

The Exact Right Word

The Official Newsletter of William Jewell College's English Department

A Word From the Chair



Dr. Ruth Williams

I'm pleased to share with you this year's newsletter featuring the words of our majors, faculty, and alumni. Beginning next year, the English major will be joining History, Languages, Philosophy, and Political Science as part of the newly established Culture, Society, and Justice division. We're excited that this new organization will capitalize on the English major's interdisciplinary nature. For now, we hope you'll enjoy catching up with us!

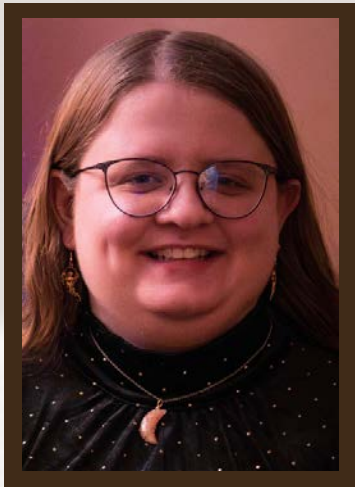
Internships can be a vital way for our majors to engage with potential career paths while also earning college credit. This year, senior English major, Clare Benton, completed an internship with Kansas City law firm Murphey, Kinney, and Sumy. Working as a legal assistant, Clare built on the writing, analysis, and research skills she developed in her English classes to draft, revise, and edit court motions, client communications, and marketing materials. Clare's internship experience gave her valuable access to the legal profession as well as an opportunity to expand her skill set in preparation for law school.



At the Mad (Libs) Tea Party, English majors and other Jewell students enjoyed a fun afternoon of snacks, tea, and mad libs, turning classic poems into bizarre literary pieces.

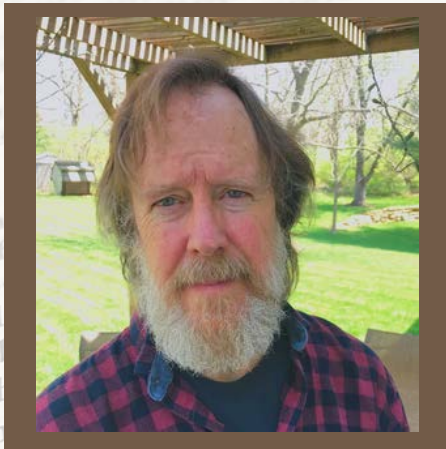
More about this year's English Department events on the next page!

Student Highlight: Tarryn Fredde, '25



Tarryn Fredde is a graduating senior planning to study at the University of Illinois: Urbana-Champaign's online MS program in Library and Information Science, as well as a similar online master's program at MU, and attend the University of Illinois in Fall 2025. The program is 40 credit hours and usually completed in 2 years with a very flexible course schedule that can be modeled based on student interests. Tarryn says that being an English major has shaped her thinking and her character in countless ways. It's made her a better writer, a better critical thinker, and a better communicator. She feels closer to the person she's supposed to be after studying as an English major, and doesn't think she would have gotten where she is today without what she learned in her classes.

Retiring Faculty Highlight: Dr. Mark Walters



Dr. Walters has been teaching at Jewell since 1991. He has been involved in numerous projects and responsibilities, such as developing and teaching tutorials as Coordinator of the Oxbridge Program for 28 years, serving as Chair of the English Department from 2009-2022, and serving on the committee that designed CTI 100. He has genuinely enjoyed the ongoing intellectual exercise of being part of the academic community, especially the freedom to explore ideas through ongoing research, practice, and conversation with very smart students and colleagues. One important thing Dr. Walters learned over his time here in the value and practice of self-awareness and genuine humility, which he believes are fundamental to learning and living a decent life. Nothing was simply academic for him; it all mattered. It still does. He wants to thank everyone with whom he's worked, and especially his students, who have been extraordinarily smart and open and insightful and kind, and made his job never seem like one.

Department Events:

Students visited Everglades Farm with three Jewell alums in creative professions for an afternoon of wandering, exploring, and creating pieces! During the Q & A session, students were able to question the creatives about their careers and art processes. Abby Bland (she/they), award-winning Kansas City writer and performer, is an English alum who participated in this event. Her one-person spoken word show Godzilla's Not A Dinosaur took home "Best of Venue" at the 2023 KC Fringe and she was awarded Best Poet in KC via The Pitch in 2023. She's on Instagram @applestoabby and you can read more of her work at abbyblandpoetry.com. At the Everglades event, Abby created a Godzilla poem.



Achievements

▶ Allison Hillman, Senior English and Secondary Education major, was a finalist for the Faculty Award, Jewell's most prestigious student honor.

▶ Naomi Speck, Sophomore OXE major, presented "Connecting the Dots: Music as Storyline, Not Just Notes" at the 2025 Duke Colloquium.

▶ Tarryn Fredde, Senior English major, presented "We Can No Longer Accept Genocide as an Answer to AIDS: ACT UP and the History of AIDS Activism in Kansas City, Missouri" at the 2025 Duke Colloquium.

"My favorite thing about the English major is all the ambiguity in the material we analyze; I love the never-ending, the unknown, the no-perfect answer."

Simone Collins, '26

"The best piece of advice that I have received seemed silly but was actually helpful: Take one day at a time. 'You can't eat an elephant in one bite. Take one bite at a time.'"

Brighton Wolverton, '28

"Don't be afraid to try something new! You might unlock some new skills or discover a new love for writing."

Kariss Johnson, '27

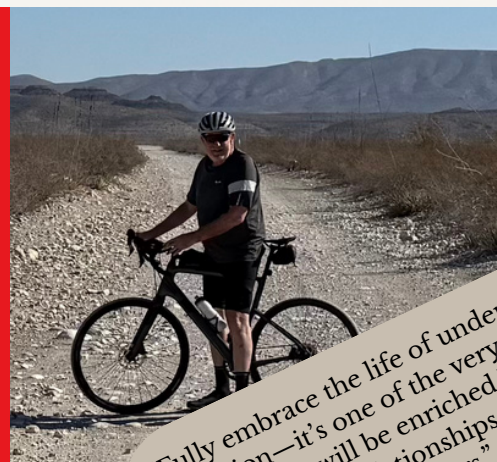
"All people have stories we can learn from, and that stories can help us understand the world around us just as much as numerical data."



Alum Highlights:

Michaela Esau, '22, teaches at Literacy Connects, a nonprofit devoted to promoting literacy and creativity. She's excited to begin her MFA in creative writing this fall. She has found the knowledge of world literature that she gained as an English major especially useful, as well as the skill of asking good questions. To current English majors, she says to keep an open mind in terms of job opportunities, and that whatever you enjoy studying will probably turn out to be useful.

Philip Krause, '80, spent his professional career of over four decades practicing law in the Kansas City area, both with law firms and as a solo practitioner. He also taught at UMKC School of Law and UMKC Bloch School of Management. He felt that his education as an English major gave him an advantage, since he could always excel at the written expression of his knowledge. These days Philip is developing other interests, including cello, watercolor, fly fishing, and yoga. He and his wife are avid bicyclists and love to travel.



"Fully embrace the life of undergraduate education—it's one of the very best times of life, and it will be enriched by investing in personal relationships with your professors."

"Communication is key. If something is hindering you in or outside of the classroom, talk to your professors; they want you to succeed, and if something is stopping that, talk to them."

Brian Woodall, '27

"Make time to read or write for fun. Especially with an English major and other classes, there will be a lot of homework and essays that can get tiring, so find the time to read and write for yourself and not just for class."

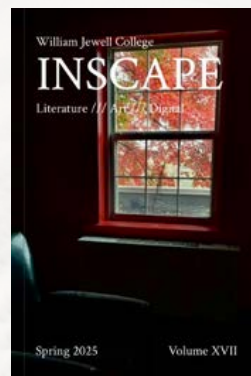
Jackson Cooper, '25

"Be sure to take time and explore subjects and topics outside of literature and critical theory... philosophy, law, business, data science, political science, psychology, natural science, and so many other things have given me a wide array of lenses through which to read and interpret the literature I study in my English classes."

Baylee Sidden, '25

Inscape, Jewell's student arts magazine, is sponsored by the English Department. Each year, its web and print issues feature creative writing and art by students from across campus.

This year, under the leadership of Chief Editor, Baylee Sidden, and Managing Editor, Allison Hillman, Inscape organized its 3rd annual release open mic event. Check out the 2024-2025 edition of Inscape at www.wjcinscape.com.



read in class!

Student Book Recommendations

Kindred by Octavia E. Butler. This novel was raw and gritty at times and really allowed a perspective into what generational trauma is for Black people living in America.

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein tells the story of how giving can have good and bad consequences on the people involved.

Savage Conversations by LeAnne Howe, read in ENG 355 with Dr. Williams, and *One Day of Life* by Manlio Argueta, read in ENG 365 with Dr. Cotter.

Arkady Martine's *Texicaan* duology discusses at length how colonization shapes language, culture, and even memory.

The short story "Salvador Late or Early" by Sandra Cisneros, read in ENG 396 with Dr. Walters, changed the way I think about plot and description.

Emma Kelly, '26

Tarryn Fredde, '25

Naomi Speck, '27

Questions about the English major?

Contact Dr. Ruth Williams

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