

FALL 2020

THE
English
POST



Fort Hays State University English Department

Table of Contents - The English Post Fall 2020

3	Alumni Spotlight: Catching Up with Past Tigers	12	Author Presentation: Sarah Smarsh
4	Carl Singleton Retires from FHSU	13	A Tribe of Nerds: Thirty Years of Sigma Tau Delta
6	<i>A Body's Just As Dead</i> : Cathy Adams Publishes Her Second Novel	14	Poems to the Author: Student Emily Linder Receives Praise from Author Ruta Sepetys
6	Rooms & Renovations: Rarick Hall's Upcoming Quality-of-Life Updates	16	Scholarship Donors & Winners
7	The Courses, They are A-Changin': ENG 327 Gets Reworked	17	Student Spotlight: 2018-19 Winner of Weaver-Smith Scholarship
8	FHSU Welcomes New Faculty	18	English Faculty Member Linda Smith Published in <i>Literary Mama</i>
10	In Memoriam: Alexis-Athena Wyatt	18	Writing Tigers Winners
12	FHSU Graduate Meagan Englert Becomes a Middle School Teacher	19	By the Numbers



Editorial Team

Pictured from left to right:
Top row- Megan Walker, Cheryl Duffy, Rose Kemper
Middle Row- Robert Loeffler, Keri Asche, Samuel Ayers
Bottom Row- Laurel Haley, Anthony Strickling

The spring 2020 Professional Editing class was not about to let a little thing like a worldwide pandemic prevent the publication of the department's alumni magazine! You can see from the screenshot staff photo above that we continued to meet weekly via Zoom once FHSU transitioned to remote learning on March 17. An additional change you might have noticed already is the name. *The English Post* strikes us as an apt brand for this publication going forward—while retaining *Post* from the former *Post Parade* for a bit of continuity. We hope you agree. Finally, we simply could not have produced this issue without the expert help of our design editor, **Emily Linder**. She met via Zoom with my class and then oversaw the “pulling together” of everyone’s pages to create the striking magazine you see before you. —**Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy, Managing Editor**

Managing Editor: Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy - Department of English, Fort Hays State University
Design Editor: Emily Linder

Cover: Carl Singleton (photo by Bob Duffy)

Fort Hays State University is a thriving liberal and applied arts, state-assisted institution with an enrollment of more than 13,000 students. It offers bachelor's and master's degrees in many fields and provides a wide variety of cultural and intellectual resources, not only for its faculty, staff and students but also for the western Kansas region and beyond. Fort Hays State University occupies the southwest corner of Hays, Kansas, a city of about 20,000 people located halfway between Kansas City and Denver on Interstate 70. The city and its people make their livings from across a wide spectrum of industries — agriculture, education, light manufacturing, medical care, oil, retail and technology.

The English Post — Fall 2020

The English Post is an annual publication of the English department of Fort Hays State University. Copyright © 2020 by Fort Hays State University Hays, KS 67601 www.fhsu.edu

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Catching Up with Past Tigers

Robert Loeffler



John Baetz is a 1999 English graduate who over the last couple of decades has built a sports magazine called *Kansas Pregame*. Fifteen years ago, Baetz started the only statewide sports magazine, though at the time was publishing about only football.

Using his English degree and his love for sports, Baetz launched a statewide website for his magazine that has expanded beyond football to include basketball, wrestling, baseball, softball and track & field.

“Growing up in Smith Center, Kansas, is what likely most influenced my decision to launch my sports publishing career with coverage of football,” says Baetz. “I played football in Smith Center and at Garden City Community College and have coached at three different high schools in Kansas as well. However, I love all sports and was excited when I was able to expand into other sports and have enjoyed covering them as much as, if not more than, football.”

His favorite memories post-graduation center on family: “My marriage to my wife of 17 years, Bree, and the birth of my daughter, Sloan, seven years ago,” says Baetz.

Baetz believes English students are versatile and should look into other fields like business management or technology. He encourages English students not to limit themselves when career searching.

Darian Housworth is a May 2019 English graduate. Only six months after her graduation she started a career abroad. Housworth has been working as a teacher for First Leap in Dalian, China. She teaches a variety of subjects from English to math to global leadership. She works with students from 3 ½ to 8 years old.

Housworth teaches at a training school. “The children at First Leap are either attending training school after Chinese school, or they are too young to attend Chinese school, and they only attend training school. Training schools aren’t elementary or preschools— they’re kind of like ‘extra’ school that the kids go to.”

Housworth credits FHSU and two key members of the faculty for encouraging her to pursue an ESL career. “Dr. Cheryl Duffy and Dr. Lexey Bartlett in particular,” says Housworth. “I wrote essays on this topic, and the feedback I received from them taught me more about teaching.”



Dalton Steinert is a 2018 graduate who actually got his degree in accounting but minored in English.

Currently, Steinert works for Koch Industries as a media buying specialist. He originally thought he would climb the managerial ladder in the accounting world. But he loves his current career, in which he develops surveys for researching brands, writes scripting code for analytics, and determines efficient ways to yield the best results for target campaigns.

“Writing eloquently is a skill I think almost anyone could benefit from,” says Steinert. “Focusing my minor on editing and creative writing courses allowed me to understand the complexities of great writing.”

He uses the Portuguese word *saudades*, which has no direct translation to English, to describe his feelings toward FHSU. “The closest understanding is an extreme sense of nostalgia, but that doesn’t fully encapsulate,” says Steinert. He remembers his time with friends, the lack of “full on” adult responsibility and the college atmosphere. “Almost any memory brings *saudades* to me. Both good or bad.”

Carl Singleton Retires

from Fort Hays State University

The English department has lost its favorite curmudgeon. Dr. Carl Singleton is the most recent retiree from the English department. He retired from teaching at the end of December 2019 after one semester more than 38 years in the department. He also served as department chair during his tenure.

“The most memorable and delightful highlight of my teaching at FHSU has always been travel with students,” Singleton says. His favorite trip was the one he took to England a few years ago. He accompanied 10 students to “all the main sights in London, as well as Oxford and other places in southern England.”

Classes were, of course, a core part of his time at FHSU. He shared a long list of classes he especially enjoyed teaching: Literature of the 1960s, Literature of the American South, Bibliography, Methods and Theories of Research, and Literature of New York City. Both times he taught the Literature



of New York City course he brought students on a five- to six-day trip to the Big Apple, most recently in spring 2019. Other notable courses include History of the English Language, English Grammar, and American Literature I.

One of his most noteworthy accomplishments is the three-volume encyclopedia *America in the Sixties*, which he published with Salem Press in the late 1990s. Singleton also attended at least 12 Sigma Tau Delta conventions — from Albuquerque to Savannah, from Corpus Christie to Portland, Oregon, and beyond. On a warmer note, Singleton cites as his greatest achievement “the feeling that I have been a good and memorable teacher to so very many wonderful students.”



Dick Leeson, Carl Singleton, and Al Geritz at a costume party.



A large crowd turned out to wish Carl Singleton well at his retirement party.

Through his time at FHSU, Singleton even taught a few of the staff in the English department such as Dr. Cheryl Duffy. Duffy first met him in a Traditional English Grammar course during graduate school in 1982. Duffy shares a running joke that “the only B [she] got on a graduate paper came from Dr. Singleton.”



She kept the paper for over thirty years and joked about the paper while she was his colleague in the English Department, asserting it should have received an

A. When his retirement party came around, Duffy pulled out the paper to continue the joke; however, Singleton had brought his gradebook from the same year and said that he was ready to change the grade. According to Duffy, the gesture showed that Singleton is a “great sport” underneath all of the curmudgeonly behavior.

Now it’s time for him to direct that underlying good nature towards his family. His retirement plans are clear: “to move to Lawrence to be with my kids and grandkids, to travel internationally each year and to write my autobiography/memoirs to self-publish through Amazon.”

We’re not sure he’s serious about that third element of his retirement plans. But if he is, you can bet that it will be interesting. And you can bet that many of his former students and colleagues will be both eager to read it...and nervous to see what he’ll write about them.

About the Writer **Anthony Strickling**



Anthony Strickling is a senior English major in the Writing Concentration. He enjoys fiction writing, art, music, and videogames.

A Body's Just As Dead

Cathy Adams, instructor at Shenyang Normal University, publishes her second novel.



Only two years after the publication of her second novel, Cathy Adams—lecturer of composition at Shenyang Normal University in China—has already begun work on a third. Unlike her first two novels, Adams' next project is being written in partnership with fellow writer Bill Brooks.

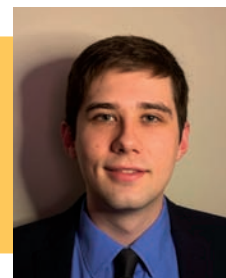
Writing is an essential part of Adams' teaching process, and she believes creative writing is important to more than just English majors. "If you have a product to sell, you're telling a story to promote it, and the nature of any story requires creativity," Adams says. "I'm a teacher who encourages students to infuse their own creative ideas into their writing."

Relocating to China allowed Adams a fresh look at what it means to be an American. Ironically, gaining an understanding of Chinese culture helped her to understand American issues better, and her unique perspective is evident in her novel *A Body's Just as Dead* as well as several of the short stories she has written while teaching in China.

At the beginning of each semester, Adams tells her students that "Westerners and Chinese have many more things in common than we do different, so we should nurture those commonalities." Discovering those commonalities is part of what drove Adams to leave for China with "nothing but a few suitcases." Little did she know that her students at Shenyang would soon feel like family and inspire her to push her writing career further.

About the Writer

Samuel Ayers, a senior English major with a focus on writing, plans to pursue a career in freelance writing.



Rooms & Renovations

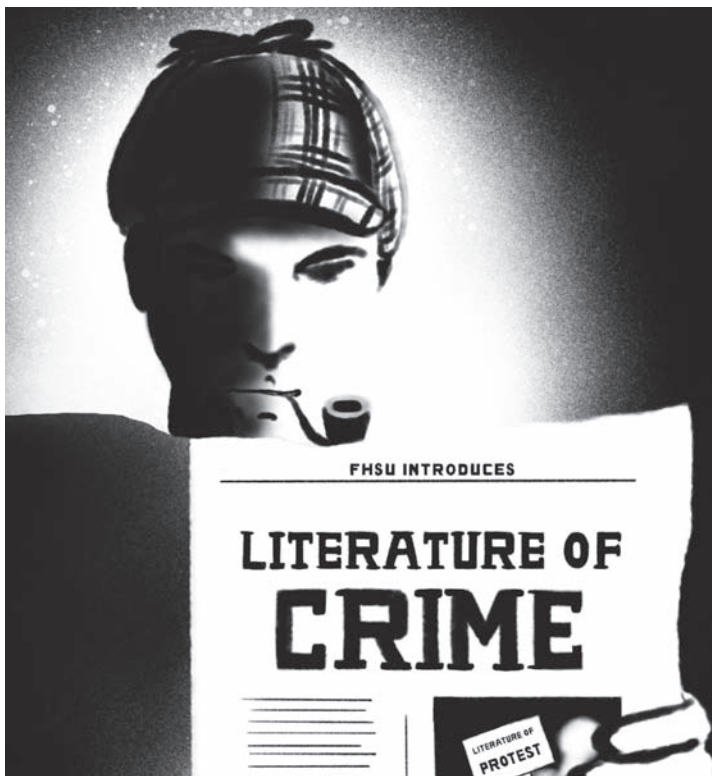
Rarick Hall's Upcoming Quality-of-Life Updates

Rose Kemper

The renovations in the works for Rarick Hall have been a subject of curiosity ever since the Art department moved from its place on the first floor to their new building. The coordinator of this project, Dana Cunningham, says the majority of the plans are already secured, as the university intends to get a bid for the construction soon.

"It's not going to affect English very much except the fact that most if not all the faculty will be able to be on the third floor, including the ESL faculty. Now they're in the library," says Dr. Eric Leuschner, chair of the English Department. The Modern Languages Department, along with the Docking Institute and several other offices, will be moving to the first floor, where they will enjoy more room.

Best of all, the former foundry/metalsmithing classroom on the first floor will be converted into a student lounge and closed off from the elements. This lounge may include amenities such as small study rooms for privacy. In addition to the new student lounge, the hallways of the first floor will be redesigned, adding a new hallway where the art gallery used to be and adding new classrooms.



The Courses, They are A-Changin’

Laurel Haley

The time-honored course ENG 327: Introduction to Fiction has been transformed into the thematic (topics-based) course ENG 327: Literature Matters. The revamped course addresses “a problem or aspect of society that has broader implications,” says Dr. Lexey Bartlett. Since the change, students interested in Literature Matters have had a choice between two topics: Literature of Crime, taught by Bartlett, and Literature of Protest, taught by Dr. Eric Leuschner.

However, English Department Chair Leuschner hopes in the near future to expand the adaptable topics of Literature Matters to include the literature of science and the literature of sport.

Before the department created the topics-based course Literature Matters, convincing students, both English majors and non-English majors, to take Introduction to Fiction was difficult. Introduction to Fiction faced a two-part problem. First, it was not readily distinguishable from ENG 126: Introduction to Literature, which covers poetry, fiction and drama, and second, the course was not appealing to non-English majors.

Leuschner believes the topics-based approach to Literature Matters resolves both problems of its predecessor. Now, by reading just the variable title (e.g., Literature of Protest, or Literature of Crime), students and advisors are better able to discern the subject matter of ENG 327.

The specific subject matter covered in Literature Matters allows advisors across campus to suggest one of the Literature Matters courses to students with degrees that parallel the topic.

Additionally, students can choose a course that suits their interests.

For example, a history major who is interested in reading literature that recounts historic protest should look into Leuschner’s Literature of Protest class. Likewise, a student who is a real crime-buff on the weekend might want to look into Bartlett’s Literature of Crime course.

The Literature Matters course counts as an upper-division General Education requirement for all majors. The department is also moving towards including Literature Matters as an optional course within the English degree program. Consequently, English majors could receive both a General Education credit and an English major credit by taking one of the Literature Matters courses. The literary works covered in Literature Matters are varied and include fiction, poetry, feature articles, essays, songs, films and plays.

The revamped course will help the English department respond to the new 2021 General Education program. The new General Education program requires a series of learning outcomes, which can be found on the Fort Hays State University website (<https://www.fhsu.edu/liberaleducation/fhsu-core-goals-objectives-and-outcomes-11-4-191>). ENG 327: Literature Matters meets the new General Education outcomes under the Aesthetic Mode of Inquiry.

Perhaps the most relevant outcome of the Aesthetic Mode of Inquiry is this: “explain how reflections on an artistic work can clarify personal and cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes.” This outcome was carried out daily in the Literature of Crime class I took in the fall of 2019. The class was much more than storytelling. In Bartlett’s class, my peers and I would form a loose Socratic seminar.

“Literature is a lab for real life where
we can test out causes and effects.”

One particular class period, my peers and I discussed the death penalty in the context of Truman Capote’s nonfiction novel *In Cold Blood*. My class examined the multiple viewpoints on the death penalty that were expressed in Capote’s novel. Through these diverse viewpoints, my class came to resemble a mock jury. Further developing this idea, Dr. Bartlett says, “Literature is a lab for real life where we can test out causes and effects.”

This social and literary alliance allowed my class to clarify our personal and cultural values and exemplified the department’s desired outcome for the Aesthetic Mode of Inquiry. Expanding on this social and literary alliance, Bartlett explains one key benefit of literature: “It gives you an opportunity to think through the implications of an action.”

-Illustration by Madison Otter

FHSU Welcomes New Faculty

From the Wildcats to the Ragin' Cajuns to the Bears, Fort Hays State University's English Department welcomes a new linguistics professor, **Dr. Perry Harrison**, to the Tiger family.

Harrison received his doctorate degree from Baylor University and taught there for a year afterward as a lecturer. Before that, he taught briefly at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette and at Abilene Christian University, where he received his master's degree.

Fort Hays State University was immediately on his radar once the job was posted.

"I've always been interested in being at a teaching university rather than a research-based university," Harrison says.

When he came to visit Fort Hays State, he was impressed with the collegiality of the department and the demeanor of the students. It was an easy choice for him.

"I enjoyed interacting with the classes I had a chance to teach," Harrison says. "I was impressed with what they had to offer."

Harrison teaches Introduction to Linguistics, English Grammar, History of the English Language, and Medieval Literature in addition to first-year writing classes.

In the classroom, he tries to keep his students engaged by being mindful of their interests. He has a wide range of students, both in the department and the larger population. For his general classes, he tries to give the students something that will carry forward to their larger academic lives.

"In the English department, I try to make sure I have something for all three of our concentrations: teaching, writing and literature," Harrison says.

His favorite experience, so far, is seeing the responses to one of his assignments. Harrison included in his class some surprising selections ranging from The Black Eyed Peas to Queen.

"For English Grammar, I had the students pick a song and correct the grammar in the song and explain why they made the corrections that they made," Harrison says. "Seeing the responses and the student engagement with that really was rewarding and really amusing."

As for Hays, Kansas, he likes how welcoming and friendly the community really is. Being a father of a young child, he's had a chance to take him to events at the Hays Public Library.

"I have really enjoyed taking part in the community events," Harrison says. "It's been rewarding for my family."



From the big city of Chicago to the relatively small town of Hays, the English Department welcomes a new composition instructor, **Camilo Peralta**.

Peralta received his bachelor's degree in his hometown of Chicago at Loyola University before spending ten years teaching overseas. When he returned home, he received his master's degree from Southern New Hampshire University. From there, he taught in Southeast Kansas for two years.

"When I realized that it was time to move on, I wanted, if possible, to stay in the state because I loved working with the local students there that I had," Peralta says.

He noticed Fort Hays State University was hiring English teachers, and after some research, he saw the school had a large China program.

"I thought that would also work well for me because I got my teaching start in China, teaching ESL [English as a Second Language] many years ago," Peralta says.

Currently, Peralta teaches composition courses and taught Technical Writing virtually for one of the school's Chinese affiliates this past summer.

In English Composition II, Peralta has his students write research papers, where his students select their own topics that are relevant to their majors. He believes as students work on a college degree, the students should be able to express themselves.

"You emphasize why it's going to be important for them to know how to write well. Whatever job you have in the future, it's going to entail some writing," Peralta says.

In his short time here, he has met some promising students. One of his students won a scholarship that is paying for her full ride. Meeting students like this one is the reason he does what he does.

"She's competing in the Miss Kansas Pageant, and she's Pre-Med. There's so much ambition in her."

After the few months Peralta has been in Hays, Kansas, he already loves much about this small town.

"I love the library!" Peralta exclaims. "I spend so much time at the library that you'd think I work there."

He loves the Volga-German traditions that are here and are still recognized and embraced. He also loves the religious, quiet community and how respectful it is.

"Everybody is so friendly," Peralta says. "Everybody walks their dogs and greets each other. It's completely different from over there [Chicago]."



About the Writer

Megan Walker is studying for a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music but writes in her spare time and finds joy in reading.



In Memoriam

Alexis-Athena Wyatt



Samuel Ayers

If you visit with Alexis-Athena Wyatt's friends, you'll hear something like what Kaitlyn Pell, her fellow sorority member and English major, says: "Alexis cared for every single person that she met. She showed me love and care in my best and worst moments. I always felt safe and at home with her." On February 3, 2020, Alexis-Athena passed away from a car crash on an icy Colorado highway.

Alexis (as she was known to her friends) was a compassionate leader and friend to many of those around her. On her journey to be a teacher, she touched countless lives and had a palpable impact not only on the English department but also on FHSU. Alexis helped establish both Tiger Pals—an organization that matches volunteers with students with disabilities—and Disability Awareness Week. Her involvement in these organizations

"So many amazing things can happen if you just take that brave first step!"
Alexis-Athena Wyatt

showed her commitment to helping those with disabilities live a more productive and comfortable life.

One of Alexis' many leadership roles was as the president of the Delta Omega Chapter of Delta Zeta Sorority. During her time as president, her sorority received the Crest Award, a prestigious honor.

Part of Alexis' charitable nature was evident in her passion for teaching. Her desire to share her love of literature with young people was obvious to everyone who knew her. Alexis was an inaugural student within the FHSU Honors College.

Alexis' passion for teaching pushed her to work at the FHSU Writing Center, where she helped students revise papers, improve their organizational skills and understand guidelines—just a few of the skills she learned throughout her college career. Alexis would have inspired many students with her compassionate leadership style and her willingness to go out of her way for others.



Being a first-generation college student, Alexis greatly valued opportunities to advance her education and build her community. Part of what pushed her to achieve was her younger

sister Imogen. Talking about Alexis' relationship with Imogen, sorority sister and friend Parker Cyrier says: "A lot of the reasons that she did what she did...was because she wanted to show Imogen that it's possible, and she wanted to make her sister proud. She talked about that a lot."

Her time as a student was filled with initiative and academic excellence. She held leadership positions and helped improve the resources available to disabled students. She was a Residential Assistant and served in many organizations including Fraternity and Sorority Life, Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society and McMinderes Hall Council. She taught for the day at Ellis High School and presented at the Kansas Association of Teachers of English.

When fellow Disney enthusiast Parker sat down with me to talk about her friend and sorority sister, her face lit up as she related some of the many memories and stories she has of Alexis.

It wasn't just the big things that stood out, like the time they spent together at Disney World. Many of the stories Parker told me were about how Alexis' personality showed through in the little things: "She was also such a goofball. She was always dancing around, so I remember walking into the living

room—we lived together for a couple of years—and we were all playing Just Dance, and everyone would just, you know, just move their arms with the Wii Remote, and then she was doing the whole entire dance. She would choreograph it. She would do the full turns, and then she would have everyone try it too, so we would all just be doing the full dances. And so now we have all these routines memorized." Her capacity for bringing people together was truly incredible.

Through Sigma Tau Delta, Dr. Lexey Bartlett has started the Alexis-Athena Wyatt Scholarship. To contribute to this fund, you can mail a check to the FHSU Foundation and write "Alexis-Athena Wyatt Scholarship" in the memo line. For more information, please contact Dr. Bartlett (labartlett@fhsu.edu).



Illustration by Parker Cyrier

AUTHOR PRESENTATION:

Sarah Smarsh Speaks about Her Memoir *Heartland*

Anthony Strickling

Kansas author Sarah Smarsh presented on campus as a part of the Sigma Tau Delta regional conference. Smarsh focused her presentation upon her New York Times bestseller and finalist for the National Book Award *Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth*.

Smarsh is notable for her other roles of a speaker and a journalist who focuses on socioeconomic class issues and rural America. Smarsh came to visit the university in October 2019 and gave her presentation in the Beach/Schmidt Performing Arts Center.

The presentation included Smarsh's authorial work and writing perspective, though the main topic was her bestseller. The book focuses on her upbringing on a poor Kansas farm and how she experienced economic inequality. The presentation wrapped

up with a Q and A as well as a book signing.

A seminar held after the Q and A allowed memoir writers to share their work, to which Smarsh responded. Joseph Gunderson, an FHSU student who participated in the seminar, noted that "she provided a few avenues to the writers in attendance to get our work out there, advising that we make use of certain journals to get our foot in the door."

For Gunderson, "the greatest bit of insight provided is a piece often said by many writers: don't give up.... She told those of us who were hoping to publish to not allow the great number of rejections to deter us from our ultimate goal."

FHSU student Laurel Haley remembers Smarsh sharing her philosophy on writing: "Any kind of art performs a sort of Rorschach test."



That is to say that viewers, readers or listeners will arrive at various interpretations based upon their own personalities and perspectives.

The sponsors of the event were Sigma Tau Delta; the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; the Department of Sociology and the Department of English.

Smarsh marked another successful author visit for Fort Hays State University in its tradition of inviting notable authors to enrich students' college experience.



FHSU GRADUATE BECOMES A Middle School Teacher

Megan Walker

From Tiger to Falcon, a recent English graduate has found her place at Hays Middle School as a seventh grade English teacher.

Meagan Englert graduated from Fort Hays State University in the spring of 2017. While she was here, Englert served as president of Sigma Tau Delta and was on the editorial board for *Lines*.

Since graduating, Englert has taught middle school for three years. She taught at Ruppenthal Middle School in Russell before accepting a position at Hays Middle School.

Englert loves the age group she teaches and enjoys helping them find their identity. Even navigating the stressful social situations of middle school brings fulfillment to her day.

In the classroom, she keeps her students busy and engaged through collaborative learning and relevancy. Her students sit at tables or alternative seating, which allows them to work in groups while in a comfortable environment. [Editor's note: Well, they did before COVID-19.]

"I do my best to relate each of our lessons to our students' current and future needs," Englert says.

Her favorite moment in class is when they are reading a whole novel.

"My students beg to keep reading because they want to know what happens next," Englert says. And what English teacher wouldn't love that?

A Tribe of Nerds

Thirty Years of Sigma Tau Delta



From 1993, left to right: Judy Anderson, Laura Davis, Kelly Brungardt, Kris Bair, Karen Zimmer, Shana McCollum, Valerie Brown.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Sigma Tau Delta here at Fort Hays State University. The Rho Psi chapter was founded in the 1989-1990 school year under the leadership of Kris Bair, the first faculty advisor, and is still going strong today. The impact that Sigma Tau Delta has had on students throughout the years is inspiring.

Valerie Brown-Kuchera, a former student who later taught at Fort Hays State University, was an early member involved in Sigma Tau Delta from 1990-1996 and served as one of the first presidents of the organization. "I was a first-generation college student with no experience traveling or attending scholarly activities at all," Brown-Kuchera says. "The opportunity to collaborate with my professors – all such admired and revered people in my life – was truly transformational. These individuals inspired me and fed my love of literature and writing. The confidence I gained through involvement in English Club and Sigma Tau Delta cannot be calculated."

Sigma Tau Delta provides a home for students who share an interest in English. The bond among these students is remarkable, and for many students who grew up in small, rural areas, finding people who have that shared interest is powerful. Brown-Kuchera says: "I went to a small high school, so I had never really found my 'tribe' until coming to Fort Hays State University. It would be hard to overstate the importance of the FHSU English Department as a whole on my development as a teacher, a creative individual and as a student of literature."

Some of the memorable activities that Brown-Kuchera recalled are literary-themed costume parties; a tour of Willa Cather's home in Red Cloud, Nebraska; selling t-shirts with silly sayings such as "Will teach for food" and creating a giant banner with a castle on it that the chapter hung across the trees in the quad to advertise the English Club and Sigma Tau Delta.

The conventions that Sigma Tau Delta holds are also unforgettable. The convention always hosts plenty of fun activities, such as "bad poetry competitions, open-mic poetry and comedy acts," Brown-Kuchera says. She also describes famous author presentations, book signings and literary tours based on the conference's location.

Fast forward to the 2019-2020 academic year. Tristan Wilson served as president of Sigma Tau Delta, having been a member since 2017. "I really like Sigma Tau Delta – it's a bunch of nerds, so it's awesome," Wilson says.

I really like Sigma Tau Delta—it's a bunch of nerds, so it's awesome.

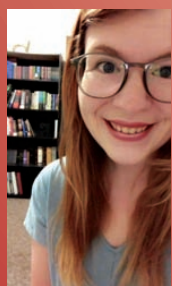
Wilson likes the conventions because it's fun to travel and see hundreds of people with similar interests, but her favorite part about being involved is "working with the team here and doing events like the Book and Bake sale," Wilson says. "The people that I'm closest with here at Fort Hays are the people in Sigma Tau Delta."

The biggest fundraiser Sigma Tau Delta holds (and the one with the longest history) is the Book and Bake sale, where members set up a table with books and homemade treats to sell outside the English Department Office. They added a new twist recently, called "Blind Date with a Book," where some of the books were covered in wrapping paper, so aside from a description, the book's title and cover are a mystery. Another event Sigma Tau Delta held this year was a "personal poetry event" where students could walk up to our table and give us a topic and we would write a poem for them on the spot," Wilson says. "It's one of a kind."

The conventions that she has attended have similar activities to those that Brown-Kuchera experienced, such as the bad poetry night. "Conventions are awesome," Wilson says. "There are opening and closing ceremonies and a meal and a gala. Everyone gets really dressed up, and that's when awards are given."

This year, because of COVID-19, the convention was canceled. Six students would have presented at the convention: Eric McFarlane, Joseph Gunderson, Laurel Haley, Meritt Hammeke, Emily Linder and Tristan Wilson.

Despite the thirty-year time difference, much of Sigma Tau Delta has remained the same. The students might come up with new ideas for fundraisers and activities, but the overall atmosphere of Sigma Tau Delta is still as fun, caring and inclusive as it was thirty years ago. And while the activities thirty years from now could be quite different, it is safe to say that the inclusive environment will remain vital.



About the Writer

Keri Asche

Keri Asche is a senior English major in the writing concentration, and she will be pursuing a career in editing after graduation.



Cassidy Locke, Tristan Wilson, Mackenzie McGregor, Makayli Allender and Jessica Shields at the 2019 Sigma Tau Delta Convention.

Poems to the Author

Emily Linder receives praise from Ruta Sepetys, Author of Salt to the Sea

Emily Linder, a current English major in the Writing Concentration at Fort Hays State University, wrote a set of ten poems as a part of a class project. Her teacher, Sharon Wilson, set up the project in order to help her students engage with and immerse themselves in the novel. Linder's chosen project surrounding the novel *Salt to the Sea* was a mix of various options she had been given: she chose to write ten poems from the perspectives of ten of the characters. Not only did she get an A on the project, but she also gained attention from the author of *Salt to the Sea*.



Wilson, upon seeing the quality of Linder's poems, reached out to Ruta Sepetys, the author of *Salt to the Sea*. Wilson received a response the same day from Sepetys' agent and received Sepetys' response to the poems three to four days later. Sepetys was "very effusive" according to Wilson. An excerpt from Sepetys' personal response to the poems, used with her permission, has been included below:

Emily's poems presented the characters in such a moving way that it brought me to tears. My characters are composites, based on real human beings. Emily has given such incredible voice to these people I have admired and loved for years during my writing process. It's difficult to describe what a beautiful gift she has given me, hearing their voices in such a visceral way.

I'm not only grateful to Emily, I'm also grateful to you. Emily and your students would never have discovered the novel and this underrepresented history without you. Thank you for helping me bring history out of the dark and give voice to so many who never had a chance to tell their story.

With heartfelt thanks,

Ruta

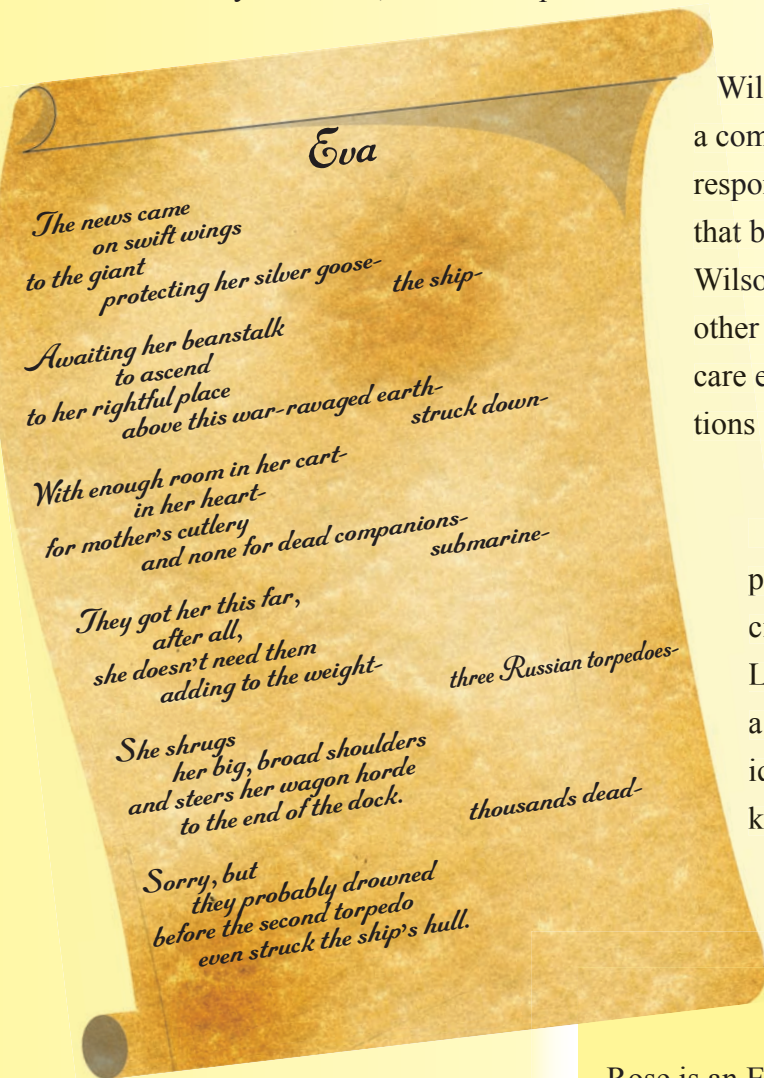
Along with the written response to Linder’s poems, Sepetys sent along a small gift of two books for writing inspiration. “This gift is Sepetys’ way of expressing what the poems meant to her, while also telling Emily to keep on her current path and to keep writing,” Wilson says.

Linder, of course, was surprised and touched by Sepetys’ response and gifts. “I got this touching handwritten note and two books for writing inspiration. The way Ruta spoke about how I captured the essence of each of her characters and moved her with my poems is not a feeling I will ever forget. It really helped affirm that I am good at what I want to do and that I’m on the right path, and it’s not every day you get that kind of feedback from an author you admire,” Linder responded.



Wilson notes that Sepetys responded in the same way that a compassionate teacher would respond. In other words, she responded promptly and cordially. “That consciousness and that belief in helping other people, I think was remarkable,” Wilson says. The same can be said for Wilson herself and any other teacher in the FHSU English department. Our teachers care enough to see opportunities for students to make connections and to help bring about those relationships.

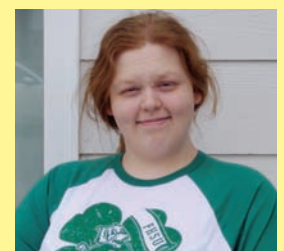
Speaking of opportunities, Wilson went a step further and paved the way for Linder to present at the 2019 Kansas Association of Teachers of English (KATE) Conference. Knowing Linder’s writing ability, Wilson asked her to write and present a piece at the KATE conference about the historical significance of *Salt to the Sea*, trusting in Linder’s maturity and knowing that she would research her subject well.



About the Writer

Rose Kemper

Rose is an English major in the Writing Concentration. Writing and art, among other things, are her favorite pastimes. She loves coming up with ideas for creative projects.



2020-2021 Scholarship Donors

Thank you all for your generous contributions!

Alan and Ruth Deines, *Hays, KS*
Ann Marks, *Snellville, GA*
Bart and Amy Briggs, *Gove, KS*
Bob and Lisa Swift, *Tucson, AZ*
Brett Weaver, *Hays, KS*
Bruce and Kris Bair, *Corpus Christi, TX*
Carl Singleton, *Hays, KS*
Curtis and Jeannette Ramsey, *Orlando, FL*
Dale and Judyanne Somers, *Topeka, KS*
Dan and Carolyn McGovern, *Walnut Creek, CA*
Dennis and Pam Hutchinson, *Smith Center, KS*
Donald and Marilyn Hill, *Loudon, TN*
Donald Richardson, *Phoenix, AZ*
Ed Moore, *Kansas City, MO*
Eldon and Karen Zimbelman, *Wichita, KS*
Jackie Luedtke, *Hays, KS*
James Stegman, *Denver, CO*
Jerry and Carla Barber, *McPherson, KS*
Jess and Carmen Medina, *Sublette, KS*
Joe and Cindy Hertel, *Ellis, KS*
Joe and Katherine Snyderstrup, *Paonia, CO*
John Voss, *Knoxville, TX*
Judy Sherard, *Hays, KS*
Kenny and Julie Ackerman, *Offerle, KS*
Larry Walker, *Kingman, KS*
Linda Smith, *Ellis, KS*
Lloyd Oswald, *Gorham, KS*
Lynne Hewes, *Cimarron, KS*
Mark and Barbara Dreiling, *Denver, CO*
Martin and Kelly Jacques, *Lawrence, KS*
Marvin and Deborah Bickner, *Colby, KS*
Matthew and Melissa Schuster, *Superior, NE*
Maureen Bulkley, *Kinder Morgan Foundation,
Lakewood, CO*
Melinda Springman, *Palm Beach Gardens, FL*
Melissa Winter, *El Dorado, KS*
Michael and LaVetta Stephens, *LaCrosse, KS*
Michael and Beth Oller, *Stockton, KS*
Michael and Norma Cornell, *Concord, CA*
Michael and Rebecca Lundquist, *Clyde, KS*
Mike Westerman, *Ellinwood, KS*
Norman and Judith Brewer, *Bethesda, MD*
Patrick and Terri Giebler, *Colby, KS*
Rachel Michelson, *Denver, CO*
Ralph Voss and Glenda Weathers-Voss,
Birmingham, AL
Richard and Jane Weiderman, *Grand Rapids, MI*
Richard and Marty Kraemer, *Lawrence, KS*
Richard Schnell and Vaunita Rusco-Schnell,
Newton Center, MA
Rita Smith, *Holton, KS*
Robert and Virginia Vocelli, *West Hartford, CT*
Ronald and Corrine Sidener, *Leawood, KS*
Ronan and Heather Sramek, *Olathe, KS*
Steve and Glenda Shepard, *Johnson, KS*
Steven and Patricia Ottem, *Loveland, CO*
Susan Deges, *Hill City, KS*
Walker Voss, *Hays, KS*
William Elliott and Janice Schmidtberger Elliott,
Oakland, CA

Faculty Quiz Answers - Take the quiz on page 18!

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Lexey Bartlett - J | 8. Daniel Kulmala - D | 15. Linda Smith - R |
| 2. Lisa Bell - A | 9. Eric Leuschner - F | 16. Matthew Smalley - N |
| 3. Valerie Brown-Kuchera - G | 10. Linda McHenry - O | 17. Brett Weaver - B |
| 4. Morgan Chalfant - M | 11. Camilo Peralta - L | 18. Bradley Will - I |
| 5. Cheryl Duffy - S | 12. Debby Pfeifer - H | 19. Sharon Wilson - K |
| 6. Perry Harrison - E | 13. Pauline Scott - Q | 20. Carl Singleton - T |
| 7. Sharla Hutchison - C | 14. Jessica Shields - P | |

2020-2021 Scholarship Recipients

Alice McFarland Scholarship

Maggie Revell

Ralph Voss/Elvon & Ruby Feldkamp Scholarship

Tristan Wilson

Roberta Stout Scholarship

Anna Criswell
Josie Hemphill

Michael Marks Scholarship

Taylor Vredenberg

Elizabeth Jane “Betty” Lenz Scholarship

Hannah Feldman

English Freshman Honors Scholarship

Serena Hanes
Katalina Rivera
Ellen Dusselier
Lauren Cure
Quinn Martens-Bobbitt
Allison Hillebrand
Robert Rhodes

Lloyd Oswald Scholarship

Tristan Wilson
Eric McFarlane
Jenny Faber
Noah Golaboff
Jenner Little

English Development Scholarship

Taylen Hubbell

English Department Scholarship

Taylor Vredenberg
Emily Linder
Miguel Lopez-Lemus
Citlalli Cobian
Jake Dechant
Kaitlyn Pell

Brett Weaver/Linda Smith Scholarship

Emily Linder
Elizabeth Kemper

Graduate Student Scholarship

Meritt Hammeke



Makayli Allender

Makayli Allender is a senior in the writing concentration of the English department. Allender was a recipient of the 2019 Weaver-Smith Scholarship, but she was not recognized in last year's *Post Parade* due to an administrative oversight. Allender will be combining her Bachelor of Arts with a minor in history. After graduating, she plans to work as an editor and move to the Pacific Northwest.

English Faculty Member Linda Smith Published in *Literary Mama*

Linda Smith, an English faculty member at FHSU, dabbles in creative writing. Recently Smith got her short story “Halo” published on *Literary Mama*, an online publishing website.

“I was not looking for a place to publish,” says Smith. “But I do subscribe to *Literary Mama* because I enjoy their approach to women writers and to themes of motherhood and family.” One story invited readers to respond with a story of their own for possible publication. “I was so engaged by that short story, that when I saw the opportunity to provide a response with my own experiences and story, I submitted.”



Smith credits a memory of her oldest daughter when she was 12 as the key inspiration for the story in its current form.

Smith reinforces that teaching is her career, but she hopes to make more time for her personal writing.

About the Writer

Robert Loeffler is a senior English major in the Writing Concentration. Passions include playing with his cats, Patches (14) and Balthazar (6 months).



Faculty Quiz

Test your knowledge of your faculty members with this quiz on their favorite TV shows!

by Keri Asche

Faculty Members:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Lexey Bartlett | 11. Camilo Peralta |
| 2. Lisa Bell | 12. Debby Pfeifer |
| 3. Valerie Brown-Kuchera | 13. Pauline Scott |
| 4. Morgan Chalfant | 14. Jessica Shields |
| 5. Cheryl Duffy | 15. Linda Smith |
| 6. Perry Harrison | 16. Matthew Smalley |
| 7. Sharla Hutchison | 17. Brett Weaver |
| 8. Daniel Kulmala | 18. Bradley Will |
| 9. Eric Leuschner | 19. Sharon Wilson |
| 10. Linda McHenry | 20. Carl Singleton |

TV Shows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A. <i>Friends</i> | K. <i>The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel</i> |
| B. <i>Dalziel and Pascoe</i> | L. <i>Star Trek</i> |
| C. <i>The Good Place</i> | M. <i>Spartacus</i> |
| D. <i>The Andy Griffith Show</i> | N. <i>Chef's Table</i> |
| E. <i>Daredevil</i> | O. <i>The Umbrella Academy</i> |
| F. <i>Doctor Who</i> | P. <i>The Masked Singer</i> |
| G. <i>Downton Abbey</i> | Q. <i>Supernatural</i> |
| H. <i>The Vampire Diaries</i> | R. <i>Mar de Plastico</i> |
| I. <i>Babylon 5</i> | S. <i>The Big Bang Theory</i> |
| J. <i>Stranger Things</i> | T. <i>Wives with Knives</i> |



Answers are on page 16!

By the Numbers

Designed by Emily Linder

19 English Faculty in Hays

53 English Majors

4 English Adjunct Faculty teaching online only

11 English Minors

16 English Faculty going online for China due to COVID-19 Spring 2020

19 English MA Students

100% Placement Rate for English Education Graduates Fall 2013 - Spring 2019



About the Writer

Laurel Haley is a student athlete who is majoring in Art History and English. She does not know what career path this will take her down, but she relishes exploring her love of art and literature.



**FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY**

ENGLISH
600 Park Street
Hays, KS 67601-4099

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HAYS, KS
PERMIT NO. 4



Seeking an MA in English?

Fort Hays State University offers Literature, Writing, Pedagogy, and TESOL courses and one of the lowest in-state and out-of-state tuition rates in the country.

Low \$35 application fee; no GRE requirement. NCA and NCATE accredited.

Visit www.fhsu.edu/english/MA-Programs or call (785) 628-4285 for more information.



FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Fort Hays State University
Department of English
600 Park Street
Hays, KS 67601-4099

Year-Round Program

- Scholarships available
- GTA positions available (tuition and \$10,000 stipend for Writing Center experience)
- Intensive summer courses enable one-year completion
- Visiting authors

Summers-Only Program

- Scholarships available
- One of the nation's only summer programs
- Completion in as few as two summers
- Designed for in-service middle and high school teachers but open to all students