

Wright College

Student Research and Creative Scholarship Colloquium

Sponsored by the Honors Program



FALL 2018 Program

Wednesday, November 14
9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Welcome Breakfast in S-247, Science Building

9:40 - 10:00 a.m. Philosophy/Sociology
Slacktivism: Why Retweets Aren't Enough

Slacktivism is the most common form of “activism” nowadays, and celebrities have made slacktivism more popular than ever before. Activism is taking action in order to effect social change, usually through social, political, economic, or environmental change. One may be an activist by participating in strikes, protests, volunteering, etc. Conversely, slacktivism is sharing and/or liking posts on social media, wearing specific colors on certain days, or buying/selling merchandise with a cause on them. Someone can do all of those things and be an activist if they are also actively doing something to help, such as participating in an organization. The purpose of this project is to challenge the beliefs people hold about social media activism and to push them out of their comfort zones of “slacktivism” so that it may become real activism. This presentation is informative and uses anecdotes as well as statistics to support the claim.

Presenter: Wesley Nay (Philosophy 106/Sociology 201 Independent Research)
Faculty Sponsor: Keith Jones

10:10 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Humanities

Non-Con: A Comic on The Gender Non-Conforming Hero

This project addresses questions of gender identity and defines terms that are categorically tied with gender concepts, including non-binary gender system, toxic masculinity, transgender, transsexual, and intersex. The project attempts to create a story that people with questions would not feel threatened by in order to explain sex and gender concepts. Furthermore, the project seeks to demonstrate the dangers of conservative gender views that many may not acknowledge or perceive.

Presenter: Kathelyn Brigantty (Humanities 144)

Faculty Sponsor: Valerie Pell

10:30 a.m. - 10:55 a.m. BREAK

11:00 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. Literature

An Ambiguous Life: Defining Literature through the Imagination of Borges

The purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate how through the mind of Borges, one can understand literature and its potential to make sense of life. This presentation offers an analysis of stories from Borges, Keats, Plato, Epicurus and Camus in an attempt to reconcile life's uncertainties and ambiguities.

Presenters: Roberto Pacheco (Literature 110)

Faculty Sponsor: Vincent Bruckert

11:45 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Speech Communication

Digital Story Showcase

Digital narrative pedagogy (“digital storytelling”) provides a vehicle for storytellers of all backgrounds to develop their personal voices, engage in cultural awareness and acceptance, and use their stories as a catalyst for civic engagement and social change. Join us to view a few stories and to learn about the storybuilding and storycatching process.

Presenters: Speech 101 Students

Faculty Sponsor: Susan Colon

12:30 p.m. - 1:25 p.m. Diplomacy Lab Discussion

Truth Decay: Is Democracy Under Threat?

As part of an undergraduate research project the class is undertaking for the U.S. Dept. of State, the students are studying the effects of misinformation, whether by domestic or international actors, through social media as well as the delegitimization of mainstream media sources. Is this new media environment a threat to open democracies like the U.S.? Some of the questions the students are examining include: how society should handle this challenge, what are the different understandings of “fake news”, what demographic differences, if any, exist in recognizing fake information, and what solutions are being considered to meet the challenge?

Presenters: Political Science 201 National Government Students

Faculty Sponsor: Merry Mayer

1:30 p.m. -1:50 p.m. Humanities
Women of Color: History

The purpose of this project is to provide insight about the history of women, particularly women of color. The presentation strives to illustrate the development of women's empowerment through the first, second, and third waves of feminism. The video used in the presentation allows viewers to visualize the struggles women endured in the United States and to recognize how women of color did not and still do not receive the same rights as white women.

Presenter: Shaima Said (Humanities 144)
Faculty Sponsor: Valerie Pell

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. English Composition II
Solitude, Exile, and Power: Exploring Contemporary Texts through Thematic Analyses of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus*

The purposes of this panel discussion are: (1) to reveal connections among a modern canonical text and a number of contemporary texts, which indicates the ways in which the texts are connected across time and in multiple sociocultural and politico-historical contexts; (2) to deploy the evidence of the connections among texts across time and different contexts in order to suggest that there exist commonalities in the human experience, especially as it relates to the construction and perception of the identities of, explorations of power relationships between, and concerns about technology use/misuse by individuals and groups in complex organized societies; and (3) to use these proven commonalities in the human experience to propose solutions to common and important contemporary problems impacting humanity. The focus of this presentation is a discussion of the experiences of solitude, loneliness, exile, and isolation, and the pursuit of knowledge in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus* (1818). Consequently, the panelists will discuss the ways in which these concepts are interpolated into the works of contemporary writers.

Olympia Korzeniewski will connect the aforementioned concepts and experiences to the problem of social repression and oppression via the Stanislavskian method in James McWilliams' article "Saving the Self in the Age of the Selfie" and Václav Havel's polemical essay, "The Power of the Powerless." Renata Ozuna Manzano will connect the aforementioned concepts and experiences to the process by which individual selves (identity) are developed, especially in the context of social bias and discrimination, in James Baldwin's article, "If Black English Isn't a Language, then Tell Me, What Is?" and Ken Liu's short story, "The Paper Menagerie." Abril Chavez will examine the aforementioned concepts and experiences in the context of the ways in which social and technological pressures impact mental health and individual self-image, resulting in anxiety, paranoia, stress, and isolation, as explored in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's short story, "The Yellow Wallpaper," James McWilliams' article "Saving the Self in the Age of the Selfie," and Václav Havel's polemical essay, "The Power of the Powerless."

Presenters: Olympia Korzeniewski, Renata Ozuna Manzano, Abril Chavez (English 102)
Faculty Sponsor: Helen Doss

Thursday, November 15

9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Welcome Breakfast in S-247, Science Building

9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Literature

Tricksters and Fools in Shakespeare and Chaucer

In this presentation, students will discuss the theme of Tricksters and Fools in British Literature. The works under discussion include Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Othello*, as well as Chaucer's "The Miller's Tale," "The Wife of Bath's Tale," and "The Pardoner's Tale." Specifically, among other things students will discuss the foci of their mid-term and final research papers and any other salient topics from their research for class projects and presentations.

Presenters: Literature 115 Honors Students

Faculty Sponsor: Michael Petersen

10:30 - 10:50 a.m. Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience

The Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience

The presentation will discuss the relationship between the advances of neuroscience and the design and development of artificial intelligence. The presenter will define the terms of neuroscience and artificial intelligence, while highlighting their relevance in the modern era. The presentation will also discuss the correlation between basic coding structures that have been created based on the codes of human reasoning and the near possibility of machines that could be enabled to emulate human reasoning.

Presenter: Pahola Mercedes Nova (Speech 101)

Faculty Sponsor: Jennifer Armendarez

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Diplomacy Lab Discussion

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Presenters: Political Science 204 International Relations Students

Faculty Sponsor: Merry Mayer

11:45 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Speech Communication
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Presenters: Speech 101 Students
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12:30 - 1:00 p.m. Math
Topological Robot Motion Planning

This talk presents a mathematical approach to the motion planning problem in Robotics. This problem consists of finding an algorithm which, given initial and final positions A and B of a robot, outputs a motion from A to B. The presenter introduces a numerical invariant -topological complexity - measuring the navigational difficulty for the robots to move in a certain space without collisions. This invariant determines the minimal number of continuous rules in any motion planning algorithm. The presenter calculates this number for the example of two robots moving in a circle track and presents the concrete instructions for the robots to move autonomously in this case.

Presenters: Allaoua Boughrira (*Math 299*)
Faculty Sponsor: Hellen Colman

1:00 p.m. - 1:50 p.m. Interdisciplinary Discussion
Argumentation: Ethos, Logos, and Pathos

Much of our communication behavior, both spoken and written, attempts to persuade. Effective persuasion necessitates that speakers and writers establish credibility with their listeners and readers, use sound evidence and reasoning, and appeal to the values of their audiences. In this interdisciplinary discussion, Speech 101 and English 96 students will discuss the importance of ethos, logos, and pathos in proposing and evaluating arguments.

Discussants: Speech 101 and English 96 Students
Faculty Sponsors: Susan Colon and Natasha Todorovich

All presentations will be held in room S-247 in the Science Building.

Event Coordinators: Profs. Natasha Todorovich and Susan Colon

Honors Program Coordinators: Profs. Susan Colon and Natasha Todorovich

Faculty sponsors: Profs. Vincent Bruckert, Hellen Colman, Susan Colon, Helen Doss, Keith Jones, Merry Mayer, Valerie Pell, Michael Petersen, Jennifer Armendarez and Natasha Todorovich

Thank you to our student presenters and to our faculty sponsors!

