respect for other cultures as well as their own.

**Kara Stadelman—‘Speak English’: White Privilege and the Teaching of English Language Learners in the United States**

Many immigrant families are moving to the United States and are expected to “speak English.” These families are expected to assimilate into American culture as soon as possible, but this assimilation process often includes the expected and rapid acquisition of the English language, which, in most cases, results in the loss of their native language and culture. The popular, “research-based” and government-recommended English-immersion programs claim to be the best option for English language learners in schools, but I argue that other programs such as dual-language immersion programs are superior. What is the underlying issue regarding this “English-only” culture in the United States? Is it the lack of communication between researchers or is it a result of a deeper social issue such as white privilege? This attitude of English supremacy is affecting English language learners and their success in American schools.

**Porshea Johnson—African American Vernacular**

The purpose of this paper is to present research that examines African American Vernacular language. Based on my research, teaching students how to switch between Black English and Standard English is a factor for success. Across the country African American students have lagged behind their Caucasian peers on standardized tests. Experts have been aiming towards shrinking the achievement gap for decades; however, the gap is still there. What I’ve discovered from my research is that teaching students how to code switch at an early age can amend that gap.
Presenters:

Griffin Gallagher—It’s Just a Game: An Exploration of the Evolution of Joseph Campbell’s Monomyth in Modern Video Games

Some argue that heroism at its core never changes. The work of Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* is his testament to this argument that the hero’s journey follows a particular template, which he called the monomyth. Yet as the world continues to grow more complex, heroes stray from this model. In an effort to chart these deviations in the scope of modern popular culture, I will explore three very recent video games: *Journey*, *BioShock Infinite*, and *The Last of Us*. Yet their departures from the monomyth are not the only matter of discussion, for there are some aspects of Campbell’s monomyth that are strictly adhered to in all three examples. Both the differences and similarities of the monomyth shall be explored, for understanding the reasoning of these is the key to understanding the societal value that is placed on the heroes and their stories.

Matt Wagenheim—Moving Words: Visual Novels as One of Many Valuable Approaches to the Study of Literature

In this article I will make the argument that visual novels—a gamified digital novel—are an invaluable, yet currently untapped, asset in the examination, exploration, and explanation of narrative in literature. An exploration of the games *Virtue’s Last Reward* and *Nine Hours, Nine Persons, Nine Doors* will reveal that this contemporary medium is not only a novel approach to the study of multiple literacies, but also a unique bridge that blurs the lines between video games, film, and literature. This article will commence with a history of visual novels, before an exploration of their current place in a novel-centric literary environment. A large portion of this project will consist of the examination of the unique properties that characterize the medium, properties which allow for applications that push beyond the boundaries of traditional literature. Finally, implications for the future utilization of the visual novel will be discussed in order to reinforce their place as an effective tool for analysis and application in the fields of education, literary research and the study of narrative. This includes their use as a device to teach children a love for reading, scholars a new approach to literature, and theorists a new platform for narratological analysis.

Cody Anderson—Multimodal Texts and the Potency of Multiliteracy in Educational Settings

My thesis argues that the constantly changing multimedia environment in which adolescents are growing and exposed to demands a transformation in secondary educational practices which utilize those same multimodal sources, including video, music, advertisement, images, video games, and the combination of all of the above. I will discuss the value of the utilization of these methods and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each medium specified as well as identify potential limitations of this type of instruction.
Nanette Leegwater—A Normative Approach to Character Education

I believe that humans are compassionate creatures capable of virtue, empathy, generosity, courage, honesty, and love. We are curious about the physical properties of the universe yet grapple with the caprice of nature. We persistently fight to transcend evil and comprehend spiritual truths. We are tenacious meaning makers who build knowledge through observation, experiment, and experience. How does a sensitive teacher engage students on these levels? I believe it is possible to enliven students’ minds by cultivating their imaginations because, as the author of *Norms and Nobility*, David V. Hicks (1999) reasons, “only through the imagination can virtue be taught and character formed” (p. 34). The formation of virtue and character are the heart of my argument in this paper; in it, I discuss how Socratic dialectic as a pedagogical tool develops the formation of virtue and character in an era when the predominantly analytical nature of progressive education has severed the link between knowledge and responsibility.

Brieann Ricketts—On Using Young Adult Literature to Reduce Bullying in Schools

In this thesis I am going to discuss the importance of combating bullying in middle and high schools. I argue that by using young adult literature in English classrooms, a greater impact will be made on the students. With this literature having such an impact on the students, I argue that it is likely that incidences of bullying will decrease within the schools implementing such units. I will include ways in which to incorporate the use of young adult literature into a unit while combating bullying as well. For my presentation, I will be taking excerpts from the novel *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher and the film *Bully* from *The Bully Project* and explaining how they could be used specifically to get the attention of students more so than using outdated documentaries and raw statistics.

Alexandra Krupp—An Extremely Controversial Recipe: History Textbooks and the Biases Within

For years, scholars have argued back and forth about the various biases that can be found in textbooks; more specifically, History textbooks. These biases raise many red flags as to the impact they have on the students reading these skewed perceptions, and therefore taking them as truths due to their seemingly credible academic sources. Leaving students with a planted idea of how something happened or telling them how they should view a concept, rather than allowing them to think critically about a situation, come to terms with what it means to them and what it meant in context, is by far one of the greatest downfalls of many history textbooks today. By researching a variety of current textbooks as well as articles and films about the topic, I will show that the implications of these biased texts extend far beyond the classroom.
Kailee Bringedahl—Fairy Tales for Feminists: In Defense of the Romance Novel

The genre of romance has long been stigmatized by scholars and society. Its marginalization has placed its authors and readers on the offensive when it comes to defending “those books” to the outside world. Many believe that because romance novels are written by women, for women, that they are inferior in intellectuality and substance when compared to other genres. Critics maintain the genre enslaves its readers within a patriarchal society. Proponents of the genre argue that romance novels feature empowering heroines who challenge gender norms, who make their own decisions. Authors like Lisa Kleypas have succeeded in creating stories which feature empowering feminist heroines, like Sara in her historical novel Dreaming of You.

Examining Kleypas’s work, one is able to observe how she is challenging the stereotypes surrounding the genre by creating novels that feature feminist heroines and tackle important issues of gender, class, addiction and more.

Lauryn Pleva—You are Not Coming In at the Beginning: Shirley Jackson and the Gothic Fifties

The 1950s in the United States was a time of conformity and stability. Poodle skirts were in, war bonds were out, and Elvis reigned supreme. It is a decade famous for its reaffirmation of traditional gender roles, and it is a decade that inspired author Shirley Jackson to pen her own Gothic fiction. In doing so, Jackson entered a long literary history of disempowered female characters struggling to survive in a world where their identities are defined in relation to men. Jackson's novels imply that the 1950s are not so far removed from the 1800s as we might like to think. I will examine three of these novels, Hangsaman, The Haunting of Hill House, and We Have Always Lived in the Castle, and I will focus my presentation on the social and psychological anxieties facing Jackson’s heroines and how those anxieties are echoed in her Gothic predecessors.

Corinne VanWyke—Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein: Early Feminism and the Psychological Complexities of Birth, Motherhood and Death

One of the most famous classic novels, Frankenstein by Mary Shelley, has been analyzed and critiqued thousands of times since it was published in 1818. After close examination and inspection of the novel, the plethora of critical research on the novel, and the life experience of the author, I have drawn the conclusion that Frankenstein is more than great literature, but that it is an illumination of a young woman’s psyche. The novel reveals several insights into the mind of a young intelligent woman. In this presentation of my thesis, I will argue how Frankenstein characterizes and discusses topics of the female experience, gender roles, birth, motherhood, and death.
Annica Bosveld—The Infinite Things We Are Not: A Study of the Literary Development of Vampires to Reflect the Needs and Values of a Changing Society

From fangs and garlic to black cloaks and blood, vampires have thrilled and fascinated their audiences for centuries. In my thesis paper, I explore how vampires have changed and developed throughout literature, specifically studying the differences between the vampires in Bram Stoker’s novel *Dracula* and Anne Rice’s novel *Interview with the Vampire*. I argue that vampires evolve to become reflections of the current society’s needs and values, filling the role of both villain and hero as society demands. I go on to take the exploration into vampire development one step further and confront the question of why the blood-sucking fiend is so appealing to society, and why, despite its changes, it has lasted for so long. In my presentation, I will address this persistence of the vampire motif and suggest an answer for why society has such an affinity for “the infinite things we are not.”

Mackenzie Deater—Society’s Creation of the *Clockwork Orange*

Sociological and psychological theories are applied to Anthony Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange*, in an attempt to understand the violent and oftentimes inconceivable actions of the main character, Alex. A multidisciplinary analysis of the novel examines the premise that Alex acts and makes decisions not as a result of his own free will, but rather in response to his society, and as a part of natural human behavior: the need for human contact, for a family, for the emotional support group that he sees at the end of the tale.

Michael Kohlenberger—Three’s a Crowd: Deconstructing Character Dynamics in Mamet’s *American Buffalo*, Shepard’s *True West*, and McLure’s *Lonestar*

Contemporary theater can be a raw and visceral experience. An audience will be riveted by the shifting character dynamics embodied by the expert actors on stage. By analyzing the character dynamics in three contemporary plays about shifting male power relationships, I will show that a third character can serve to literally deconstruct and alter or reverse the character dynamic between two lead characters. David Mamet’s *American Buffalo*, Sam Shepard’s *True West*, and James McLure’s *Lonestar* each feature two male characters who embody a specific binary opposition. By using Derrida’s theory of Deconstruction, I hope to provide for future actors insight into how they can harness the skills of analyzing character dynamics in a contemporary play so that they can better embody the characters and the story of the play.
Michelle Nedved—The Benefits of Wordless Picture Books in the Classroom: Creating an Even Playing Field and Supporting Emergent Literacy

My thesis argues that wordless picture books are a great addition to the classroom. Many believe that these types of books are only beneficial to younger students; however, I plan to show how they can be of benefit for children of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and literacy levels. My presentation will focus on demonstrating how they can be used to create an even playing field in a diverse classroom and how they can aid in the learning of important emergent literacy skills.

Emily Dawes—Visual Literacy and Graphic Novels in the Classroom

My thesis argues that visual literacy, with the use of graphic novels, is an important education tool for all learners within the classroom. Drawing on work by experts, I discuss various ways in which visual literacy and graphic novels benefit learners, how graphic novels can be used within the classroom as well as specific titles in which can be used for content areas. For my presentation, I will discuss visual literacy in relationship to graphic novels and provide titles of curriculum appropriate material.

Elise Ezinga—Becoming a Part of History: Engaging Elementary Students through Historical Fiction

What if you could go on wild adventures and experience dangerous events, all without putting your own life at risk? It is possible, especially for intermediate elementary school students. Several historical fiction series, such as *I Survived* and *American Girl*, have been created for this age range to bring historical events to life through the first person perspective. These kinds of series contain educational value of not only history, but also writing, reading, science, vocabulary development, and moral education. Students can live through the events and retain much more information than by reading only nonfiction and informational texts. In this paper I will analyze these historical fiction series in order to discover the education benefits that it brings to the students reading them.
Facilitators: Dr. Ben Lockerd
Dr. Jo Miller

Presenters:

**Derek Blenman—The Villain of One’s Own Schemes**

While Iago is most often associated as the evil personified, that is nowhere near the complexity that exists with him. He is evil no doubt about that but his deeds are not for causing chaos around him instead, it is for rising to the station that he belongs. He may be the embodiment of jealousy, of the love Othello has for Desdemona and making Cassio a lieutenant over him, but his overwhelming intelligence insures that he is able to get what was promised to him in the end. His intelligence is the true evil, for he becomes swept up in his own sense of ambition and if he were to admit that he had gone too far in his plans everything that he had built would crumble around him and he would become nothing but a common villain.

**Sean Kelley—Inventing Richard II**

The title character of *Richard II* owes much to both fictional and historical sources. Current criticism points to the inspiration for Shakespeare’s Richard coming in part from such sources as Holinshed or Marlowe’s Edward II, but criticism of the play also consistently notes that Shakespeare diverges from any discernible source in the construction of his title character at several key points. In this paper I will build on this critical conversation and begin to search out a pattern to Shakespeare’s inventions. Examining the original elements of Shakespeare’s *Richard II* allows us to see what parts of the character reflected the politics of England when Shakespeare composed the play.

**William Conner—WWE: The Modern Shakespeare**

Many people tend to think a performance of a Shakespearean play in the 1600s would be similar to, or the same as it would be today, but in actuality early performances of Shakespeare’s plays were more similar to WWE events. A performance of one of Shakespeare’s plays today would be considered an upper class event where you’re expected to dress nice, refrain from talking, and pay anywhere from 30-100 dollars a ticket at a decent sized venue. Early performances of Shakespeare were regularly put on for the lower class, and would often get quite rambunctious, with audience members and performers interacting with each other, along with much eating and drinking. This paper will examine the similarities between the WWE and Shakespeare both thematically and in performance, in the hopes of showing readers that some things that may seem foolish on the surface still have merit when examined critically.
Meg Travis—Differentiated Instruction: Helpful or Hindering?

Differentiated instruction is becoming more and more prevalent in elementary education classes these days, but is it beneficial to student learning or just a new and exciting fad? Does the use of multiple instructional strategies effect the understanding and concentration of students? What are the benefits of using differentiated methods in the classroom? I will address how differentiation in education classes, when implemented correctly and with support, can benefit all students’ learning.

Joshua Fish—They Can Handle It: Empowering Students in the Language Arts Classroom

Many forces in culture and education seek to control what students read, how students should be taught, and what students should think about texts in the Language Arts Classroom. This reality does not serve students. Instead, students should be positioned at the center of the modern educational practice. Through analyses of pedagogic models from Sweden and the U.K. to an examination of students developmental capabilities, this paper provides a framework for Language Arts teachers to develop a student centered classroom which will provide purpose, meaning and agency to their students’ reading and writing lives. The goal of this framework is to build the skills necessary for students to confidently participate in the adult cultural conversation and enable them to take an active role in determining their education, their lives, and, ultimately, impact the course of society.

Emilee Best—Readio Emilia: The Search for Literacy in the Reggio Emilia Approach

This paper will describe and analyze the Reggio Emilia Approach to education. The foundations of this approach are detailed and need a deep understanding to successfully teach with this approach. This method is growing in popularity in the United States and early childhood schools are transitioning to this approach. But how well does it promote literacy? Early childhood literacy is a key part of early childhood education and helps students succeed. There are two main questions that arose with the Reggio Emilia Approach. How well does this approach promote early childhood literacy? How can the Reggio Emilia Approach improve the literacy? After reading this paper, the reader will have a greater understanding of the Reggio Emilia Approach and the key aspects of the approach that may downplay or promote literacy.
Session Four - 12:00-12:50 pm

Session 4C-Room 2270—When Writing Become Personal

Facilitators: Dr. Avis Hewitt
Dr. Ashley Shannon

Presenters:

Sarah Brown—Fan Fiction: Reading and Writing Education While Exploring Personal Interests

Reading and writing education is vital to our society, but it’s difficult to do, and do well, if there’s no interest in the topics provided. I explore in my thesis the way that the creation of fan fiction can be a great tool to education. Fan fiction can be based on any topic from any interest, and it’s an excellent way to promote reading and writing practice. My research centers around the most useful methods of education, such as peer review and whole language theory, and considers the way this mode of writing fulfills these methods in order to educate in a way students would be genuinely interested in.

Danielle Johnson—Reading Through the Pain: How Bibliotherapy Has Become an Effective Tool for Healing the Malaise of the Body and Mind

Since the times of Ancient Egypt, reading has been utilized as an expressive therapy technique to help those who suffer from a variety of pains including those that are both physical and mental. Those who suffer from the malaise of either the body or the mind use bibliotherapy to relate to characters with the same pains and to feel as if they are not alone in their suffering. This paper will explore the effectiveness of bibliotherapy as I argue how impactful reading can truly be on the lives of those who experience such sorrows and ailments. Through case studies, interviews and scientific journals, I will investigate a deeper level of how much of a difference reading can make when employed as medicine for depression, anxiety and other illnesses.

Jenna Bradshaw—Asian-American Cultural Memoir: Filling In the Pieces

Asian-American cultural memoirs have created a dialogue between research and reflection of history. They give voice to different cultures that have been silenced throughout history. These silenced voices have emerged through different genres of writing (theater, television shows, etc.), but especially in the form of memoirs. Through the analysis of cultural memoirs, we can see the impact that the authors’ cultures had on shaping what it is to be an American. They are primary sources and can be used as mediators of history and in defining American culture. Secondary sources cross-examine personal reflections and other primary sources, giving validity to the memoir. Results of secondary resource findings have proven the accuracy of Asian-American cultural memoirs and also their rightful place as critical works in history.
Session Five - 1:00-1:50 pm

Session 5A-Room 2259—Disturbing Literary Privilege

Facilitators: Dr. Kurt Bullock
Dr. Sherry Johnson

Presenters:

Crystal Blair - Multicultural Literature in the Real-World Classroom

Multicultural literature has countless positive aspects when used correctly in the classroom; numerous studies have been conducted to confirm this. However, in actual classrooms multicultural literature is seldom used. If there are all these positives then why are teachers not utilizing this body of work? When teachers do use these books, are they high quality? Why are low-quality books being published and sold? What are children really learning from exposure to multicultural books in the classroom? By using conversations with teachers, classroom observations and research I will address these questions in this paper. Why is there a gap between the positive attributes of using multicultural literature in the ideal classroom and a lack of exposure in the real-world classroom?

Rachel Deppe - A Light in the Dark: The Pedagogy of Unsettling Literature

An idea is a powerful thing. It can convey encouragement or it can bring pain. It can raise a question or answer it. An idea can spark change, be it positive or negative. Books are full of ideas, and for that reason, many seek to control what is allowed in books or who has access to certain ones. In this thesis, I will explore how authors and educators in the United States and Germany approach darker ideas in children’s and Young Adult Literature, namely ideas related to the violence of war and the exploitation and abuse of groups of people. This will be an examination of the existing philosophies on children’s access to information as well as a guide for educators as they consider how they want to select literature for their classrooms and what support structures they will have in place as their students explore difficult topics.

Elma Talundzic - A Look at Caricature in Craig Thompson’s Habibi

The use of caricature has been a large part of comic and graphic art history. Caricature is often used to grotesquely exaggerate the idea of someone or something, usually for humor. My paper will explore the idea of caricature in Craig Thompson’s graphic novel Habibi. Thompson describes his work as a fairytale that takes place in a non-existent land. Therefore, the subjects and ideas illustrated should not be taken as actual representations, but rather caricatures. My paper will also discuss Thompson’s work in the context of the recent Charlie Hebdo conflict in regards to the depiction of the prophet Mohammed in the magazine. Caricature is intended to be taken lightly, but it has drawn forth intense emotion from readers. I explore why Thompson has decided to exaggerate his characters and if there is truth behind the falseness.
Facilitators: Dr. Brian Deyo  
Dr. Michael Webster

Presenters:

**Angela McKellar—Early Childhood Reading: Parental Involvement, Technology, and Good Old-Fashioned Storybooks**

There is no denying the fact that in recent years we increasingly spend most of our time in front of screens, whether it is television, computers, tablets or phones. This trend is starting to emerge and is rapidly growing among young children and infants and the classroom. The use of technology to educate children is a heavily debated topic. My thesis looks at the benefits of early childhood reading, its linguistic and social benefits; how parents play a vital role in the acquisition of language; and whether or not we should be relying so heavily on technology to help children learn.

**Meghann Stoike—How Play and Games Can Engage Early Literacy**

My thesis argues how play and games (including activities) can engage early literacy in a primary classroom. Finding resources on authors, such as Stoltz and Swan, I discuss benefits of having a play based learning environment. For this presentation, I will focus on talking on why schools should encourage teachers to incorporate play based learning into their curriculum. Some topics that I will be talking about is how play based learning can improve academic skills, and encourage social development. I will give examples from teachers, on how they used play based learning in their classroom, and their opinions about play based learning.

**Ciara Kukalis—Literacy in Action: Exploring the Relationship Between Literacy and Play**

“School isn’t fun anymore.” “They’re just kids, give them a break!” “We never did that much work when I was young. We just played and had fun with our friends.” Have you heard any of these phrases lately? I hear them all the time. Honestly, I’ve even uttered them myself. What is it about early elementary school now that makes people cringe? It should be a time of excitement and exploration but lately it seems to have lost its luster. Why can’t children simply play anymore? Are teachers’ schedules packed so tightly with curriculum that they don’t have time left for children to learn by exploring the world around them? My paper will address the idea of play as it relates to literacy by answering the question: If play has the ability to incorporate and advance literacy, why don’t we allow more time for it in elementary schools today?
Sarah Hurd—The (Closest Thing to a) Contemporary Fitzgerald: Youth Culture in Literature

F. Scott Fitzgerald published his first novel, *This Side of Paradise*, in 1920 at age twenty-three. Not only did he garner praise for his literary merit, but he also created an accurate illustration of what his fellow youths were experiencing at the time—the ubiquitous struggles, fears, and confusions that anyone undergoing the transition from adolescence to young-adulthood experiences, but under the canopy of the start of the 20th century. Fast forward eighty-five years to 2005, and another young author is publishing his first novel—John Green with *Looking For Alaska*. Both novels can undoubtedly be categorized as a *bildungsroman*—the essential coming-of-age story, and each of these authors have been recognized for not only their ability to connect to, relate to, and explain the thrills and tribulations of their respective youth cultures, but for their literary and stylistic approaches in their writing. My thesis investigates how these two novels function within that frame.

Gabrielle Bippes—The Case of the Missing Bisexuals: Queer Representation in Young Adult Literature

For my thesis I examined the representation of bisexuality in young adult literature. Bisexuality is underrepresented in all fields of study and young adult literature is no exception. While there is starting to be more literature in the field of LGBTQ young adult literature, there is a general lack of novels portraying bisexual youth and even fewer representations that are positive. The representations that are available to readers are very often problematic in nature, showing bisexual characters to be confused, untrustworthy, among other negative traits. My presentation will focus on the problematic representation of bisexuals in young adult literature and the ways in which the genre needs to change to foster positive representation of this marginalized sexuality.

Samantha Sanders—The Green, the Bad, and the Ugly: Evil Industry within Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*

Tolkien has reached the masses with his novels *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Scholars, too, have noted Tolkien’s work and have seen underlying themes of environmentalism and love for nature. While most scholars study Tolkien’s romanticization of nature, my research will focus on the ways in which Tolkien criticizes the idea of industrialization. By using contemporary eco-criticism I will examine Tolkien’s characters’ actions such as the Ents and Saruman. Specifically, I will be assessing the Ents’ uprising against Saruman’s industrialized Isengard and what message this sends to readers within the context of environmentalism, and show that Tolkien’s works were ahead of their time.
Session 5D-Room 2201—Seeking Literacy Achievement

Facilitators: Dr. Dawn Evans
Dr. Amy Masko

Presenters:

**Darian Meininger—Inspiring Literacy in Elementary Language Arts Classrooms**
My thesis explores practical techniques to engage students in reading that can rightfully be used in an elementary school classroom. This will eventually help students to become lifelong learners. I examine ways teachers motivate students, both intrinsically and extrinsically. By examining studies that provide the best ways to intrinsically motivate students authors are to identify practices that provide the best results. From the multiple practices examined I will discuss the commonalities found in the research. I will also examine how these practices further develop the students’ potential to become engrossed in reading.

**Hannah Lightfoot—Balanced Literacy: The Solution to Academic Diversity**
My thesis argues that the implementation of Balanced Literacy is the most effective literacy program when teaching the present-day diverse classroom. To fully understand diversity in the means of academia in the 21st century, three focal areas will be explored: culture, achievement levels, and poverty. Then, I will fully explain the active components of the Balanced Literacy program and how the nature of this program can rigorously combat common deficiencies, in regards to the ever-changing diverse classroom, within the learning of language arts. For the purposes of this presentation, I will be focusing on the dire need for reform in the classroom due to diverse needs, the structure of Balanced Literacy and how this program must be practically employed in the classroom, and the role of the teacher in this best-practice.

**Christine Morgan—Strategies to Support Literacy Success**
My thesis argues that teachers have a responsibility to be familiar with and apply a variety of literacy strategies in the classroom to support students who have little literacy exposure or support outside of the classroom. Applying research by experts in the Field of English Education, I discuss strategies that are practical, efficient, and beneficial for students needing literacy support to succeed. For this presentation, I will discuss strategies that are practical and relevant for teachers to utilize in their classrooms, as well as the importance of each strategy in student support and positive results that contribute to student success.
Facilitators: Dr. Sufen Lai  
Dr. Jo Miller

Presenters:

**Lindsay De Vos—Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo!: Cinderella’s Magical Escape from One Patriarchal Prison to Another**

The creations of Walt Disney have shaped many of our childhoods. The characters, songs, and fantasy of the movies have affected the imaginations of boys and girls everywhere. Cinderella, a Disney classic, gave young girls the idea that they can find a happily ever after but only if their fairy godmothers would show up and give them those fancy shoes! Disney wasn’t the first to present Cinderella’s story. Her story has been told under other aliases all over the world for over a thousand years. My thesis focuses on the expectation of women in different Cinderella stories as well as how those expectations mirror the patriarchal society in which the stories were presented. These expectations include women’s actions, appearances, and goals. I argue that Cinderella submits to the patriarchal structure enforced by her community and, therefore, presents a passive, powerless, and beauty-obsessed role model for listeners, readers, and movie-goers everywhere.

**Kaitlyn Liniewski—Female Protagonists in Children’s Literature: The Fictional Women Who Become Childhood Heroes**

For my senior thesis, I focused on female protagonists in children’s literature and how they have been portrayed over time. I specifically analyze how this type of character is portrayed in children’s chapter books. Louise Fitzhugh’s Harriet the Spy, Madeleine L’Engle’s A Wrinkle in Time, and Willo Davis Roberts’s The Girl with the Silver Eyes are the three texts I analyze for specific character analysis and for applying to my argument, as well. For my presentation, I will focus on L’Engle’s A Wrinkle in Time and discuss how the female protagonist, Meg, is portrayed as a stereotypical female character in some aspects and how she also deviates from the typical female character.

**Kaitlyn Lundquist—Incorporating Fairy Tales into the Classroom**

My thesis argues that incorporating fairy tales into an elementary classroom is essential to a well-rounded curriculum. Fairy tales encompass a wide variety of themes and issues such as gender, culture, and paradox. Beyond the educational realm, fairy tales are also an important factor in social relationships since each story entails representations of acceptable behavior and morals. With so many viable options for discussion, I argue that fairy tales should be incorporated into every classroom. I will be discussing methods and ways in which someone can utilize fairy tales in such a setting.
Session 6B-Room 2266—Wharton and Late Nineteenth-Century Culture

Facilitators: Dr. Jim Persoon
Dr. Michael Webster

Presenters:

Cody Johnson—Hardy: A Hopeless Romantic

Thomas Hardy is perhaps best known for his novels, but he was a novelist only by necessity and a poet by choice. He thought verse “contained the essence of all imaginative and emotional literature.” Thomas Hardy’s poetry has given headaches to critics and fans alike since he began publishing at the end of the nineteenth century. His contemporaries gave his work a lukewarm response; mainly for the underlying “pessimism” they thought was ever constant in his poems. Critics were unable to categorize Hardy’s poems; he lived and wrote much during the Victorian era, but he opposed the Victorian theory of human progress; he studied the Romantics, but he furiously rejected the idea and sympathy and goodness of nature. This paper will investigate Hardy by examining two of his bird poems, and comparing them to three works concerning birds from Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats.

Jessica Massey Rooker—Thomas Hardy’s Jude the Obscure: Reconciling Sexuality in Repressive Victorian England

For my senior thesis, I focused on Jude the Obscure, a novel by Thomas Hardy. I argue that Sue Bridehead represents an embodiment of the author’s synthesized philosophy and world-view on the human condition, especially in relationship to marriage, the “New Woman” and the early feminist movement. I argue by embracing Foucault’s social constructionist view of the history of sexuality and repression, we clearly see how by harnessing and controlling her sexuality, Sue was attempting to gain power. By reflecting on Sue’s transitions through the different female gender roles, we will see how she asserts her authority in sometimes incongruent ways. It is clear how unconscious thought weighs heavily on the human condition, and subconscious desire undesirably thwarts the main characters’ desired trajectory. The imperfection of society's constructs negatively impacts the assertion of Jude and Sue’s independent will to achieve outside their social sphere. Thus, Hardy is a progressive verging on early feminist.

Yi Shi—Relationship Analysis of Main Characters in The Age of Innocence through Sadism and Masochism Theory

The Age of Innocence, Edith Wharton elaborates the wakening of women’s self-awareness in the 1870s through a triangular love relationship. This thesis aims at analyzing the personality and the relationship of the main characters through the sadism and masochism theory in the context of feminism. And it turns out that the sadistic/masochistic and the dominant/subordinate relationship are relative and interacted. Besides, through the sadistic and masochistic process, both sadists and masochists experience pain and pleasure. This thesis helps readers have a further understanding not only of the sexual relationships among main characters, but of the sense of dominance and obedience.
Danielle Kaye—Techniques for Successful Teaching of English as a Second Language

Over the last few years, I have been taking a number of courses at Grand Valley that have educated me on a variety of ways I can incorporate other cultures and diversity into my future lessons. My professors have encouraged me, as a future educator, to recognize the other cultures within the room and use different strategies when making our lessons. For my thesis, I want to focus on how I can further education of specific teaching strategies when working with students of a culturally diverse background. I want to seek answers in finding out how accessible and realistic these tools are as well as how often are they really being used in the classroom. Is there a process teachers must take to become fluent in teaching to diverse learners? Not only is the battle for teachers to reach the students who come from different backgrounds, but there are also students who do not speak much or any English, creating a language barrier within the class. What strategies have teachers been able to research and use when they notice a diverse student is struggling to comprehend the lesson?

Jenna Phillips—Pragmatics and Teaching English as a Foreign Language

The practice of Teaching English as a Foreign Language is one that is constantly evolving and growing. In a world that continues to become more and more globalized, it is important that those teaching English to nonnative speakers are well equipped with the tools and skills to successfully teach. While there is already a great deal of focus on listening, speaking, and reading skills, more importance needs to be placed on teaching EFL students about Pragmatics in the English language. This often neglected area of the English language needs more emphasis when teaching in order for EFL students to be able to properly communicate and succeed in the workplace and in everyday communication.

Zechariah Ramey—English Pronouns

Verbs and nouns often undergo semantic changes, but do pronouns undergo similar processes of change? Pronouns are used so frequently they appear to be the most resistant to shifts in usage. Like prepositions, pronouns are amongst some of the oldest words in our language. Often, they are the first words taught to children and ESL learners. In order to equip the reader with a quick history of morphology, this paper will attempt to find consensus between linguists such as Barbara A. Fennel, David Crystal, and C.M. Millward. Why do reflexive pronouns get replaced by personal pronouns in our speech? How have pronouns established spatial and socioeconomic positions? I will also cross-reference English pronouns with those of other languages where people have worked to neuter their language’s pronouns.
GVSU’s English Department
~in conjunction with the departments of Classics and Writing~
is pleased to announce its annual…

Oldenburg Writing Contest

Named in honor of former department member E. William Oldenburg, the contest offers GVSU students first-place prizes of $50 and second- and third-place prizes of $25 in each of the following categories.

**Categories:**
- Personal, analytical, or persuasive essay written by a freshman.
- Personal essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior.
- Analytical or persuasive essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior.
- Poetry written by any GVSU undergraduate student. A small portfolio of three to five poems would be an appropriate entry. A single poem normally would not be considered.
- Fiction written by any GVSU undergraduate student. One short story per entrant.
- Drama written by any GVSU undergraduate student. One short play per entrant.
- Essay, poetry, fiction, or drama written by a GVSU graduate student.

**Rules:**
- Entries must have been written while enrolled at GVSU. One entry maximum per category. Writing previously submitted to the contest is not eligible.
- Entries should be typed, double-spaced (photocopies are acceptable) and submitted with a detachable cover-sheet indicating:
  - title of the work
  - category entered (please specify graduate or undergraduate)
  - contestant’s name and student ID
  - address, phone number, and e-mail for March and April 2016.
- Place contestant’s name on the cover-sheet only, not on the manuscript.
- All winners who have not been or currently are a student employee at GVSU must complete an I-9 Form. Form may be obtained and turned into Student Employment (105 STU).

- Entries accepted anytime at the English Department Office in 210 Lake Huron Hall.
- Entries may also be submitted online at www.gvsu.edu/english
- Manuscripts not returned.

*Awards will be given out at the English Department Awards Ceremony*
The Gilbert R. and Patricia K. Davis Endowed Merit Scholarship

Merit scholarship for Full-or-Part-Time Junior and Senior English Majors

Eligibility Requirements:

Students must be declared English majors
Students must have 55+ credits.
Students must have completed 30 hours at GVSU.
Students must have a 3.0 GPA.
Students may be full or part time. Part time students are especially encouraged to apply.
Financial need is not a criterion
Students who receive the award as a Junior are eligible to receive the award as a Senior if they maintain their eligibility.

Applications Requirements:

Applications must be submitted online at:
www.gvsu.edu/scholarships

Application deadline is March 1, 2016.

The Davis Scholarship will be awarded at the Awards Ceremony of the English Department.

www.gvsu.edu/english
English Faculty Scholarship for New English Majors

How many? Two scholarships are awarded each year

Who’s Eligible? 1st & 2nd year students (≤60 credit hours) who are 1st generation college students with a GPA of 2.5 or higher
*must declare English major by time of application*

How do I apply? Applications must be submitted online at:
www.gvsu.edu/scholarships.

Applications include: Application form, academic transcript, & writing sample

Application Deadline: March 1, 2016
The Robert C. Chamberlain Scholarship

A Tuition Scholarship for Junior English Majors
Demonstrating Excellence in Writing

Eligibility Requirements:

♦ Students must be English majors
♦ Students must have Junior status
♦ Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA
♦ Students must be full time
♦ Financial need may be taken into consideration

Application Requirements:

♦ Each student must submit:
  1. A short letter explaining why he or she qualifies for this scholarship.
  2. Two pieces of writing, at least one from a class

Applications must be submitted online at: www.gvsu.edu/scholarships
Application deadline is March 1, 2016

The Chamberlain Scholarship will be awarded at the Awards Ceremony of the English Department.
Dr. Andrew M.C. Brown Memorial English Scholarship

**Eligibility Requirements:**

- Should be accepted or currently enrolled at GVSU
- Must be a senior with a declared major in English with Language and Literature emphasis
- Student must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher
- Preference will be given to students intending to pursue an advanced English degree. Financial need may be considered.

**Application Requirements:**

- In 100-200 words (1-2 paragraphs), explain why you are applying for this scholarship, why you should receive the award, and how it will assist you in achieving your academic goals.
- Submit two sample papers written while at GVSU that demonstrate your scholastic achievement and potential in the field of English.

Applications must be submitted online at: [www.gvsu.edu/scholarships](http://www.gvsu.edu/scholarships)

Application deadline is March 1, 2016

The Dr. Andrew M.C. Brown Memorial English Scholarship will be awarded at the Awards Ceremony of the English Department.
Dining Options

**Commons:**
Lower Level: Includes Bleecker Street, Freshen’s Smoothies and Crepes, Jump Asian Cuisine and Papa John's Pizza

Upper Level: Fresh Food Company—A market style restaurant featuring an assortment of choices in an all-you-care-to-eat setting. Einstein Bagels—A sophisticated blend of trendy tastes and atmosphere specializing in fresh baked items, breakfast and gourmet bagel sandwiches, soup, specialty salads and gourmet coffee.

**The Connection:**
Featuring sustainably focused menu. Guests can enjoy meals at Green Plate, Croutons custom made salads and 42nd St. Deli sandwiches. Also enjoy locally roasted coffee from Rowsters. This location accepts credit and debit cards.
Also at P.O.D. is the Wired coffee bar featuring a full line of brewed coffees, specialty drinks, Javalanches and Smoothies.
Papa John’s Pizza—Get your favorite pizza. Dine-in, carryout or have it delivered. Call ahead at 331-PAPA or online at papajohns.com.

**Kirkhof Center:**
Lower Level: A variety of crisp grab and go salads, customized pizza and pasta, Zoca, Grille Works, Croutons, and made to order sushi.
Main Level: Subway, Panda Express Asian Cuisine, along with Java City and the Freshens Smoothie Company. The Convenience Store is also a great place to pick up a snack or a meal to go. Stop by our section of organic and natural snacks for a healthy treat.

**The Marketplace:**
Starbucks and Which Wich—made to order sandwiches, salads, shakes & sweets.

**Kleiner Commons:**
Choose from The Market (comfort food & international flavors, pizza, grill items, made-to-order salads, sandwiches & wraps, sushi and soup), Qdoba and Java City.

There are also many options off campus, including Burger King, McDonalds, Subway, Mancinos, Grand Coney, Murphy’s Family Restaurant, Jimmy Johns, Biggby, Main Street Pub, Aroy Thai, Tim Horton’s Cafe, and China One.
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