

CLASS Notes

February 28, 2014

Georgia Southern University

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CLASS *notes*

COLLEGE OF
LIBERAL ARTS &
SOCIAL SCIENCES



February 28, 2014

Welcome to Georgia Southern University / College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences

Greetings!

There are certain things that we expect as supporters of the liberal arts and humanities. The departments, centers, programs, faculty, and students of CLASS continue not only to meet but to exceed these expectations and to generate news items that some people might find surprising.

For example, many would expect for the College to offer classes examining various religious practices. However, some would be surprised to learn that the Department of Literature and Philosophy houses a Center for Religious Studies whose minor has attracted more than 90 students from disciplines across campus to learn under three tenure-track instructors.

You might expect faculty members of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology to be interested in issues of aging. However, you might be surprised to learn about the development of the Center for Social Gerontology, which aims to develop a gerontology concentration for students and to provide professional-development opportunities for area aging-services providers.

Readers of this newsletter already know that Fred and Dinah Gretsch have supported the Department of Music through funding an after-school program for youth in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bulloch County, but they might not be aware that the Public History program recently partnered with Gretsch Guitars and the Georgia Southern Museum to present an exhibit commemorating the 50th anniversary of The Beatles appearance on the *Ed Sullivan Show* and George Harrison's love of Gretsch guitars.

It should come as no surprise that the Georgia Southern Symphony continues to present top-tier concerts or that it routinely partners with soloists in and out of the Department of Music, but the recent visit by Peter Schickele, who served as a composer-in-residence in preparation for the world premiere of his clarinet concerto by Dr. Linda Cionitti, might be unexpected.

Lastly, it goes without saying that CLASS' faculty members are dedicated to the success of their students and that they serve to help them succeed. However, it exceeds most people's expectations that a faculty member such as Dr. David Dudley would be so dedicated to this mission to be

honored with the Patriot Award for his services.

These are just a few examples of the exceptional teaching, research, and service projects being undertaken by students and faculty of the College. I hope that all of our products - books, articles, graduates, courses, and events - continue to exceed your expectations.

How have the news items, events, or your diploma from CLASS exceeded your expectations? Please drop us a line at class@georgiasouthern.edu or fill out the [online alumni survey](#) to update us on your life events (honors, awards, promotions, and successes).

Warmest regards,



Curtis E. Ricker, dean

Center for Religious Studies

Religious Studies continues to be the fastest growing minor in CLASS. In the past seven years, the program has grown from 15 minors in religion with one adjunct instructor to 95 minors with three tenure-track professors: Dr. Hemchand Gossai, Hebrew Bible and Biblical hermeneutics; Dr. Nicole Karapanagiotis, religions of India and Asian religions; and Dr. Finbarr Curtis, American religious tradition and religion and politics. With these three representative areas in religious studies, the range of courses being offered by the Center has expanded significantly. Some examples of courses include Hebrew Bible, Hebrew Prophets; New Testament; Male, Female, and Religion; Human Suffering and the Bible; Genesis and Human Relations; Asian Religions; Religions of India, Islam, Hinduism; World Religions; Religion and Film; Religion and Politics; Religious Movements in the U.S.; and Introduction to Christianity, Mormonism, Catholicism in the U.S. With the wide range of course available, students are able to be more selective in designing their minors.

Some recent highlights from the Center for Religious Studies:



A full-house of attendees to the 2013 Undergraduate Religious Studies Conference.

* In 2012, the Center organized its inaugural student research conference. Taking as its theme Religion and Politics, the conference featured 13 papers and two panel discussions. The 2013 conference had the theme Religion and Sex and featured 16 papers and two panel discussions. Plans are already under way for the 2014 conference, and the Center looks forward to making this an annual event.

* Some courses have begun including a Religious Center Site Visit project, in which students observe a religious ritual of their choice and interview a practitioner. Students have visited Hindu temples, Muslim mosques, Jewish synagogues, Catholic and Latter Day Saints churches, and other centers.

* Religious Studies has begun offering field trips to a mosque, an Orthodox Christian church, and a synagogue, and conversation with a Holocaust survivor in Savannah; a Hindu temple in Augusta; and a Hindu Garba festival in Statesboro. Students say these experiences have been tremendously important and meaningful for them.

* Students have participated in service-learning projects, including hosting a fundraiser for Heifer International and participating in a Yom HaShoah commemoration. The student organization Scholars of Religion has been established with Dr. Karapanagiotis as its advisor and has sponsored several programs.

* Dr. Gossai recently presented "Jeremiah's Shalom Ethic: A Challenge to Imperial Militarism" at the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in St. Andrews, Scotland. His article "Hagar in Medieval Times and Reformation Era" has been accepted for publication in the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, and his book *The Hebrew Prophets after the Shoah: A Mandate for Change* will be published in September.

* Dr. Karapanagiotis' article "Cyber Forms, Worshipable Forms: Hindu Devotional Viewpoints on the Ontology of Cyber-Gods and Goddesses" was published in the *International Journal of Hindu Studies*. She has almost completed her manuscript "Does Cyber-Smoke Reach the Gods? Online Hinduism and the Tensions of Tradition," which

explores the ways in which devotees navigate important and enduring religious questions such as divine embodiment, ritual, the goals of ritual, and the construction and maintenance of sacred space as they encounter these new ritual forms.

* Dr. Curtis is completing *The Economy of American Religious Freedom*, a book on competing uses of the language of religious freedom in the U.S. He is also writing an essay about the Cohen brothers film *Burn After Reading*.

At the Front of the CLASS

My name is Nadia Dreid; I am a senior journalism major and religious studies minor at Georgia Southern University. As a Statesboro-native, Georgia Southern was the natural choice to start my college journey, but I planned to transfer long before graduation began looming on the horizon. I could never bring myself to do it, however, and three years later, I'm glad I chose to remain an Eagle.

I would humbly say that Georgia Southern provided just the environment I needed to thrive: It is large enough to contain any resources I may need to further my education but small enough to never make me feel lost among the crowd. During my time at Georgia Southern, I've joined and headed student organizations, participated in dozens of on-campus events discussing topics from immigration to religion, formed close academic relationships with faculty members, and made amazing friends.

Ever since I can remember, it seems that I just wanted to write; so in this way, falling into my major was easy. I started at Georgia Southern knowing this was exactly what I wanted. Being able to do the thing I loved while being a service to others made it seem like the ideal choice for me - but it wasn't until a little later that I found my minor.

I have always been drawn to religion. Raised in a mixed-faith household, I consider myself a religious person. I have always believed a person should earnestly study his/her own faith if he/she is going to claim to believe it. As my Introduction to Religion professor put it on our first day of class: "A belief that does not stand up to criticism isn't worth having."

However, I also don't believe the study of religion should end with one's own tradition or is only for people of faith. People connect to God, or whatever they believe to be the ultimate reality, in a myriad of ways. How can we love one another without knowing one another? And how can we know each other without understanding some of the things the people in our lives fundamentally believe to be true?

Needless to say, when I discovered Georgia Southern offered a religious studies minor, no one had to convince me to sign up!

Taking classes in the Center for Religious Studies has done more for me in my three short years at Georgia Southern than any other group of classes I have taken. Aside from giving me the vocabulary and ability to speak about religion in a way I would not have otherwise had, it gave me the ability to think critically.



One could argue that the goal of college is to train adults to think critically, and I have certainly had professors from other departments who impressed upon us the importance of critical thinking, but I've never found it so central as in the study of religion.

The Center for Religious Studies is a small program - for most of my time with them, they only boasted two professors but have recently added a third. While I am sure this means the professors always have a busy schedule (their offices doors might be more economical if they revolved), it also means the students of the program grow to know them in unique way. The faculty members become mentors and sources of both personal and academic guidance.

Fellow students have also become founts of knowledge - every person you ever meet will have a different perspective than you, and in the study of religion, this is particularly useful.

We're small, but we're a family: I'm incredibly grateful for all the opportunities my college experience has provided me thus far, and I wouldn't trade my Georgia Southern family or my religious studies family for anything.

Department News

Psychology

Undergraduate student Brittany Bates was [profiled](#) by *Connect Statesboro*.

Graduate students Callie Gibson, Joy Losee, and Christine Vitiello's paper "A replication attempt of stereotype susceptibility (Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999): Identity salience and shifts in quantitative performance" accepted for publication by the *Journal of Social Psychology*.

Graduate student Tori Allen accepted a job as a research assistant at the Children's Hospital Neuroscience Institute in Colorado. She will work as a consultant on research design and statistical analysis problems.

Undergraduate student Kiersten Sippio was accepted to the Chicago School of Professional Psychology's Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology program.

Boys Town intern Brendan McCollum has accepted a postdoctoral position at Keystone Behavioral Pediatrics in Jacksonville, Fla.

Pre-doctoral intern Amanda Rickard presented her dissertation defense on February 28. Her dissertation committee encompasses Drs. Theresa Yancey, Jeffrey Klibert, Lawrence Locker, and K. Bryant Smalley.

Literature & Philosophy

Department Chair Dr. David Dudley's latest novel, *Cy in Chains*, received a positive review from the Voice of Youth Advocates. The organization gave the book five of five possible points for quality and four of five possible points for popularity.

Dudley received the [Patriot Award](#) from the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Organization after being nominated by philosophy major and active-duty military member Staff Sgt. Amber Augustine. The Patriot Award is presented to employers or supervisors who are supportive and understanding of service members' needs for flexible schedules, time off before and after deployment, and more.

Professor Olivia Carr Edenfield was [profiled](#) by *Connect Statesboro*.

Music



The Georgia Southern String Camerata, under the direction of Dr. Steven Elisha, was featured in a Lobby Performance at the Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference at the Savannah Convention Center on January 30 and February 1.

Strings students Jennifer Latimer, violin; Fiona Wang, viola; and Xiaohang Yu, cello - all members of the Honors Magnolia String Quartet directed by Dr. Larisa Elisha - performed in Atlanta during Georgia Southern Day at the Capitol on February 6.

Music education majors and Dr. Laura Stambaugh participated in the Georgia Music Educators Association's conference in February. Graduate students Maggie Alley and Brian Dyson presented research posters examining changes in choral methods textbooks and the relevance of music education in rural Georgia schools, and Stambaugh presented research findings from her examination of how music education majors identify mistakes in ensemble performances. Over the past three years, 43 Georgia Southern music education majors have participated in Stambaugh's research, and the study's results will impact how students are taught to be better teachers and conductors.

Drs. Steven and Larisa Elisha presented research posters at the Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference in Savannah on January 30 and February 1. S. Elisha's poster was entitled "Taking the High Road: An Introspection of David Popper's 'High School of Cello Playing, Op. 73' and How To Maximize its Benefits for Developing Cello Technique," and L. Elisha's was entitled "Giants of French Impressionism in Music and Visual Art."

The Georgia Southern Symphony presented a concert February 18 featuring solos by Dr. Linda Cionitti, performing the premiere of Peter Schickele's clarinet concerto, and music major trombonist Christian Eric Spencer, performing the first movement of Gordon Jacob's trombone concerto. American composer Peter Schickele (a.k.a. PDQ Bach) visited the University for three days as a composer in residence through sponsorship by the Campus Life Enrichment Committee at Georgia Southern.

Sociology & Anthropology



Graduate student Matt Newberry (seen here at with CLASS Dean Curtis Ricker) and Dr. Sue Moore presented research on Camp Lawton in Atlanta at Georgia Southern Day at the Capitol.

Senior sociology major and honors student Mariann Torrence presented her research "Continuing to Foster: The Impact on Foster to Adopt Families" at the second annual Georgia Undergraduate Research Conference in Columbus, Ga., on January 25. The qualitative research project examines the family dynamics of Georgia foster-to-adopt families that have adopted a child and continued fostering.

The Center for Social Gerontology has begun holding meetings to support the efforts of faculty, staff, and students interested in aging-related issues. Areas of focus include supporting student research in aging-related topics, creating opportunities for collaborative aging research across disciplines, developing a gerontology concentration, conducting a community-needs assessment relative to older adults in the area, creating a website, and providing professional development services for area service providers. For more information, contact Dr. Adrienne Cohen at acohen@georgiasouthern.edu.

Eric Silva's article "Neutralizing Problematic Frames in the Culture Wars: Anti-Evolutionists Grapple with Religion" was published in *Symbolic Interaction*.

Criminal Justice & Criminology

Dr. Bryan Miller and colleagues published *Emerging Trends in Drug Use and Distribution* with Springer Publishing. The book examines recent examples of emerging drugs including salvia, bath salts, and so-called research chemicals, which have received brief intervals of high-intensity media coverage that might not reflect an actual increase in their use.

Drs. Laura Agnich, Bryan Miller, and Laurie Gould attended the Center for Instructional Development and Educational Research Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy in Blacksburg, Va.

Foreign Languages

Professor Mauricio Peña Sánchez has been granted full certification as an ACTFL OPI Tester. After participating in a rigorous four-day ACTFL Opi Tester workshop, participants undergo an arduous process for certification, which only a small percentage of workshop participants complete.

Professor Jose Manual Hidalgo's article "La exégesis babélica de la prisión de Leriano en *Cárcel de amor*" has been accepted for publication in the Fall 2014 edition of *Romance Philology*, a prestigious internationally renowned journal dedicated to the linguistic history and medieval literature of Romance languages.

Political Science

Dr. Robert Pirro will participate in a conference focusing on the edited volume *Tragedy and the Tragic in German Literature, Art, and Thought* in Boston on March 13-15. The conference is sponsored by the Goethe Institute Boston and Brandeis University's Center for German and European Studies. Pirro's contribution to the volume is entitled "Atrocity and Agency: W.G. Sebald's Traumatic Memory in the Light of Hannah Arendt's Politics of Tragedy."

History



The Department's Public History program partnered with the Georgia Southern Museum and Gretsch Guitars to present the "These Youngsters from Liverpool: The Beatles, Ed Sullivan, and Gretsch Guitars" exhibit.

The Department partnered with the Center for International Studies to present "Ukrainian Crisis: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives," a panel discussion, on February 11. Panelists included Dr. Jonathan O'Neill, chair of the Department; Melissa Gayan, history professor; Dr. Jacek Lubecki, director of the Center for International Studies; and Iuliia Inozemtseva, Ukrainian graduate student.

Undergraduate history major Lillian Wingate helped complete a new portion of the Camp Lawton exhibit at the Georgia Southern Museum as part of her internship.

Dr. Michael Van Wagenen presented "The Importance of Collaboration Between Professionals and the Community" on campus at The Past, Present, and Future of the Bennett Grove School, Bulloch County's Last One-Room African-American Schoolhouse conference.

Paul Rodell presented "External Influences and Domestic Insurgency: The Case of Philippine Muslim Separatism" at the 31st annual meeting of the Association of Third World Studies in Chennai, India. Rodell is also coordinating the third annual [Teaching Southeast Asia](#) workshop for college and university faculty members in Georgia on April 11 and 12 at Georgia Perimeter College's Clarkston campus. The seminar is free to attend and includes five regular sessions, a Friday evening program, and lunch Saturday.

Dr. Jonathan O'Neill presented "The South and the American Constitution after the Civil War" at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association in New Orleans.

Dr. Jonathan Bryant published "'We Defy You!' Politics and Violence in Reconstruction Savannah" in Leslie M. Harris and Diana Ramey Berry's *Slavery and Freedom in Savannah*.

Dr. Robert Batchelor's *London: The Selden Map and the Making of a Global City, 1549-1689* was released to positive reviews in *The Economist* and on CNN. His video-, web-, and game-design work appeared at the Jepson Center for the Arts' 2014 PULSE Art and Technology Festival, where he also participated in a panel on art, technology, and gaming.

William Allison delivered a lecture at the [Army Heritage and Education Center](#) in Carlisle, Penn., on February 19.

Art

Foundations Professor Jessica Burke's solo exhibition *Another Fine Mess* was on display at Seminole State College in Sanford, Fla., from January 16 to February 17.

Ceramic Professor Jeff Schmuki's exhibition with colleagues Wendy DesChene and Robin Dru Germany, *Ecology Revisioned*, is on display at Prescott College in Arizona until March 22. Schmuki participated in an artist lecture and reception at the college on February 21 and 22.

Graphic Design Professor Ed Rushton's typographic T-shirt design for Rockscar Designs in Atlanta was displayed at the AmericasMart Atlanta from January 30 until February 3.

Foundations Professor Sarah Bielski's "Getting to Third" and "Pearl Necklace" were accepted by the nationally juried *Common Knowledge* exhibition at the Non-Fiction Gallery in Savannah.

Alumni News

Alvie Coes III has been selected as an American Political Science Association minority fellow for 2014-2015. The fellowship program provides students entering a Ph.D. program in political science \$4,000 for their first two years of study.

Events

Alumni Connection Series

March 4

LECTURE J. 'Jut' Wynne: The Mysteries of Easter Island Caves

6:30 p.m.; Williams Center, Multipurpose Room; 912.478.8597

Great Minds

March 28

LECTURE Michelle Groover, Department of Communication Arts: "Twilight and Twitter: An Ethnographic Study"

Noon; RJ's Seafood and Steaks; 912.478.8597

Communication Arts

Through March 5

THEATRE Fuddy Meers

Dark comedy tells the story of amnesiac Claire, including a twisted odyssey of kidnapping, foul-mouthed puppets, stolen lives, and bacon. Parental guidance is suggested.

7:30 p.m. with 2 p.m. Sunday matinee; Black Box Theatre @ the Center for Art & Theatre; \$5 youth & students, \$10 general admission; 912.478.5379

Art

March 3-13

GALLERIES Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art MFA Candidates Thesis Exhibition I

University & Contemporary galleries, Center for Art & Theatre; 912.GSU.ARTS

March 17-28

GALLERIES Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art MFA Thesis Exhibition II

University and Contemporary galleries, Center for Art & Theatre; 912.GSU.ARTS

Music

March 4

CONCERT SAI American Musical

7:30 p.m.; Carol A. Carter Recital Hall, Foy Building; 912.478.5396

March 8

CONCERT Faculty recital: Arikka Gregory and guest

3 p.m.; Carol A. Carter Recital Hall, Foy Building; 912.478.5396

March 11

CONCERT Faculty recital: Larisa Elisha, Steven Elisha, and Michael Braz

7:30 p.m.; Carol A. Carter Recital Hall, Foy Building; 912.478.5396

March 13

CONCERT Piano Area Recital

"Schubertiade": Piano majors and minors perform the works of Franz Schubert

7:30 p.m.; Carol A. Carter Recital Hall, Foy Building; 912.478.5396

March 26

CONCERT Brass Studio Solo Recital

7:30 p.m.; Carol A. Carter Recital Hall, Foy Building; 912.478.5396

March 31

CONCERT [Symphonic Wind Ensemble](#)

7:30 p.m.; Performing Arts Center; 912.478.5396

History

March 5

RESEARCH [Regional History Day Competition](#)

National History Day is an program for students in grades 6-12. Students will research topics and present their research, and those who place first, second, or third will qualify for the state contest. At the state contest, the first and second place in each category advance to the national contest. Nessmith-Lane Conference Center

Foreign Languages

March 27-28

CONFERENCE [Southeast Coastal Conference on Languages & Learning](#)

Nessmith-Lane Conference Center; 912.478.5281

[{Complete list of CLASS events}](#)

Give to CLASS

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences aspires to be recognized nationally for its superior and innovative educational experiences across the humanities, social sciences and arts. Our goal is to provide outstanding programs that are responsive to the needs of the region and to allow all members of the college -- faculty, staff and students -- to serve together to enhance quality of life. If you would like to support CLASS in meeting these goals, please visit our [annual campaign website](#).



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