

The English Post

Fort Hays State University English Department Fall 2022



Shakespeare Scholar Pauline Scott Retires

Story on p. 4

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(From L. to R.) Dr. Cheryl Duffy, Danny Sleigh, Ethan Thornbro, Mar (Moore) Sarratt
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Posing in the Foundry Lounge, First Floor, Rarick Hall

Photo by Bob Duffy

You might think that a Professional Editing class of just three students wouldn't be up to the daunting task of writing and designing a 20-page alumni magazine in addition to juggling course readings, quizzes, and exams—but it all depends upon which three students. And these three students pictured to the left cheerfully and expertly rose to the task! It certainly helped when Mar Moore donated some of her Writing Internship hours toward the cause. We also tapped into other writers for our "In Memoriam" pieces, and faculty, for the most part, wrote their own blurbs for the two-page faculty update spread. All in all, I'm pleased with the result and hope you will be, too.

-Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy,
Managing Editor

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 for the western Kansas region and beyond. Fort Hays State 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.

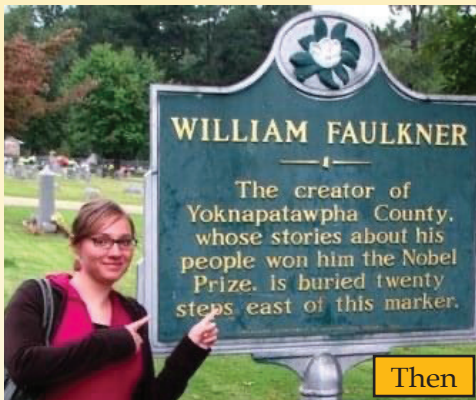
The English Post -- Fall 2022

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International Alumni

Where are they now?

by Ethan Thornbro



International alumni have passed through the welcoming doors of Fort Hays State University's English department since international students first set foot on campus. During that time, they have made great contributions to our department, but what is life like for these students post diploma? Two international students who have found success by remaining in the United States after graduation are Olga Renner and Wen Xin.

Olga Renner, who attended Fort Hays two separate times, hails from Germany. Renner spent her first two semesters at FHSU as an undergraduate. After those two semesters, Renner returned to Germany to complete her undergraduate degree. She graduated as a dual major in 2009, focusing on both business and English. Returning to Fort Hays, Renner graduated in 2010 with an M.A. in English from Fort Hays State University.



As is the case for many English majors, Renner's academic success was backed by the close-knit friendships formed with faculty members and classmates. "The class sizes were small, giving opportunities to meet and get to know other students," Renner says. She is still in contact with many of these friends to this day.

As a Sales Supervisor in Hays for Nex-Tech's Business Technology group, Renner uses the many skills acquired during her time in the English department. "An English degree teaches you to look at things from different perspectives, constantly considering the bigger picture," Renner says. Renner has succinct advice for future international students: "Stay open-minded and stick it out."

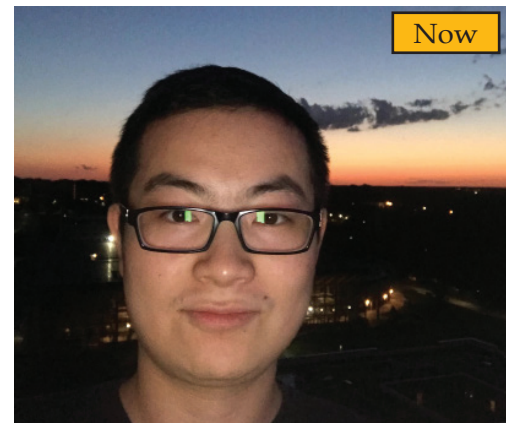
Olga Renner

Dr. Wen Xin came to Fort Hays in 2011 from China. From his arrival at Fort Hays in 2011 to 2013, Xin's academic work focused on receiving his B.A. from the English department. After receiving his B.A., Xin continued his education at Fort Hays State from 2013 to 2015, where he pursued an M.A. in English.

Xin's reasons for choosing the Fort Hays English department ultimately came down to its "comprehensive and multidisciplinary" curriculum. Xin's experience at FHSU laid the foundation for his doctoral studies at the University of Kansas, where he focused on English language studies, rhetoric and composition. With the experience gained at all three levels of study, Xin was hired as an assistant teaching professor at Syracuse University in New York, where he taught both introductory and upper-level courses.

When looking back at his time at FHSU, Xin thinks of two of his favorite classes, Advanced Composition and Theories of Rhetoric and Composition. It was in these classes that he got out of his comfort zone, and he cites his strong friendship with Dr. Cheryl Duffy as one of many reasons he enjoyed the department. "Stepping out of your comfort zone is key," Xin says. He has advice for potential international students coming to Fort Hays: "By not stepping out of your comfort zone, you cannot grow."

Wen Xin





“What is past is prologue.”

Dr. Pauline Scott bids a fond farewell to the FHSU English Department

With the Rarick Hall construction noise dying down, Dr. Pauline Scott quietly reflects on her passing time at Fort Hays State University – just as the university has changed Rarick Hall, it has also forever changed her. This year, Scott said goodbye to the English department and its steadfast students, leaving her mark on all she knew and taught.

Scott’s time in the department started when she stepped into the role of department chair in August 2011, a position she held until 2015. While in this role, she learned about her love of problem-solving and innovation. However, as Scott says, “I missed my time in the classroom.” She stepped down from her position and promptly took up two others as Director of the English Master’s Degree Program and Graduate Advisor, positions she held until retiring at the end of the spring 2022 semester.

“I think the main lesson that I learned from these positions was the importance of keeping the lines of communication open and enjoying the people you spend time with along the way,” Scott says.

Scott’s constant encouragement and inspiring drive are cherished by her students. Her dedication to advancing her students even resulted in her taking graduate students with her to present at the College English Association 2019 national conference in New Orleans (pictured below).

As she reflects, she assures that her time at FHSU is full of many years of care and admiration for those whose paths she crossed. “My favorite memories involve times when faculty have gotten together to socialize, such as our Halloween costume competitions with the Math department, our Christmas potlucks, and our brief but much-beloved theme gatherings,” Scott laughs. “‘Disco Day’ was particularly memorable!”

She also fondly recalls a memory with her close colleague, Pamela Shaffer. “I absolutely will never



(L. to R.) Zach Kastens, Dr. Scott, Cheryl Duffy



(L. to R.) Dr. Scott, Stacie Rupp, Vanessa (Beilman) Schumacher, Karel (Schulz) Webster

“The one thing we have all learned over the last couple of years is to be patient and understanding with one another and also to be mindful of our own wellbeing.”



forget the Halloween when our dear late colleague Pam Shaffer came dressed as Princess Leia, complete with side buns!"

Scott's post-teaching life will be full of gardening, reading, writing and ease. "I'm actually enjoying not having any specific plans at the moment," Scott says. "I know that there will be travel in my future, and there are a number of destinations on my bucket list."

She urges readers to go forth as she plans to, with a carefree, mindful attitude. "The one thing we have all learned over the last couple of years is to be patient and understanding with one another and also to be mindful of our own wellbeing," Scott says.

It is to her students, though, that she leaves her last bit of advice. Scott urges current students of any level to go forth with confidence and commitment. "There may never be an other time when people will devote their time and full attention to carefully reading and responding to your work." While academics come first, she quickly adds – "Also, take the time to make friends and have fun!"



About the Writer

Mar (Moore) Sarratt is a senior English major in the Writing Concentration. After graduation, Mar plans on pursuing an M.A. in Library Science.

PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

UPDATED ENGLISH M.A. PROGRAM ARRIVES



Eric McFarlane graduates with his English M.A. (May 2022).

While problems arose from the Covid-19 pandemic, solutions arose as well. Fort Hays State University has been working diligently to ensure that the transition to a post-pandemic life is smooth. The English department is implementing changes to make its Master of Arts program more accessible for graduate students near and far through Zoom sessions, hybrid classes and online courses.

Formerly taught strictly in person, the English M.A. program followed a traditional delivery model. With recent changes, students not only in Hays but wherever Tigers may call home can easily achieve this academic milestone. "This is thanks to the major change in the structure of the M.A. program, which focuses on allowing online credits to count towards the M.A. degree," says Dr. Eric Leuschner, Chair of the English department.

To further expand the English department's reach of opportunity for future Tigers, the M.A. program changes went into effect summer 2022. These changes will reshape the availability of summer courses, allowing students and teachers alike to gain expanded access to the English M.A. program. The accessibility of these courses will be increased through online classes.

Asynchronous classes are traditional online courses where students complete the work at whatever time fits their schedule. Synchronous classes will include face-to-face instruction with a Zoom option for students not living in Hays but still wanting to participate in real time with the instructor and their classmates. "That means students will not have to relocate to Hays for the summer but will still be able to participate in live, synchronous courses," Leuschner says.

Furthermore, students will be able to take online courses during the fall and spring semesters to count toward their master's degree. Leuschner hopes that this increased availability will make it easier for students to complete their M.A. Ultimately, Leuschner hopes that the newfound flexibility will allow students to "complete their degree in a way that best meets their needs but also offers the opportunity for the face-to-face (or face-to-screen) interaction students have always enjoyed about our program."

Dr. Brett Weaver supports the revamped program. Stating poetically that "one perishes when one does not evolve," Weaver thinks that there may be more benefits from this pandemic than we think. Hybrid and online classes join the list of other adaptations that make day-to-day life more accessible.

Weaver strongly believes that the future of all forms of education lies within these types of adaptations. He hopes that with this more flexible and more available option, liberal arts programs will increase in size at all universities. Weaver, like others, acknowledges that there will be bumps in the road.

For more information about this and other programs within the Department of English, visit our website at FHSU.edu/English and click on "programs."



About the Author

Ethan Thornbro is a fourth-year English major in the Writing Concentration from Marion, Kansas. After completing his undergraduate degree, he plans to further his education by getting his master's and eventually doctorate degrees. He hopes to one day teach at the collegiate level.

Introducing Jacob Buckman, FHSU's Second Poet Laureate

by Danny Sleigh



FHSU introduced the Poet Laureate position to FHSU in 2021. The resurgence of poetry has led to similar positions at other universities, which inspired the introduction of the role to the Fort Hays campus. The current Poet Laureate is Jacob Buckman, a graduate student in the Philosophy department.

"Our chief goal [for the position] is poetry engagement," says Morgan Chalfant, Buckman's mentor. Chalfant wants to reach the communities of both FHSU and Hays in general. Buckman's goal with his position, and his poetry in general, is to lighten his reader's mood. "I produce poetry that is lighthearted, fun and easy to receive for the sake and necessity of simplicity in one's life," Buckman says. He wants to provide a way for the community to be creative and enjoy their writing.

Buckman found out about the position through Dr. Bradley Will's Ideal Societies in Fiction course. Buckman rekindled his love for literature. "I put my name in the hat and had so much fun doing poetry again for the first time since I was a child," Buckman shares.

Buckman's inspiration for his poetry comes from music, funny experiences and compelling scenarios. Buckman's poetry is easy for audiences to engage with because of its light-heartedness and readability, according to Chalfant.

Music is ingrained in our society, and music is poetry, so Buckman's inclusion of musical elements helps make his poetry enjoyable.

Buckman's work as a philosophy major helps him in his writing. "My philosophy major is the driving force behind my perspective in art," Buckman says. Philosophy is always on Buckman's mind, according to Chalfant, who isn't always sure how much the Poet Laureate wants to get across. "Sometimes he just wants to write poetry to make someone laugh," says Chalfant.

Buckman has found his time as Poet Laureate fulfilling, specifically as he works to help build the program. "To be present from the foundation of this community and to develop a self-sustaining cycle that lasts for years I think is my greatest pleasure in this position," Buckman says. As much as Buckman enjoys his position, it seems the community enjoys him just as much. "Jacob is somebody who is very likable, very personable and he's very good at talking to people," Chalfant says.

Buckman and Chalfant agree that the future of the Poet Laureate program looks bright. Buckman works hard now so that the program can continue to grow and bring success to future poets. It's about growth for Chalfant as well. "It's always a direction of trying to get poetry more in the spotlight," Chalfant says. People don't realize how ingrained poetry is into our society, but the Poet Laureate position is a means to increase that awareness.



Student Kelly Flickinger (left) with her FHSU English instructor, Judy Sansom.

FHSU Comp Student Makes a Difference

by Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy

You can write to fulfill an assignment — and you can write to effect real change. Kelly Flickinger, a student in Judy Sansom's English Composition II class, did both.

When Sansom charged her students with writing an argumentative paper on a locally impactful topic, Flickinger chose a topic close to her heart. Her high school—Wakefield High School in Wakefield, Kansas—was under threat of being shut down.

So Flickinger did her research and crafted a reasoned argument titled "Go

Bombers! The Legacy of Wakefield Must Continue." She submitted her paper early for a grade because of the urgency of her situation: The school board was about to vote on the proposed school closure.

Once she'd revised her paper according to Sansom's feedback, Flickinger sent her argument to three school board members. Imagine her satisfaction when she later learned that the board had voted not to close the school!

Of course, many factors likely led to that decision. But because of her initiative and skill, Flickinger was able to use her writing to join a pressing civic conversation—and be one of those influential factors.



In Memoriam

– A Colleague’s Tribute to Ralph Voss

by Carl Singleton

July 2021 saw the passing of Dr. Ralph Voss (B.A. 1965, M.A. 1967) at age 78. We remember him warmly as a dedicated teacher, a respected scholar and a lifetime friend and graduate of the Fort Hays State University Department of English.

I first met Dr. Voss soon after I came to Hays to teach in the Department of English in 1981. He was by then a fully tenured faculty member at the University of Alabama, but he came home to Kansas for many weeks every summer. Having grown up in Plainville, Kansas, he never removed himself from his birth and identity ties to western Kansas. Soon, he was teaching courses here on the FHSU campus for us in our highly successful Summer M.A. program. This gave him the personal excuse to be in Hays for several weeks each summer – and he most proudly did so!

From the beginning, it was clear that he was a popular and successful teacher among all our students. They repeatedly sought out his classes and always expressed their gratitude for him as an outstanding teacher. His erudite background and never-failing sense of wit and humor served him well as a teacher of the first rank for many decades.

Upon his retirement, he funded a scholarship for FHSU English M.A. students. When he came to town, we in the department always scheduled a lunch or dinner for him and his wife so that all could catch up. Some of his former students were always invited, and they often drove in from places in western Kansas to see him – and to honor him.

Dr. Voss’s record as an academic and a scholar honors the FHSU Department of English. He published two composition textbooks: *Elements of Practical Writing* and *The Heath Guide to College Writing*. He also published *Truman Capote and the Legacy of “In Cold Blood”* and *A Life of William Inge: The Strains of Triumph*. On a personal level, his most recent publication was a book called *C. Diff: Our Gut-Wrenching Road to Recovery*, which he co-authored with his wife, Glenda Weathers.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the Fort Hays State University Foundation, specified for the Ralph F. Voss, Elvon and Ruby Feldkamp English Scholarship, sent to the Robbins Center, One Tiger Place, Hays, Kansas 67601.

The English department was saddened to learn of Christiane “Chris” Luehrs’ passing on July 14, 2022. A full article in tribute to her will appear in the 2023 English Post.

In Memoriam

- Two Former Students' Tribute to Pam Shaffer

by Michelle (Webb) Lingo (B.A. and B.S. '11, M.A. '12)
and Renee (Simon) Schaffer (B.A. '12, M.S.E. '16)

Dr. Pam Shaffer, who retired in 2013 after 36 years of teaching in the FHSU English Department, passed away in July after a short bout with cancer. Dr. Shaffer was known for writing notes using the phonetic alphabet – for weaving witticisms into conversations so seamlessly and masterfully that you often missed them – for an unfathomable intelligence matched with gentle humility.



Those who knew Dr. Shaffer were constantly in awe of her knowledge (she could speak Old English and effortlessly explain *Paradise Lost*), yet she was still exceptionally relatable and able to explain her mind's complexities in ways that were equal parts exhilarating and charming.

Dr. Shaffer's goal in retirement was to edit and publish the letters of her uncle, who was a Catholic priest and missionary. It comes as no surprise that she accomplished that feat, publishing *Letters to Mary: A Missionary Writes Home from New Guinea, 1959–1963* in January 2021 (available for purchase on Amazon or at Hays local bookstores).

The book is about Monsignor Fermin Schmidt, a Capuchin priest and missionary who was promoted to Bishop of Papua New Guinea and would write a letter home each week to his sister Mary. Fermin's letters home describe his encounters with the Papuans, who were among the last isolated stone-age-level tribes of the 20th century – and as such were of great interest to a variety of Christian missionaries and anthropologists. Fermin's letters provide a time capsule of some of these first encounters between two peoples. It's clear why Dr. Shaffer was so eager to publish these letters and make her uncle's historic experience available to a wider audience: Not only a lifelong student of language and its intricacies, Dr. Shaffer was also compelled by the fundamental workings of humanity.

Dr. Shaffer's diverse talents added to her distinctive personality, which her son, Zachary Shaffer, summed up well when he said she possessed the largest functional vocabulary of any person he knew – and could make apple pie with the best crusts imaginable. She was a beloved mentor to all who knew her. She was a devoted leader of the FHSU Writing Center, which served countless students and held some of the most entertaining staff meetings on campus. And she was a true wit, whose passion for learning could never quite be quelled. The world was entirely a better place simply because Dr. Shaffer existed in it, spreading care, cheer and knowledge to all she encountered.

Those who knew her best will recall a frequently used Dr. Shaffer witticism: "Well, excuse me for living." And live, she did.

*Memorial contributions are suggested to the Fort Hays State University Foundation,
specified for the Pamela Shaffer Scholarship, sent to the Robbins Center,
One Tiger Place, Hays, Kansas 67601.*

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FACULTY UPDATES

Lexey Bartlett has served as Writing Center Director since 2018, and in spring 2020, she and the staff took the Writing Center completely online for the first time, providing support to the FHSU community during the pandemic-related campus closure. While the Writing Center has reopened on campus, online access continues. She has also been our Sigma Tau Delta Chapter Advisor since 2010 and joined the Sigma Tau Delta International Board in 2013, elected first as High Plains Regent, then as Secretary/Treasurer in 2020 and as Vice President/President Elect at the 2022 Atlanta convention. When she advances in 2024, she will serve as the first President of Sigma Tau Delta's second century. While continuing to teach courses in British literature, she has also developed a course in Literature of Crime, a scholarly area she promotes by chairing the Mystery/Detective Fiction and Disability Studies areas at the Southwest Popular and American Culture Association Conference each year.

As an instructor, **Lisa Bell** focuses on First-Year Composition (FYC) with an emphasis on developmental writing. For the past two years, she has taught the co-requisite Writing Studio and Composition 101 courses as well as Composition 102. In addition to teaching composition, Lisa also helps in the ESL Department when needed. She loves to watch the personal growth of developmental and international students as they find and grow into their own voices. In the coming years, she hopes to use her research and experience to complete her Ph.D. and continue to support students in realizing their potential.

Morgan Chalfant is an instructor who teaches ENG 101 and 102 as well as ENG 449 Writing for Publication. He received his English B.A. (writing) and his English M.A. from Fort Hays State University. He is the author of the horror/thriller novella *Focused Insanity*, and the urban fantasy novels *Ghosts of Glory* and *Infernal Glory*. His horror story "Little Neon" appeared in the Splatterpunk Award-nominated cyberpunk anthology *Crash Code*. His other prose and poetry have appeared in various publications such as *Lovecraft's Disciples*, *Illumen*, *Straylight Magazine*, *Under the Bed E-zine*, *Spine Horror Magazine*, *Oklahoma Pagan Quarterly*, and the anthologies *Dark and Evil*, *13 Postcards from Hell*, *Dark Drabbles #1: Worlds*, *Play: Toy Horror*, and *Parasite Gods*, a cancer charity anthology. In his free time, he likes delving into horror movies, painting miniatures, collecting ancient weapons, practicing martial arts, and maintaining a perpetual love for 1980s pop culture.

Cheryl Duffy is happily up to her eyeballs leading FHSU's Writing Across the Curriculum program. This past spring, WAC hosted consultant Dan Melzer (co-author of *Engaging Ideas: A Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*) for meetings and a mini-conference. WAC also expanded our Writing Tigers awards ceremony to a campus-wide event involving 15 different departments and 47 student writing awards during its first year. She published three chapters in *Critical Thinking and Writing in Psychology* (Kendall Hunt Publishing) and presented at the International Writing Across the Curriculum Conference. As Director of Composition, Cheryl has overseen recent updates of our ENG 101 and 102 syllabus guidelines. She taught a hybrid Summer M.A. course, Grammar for Teachers, and still enjoys teaching first-year composition, Advanced Composition, Theories of Rhetoric and Composition, Professional Editing and Writing Internship.

Sharla Hutchison serves as the Director of the Master of Liberal Studies program. During the past year, she has had fun teaching courses in Victorian Popular Fiction and Literature of the American West. She is currently planning a couple of post-pandemic vacations to different American beaches.

Brett Weaver, who is still originally from Hayling Island, England, only wishes he had more students and more essays ... but as Mick Jagger says, "You can't always get what you want." Speaking of Mick, Weaver is concerned that he is starting to show his age, especially in the hirsuted-head area, so he plans to wear hats more ... or more hats. He has recently completed another article on J.D. Salinger, and it currently shivers with anxiety in the halls of *The Explicator* literary journal. He continues to re-craft screenplays in the hopes of "breaking into Hollywood," but he is also leaning Pisa-like toward writing a children's book ... ostensibly (note the "English Major" word there) for adults. In these "corona-not-the-beer" times, he wishes that those who have not yet found good health to jolly well get along and discover it.

Eric Leuschner is ending his seventh year as English Department Chair, having survived Covid lock-downs and Rarick renovations. Between chair duties and shuttling teens between school activities, he did publish his article "The Literature of Protest and the Consumption of Activism" in JMMLA, which appeared at the end of 2021.

Jason Harper had a busy year serving multiple FHSU departments with international partnership ties (particularly the FHSU/China program) and supervising the faculty teaching English composition, Global Business English courses, computer science courses, and the new UNIV 105 freshman orientation course that we now offer at Sias University in China. On the Hays campus, Jason served on the Goal 5 Strategic Planning Committee and on the OER Committee last year. Jason has been in the Faculty Senate since 2017 and has chaired the Partnerships & Technology Committee. He presented at three conferences and earned a master's degree in Human Resource Management from FHSU. Jason is currently a student in the Higher Education Administration doctoral program at KU.

Perry Neil Harrison recently stepped into the role of Graduate Advisor for the English M.A. program and had a great time leading a new class for the English department, "Robin Hood through the Ages." In addition to his work inside the department, he also had an article exploring the link between J.R.R. Tolkien's outlaw characters and Robin Hood accepted for publication in *Tolkien Studies*. Additionally, he presented essays at several academic conferences, including (but not limited to) the International Congress on Medieval Studies, the Popular Culture Association Conference, and the annual meeting of the Medieval Association of the Midwest. Most importantly, he welcomed his daughter, Mina Joy Harrison, into the world in November 2021. The name is, of course, an homage to Dracula!

Jason Markins is working diligently on completing his dissertation, titled *The Head and the Hand: A Comparative Rhetorical Analysis of Craft, Technology, and Making in The Craftsman (1901-1916) and Make: Magazine (2005-)*. He is adjusting nicely to his second year of teaching for FHSU — and his first in person. This past year he taught several Comp 101 and 102 sections along with ENG 602: Digital Writing and Rhetoric and ENG 603: Technical and Professional Writing. He was recently married in June, and his partner is a psychology professor at Southwestern College. In his free time, he enjoys hiking with his two dogs, Scarlett and Rhys.

Michael Meade retired from FHSU this past May after more than 54 years on campus. He started in the Department of Modern Languages in 1967 and later transferred to English. He is remembered for his generous support of the arts and his love of dogs, which prompted him to fund multiple scholarships for students working with the Western Plains Animal Refuge. (He requested no full article announcing his retirement.)

Matthew Smalley enjoys the opportunity to teach a wide variety of American literature courses at FHSU. Recently, he's published articles on both Toni Morrison and Herman Melville, and he's at work on his current book project, *Resistance and the Sermon: The Cultural Work of Literary Preaching from Emerson to Morrison*. When not engaged in scholarly activity, Matthew enjoys traveling to US cities, spending time with his family, exploring national parks, and fly fishing.

Camilo Peralta wrote his dissertation on *Russell Kirk and the Moral Imagination* and recently completed his doctorate from Faulkner University. In December he took four students on a trip to the William Inge Center in Independence, Kansas. Within the department, he teaches English Comp I and II as well as world literature — both the undergraduate course and ENG 693 Studies in World Literature: Global Post-Colonial Literature for the Summer M.A. program. On a personal note, he enjoys traveling with his wife to Kansas City to meet up with family from Chicago, and he's a self-proclaimed Star Trek nerd (and might or might not have a model of the starship Enterprise atop a file cabinet in his office).

Sharon Graham teaches both face-to-face and online composition classes. She especially enjoys the opportunity to work with the diverse student population that online teaching provides. Although Sharon misses being able to travel to China to work with Chinese English teachers in her previous role as Director of EFL Curriculum in connection with one of FHSU's partner schools, she will confess she doesn't miss the long airplane rides or constant repacking of suitcases. She does stay in touch with Chinese colleagues and friends and hopes to someday visit China again when the world is a bit calmer. In the meantime, she has been applying her background in ESL to teaching a weekly community English class at Hays Public Library. She also presented at the 2022 TESOL Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, this past spring.

Sharon Wilson recently received her forty-year pin for teaching at FHSU. In 2021, *Kansas English* published her book review of *Punching the Air*, a young adult novel written by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam. She submitted a proposal for a breakout session at the KATE Conference. Although the proposal, "The Transformative Power of Young Adult Literature: Addressing Hate Crimes Directed at Asian Americans," was accepted, she withdrew because the conference was held face to face. She is revising the proposal to submit as an article for publication. She enjoys working with and preparing students to be teachers in an increasingly demanding field.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Mar (Moore) Sarratt

ALUMNI UPDATES



JOSE ANAYA

Volunteering, educating and inspiring – alumnus Jose “Fred” Anaya is looking forward to continuing his work as a 7th grade Honors English and AVID teacher at Horace Good Middle School in Garden City, Kansas. Anaya won a Book Love grant this past year, allowing him the opportunity to enrich his students’ learning with books related to diversity – including books related to refugees, BIPOC experiences, disabilities, LGBTQ+ history and issues, and more. “This has been one of my main goals, ever since I first started teaching,” Anaya says. “When I was first told about winning the grant, I felt a sense of accomplishment as a teacher to be able to pass along new opportunities to my students.”

He also plans to pursue his master’s degree and begin work in the ESL field. Anaya appreciates his time at FHSU and how it challenged him to become a “better writer, a better communicator and overall, a better leader,” he remarks. “I use my degree daily because to be an effective educator, you need to have those three skills, and you need to pass them on to your students.”

The BRICKHOUSE Day Spa

Alumna Vanessa (Beilman) Schumacher’s time since graduation has been full of adventure. After her graduation, Schumacher taught at Thomas More Prep-Marian – a position she was offered due to her work as a student-teacher through FHSU – teaching English and journalism. Following her time at TMP, Schumacher began teaching at Hays High School, where she has now taught 9th and 10th grade Honors English for five years.

Recently, Schumacher ventured into the business world. In 2021, The Brickhouse Day Spa opened on Main Street in Hays. “When I had the opportunity as an investor to purchase the building downtown, I knew exactly who I wanted to go into business with – my sister.” Together they operate the spa.

Schumacher says that even as she branches out, her time at FHSU remains with her, her degree helping even in her business venture. “I still use my English degree to help as a co-owner of the spa,” she says. “I run most of the marketing and social media – and we all know how important grammar is there!”

VANESSA SCHUMACHER



Vanessa (left) is pictured with her sister



KELLY JACQUES

Life for Alumna Kelly (Chrisman) Jacques is full of balancing publications from all six state universities in Kansas as Managing Director of the University Press of Kansas (UPK) in Lawrence, Kansas.

“We publish approximately 45 new titles annually,” Jacques says, “and in addition to overseeing the daily on-site operations at the Press, I’m also the managing editor.” She plans on continuing her work at the Press, expressing that she is extremely grateful to work in an environment where she can learn from her esteemed colleagues and grow as an editor and publishing professional.

“As an editor, I use the foundational writing skills that I learned at FHSU. The courses within the Writing Concentration are especially applicable to my profession,” Jacques notes. “My Bachelor of Arts degree made me a competitive candidate for the student production assistant position that I successfully landed at UPK.”

For Jacques, there is no rush in deciding what the future holds. “Career aspirations are important in propelling us forward to our next opportunities, but a healthy work-life balance is also essential to our personal successes,” she says. “I always look forward to spending time with my family – with springtime comes plenty of opportunities for adventuring outdoors with my husband and our three children.”



SHEENA HERANDEZ

Her time at Fort Hays State University is something Hernandez cherishes. She shared her story of coming to FHSU, and how it has shaped her:

“It seems both just yesterday and a lifetime ago. I was a transfer student to FHSU; I started my education at a different college and then got married and moved to Kansas, hundreds of miles away from home. My very first interaction with a member of the department was with Dr. Cheryl Duffy. I remember sitting in my then-dorm room, speaking to someone on the phone I’d never even seen, and feeling less nervous with each passing minute.

“She took great care of the introverted 20-year-old. I hadn’t anticipated actually enjoying the department or making lasting connections....I was transferring to finish my degree. However, I was pleasantly surprised; my experience with the rest of the department was no different. I worked for Pamela Shaffer in the Writing Center honing my English skills; I spent 3 years working for Linda Leiker as a student assistant working on office management skills (though I still haven’t mastered the paper cutter). I learned so much in my experiences there and really felt like a member of the group. I’ve never regretted transferring. Now, I have a career they very much prepared me for.”

Sheena Hernandez is a well-established alumna. Her time after FHSU has been spent changing students’ perspectives as a teacher and aiding her faculty during her time as both the Communications Division Chair and Technology Department Chair at Garden City Community College. Hernandez has been teaching for twelve years, covering a wide range of courses in literature and writing. “I love creating new classes and am constantly revamping classes I’ve taught before,” Hernandez says. “Keeping myself interested translates to keeping my students interested.”

Hernandez recently stepped down from her chair position after serving for four years. “During my time as chair, I most enjoyed encouraging the growth of and advocating for my faculty,” Hernandez says. The change in position has her excited about new possibilities “Now I have more time to work within my home department to create and facilitate new projects and try new ideas with my classes. I can serve with my peers in a different capacity.”

ΣΤΔ members travel down South to represent the Rho Psi Chapter

This past March, members of the Rho Psi chapter of the Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, for the annual international convention. Accompanied by the chapter’s sponsors, Dr. Lexey Bartlett and Lisa Bell, FHSU’s Rho Psi chapter had 11 students who attended: Sam Ayers, Rachel Beck, Tanner Callis, Hannah Eller, CJ Gibson, Laurel Haley, Josie Hemphill, Eric McFarlane, Katie Modlin, Kati Rivera and Taylor Vredenburg.

Seven Rho Psi members presented their own written work. The students who presented at the convention were Sam Ayers, Tanner Callis, Laurel Haley, Josie Hemphill, Eric McFarlane, Katie Modlin and Taylor Vredenburg.

With written pieces ranging from an essay on Covid-19’s effect to a student’s original poetry, Rho Psi truly displayed the writing talent the English department has to offer. Eric McFarlane, Rho Psi’s 2021-2022 President, describes the convention as “an amazing opportunity to travel and meet with others who share our literary passions.”

Perhaps most exciting, our own Dr. Lexey Bartlett was elected as Vice President/President elect of Sigma Tau Delta. Expect to hear more on that topic in next year’s *English Post!*

Meanwhile, contact Dr. Lexey Bartlett or go to www.english.org for more information regarding Sigma Tau Delta and its mission.



Members of ΣΤΔ enjoy dinner together

The Welcoming Professors of FHSU's English Department

Coming into the English Department as a sophomore, I feared I would struggle to connect with my professors. To my relief, I was quickly welcomed into the department and had no trouble feeling comfortable. The consensus among students is that the English Department is full of friendly professors.

What makes a professor approachable?

"I really appreciate all my professors, all their kindness and efforts to let me improve my English skills and let me feel closer to the culture," says Xingyu "Kelly" Wang, an international student from China. She believes she has changed in positive ways since coming to FHSU, partially because of help from her professors.

Jewel Dinsmore got used to FHSU as a freshman through the approachability of professors. For Jewel, class sizes are much larger than she was used to in high school, but professors still do a great job of helping students and keeping them engaged.

Anthony Strickling recognizes his professors' accommodations and the support they gave him to continue with the English department in the graduate program. "It's a little hard to narrow down the list because the English professors I have worked with have been very friendly, approachable and accommodating," Strickling says.

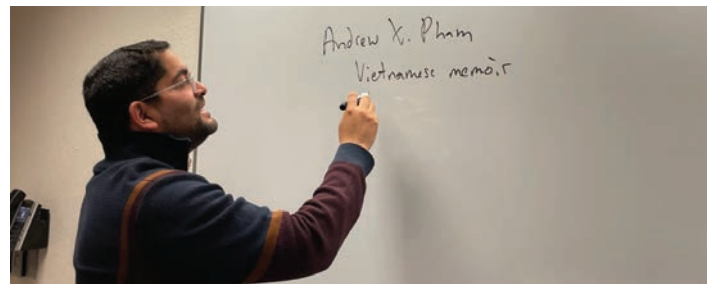
What makes you an approachable professor?

Dr. Camilo Peralta was among the professors mentioned for their approachability. Students recognize Peralta for his communication outside of the classroom. He openly engages students who are not in his classes and has candy on his desk for students who visit his office. Peralta promotes in-class engagement by providing extra credit to students who volunteer to read aloud.

He keeps an eye out for talented writers and encourages publication or presentation of their work. Peralta notes that publication is less likely

for undergraduate writing, so he has taken a group of students to the birthplace of playwright William Inge and is now working on co-writing papers on their studies to raise their chances of undergraduate publication.

"I always try to remember that I was a student too, once," says Peralta. He looks back to his own experience as an undergraduate to understand the support students need, and he always encourages his students to take the first step to approach him.



Dr. Peralta sharing about world literature

Another name students repeated is Dr. Matthew Smalley, whom they recognize for his friendliness both in and out of the classroom. Smalley recognizes that classes work best when the students and the professor work as a team. He delights in seeing his students outside of the classroom and has an open library for them.

"It's a lot more comfortable to talk about the parts of a metaphor than it is to talk about whether Toni Morrison has something to teach us," Smalley says. "I think it's important to make space for students if they want to, to ask questions about the text."

Smalley does his best to be understanding of the situations students are in, while still maintaining high expectations. "I think I'll always err on the side of kindness and approachability," he says. Smalley believes students can sense when people are enthusiastic about what they're teaching and the task of teaching, and he hopes that's something his students have felt in their time with him.

Students mention Dr. Pauline Scott as a helpful and understanding instructor. Scott believes that



Dr. Smalley's ENG 652 Transcendentalism class transcending the classroom on the quad

English majors are excellent at engaging within the class, so she finds ways to open discussions to allow more students a chance to speak. She also recognizes students may be introverted and understands that sometimes just listening is enough. She supports student organizations outside of the classroom by attending their events.



Dr. Scott discussing *Breath, Eyes, Memory* with a student in her ENG 693 Global Women's Issues class

Scott wants to learn students' names quickly to engage them beyond a simple greeting in the hallway. She finds value in including students in conversations with other faculty members. "I think it's important to model that faculty share with one another our research, and our teaching, and our ideas about classes," she says.

Scott believes this sharing creates an environment where ideas are always at the forefront. She sees a balance between getting to know her students and respecting their privacy. She tries to create spaces where students feel safe and comfortable sharing.

Students also recognize Dr. Lexey Bartlett as a welcoming instructor within the department. Bartlett sets up in-class discussions so students can give their questions or comments before class so she can guide the lesson to fit the students' needs. She finds that teaching two required majors courses allows students to become more familiar with her, ask her more questions and discuss with her.

Bartlett smiles often, and she remembers people's names, so they feel welcome. "I'm not sure [kindness] is always something we consciously do to make people feel able to approach us," says Bartlett. She encourages students to get involved in departmental activities like Sigma Tau Delta, where students and professors can get to know one another.



Dr. Bartlett working with a Writing Center student employee

Despite a full range of personalities, every professor in the English department – not just those mentioned here – maintains a welcoming environment in and out of the classroom. Incoming English majors are sure to find great professors who care about their success.



ABOUT THE WRITER

Danny Sleight is a senior English major working on a Literature Concentration. Danny plans to pursue an M.S. in Instructional Design.

DEDICATION TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ADDS THREE NEW COMMEMORATIVE SCHOLARSHIPS

by Mar (Moore) Sarratt

The Fort Hays State University English department is never short on supporting its students. Numerous scholarships have been a hallmark of the department for years, ranging from the Western Kansas-based Lloyd Oswald Scholarship to the Brett Weaver/Linda Smith Writing Concentration Scholarship (with included Hawaiian shirt).

The department has introduced several new scholarships for the upcoming semesters. These scholarships were made available to students starting spring 2022. Each scholarship commemorates the life of its eponym, memorializing them for generations of students to come.

Pamela Kathryn Shaffer, known to friends and colleagues as “Pam,” was a faculty member at her alma mater, Fort Hays State University, until her retirement in 2013, following 36 years of teaching. Shaffer was well known for her time directing the FHSU Writing Center, a position where she enjoyed shaping future tutors and helping students improve their writing.



The Pamela Shaffer Scholarship was created upon her passing, dedicated to graduate students pursuing a degree in English.

The scholarship is non-renewable, with its expected disbursement yet to be announced. Shaffer’s scholarship is welcomed among the many departmental scholarships. Her scholarship, founded by her husband (pictured here), Warren Shaffer, will continue her mission of shaping and uplifting the next generation of English enthusiasts.



Eleanor Bogart
(above)



Wilda Smith
(right)

Eleanor Anne Bogart was a well-respected figure in the Hays community. Known for her passion for and dedication to the written arts, Bogart founded her scholarship in tandem with her lifelong partner, Wilda Smith, before their passing. Bogart’s family had a long-standing closeness with Fort Hays State University. Her mother taught English and French at the university, her brother also attended and Bogart herself graduated with her bachelor’s in English from FHSU in 1954. Bogart’s most significant memory, which she often recounted, was her publication in the *New York Times*, “I Knew Someday I’d Be a Star.” The article discussed her time as an actress in the movie *Paper Moon*.

The Bogart Scholarship is fully funded and was released to students in the spring 2022 semester. The distribution amount is yet to be announced. This scholarship will be available for graduate students and is non-renewable. Bogart’s passion for the arts, especially the written word, will be continued with each scholarship awarded.

Many in the department, including alumni as well as current students and professors, are sadly aware of Alexis-Athena Wyatt's story. She graduated from Fort Hays State University shortly before her passing at age 22. Alexis-Athena was well-loved by her friends and family and was known during her time on campus for her bright, open attitude. Wyatt had served as president of the Delta Omega sorority chapter, was an often-recommended writing consultant at the Writing Center and played an active part in many on-campus organizations and groups. Alexis-Athena planned to pursue a career in teaching. Many faculty members have noted what an exceptional teacher she would have been.



Alexis-Athena is pictured here with her fiancé, Justin Montney.

When she passed, the Rho Psi Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society created the Alexis-Athena Wyatt Scholarship with an initial donation of \$3000 for undergraduate English students. Additional contributions from the English department faculty and a close friend of Alexis-Athena brought the total donated to \$6400. Additional contributions this past spring brought the scholarship to full endowment level.

Dr. Lexey Bartlett, Chapter Leader for Sigma Tau Delta, expresses gratitude for the donations received and notes: "We also wanted to make it an endowed scholarship so that it would be given every year in perpetuity in her memory. Endowed scholarships require initial funding of \$10,000 before they can be distributed, so we hope that others will be inspired to give in her memory."

The scholarship will be available for English undergraduate students who maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. This requirement reflects Alexis-Athena's own high achievements as an Honors College graduate.

For more information about Sigma Tau Delta and their involvement with the scholarship, contact Dr. Lexey Bartlett, High Plains Regent of Sigma Tau Delta. For donations: Please make any donations directly to the FHSU Foundation and include a note designating the Alexis-Athena Wyatt Scholarship.

2022-2023 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

<p>English Freshman Honors Scholarship Jessie Smith Merranda Dixon-Philips Allison Weber Rylie Curry</p>	<p>English Development Fund Scholarship Katalina Rivera</p>	<p>Roberta Stout Memorial Scholarship Margaret Savage Emma Pfannenstiel</p>	<p>English Department Scholarship Riley Brungart Elizabeth Clingan Cambree Koehen Elizabeth Leck Elizabeth Leiker McKenna McBride Kensley Roberts</p>
<p>Non-Traditional Student English Award William Brown</p>	<p>Elizabeth Jane "Betty" (Nee Moore) Lenz Scholarship Hope Lubbers</p>	<p>Eleanor Bogart English Scholarship Tanner Callis</p>	
<p>Graduate Student English Award Blake Regnier</p>	<p>Lloyd Oswald Scholarship Fund Kinsey Barton Genesis (Schmutz) Brown Angie Koons Alissa Rehmert Maleigha Siglinger-Albers</p>	<p>Brett Weaver/Linda Smith Writing Concentration Scholarship Mariah (Moore) Sarratt Taygan McBurney</p>	<p>The Ralph E. Voss, Elvon & Ruby Feldkamp English Scholarship Genesis (Schmutz) Brown</p>
<p>Alice McFarland English Scholarship Hannah Eller</p>		<p>Kay Gilmore Memorial Scholarship Taylor Vredenburg</p>	<p>Michael Marks Literature Scholarship Katalina Rivera</p>



Wagoner has been teaching in USD #489 for 30 years.

MASTERFUL EDUCATOR

FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY ALUMNA

KATHY WAGONER EARNS KANSAS MASTER

TEACHER AWARD by Mar (Moore) Sarratt

Kathy Wagoner's passion for teaching comes from a lifetime of adoration for her field. "What led me to teaching – it's in my blood. Teaching is not what I do; it is who I am," Wagoner says. "Since childhood, I have always wanted to teach."

In 2020, Fort Hays State University alumna Kathy Wagoner won the Kansas Master Teacher Award. Teachers from across the state who demonstrate an exceptional ability to connect with students and aid their learning have been nominated annually since the creation of the award in 1954.

To be eligible for nomination, a teacher must have a minimum of seven years of teaching experience in a Kansas K-12 school. The goal of the Kansas Master Teacher award is to acknowledge the individual teachers who have made a substantial impact on Kansas students, fostering a better relationship with learning and among students. Wagoner exceeds these expectations.

Wagoner prides herself on her closeness with and ability to adapt to her students. She strives to understand her students beyond who they are in the classroom, noting that the critical quality of a Master Teacher lies in their ability to work with students. "What do I consider qualities?" Wagoner asks. "First and foremost, showing respect for others, especially students, for they also have struggles in their daily lives. Then knowing how to work with students in achieving the learning goals that you have determined they need."

This ethic shows in the comments made by students who nominated her. An article announcing her award quotes one such student: "It's not just how great a teacher she is that makes her worthy of this award; it's how great of a person she is. Her passion and mindset is inspiring and unmatched. The way she teaches is unique and from her heart."

That same article describes Wagoner as "a life-long learner, studying for two degrees, earning National Board Certification three times, serving in multiple leadership roles, and serving students in her classroom for 29 years."

Wagoner attended Fort Hays State University for her master's degree, graduating in 1999 and continuing her career as an English teacher at Hays High School. She also works with Fort Hays State University to teach dual-credit English Composition for students at Hays High, allowing them advanced opportunities for college credits.

Wagoner cites her time at Fort Hays State University as a driving force behind her professional development. "What I learned during my master's program at FHSU has helped me find more relevant material and strategies to use within my classroom. It also gave me a network of professionals I can access to develop in-depth lessons."

While the 2020 Kansas Master Teacher Awards ceremony was postponed due to COVID-19 complications, Wagoner will attend this year's ceremony to receive her well-deserved award.

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS!

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