

# THE INTERLOCUTOR

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024

## THE YEAR OF LIGHT AT SEAVER

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"YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. A CITY ON A HILL  
CANNOT BE HIDDEN." —MATTHEW 5:14

## A NOTE FROM THE DEAN.

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

As we reflect on the 2023-2024 academic year, I am filled with gratitude for our community's commitment to being lights in the world, inspired by the biblical verse, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Our theme has guided us in every endeavor, illuminating our classrooms, our campus, and beyond.

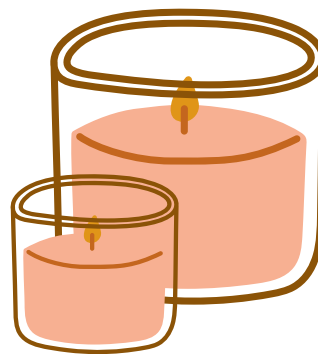
I am profoundly thankful for our dedicated faculty and staff in the Humanities and Teacher Education Division. Their unwavering commitment to nurturing and guiding our students has been a beacon of inspiration. They have tirelessly worked to help students discover their vocations and passions, fostering an environment where each individual can shine brightly. Our faculty's commitment to excellence and their role as mentors have made a significant impact, shaping not only the minds but also the hearts of our students. Their efforts have ensured that our graduates are not only well-prepared for their careers but are also compassionate and thoughtful individuals ready to contribute positively to the world.

Throughout the year, we have witnessed countless examples of our division's light shining in various activities and achievements that you will see in this newsletter. From thought-provoking lectures and innovative research to the numerous heartwarming ways we supported one another through a year filled with unforgettable tragedies – the HUTE Division has shined brightly!

As we look forward to the future, let us continue to embrace our role as lights in the world, guiding and inspiring those around us. Go Waves!

With gratitude,

Dr. Stella Erbes  
Divisional Dean of Humanities and Teacher Education



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### CREATIVE WRITING



*Expressionists* launches in Spring 2024 in Payson Library's Surfboard Room. Editor Ray Imes reads before an audience. Imes, a Creative Writing major, graduated magna cum laude in April.

"MAN READING SHOULD BE  
MAN INTENSELY ALIVE. THE  
BOOK SHOULD BE A BALL  
OF LIGHT IN ONE'S HAND."

~Ezra Pound



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### CREATIVE WRITING (CONT'D)



Graduating Creative Writing majors Taryn Navia, Ray Imes, Garrett Le, and Rachele Aurino at the HUTE Reception.

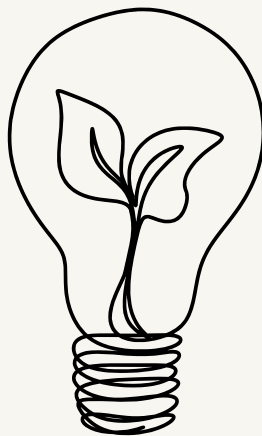
CONGRATULATIONS,  
WRITERS!

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### TEACHER EDUCATION & LIBERAL STUDIES FOR EDUCATION



On September 11, students enjoy the Gardeners of Potential event, aligned with the theme of educators as seed-planters. They plant succulents, make bracelets, eat snacks, and hear from a current student, an alumnus, and Dr. Carrie Wall-- all about our teacher preparation program

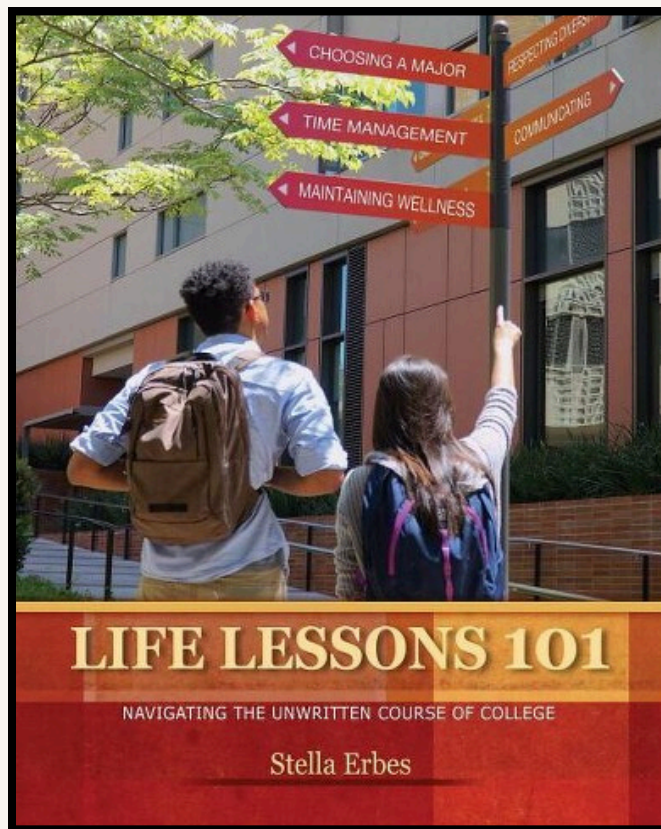


In the fall, Dr. Carrie Birmingham hosts the annual cultural potluck, a kickoff for her class EDUC 465 "Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms."

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### TEACHER EDUCATION & LIBERAL STUDIES FOR EDUCATION (CONT'D)

In October, divisional dean Dr. Stella Erbes presents her book *Lessons 101: Navigating the Unwritten Course of College* for the Pepperdine Parents Program.



Senior RJ Wicks is selected as the student representative to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. He attends and contributes to CCTC meetings in Sacramento as a non-voting member. Wicks is a Posse Scholar and Political Science major. Here he is teaching first grade at Malibu Elementary.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### TEACHER EDUCATION & LIBERAL STUDIES FOR EDUCATION (CONT'D)

In December, Emily Audras, Thea Reagan, and Paige Tattersall complete their teaching credentials, and in the spring, Rylee Salot, Amani Pearson, Rebecca Jackson, Sophia Kouretas, and RJ Wicks (on the screen) complete theirs.



Former Education faculty Dr. Elizabeth Yomantas and her husband Eric successfully adopt two children--Akua Afriyie and Zakaria. They live in New Jersey, close to Elizabeth's family.

"HOW FAR THAT LITTLE  
CANDLE THROWS HIS  
BEAMS! SO SHINES A GOOD  
DEED IN A WEARY WORLD."

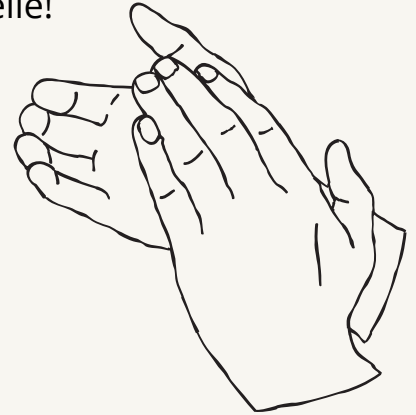
~Shakespeare,  
*Merchant of Venice*

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### TEACHER EDUCATION & LIBERAL STUDIES FOR EDUCATION (CONT'D)



In the spring, faculty Dr. Terelle Sales is elected president of the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE). Here he is pictured (right) with fellow Education faculty at a former conference. Congratulations, Terelle!



CONGRATS,  
EDUCATORS!



Education graduates at the Hute Reception.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### ENGLISH



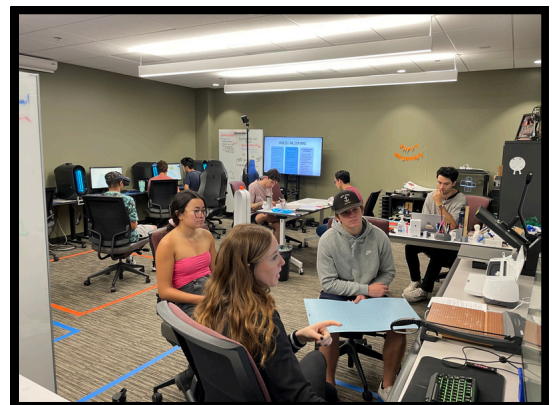
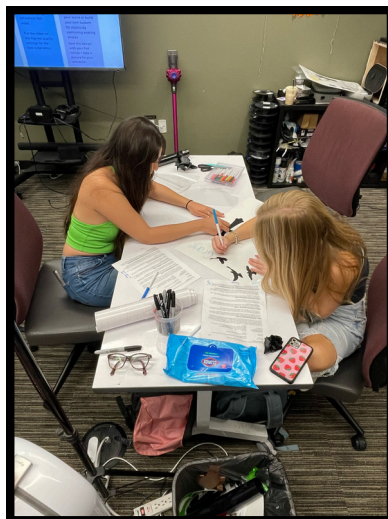
**September 6, 2023**

Dr. Lisa Smith shares from her book *Preaching to the Masses: George Whitefield and the Public Humanities* in the Payson's Surfboard Room.



**October 17, 2023**

Dr. Lisa Smith's *Passion and the Pen: Documents of the First Great Awakening* class visits the Genesis Lab.

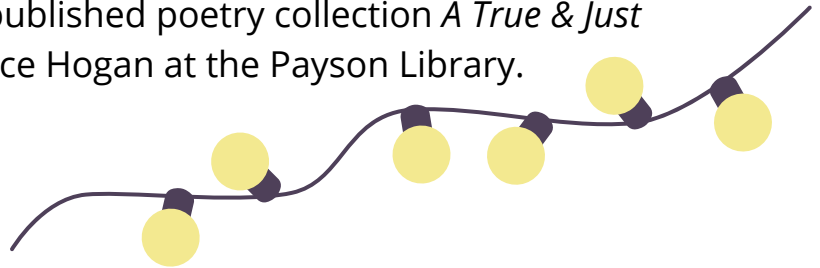


## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### ENGLISH (CONT'D)

**January 30, 2024**

Dr. Kate Bonnici reads from her newly-published poetry collection *A True & Just Record* along with fellow poet Laura Reece Hogan at the Payson Library. Congratulations, Kate!



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### ENGLISH (CONT'D)

**April 17, 2024**

Esteemed English faculty at the annual Sigma Tau Delta induction ceremony. Left to right are Dr. Kate Bonnici, Dr. Maire Mullins, Dr. Lisa Smith, Dr. Jennifer Smith, Dr. chad duffy, Dr. Katie Frye, and Dr. Rachel Gould.



"THERE ARE TWO WAYS OF SPREADING LIGHT: TO BE THE CANDLE OR THE MIRROR THAT REFLECTS IT." ~Edith Wharton



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### ENGLISH (CONT'D)

**Dr. Katie Frye receives tenure.** Congratulations on your tremendous accomplishment, Katie!



"NOTHING CAN DIM THE LIGHT  
THAT SHINES FROM WITHIN."

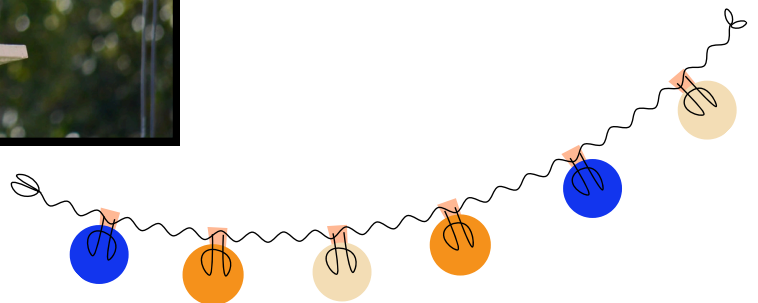
~Maya Angelou

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### ENGLISH (CONT'D)

**April 26, 2024**

English faculty and students gather at the Hute Reception, a celebration of top-tier majors before graduation.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### ENGLISH (CONT'D)



CONGRATS,  
ENGLISH SCHOLARS!

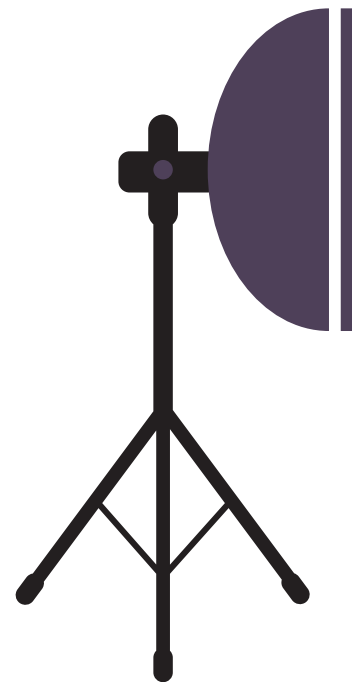


# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

## FILM

### November 2023

Cinematographer John Lindley visits Prof. Patrice Patrick's FILM 200 Intro. to Film Studies as a Distinguished Guest.



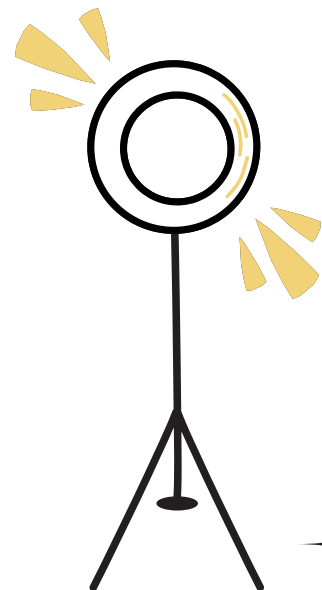
## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### FILM (CONT'D)

During his visit, Lindley explores a range of career highlights over thirty-five years in television and film, sharing cinematic techniques and original storyboards from screenwriter-director Gary Ross' 1998 iconic film *Pleasantville*. Lindley served as the cinematographer and developed unique thematic colorization. Other films include *Father of the Bride* (1991) and *You've Got Mail* (1998).



"HOWEVER VAST THE DARKNESS,  
WE MUST SUPPLY OUR OWN  
LIGHT." ~Stanley Kubrick



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### FILM (CONT'D)

Graduating film studies students present their work at the Senior Exhibition in Elkins Auditorium.



CONGRATULATIONS,  
FILM SCHOLARS!



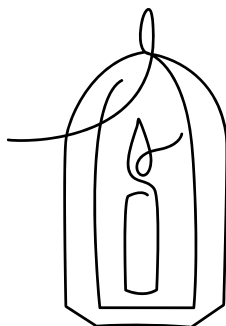
## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### GREAT BOOKS



**Dr. Michael Gose publishes a book on great books.**

*Everyone's Inheritance* explores the universality and diversity of the great books tradition. Congratulations, Michael!



**Dr. Jessica Hooten Wilson reads her new work in the library.**

"Flannery O'Connor's *Why Do the Heathen Rage?*: A Behind the Scenes Look at a Work in Progress," is a literary excavation of the famed novelist's unfinished third novel. Congratulations, Jessica!

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### GREAT BOOKS (CONT'D)

**Dr. Jacqueline Dillion receives tenure.** GB faculty celebrate by gifting her a first edition of the illustrated Thomas Hardy novel, *The Return of the Native*. Congratulations, Jacqueline!



"TO BE INVOLVED WITH BOOKS IS  
TO LIVE AT THE HEART OF LIGHT."

~Mary Cantwell

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### GREAT BOOKS (CONT'D)

#### Other Great Books highlights:

Dr. Johnathan Koch presents on the library's holdings of Milton rare manuscripts, and Dr. Jacqueline Dillion and Dr. John Kern host a virtual student conference on Enduring Questions. Below is a photo of the presenters along with Great Books faculty Dr. Jessica Hooten Wilson, Dr. Michael Gose, Dr. Michael Ditmore, and Dr. Paul Contino.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### GREAT BOOKS (CONT'D).

**The Great Books Banquet.** The program holds a banquet for students completing four semesters. The students write reflections of wisdom for future GB participants. Here are a few excerpts!

"IF YOU CAN THINK OF A TIME IN YOUR LIFE WHEN A CONCEPT FROM **THE BOOK** COULD HAVE HELPED YOU MAKE A DECISION OR WHEN A CONCEPT COULD HAVE APPLIED TO YOUR LIFE, THAT WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND IT SO MUCH BETTER."

"...IF YOU STICK WITH **GREAT BOOKS**, YOU WILL BE BETTER FOR IT, ALMOST NO MATTER WHAT YOU WANT TO DO IN LIFE."

"WHILE **GREAT BOOKS** HAS CHALLENGED ME ON AN INTELLECTUAL LEVEL, IT HAS, MORE IMPORTANTLY, FORCED ME TO EXAMINE MY SOUL."



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### GREAT BOOKS (CONT'D)

**The Great Books Banquet.** Dr. Paul Contino celebrates with a Great Books graduate.



CONGRATULATIONS,  
GREAT BOOKS  
SCHOLARS!

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

## HISTORY

### September 2023

Chumash artist and cultural educator Carmen Sandoval unveils her new artistic project at Payson library. Her art is rooted in Chumash tradition, craftsmanship, and integrity.



### September 2023

Students in Phi Alpha Theta and Dr. Sharyl Corrado's HIST 415 class visit the Getty Center in Brentwood. They enjoy a 19th century art scavenger hunt and a spotlight tour of Millet's "Man With a Hoe."



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

## HISTORY (CONT'D)

### January 2024

The Pepperdine History Program is well represented at the AHA and ASCH annual meetings in San Francisco. Dr. Nicole Gilhuis, Dr. Tuan Hoang, Dr. Jonathan Riddle, and Dr. Megan Kendrick all participate in the events.

A number of students present, and a memorable moment is Senior Alyssa Medina participating in an undergraduate panel and speaking about her research on the Chicano movement.



"HISTORY IS A LIGHT THAT  
ILLUMINATES THE PAST, AND A  
KEY THAT UNLOCKS THE DOOR  
TO THE FUTURE". ~Runoko Rashidi

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### HISTORY (CONT'D)



#### March 2024

Students in Dr. Megan Kendrick's California History course visit the historic plaza in downtown Los Angeles. Students make connections between L.A. landmarks and course readings about immigration, discrimination and historic preservation in Southern California.



#### March 2024

Three history students present the results of their excellent research at the Seaver College Research and Scholarly Achievement Symposium.

Josh Huchel (History) and Evan Pallis (International Studies) present the findings of their independent research supervised by Dr. Sharyl Corrado.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### HISTORY (CONT'D)



#### April 2024

Nine graduating history majors present their senior thesis research in front of a full and engaged audience.

Ariana Badgett presents "Staring Death in the Face: Art vs. Science in Victorian Photographic Depictions of the Dead."



#### April 2024

Outstanding history graduates Hannah Alnemri, Ariana Badgett, Andrew Crandall, Christopher Gallegos, Joseph Heinemann, Joshua Huchel, Alyssa Medina, Reagan Phillips, and Chelsea Taura are honored at the Hute Reception.



# CONGRATULATIONS, HISTORIANS!

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

## MULTICULTURAL THEATRE PROJECT

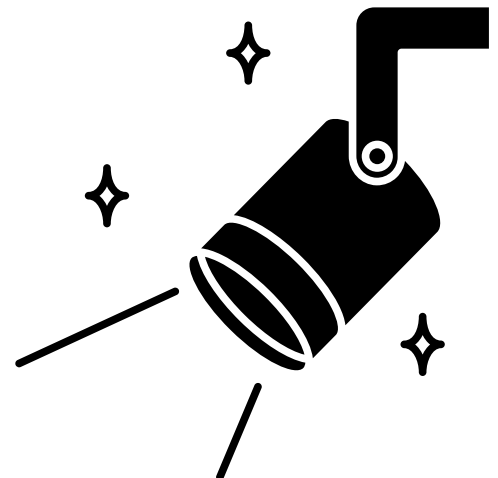
### February 15, 2024 - The Emancipation of Music: From Spirituals to Hip Hop.

This event celebrates the unique musical contributions of African Americans in the United States. It features an intimate conversation with Mathew Knowles, of Music World Entertainment Corporation, architect of the careers of Destiny's Child, Beyoncé Knowles and Solange Knowles and Kenny Lattimore, Grammy Award nominee singer-songwriter.



*At left: Dr. Joi Carr, Creative/Program Director, Multicultural Theatre Project, with Kenny Lattimore, Gardenia Rosario (Seaver student & event emcee), Dr. Mathew Knowles, Chantal Mbayah (Seaver student & event emcee).*

*At right: emcees Rosario and Mbayah.*



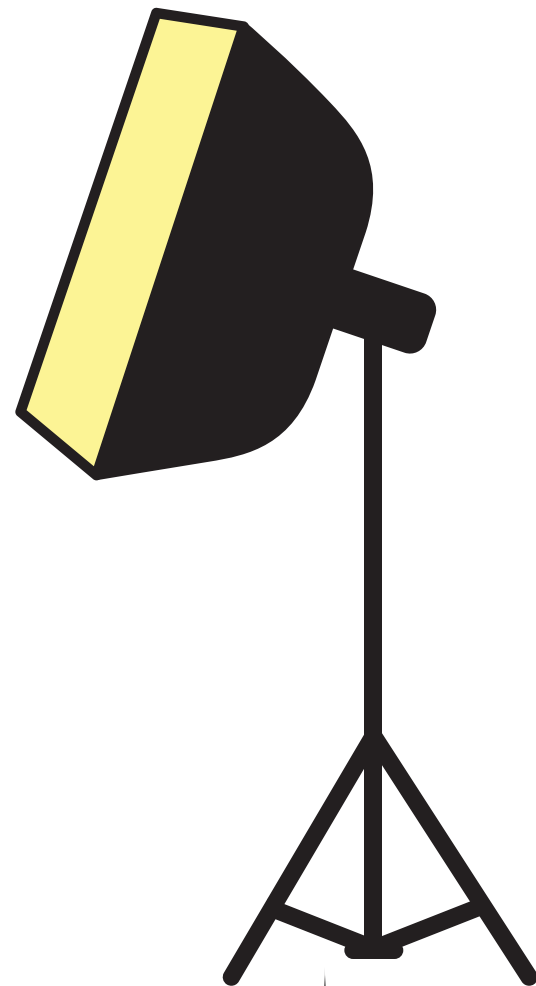
## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### MULTICULTURAL THEATRE PROJECT (CONT'D)

#### March 27, 2024: A Woman Speaks

This event in collaboration with Pepperdine Libraries and the Office of Intercultural Affairs in honor of Women's History Month features reading from poetry, essays, and short stories written by women from diverse backgrounds and includes analytical responses/close reads from Seaver faculty.

The program features L. Scott Caldwell, Tony Award, Obie Award, Helen Hayes Award, and Los Angeles Critic Award winning actor. Caldwell's distinguished career represents roles on Broadway, off Broadway, film, and television, over 100 roles as a series regular, in recurring roles, and guest starring roles.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

### MULTICULTURAL THEATRE PROJECT (CONT'D)

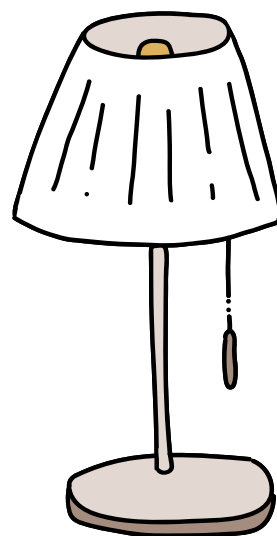
#### March 27, 2024: A Woman Speaks (cont'd)

The program's faculty respondents include Dr. Joi Carr, Dr. Kate Bonnici, Dr. Colin Enriquez, Dr. Jessica Hooten Wilson (not pictured), and Dr. Rachel Gould.



"THERE IS ALWAYS  
LIGHT. IF ONLY  
WE'RE BRAVE  
ENOUGH TO SEE  
IT. IF ONLY WE'RE  
BRAVE ENOUGH  
TO BE IT."

~Amanda Gorman

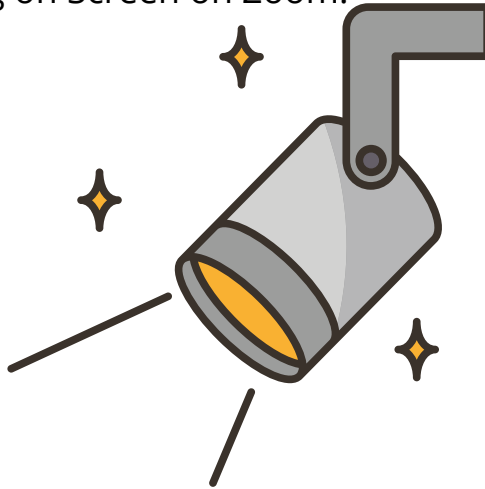


# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

## MFA IN SCREENWRITING

### Fall 2023

The program hosts Chat with Hollywood Pros: Women, DEI, and Belonging on Screen on Zoom.



### March 14, 2024

The Graduate Hiking Pod explores character through Meditations for Screenwriters on the Westward Beach-Point Dume Field Trip. The focus exercise invites participants to engage their protagonists through the four insights of walking the labyrinth, including the positive way (*via positiva*), the negative way (*via negativa*), the creative way (*via creativa*), and the way of transformation (*via transformativa*).



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

## MFA IN SCREENWRITING (CONT'D)

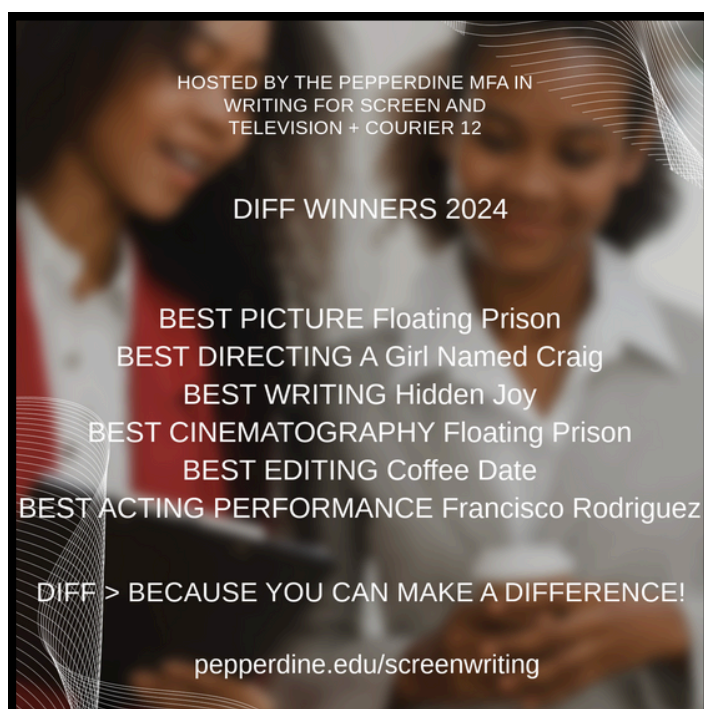


**March 21, 2024**

The program hosts its annual Diversity in Film Festival (DIFF).

"LIGHT A  
 CAMPFIRE AND  
 EVERYONE'S A  
 STORYTELLER."

~John Geddes

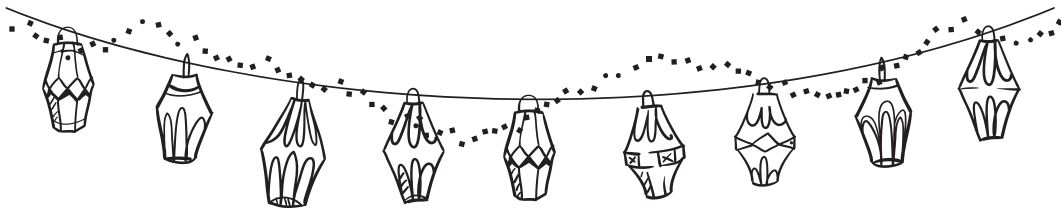


# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

## MFA IN SCREENWRITING (CONT'D)

**April 18, 2024**

The MFA Showcase returns to in-person programming for the first time since COVID at Wilburn Auditorium. It features short films and staged readings of scripts.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS.

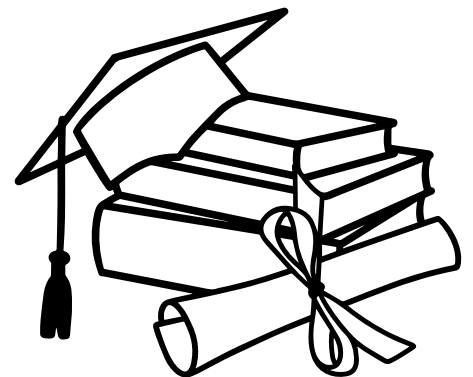
### MFA IN SCREENWRITING (CONT'D)

#### April commencement, 2024

Several MFA students walk the stage. The program features Tierney Leonard, who loves Taylor Swift music and hopes to be as prolific as Shonda Rhimes. They believe she will!



CONGRATS,  
SCREENWRITERS!



## FEATURE 1: ENGLISH 101

### **Creative Approaches to Foundational Writing**

*In her 2020 op-ed piece “How First-Year Comp Can Save the World” for Inside Higher Ed., NYU liberal studies clinical professor Deborah L. Williams explores the benefits of college composition for inspiring well-rounded thinkers. Such a course, she argues, is commendable in its encouragement of diligence and discourse. “Through revisions, conferences and workshops,” she observes, “students learn to step back from themselves and consider the nature of the conversation they are having in their writing and what they want that conversation to accomplish,” skills undoubtedly useful for their futures regardless of career path.*

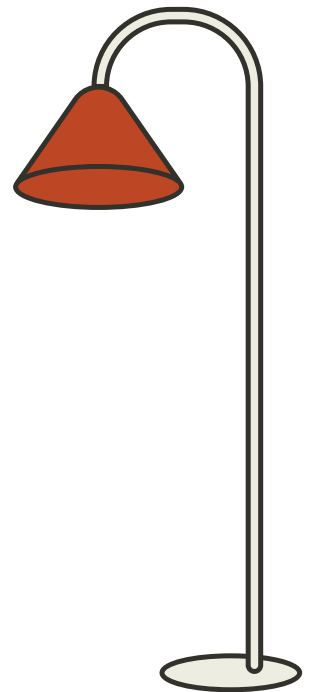
*How are Seaver students engaging in conversation through their writing?*

*The forthcoming reflections from esteemed English 101 faculty offer some insight into the array of opportunities that composition provides.*

\*\*\*

Within the Hute division, English 101 holds a special place as one of the only general education courses that almost every student takes, regardless of major. Directed by Dr. Heather Thomson-Bunn, the program includes faculty from an engaging variety of writing backgrounds (including a disability and social justice advocate, an anime magazine editor, a lawyer, and a playwright among others) and allows space for each professor to offer a unique and distinctive angle on foundational essay-writing.

Below are some insights and anecdotes from faculty teaching the course this year that highlight the opportunities for composition in the hands of creative and well-equipped writing mentors.



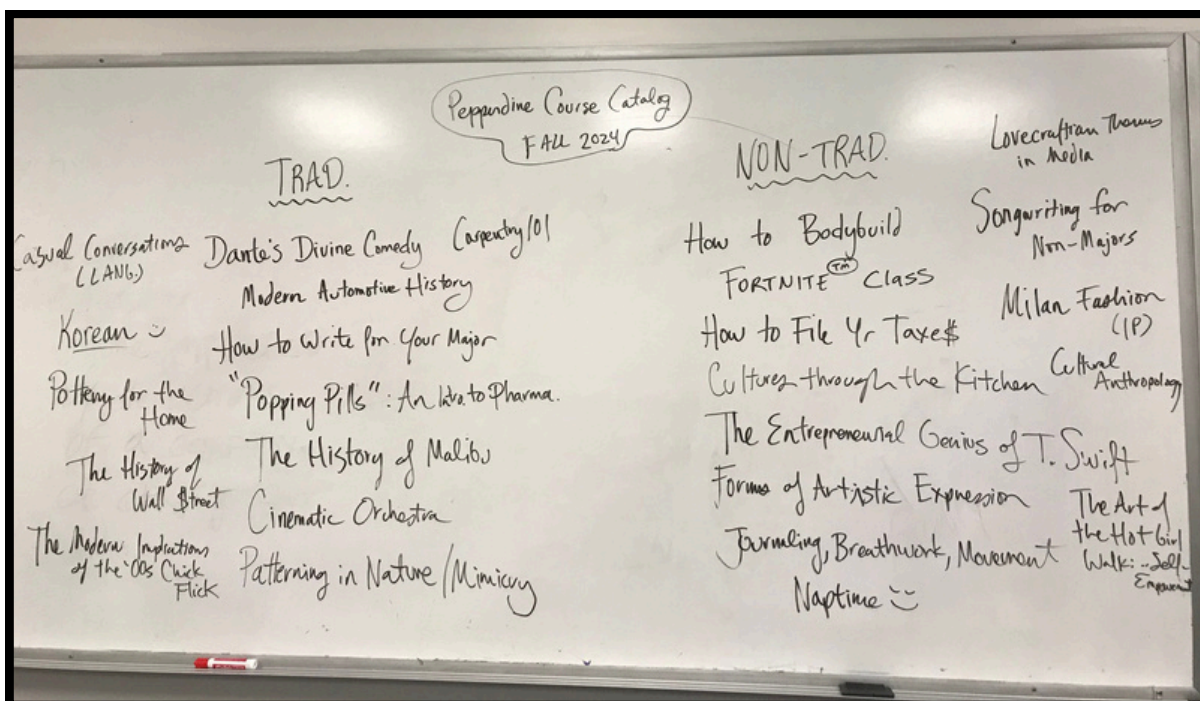
## FEATURE 1: ENGLISH 101 (CONT'D)

### dr. chad duffy: Music in the Room

"Something I've loved about teaching ENG 101 at Pepp is bringing in music into my 8am composition course as objects for our rhetorical analysis. It's really helped get us pumped despite meeting at such an early hour!"

### Prof. Stephanie Donnelly: The "I" in "It"

"For the last few years, I have titled ENG 101 'The 'I' in It'--we discuss our social, cultural, and academic relationships and communities, emphasizing Pepperdine as our 'shared text.' The final research-based writing project asks students to 'create and argue for a new class at Pepperdine.' This assignment builds on their previous work and class conversations, helps them better understand and perhaps invest in their Seaver College education, and keeps the energy up as we conclude our semester. Some recent favorite student 'classes' include 'Lovecraftian Themes in Media,' 'Mimicry and Patterning in Life: A Guide to Survival,' and perhaps inevitably, 'The Economics of Taylor Swift.'"



The featured image is from Prof. Donnelly's composition course brainstorm.

## FEATURE 1: ENGLISH 101 (CONT'D)

### **Prof. Danielle Wagner: An Injury-Inspired Publication**

During the near end of the spring semester, Professor Wagner had a student in her English Composition course who was dirt biking with family on Easter weekend. Tragically, the student's finger was amputated. Professor Wagner aided the student by typing out their self reflection essay in class to accommodate their needs. In a surprising turn of events, after the surgery, the student's surgeon asked about the classes she was taking at Pepperdine. She proudly said she had completed two research papers in her English Composition course. The surgeon offered the student the opportunity to write about her experience with him in a medical journal!

### **Dr. Natalie Meir: Supporting Community**

"It's such a pleasure to see how my English 101 students come together as a supportive community and how, through the assignments, they share what matters to them personally."

An assignment Dr. Meir created this semester was an "Educational Values Analytical Essay," which she calls a "hybrid of a popular culture analysis essay and a research essay."

The stated purpose of the essay is three-fold:

1. to select an educational issue that the student sees represented in popular culture and would like to understand better
2. to research the issue to learn about the opposing viewpoints on it, as well as the larger context
3. to develop an argument about how the student sees the issue represented in a particular piece of popular culture



## FEATURE 1: ENGLISH 101 (CONT'D)

Topics ranged from the challenge of identifying misinformation in the digital age to the impact of the portrayal of student athletes as superheroes to the negative ramifications of the cultural obsession with the dream school.

\*\*\*

***These approaches and experiences in Hute's English composition course reveal the array of opportunities for conversation that the course allows as an introduction to college writing. Further, they demonstrate the benefit of embracing unique faculty skill-sets in general education. Whether students engage in composition amidst a serious medical injury, by composing their own course design, or while enjoying their favorite tunes, they encounter faculty who offer some of their unique selves in the room while encouraging students to do the same on the page.***



## FEATURE 2: PEDAGOGY GROUP

*The following is an interview with Dr. Rachel Gould, creator and leader of the Hute Pedagogy Group. We thought it would be enlightening to feature, as it is a unique series within the division that engages with all majors.*

**Please share a bit about how you started the Pedagogy Group.**

RG: During the 2019-2020 academic year, I was the Graduate Teaching Fellow at the Vanderbilt Center for Teaching, and in my role there, I worked with graduate students who were seeking to refine their teaching practice and trained faculty who were scrambling to move online during the pandemic. I found this work rewarding, and I grew in my own teaching practices through the conversations and observations I led in that position. When I came to Pepperdine, I was consequently eager to find a space where I could continue those conversations. I connected with Chris Heard at the CTE, and he recommended I look for ways to promote these sorts of conversations within the division. Stella graciously agreed to sponsor the group, and I collaborated with Shanna Early during the first year to create the content and lead the meetings. We launched our first meeting in September of 2021.



## FEATURE 2: PEDAGOGY GROUP (CONT'D)

### **Which topic that you've led has been the most exciting or well-received?**

RG: We've had two significant sessions. The first was in February of 2023 when we met to discuss AI and what it might mean in the classroom. We were one of the first groups on campus to have that conversation, so I introduced the group to the emerging information about Chat-GPT and other sites so that we could have a common vocabulary and understanding. We then spent a lot of time brainstorming the pitfalls and potentials AI affords. I heard from colleagues afterwards that that session had been one of the most useful pedagogy sessions they had been to on campus. Our other significant session was in October of 2023. We were scheduled to meet on Oct. 18, and since Stella had shared the news of the tragedy at the HUTE meeting that morning, we all knew we were about to face a significant challenge though we did not yet know who had died or how it would impact our classes. So I pivoted. I provided faculty with a list of tools and strategies that varied in terms of the labor and type of intervention that they could employ in their classes. That day, the Pedagogy Group gave us a space to process together and to anticipate the challenges that were forthcoming so that we could respond with care and compassion for our students rather than simply react to the hard situation in which we found ourselves.

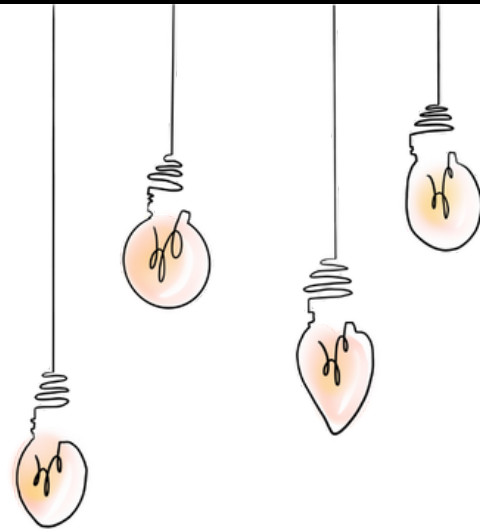


## FEATURE 2: PEDAGOGY GROUP (CONT'D)

**This group is unique within the division in that it invites faculty from all majors. How does this context impact your planning and/or the meetings?**

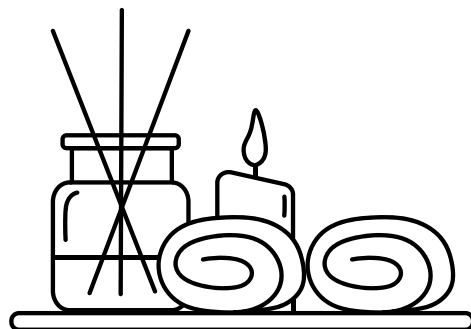
RG: I think the interdisciplinary nature of this group is critical because it helps us to stay focused on the teaching questions rather than getting bogged down in the particulars of the content, and it also allows us to see a common teaching problem from different angles. While most disciplines do have what's called a "signature pedagogy," the best college educators use techniques and evidence-based methods that span disciplines. While I was working at Vanderbilt's CFT, I was fortunate to work alongside faculty from chemistry, political science, math, and Spanish, and I learned from them how to discuss method rather than content so that I could observe a graduate student teaching biology or history and still give effective feedback about my peer's teaching. I have drawn from those experiences here. The teaching challenges and questions that we have rarely are defined by our disciplines, so I prepare for our meetings by checking in with faculty in each of our majors to see what issues they are confronting in their teaching, and typically, the responses overlap. I then check the current research on that issue and compile resources to share and provide discipline-specific content as I think it might be helpful.

***We are grateful to Rachel for spearheading this series and look forward to what the future holds!***



## FEATURE 3: THE HEALTH HUMANITIES

*The following is an essay written by Dr. Jonathan Riddle, who is designing a health humanities minor for Seaver students.*



So much of the experience of sickness takes place in the dark and away from view, whether we are comforting a feverish child deep in the night, visiting a parent who can no longer leave the house, or hiding our symptoms to avoid awkward conversations. The health humanities, however, seeks to shed light on these experiences by using the methodologies and insights of our disciplines to understand this fundamental aspect of the human condition.

This interdisciplinary field is for everyone, as we will all suffer illness and we will all tend to others in their suffering. Moreover, as we saw in the COVID-19 pandemic, diseases have social, cultural, and political realities that implicate us all, no matter our status or wellbeing.

The health humanities are growing rapidly in undergraduate education, expanding from 12 programs in 2000 to 140 programs in 2022, with an additional seven currently in development. This twelvefold increase appears to be revitalizing the humanities more broadly. According to a recent assessment of the field by Princeton University historian of medicine Keith Wailoo, “This remarkable growth offers a counterpoint to narratives of decline in the humanities.”

I believe it would serve our students, our division, and our college to join this burgeoning movement by launching a health humanities program—most likely a minor. Such a program would show students how to approach health, illness, and caregiving with broader awareness, deeper insights, and greater compassion. Furthermore, by showcasing the power of our disciplines to illuminate every aspect of life, the health humanities might draw more students to HUTE division classes. Finally, the health humanities promise to create a channel through which Seaver College might connect and collaborate with the new College of Health Sciences.

Right now, I am continuing to work with interested faculty and Associate Dean Paul Begin on developing a health humanities program. If you are interested in participating, please let me know: I would love to help you dream up relevant courses in your discipline—courses that promise to fill up semester after semester.

***We are grateful to Jonathan for sharing his inspired vision!***



## FEATURE 4: REMEMBERING ASHA WEIR & THE FOUR ANGELS

*The following is an essay written by Dr. Theresa Flynn on Asha Weir, one of the four students that lost their lives in the tragic accident on Pacific Coast Highway this fall. Asha was an English major and a student in Theresa's class.*



Asha Weir was a delightful young woman. One might be tempted to describe her as girl-like due to her soft voice and diminutive stature, but life had made her strong; that came through in her writing. English 328 was an enviably small class with an enrollment of only three students in a softly lit and comfortable room that seated 18. Every week, the students read a professional non-fiction work and, in response, would pen original pieces of their own. It was easy for us to bare our souls in that class. There was great excitement every week, listening to the students candidly sharing what was in their hearts. They always wrote about deeply personal things which led to a connection that made us all feel like we were inextricably bound to each other.

In nearly every piece that Asha wrote, there was at least one mention of her mother. And there were nods to her grandmother and to mothers in general. In one piece she wrote, "Mothers are heroes" and that motherhood was "the world's hardest job." She described her mother as her best friend and we all knew it was true. Remarkably, they looked more like sisters than mother and daughter.

I didn't realize how poignant this was until the evening of October 17th, 2023 as I sat at home, grading papers. Longing for a distraction, I allowed myself a peek at Facebook. I remember when I saw it flash on my screen. It was an early headline stating that four Pepperdine women were in a car accident in Malibu. There were no other details. I did a quick search on Google, found nothing, and tried to get back to the post I had been reading but it was gone. I figured that somebody had gotten their facts wrong and it had been retracted. With a mild sense of relief, I went to bed. In the morning, I fixed my coffee and sat down to read some news headlines before getting the kids off to school.

That's when I saw it.

## FEATURE 4: REMEMBERING ASHA WEIR & THE FOUR ANGELS (CONT'D)

It was true. Four Pepperdine students, all women, were not only struck but killed by an out-of-control car. No names were released. Suddenly, adrenaline rushed through my body as I remembered that my daughter, Caitlin, a senior at Pepperdine, had been staying with friends who lived close to campus. I made a frantic call to her. After a few rings, she picked up the phone. When I heard her voice, waves of relief and a fair number of tears washed over me.

About two hours later, my daughter, in tears, called me back to break the news: "Mom," her voice cracked, "One of the girls was Asha." Asha and Caitlin had many classes together. They sat next to each other in one of those classes. They were both tutors in the Writing Center. They were both Writing and Rhetoric majors in their senior year at Pepperdine, set to graduate in April. "No. Not Asha," I cried. Cell phones pressed to our ears, Caitlin and I, daughter and mother, wept together.

And now I know why I limped painfully through the last semester of 2023. I had not lost a student. I had lost a daughter. No, not my daughter, but I felt a fraction of what that might have been like. Moreover, in that small, intimate class, Asha felt like a daughter. She opened up her heart to me. I felt and admired the beautiful connection that she shared with her lovely mother, Vinita. Like Asha, I gained a new respect for mothers and I wept for those who ever had to experience that kind of pain because I had felt it too.

***Thank you, Theresa, for honoring Asha's legacy with this tribute.***



## FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS

*Last year, we featured outstanding students who brought joy to the division. This year, we are applauding three faculty who have been bright lights within the community.*



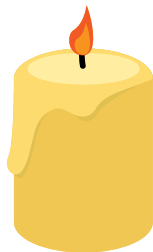
### PROF. KAREN HENDRICKS (LIBERAL ARTS IN EDUCATION)

#### How would you describe your role in the division?

The unique configuration of my role is really wonderful! I have an opportunity to teach classes (Instructional Design and Educational Foundations thus far), and also to oversee the K-12 placements of our student teachers. My opportunities as the director of clinical practice involve interacting closely with educational partners throughout the area, including administrators and mentor teachers, as well as with our amazing teacher candidates and their university field supervisors. This work permits me to continue with my career long commitment to developing, recruiting and retaining an excellent and diverse workforce on behalf of all elementary and secondary school students.

#### You were chosen as a light within teacher education and liberal studies. What does this mean to you?

That is such a lovely thing to have been said. As a follower of Christ, I feel a profound sense of privilege to carry His spirit within me, and a calling to shine God's light in this life as I walk through it. To borrow the words of singer/songwriter Mark Harris, "I stand on Your promise, Your love is forever, and I believe with all my heart; You are my one and only savior, you are the calm when my world falls apart; And to the ends of the earth, and for the rest of my life... I'll carry the light." This university and division are places where the lights of students, staff, faculty and families are beautifully illuminated.



*The shared photo is Karen with recent graduate RJ Hicks.*



## FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### DR. VICKIE SAXON (CREATIVE WRITING)



#### How would you describe your role in the division?

I usually teach Introduction to Creative Writing and sometimes one other course.

#### You were chosen as a light within creative writing. What does this mean to you?

Oh, gee, I have no idea why that might be said about me! But I do like the term, and I can honestly say that the light from my students is always a great joy every semester. There's something wonderful in each student, and it is genuinely a delight to see students find their creative voices, share heartfelt words, and express the complexities of their characters' lives and relationships through writing.

#### What is a key memorable experience you have had at Seaver this past year?

There was one time when one of the students from the very first class I taught at Pepperdine spoke by Zoom to my Spring class about his novel getting published (Jeff Doka, *The Distributor*). After a year in which this community reeled from tragedy, it was incredibly moving to see and feel the love, courage, and connection of the writers in that room on that night.



*The shared photo is Vickie with her sister, niece, nephew, and mother in their first get-together post-pandemic.*

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### DR. RACHEL GOULD (ENGLISH)



#### How would you describe your role in the division?

I am an assistant professor in the English program. Within the HUTE Division, I lead the HUTE Pedagogy Group, and I coordinate the HUTE Symposium. Within the English program, I manage the English program's social media accounts and supervise the English program student worker, and I recruit students to the major and minor.

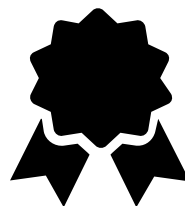
#### What is a key memorable experience you have had at Seaver this past year?

During the fall of 2023, I worked with one of our recent graduates, Rebecca Jackson, through the faculty-student mentor program. Rebecca was pursuing a BA in liberal studies for education with an added authorization in English, so we used the mentorship program to allow her to shadow me in the classroom and to reflect together on the pedagogical approaches I used to teach literature and writing. While our weekly meetings helped me to reflect a lot on my teaching, this relationship became invaluable to me in the wake of the tragedy. Rebecca provided me with helpful insight into the student experience on campus, and she also was a helpful sounding board as I thought through how to modify my classes. I grew a lot through that experience, and I developed a rewarding and joyful collaborative relationship in the process.



*The featured image is Rachel's faculty photo.*

# FACULTY RECOGNITION



*Hute faculty were well-recognized both on campus and beyond this year. Below are some highlights.*

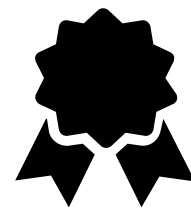
## **The Howard A. White Award for Teaching Excellence**

English faculty Dr. Katie Frye and Dr. Lisa Smith both receive the prestigious award, which “honors teachers who inspire, stimulate, challenge, and motivate their students; teachers who develop in students the ability to think critically and creatively about the world; teachers who instill in their students a lifelong love of learning.”

*The featured photos include Lisa and Katie at the award ceremony and with Pepperdine President Jim Gash.*



# FACULTY RECOGNITION (CONT'D)



## The Seaver College Impact Award for Outstanding Service to Students

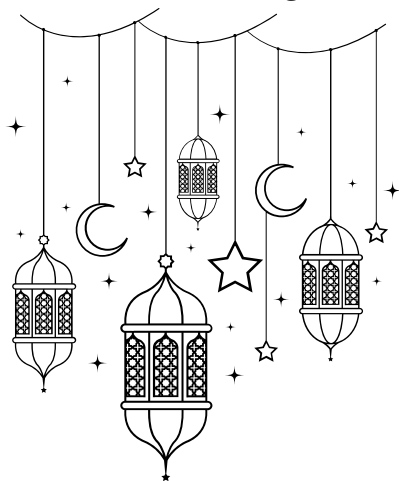
English faculty Prof. Julie Quarles receives the award, which was “established to encourage faculty and staff members who reflect the teachings and servitude of Christ, acting out Pepperdine’s motto of ‘Freely ye received, freely give’ (Matthew 10:8).”

*The featured photo is Julie at the award ceremony.*

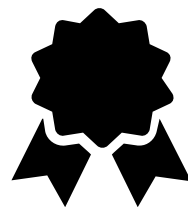
## The Posse Award for Outstanding Teaching and Mentorship

Great Books faculty Dr. Paul Contino and English faculty Prof. Julie Quarles are both recognized by former students in the Posse 9 scholarship program for “scholars with exceptional leadership and academic potential” for their mentorship. The event includes a dinner at Provost Brewster’s home on campus.

*The featured photos include Julie with Posse student Sebastian Gonzalez and Paul with Posse student Vincent Vergara.*



# FACULTY RECOGNITION (CONT'D)



## *Promotions within the Division*

The faculty below received promotions this year. Congratulations!



**Dr. Carrie Birmingham**  
*Professor of Teacher Education*



**Dr. Nick Cumming**  
*Associate Professor of Humanities*



**Dr. Jacqueline Dillion**  
*Associate Professor of English  
Tenure*



**Dr. Katie Frye**  
*Associate Professor of English  
Tenure*

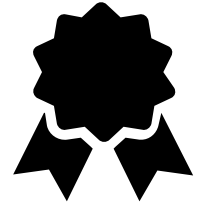


**Dr. Terelle Sales**  
*Associate Professor of Teacher  
Education*



**Dr. Carrie Wall**  
*Professor of Teacher Education*

# FACULTY RECOGNITION (CONT'D)



*The featured faculty received recognition for their writing this year. Congratulations!*

## **Best Published Article, Screenwriting Research Network International Conference, 2023**

Dr. Leslie Kreiner Wilson is recognized for "'Strictly on the Level, Like a Flight of Stairs': Irving Thalberg and Anita Loos as Trickster-Heroes in the Case of Red-Headed Woman" for *Film History: An International Journal* 34.1.



## **Timothy Miller Outstanding Book Award from the Communal Studies Association.**

Dr. Stewart Davenport is awarded for *Sex and Sects: The Story of Mormon Polygamy, Shaker Celibacy, and Oneida Complex Marriage* (University of Virginia Press, 2022).

*The shared images are Leslie and Stewart's faculty photos.*



# FACULTY PUBLICATIONS



**Carrie Birmingham.** "Correcting One or Two False Notions: Reading Surprised by Joy as a Counternarrative," *VII: Journal of the Marion E. Wade Center* 39 (2023).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Experiencing Pedagogical Reflection as the Virtue Phronesis," *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives* 24.5 (2023).

**Kate Bolton Bonnici.** *A True & Just Record* (Boiler House Press, 2023).

**Joi Carr.** *Boyz N the Hood: Shifting Hollywood Terrain*, revised edition with foreword by Stephanie Allain (Peter Lang, 2023).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Framing the Feminine: Harriet, Constructing Black Female Subjectivity and Agency," in *The Post Soul Cinema of Kasi Lemmons*, ed., Dianah Wynter (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023).

**Nicholas Cumming.** "Luther vs. the Lutherans (and Catholics): The Reception and Authority of Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon in Francis Turretin's (1623-87) *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae*," *Church History and Religious Culture* 103.1 (2023).

**Phillip Freeman.** *Julian: Rome's Last Pagan Emperor* (Yale University Press, 2023).

**Katie Frye.** "'That's me': Ruby Fisher from 'A Piece of News' as Eudora Welty's Selfie," *Eudora Welty Review* 15 (Spring 2023).

**Bryan Givens.** *Jack and the Jarl's Plea: Adventure of Jack, Part 3*, illustrated by Jessica Cooper (Ballykillarney House, 2023).



# FACULTY PUBLICATIONS (CONT'D)



**Michael Gose.** *Everyone's Inheritance* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2023).

**Tuan Hoang.** "Pray the Rosary and Do Apostolic Work: The Catholic Associational Culture in South Vietnam and the Diaspora," in *Republican Vietnam 1963-1975: War, Society, Diaspora*, eds., Trinh Luu and Tuong Vu (University of Hawai'i Press, 2023).

**Jessica Hooten Wilson.** *Reading for the Love of God: How to Read as a Spiritual Practice* (Brazos Press, 2023).

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Liberating Arts: Why We Need Liberal Arts Education*, co-edited with Davey Henreckson and Jeffrey Bilbro (Plough Books, 2023).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Creation Orthodoxy" in *Why We Create*, eds., Brian Brown and Jane Scharl (Square Halo Books, 2023).

**Edward Larson.** *American Inheritance: Liberty and Slavery in 'The Birth of a Nation,' 1765-1795* (Norton, 2023).

**Jonathan Riddle.** "Physiology, Vitalism, and the Contest for Body and Soul in the Antebellum United States," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 78.3 (2023).

**Terelle Sales.** "Culture: A Critical Pillar in the Pedagogy of Jesus," *Christian Education Journal* (2023).

\_\_\_\_\_ (with K. Rim) "The Parable of the Sower: Rooting Out White Supremacy and Institutionalized Racism in the Church," *Theology Today* 80.2 (2023).



# FACULTY PUBLICATIONS (CONT'D)



**Mike Stock.** "The Nest in the Shell: Phenomenology, Postwar Automobility and Film Noir Cars," *Mediapolis: A Journal of Cities and Cultures*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (September 2023).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Seeing by Automobility: Protoautomobility, Immersion, the Traveler-Spectator, and the Phantom Ride, 1897-1912," in *States of Immersion: Bodies, Media Technologies*, Ed. Philippe Bédard (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Eco-Horror and Ruined Landscapes in the Early Films of Wes Craven," in *A Critical Companion to Wes Craven*, Ed. Fernando Gabriel Pagnoni Berns and John Darowski (New York: Lexington Books, 2023).

**Lisa Smith.** "Using Comics to Teach Analytical Writing," in *Teaching Comedy*, ed., Bev Hogue, MLA Options for Teaching series (Modern Language Association, 2023).

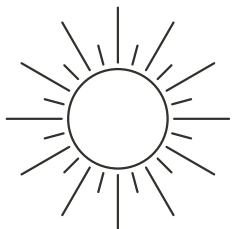
\_\_\_\_\_, "Mentoring: Sharing the Road," in *Ordinary Saints: Living Everyday Life to the Glory of God*, ed., Ned Bustard (Square Halo Books, 2023).

**Carrie Wall.** "Educator Secondary Traumatic Stress in the Wake of the Pandemic: Buoying Teacher Holistic Health," *Journal of Loss and Trauma* (2023).

*Congrats*



# ILLUMINATIONS: A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Congratulations, my inspiring Hute colleagues, on another successful year! It was quite meaningful for me since, as many of you know, I gave birth to my second son Ezekiel in January. This letter is coming your way a bit later than planned, but it was so wonderful to connect with you all and learn about the triumphs of your year, and I am so grateful for each person who was willing to contribute.

The fall semester was struck by unfathomable tragedy when we lost four Seaver students, including our own English major Asha Weir, but I was inspired by the ability of Seaver's residents to rally together in a time of immense heartbreak. The pages of this letter serve as a tribute to a community determined to persevere.

The spring semester was filled with new beginnings, from my own boy's arrival to the initiation of many graduates into the professional realm—each led by your mentorship and wisdom. The countless snapshots of Pepperdine orange and blue within these pages serve as a tribute to a community determined to excel.

I hope that this letter offers some welcomed illumination of both the obstacles we've endured and the celebrations we've shared during this past year together, and the tremendous privilege we enjoy as members of the Hute community .

*I leave you with my favorite photo of the year: an embrace with my two rays of sunshine, Isaiah and Ezekiel.*

In gratitude,

*Julie T. Quarles*

Editor, The Interlocutor

