



Student Research & Creative Scholarship Colloquium

Wednesday, April 24

Thursday, April 25

In S-247

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10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. “Student-created textbook: Learning Mathematics with Open Source Software SageMath”

This session will have also a Zoom option and will be recorded:

<https://cccedu.zoom.us/j/86831650023?pwd=dmRCUG9XUmtvM0tvU0dZZ2xCVjhZUT09>

Meeting ID: 868 3165 0023 Passcode: 591247

Discrete Math uses the open source mathematical software SageMath. This software covers a range of mathematical areas such as algebra, geometry, number theory, cryptography, numerical computation, calculus, and more. We are developing an Open Educational Resource for students to use this mathematical software effectively. Our goal is to streamline the learning process with SageMath. This approach helps students focus more on mathematics and reduces the friction of learning how to code. Our textbook is interactive and designed for all math students, regardless of programming experience. Our textbook is, and always will be, free for all. In this talk, we will present our journey through the inception, struggles and success of the first student-created textbook to learn Discrete Math with SageMath - and invite you to join!

Presenters: Zunaid Ahmed and Samuel Lubliner

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Hellen Colman

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. “Mapping Multicultural Identity and Strengthening U.S.-Singapore Cultural Ties”

In this Diplomacy Lab project, students have been asked by the U.S. Embassy in Singapore to compare the various government efforts in Singapore, the U.S. and Chicago to unify ethnically, religiously and racially diverse populations. Students will explore some of the innovative policies Singapore uses (housing, education, etc.) to unify its population and contrast that to U.S./Chicago policies.

Presenters: Graci Komperda, Jeanne Morrissy, Helen Cavanagh, Tammatha Spivey

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Merry Mayer

12:00 p.m. – 12:20 p.m. “Rural America’s Caliban Problem: An Analysis of Shakespeare’s The Tempest, Rebecca Gilman’s Luna Gale, and Nassim Soleimanpour’s “Down by the Creek”

This project proposes to explain how to understand the ways Shakespeare’s Caliban makes choices and performs actions because of a system that failed to treat him as a human being. Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* presents Caliban as a native of the island Prospero he has returned to. The play shows how he is treated as a criminal by the other characters. Traditional commentary on the play indicates historical readers expected Caliban to be understood by fellow audiences as a criminal element on the island, but new playwrights in America, such as Rebecca Gilman and Nassim Soleimanpour, re-imagine the rural “troublemaker” as an

overwhelmed, desperate, and struggling citizen trying to overcome the challenges of being marginalized in one's own social situation. The research involved in this project explores commentary insights into those issues related to a faulty system that affect the mindsets of the three playwright's protagonists. This project seeks to re-imagine initial interpretations of Shakespeare's Caliban, Gilman's young couple, and Soleimanpour's Don by analyzing the ways their monstrous behaviors and choices result from the ways they are easily manipulated by even more diabolical forces controlling their lives.

Presenter: Godwin Raphael Malveda Javan

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Vincent Bruckert

Thursday, April 25 In S-247

9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. “Breaking Traditional Structures”

This project investigates the theme of death in Milorad Pavic's novel *The Inner Side of The Wind*. The discussion will include a description of the book and the author and explain the main theme of death. Various examples from the book will be used to illustrate how the theme of death is represented in the book and how it is to be understood. This discussion may attract some students who didn't read the book to read it, but it can also help those who read it to find some new connections.

Presenter: Kateryna Romaniv

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

9:45 a.m. – 10 a.m. “Duality in Postmodern Slavic Literature”

This project will discuss duality in postmodern Slavic literature, precisely in *Ignorance* written by Milan Kundera, *Escape Hatch* written by Vladimir Makanin, *House of Day*, *House of Night* written by Olga Tokarczuk, and *The Inner Side of the Wind* written by Milorad Pavic. In *Ignorance*, duality is seen in freedom and the feeling of being trapped. In *Escape Hatch*, it is represented as light and dark. On the other hand, in *House of Day*, *House of Night* it is seen in the opposition of dreams and reality. Finally, in *The Inner Side of the Wind* it is represented in the relationship of a man and woman who live centuries apart. This presentation will discuss the significance of duality in each work and elaborate on their differences and similarities.

Presenter: Isabel Both

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. “Revenge and Justice in Literature”

In this session, students from Literature 115 HON9 will discuss some the themes of revenge and justice in literature. Characters we discuss this semester act on their principled convictions, as well as their destructive passions, in order to reconcile the actions of those around them, as

well as their conflicted feelings about others and themselves. We will discuss Sophocles' *Antigone*, Euripides' *Medea*, Seneca's *Thyestes*, and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, as well as look at other works. Students will examine some of the specific themes and questions of these works, including those topics they will more fully address in their 2500-3000-word final research papers. Students will also include highlights from their powerpoints on specific works and themes of the course.

Presenters: Literature 115 Honors Students

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Michael Petersen

11:10 a.m.–11:25 a.m. “Horror Literature: An Analysis of Its Impact”

In the 1900s, people experienced societal, economic, and personal fears. They worried about many changes in the world. Technological inventions and small businesses grew and with it political and economic issues were arising. Some people adjusted to the changing world in the 1900s, but the rest found it difficult because of the need for more comforting resources. At the time, people had to find or develop a solution to relieve their stress. Horror literature was and still is a solution because it relaxes people by redirecting their attention away from their fears, situations, and disorganized lives.

Presenter: Wilfredo Razo

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Vincent Bruckert

11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. “A Cosmic Battle”

This project centers around the novel *House of Day House of Night* written by Olga Tokarczuk. It interweaves multiple perspectives by painting the novel's representative themes of time, identity, and memory. Different pieces of media art styles that represent the change in attitudes and narratives in the novel will be installed and will hopefully thread the connections in the book in attempt to compliment the symbolisms in the novel's atmosphere. This painting is to embody the transformations and themes based off the stories from novel's characters who reside in Lower Silesia. It's intended to replicate the novels essence as much as possible. To do so, installing mixed media and minimalistic technique will best capture the novel's atmosphere.

Presenter: Ariana Salgado

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. “Lack of Consistency & Constants: Realities Demonstrated in Postmodern Slavic Literature”

This presentation will tackle the themes of the inconsistency and paradoxes of reality as portrayed in the literary work *Escape Hatch* by Vladimir Manakin. This novella exemplifies a dynamic portrayal of reality, specifically through the shifts between two worlds. These differing worlds showcase variations of realities existing in the same timeframe, therefore displaying the reality is inconsistent. This analysis uncovers a common theme, highlighted by *Escape Hatch* of reality being subjective and fluid. Not only is reality shown as ever-changing physically, but it provides examples of moral and mental bends as well. Throughout this

presentation, the text of *Escape Hatch* will come alive through an analyzation of its unstable reality.

Presenter: Yasmin Whitfield

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

12:00 p.m. – 12:15 p.m. “The Feminine Condition in Milan Kundera’s *Ignorance*”

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir writes: “Even if they [women] are allowed independence, this road (devotion) is still the one that seems the most attractive to most women; it is agonizing to take responsibility for one’s life endeavor.” One of the characters in Kundera’s *Ignorance*, Irena, displays a consistent attitude that things are out of her power. She relies on her position as a woman to play fate’s martyr. She has no control over her life because taking responsibility for herself is much more difficult than marrying a man to escape her mother or her life. She quietly forges an existence as an émigré and relies on her accidental residence in France to separate herself from her mother, who she feels would eclipse her own will and identity, as she’s never exerted it for herself.

Presenter: Meeka Millard

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

12:15 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. “Borders in Contemporary Slavic Literature”

This project delves into the thematic significance of borders in contemporary Slavic literature as both physical and metaphorical constructs that explore the complexities of history and identity. Borders define the division between the past and present, realism and surrealism, as well as freedom and constraint, painting extremes of each nature within each novel. In Milan Kundera’s *Ignorance*, borders represent the gap between past and present identities muddled by doubtful recollection of memories. Vladimir Makanin’s *Escape Hatch* shows the psychological division between reality and surrealism in a post-Soviet dystopia. Olga Tokarczuk’s *House of Day, House of Night* illustrates the preservations of dreams apart from reality, covering an overlap of human experiences. Milorad Pavic’s *The Inner Side of the Wind* draws parallels between the duality of fate and reality between history and legends. Ultimately, the interplay between methods of literary incorporation and reoccurrences of memory, humanity, dreams, and the passage of time functions as critical agents in the portrayal and understanding of how Slavic literature transformed into a post-modern movement to preserve history and identity.

Presenter: Longley Pham

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m. “Identity in Postmodern Slavic Literature”

One of the biggest themes in postmodern literature is identity and the concept of understanding one’s individualism. In Slavic lit, identity can be embraced or rejected, but it is meant to be explored in hopes of finding one’s “true” self. Whether rooted in realism or fluid outside of the third dimension, identity is a central focus. This presentation will discuss the importance of identity in *Ignorance* written by Milan Kundera, *Escape Hatch* written

by Vladimir Makanin, *House of Day*, *House of Night* written by Olga Tokarczuk, and *The Inner Side of the Wind* written by Milorad Pavic. It will explore identity from marginalized communities to the abstract, and focus on its place in postmodern literature.

Presenter: Helen Cavanagh

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

12:45 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. “Exploring Commonality in Uncommon Literary Work”

This project explores the use of the concurrent theme of borders within post-modern Slavic literature as represented by Vladimir Makanin in *Escape Hatch*, *Ignorance* by Milan Kundera, *House of Day*, *House of Night* by Olga Tokarczuk and *The Inner Side of the Wind* by Milorad Pavic. All four authors utilize a setting of post-modern Eastern Europe during a time period of political and social upheaval, fear, and ever-changing boundaries. Despite this commonality of place and time amongst these authors, the works present a larger theme than that represented by the struggles within post-modern Eastern Europe. The struggle with borders is not idiosyncratic of post-modern Eastern Europe, nor was it the author's intention to represent it as such. The author's use of borders is emblematic of ours, and of all life on this planet, in its struggle against borders that begins at the very moment of conception.

Presenter: William Paulson

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

1:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. “The Dynamics of Relationships in Postmodern Slavic Literature”

This presentation will expound on how the characters' relationships in Milan Kundera's *Ignorance*, Vladimir Makanin's *Escape Hatch*, Olga Tokarczuk's *House of Day*, *House of Night*, and Milorad Pavic's *The Inner Side of the Wind* help shape and transform their identities. This includes them discovering new things in themselves and the things they want to become, or even guiding them to what they want to pursue and do. Some of these relationships are romantic, but romance is not of total importance here. It is more of the connection amongst people that help them explore and come to terms with new things within themselves. The key insights are that each of these stories perfectly demonstrates the human condition of reaching out and needing someone else to help along the way on journeys when it comes to simply living or self-discovery.

Presenter: Annalisa Pena

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

1:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. “Philosophy and Politics in Contemporary Slavic Literature”

This presentation will discuss the research that looks at the fundamental themes of change, metamorphosis, and the hidden facets of existence in Milan Kundera's *Ignorance*, Vladimir Makanin's *Escape Hatch*, Olga Tokarczuk's *House of Day*, *House of Night*, and Milorad Pavic's *The Inner Side of the Wind*. These characteristics are essential components of storytelling,

influencing tales and enriching readers' experiences. Furthermore, different philosophical and political perspectives contribute to the understanding of these novels and add greatly to the plot's depth and complexity. The authors philosophical and political approaches do not only investigate the subject of human existence, but also provide incisive critique on societal institutions. Thus, the connection of philosophy and politics enriches the examination of change and transition, giving readers of these works a better knowledge of the human condition and the world around them.

Presenter: Alejandro Olvera Constanza

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. ‘Slavic Literature in the late 20th Century: Becoming Postmodern’

In this presentation, students will investigate some of the major themes in Milan Kundera's *Ignorance*, Vladimir Makanin's *Escape Hatch*, Olga Tokarczuk's *House of Day, House of Night*, and Milorad Pavić's *The Inner Side of the Wind* that unify their interpretations and identify the trends in postmodern Slavic literature.

Presenters: Isaiah Zavala, Suong Nguyen, Michael Simmons, Jose Cuantle

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2:15 p.m. – 2:30p.m. “Modern-day Samsara”

This presentation will illustrate the connection between Greek myths, legends, and ideas to Olga Tokarczuk's *House of Day, House of Night*, Milan Kundera's *Ignorance*, Vladimir Makanin's *Escape Hatch*, and Milorad Pavić's *The Inner Side of the Wind*. Specifically, it will analyze the characters Irena, Klyucharyov, and Leander by comparing them to their respective counterparts in Greek Mythology Odysseus, Prometheus, and Oedipus. Additionally, this presentation will show the abstract connection of Tokarczuk's work with Plato's "Allegory of the Cave." The connection of postmodern Slavic literature and Greek mythology will demonstrate the idea of a samsara and how the present is the past repeating itself.

Presenter: Hajer Mohamed

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. “Heroic Journeys through the Slavic Literary Landscape: Triumphs, Trials, and Transformations”

This project explores the portrayal of heroic characters in Olga Tokarczuk's *House of Day, House of Night*, Milan Kundera's *Ignorance*, Vladimir Makanin's *Escape Hatch*, and Milorad Pavić's *The Inner Side of the Wind*. The discussion will delve into the multifaceted challenges faced by protagonists and their transformative journeys. Through textual analysis, this project illuminates the ways in which characters grapple with adversity, such as substance abuse, existential crises, and relational conflicts, showcasing resilience and courage. Key findings

reveal recurring themes of resilience, self-discovery, and the human capacity for growth amidst turmoil. By examining these narratives, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of heroism and the human experience within the context of Slavic literature.

Presenter: Justin Cortez

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Natasha Todorovich



Wright faculty sponsors: Michael Petersen, Hellen Colman, Vincent Bruckert, Merry Mayer, Natasha Todorovich.

Honors Program Coordinator: Natasha Todorovich

Many thanks to our student presenters and to our faculty sponsors!