

# English Matters

*for faculty, students & alumni of the GVSU*

*English Department*

Winter, 2025



**Grand Valley State University**  
**College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**



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## Message from the Department Chair, Dr. Shinian Wu

Welcome to this new edition of our newsletter *English Matters*!

After a period of hiatus coming out of the pandemic and rejuvenating from a lack of editorial assistance, I'm very excited to see the English Department newsletter coming back to life again, thanks in no small part to the time and effort of our editorial team including two wonderful student assistants Thaddeus Konieczny and Aeryn Hart. All of us in the English Department appreciate their hard work!

Consistent with our past traditions, *English Matters* serves as a window through which readers learn about the successes of our students present and past, who have time and again shown their passion for the discipline of English studies, their resilience in their academic work in the face of challenges and adversities, and their dedication to the professions they have come to love. These success stories of our students are inseparable from their professors. They play an instrumental role in helping foster the next generation of teachers, scholars, editors, writers, journalists, school administrators, librarians, and those others who make equally productive use of their knowledge in related careers. This newsletter is not merely reporting news; more appropriately, it celebrates both students and professors, as well as their parents, who make the English Department what it is—a place for students to learn new knowledge and skills, and grow intellectually through reading and writing; a place where professors contribute the best way they can to their students' learning and growth; and a place for alums to reflect on their experiences, and to come back and visit, and to have a hearty chat with their former professors.

Readers will notice that I place students and professors in that order because students are the center of what we do as teachers and scholars who play a pivotal role in helping them succeed.

As the English Department embarks on a new journey of curriculum innovation and high impact learning to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse society with new challenges, we again strive to move forward, with a new synergy, passion, and determination.

## Faculty Retirements

Three beloved faculty members will retire in May 2025. We will miss them, but wish them the best retirement!



### **Dr. Rob Franciosi**

Dr. Rob Franciosi joined the English Department at GVSU in 1988 and will retire in 2025 after 37 years of service.



### **Dr. Kurt Bullock**

Dr. Kurt Bullock will retire at the end of Winter 2025 after 25 years of service. Dr. Bullock started at GVSU in 2000.



### **Dr. Janet Navarro**

Dr. Janet Navarro will retire after 17 years of service in GVSU. Dr. Navarro began at the university in 2008.

## **Dr. Rob Franciosi**

I joined the department in 1988 as part of a seven-professor cohort—all in English. Over the next three years we hired another thirteen tenure-track faculty. At times it seemed like we were watching a time-lapse film of a rapidly growing metropolis. The Eberhard Center was then our only building in downtown Grand Rapids, and I recall the provost at my first all-university faculty meeting declaring that we would never have more than a minimal presence in the city, one strictly limited to a few graduate programs. I often recall that meeting when academic administrators speak with great confidence about the near or distant future.

The pre-1988 Grand Valley that soon disappeared was founded as a public liberal arts college, expanding during the higher ed boom of the 1960s to several cluster colleges. Michigan's economic crisis in the early 1980s shattered that original vision. Others may argue whether the shift from separate colleges to a university was for the better, but I will note that my career began when that founding vision, and the faculty who subscribed to it, was still very much in evidence.

Retirement should provoke reflection, not nostalgia, but in thinking about the Grand Valley that faded during my early years, I recall with great affection those folks in English who had built the place, especially Lou Rus, Gil Davis, Loretta Wasserman, Tony Parise, Jon Jellema, and many others. They exemplified a collegiality that was possible when most of us were on campus at least four days a week, when department meetings on Friday afternoons were often followed by cocktails and dinners, and when the entire university was run rather informally. A phone call to the right person could immediately solve a problem. Longtime president Don Lubbers might pop into your office for a late afternoon chat.

But it was a model that could not survive the growing demands of surging enrollments, expanding bureaucracies, and digital lives that began to erase the line between work and home.

While I look at those early days with respect, and a measure of loss, I also recall putting my shoulder to the wheel of a changing institution. Within the department, I am most proud of the graduate program we developed and supported for two decades. Within the larger university, where I placed a lot



of mid-career energy, I served as vice-chair of a University Academic Senate that reorganized GVSU into its current college-based structure.

During my later tenure as chair of UAS, I served on committees that hired President Haas and founding CLAS Dean Fred Antczak. We established the Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence, revamped the personnel process so that a three-course load was standardized for tenure-line faculty across the university, established the affiliate position, and even ensured that the word “Library” was affixed to the proposed “Information and Learning Commons.” And in the wake of Michigan banning same-sex marriage in 2004, we worked with President Haas to craft and implement a partner benefits program seven years before the Supreme Court decision of *Obergefell v. Hodges*.

Some might contend, however, that our greatest achievement was successfully fending off an administrative initiative to charge all faculty and staff for campus parking.

All these efforts were aimed at two simple goals: to provide the best education for our students and to foster a supportive environment for faculty life, in all its dimensions.

Both aims are what made my time at Grand Valley so rich. The institution’s commitment to teaching allowed me to develop as an instructor and, most importantly, pursue interests across several fields. Just about every year I have developed and taught one or two new courses, either for English or Honors, by my rough count of at least fifty different topics. I have been able to team-teach with outstanding colleagues in History, Film, and Music, escort students on trips to Germany and Poland, and supervise numerous M.A. theses and Honors senior projects. I never felt straightjacketed by my teaching options and appreciated the flexibility that made room for this professor’s continuing education.

Congruent with my evolving teaching interests, my scholarship was able to develop in unexpected ways. I began my career at Grand Valley as a specialist in modern American poetry. Yet an interest in Holocaust studies that had begun a few years before my arrival in Allendale was allowed to flourish here and to become the center of my scholarly life. The university has been supportive in more ways than I can list, whether through research

grants, funds for important lecturers, for graduate assistants, for public events. I am stepping away from regular teaching, in fact, to devote my energies to several long-term projects (and new ones) that emerged under these supportive circumstances.

GVSU's presence in Grand Rapids also allowed me to engage with the local community and the kind of public scholarship not always possible in the humanities. Whether it was editing the memoir of local Holocaust survivor Joseph Stevens, or leading the creation of the West Michigan Holocaust Memorial web site, I have been able to share my scholarly passions with the wider community and to embark upon public-facing work that bridges town and gown.

I always enjoyed Dean Antczak's opening addresses to the college, in part because of how carefully he crafted them, but mostly because he always reminded us of how fortunate we are to be doing the work we do. These are certainly anxious times for higher education, and Grand Valley, for all its virtues, has not been immune from the forces, both external and internal, which weigh on our colleagues and students. But in reflecting on my thirty-seven years at this ever-changing university, I find myself nodding in agreement at Fred's wisdom, especially when I see in our students the person I was at their age.

As I worked year-round in a small factory to pay my way through NYU, I could hardly imagine a life in which reading, writing, thinking, and talking—the elements that define what it means to be a literature professor—could in fact be a life. A mentor at NYU and another at the University of Iowa convinced me that it was indeed possible. I was extraordinarily lucky to have found them, and fortunate to have followed this path. If I have influenced some students with even a trace of the effects Professors Ilse Duso Lind and Sherman Paul had upon me, then I have honored their legacies.

One of the surprising features of growing older is that the person inside—what Walt Whitman calls “the Me myself”—somehow seems the same. My head still bursts with new ideas for courses, for research abroad, for different pedagogies, all the while conveniently ignoring time's relentless toll. To avoid becoming a figure from a Beckett novel, though—muttering “You must go on. I can't go on. I'll go on.”—I have decided that the calendar, finally, must rule the head and the heart.

I had the privilege of encountering Dr. Franciosi as both an English and Honors College professor simultaneously. In that experience I got to witness how much Dr. Franciosi cares about connecting with his students and providing an environment where they can push themselves and excel to their greatest potential. Dr. Franciosi reignited a passion for writing and I owe him great thanks for that. I am grateful for the experience I got to have learning from Dr. Franciosi and wish him the best in retirement! — Anne Davey

Rob joined Grand Valley about 10 years before I arrived. Since he was in literature and I was in linguistics, I didn't get a lot of opportunities to interact with him in my formative years other than knowing him to be a specialist in holocaust literature. Over the years, though, I got to know him better—listening to him at department meetings, chatting with him in the hallways, exchanging e-mails with him on the department's missions, marveling at his remarks to Sigma Tau Delta inductees about the role and meaning of a pen for an English major, and for that matter, for an English professor, and of course, reading about his accomplishments in his annual Faculty Workload Reports (Yes, I began to be part of the annual review team at the invitation of then chairs long before I became chair myself). Early on, Rob struck me as a deep thinker with a sharp eye for things good and not so good, a man with wisdom and insight, a sage, so to speak—to this day! His dedication to research, writing, and speaking on the holocaust and the literature depicting this most tragic human atrocity in the 20th century is indomitable! He is not only a respected scholar within the academy; he is also a public intellectual tirelessly sharing and disseminating his knowledge and expertise with broader audiences on the topic he has pursued his entire life.

Rob, I wish you the best of luck with your life's continuous journey!  
—Shinian Wu

Whenever I describe my time as an English MA student from 2011-2019, one sentence always gets repeated: without the mentorship and years-long efforts of my three thesis board members, I never would have made it to graduation. One of those three professors: Rob Franciosi. He's the kind



of professor who agrees to extra work for a student he doesn't know-- and then builds a text list centered in her then-unpopular research interest of graphic novels. He's the kind of professor who revolutionized his own subject areas of research dedication, but who also believes his students can do the same while they are still students and even by building on texts he's considered a world-renowned expert by his own scholarship. He's the kind of professor who doesn't give up on you even when you toil over that thesis project for six-long-years. He's the kind of professor who unwaveringly and actively supports your choice to focus your research in horror and comics, even when others may not. The long-lasting and far-reaching impact your work has had on this department will be hard to match, Professor Franciosi. Thank you for being 1 of 3 who believed in me even when I refused to believe in myself. -- Amy Jacobs

## **Dr. Kurt Bullock**

It was the summer of either 2006 or 2007, and I was meeting in my office at the Traverse City University Center with a researcher from Sweden. He was traveling the United States while conducting a qualitative study regarding intended teaching duration of American university faculty.

"You plan to retire at 65?" he asked me.

I immediately replied no.

"64?" he responded.

Again: no.

His expression turned quizzical. "63?" he queried.

"Wrong direction," I said. "I intend to teach until I'm 72."

Let's just say that in hindsight, that researcher knew something that I didn't. But my reply then was sincere. And it remains true, right through last fall semester, that I always have loved teaching, have been enlivened when in a classroom facilitating discussions, and have enjoyed, in particular, one-on-one conversations with students.

I arrived at GVSU in 2000, moved to Traverse City in 2003 to direct our department's English program there with Northwestern Michigan College's University Center program, and then returned to Allendale in 2015 when our TC program closed for several reasons: a paucity of teaching positions available in Traverse City, students who didn't wish to leave the area upon

graduating to find teaching positions, and a Continuing Ed director who was discovered to be doctoring the numbers to make the program look good for years on end.

The program had been strong initially; I recall my first ENG 221 course had an enrollment of 38 students. I routinely taught ENG 221, 226, 311 and 495, observed and mentored teacher-assisting students, and each fall traveled one day per week to Allendale to attend faculty meetings and teach an evening 495 course (note: all courses in TC met from either 3–5:50 pm or 6–8:50 pm because the vast majority of students were non-traditional—and so for twelve years I taught nothing but three-hour courses!). But once the economy turned and students realized they couldn't gain full-time teaching positions in the region, our numbers began to dwindle.

That inevitability hit me during my first teacher-assisting mentorship. The market for new teachers in Traverse City was tough even then, and I'd been discussing with my mentees that, in order to gain full-time employment rather than be an aide or a substitute, they might have to go to places such as Arizona, Florida, Texas or North Carolina, where at the time teaching openings were plentiful.

"Kurt," one of the students quickly shot back, "people spend their entire lives working just so they can move to Traverse City. Why would we want to leave?"

Point made.

I'm with them. I recall in junior high, while on vacation with my parents, sitting in the back seat of our sage-green Ford Fairlane station wagon while driving through Traverse City, and thinking even then, "This might be a good place to live." When we drove past Northwestern Michigan College, I remember musing that maybe I could even teach in Traverse City. So when I returned to Allendale in 2015, I kept my house in Traverse City. The city and its surroundings had become 'home' for me, and I think even then I might've been pondering an earlier retirement than age 72.

When our curriculum changed fifteen years ago, ENG 221 and 226 foundations were replaced by ENG 215 and 216, and since my return I've almost exclusively taught ENG 216 and ENG 495. I also was asked then to direct our Capstone program, which I have done now for ten years. Those two classes have always been my favorites. My method in the Critical Approaches class has been to minimize literature and focus on the ways that we're ideologically constructed to engage with all language, which is

inherently motivated and influential, and thus with life—whether it's reading a book, a text message, a news feed or an advertisement, or listening to parents, friends, teachers, pastors, politicians, and others.

The joy of Capstone is watching students, many of whom I've had in class once or twice previously, take on the task of developing their own project. I've always referred to Capstone as 'a facilitated independent study,' because I don't feel as though I'm teaching but rather expediting a student's process. Given the breadth of topics that emerge, I end up encountering ideas and information that I would never have otherwise. Yes, fellow faculty, it's a boatload of reading and responding. But the reward when you see a student simply glow with pride over their extended research project and presentation is unmatched in any other course.

Besides the move back to Allendale and the demoralizing stretch of online teaching during Covid, what has prompted me to retire sooner than I had initially planned is the realization that I have more to life than teaching. I had a health scare in 2023; the year previous had taken up oil painting. In the three years I've been painting somewhat sporadically, I've sold a score of paintings, won a couple of awards for my work, and currently have a painting on display at the Dennon Museum in the Northwest Michigan Juried Exhibition—one of sixty-four chosen for exhibition from nearly three hundred submissions by artists in thirty-seven Michigan counties. I was delighted just to have a painting selected for the exhibition, but when that painting won the Juror's Award, second only to Best in Show, I was stunned.

I'm not expecting to be the next Claude Monet, and fortunately I don't have to earn a living from my painting. But I have enjoyed greatly the ongoing shift from analytical to creative thinking, and equally enjoyed becoming a learner rather than a teacher. Artists in two weekly plein air painting groups in the Traverse City area have proven particularly supportive and encouraging, and I love being out in nature almost daily. I'll no longer be standing in front of a classroom but rather an easel, always grateful for the profession I have had, but eager to pursue this new direction—at age 65, not 72.

My favorite memory with Prof. Kurt was chatting with him after most of his lectures. It's evident that he is passionate about his work. His students will miss him!" – Erin Camburn

Professor Bullock was my 216 professor during my first semester at GV, and my advisor this year. He was always extremely supportive of students' interests, and encouraged me to allow myself the time to explore when I was unsure of my path. I think a moment that sums him up well is when he recommended me for a study abroad program in Scotland, albeit with this stipulation: "I will do my part to get you there... If you get to go, I'm gonna expect a video of you playing a bagpipe while wearing a kilt. — Lee Marentette

Out of all the professors I've had at GVSU so far, Professor Bullock was one of the only professors who really recognized me as a student. Not only did he get to know all of his students in this meaningful way but he also encouraged us to take the concepts from class and apply them to our lives, creating a lasting impact. I hope this is acceptable, thank you for the opportunity to share! -Maitlin Miller

Professor Bullock MADE my experience as an English major at Grand Valley. He was the hardest professor I've ever had because he truly believed in the abilities of his students, and pushed every one of us past what we thought was possible for ourselves. The English Department will not be the same without him, but I am certain that we will strive to make him proud. – Clara Snyder

Dr. Kurt Bullock was probably the professor that cemented my outlook on English and on life. Before taking a class with him, I knew I loved English, but there was never a strong tangible connection that I could make from a text to the world. His deep analysis of literature and ability to foster deep analysis using both history and personal experiences showed me that English is deeply important. He was a professor that cared immensely about his students, and the world, and used deep research and critical thinking to show that. I've always been around smart professors and professors who care for the world, but Dr. Bullock used his intelligence to know how to care and to teach that. He's top tier and he'll be missed at Grand Valley. I hope he enjoys making music and making art. — Jaden Moser

## **Dr. Janet Navarro**

I joined the English Education faculty unit in the English Department at GVSU approximately 17 years ago. While primarily working with students who hope to teach elementary aged children, I also taught a few secondary writing methods classes as well. My absolute favorite course to teach was ENG 302 in the previous certification program because it combined children's literature and writing. My second favorite course to teach was the capstone course offered to SAT majors, SAT 495. My current love is ENG 201! After nearly a full career of teaching junior and senior level students I found great joy in working with freshman, sophomore and transfer students.

Highlights of my time at GVSU include, of course, the relationships I built with students, participating in the Lake Michigan Writing Project's Summer Institute for Teacher Consultants, partnering with Central Elementary where I worked with ENG 301 students, the fast switch from in-person to remote teaching during March 2020 when I built a website and learned how to create a Bimoji classroom, field trips with SAT 495 students to Oakland County schools and White Pines in Grand Haven, and endless GVSU supported opportunities for professional development both on and off campus.

I'm retiring from GVSU with mixed feelings. I love my work and am sad to be leaving, and yet feel ready to do other things. First and foremost, is caring for my amazing elderly father with more intention. There is still much to learn from and with him. Second, I'm looking forward to writing more publishable poetry. I have a second book nearly ready to go. Third, I'm looking forward to riding my bike and waterskiing well into September and not taking the boat out until late October! What I will miss most about GVSU, besides the people (of course) is the incredible artwork in all the buildings. The art gallery, spread with intention in every nook and cranny around campus, is unique and special. I have many "old friends" in Lake Huron Hall who ground me. One more thing. In this, my final semester, I am teaching two night classes and often leave the building after 10pm. I have come to see and know first-hand the people who are on their hands and knees scrubbing the benches in the beautiful atrium study nooks, the bathrooms, and metal plates that protect the bottom of the doors. These women put our chairs back and pick up after us, all those carelessly thrown papers and food

containers. They clean the doodles off our white boards and mop the floors. While I have always noticed and valued the privilege of walking through the beautifully kept grounds and working within pristine buildings, I admit to never giving much thought to the invisible and physical labor that goes into keeping everything so lovely or who did that work. For them and all things GVSU, I leave with a great sense of gratitude for my time here. Onward!



Dr. Navarro (or Dr. J as my class called her) helped create an environment in our classroom that has yet to be matched in my time at Grand Valley. We shared honest truths, laughed a lot, and most importantly, built an understanding for teaching literacy that has laid the foundation for our teaching careers forever. Dr. J showed passion, vulnerability and immense care for the content and her students. I'm so grateful to have had her to learn from.

Thank you for everything, Dr. J! ❤️

— Emily Bouchard



Dr. Navarro was the first professor I met as I walked into the very first class of my college career, and there, I was welcomed, heard, and challenged. That English class quickly became an enjoyable, engaging environment as she created a space for us all to connect and learn together as future educators. —Katie Preble

It was an absolute privilege to learn from Dr. Navarro in my preparation to be a teacher. She taught me so much about the importance of cultivating a love for reading in my students and helped me rediscover my love for reading. By challenging me to read even when I feel like I don't have time and giving me strategies to help me get more out of a text, I have become a better reader and deeper thinker. I will be a better teacher because of her. — Briana Rose

When I first met Janet, I wasn't sure we'd see eye-to-eye. I was hesitant about her class and worried I wouldn't enjoy it. At the time, I felt like there was too much pressure, and I wasn't sure I'd be able to keep up. But looking back now, I'm grateful for the high expectations she set for us. That class, just before I started my apprenticeship, was exactly what I needed. While I didn't appreciate it then, Janet's tough approach taught me to take things seriously and prepared me for the level of critique I'd face in my apprenticeship. Her lessons weren't always easy, but they were exactly what I needed. Janet expected more from our class than any prior English professors. I'm extremely glad that I was able to have her as professor. Thank you for pushing us so hard, and I hope you enjoy your retirement! — Makenna Fall



# Student Spotlights

**Interviewer: Thad Konieczny**

**Student: Bran Hurst, Junior**

Double major in English Language and Literature and French Literature

In times of political unrest, people often turn to art as a source of comfort and understanding. This was the idea that **Bran Hurst** had in mind when they organized a poetry reading with Sophie Bytwerk night the week after the election of Donald Trump. The night ended up being a success, with dozens of students gathering in the Language Resource Center to share poetry and vent their frustrations about the state of the world. The poetry night was renamed to **Just Art**, and meetings are now biweekly with a different theme each time. Like the first meeting, students will typically read poetry, but they will also often just vent about whatever is on their mind. Either way, Hurst asserts that community is the most important aspect of it, especially during stressful times. Here is an excerpt from our conversation, edited for conciseness and clarity.

*Q: What encouraged you to start Just Art?*

A: It was definitely the election. There's actually a quote by Kurt Vonnegut about the power of art in times of resistance: "During the Vietnam war...every respectable artist was against the war. It was like a laser beam. We were all aimed in the same direction. The power of this weapon turns out to be that of a custard pie dropped from a stepladder six feet high." I was feeling very upset about the results of the election, and a lot of my friends were feeling upset about it, and I felt like we needed a place to talk about it. I also felt like the moment was there and it couldn't really wait super long.

*Q: What do you think the importance of poetry is in times like this?*

A: Processing and expression. For one thing, you have to make sense of the world around you even when it isn't pleasant to be in. You also need to have a way to have your thoughts be heard about that.

*Q: Are there any poets or other writers that you've found yourself reading a lot recently?*

A: I would say no. This semester I haven't had much time for leisure reading. There's this grindset where it's so hard to look up and engage with what's going on politically. That was why I thought it was important to set up Just Art, but that's one of our biggest challenges. We really want to engage but it's difficult. Where do we draw the line between self-care and looking out for everything?

*Q: Are there any other interesting projects you're working on right now?*

A: I wasn't involved in planning this, but there was a counter event to the anti-trans event on campus recently. There were people who did their homework on Turning Point USA, and instead of trying to engage them in a dialogue, they set up a counter event about what detransitioning is. If we can't engage them in debate, we can talk about our own views in our own ways. I believe it was set up by SDS, and I'm not involved with them, but I think they're doing good things.

**Interviewer: Aeryn Hart**

**Student: Ian McGuckin, Senior**

Major in Secondary English Education

**The olive tree collection** is a journal of Art and Writing that puts as its primary purpose, protest. Artists and authors from around the world collaborated with us to put together a comprehensive protest against the conditions imposed on the Palestinian population of Gaza. These conditions and the war that produced them have been described by scholars, international courts and humanitarian organizations as a genocide, an ethnic cleansing operation, and, at its most sanitized, a humanitarian catastrophe. My team and I (**Ian McGuckin**) were drawn to action by months of witnessing the suffering imposed on the population of Gaza through social media. This genocide has been called one of the most well documented genocides in history, meaning it has been recorded, transcribed, and then disseminated across the world via social media platforms shortly after October 7 and ongoing for the rest of the remaining months of 2023 and then 2024. Many college students such as myself were shocked by the levels of violence and the cataclysmic conditions that were created by the seemingly indiscriminate bombing campaign. As I continued to see the suffering for months and months it had an impact on my mental condition. I felt culpable, in some sense, being in the heart of the nation that was materially and fiscally supporting these bombardments. I felt at least partially responsible, or at the very least incredibly privileged. I felt this freezing sense of nihilism as to the morality of the international order. And so in April of 2024 along with some of my friends, I decided to take action and to do something to resist such feelings of political nihilism and to actually have an impact, no matter how minute, on the situation.

This project is incredibly special to me because it accomplishes all of the goals that we set out. It is a well thought and thorough protest, but it's also educational. This was one of our other goals in which, since we conceived of this project around the same time as the encampments

which swept the nation, we wanted to strike some sort of middle ground between inaction and what many saw as the extreme action of campus occupations. So, we wanted to make something that was perhaps more palatable to the amateur activist or to someone who had never experienced the movement face to face. Through the journal and through the protest, our mission was to change hearts and minds, and we wanted to do that through the affective qualities of art. This project is really special to me, because at least in my belief, it accomplished a lot of those gains just because of the quality of the artwork and the way in which this artwork kind of compounds and the pieces build on each other. We organized it in a way so that the pieces could do that. I think it presents a very cohesive and coordinated attempt to educate, to move and to protest. Furthermore, I think this project has a lot of special meaning for me, specifically because it pushed me into a new direction with my skills and my future career. It showed me how passionate I was about the international sphere, and it has prompted me to pivot towards international education and using education as a force for social good and reconstruction for those who have faced detrimental violence and disruption in their learning process. This project pushed me in the direction of humanitarian action, and this summer, I'm planning to act on that by going to Thailand in Chiang Mai to teach refugees fleeing the Myanmar crisis. So yeah, this project was, I think, really integral towards developing that passion for me, and also teaching me that there was indeed something that I could do in relation to these global events that feel so outside of our control.

In terms of actually enacting this project, one of the most surprising and fulfilling aspects was my interaction with artists from the Gaza Strip who were living through the genocide as it happened, and they were some of the kindest, most heartfelt and empathetic people I had ever interacted with. They consistently asked me about my day and showed genuine interest in my life despite undergoing a brutal, brutal war. It surprised me, their kindness and their ability to give that to another person when they themselves had so little, and I think it was so wonderful to be able to actually interact with them, because it bridged that divide Across the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, to actually, like, make a connection. And I think that's wonderful, because a lot of this work was asynchronous and it was a bit isolating, because it's hard to know exactly

how the impact was received by people who read it, how our contributors felt about the project and what they were going through. So actually having that direct one on one conversations with our artists from the Gaza Strip was fulfilling in so many categories. They taught me, by virtue of their example, quite a bit about resilience. Several of them were obstinate in their refusal to allow the genocide and the war to disrupt their lives. They continued to conduct their lives as close to normal as possible, to try and fulfill their dreams. Several of them were pursuing education through virtual means, through colleges that had offered tuition remission across the world for students from the Gaza Strip. Several were continuing to educate themselves at the time, they were continuing to write and to create art frequently as just efforts of resistance and a refusal to succumb to the material conditions around them. This caused me to reevaluate who I was as a person, my own resiliency. And it really gave me perspective of what can be accomplished, even in the face of such extreme violence. These artists were able to produce gorgeous poetry and stunning artwork, and it really made me rethink my own ability to overcome situations around me. So, I was really inspired by my direct interactions with civilians from the Gaza Strip in their resiliency. I think this project is incredibly special in the way that it bridged the geographical divide between the United States and the Gaza Strip.

The unique part about this project that I think really enhances its quality is that we allowed many artists to submit an artist statement or a statement of purpose about their submission, to kind of contextualize or qualify their artwork, or just to have a space to directly say what they mean or what they wanted readers to take from their piece. Pairing this with the artwork, in many cases, really enhances the message that this journal puts forth, the ability to educate oneself. And I think it really allows each artist to portray their perspective more in depth.

To view this project, you can access our Instagram [@theolivetreeditorial](#) and [olive tree collection.wordpress.com](#).



## Alumni Spotlights

### Katie Alphenaar, '15

English Department alumna, Katie Alphenaar, '15, was recently featured in an Mlive article about the banned book month. Katie is the head of reference and information at the Loutit District Library in Grand Haven. As libraries have become battlegrounds over content, Alphenaar has been working in her capacity to ensure there is something for everyone. “While there is something in every library that will offend someone and everyone will find something that will offend them, that’s OK because we also want to ensure there’s something in every library that will be your ‘just right’ book, your ‘just right’ magazine, and we have an audiobook for you and you can really find this open, safe and free third space in your community,” Alphenaar says. Katie graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English, with an emphasis in language and literature, in 2015.

### Sarah Chanski, '08 & '17

Sarah Chanski served as Editor-in-Chief for the Northwestern University Law Review Volume 116, from 2021-2022. This is a distinction she shares with John Paul Roberts and other legal behemoths. Sarah is currently in her sixth year at Northwestern University where she is completing a joint JD/PhD in Communications. She was on track to defend her dissertation in April this past spring and graduate with both degrees in June. Sarah will be clerking for Judge Amy St. Eve on the 7th Circuit after graduation for one year. Sarah graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English with an emphasis in Secondary Education and a Spanish Teaching Minor in 2008. She completed her Master of Arts in English at GVSU in 2017.



## **Graham Liddell, '13**

English Department graduate Graham Liddell has published an article entitled "A Harrag's Account: Craftily Narrating and Navigating the EU's Morphing Borderscape" in The Journal of Modern Greek Studies (October 2022). Graham began to study literary representations of migration to the European Union in Professor David Álvarez's ENG 303 Studies in World Literature course. He is currently completing a dissertation on this topic for a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan. Graham graduated from GVSU in 2013 with a double major in English (with an emphasis in language and literature) and Writing.

## **Helena Kore, '19 & '22**

Helena Kore was recently selected to serve on the board of Michigan Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. MITESOL is a professional association in the state of Michigan and Helena will be serving as the Communications Coordinator. Helena graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English with an emphasis in Secondary Education and a minor in Applied Linguistics in 2019. She completed her Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics in 2022.



# Faculty-Student Research Collaborations

Our retired faculty, **Dr. Kathryn Remlinger**, published an article “How much Dutch? Ideological borderlands of place and belonging in Holland, Michigan” with former MA in Applied Linguistics graduate students, **Tristan Kittle** and **Alice Pozzobon**, in *Middle West Review*. The article is based on a linguistic landscape study they conducted in 2018-19.

KATHRYN A. REMLINGER, TRISTAN KITTLE,  
AND ALICE POZZOBON

## How Much Dutch?

Ideological Borderlands of Place  
and Belonging in Holland, Michigan

### Introduction

When we look around us, the landscape presents us with a certain perspective from wherever we are standing. This perspective changes over time and is shaped by meanings past and present that we draw from images, sounds, signs, and architecture surrounding us. Language and image are central to these meanings, and together they create a linguistic landscape that reflects the history, people, and everyday ways of being and doing that make a place recognizable and identifiable. *Linguistic landscape* is defined as public uses of language, typically signage but also graffiti, street names, menus, posters, signed languages, and other visual uses of language that communicate local meanings.<sup>1</sup> The linguistic landscape, however, isn't restricted to written language; it also includes images, colors, plants, advertising, architecture, and other material objects that evoke recognizable meanings. The soundscape is meaningful in a given space: conversations and the languages spoken, music from passing cars, announcements from speakers, bird calls, even the rustling of leaves.

**Dr. Sarah Williams** and **Dr. Pengtong Qu** collaborate with **Lydia Dennings**, a GV undergraduate student on a research project focusing on pre-service teachers' identity formation related to reflection and growth as readers and writers. They presented “Diverse pages, inclusive voices: Nurturing multicultural literacy and true belonging” at MCTE in 2024. Currently, they are preparing the manuscript “Beyond the red pen: Investigating the formation of reader and writer identity in pre-service teachers.”



# Faculty and Student Book Reviews

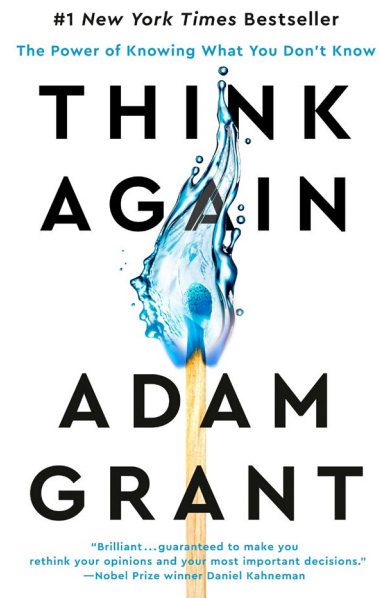
Add books to your summer reading list

## Dr. Kurt Bullock

Grant, Adam. *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know*, 2021.

Few professors would suggest that students forget entirely what they already know, but that's precisely what Adam Grant, a psychologist at The Wharton School, advocates in *Think Again*. His chapter "Rewriting the Textbook" challenges educators to promote active, inquiry-based learning rather than lecturing all but exclusively, thus allowing students to question ideas rather than ingest information that remains unchallenged.

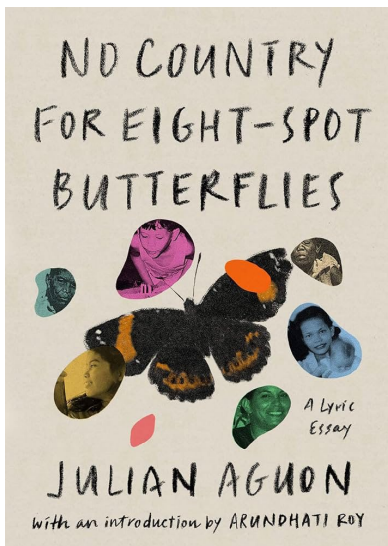
"Many teachers don't do enough to encourage students to question themselves and one another," Grant suggests, adding that students need "frequent practice at unlearning" ideas they've accepted at face-value (187, 189). The same is true for all of us; notably, research indicates that those with higher IQs struggle most with rethinking their ideas. We base our identities on fossilized belief systems, to our own detriment: We become 'preachers' delivering sermons to safeguard our challenged ideals, 'prosecutors' spending more time tearing down others' positions than considering the validity of our own, and 'politicians' willing to say anything to garner unwarranted approval. Grant is particularly concerned that "calcified ideologies are tearing American culture apart," drawing upon the pandemic, racism, politics, and scientific distrust for current illustration (10). His book is chock-full of research and narrative examples that, truly, will make you think again.



## Dr. Brian Deyo

Aguon, Julian. *No Country for Eight-Spot Butterflies: A Lyric Essay*, 2022.

First time I'd read the name of the Chamorro Indigenous human rights lawyer, writer, and environmental activist, Julian Aguon, was in an enticing tweet posted by Rebecca Solnit, a writer whose literary sensibility, political outlook, and attitude on a great variety of subjects has been a reliable source of encouragement and inspiration over the years. She's also batting a thousand when it comes to making solid book recommendations—at least for me and, I strongly suspect, many others. Headlining the tweet were pithy words of praise for Aguon's first book, *No Country for Eight-Spot Butterflies: A Lyric Essay*, accompanied by a picture of the two laughing together as she interviews him after a reading at the famous City Lights Bookstore in San Francisco. The warmth, good humor, and friendship expressed by their smiling faces was recommendation enough.



Thanks to Solnit's tweet, I purchased Aguon's poignant, delightfully unassuming, and bravely beautiful lyric essay about life in his homeland, the island of Guam—still a colonial possession of the U.S.—with my professional development money from my favorite independently run neighborhood bookstore, Books & Mortar. As I eagerly awaited its arrival, I happily feasted on reviews of the book and interviews with the author. I also listened to an episode of The Red Nation Podcast, where the Indigenous organizer, journalist, and historian, Nick Estes, asks Aguon to describe his book. He answers with a simple, albeit powerful word: "quiet." As he explains in the afterword to the book, "the work of

confronting empire is almost always loud," and perhaps what we need, "now more than ever," is "radical listening, which is to say listening to the voices of those more vulnerable than us," human and nonhuman alike, including the eight-spot butterfly, "whose lives are more precarious than our own" (Aguon 102).



## Cullen Forster

Senior, English Language and Literature

Parrot, Plum. *Cyber Dreams: Electric Angel*, 2023

In the year 2108, Juliet, a scrapyard worker, finds herself in the wrong place at the right time, and acquires a new, top-of-the-line personal AI. This AI shepherds her entry into the mercenary Operator lifestyle, and together they learn the ropes of the job, working through tough situations, and making reliable friends.

The book is the first of a six-book Cyberpunk action/adventure series—without the bad endings. Plum Parrot does a great job of moving the plot forward through a lively, engaging world with a great, if ever-changing, cast of characters. I especially love the chemistry between Juliet, the protagonist, and Angel, her AI partner, a bond that slowly but surely grows deep as Juliet goes farther down the rabbit hole. A “Rags to Riches” story, with emphasis on “to.” Available on Amazon Kindle and Audible audiobooks, I'm often told that Suzy Jackson's narration is excellent!





# My Book Story

## Dr. Rachel Anderson

Libraries have always been an important part of my life. When I was in elementary school, I must have checked out the same book dozens of times – *Our Universe*, a non-fiction tour of well, everything in the universe. (Is it any surprise that I ended up teaching science fiction?) By the time I was fourteen, I was working in that same children’s library shelving books, checking out books, and most frequently, loading *Oregon Trail* on the library’s one Apple II+ computer for patrons to play.



As I worked my way through undergrad and grad school, I continued being both a patron and an employee. While in grad school I worked in cataloging moving all the books using Cyrillic orthography in the Indiana University library from the card catalog to the online system, and later in the Lilly Rare Books Library. This facility not only had copy of Shakespeare’s *First Folio* but also had one of John Ford’s directing Oscars—which was kept on top of a (very secure) filing cabinet.

When I started teaching here at GVSU, I thought my library service days were over, and I’d be “just” a lifelong enthusiastic patron. However, in 2015, I responded to an online call for applicants to be a Commissioner of the Grand Rapids Public Library. When I walked into the meeting to be interviewed by the Board, I found that the other finalist was Kelly Boston – a former GVSU English major and my advisee. I don’t think the Board knew how to handle our rather paradoxical interview tactic of telling them how great the other person was! While I ended up getting selected, I’m very glad Kelly ended up running for the board, getting elected and is currently our Vice President.

I was duly elected to the board in 2017, and 2020 was elected to be its President. Much has changed in public libraries since I was a 14-year-

old in the mid 80s! There's more than one patron computer, for example, and the shift from card catalogs to online databases is pretty much complete. But more importantly, the social function of the library had broadened. As public locations where all are welcome diminish in our society, the public library remains a place with open doors and welcoming smiles. With a mission to help connect all people with knowledge, libraries have become the place where people rightly come for help figuring out the challenges of life – as well as accessing the literature, films, music, and other things that feed souls.

I view my work on the GRPL Board as a way to support this mission of connection. A community with a library is community that values and supports its members. I'm sure many of you read about the defunding of the Patmos library in Jamestown Charter Township. Other libraries in Michigan and beyond have also been targeted by right-wing agitators keen on an agenda of defunding, censorship, and general disruption. I think one of the most important things that we can do as people who care about literature, about people's access to knowledge, is to stand up for libraries. This doesn't have to be Board service – simply supporting your library on social media, visiting and showing up to events, and supporting library millages is absolutely amazing.

Oh, and that Our Universe book I was obsessed with as a child? I recently tracked down a copy and bought it. The info is slightly out of date – but the memories are evergreen.

# Welcome New Faculty Members

Meet our new hires who joined us since 2022

## Prof. Roy Black

If the hashtag #Laker4aLifetime was a person, it would be me. GVSU has played a big role in making me who I am today, both personally and professionally. After earning a BA and MA at GVSU around the turn of the century, I stayed connected to the university in various ways while teaching English in Wyoming, Michigan, about 20 minutes from the Allendale campus. Starting in 2012, I returned to GV as a Professor—first as an Adjunct, then as a Visiting Professor, and now as an Affiliate.



I live with Emily, my wife of 30+ years, on the banks of the Thornapple River in Alto, Michigan. We have three adult daughters. We are very proud of all of them. Emily and I also have two Dachshunds, one named after Stevie Ray Vaughan and the other named after Andre the Giant.

My professional interests and areas of inquiry include English education, best practices in reading and writing, and equity in educational practices. When I'm not reading and writing about those things, I mainly read fiction (especially science fiction and fantasy), history, and historical fiction. If I'm not reading in those areas, I'm probably reading a graphic novel. I write quite a bit, but mostly for myself lately. In addition to reading and writing, I enjoy listening to good music, Yoga and AquaCardio at the YMCA, playing games, golfing, and watching football—especially when played by the GVSU Lakers and the Detroit Lions.

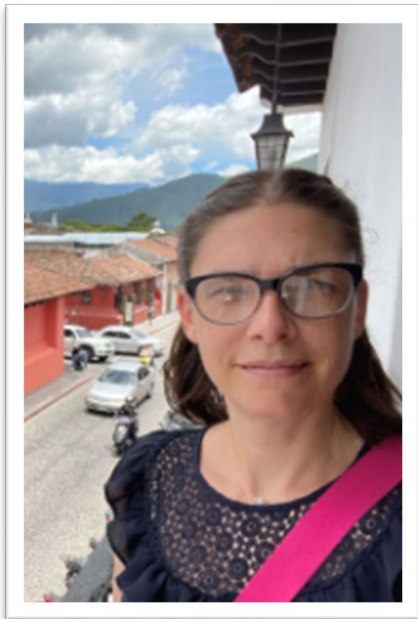
## **Dr. Elisabeth Spinner**

Beth Spinner is a new faculty member teaching English education courses. She recently moved to Grand Rapids with her husband and two kids. They are loving the Grand Rapids area! When they aren't all in school, Beth and her family love to travel and camp. Beth also loves reading and running. Before coming to Grand Valley, Beth was a professor at Alma College. She went to Western Michigan University for her PhD and Michigan State University for her Masters and bachelor's degrees. She taught middle and high school English before moving to the college level.



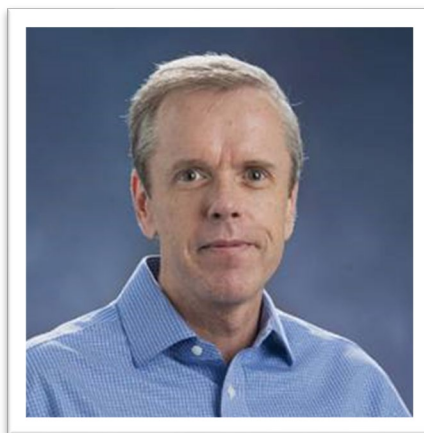
## **Dr. Sarah Williams**

This is my third year on faculty in the English Department. I have been a teacher in Chicago Public Schools, Acting Director of the Reading Clinic at the University of Illinois at Chicago, a reading interventionist, and COO and President of SchoolRise, a national educational consulting company. I have taught literacy courses at Ferris State University and Western Michigan University. My research interests center on social justice, equity, and inclusion in education, as well as culturally responsive perspectives and practices in literacy and education research. I identify as a Third Culture Kid (TCK) having grown up in Guatemala. I have also lived in Australia, the Czech Republic, and all over the US. I enjoy playing games and going on walks with my husband, three sons, and dog. My hobbies include baking, knitting, sewing, reading, gardening, and working out.



## Dr. John Gibbons

John Gibbons is a passionate educator and linguist who enjoys preparing future teachers and linguists for impactful careers. As a Visiting Professor at Grand Valley State University, John teaches a variety of courses in English, linguistics, and teacher preparation, focusing on fostering inclusive, engaging, and effective classroom practices. With a PhD in Applied Linguistics and a background in TESOL, his research interests include second language writing, technology-mediated learning, large language models (ChatGPT), and teacher training.



John's teaching philosophy centers on empowering students with practical skills and critical thinking abilities, ensuring they are well-equipped to support diverse learners. Whether guiding pre-service teachers or mentoring linguistics students, John finds immense joy in sharing his expertise and contributing to the growth of the next generation of researchers and educators.

## Dr. Pengtong Qu

I grew up in northeast China and have had educational experience in China, Spain, and the U.S. I earned my Ph.D. from Indiana University and joined the English Department at GV in 2022. Because of my transnational learning experiences, I am interested in how multilingual children creatively use their language(s) in and out of school. Something new about me, I just had my first baby this past spring! It has been so fun to observe how she interacts with multiple languages!





## Dr. Daniel Knapper

I joined the English Department in 2023. Hard to believe! Time flies, especially when you've got a growing brood of energetic little children: Josie (6), Franklin (3), and baby Louise June (5 months) keep life quite adventurous for me and my wife Maria. My teaching is mainly focused on the Renaissance or early modern period, 1500-1700, including courses on Shakespeare and the early British literature survey. *Beowulf*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—you will not read and/or watch more entertaining, sophisticated, weird, maddening, funny, insightful, and hugely influential literature than you do in these classes. Ever heard of *The Lord of the Rings*? *Harry Potter* ring any bells? How about *Game of Thrones*? None of these beloved series would exist without the brilliant work of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and their contemporaries, and of course, Shakespeare's plays are themselves as popular as ever, still produced, performed, and adapted on stage and film around the world, including every other year here at GVSU for the Grand Valley Shakespeare Festival. But my teaching responsibilities also range beyond the Renaissance to such varied and diverse subjects as science fiction and contemporary drama. All rich and compelling stuff.

As for scholarship, I research the impact of biblical writing on the style and rhetoric of early modern literature. The Bible is a central source and inspiration for literary writing in the Anglophone tradition: the imaginations of Cormac McCarthy, Toni Morrison, Marilynne Robinson, Maya Angelou, August Wilson, etc. etc. are steeped in biblical language, imagery, and narrative. But the biblical engagements of early English writers such as Shakespeare and John Milton are distinctive in their keen attention to biblical rhetoric (a result of their humanist education) combined with their profound interest in biblical theology (a result of Reformation-era religious culture). My work explores this heady mixture of humanism, religion, and literature: my first book shows how and why early English writers imitate and adapt the style of Saint Paul's New Testament epistles, and my current book project shows how and why they imitate and adapt Old and New Testament prophecy. One big takeaway from all this: the English department really needs a "Bible as Literature" class.



When I'm not parenting, teaching, or researching, I'm probably doing 1 of 3 things. First, I may be jogging, though my running routine has been sorely hampered by the winter months. Or I may be practicing my German-language skills, a hobby first inspired by my graduate work and recently revived by a PBS travel special on the beauties of the Rhine. Or I may be watching Ohio State football, which, as I compose this, is sitting at the pinnacle of the college football world, thanks to the remarkable resilience of Ryan Day and his merry band of Buckeyes. Now if we could just defeat those pesky Wolverines!



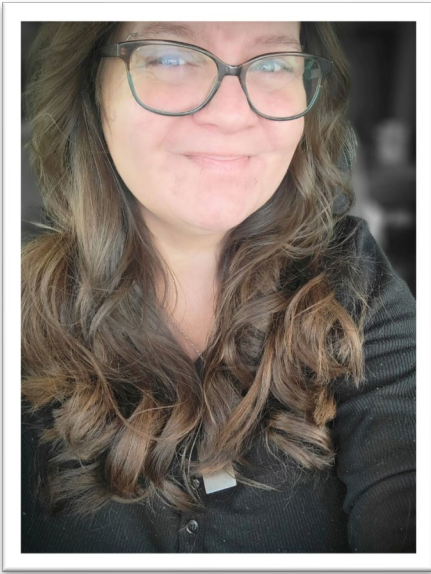
## Prof. Sarah Nolan



Hello! I'm Sarah Nolan-Brueck, a new adjunct instructor at Grand Valley State this semester. I grew up in Northern Indiana, went to Purdue University for my undergrad, and then moved to Los Angeles in 2018, where I taught at a fancy middle school dedicated to students with language-based learning differences. The next year I started my graduate studies in English literature at the University of Southern California; I received my master's degree in December 2022.

I'm now a PhD candidate, set to defend my dissertation and graduate this spring. I specialize in science fiction, and specifically, how authors have used the genre to interrogate gender. My work focuses on medicine and the law, beginning with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and culminating in more recent novels, like Anna North's *Outlawed* and Akwaeke Emezi's *Pet*. I study how early challenges to biological identity are tied to contemporary discussions of infertility, abortion, and gender affirming healthcare. I have two cats named Margot and Cornelius, a husband named Andrew, and a four-month-old baby named Olivia. I collect copies of *Alice in Wonderland*, and there's nothing I love more than watching baking competitions and reading about food.

## Prof. Amy Jacobs



Prof. Amy Jacobs joined GVSU as an adjunct professor in the Fall 2023 semester, to teach ENG 215 Literary Foundations: Genre. A graduate of the Laker Nation herself, Amy earned her MA in English literature in 2019 after defending her thesis titled “ ‘We Are The Walking Dead: Morality in Robert Kirkman’s Comics Series” under the supervision of Professor Rob Rozema with thesis committee members Kathleen Blumreich and Rob Franciosi.

Specializing in the horror genre and comic books, she loves bringing the living dead and beyond to her classrooms now that she has returned to the Laker Nation as a professor. So far, her proudest achievement outside of coming back to Grand Valley came in 2022 when she presented a paper on *Maus* and *In the Shadow of No Towers* at San Diego Comic Con—her lifelong career dream! A member of the Horror Writers Association, the Society of Cinema and Media Studies, the ALA’s Graphic Novel and Comics Round Table Equity and Diversion Taskforce, and a founding member of the Society for the Study of the American Gothic, Amy lives with her husband, James, and their six-year-old daughter, and when she isn’t reading or consuming genre pop culture Amy spends her time acting out Disney scenes with her daughter. Her current research focuses on ways in which post-9/11 horror film franchises function as modern-day fairy tales for 21st-century American audiences.

## Dr. Tierney S. Powell

Tierney S. Powell is Assistant Professor of Multicultural American Literature and member of the Interdisciplinary Cluster for Society, Technology, and the Environment at Grand Valley State University. Her current book project argues that literature, television, and film produce powerful narratives that theorize and imagine alternatives to logistics, the spatial practice and organizational logic undergirding expansive and

intensifying global commodity chains and the fossil economies that fuel them. This work extends from her interdisciplinary research and teaching considering the legacies of colonial extraction, trade, and war-making as they inhere in the infrastructures and spatial practices of global cities. Her work on Joy Harjo's "New Orleans" is part of *Voices and Visions: Essays on New Orleans's Literary History*, edited by Nancy Dixon & Leslie Petty (University Press of Mississippi, 2025). She earned her PhD from the University of Illinois Chicago.

Dr. Powell teaches classes on literary and cultural representations of globalization, infrastructure, water justice, public health, and American cities, in addition to literary theory, criticism, and form. Alongside this, her teaching and research incorporate the Digital Humanities, using digital tools to produce engaging public scholarship, to theorize new modes of representation, to visualize complex data, and to deepen our critical understanding of digital platforms, systems, and their implications. If you are interested in taking a class with Dr. Powell, she welcomes students to email her at [powellti@gvsu.edu](mailto:powellti@gvsu.edu) and/or pop by her drop-in hours.



Dr. Powell joined the GVSU faculty in August 2024. Since arriving, she has enjoyed meeting GV students and faculty and exploring the Grand Rapids metro area. Dr. Powell and her husband continue to spend most of their weekends checking out great hiking trails around West Michigan and rewarding themselves with fresh bread and produce from the Fulton Street Market. In her free time, you can find Dr. Powell in a coffee shop, vintage store, or lugging a tote full of used books home from Black Dog Books and Records. Or, most likely of all, she's probably taking a long walk with her small fluffy pup named Cheezit.

## Faculty Awards

Congratulations to our faculty on winning a university award!

### Dr. Dan Brown

My name is Dan Brown and I'm an Associate Professor in the English Department, specializing in applied linguistics with a focus on TESOL (Teaching English as a second language to speakers of other languages), second language acquisition, and research methods in applied linguistics. I teach courses such as Sociolinguistics and Applied Linguistics, as well as teacher preparation courses designed to prepare future educators to support multilingual learners effectively.



My work is grounded in a passion for exploring the opportunities and challenges of English learning in both global contexts and the U.S., where multilingual learners often face marginalization. Prior to joining GVSU, I was privileged to teach and mentor students and educators in Chile, Thailand, and Japan.

I am deeply honored to receive the PEW Teaching Excellence Award this year, which recognizes faculty for their excellence in teaching and mentoring at GVSU. This award recognizes commitment to fostering intellectual curiosity, staying current in my field, and continuously improving my teaching practices. I appreciate the recognition of my peers and students, and I look forward to continuing to try to create meaningful and engaging academic experiences that help prepare our students to achieve their goals.



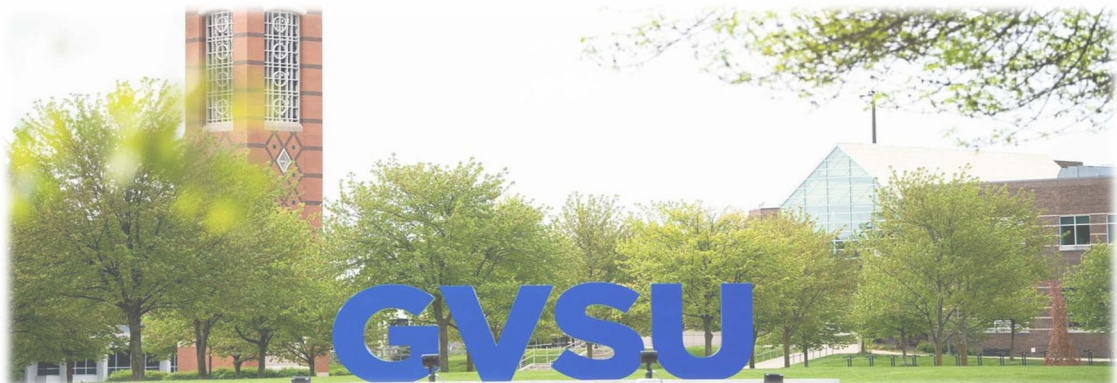


## **Dr. Adeline Borti**

My name is Adeline Borti, and I am an Assistant Professor in the English Department. My interests include teacher knowledge of literacy and English education at the preservice teacher education and in-service levels. I am also interested in students' needs assessment, equity, inclusion, and diversity in literacy, and English as a second language contexts. Additionally, my research focuses on Indigenous research methodologies and Indigenous knowledge.

GVSU recognized my scholarly and creative accomplishments with a Distinguished Early Career Scholar award in January 2024. This award considered my regional, national, and international research, publications, and presentation accomplishments, coupled with my ability to research with my students and use literacy research in my preservice teachers' classroom to nurture curious and critical thinkers, leaders, and advocates.

In 2024, I received the GVSU International Student Services/Padnos International Center Pineapple Award, which is awarded to faculty who have supported international students in an outstanding manner.



# Faculty Highlights

Faculty's scholarly and creative work in from 2023 to 2025

## David Alvarez

- The translation of a chapter from *To the South of Tangier: A Journey to the Cultures of Morocco* was read at the Theatre Riyad Sultan, Tangier, Morocco in October 2023.
- Delivered a guest lecture at Hope College entitled *From 'Cannibales: traversée dans l'enfer de Gibraltar' to 'Welcome to Paradise': translating illegalized migration across the Strait of Gibraltar in October 2023.*
- A piece of creative nonfiction written on the Strait of Gibraltar entitled *Hercules's Sundering Reversed* was published in Patuka Press (Gibraltar), Issue 2, "Borders and Boundaries" in 2023.
- Published a poem entitled "Receding View of Memory Lane" in Issue 3 of *Patuka Press* (Gibraltar) in June 2024.

## Daniel Knapper

- *Pauline Style and Renaissance Literary Culture* was published by Oxford University Press in October 2023.
- The article *Prophetic Style and Isaian Exceptionalism in Reformation Rhetoric and Theology* was published in *Sixteenth Century Journal* in 2023.
- Published the article *Biblical Prophecy and Political Counsel in Shakespeare's Richard II and Shakespeare and Fletcher's Henry VIII* in *English Literary Renaissance* in 2024.
- Served as the editor of *Comparative Drama*, a quarterly academic journal of drama, theatre, and performance studies since 2023.

## Dan Brown

- Plonsky, L., Brown, D., Chen, M., Ghanem, R., Gutiérrez Arvizu, M. N., Isbell, D. R., & Zhang, M. (2024). "Significance sells": Researcher views on the ethics of the quantitative data handling and reporting. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, 3.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rmal.2024.100099>



- Brown, D., Fernández, J., Huensch, A. (2023). The role of pragmatic markers in perceptions of L2 fluency in dialogue. *System*, 119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.103157>
- White, B. & Brown, D. (2023). Enhancing learners' self-efficacy to support L2 motivation: The need for strengths analysis. *TESOL Journal*, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.780>
- Brown, D., Liu, Q. & Norouzian, R. (2023). Effectiveness of L2 written corrective feedback in developing L2 accuracy: A Bayesian meta-analysis. *Language Teaching Research*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688221147374>
- Brown, D. (October 2023). The role of pragmatic markers in L2 interactive fluency. Accepted to present at the annual MITESOL conference at Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, MI.
- Brown, D., Liu, Q., & Norouzian, R. (March 2023). Effectiveness of written corrective feedback in developing L2 accuracy: A Bayesian meta-analysis. Accepted to present at the annual American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Conference, Portland, OR.

### **John Gibbons**

- Li M., & Gibbons, J. (2023). Examining visual metadiscourse in EFL students' infographic posters. *CALICO Journal*
- Li M., & Gibbons, J. (2023). Re-exploring writer-reader interaction: Analyzing metadiscourse in ESP students' infographics. *English for Specific Purposes*
- Gibbons, J. & Akoto, M. (2023). Use of digital technologies for collaborative writing. In M. Li & M. Zhang (Eds.), *L2 collaborative writing in diverse learning contexts*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- 2025 CALICO 2025. *Empirical Research on ChatGPT in Second Language Teaching, Learning, and Academic Writing: A Scoping Review*. 30-minute session
- 2024 The 20th Symposium on Second Language Writing (SSLW). *Re-exploring writer-reader interaction: Visual metadiscourse in EAP students' infographics* (Paper).

- 2024 AAAL (American Association for Applied Linguistics). *Graduate Students' Using ChatGPT in Education: Three Personal Stories*. One Hour Colloquium. Language and Technology (TEC) Strand
- 2024 AAAL (American Association for Applied Linguistics). *Using ChatGPT in Higher Education: Stakeholders' Perspectives*. One Hour Colloquium
- 2023 DFW Metroplex Linguistics Conference. *Re-Exploring Writer-Reader Interaction: Analyzing Visual Metadiscourse In EAP Students' Infographics*
- 2023 IALLT (International Association for Language Learning Technology) Conference: *Implementation of Digital Social Reading in a TESOL Teacher Training Course*
- 2023 CALICO (Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium) Conference. *Exploring the Use of Perusall Social Annotating to Support Academic Reading and Writing*
- 2023 TextESOL V Virtual Regional Conference. *Technology-Mediated Collaborative Learning Through Perusall Social Annotations In a University TESOL Teacher Training Course*
- 2023 18th Annual Pathways Student Research Symposium: 1st Place Award. *Technological Affordances of Perusall Social Annotating to Support Academic Reading and Writing*
- Gibbons, J. (2024). *Beyond the Margins: Enhancing Student Engagement Through Social Annotating in the Classroom* [Webinar]. International Association for Language Learning Technology (IALLT).

### **Rachel Anderson**

- Anderson, R. (2024). I Don't Want to Be Human': The Neurodivergent Reader Response to Martha Wells' *Murderbot Diaries Series*" *Ought* 5.2. <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ought/vol5/iss2/18/>
- Anderson, R. (2024). Faulty parts: The (mal)functioning cyborg in *After Yang* and *The Murderbot Diaries*" *Transitions: The SFRA* (Science Fiction Research Association) Annual Conference, Tartu, Estonia.
- Anderson, R. (2024). Tentacles/Hair: Medusa, Shambleau, and *Binti*. *Speculative Fiction Across Media Conference*. Los Angeles, CA.

### **Brian White**

- White, B. & Brown, D. (2023). Enhancing learners' self-efficacy to support L2 motivation: The need for strengths analysis. *TESOL Journal*, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.780>

### **Colleen Brice**

- Brice, C., & Palaez-Morales, C. (December 2024). Selected bibliography of scholarship on second language writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 66, [101159](#).
- Brice, C., & Palaez-Morales, C. (September 2024). Selected bibliography of scholarship on second language writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 65, [101136](#).
- Palaez-Morales, C., & Brice, C. (December 2023). Selected bibliography of scholarship on second language writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 62, [101074](#).
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### **Amy Masko**

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### **Pengtong Qu**

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### **Shinian Wu**

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### **Corinna McLeod**

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### **Sarah Williams**

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- Williams, S. R., & Warsen, G. (2024, July 29). *Breaking barriers: Exploring schools that defy the odds* [Presentation]. International Council of Professors of Educational Leadership. Virtual presentation.
- Denning, L., Williams, S. R., & Qu, P. (2024, April 10). *Beyond the red pen: Investigating the Formation of reader and writer identity in pre-service teachers* [Poster presentation]. Student Scholars Day, Allendale, MI.
- Hornak, A., Williams, S. R., Duke, S., & Ampaw, F. (2023, April 13-16). *Formative influences: How capital shapes rural students' college-going intentions* [Paper presentation]. American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.
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### **Brian Deyo**

- Winter 2023: FTLC Sandbox Grant supported a virtual workshop on podcasting in ENG 382-Literature and the Environment with John Biewen, producer and host of Scene on Radio.



- Fall 2023: Co-designed and taught ENG 105/CLA 131, “The Romans and Us: An Introduction to the Interdisciplinary Environmental Humanities”, a First-Year Learning Community (FYLC) and pilot course for the CLAS Voyage with Charles Ham (CLA)
- Fall 2023-Winter 2024: FTLC Teaching Innovation Grant supported the lecture series, “Climate Change, the Public Environmental Humanities, and the New Liberal Education”, an interdisciplinary collaboration with Charles Ham (CLA) and Mayra Fortes (MLL)
- Winter 2024: FTLC Sandbox Grant supported an interdisciplinary field trip with Mayra Fortes (MLL) and Ben Holder (PHY) to bring students to witness a total eclipse within the path of totality
- Fall 2024: FTLC Teaching Innovation Grant with Denise Goerisch (INT) and Heather Moody (GPY) to support “Landscapes of Debt,” an interdisciplinary symposium designed to help faculty, staff, and students imagine a debt-free college experience
- Winter 2024: published “Reading Ecophobia in the Capitalocene” in *Eco-Concepts: Critical Reflections in Emerging Ecocritical Theory and Ecological Thought*, a short essay on contemporary critical theory, with a special focus on the concepts of ecophobia and the Capitalocene.



*An interdisciplinary field trip to see the 2024 total eclipse. Supported by an FTLC Sandbox Grant with Mayra Fortes (MLL) and Ben Holder (PHY).*



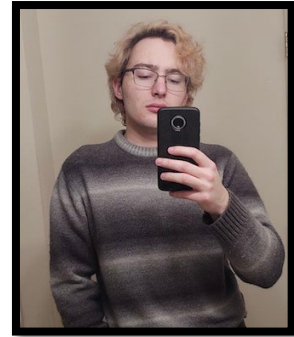
# 2025 Winter Newsletter Committee

## **Thad Konieczny**

Senior

Major: English

Minor: Marketing



## **Aeryn Hart**

Senior

Major: Secondary English Education

Minor: Geography



## **Sherry Johnson**

Associate Professor

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