

CLASS Notes

March 4, 2016

Georgia Southern University

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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "CLASS Notes" (2016). *CLASS Notes*. 75.
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CLASS *notes*

COLLEGE OF
LIBERAL ARTS &
SOCIAL SCIENCES



March 4, 2016



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Greetings!

With spring-and spring break-just around the corner, life in the College is accelerating in anticipation of the forthcoming hiatus. Students are frantically completing projects, shows and recitals are bursting forth like blooming azaleas, and faculty are somehow keeping up with the assessment and planning that take center stage each spring.

On the college level, we are immersed in the planning for the new academic interdisciplinary building that will house the current tenants of the Forest Drive building. Progress is proceeding rapidly on the design of what will provide much-needed space for departments and classes. Work also moves ahead on the new university storage facility that will contain an archaeological repository-another major boon for curation and research needs-and the costume shop for our theatre program.

With two months to go before Spring Commencement, the calendar will be fill with lectures and performances, readings and drama, and even some fun and games. We hope that you can join us!

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Curtis E. Ricker".

Curtis E. Ricker, dean

Center for Irish Research and Teaching



"Ireland" by Roberto Taddeo is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

Having in 2014 raised the money for and co-produced Educating the Irish Genius, a major international academic symposium about the Enlightenment in Ireland, the Center for Irish Research and Teaching (CIRT) achieved a similar outcome in 2015.

During mid-June, CIRT-affiliated faculty member Dustin Anderson, Ph.D., was principal host for a CIRT joint venture with the F. Scott Fitzgerald Society and our sibling institution, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), the premier doctoral-research university in southeastern Ireland.

The event was "Gaelicly yours": F.Scott Fitzgerald's Irishness, a multi-day conference held primarily on WIT's state-of-the-art main campus, just outside Waterford, Ireland's oldest city. Concluding much of his correspondence with the phrase "Gaelicly yours," Fitzgerald, author of such classics as *The Great Gatsby*, self-identified as Irish-American, and his greater opus abounds with Irish references. Anderson notes that "the cream of the crop of established and emerging Fitzgerald academics" attended, so CIRT's scholarly flag was "flying stoutly."

For a seventh consecutive summer, during June and July 2015, CIRT used Waterford Institute of Technology as its base for two multi-week programs, each of which offers Georgia Southern students six hours of academic credit in a participative-learning environment.

CIRT-affiliated faculty member Margaret Sullivan, Ph.D., joined Anderson to help provide the five-week full term in Ireland program for a record number of 64 undergraduate students. Sullivan's upper-division course *Queer Ireland: Literature and Culture* was particularly apropos, for it coincided with Ireland's becoming the first nation on earth to approve marriage equality by popular referendum. Among other foci, students considered Sir Roger Casement, the gay Irishman executed by the British in 1916, who's a hero not just to Irish revolutionary nationalists but also international human-rights advocates. Casement's knighthood derived from his work on behalf of native workers who endured unspeakable labor abuses in rubber plantations in the Congo and Peru.

One participating student remarked, "Dr. Sullivan's course changed my understanding of human courage and moral principles. I returned from Ireland a better person."

CIRT's productive relationship with WIT was specially acknowledged during 2015, when former Georgia Southern President Brooks Keel, Ph.D., and WIT President Ruaidhrí Nevin, Ph.D., signed an inter-institutional Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of their respective universities.

In a July 2015 statement wrapping up his six-year term as Ireland's Consul General in the Southeastern United States, Hon. Paul Gleeson noted, "Among the strongest components of the overall Ireland-Georgia relationship is what [CIRT Director] Howard Keeley and his team have accomplished in creating one of the largest study-in-Ireland footprints among American and Canadian universities. The quality of the Georgia Southern programs at Waterford Institute of Technology is top-class, both as regards teaching and research."

Gleeson especially highlighted the summer Savannah-Ireland Inquiry Program, which over a three-week period embeds two graduate students and twelve high-achieving undergraduate students in a trio of archives in Savannah. Then, the group relocates to Ireland to conduct

research at the Waterford Combined County and City Archives and the Wexford County Archives, as well as both the National Archives and the National Library of Ireland in central Dublin.

Produced by CIRT in association with the Georgia Southern University Honors Program, this opportunity has (among other achievements) seen multiple CLASS students handle and analyze high-value but uncatalogued primary-source documents from the 1840s, material not touched in well over a century.

CIRT Director Keeley remarks, "Few universities supply undergraduates with the edge that comes from creating-as opposed to merely consuming-knowledge. Our archive-based humanistic research is revealing new information about Savannah's Irish heritage. Documents in the uncatalogued boxes at the National Archives of Ireland suggest that the mid-nineteenth-century Savannah business leader Andrew Low II may have initiated what we're calling a trade and migration 'axis' between the maritime county of Wexford in southeastern Ireland and Savannah."

The student researchers' work is integral to the greater Wexford-Savannah Axis research project, which CIRT leads, but which also enjoys as official partners the Georgia Historical Society (founded in 1839), Waterford Institute of Technology, and the Ireland-based John F. Kennedy Trust, a public-history foundation headquartered in Wexford, Ireland's most southeastern county.

As a formal partnership, the project experienced its first full year in 2015, and Keeley spearheaded several fundraising efforts in support of it. One significant spring initiative was "Celtic Celebration": a concert held first in St. Mary on the Hill church, Augusta, Ga., and then in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Savannah, Ga. Featuring three of Ireland's top musicians, a soprano, a keyboardist (specializing in church organ), and an uilleann piper, the two shows yielded profit of over \$10,000 for student-research scholarships.

Should you wish to contribute, tax-deductible donations are welcome: the Wexford-Savannah Axis Research Fund is Account 0968 at the Georgia Southern University Foundation.

Respecting competitive grant-generation: in October 2015, Keeley received \$35,000 in support of the Axis project from the Diaspora Heritage Fund operated by the Irish State Department. During the second half of 2016, CIRT intends to launch a project-specific website, which will complement other public manifestations of the Wexford-Savannah Axis work, such as a mini-exhibit by history graduate student Brittany Sealey, scheduled to open in the domed foyer of Savannah City Hall on March 1, 2016.

Overall, Keeley brought in just over \$89,000 during 2015 in support of the Center for Irish Research and Teaching, a portion of which was \$15,000 (since increased by a further \$6,000) to create the Helen Ryan Collins Memorial Scholarship in Irish Studies.

Faculty affiliated with the program published articles, presented at conferences, and served students, all to advance Irish Studies at Georgia Southern. Sarah McCarroll, Ph.D., and Marla Bruner, together with Keeley, gave academic papers at the 2015 meeting of ACIS-South, the Southern Chapter of the American Conference for Irish Studies, whose online, peer-reviewed academic journal, [Irish Studies South](#), CIRT publishes through Digital Commons at Georgia Southern. As for the primary Irish Studies gathering in the United States, the ACIS international conference, held for 2015 at the University of Miami: CIRT-affiliated faculty members Dustin Anderson and Marti Lee, a lecturer in the Department of Writing and Linguistics, presented research papers.

As 2016 began, Club Gael, the Irish Studies student club, selected Lee as its faculty advisor, and both the Club and the greater Center are committed to a variety of happenings across the year to mark the centenary of Ireland's Easter 1916 Rising, the event seen as precipitating the modern Irish state. CIRT Director Keeley was one of just 100 people invited by Ireland's Ambassador to the United States to attend the official launch in New York of the Irish Government's Easter Rising commemorative program for the US, a signal honor for the Irish Studies enterprise at Georgia Southern.

As ever, CIRT enriches the culture on campus and our region through world-class public programming. Details will be announced soon of the fifth annual Distinguished Lecture in Irish Studies, to be given on campus in early April 2016 by Patricia Harty, Editor and Co-Founder of the leading US Irish publication, [Irish America magazine](#), and the 2015 recipient of the Eugene O'Neill Lifetime Achievement Award for Service to Irish America.

- Howard Keeley, director

Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art

Assistant Professor Derek Larson has been selected for publication in the [New American Paintings #124](#) Southern Issue. He was also recently appointed M.F.A. Graduate Director, was invited to teach in the Summer Studio Program at Virginia Commonwealth University, and has been offered a solo exhibition at West Virginia University in the Fall.

PlantBot Genetics is a collaborative pair of artists, Wendy DesChene and Assistant Professor Jeff Schmuki, whose work combines activism, research, and social space to foster discussion and generate action in the area of ecological awareness. The PlantBot Genetics Moth Project exhibition will visit Augustana College from March 9-April 2. In addition to the exhibition, the artists will work with Augustana students to create interventions around the Quad-Cities community.



"Monsantra at the Salt Flats"

<http://www.monsantra.com/#!/moths/c1qbm>

Center for Africana Studies

On Feb. 17-21, 2016 the Georgia Southern University Model African Union (MAU) team travelled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the National Model African Union. This year the group represented the countries of Senegal and Guinea. The following students attended the conference on behalf of Georgia Southern: Dylan John, Amber Sims, Etinosa Oghogho, Amanda Mack-Thomas, Deandre Hollier, Ta'Shon Grady, Jasmyn Bush, Akiv Dawson, Xavieria Jeffers, Jacara Cherry, Jessica Shanken, Shaneka Spikes, Isha Williams, and Christopher Cowart.

Georgia Southern's MAU team performed very well and collected seven awards at the conference. These included three Committee Leadership Awards and four Michelle Tooley Outstanding Delegation in Committee Awards (Highest Honor).

The Dylan John, Akiv Dawson, Xavieria Jeffers, and Jessica Shanken were recognized for outstanding performance in their respective committees.

The team was guided under the leadership of Saba Jallow, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Africana Studies and Cathy Skidmore-Hess, Ph.D.

Department of Communication Arts

Rebecca M. Kennerly, Ph.D., has been invited to direct her show, "A Taste of the Sweet Life: The Vidalia Onion Oral History and Performance Project," at the Averitt Center for the Arts in Oct. Kennerly will add new interviews to her existing script, cast the show with student and community performers, and help performers create a new element for the show.

The Theatre & Performance program at Georgia Southern University opens the spring with William Shakespeare's [Twelfth Night](#) on March 3-5 in the Performing Arts Center (PAC). Directed by Georgia Southern alumnus Gage Crook, [Twelfth Night](#) follows lovesick Orsino as he sends his servant Cesario (who is actually the maiden Viola in disguise) to plead on his behalf for the heart of the indifferent Olivia. Meanwhile, an alliance of servants and hangers-on fight a battle of wits against the high-handedness of the pompous Malvolio. Filled with a cast of unforgettable characters, [Twelfth Night](#) combines high comedy and the pangs of unrequited love with Shakespeare's poetry.

Matthew Hashiguchi's interactive documentary, [Good Luck Soup](#), was introduced on i-Docs, which is an initiative of the Digital Cultures Research Center and based in the Pervasive Media Studio, Bristol. He will be at i-Docs 2016 to present the project and talk about areas he's focused on; Reframe, remix, remediate - interactive approaches to non-fiction archives and Open Space documentary - open processes, open societies, open minds: the potential of hyperlocal collaborative storytelling.

Publication

Geyerman, C. B. (2016). [Biblical Tales in the Sports Media: Narrative and the Redemption of Michael Vick](#). In B. Schultz & M.L. Sheffer (Eds.), *Sport and religion in the Twenty-first Century* (pp. 47-65). New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Department of History

Public history graduate students, Leisa Vaughn and Sarah Napier, were an important part of the Georgia Historical Society team that put on this year's Georgia History Fair. Among other responsibilities, Vaughn created educational outreach materials for Georgia schools as part of her non-thesis project. Napier has been a graduate assistant at the Georgia Historical Society this year and has held a variety of responsibilities. [Click here for more information.](#)

Lisa Denmark, Ph.D., presented "The State of Chatham: Savannah's Wet Romp through Prohibition" to the City of Savannah Employees on February 12.

Jonathan Bryant's, Ph.D., book, [Dark Places of the Earth: The Voyage of the Slave Ship Antelope](#), is one of five finalists for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in History. The winner will be announced at a ceremony in Los Angeles on April 9, 2016.

In January Bryant presented at the Friends of the Henderson Library Donors' reception and also spoke at the Aiken County, S.C. Historical Museum and Library. In February Bryant was the Black History Month speaker at the Spartanburg, S.C. Public Library and also spoke to Honors Students at Converse College.

Craig Roell, Ph.D., made the front page of the Statesboro Herald with a story on his book's winning of the Presidio La Bahía Award. [View the article here.](#)

Rural Health Research Institute

Rural Health Research Institute (RHRI), Bryant Smalley, Ph.D. and Psy.D., has been elected to the American Psychological Association's (APA) Committee on Rural Health (CRH). The CRH serves as APA's national committee with the objective to ensure that the behavioral healthcare needs of rural and frontier Americans are met. Smalley will serve for a 3-year term.

Smalley and Nikki Barefoot, Psy.D., recently published the following articles:

Smalley, K.B., Warren, J.C., & Barefoot, K.N. (2016). Variations in psychological distress between gender and sexual minority groups. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Mental Health*. Advanced Online Publication. doi:10.1080/19359705.2015.1135843

Warren, J.C., Smalley, K.B. & Barefoot, K.N. (2016). Higher motivation for weight loss in African American than Caucasian rural patients with hypertension and/or diabetes. *Ethnicity and Disease*, 26(1), 77-84.

Warren, J.C., Smalley, K.B. & Barefoot, K.N. (2016). Rural/urban differences in health risk behaviors among gender and sexual minorities. *Health Behavior and Policy Review*, 3(1), 43-53.

Warren, J.C., Smalley, K.B. & Barefoot, K.N. (2015). Recruiting rural and urban LGBT populations online: Differences in participant characteristics between email and Craigslist approaches. *Health and Technology*, 5(2), 103-114.

Warren, J.C., Smalley, K.B., & Barefoot, K.N. (2015). Perceived ease of access to alcohol, tobacco, and other substances in rural and urban US students. *Rural and Remote Health*, 15, 3397.

The Evans Partnership for Health; a formal collaborative between Evans County community members, the Rural Health Research Institute, and the Center for Rural Health and Health Disparities at Mercer University, participated in the Evans County MLK Festival on Jan. 18th. As part of the event, the Partnership disseminated county specific health infographics related to secondhand smoke, cancer, child internet safety, and teen reproductive health.

Writing and Linguistics

"Blogging a Research Paper?: Researched Blogs as New Models of Public Discourse" by Lisa Costello, Ph.D., was published in the Dec. 2015 issue of [Teaching English in the Two Year College](#).

W.T. Pfefferte, Ph.D., has two poems from his new book, [Peter Cobalt in the Weeds](#), coming out this month from [Razor Lit Mag](#), published by Gustavus Adolphus College.

Mimi Li, Ph.D., has published the article "One wiki, two groups: Dynamic interactions across ESL collaborative writing tasks" in the [Journal of Second Language Writing](#).

A new book by Jared Sexton, M.F.A., entitled [I Am The Oil of The Engine of the World](#) will be released this month by Split Lip Press. His story "Carry What You Can Kill" appeared in the newest issue of [Lockjaw Magazine](#).

Marti Lee, M.A., will present a paper titled "Yeats, Cuchulain and the Rising: An Analysis of 'At the Hawk's Well'" at the American Conference for Irish Studies Annual Meeting at University of Notre Dame on April 1. She will present a paper titled "W. B. Yeats and Monty Python: Heroes and Farces" at the ACIS Southern Regional Meeting on April 16 in Atlanta.

The Department of Writing and Linguistics along with several organizations across campus brought Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and immigration activist, Jose Antonio Vargas, to campus in Feb. Vargas spoke on the complex immigration issue and shared his personal experiences with immigration to a full house at the Performing Arts Center.

Alumni News

Patrick Bennett ('12) co-authored a chapter in the book [Dehumanized and Empowered? Black Women, Reality Television and Love and HipHop Atlanta](#) focusing on the women on the show Hip Hop Atlanta and explored the question of how/if the women are both simultaneously empowered and dehumanized on the show through a Hip Hop Feminist lens. He finished his M.A. at SIU in 2014. He taught last year as an adjunct at USC-Aiken, and he currently teaches at Midlands Technical College in Columbia, S.C.

Connor White's ('15) story "There Are Many Rooms In My Father's House" was accepted for publication in *Rogues & Scholars*.

Share your updates with us through [email](#) or by filling out the online [alumni survey](#). It is always wonderful to hear from you!

Upcoming Events

[\[View Complete Events List \]](#)

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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