English Department Capstone Conference

To live as they do, vulnerably, in the air, the wing-assaulting wind...

Patricia Clark, "Out with the Monarch, the Vole, and the Toad"

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

21 April 2017

Kirkhof Center

Grand Valley State University

Allendale, Michigan

ENG 495

Capstone Conference

21 December 2017

Kirkhof Center

Grand Valley State University

Allendale, Michigan

Why a Capstone Conference?

The English 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).

Our Capstone course underscores the department's principles and values: to cultivate critical reading and reflection; to produce excellent writing in a variety of forms; to speak, read, and write effectively; and to achieve literary, analytical, pedagogical, and theoretical skills.

This conference is the culminating event for the English Capstone course. It requires that students publically present a project for which they have been responsible from its inception to its final form. The presentation makes concrete the expertise that students have accrued in the research process and allows them to speak as authorities on 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 for 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 element 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.

Schedule

Session One: 10-10:50 a.m.

Panels A & B

Session Two: 11-11:50 a.m.

Panels C, D & E

Session Three: 12-12:50 p.m.

Panels F, G & H

Session Four: 1-1:50 p.m.

Panels I, J & K

Session Five: 2-2:50 p.m.

Panels L, M & N

Session Six: 3-3:50 p.m.

Panels O, P & Q

Annual Awards Ceremony: 4 p.m.

Grand River Room

Notes

Students will present in the order in which they appear in this brochure; a question-and-answer session will follow once all students on the panel have presented their papers.

Please join us at 4 p.m. in The Grand River Room (KC 2250) of the Kirkhof Center for the English Department's Annual Awards Ceremony.

Panel A
KC 2259

Pressing Issues in Education
Facilitators: Dr. Kurt Bullock &
Dr. Brian White

Rachel Trisch
'Privatization of Public Education: What Is Best for Our Students?'

In the last twenty years, we have seen several movements to privatize and deregulate education in the United States. While supporters of this movement argue that liberating education systems from the burden of governmental red tape and requirements will be the answer to the growing number of problems that schools in America are facing today, the diminishing support of public education institutions has proven itself to be disastrous for our most vulnerable students and will continue to make success increasingly difficult for these students if public education is not strengthened. This paper will explore these concepts through the examination of research conducted on schools that have emphasized the privatization and deregulation of education, and examining the subsequent effects these practices have had on minority groups.

Janelle Schwartz
'Removing the Crippling Effects of Test Anxiety: Battling One of Education's Biggest Enemies through English

Test anxiety is a common problem in K-12 students: a fear of failure in a testing situation. Sources show that many students in K-12 classrooms suffer from test anxiety; however, the Diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) does not recognize test anxiety as its own mental illness. While there are differing opinions as to how to solve this growing problem, most psychologists and teachers alike see that this problem needs to be addressed so that our students can learn to their full potential. This thesis will discuss the studies done to find what factors affect test anxiety, as well as the effects of standardized testing on test anxiety. Some strategies to combat test anxiety in the classroom will be discussed, as well as how English classrooms can give students the creative outlet they need to lower testing anxiety.

Rachel Okarski

'Maintaining Teacher Morale'

It is no secret that teachers make up the largest population of a school and perhaps have the greatest influence on a schools community. For this reason, teacher morale is a topic of great concern. Many studies suggest that low teacher morale has a negative influence on student achievement and engagement. Moreover, research indicates that principal and educational leadership influences teacher morale more than any other factor. By listening to teachers and supporting them with resources and positive recognition, principals can help boost and maintain morale and provide a learning environment where teachers feel appreciated. Strategies throughout the school and the classroom can also be implemented to boost morale and student achievement, leading to various positive outcomes. This thesis project focuses on leadership effects by analyzing relationships between teachers and principals, strategies that can be implemented to preserve morale, and how student achievement is impacted by morale.

Panel B

KC 2270

Classroom Language—AAVE & Chinglish

Facilitators: Dr. Sherry Johnson & Dr. Shinian Wu

Brian Griggs

'Shaping a Dialect: Ideologies of AAVE Through Three Literary Periods'

The dialect of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) has a significant amount of linguistic variation that characterizes its individuality from other dialects. This essay will look at three different literary periods and use discourse analysis to study the ideological factors which influence uses of the dialect within the literature. As ideologies change throughout the periods, the roles of written AAVE also change, serving a different purpose. Language ideologies are portrayed in the informal and formal written forms of discourse of the literature and present variations throughout each era. Attitudes towards language, literature, heritage languages and society will be extracted from the data and will aid in interpreting changes seen in the dialect of AAVE.

Arin DeGraaf

'Language and Identity: The Power of African-American Vernacular English in the Classroom'

The way that people speak and communicate with others is a very powerful aspect of an individual's personal identity. This thesis presentation focuses on African American Vernacular English and its status within American classrooms. Scholars such as Rebecca Wheeler, John Rickford, and Jessica Whitney discuss the impacts that African American Vernacular English (AAVE) have on the identity of students in classrooms all around the country. They all stress the importance of recognizing AAVE as a legitimate variety of American English and one that students in many classrooms around the country may communicate in. Teachers and educators alike need to accept AAVE as not an incorrect way of communicating but instead a large part of a student's cultural identity. Code-switching will also be explored in this thesis as a strategy to not only get other students to recognize linguistic differences in the classroom but to also make sure that each student's individual linguistic identity is acknowledged and celebrated.

Erin Gorelick

'"Fall Carefully into Water": The Socio-Linguistic Implications Of Chinglish'

This paper looks at the sociological and linguistic implications of the blend of Chinese and English commonly known as "Chinglish". This research draws its sources from a variety of sources including academic journal articles, books, media, and even photographic examples found on the streets throughout China. This paper can be split into three parts. The first part looks at the anatomy of Chinglish and not only dissects the linguistic features of Chinglish, but why these features exist and what caused them to become commonplace. The second part of this paper examines how Chinglish is classified as a linguistic code and variety of English. The third and final part of this paper examines whether or not Chinglish should be taught in schools as other varieties of English such as American English or British English. The goal of this paper is to make the reader aware of the complexities and implications of the often humorous, sometimes confusing blend of Chinese and English known as Chinglish.

11 a.m.	**SESSION TWO**

Panel c
KC 2259

Coping & Healing in the Classroom
Facilitators: Dr. Karen Pezzetti &
Dr. Rob Rozema

Emily Binns
'Anxiety Disorders in the Classroom: Identifying Signs and Possible Coping Mechanisms'

A variety of distractors often take hold of students' attention while trying to engage and learn in a classroom setting. This paper identifies, defines, and explains the different types of anxieties that are most often seen in children and adolescents and how those anxiety disorders affect their ability to learn. This paper will also discuss the signs that children suffering with anxiety often display in the hopes that these children may be identified by their teachers and other school faculty. Lastly, the paper will examine how teachers and school faculty will be best able to help their students cope with different anxieties. The objective of this paper is to inform the public, but specifically educators, on different anxieties that affect children's learning and how to help them cope and continue to be successful students.

Erin Bargo
'Unleashing Hidden Emotions: The Positive Use of Bibliotherapy By School Personnel'

Bibliotherapy is therapeutic reading in which children find duplications of their own problems and observe how children similar to themselves face their difficulties. Children are able to use literature to cope with both trauma and the everyday struggles of growing up. Bibliotherapy has a rich history and is becoming more routinely understood and used by many therapists, teachers, counselors and librarians with children today. Bibliotherapy can be utilized in the classroom through all disciplines. There are many precautions when using bibliotherapy to make sure the literature is helping rather than hindering the child's healing process. Choosing a book carefully is the key to making the right connection between the child and the book. This thesis will stress the importance of using books with children as the first form of therapy as they are able to make connections with characters of all different backgrounds and experiences.

Kelsey Rogers
'Graphic Pathologies: Utilizing Graphic Novels as a Tool for Bibliotherapy'

Graphic novels tend to bring up a myriad of opinions from both educators and scholars. While they often acknowledge their entertainment value, many fail to recognize their literary merit. The recent flow of research reflecting the unique strengths of graphic novels contrasts these views. In the past few decades, graphic novels have been utilized in the classroom with notable results. Many authors have started using the medium to tell personal stories of mental illness and trauma. Through the cathartic process of writing, these authors are discovering the power of their novels to reach others. Gillian Whitlock coins these novels "graphic autographies" due to their ability to merge visuals and text in order to create a deeply empathetic bond between the author and the reader. This paper analyzes the history and research of graphic novels, bibliotherapy, and graphic autographies in order to present graphic novels as an effective tool for the purposes of bibliotherapy.

Panel D
KC 2263

We Live in a Digital World
Facilitators: Dr. Avis Hewitt &
Dr. David Ihrman

Anna VanDer Schaaf
'Internet Linguistics and Digital Communication: Here to Stay'

"The Internet is the largest area of language development we have seen in our lifetimes. Only two things are certain: it is not going to go away, and it is going to get larger." So ends a chapter in *Internet Linguistics: A Student Guide*, written by famed linguist and prolific author, David Crystal. Internet Linguistics is an emerging field of study examining the new language styles that have emerged due to the Internet and other means of digital communication like text messaging. Some revel in and exalt this new, linguistically virginal territory, while others weep at the supposed massacre of prescriptive Standard Variety English. In addition to examining these warring viewpoints, I will also assess the extent digital communication affects "real world" dialogue, as well as what the positives and negatives can be to adopting such a subversive method of communicating.

Ethan Haughie

**'You [bleeping] [bleep]!:
Analyzing Incivility in
Online Political
Comments'**

While there is extensive research into online political discourse and the role of incivility online, this subsection of the field of Political Discourse Analysis has largely conducted itself separately from the burgeoning field of Internet Linguistics. This paper argues that by adopting an integrated research lens, which combines both fields into a cohesive analysis of civility in online discourse, the full breadth of the variables at play in online deliberation will be laid bare. An analysis of the comment section of a contentious article on a "neutral" news site serves as a pilot study for one potential model that utilizes this larger lens. The results are compared to the existing corpus of findings from Internet Linguists and Political Discourse Analysts, in order to draw correlations between features of the former that affect outcomes of the latter—namely, the overall civility of the discourse.

Panel E
KC 2270

Movement in the Classroom

Facilitators: Dr. Dawn Evan & Shinian Wu

Karlee Schreur

**'Enhancing a Student's
Mind: The Kinesthetic
Classroom'**

Involving many scholars, movement or physical education in the classroom can be considered a benefit when it comes to enhancing a student's mind. However, it can also be problematic because many school districts believe they don't need to use this method of teaching, that students should understand the material given to them. Scientific studies have been done over the past decade providing many materials that movement should be taught to increase literacy levels. However, others believe some studies also provide information that movement does not work. This thesis will explore and analyze many well-known conducted scientific studies, best-selling books, and journal articles expressing what benefits they feel movement would and would not have for students, suggesting that whatever option current or future educators choose that the focus is still on student success rates.

Caitlin Hunter

'Move to Learn, Learn to Move'

Classrooms have looked the same for the last one hundred years, desks in a row, lined up facing the teacher. Students get yelled at for moving around in their seats. This is the old way of teaching that needs to change with our changing world. This presentation will explain how to create a classroom environment that encourages movement, and gives students options on how they best work. With ADD/ADHD statistics on the rise within the last decade, and children's natural tendency to fidget, teachers should not reprimand students for moving, but channel that energy into innovative movement while integrating classroom material. Information showing the positive correlation between movement and memory will be shown as well as multiple parts of the brain that react positively to movement alongside learning. Simple steps on how to turn your classroom into a kinesthetic classroom will be shared.

Noon	SESSION THREE

Panel F
KC 2259

Writing in the Classroom
Facilitators: Dr. Rachel Anderson & Dr. Michael Webster

Katlyn Vuilemot

'Inspiring Great Writing: Teachers Who Love Writing Are the Key to Motivated Students'

The ability to produce a well-crafted paper is a skill all students are expected to develop during their K-12 education. From first learning to spell, to producing full-length research papers, students work daily on writing abilities necessary for life after high school. Unfortunately, many students leave school with a negative ideology of writing due to the lack of excitement in their classrooms. I argue that it's the teacher's responsibility to create a positive learning environment for students in order for them to learn the joys of writing. More importantly, teachers who understand their responsibility and model their passion for writing while in the classroom can create a generation of students who are motivated and truly enjoy writing.

Annalise Olson
'Lazarus Effect: The Death and Resuscitation of Poetry in Education'

Many individuals in our current education program view poetry with apprehension and unease. It has been established that children are naturally drawn to poetry and poetic language, yet the majority of students in upper elementary and above claim to have an aversion to poetry. Why is poetry often viewed so marvelously at one point in life and so miserably the next? There are countless influencing factors for the deterioration of poetry in education. The traditional canonization and instruction of poetry, as well as the stereotypes and misconceptions it has produced, have become major contributing factors for the development of unfavorable attitudes toward poetry. These factors, coupled with an increased focus on standardized testing, have created a toxic climate for poetry instruction, subsequently leading to its current state. This thesis will ultimately explore how teacher education on poetry and transformative teaching practices can lead to the redemption of poetry, as both a tool and an art form, in the classroom.

Caitlin Benson
'Engaging with Syntax'

The most recent Nation's Report Card from 2011 shows a dismal writing score: only twenty-four percent of twelfth graders write at a *proficient* level whereas fifty-two percent are at the lower, *basic* level, of writing. These scores suggest the question: why can't our students write? Many blame poverty, lack of interest, technology, and other factors. The public cries out for government overhauls and interventions, but the answer may be simpler: in an attempt to embrace creativity we have let the basics fall to the wayside. However, to go back to the "chalk and talk" method of earlier times would be to resurrect an outdated factory model—the remnants of which we still see today in many schools. What needs to occur is an educational overhaul from both the top rungs of our government down to the teachers in the classroom.

Classroom Literature & Social Change

Facilitators: Dr. Regis Fox &
Dr. Karen Pezzetti

Alexis Vercellino

'The Power of Stories:
Discovering How
Books Can Be Used to
Decrease Bullying in
Schools'

Bullying at school is a problem that all educators will address at some point in their career. There are several ways to combat bullying in schools. One impactful way for teachers to confront bullying is through developmental bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy is the use of books to help solve problems. Students can learn problem-solving techniques through stories that are read and discussed in the classroom. This paper introduces the topic of bibliotherapy and its benefits. It also includes a description of the steps for educators to take when introducing literature about bullying. I will include an analysis of several children's books that can be used as bibliotherapy and provide a step-by-step process of how to implement them in the classroom.

Kate Pike

'Written in Black and
White: Unlearning
Racism through
Stories'

Since the day we arrive on the planet, we are told stories. Stories surround the human race whether it be stories told orally, written stories, or stories on a screen. A master narrative has controlled our stories for all of history. This in turn has controlled the way we live and the way we see diversity in our society. Believing that one story is the only story is a danger zone that too many people live in today. What does this look like in our classrooms full of diverse students? This thesis looks at the history of the master narrative, specifically white supremacy. By realizing that single stories lead to prejudice, it invites a need for solution. Multicultural literature in our classrooms is a step toward combating prejudicial thinking in the next generation.

Allison Van Zytveld

'Including LGBTQ-
positive Literature in
the Elementary
Classroom'

Promoting positive LGBTQ literature in the elementary classroom is huge for young minds. This thesis will discuss the importance and need for children to have this category of literature accessible within the classroom. Books are outlets for children, and they gain perspective, understanding and confidence from all literatures, including LGBTQ literature.

Panel H
KC 2270

Environmental Thinking & Learning
Facilitators: Dr. David Alvarez &
Dr. Brian Deyo

Holly Postma

'The Evaluation, Analysis, and Implementation of Environmental Education in the United States School System'

This Grand Valley State University capstone research examines, investigates, and validates the implementation of Environmental Education (EE) in the United States of America. The primary goal of this research is to consider the dire need for an education system that values the core principles of an environmentally friendly society. Educators and environmentalists across the globe have organized, designed, and executed this study into their country-wide school systems, and now it is our turn in the United States. This well researched presentation will focus on narrowing the definition of EE and its importance, as well as the politics behind this realm of education, and how the United States should apply it as a nation-wide requirement.

Tina Olter

'Exploring the Natural World through Environmental Literature at the Primary Level'

Environmental writers such as Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, and Rachel Carson do not tend to be introduced until the secondary and college level. The works of these writers are rarely taught to younger students due to their advanced style. They can still however, be taught to youth through writer biographies and environmental literature designed for the primary level. By looking deeper into student curriculum and material we can recognize the potential environmental writings have to impact children's perspective. Environmental Literature in this category will advance Language Arts learning, and broaden student understanding of the natural world and their position in it. This thesis will explore environmental literature at the primary level and how to implement it into curriculum. This suggests it will impact children's perspective on the natural world.

Panel I
KC 2259

Developing the Inclusive Classroom
Facilitators: Dr. Sherry Johnson &
Dr. Corinna McLeod

Amber Heath
'Language Minority Learners and the Negative Aspects of Reading Testing'

The language dynamic of the United States is constantly changing. While English may be the main language used in an academic setting, at home many families speak a language other than English. Children of these families are known as Language Minority Learners. While these language minority learners are struggling to learn a new language, they are also being held to the same standards as their English-speaking counterparts, including during reading testing. This thesis will examine the ways in which reading testing places unnecessary stress on language minority learners due to the linguistic, academic, and background knowledge assumed by the test creators which creates inaccurate test results.

Clementine Sikiri
'Ensuring Success for English Language Learners in the Classroom'

The United States continues to receive many immigrants. Among them, we have various types of English Language Learners (ELLs) who are experiencing challenges in the classroom. Such challenges are getting in the way of their academic success. My thesis will explore the main challenges the ELL students are facing that are interfering with their success, such as language proficiency, teacher experience, culture differences and lack of parent engagement, and how this affects their performance in other subject areas. The thesis will also explore how understanding these challenges could help develop useful resources and methods that can open a clear path to academic success.

Amber VanDillen
'The Hidden Immigrant and Culturally Responsive Education'

We live in an increasingly connected and mobile world which means that a childhood spent in one location or school is no longer typical. Parents employed by organizations such as the military, government or missions are often placed in international locations and take their families with them. Kids who grow up living abroad or in a culture that is not the same as their parents' culture are

called "Third Culture Kids." The third culture is an amalgamation of their passport culture and the culture in which they currently live. These students can also be called hidden immigrants because they often look like everyone else but their experiences separate them from their peers. Understanding the special needs of this group of students is essential for educators who hope to have an inclusive classroom, and their pedagogy must be culturally responsive to these unique students.

Panel J
KC 2263

Narrative Truth
Facilitators: Dr. Pat Bloem &
Prof. Margery Guest

Chelsea Ayotte
'"Women Is Losers":
Janis Joplin and
Women's Language'

Rock and Roll has been a unifier of both men and women for decades, so why is the industry so dominated by males? Researchers have often pointed out that the lyrics of rock music lean toward more masculine imagery or are fueled by anger, an emotion females have been raised to suppress. Also, the language women use is not often seen as strong or loud, adjectives which characterize rock music. One female who broke the chains of this ideology was Janis Joplin. Her songs weren't love ballads and cries for help, but strong and sometimes angry narratives about womanhood. I believe that by examining how Janis Joplin redefined so-called "woman's language" in her songs, and in the music industry, we can discover how to do the same with "woman's language" today.

Daryl J. Barker, Jr.
'Believing the
Narrative: Inspecting
the Construction of
Worldview'

This research examines how beliefs are formed and mold individual perceptions of meta-narratives in literature and reality. C. S. Lewis, Ayn Rand and Salman Rushdie are three excellent novelists and thinkers that critically postulate about the importance of context, philosophy and narrative in the formation of belief. When observing the interaction between facts and narrative, it becomes apparent that the components of the argument— context, philosophy and narrative—naturally progress in a circular manner. The context provides a narrative that interpolates upon the subject (the

individual in this instance), who responds by "choosing" a position which results in their belief, granting the individual significance and becoming the lens through which the individual perceives the context. In this situation, belief is paramount since it acts as the judge between two narratives confirmed by one set of facts. The resulting narrative then gives the individual significance in their life.

Elise Riffle
'Video Games: The Fight Between Narrative and Simulation'

From mobile games like the *Candy Crush Saga* to the iconic *Super Mario Bros.*, video games have firmly established their place in mainstream media. However, as a relatively new field of study there has been much contention about how to discuss video games. This largely stems from the pervasive societal view that video games are only meant to be mindless entertainment. But the truth is that video games have limitless potential when it comes to the creation and development of beautiful, compelling, and even thought-provoking narratives. However, as graphics grow more realistic, many problems have arisen as a result of the disparity between narrative and gameplay. In this paper, I explore the concepts of linear narrative and simulation in video games while I expand upon the argument that the use of traditional narrative structures is holding video games back in terms of their story-telling capabilities.

Panel K
KC 2270

Engaging Young Readers
Facilitators: Dr. Rachel Anderson & Prof. Gayle Johnson

Meghan VanDoorne
'Turning Pages and Turning Corners for Aliteracy'

Knowing how to read, but choosing not to (a condition known as aliteracy) is a problem facing society today. Elementary school children are susceptible to aliteracy when they do not have a strong background or support system regarding their literacy. This paper explores strategies involving the use of different types of children's series books to keep students engaged in reading. By engaging students in reading at the primary school level, students will hopefully learn to love to read and become lifelong readers.

Kaitlyn Schweda

'The Negative Consequences of Banning Literature and How to Incorporate Challenged Books into Secondary Classrooms'

What is a banned book? How does a district successfully remove a book from their library? Who is affected when a book is banned? This project examines questions surrounding the topic of banned books. It analyzes what genres and themes are most challenged in classrooms. The project argues that banning books causes negative consequences for educators, students, and districts as a whole. In addition, it suggests a series of steps secondary educators should take in order to safely teach a frequently challenged text in a secondary classroom.

2 p.m.	SESSION FIVE

Panel L
KC 2259

Literature Choices
Facilitators: Dr. Regis Fox &
Dr. Janet Navarro

Jordyn Gildner

'The Importance of Contemporary Multicultural Literature'

Due to our society becoming vastly diverse, it is important that our literature changes too. Teachers must be able to understand their students' perspectives as well as recognize what they are experiencing. Teachers can achieve this through multicultural literature. It is a tool that should be utilized within all elementary classrooms to help teachers and students gain a better idea of other cultures as well as to reflect their own. By examining several texts, we will observe how far multicultural literature has advanced and why educators must promote its use in the classroom. This thesis will explore the drastic improvements multicultural literature has made over the years and why educators should use current texts that include a broader range of ethnicities within their classrooms.

Alexis Aspinall

'Taking a Look in the Mirror: The Necessity of Multicultural Literature in the Classroom'

In the United States, it is no secret how valued our mainstream culture is. There is a plethora of examples of the mainstream culture in the media, in movies and in books while there is still a lack of different cultures presented in the media in our society. Although research has shown that the inclusion of different cultures has been improving over the years, there is still more work to be done to

give people of different color, religion, class and cultures the appreciation they deserve. In this analysis, the definition of multicultural literature will be discussed as well as the importance of these books and how to find authentic examples of multicultural literature. As a future teacher, there will also be discussion on how to incorporate multicultural literature in the classroom.

Miriam Koerner
'Alive and Well: Puritan Comfort and Entertainment in Contemporary Christian Children's Literature'

Traditionally, scholars believed that the literature Puritans desired their children to read left children without any guarantee of eternal life in the likely event of young death. However, many of these early children's books became very popular, and the majority of more recent scholarship views Puritan children's literature as comforting and, in some respects, entertaining. Because Puritan children's literature is an early ancestor of contemporary Christian children's literature, this thesis will explore whether contemporary Christian children's books share a similar view of the child reader's level of understanding and need for enjoyment as did Puritan children's literature. Such a link could call for further research into the influence Puritan literature has had on other contemporary genres.

Panel M
KC 2263

Shrews, Clowns & Madwomen
Facilitators: Dr. David Irhman & Dr. Ashley Shannon

Larissa Copeland
'Darkness, Horror, and a Bit of Romance'

Horror fiction has manifested for more than a decade as a source of mass aesthetic stimulation, and these books line shelves in bookstores, grocery stores, and campuses. Some of the most influential and well known horror writers are Bram Stoker, H. P Lovecraft, Dean Koontz, and Peter Straub. A once-popular horror writer whose notoriety has dwindled over the years is Stephen King; one of King's novels that has been read by many and is the longest book he has written is *IT*. Throughout the years, scholars have begun to attempt to revise perceptions about genre authors through more detailed readings, which consider their literary traditions. Stephen King merits further appreciation by scholars due to his use

of negative romanticism and his dark imagination. Through comparing *IT* and the classic romantic text "The Fall of the House of Usher," I argue that King uses many of the same literary devices and styles as Edgar Allan Poe.

Laura Thaxton
'Let the Madwoman Be Mad: Dismantling the Metaphors of Women's Mental Illness in Victorian Literature'

In the mid nineteenth century, "madness" was diagnosed almost exclusively to women as a mental disorder. Labelling others with mental illnesses then became a method of social and patriarchal control. Yet women writers took this diagnosis and turned it into a metaphor for resisting this oppression, creating several images of a "madwoman" throughout their works. This thesis explores madness through the Victorian-era works of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Charlotte Bronte and Jean Rhys by proxy, and Kate Chopin. These writers were burdened with actual and serious mental illnesses in their own waking lives. However, when does the metaphor of the madwoman start erasing the lived experiences of these women who may have truly experienced mental instabilities? This thesis contends that these metaphors are problematic and have caused stigmatizing aftershocks to the world of women's studies and of mental health education.

Margaret Trimmer
'Who Is the Shrew?'

It is easy to imagine groundlings at the Globe rolling in the aisles without regard for anachronism during performances of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Great performances and the works that inspire them are not bound to or by their time of origin. This work has been interpreted as commentary on marriage and on the status and rights of women. It reflects the influence of the Christian church on Western attitudes. Shakespeare has been hissed at as a misogynist and decorated as a proto-feminist. Comparison of film versions of Kate's famed final act monologue will facilitate consideration of the play from the larger perspective of identity. Shakespeare has inspired four hundred years' worth of audiences and actors to explore and redefine identity through the oddly-wed couple.

Panel N
KC 2270

Issues in Pre-School Reading

Facilitators: Dr. Kurt Bullock &
Dr. Corinna McLeod

Sarah Westgate
'Read, Read, Read!'

Read-alouds are very important for preschool children, and active engagement and repetition are two key factors in read-alouds to preschoolers. The benefits of read-alouds include social, emotional, and intellectual development. Read-alouds are beneficial for oral language as well. Children develop higher-level thinking and analytic talk through read-alouds. Preschool teachers should be actively engaged in a read-aloud by using facial expressions and being aware of their tone of voice. A preschool teacher can build on scaffolding as well as develop new knowledge and techniques through informational texts and other read-alouds. Preschool teachers should inspire students to read, and the best way to do that is through a read-aloud.

Brooke Knuppenburg
'Public Libraries: Developing Literacy through Early Childhood'

Early childhood education can significantly enhance all students' long-term achievements, including children with disabilities or special needs. Children can acquire literacy at many different places outside of the home. Families look at cost, educational practice, and environment to find an appropriate program for their child. Among the many different places that children can gain literacy at an early age are private institutions, public institutions, or public libraries. Public libraries are not one of the most common forms of education, but we question why not. While many scholars focus on public and private preschools, there is a lack of attention paid to the role public libraries play in early childhood literacy. Many scholars also note that it is a more popular form in countries outside of the United States, such as Australia.

MacKenzie Feeley
'Familial Disruptions on Literacy Acquisition'

Children's levels of literacy vary greatly when they begin elementary school. These different levels of literacy can be caused by many factors in a child's life, such as socioeconomic status or home life. Most children develop in predictable ways during childhood, but often major life events can disrupt their acquisition of literacy skills. Life events that can have an impact on children's literacy can be divided

into traumatic and non-traumatic categories. Events in the traumatic category can include a tumultuous divorce, the death of a parent, and the incarceration of a parent, while events in the non-traumatic category can include moving, changing schools, or even the birth of a sibling. These life events can have a range of impacts on children's literacy and present challenges for teachers as they try to help students reach appropriate levels.

3 p.m.	SESSION SIX

Panel O
KC 2259

Contested Classroom Space
Facilitators: Dr. Avis Hewitt &
Dr. Christy Pearson

Danielle Kaley
'Second Language Immersion Programs'

Within the last 5-8 years, second language immersion programs have become increasingly popular. These programs educate children as young as four years old. With the ever-changing world and desire that parents have to make their children as successful as possible, enrolling children in immersion programs to learn a second language is an easy decision for most parents. The hope is that by enrolling children in an immersion program, it will make them fluent in a second language and set them up for success for the rest of their life. This thesis will explore the positive and negative aspects of immersion programs and the effects they have on children.

Catherine Cook
'Could Therapy Dogs Be the New Teacher for ESL Students?'

This paper and presentation discusses the multiple benefits of integrating therapy dogs into classrooms that have ESL (English as a Second Language) students. Throughout the country, schools are experiencing a large increase of ESL students in their classrooms, and many teachers are not prepared. These students are either placed in the mainstream classroom or an ESL specific classroom; the latter is often expensive and requires trained professionals. Research pertaining to therapy dogs in classrooms reveals the educational and health benefits that dogs have on children. Dogs could be the answer for teachers all over the country struggling to teach their new students how to obtain written and oral skills,

providing these students with support and a self-esteem boost to be able to learn English in a way that is positive and not detrimental to their learning.

Carly Eck
'Back to Swear One: Reinventing Opinions on Cussing in the Classroom'

By today's standards, cussing in the classroom is considered taboo, but that may not always be the case in the future. Along with its contributions to psychological and physical health, research reveals that swearing allows people to be more assertive, persuasive, and authentic. Although exposure to and the usage of profanity within the classroom is frowned upon, these benefits could be just what students need to develop better language skills. This thesis explores whether or not the use of profanity within written and spoken language is a valuable tool in the English classroom.

Panel P
KC 2263

Dystopias & Utopias
Facilitators: Dr. Brian Deyo &
Dr. Ashley Shannon

Daniel Bowen
'Dystopian Literature: Making the Case Against the Modern Surveillance State'

State-sponsored surveillance is something that is inextricably woven into the historical governance of mankind. In modern times, the extent to which we are being surveilled is often obfuscated by the state and ignored by an apathetic populace. This thesis will be a compendium that details and challenges the actions taken by the United States Government in matters of online and telecommunication-based surveillance. Utilizing George Orwell's *1984* and Philip K. Dick's "The Minority Report," along with other derivative works, this thesis will explore how surveillance by governmental entities corrodes and undermines our fundamental liberties and constitutional rights.

Ben Glick
'Imaginary States: The Utopian Cycle in the Novels of Kim Stanley Robinson'

Since the early 20th century, scholars have correlated the availability and prominence of eutopian and dystopian fiction with the attitudes generated by the public as a result of larger historical events. A given timeframe can be said to either be in a eutopian or dystopian period, depending on which attitudes are dominant. This is what is known as the utopian cycle. The last major oscillation in the utopian cycle

occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and can be traced to a single author, Kim Stanley Robinson. Emerging from the dystopian cyberpunk movement, Robinson defined a new, but brief, eutopian period that is still worthy of attention today. By examining the contents of his novels, my goal is to extract what separated them from the dystopian ambience of their time, how they fit into the utopian cycle, and their implications for future utopian thought.

Edith Vallejo
'The Merits of Dystopian Literature: From Utopia to Oceania to the Arena to the Classroom'

The past ten years have brought dystopian novels back into the forefront of American literature, especially to young adults. Readers of all ages are attracted to the complex worlds and themes, and quickly find themselves relieved after realizing they are not the ones living in overt oppression; yet dystopian literature has often been dismissed and regarded as an inferior form of literature for the classroom. In truth, young readers can draw parallels between the dystopian world and the world in which they live in, as well as critically think about the anxieties the author is aiming to tackle. After analyzing the evolution of dystopian literature, my thesis will explore the modern readers in the classroom, as well as the current social context and the worries they face with living in a Western world. In addition, I will argue for the benefits of reading dystopian literature in the classroom and the potential it has to spark social change in readers.

Panel Q
KC 2270

Reading Issue
Facilitators: Dr. Dawn Evans & Dr. Janet Navarro

Jamie Haist
'Literacy as an Equalizer'

There is a very evident issue within the public school system, where a student's poverty level often determines their literacy skills at a very young age. As a result, these students from low-income schools tend to fall behind in every subject area and find themselves in a cycle that stunts preparedness both for the next step in education and for the world ahead. It is proven, however, that improving literacy rates can entirely change the cycle these students fall into. This paper examines the relationships between

poverty and literacy as well as literacy and other core content areas in order to answer the question: Can a massive push for literacy allow students in low-income schools to perform on par with students who have access to more resources? Can literacy be an equalizer in education?

Sydney Johnson
'The Summer Reading Gap: A Rising Issue'

The majority of students living in the United States of America attend school for nine months out of the year. During this time, most students are gaining knowledge. Unfortunately, when summer comes around, many students, especially those from low-socioeconomic families, experience a summer reading loss. This creates different levels of learning between children in the classroom. By examining the access to resources students living in poverty have, we can clearly see why they fall behind in the summer. This thesis will explore the ways in which teachers, parents, and communities can enrich the students' learning process by helping them access reading materials throughout their summer break.

Tatianna Spencer
'Improving Reading Comprehension through Mindfulness'

Reading comprehension is arguably one of the most important skills for students to master. Their success academically and vocationally depends on it. I propose that the inclusion of mindfulness practice in schools will enhance students' reading comprehension skills. While mindfulness research is in its infancy, early studies suggest that mindfulness improves a participant's attentional capacities, bolsters their executive functioning skills, and augments their social and emotional learning (SEL). I posit that the benefits of mindfulness are not to be ignored when addressing the complex challenges of improving reading comprehension abilities in school-aged children and youth.

4 p.m. | RECEPTION

Annual Awards Ceremony
KC 2250

Please join us in honoring our students during the English Department's Annual Awards Ceremony, held in the Grand River Room of the Kirhof Center.

**Honoring Student
Writing in the
Persuasive and
Personal Essay, Poetry,
Fiction, & Drama**

Held in Conjunction
with the departments
of Classics and Writing

Named in honor of former department member E. William Oldenburg, this annual contest offers GVSU students first-place prizes of $50 and second- and third-place prizes of $25 in each of the following 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 portfolio of three to five poems would be an appropriate entry, and a single poem 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.

Entry Requirements:
- Entries must have been written while enrolled at GVSU;
- Entries should be typed, double-spaced (photocopies are acceptable), and submitted with a detachable cover sheet indicating:
    - title of work;
    - category entered (please specify graduate or undergraduate);
    - contestant's name and student ID;
    - address, phone number, and e-mail for March and April of the academic year;
- 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, which may be obtained and turned in to Student Employment (105 STU);
- Entries are accepted at any time at the English Department Office in 210 Lake Huron Hall;
- Entries may also be submitted online through the English department website;
- Manuscripts will not be returned.

The Robert C. Chamberlain Scholarship
A Tuition Scholarship for Junior English Majors Demonstrating Excellence in Writing

The Chamberlain Scholarship will be awarded at the English Department's Awards Ceremony held in April.

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;
- Students must demonstrate financial need by filing the FAFSA.

Application Requirements

Each student must submit:
- A short letter explaining why the student qualifies for this scholarship;
- Two pieces of writing, at least one from a class at Grand Valley State University.

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

The Gilbert R. and Patricia K. Davis Endowed Merit Scholarship
A Merit Scholarship for Full- or Part-Time Junior and Senior English Majors

The Davis Scholarship will be awarded at the the English Department Awards Ceremony held in April.

Eligibility Requirements

- Students must be a Junior or Senior declared English major;
- Students must have completed 30 credit 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 Juniors are eligible to receive the award as Seniors if they maintain their eligibility.

The English Faculty Scholarship for New Majors
A Scholarship Made Possible through the Generosity of GVSU English Department faculty members

The English Faculty Scholarship for New Majors is awarded to two English majors annually at the English Department Awards Ceremony held in April.

Eligibility
- Applicants must be a declared English major at the time of application;
- Applicants must be a currently-enrolled student with fewer than 60 credit hours completed (1st or 2nd year student) during the semester of application;
- Applicants must have a cumulative 2.5 grade point average or better;
- Applicants must be a first-generation college student.

Supplemental Questions
1. Are you the first person in your immediate family to pursue a college degree (neither parent/guardian(s) has a four-year degree)?
2. In 100-200 words (1-2 paragraphs), explain why you are interested in and applying for this scholarship, why you should receive the award, and how it will assist you in achieving your academic goals.

Please include an academic writing sample, minimum three full pages in length, submitted for a class during your freshman or sophomore year.

Applications Requirements:
Applications must be submitted online at:
www.gvsu.edu/scholarships
Application deadline is March 1, 2018.

Winter Semester 2017