

KEEP-ENG IN TOUCH

A Message from the Chair

I hope you enjoy this, our third-ever issue of Keep-ENG in Touch, the student-produced newsletter about stories coming out of the English Department at Eastern. This issue not only reports on many of the exciting events and achievements of the Fall 2014 semester but also provides some very interesting and informative reading. A high point for me was learning how to use LinkedIn at the workshop led by our student interns on October 8th. If you haven't already done so, be sure to connect with me on LinkedIn to help us keep-ENG in touch!



Lisa Rowe Fraustino

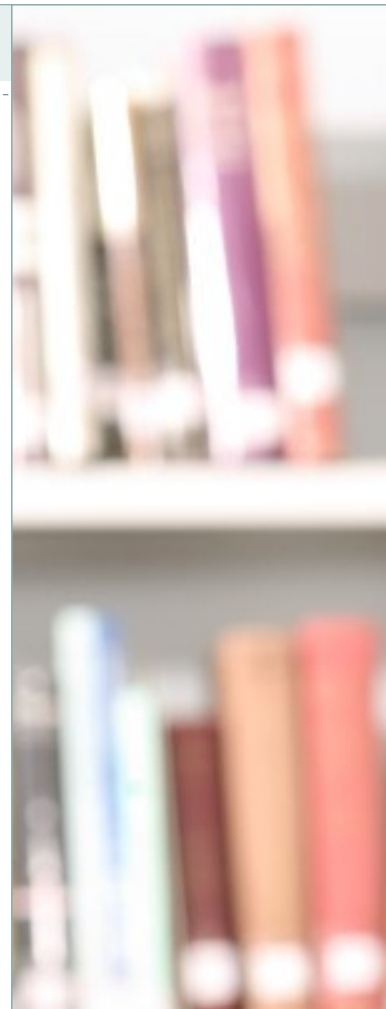
FraustinoL@easternct.edu

A Message from the Editor

I'd like to say a special thank you to Ms. Miranda Lau for helping me out this semester with booking rooms, sending pictures my way, and supporting me in any and every way possible. I would not have been able to create this newsletter if it weren't for your help. Thank you so much, Miranda!

Mae C. Ehrnfelt

ehrnfelte@my.easternct.edu



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Dr. Mama Reading.....	2
Marc-Yves Regis	2
Dr. Speicher	3
English At Work Panel	4
Jennifer Kuhn	5
“My Accidental Jihad”	6
Eastern Writers Guild.....	7
Akaya McElveen.....	8
Jim Daniels	9
Liberal Studies.....	10
New Media Studies.....	11
LinkedIn.....	12
English Night.....	13
Contributors.....	14

Eastern Connecticut
State University
83 Windham Street
Willimantic, CT 06226

DR. MAMA READING

By Sara Dart-Ford

On Thursday, September 25, Dr. Raouf Mama held a reading of his new book, *Fortune's Favored Child*. The Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Carmen Cid, introduced Mama; all the while, there was traditional African singing and dancing on the screen behind the podium. Mama first shared a personal story of how his son had survived a serious car accident; from this, it was clear to see that family and spirituality were very important to him.

Mama followed his speech with a short excerpt from his book. The scene he read was about the first time he met his biological father at the age of 21. After the book reading, Mama moved into the question and answer section of the night.

Some of the questions that were asked included how his relationship with his biological father was. Another question asked was if he ever resented his mother for not telling him about his father. Mama answered that he still had a very good relationship with his mother, who just recently passed away at over 100 years old. The reading was beautifully put together and it was wonderful for the Eastern community to get to know Mama more as author instead of his usual professor role.



UNIVERSITY HOUR: MARC-YVES REGIS

By Katie Shpak

On Wednesday, September 10, Eastern Connecticut State University hosted an event where renowned author and poet Marc-Yves Regis shared some of his poetry and writings about the Haitian culture. Living in Haiti for eighteen years of his life before moving to the United States, Regis expressed the adversities that the people of Haiti experience daily.

He began discussing his book, *Headstrong Children*, reciting, "If you're old enough to walk, you're old enough to carry water." Regis showed a video of children in Haiti carrying heavy loads of water and food on their heads. The majority of their lives consist of searching for water, which is never fresh. Referring to the water, Regis stated, "It will save our lives now, and kill us later." While the first part of his book focuses on the struggle of finding water, the second part talks about the struggle with food. Many Haitian citizens are lucky to eat one meal a day. Regis emphasized how there is simply no time for school or play, only time to search for necessities like food and water.

Regis concluded his presentation by reciting some of his poetry. The poem he recited had an interesting pattern, one where he would mention one of the serious hardships people of Haiti constantly struggle with, always followed by the line, "Haiti, we love you." It was amazing to hear so many negatives followed by such love for the country in which he grew up.

During the question and answer session, someone asked Regis what needs to be done in Haiti in order for the culture and the lives of its citizens to improve. Regis responded with, "Haitian people need to stand up and say, that's enough." Leadership and action are what the people of Haiti need for change to occur. Though Regis is living well-off as an author here in the United States, he still continues to visit the place he will always call home.

As one of the newest faculty members of the English Department, Dr. Allison Speicher is passionate and ready to make her mark on Eastern's campus. She is eager to instill new ideas and concepts about the older texts of 19th century America, along with children's literature. With her impressive dedication to her interests in these fields, Dr. Speicher brings an exciting look into the world of readers in the 19th century.

What do you hope to achieve while teaching here at Eastern?

It is really important for me to provide future teachers with a good experience in terms of modeling what to do in the classroom. I want students to feel like they're ready to go into a classroom and be responsible for a group of young people's education. It is important to prepare future teachers for not only the content they will need to deal with as a teacher, but also the attitudinal and philosophical issues that may arise. One of the most important aspects of teaching is allowing the students to explore their individuality and I really want to give students a chance to be reflective about becoming a teacher. For the students who may not plan on becoming teachers, I like there to be an element of surprise in class. I want all my students to be able to leave class thinking differently about certain topics.

Where did you earn your degree and what is your background in English?

I'm originally from Queens, NY but my PhD is from Indiana University Bloomington in 19th century American literature, which has always been my interest. The majority of books I read when I was girl were among the 19th century American list. It was a fascinating moment in American history: the nation was still coming into being, events of the Civil War were going on, and it was the beginning of massive readership. What I study in particular is the beginning of public schools in literature and the 19th century, which was really when mass education became a reality in the United States. For my undergraduate I studied English, Women's Studies, and Education.

What led you to apply for a position at Eastern? Have you taught at any other schools?

I carried out my student teaching at an inner city high school in Richmond, Virginia. It was a place where many of the students were very poor and nothing in my education had completely prepared me for it. We had talked about diversity but it wasn't enough when I was actually in that environment, having to think about whether or not my students had food or how I could create priorities when I knew they had a toddler at home. I would like to be a resource for my students to think about these big questions in class. In terms of applying to Eastern, I knew I wanted to work at a Liberal Arts school because I went to one, the University of Richmond. I appreciated that my professors knew my name and loved seeing my classmates around campus. I was a first generation college student and I felt like I was part of a community. I knew I wanted to work somewhere like that so I could provide my students with that kind of experience.

Your focus is American lit and children's lit; what excites you about these genres and what are some of your favorite books?

On the 19th century side, I have a few favorite books. I do a lot of work thinking about women writers in part because many different fields have done a better job at identifying women writers than mine. If you ask someone to name a woman writer from the 19th century, they usually can't name anyone other than Emily Dickinson. It's an important field to think about women writers and writers of color because we're a little behind. Most of my work in the 19th century is on recovery. When I was starting my current project, it was inconceivable to me that America wouldn't have any books on the reform of schools while Britain had a history of so many school stories; leading up to Harry Potter, which is a more contemporary example. So when this is the moment in the United States where public schools come into being, why wouldn't anyone have written about that? It didn't make sense to me so I specifically looked and found 125 school stories, many of which no one has ever heard of. For example, Hezekiah Butterworth was a novelist from that time that I write about quite a lot. It's interesting to read something that no one has valued for 150 years and you can be the one to make a case as to why this is important literature. On the other hand, one of the cool things about being able to teach children's literature is reliving the books I enjoyed when I was a kid. I want my students who take my class to be able to think differently about these books and realize there's so much more going on.

You're teaching a course this spring called the Golden Age of the American Tomboy. What can students expect from taking the class?

It'll be really fun! We will be really invested in the "Tomboy" in its historical context. For me, it's a product of the second half of the 19th century and right around the Civil War. The question for me is always why: why was this the historical moment that gender-bending girls became a cultural phenomenon? These aren't fringe books. *Little Women* is a major best-seller and has never been out of print since it was published, which is interesting because we don't normally see gender-progressive literature become mainstream. I'm interested in why this moment makes the gender-bended girl seem like an attractive character and what's in stake for that: Is the Tomboy always white? Is this a position open to women of color? I also want to address the ways that the Tomboy is connected to issues of class in this time period. Most of the books that feature Tomboys are children's books, so we'll be reading many of those. I'm interested in connecting these Tomboy heroines to our modern culture with books such as *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*.

ENGLISH AT WORK PANEL: PROVIDING ENGLISH MAJORS WITH INSIGHT AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THEIR FUTURES

By Alexandra Rogan

“How are you going to use your degree?”

It’s a question every English major has been asked. A question that is often faced with frustration. A question that can be difficult to answer.

Eastern Connecticut State University’s second “English at Work” panel discussion, hosted by the English Department on Wednesday, October 22, helped provide ways in which students might better respond to that question.

The panel was moderated by students Jessica Link, Ryan Bahan, and Mikayla Zagata. It featured five English majors including Eastern president Dr. Elsa M. Núñez; Center for Instructional Technology employee Michael Palumbo; alumna and Woman’s Center coordinator Starsheemar Byrum; Academic Services Center assistant director Christopher Drewry; and Academic Services Center director William Bisese.

All five panelists expressed satisfaction with their English degrees by sharing how they use those degrees in their current positions. They also provided encouragement when asked about opportune jobs for those with English degrees.

Dr. Núñez’s writing skills allow her to truly contribute as an administrator. She frequently uses her degree to help colleagues expand their reports, to craft her speeches, and to carefully write and read emails since they also serve as legal documents.

Though Palumbo works in the ever-changing world of technology, he values his degree because English never grows obsolete. He said he must communicate with faculty and staff to gain understanding of what and how they teach before he can effectively help them utilize new technology.

In the Women’s Center, Byrum uses her degree to assist sexual assault and interpersonal violence victims in thinking carefully about incidents so they can accurately relay what occurred and complete necessary paper work.

Drewry explained he uses his degree when writing letters, interview questions, and conference presentations.

When asked what future careers might be suitable for English Majors, Bisese revealed many business owners hire English majors. English majors are able to understand and adapt to a business structure without the mind set that they need to reorganize or revamp it.



Additionally, Dr. Núñez suggested careers in law, marketing, or advertising. Byrum advised students to complete multiple different internships.

Providing a dose of reality, Palumbo reminded students that studying English doesn’t provide a clear path for their futures – students must find their own paths. However, he also communicated the clear advantages of earning an English degree: it provides people the power to understand and to be understood.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: JENNIFER KUHN

By Mae Ehrnfelt

Jennifer Kuhn is an '08 Eastern Connecticut State University graduate who obtained her Master's in Publishing from George Washington University. She is the director of publications for a nonprofit medical association in the DC area and owns *Nanny Magazine*. Jennifer would love to serve as a mentor to young Eastern students who are looking for career advice and where to go after graduating with an English degree. She can be contacted by email at jennifer@nannymag.com.

What is Nanny Magazine? How did it get started? Why the topic of nannying?

Nanny Magazine is the premier print and online publication for nannies and other childcare workers in the United States. The magazine was started in 2013 by me and a Chicago-based nanny, Whitney Tang, because we were baffled by why there were so few resources out there for nannies. Nannying is a hard job. It's isolating and lonely and very, very underserved. Providing a resource to help nannies feel connected, become more empowered, and serve as a professional development tool is the reason for why *Nanny Magazine* was founded.

How has being an alumna of Eastern benefitted you? How did you use what you learned in college in the "real world"?

All of my achievements go back to Eastern. I would not be where I am right now if I did not have the strong foundation Eastern gave me. During my junior year I started nannying on the Jersey Shore and continued to nanny well into graduate school. After I got my first job in the publishing field, I decided I wanted to remain connected to the world of nannying, so launching *Nanny Magazine* gives me the opportunity to combine my two great passions: publishing and kids.

If any Eastern students are interested in writing for Nanny Mag, how can they get involved?

You have no idea how excited I would be if students from Eastern wanted to write for me! I think the perfect author would be a student who is double majoring in English and Early Childhood Education because this would be a great way for them to prove their knowledge and earn valuable publication credits. If anyone has an interest in writing or even serving as an intern to get hands-on publishing experience, they should definitely reach out to me. I have plenty of fun projects for writers, photographers, and even people interested in marketing and business development.

What advice do you have for English undergrads?

My best advice for English majors is to get an idea of what you want to do before you graduate. When I graduated I had no clue where to go next, so I stuck with nannying. For me it simply worked out to be that I loved it so much that I made an entire new unique business out of it. I see too many English majors go on to do things with their lives that they could have done without having paid thousands of dollars for college, and too many English majors who graduate with dreams of being the next great American novelist. Not saying it can't happen, but it more than likely isn't going to. The ability to read and synthesize information well and to communicate effectively via the written word is a huge bonus in today's career marketplace, but it isn't enough. You need to develop a specialized interest. How do you want to apply those skills to the real world? That's the big



Would you be interested in offering an internship opportunity in your workplace for our current students? If so, please get in touch with the English Department!

E-mail: english_dept@easternct.edu / Phone: (860) 465-4570

“MY ACCIDENTAL JIHAD: A LOVE STORY” UNIVERSITY HOUR

By Meaghan McFall-Gorman

On Wednesday, September 17, Eastern Connecticut State University was honored to have acclaimed, award-winning writer Krista Bremer during University Hour to discuss her newest work, *My Accidental Jihad: A Love Story*. The book centers on her experiences as being married to an older, Libyan-born Muslim man and the effects that relationship has had on her as an individual.

To begin, Bremer made it a point to define the Arabic word “jihad.” She explained that it does not have any correlation to violence, as some of the Western world believes; rather, the word jihad means “struggle.” “Therefore,” she continued, “this is the story of my struggle, and in order to fully understand the things I faced, I will include a brief background of my early life.”

Bremer spoke of her life growing up in Southern California; about her skeptical views on religion and her identification as a feminist; and her desire to be strong, independent, and autonomous. It was her desire to become a journalist that ultimately led her down the path of her accidental jihad.

When she moved to Northern California to pursue her writing career, Bremer met

Ismail, the man who would force her “to confront [her] own assumptions about everything from community, childhood, beauty, and life in general.”

Krista Bremer made it clear to the audience that there should have been nothing between her and Ismail, her now husband and father of their two children. It seemed like Ismail was different from her in every way possible. She was a tall, blonde, young white female with no religious convictions who identified as fiercely independent and ambitious. Ismail was a considerably older Libyan man, a devout Muslim who came from extreme poverty and still lived very humbly. Despite these differences and the views she held about the Muslim faith, Bremer admitted that she was undeniably drawn to Ismail, which forced her to confront certain things about herself.

“My relationship with Ismail, it changed my thoughts on what intimacy entails. All those preconceived notions that we as a society hold on romance, they are not true indicators of love.” Bremer explained how in her relationship with Ismail she was forced to look internally, which is where she eventually found her personal jihad. She struggled with facing their differing beliefs on so many things, and trying to make things work.



Bremer visited Dr. Torockio's Writing Fiction class on Tuesday, September 16, 2014.

It was there, in those moments of struggle, that Bremer found the inspiration for her book. “I realized that every relationship is bicultural, that we all hold different beliefs from one another, and that we must negotiate them in order to live together.” This was partly inspired by Ismail, who related the word of Mohammed to her, and explained how “the greatest struggle is internal, every day in our hearts.”

The struggle did not end with Bremer's relationship to her husband; in fact, it continued in her relationships with her two children. Bremer laughed when she explained how she had once been so confident in her convictions that her children would choose “Christmas, the Mall, cable, and clothes over Henna and Baklava.” To Bremer's surprise, her young daughter opted to wear the traditional female Muslim head scarf. Once again Bremer had to confront her personal beliefs,

this time about childhood and beauty, modesty and innocence. Now, she continues, her daughter has gone from “pious to punk rock,” furthering her belief in how we are all essentially bicultural in our relationships with others.

As demonstrated in her book, Krista Bremer analyzes the fundamental structures of interpersonal relationships: what they are, why we have certain “ideals” on what they should be, and how they define us. Everyone has convictions. How we manage these ideas and the struggles that come with them — that is how we face our own jihad.

SUCCESSFUL SEMESTER FOR THE EASTERN WRITERS GUILD

By Sabrina Scott

With the semester winding down, the Eastern Writers Guild was just revving up. The club enjoyed a surge of interest this year and has seen many new faces at meetings and at the two Coffeehouses it held during the semester. In regards to creative input of the new members, President Kelsey Haddad says, "I feel like they're a breath of fresh air." The E-board members credit the greater size of the club to luck, taking an interest in each student, and the ice breakers that begin most meetings.

Having received over one hundred submissions for the 2015 Eastern Exposure, its next task is to choose the best pieces and prepare the issue for publication. In keeping with its commitment to follow the best professional standards in the field of literary publishing, the Eastern Writers Guild began using this semester a streamlined, online-only submission process. Through its subscription to a submission management service called Submittable, the editors are now able to track and respond to submissions more efficiently.



Sabrina Scott / Eastern Connecticut State University

In addition to working on the literary journal, the Eastern Writers Guild hosted a reading by visiting writer Jim Daniels on Monday, October 13. To read more about the event, see page 9 of the newsletter.

When asked what her favorite part of the club was, new member Sharon Suchecki said she enjoys "getting to read the submissions for Eastern Exposure. We get to know a side of the student body that not everyone gets a chance to see." Eastern Writers Guild takes pride in its mission to promote creative expression among the Eastern student body.

Next semester will see another guest writer, fiction writer Jim Shepard, and the completion of the 2015 Eastern Exposure. Eastern Writers Guild members have expressed an interest in having more than one Coffeehouse a month to keep the "constant creative vibe—not to mention a free flowing amount of coffee."

What would you like to see from the Eastern Writers Guild in the upcoming semesters? Let them know at easternwriters@my.easternct.edu.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: AKAYA MCELVEEN

By Mae Ehrnfelt

Akaya McElveen graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University in May 2014 with a B.A in English and minor in writing. During her time at Eastern, she helped to develop the *Keep-ENG in Touch* alumni newsletter, worked in the University Relations Department and wrote for the student newspaper, *The Campus Lantern*. Akaya was also co-captain of the track team and secretary of Eastern's Black Student Union. Akaya currently resides in Willimantic and is a reporter for the *Willimantic Chronicle*.

How has your past experience with the English Alumni Newsletter benefitted you in regards to finding a job after graduation?

I initially got the position because I was working in the University Relations Department and I was assigned to cover the English Department. I went on a conference with Dr. Fraustino and there she explained this idea that she had for a newsletter. She asked if I'd be interested in helping out and of course I accepted! I thought it was the perfect opportunity to get editing experience, and it gave me the skill that I needed for the job I've got now.

How did you get a job with the Chronicle?

While I was still at Eastern, I was applying to lots of different places. I used www.journalismjobs.com, which is a great website. I saw the *Chronicle's* advertisement for a part-time reporter, and I applied with the thought in mind that I could finish up my senior year and start working. They got back to me and told me they were already familiar with my press releases from University Relations. After that, I didn't hear back from them. Then graduation came and I was having a nervous breakdown because I hadn't found a job so I decided to call the *Chronicle* again. They remembered me and told me to come in for an interview and from there I got the job!

What are your duties as staff writer for the Chronicle?

As a part-time writer, I cover the towns of Ashford and Eastford. The *Chronicle* doesn't assign stories to me; I choose what I want to cover. I go to town meetings, board of education meetings, and board of selectmen meetings to get stories to write. I usually come up with at least two stories from the meetings. There are also general assignments for writers, such as press releases.

What are your future plans at this point?

Right now I'm a news writer, but I'm trying to get more into immersion and narrative journalism because I enjoy the creative nonfiction aspects of those styles. One day I'd like to go into magazine writing and my ultimate goal is to have my own publication. I won't necessarily be a journalist all my life, but I will always be a writer.

What was your favorite English class here at Eastern?

My favorite English class was Victorian literature with Dr. McNeil. The course was called something along the lines of "Love and Sex in the Victoria Era." I'm very interested in the time period and they were very raunchy back then! I learned that unfortunately, many of the sexist concepts of Victorian literature are still true today; they were just more secretive about it in the past.

Finally, what advice do you have for Eastern English undergraduates?

Reach out to the English Department. Every professor in the department is willing to help students in any way possible; even students they don't know! I transferred into Eastern my sophomore year, and the professors really helped me in that transition. With that in mind, take advantage of every opportunity because you never know if it's going to lead you somewhere else. When I was a student, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do so I tried out everything. It led me down the right path, and it will for you, too!

JIM DANIELS READING

By Brooke Baldwin

On Wednesday, November 12, author and poet Jim Daniels held a reading in the Science Building auditorium. Kelsey Haddad, president of the Eastern Writers Guild, provided an extensive introduction of the author to a filled room of students before the reading began. Daniels has received many honors for his achievements in writing, such as winning the Brittingham Prize in Poetry, the Tillie Olsen Prize, and the Blue Lynx Poetry Prize. He has also received high praise from *The New York Times*, such as that “Jim Daniels gives voice to the voiceless.”

Daniels recited over a dozen of his poems over the course of the hour-long reading, beginning with the poem “Factory Love,” which appears on the top of NASCAR driver Alex Grebow’s racecar. The author also intrigued his audience with a reading of his short story “13-Part Story with Mime,” and popular poems such as “MegaEverything,” “Wheels,” and several poems from his book *Birthmarks*, which many students in Dr. Donaghy’s poetry classes had read. His topics range from talking

about his family, his aging parents, where he comes from, and his past romantic relationships. Dr. Donaghy may have said it best when describing Daniels’s poems to his classes, stating that the author has “looked into the darkness, and found a way to sing about it.”

Daniels has also been active in creating short films and scripts based on his poetry. When asked about how this process differs from his poetry writing, Daniels stated that when his poem is read the film relies heavily on the visual image to complement his words. Though the process of writing poetry is mainly about himself, the scripts have to focus on collaboration, and this process is stimulating to him as a writer.

After the reading, Daniels answered questions from the audience, giving insight about his writing process and advice to fellow poetry writers. When asked how he had gone about writing his poems that seem to read as a stream-of-consciousness, Daniels explained that these poems mainly existed through his “frustration with

bureaucracy versus his imagination.” He encouraged writers in the audience to experiment with this format. When asked if he ever felt hesitant when writing about his family members or personal accounts of events, Daniels stated that “the truth is no excuse for a bad poem; a poem generates its own truth...poetry is fiction, it’s not nonfiction.” He elaborated on this idea by saying that his poems recount the events as he remembers and imagines them, not as they truly happened. Daniels encouraged the audience to not limit their writing to their comfort zone: “No one remembers individual fireworks, and poems aren’t meant to be individual either. They are all in the moment.”

Daniels was well received by his audience and held a signing after the reading, giving attendees a chance to meet and talk to the author personally. Thanks to the English Department and Dr. Donaghy for sponsoring this successful Eastern Writers Guild event. To learn more about the Writer’s Guild, see the story on page 7.



***Group photo from Mr. Daniels's writing workshop.
Christopher Torockio / Eastern Connecticut State University***

NEW MAJOR: LIBERAL STUDIES

By Alexandra Rogan

The newly implemented Liberal Studies major is exclusively designed for pre-Early Childhood Education or pre-Elementary Education majors. In general, Education majors are required to declare a second academic major, such as English, mathematics, history, science, or a social science. However, since Early Childhood and Elementary Education majors must be prepared to teach a variety of subjects (unlike Secondary Education majors preparing to teach one subject to high school students), it is important that they become well-rounded in all subjects.

To provide pre-Early Childhood Education or pre-Elementary Education majors with an appropriate education, there are four key subject areas in the Liberal Studies major. The areas include English, History/Social Science, Mathematics, and Natural Sciences.

English classes required for all Liberal Studies majors include Literary Analysis, Children's Literature, and Linguistic Analysis. Literary Analysis is similar to an Introduction to Literature class in that it will allow students to learn key literary terminology that they will be expected to teach (e.g. metaphor, simile, etc.). Children's Literature focuses on a variety of literary genres for young readers and listeners, and Linguistic Analysis provides experience in solving morphology and syntax problems.



www.easternct.edu

Liberal Studies majors who choose English as their concentration are required to take Introduction to English Studies, Writing for English Majors, American Literature from 1865, a Senior Seminar in Liberal Studies, and an elective in Creative Writing, Reading Culture, and any 300 level English course.

In addition to better preparing pre-Early Childhood Education and pre-Elementary Education majors for their teaching careers, the Liberal Studies major addresses another concern: the Praxis II.

Connecticut recently revised its Praxis II test to require education majors to take four tests, one in each of the following subjects: English, math, science, and social sciences (including history). The Liberal Studies major can provide a stronger foundation in preparation for licensure to teach.

As director of Liberal Studies, English professor Dr. Barbara Little Liu has worked on publicizing the major. Since it had to be approved by the University Senate and Board of

Regents, it did not become an official major until the end of this past summer, leaving little time to publicize for the Fall 2014 semester.

Dr. Liu has also recently worked with students interested in the major, and has helped them plan for Spring 2015 class registration. She has worked to make revisions to the major, allowing students to substitute some of the major's required classes with Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LAC) classes.

Additionally, Dr. Liu has worked with professors in other departments to ensure classes will be open to Liberal Studies majors and to help recruit additional Liberal Studies advisors.

One of Dr. Liu's ongoing responsibilities is to keep track of students not admitted to the CARE program. These students will not be allowed to continue their studies within with the Liberal Studies major, but will be encouraged to major in their Liberal Studies concentration.

Any interested pre-Early Childhood Education and pre-Elementary Education majors are encouraged to contact Dr. Liu at liub@easternct.edu or (860) 465-4576 for more information.

NEW MAJOR: NEW MEDIA STUDIES

By Meaghan McFall Gorman

Change is in the air at Eastern Connecticut State University, and one contributor is the New Media Studies major. While the major's first coordinator is Dr. Jamie Gomez, a professor in the Communication department, the major itself draws from more than just the typical Communication classes and subjects and includes English. The New Media Studies major has its core requirements which all students must take; then there are interdisciplinary requirements and disciplinary concentrations which offers options for students. The interdisciplinary and disciplinary requirements allow students to choose one or more concentrations under each discipline. These concentrations vary from Cultural Representations and Digital Applications to Media Computation and English.

courses. Overall, it is the prevalence of technology and ever-changing media within our lives and jobs that inspired the creation of the new major.

When asked how the specific English courses for the new major are chosen, Dr. Pauley explained the thought process behind the decisions. He stated, "We thought about what perspectives our discipline could bring that would be valuable. English has always been strong in helping students become careful and sophisticated readers and writers, and we know that students can apply those same skills to evaluate and navigate this changing environment."

Therefore, one core requirement for the major is the Multimodal Writing Workshop English course, which

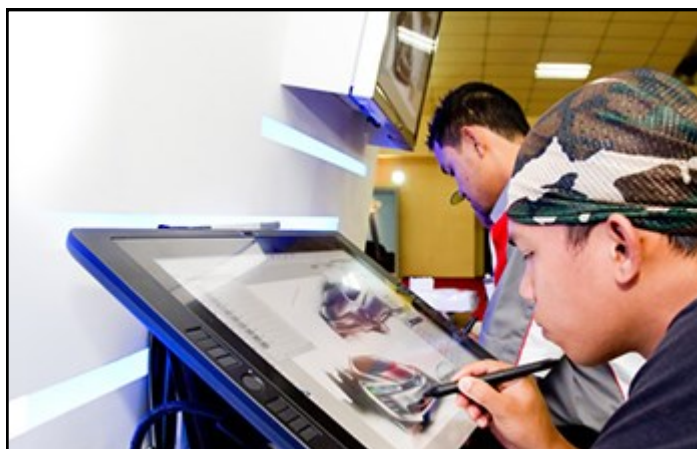
"Incorporating English courses draws on the traditional strengths of reading and writing which can be applied to evaluating and navigating this changing environment."

With the extreme variance in course concentrations, there is a clear need for communication and collaboration between faculty members from all departments involved. The representative for the English Department is Dr. Benjamin Pauley, who specializes in eighteenth-century British literature.

When asked about the New Media Studies major and the contributions of the English discipline, Dr. Pauley provided much information on the evolving process. According to Dr. Pauley, the whole purpose of the New Media Studies major is to create "an interdisciplinary major in which students take classes from different academic fields to address work in emerging media." New Media Studies, Dr. Pauley stated, examined the ways that people use, create, consume, and communicate using digital media. This includes but is not limited to social media, computer design, electronic books, and online

stresses the ability to write and analyze multimedia platforms in a critical way. There are other English courses optional within the major under the interdisciplinary requirements, including Critical and Creative Thinking, Rhetoric of Hollywood Film, and Film Theory. There is even an entire concentration of English under the disciplinary requirements, comprised of 18 credits worth of English courses that vary from Reading and Writing Electronic Literature to Literary Publishing.

Overall, the New Media Studies major does not disappoint in its self-adaptability, as students in the major can choose from a wide variety of disciplines and courses to customize their learning experience as they seek to address, as Dr. Pauley puts it, this "media phenomenon, the way it changes our relationships with media in this transitional time."



www.easternct.edu

THE IMPORTANCE OF LINKEDIN

By Katie Shpak

Prior to this past summer, LinkedIn was nothing but a website to me. Last summer and most of this semester I worked with Dr. Fraustino as an intern to keep the Facebook and Twitter pages updated and informative. While updating these pages with new posts each week, I also began to research LinkedIn. It was my goal as an intern and as a student who is graduating in May to learn the significance of creating a LinkedIn account.

To begin, I created my own LinkedIn account. Once I established my own page, I was able to connect with English professors at Eastern, English alumni, and peers with whom I currently attend classes. Once I connected with these individuals, I was able to contact them and ask questions pertaining to the website and its benefits. Many alumni had positive feedback, explaining to me that though they had not found a job specifically through LinkedIn, they would highly recommend all students and individuals looking for a career to create their own account. There was actually one alumnus who connected with a former peer through LinkedIn a couple years after she graduated Eastern, and the student told her about a job position that was available. She wound up applying and getting hired and she never would have known about the position if it weren't for LinkedIn.

Once I contacted these alumni, I did some research on LinkedIn to share at a LinkedIn Workshop that

the English Department hosted on Wednesday, October 8, 2014. Through this research, I discovered useful information that helped me understand more about the benefits of LinkedIn and how it works. I found out that by having an account, businesses can find you based on the information you include about yourself. Though you might not be able to find a position, there is always the chance they come to you. I learned about what information is important to include and that it is imperative to keep in mind that everything included on the page must be professional. Even the profile picture should be of one where the person is professionally dressed. It is a website geared specifically toward professional networking so that should be the mindset for every piece of information put onto the page.

When I first created my account, I was unsure whom to connect with and whom to accept. Now I know that I should connect with alumni, colleagues, friends, recruiters, and others in the same field. Basically, the larger your own network, the easier it becomes for the right people to find you. After learning all I did about LinkedIn, I would recommend to all college students to create an account. Opportunities that may never have been expected could present themselves if you put yourself out there and share your talents and skills with the world.



Interns Mae Ehrnfelt, Katie Shpak, and Ryan Bahan at the LinkedIn workshop.

FALL 2014 ENGLISH NIGHT

By Ryan King

On Monday, December 8, Eastern Connecticut State University's English Department presented English Night in the Betty R. Tipton Room. The night included the Constance Campo Scholarship ceremony, the announcement of the

spring 2014 first year writing award winners, the Sigma Tau Delta induction Ceremony and senior seminar presentations. The event was hosted by English Department Chair Dr. Lisa Rowe Fraustino.

The evening kicked off with the presentation of the English Major Constance Campo Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded to a non-traditional student who can demonstrate excellence in the classroom while also showing sensitivity in regards to issues involving race, gender, or culture, just as Campo did during her tenure at Eastern. This year, the scholarship was given to senior Meena Roy. Despite her busy schedule, professors in the English major commended Roy for always being prepared for class, being passionate about the texts she was asked to read, and consistently bringing that passion to the classroom.

Dr. Stephen Ferruci then took the stage to announce the two winners of the first-year writing awards. The first award, which is given to a student who demonstrates innovative and creative writing, was given to Alexandra Steel for her adaptation of a literacy narrative. The second award, which celebrates a student who has done thorough research and uniquely articulated this research, was given to Lyla Maus for her research paper "Higher Education Is a Human Right."

Next, Sigma Tau Delta took the stage to begin their induction ceremony. Students must be nominated by faculty members, who consider students whose intellectual ability, course work and character are deemed worthy of this special distinction. Co-presidents Mae Ehrnfelt and Ashley Westman introduced twenty new inductees who have set themselves apart as exceptional English majors. Chapter sponsor Dr. Barbara Liu officially welcomed these members into the group when she presented them with their certificates and cords.

After a brief refreshment break, the event picked back up with student presentations from Dr. Rosenberg's "Community Literacy Studies" senior seminar as well as Dr. Chirico's "Classics in Comedy" senior seminar. From Dr. Rosenberg's class, Michelle Hoetjes gave a presentation that stuck out to me; Hoetjes explained how she was able to provide stability in the form of a routine by giving four siblings at a homeless shelter in Willimantic weekly creative writing exercises. Spencer Coriarty, a student from Dr. Chirico's class, examined in depth how stock character types and scenarios that are evident in 15th century comedies are still used today in popular culture such as the television show South Park. By the end of the night, these two students as well as twenty-one others had presented on a wide variety of topics that they'd been working on for two semesters.

"Yay for us!" Dr. Fraustino concluded, noting that the seminar readings always make her proud of Eastern's faculty and students.



CONTRIBUTORS

Brooke Baldwin is a senior majoring in English and Elementary Education.

Sara Dart-Ford is a junior majoring in English.

Mae Ehrnfelt is a junior majoring in English and Women's & Gender Studies.

Amanda Glaude is a junior majoring in English and Secondary Education.

Ryan King is a junior majoring in English and minoring in Writing.

Meaghan McFall Gorman is a sophomore majoring in English and Secondary Education as well as minoring in Political Science.

Alexandra (Alee) Rogan is a senior majoring in English and minoring in Writing.

Sabrina Scott is a senior majoring in English and minoring in Theatre and Spanish.

Katie Shpak is a senior majoring in English and minoring in Writing.

Meet the Spring 2015 English Department Interns!

Jacqueline Stone is a junior at Eastern. She is an English major and has a minor in Communications. As an intern, she will be in charge of the English Department's social media accounts. She says, "I look forward to working with everyone and will always put my best foot forward throughout my time as an intern!"

Ryan King is a senior at Eastern. He's an English major with a minor in Writing. As an intern, he will be in charge of editing the English alumni newsletter. He says, "I think it will be a challenging and rewarding experience helping student writers collaborate in order to create something that hundreds of students and alumni will read."



Like us! www.facebook.com/ECSUEnglishDept

Follow us! [@ECSUEnglishDept](https://twitter.com/ECSUEnglishDept)



