



Humanities Newsletter

Bowden Hall • 575-538-6525 • humanities@wnmu.edu

Fall 2016

Biannual Newsletter

New Philosophy Club !

A new Philosophy Club has been established here at the Humanities Department. If you are interested in joining, please contact Eric Lowe at 575-694-4121 for more information!

Add us on Facebook!
<https://www.facebook.com/WNMUHumanities>



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Gist's Grist

The core values of the university—innovation/creativity, integrity, intellectual curiosity, personal responsibility, service, and student success—are the heart and soul of the Humanities Department.

Whether it is through critically analyzing complex contemporary ethical situations, comparing literatures from different times and places, or learning to communicate effectively and creatively through written and oral means, we strive, as a department, to impart to students the soft skills which employers demand in today's ever-changing economic landscape. At the same time, we strive to nourish students' souls through intellectual discourse centered on understanding what it means to be a human being.

It was the German philosopher Heidegger who observed that as humans each of us must take a stand on being. While the beaver does not choose to build the dam but rather builds through the necessity instinct, as humans we must choose whether to be a farmer or a teacher, a preacher or a mechanic, an astronaut or a geologist. If we don't make a stand we are not living up to our potential as human beings but, rather, allowing someone else to make our choices for us.

In her delightful essay "Living Like Weasels," Annie Dillard expresses her innermost desire, "I would like to live as I should, as the weasel lives as he should." She goes on to write, "We could, you know." Sadly, unlike the weasel, which lives by "single necessity," as humans we must make a stand on being, our only necessity being choice.

The Humanities Department prides itself on helping students, through creative expression and critical analysis, to communicate, and, in doing so, to understand who they are in the context of the world today. We strive to prepare them to make the stand that best suits them as individuals in the larger collective of life on earth.

Towards this goal, I would like to welcome Roberta Brown to the department and to WNMU. Roberta drove up from Florida over the holidays to help with our most at-risk students. I have an intuition she will fit in quite well, as she was happy to see my trusty blue heeler Puck asleep in the old recliner in my office; she even took a picture. A more telling clue was that Puck took right to Roberta. We ask that you, too, help us make Roberta feel at home at WNMU.

Our department is very involved and excited about the ALAS initiative, and we are revamping our English degree to mesh with the interdisciplinary spirit of that program. We believe this will help students live fuller, richer, more meaningful lives. Meaning, I am finding, is what more and more students crave.

Finally, I know from experience that the faculty and staff in Bowden Hall are some of the very best on campus. I am proud to work with them all on a daily basis, and I thank them for that. Happy New Year!

Go Mustangs!

John Gist
Chair, Humanities Department.





Joy Harjo

Native American Poet Joy Harjo will be the keynote speaker and reader at WNMU's 2nd annual celebration of Women's History Month. This year's celebration, called **Women's Voices Past and Present**, will feature four presenters besides the much-published Harjo, says Professor Debbie Heller, organizer of the event and director of Writing Across the Curriculum. Invitations and calls for proposals will arrive in WNMU mailboxes in late January, says Heller, who is very excited about the event and hopeful that it will kindle especially enthusiastic interest this year because of Harjo's presence.

Here's all you need to know to mark your spring calendars:

What: Women's Voices Past and Present: a Celebration of Women's History Month– Featuring Poetry, Stories, Reflections, and Other Works by and about Women

Who: Poet Joy Harjo and Others

When: Thursday, March 2, 2017 from 4:00–5:30PM

Where: Miller Library Lobby

What Else: Sponsored by WNMU Office of Cultural Affairs, Miller Library, and Writing Across the Curriculum. It's free and open to the public. Refreshments will follow.

Have questions? Write to Debbie Heller at hellerd@wnmu.edu

WNMU English Professor's Book Chosen for New Series

WNMU professor Deborah Heller's book *Bluestockings Now!* (2015) has been chosen for inclusion in a new Routledge series: *Routledge Historical Resources: History of Feminism*.

The new History of Feminism series selected Heller's text "for its decisive contribution to the feminist history of ideas in an international context."

"It's an honor to be included," Heller stated. "The new series will bring the book to an even wider audience." Heller has already received international accolades for her efforts. Dr. Elizabeth Eger, King's College London, called the book "an exciting intervention in the field of eighteenth-century literary studies...particularly innovative and thought-provoking."

Dr. Deb Heller will teach a new undergraduate English course in fall 2017: **Topics and Problems in English Literature**. Heller explains that this course is intended to replace the two English survey courses taken in the past by English majors and minors—English 293 and 294—which are being phased out to make room for a more "topics centered" focus. The new course description states that assigned texts will illuminate the moral, social, and political dilemmas that modern individuals inevitably confront. Course topics might include but are not limited to: love and betrayal; the causes and costs of prejudice (racial, religious, gender); conformity and rebellion; the family and its discontents; civilization and barbarity.

Courses are now being planned in American literature and World literature along the same lines, says Heller.



Dr. Deb Heller, Humanities Department.

Faculty Updates

Dr. Heather Steinmann

July, 2016: Presented research at the Trans-Atlantic and Pacific Project conference in Fargo, North Dakota.

August 2016: Finalized and sent article, "Learning across Borders: A Teaching Case Connecting Writing Students Internationally" to the journal *Konin Language Studies*.

September 2016: Started teaching yoga at WNMU's Center for Gender Equity and will continue in the Spring 2017 semester.

October 2016: Dr. Steinmann had a short story nominated for *storySOUTH*'s Million Writers Award.

Dr. Deb Heller

Dr. Heller is doing exciting work in earlier (1700-1900) women's writing. It may come as a surprise, she says, that "women became active social reformists, writers and publishers well before the 20th century—well before the 19th century, in fact." Want to learn more about how literature by women evolved over the last 300 years? Read about English 438/538 (Women as Writers) in our summer and fall course offerings on pages 4-8.

WNMU Humanities Department

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Sigma Tau Delta Update



This semester has been quite an eventful one for Sigma Tau Delta! We were all very excited to welcome Dr. Heather Steinmann as our new club advisor, and Thomas Durham, Diana Gordillo, and Vicente Partido as our newest members. Then, a few weeks into the school year, due to the added stressors of senior year, Marissa Aguirre and Nathan Jackson decided to step down as President and Treasurer, respectively. This led to a mad reshuffling of students to fill the needed positions. Casey Dickens stepped in as the new President, Marivel Medel took over Casey's previous position as Secretary, and Vicente Partido volunteered to take on the task of Treasurer.

We are all still eagerly waiting to hear back about whether or not we got accepted to speak at the next annual International English Honor Society Conference, which is taking place in Louisville, Kentucky in March 2017. If we get accepted, like we did last year, we will be hosting a roundtable discussion about the effects of advertising in E-Books. Last year, the conference really worked to bond more strongly as a club, and we are all hoping for a chance to share a similar experience with our newest recruits. We will be working hard the next few months with fundraising for the conference in the hopes of getting to go whether or not we get accepted to present. After a huge success in our Christmas cookie fundraiser the week before finals (where, with matching funds, we made a whopping \$238!), we are all very optimistic that we will be able to meet our goals next semester.

-Casey Dickens, Sigma Tau Delta President

Interested in joining Sigma Tau Delta? Contact Casey Dickens or Dr. Heather Steinmann at 538-6512!

Work Study Corner: Samuel Holguin

Samuel Holguin came to our department in the Fall of 2016. This was at a time when we needed his aid the most. It was also his first semester of college a recent graduate of Cobre High School. Samuel is currently pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Wildlife Forestry. He has since learned how to be an excellent, reliable, work study and ended his first semester a successful WNMU student. Samuel always has a smile on his face along with a cheerful attitude. It's just his nature. The Humanities Department is happy to have Samuel on our team. Samuel returns as our work study for the Spring 2017 semester. If you see him around campus, make sure and tell him you saw him here!



Summer 2017 Courses Offered:

Undergraduate

COMM 110: Public Speaking

Online

Dr. Benjamin Cline

Study and Practice of how to speak effectively, and with ease and confidence in a variety of public situations.

ENGL 150: Introduction to Literature

Online

Dr. Kate Oubre

An introduction to the study and appreciation of literature. Shows how understanding writers' techniques increases the enjoyment of their works; relates these techniques to literary conventions; teaches recognitions, analysis, discussion of important themes.

ENGL 225: The Short Story

Online

Dr. Kate Oubre

Detailed study of short stories.

ENGL 461: Environmental Literature

Online

Dr. Kate Oubre

Investigates the relationship between literature, human culture, and the natural environment. Reading will be selected from diverse traditions and genres.

ENGL 465/565: Critical Approaches to Lit

Online

Dr. Mary Leen

Intensive study of literature through the application of various insights and knowledge from other fields that can reveal more about the literatures as well as more about the students exploring the literature.

Graduate

ENGL 521: The British Novel

Online

Dr. Deb Heller

Studies in the history and development of the British novel; an analysis and interpretation of the socioeconomic conditions which it reflects.

ENGL 524: Greek Tragedy

Online

Dr. Deb Heller

Offers a concentrated study of the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, focusing on the nature of the tragic her, recurrent themes and problems of plays, and differences between the playwrights' techniques.

WRTG 508: Creative Non-Fiction Writing

Online

Dr. John Gist

Advances practice in writing creative non-fiction, including the understanding of fiction techniques as applied to non-fiction writing. Students choose non-fiction subjects, articulate criteria for these assignments, apply dramatic techniques, post their writing assignments online, and review each other's work. Course may be repeated for a max of six credits.

Get Registered early! If you have a question about a course or want to get in touch with an Humanities advisor. Give Estere Lucero a call at (575)-538-6644 or email Estere.Lucero@wnmu.edu

Fall 2017 Courses Offered:

Undergraduate

- PHIL 100: Introduction to Philosophy** 11:00am-12:15pm **Dr. Royce Grubic**
Acquaints the student with philosophical problems and methods through systematic discussion of selected questions concerning the nature and grounds of knowledge, morality, and religion.
- PHIL 101: Thinking and Problem Solving** Online **Staff**
Development of such problem-solving techniques as common sense, verification of facts, validity of logic, existentialist analysis, and computer modeling; explores the humanistic value of thinking in itself as distinguished from problem solving.
- PHIL 205: Ethics for Professions & Life** T R 02:00-3:15pm **Dr. Royce Grubic**
Will apply ethical theory to topics of interest to WNMU undergraduates linked to the student majors in a way that will help prepare them for the responsibilities and dilemmas that await them in their future careers. Following an introduction to the basic of moral philosophy, the emphasis will be on case analysis and the decision-making process.
- PHIL 300: Recent Philosophy** ONLINE **John Gist**
Critical examination of important trends in American and European philosophy of the recent past, particularly various schools of linguistic analysis, phenomenology, logical positivism, and existentialism.
- ENGL 115: Intro to Creative Writing** T R 12:30-1:45PM & Online **John Gist**
This course offers a practical, workshop and theoretical approach that introduces beginning creative writers to the elements of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, as well as the academic field of creative writing.
- ENGL 219: Business and Professional** T R 11:00am-12:15pm **Dr. Heather Steinmann**
Practice in writing and editing of workplace documents, including correspondence, reports and proposals.
- ENGL 225: Short Story** T R 9:30-10:45am **Dr. Faye Vowell**
Detailed study of short stories.
- ENGL 225: Short Story** Online **Dr. Donald Florence**
Detailed study of short stories.
- ENGL 280: Topics and Problems in English Literature** Online **Dr. Deb Heller**
Assigned texts will illuminate the moral, social, and political dilemmas that modern individuals inevitably confront. Course topics might include but are not limited to: love and betrayal; the causes and costs of prejudice (racial, religious, gender); conformity and rebellion; the family and its discontents; civilization and barbarity.
- ENGL 300: Heroic Myth & Legend** Hybrid W 2:00-3:15pm/Online **John Gist**
Study of the nature and function of myth and its expression through the literature, legend, and folklore of particular cultural traditions. Examines the heroic code, legendary heroes and heroines, gods and goddesses, and mythical archetypes.
- ENGL 316: Traditional Grammar and Usage** Online **Dr. Kate Oubre**
Intensive grammar study designed primarily for the English major or minor; required for students seeking New Mexico teacher licensure in English.
- ENGL 419/519 Advanced Composition** Online **Dr. Heather Steinmann**
Intensive work in expository writing.
- ENGL 420/520: Studies in American Literature** Hybrid R 9:30-10:45am **Dr. Kate Oubre**
Advanced study in a particular period, author, theme, or genre in American literature; serves as an in-depth follow-up to the most recently offered American literature survey course.
- ENGL 438/538: Women as Writers** Online **Dr. Deb Heller**
Examination of selected writings by English and American women from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries, with special consideration given to the ways in which women portray women's experience, image, self-concept, and role in society.

Fall 2017 Courses Continued...

MAIS

ENGL 501: Studies in Ancient & Medieval Lit **Online** **Dr. Deb Heller**
 Ancient and Medieval Literature (an online course for graduate students with an English concentration; interested upper-division undergrads should contact Prof. Heller at hellerd@wnmu.edu to seek permission to take the course for undergraduate credit). *In English 501 we will explore four different kinds of literature from the culture of ancient Greeks and Romans: Homer's epic masterpiece, the Iliad; selections from the erotic Greek Lyric poets; and two dialogues by the philosopher Plato.*

ENGL 520: Studies in American Lit **Online** **Dr. Kate Oubre**
 Selected studies in periods, genres, and figures in American literature; appropriate areas of study selected by teachers and students.

ENGL 525: Studies in the Short Story **Online** **Dr. Donald Florence**
 This reading and writing-intensive course involves in-depth study of the art of the short story and of selected works by American, English, French, and Russian authors acknowledged as masters in this genre. Students will also be introduced to the historical and cultural context within which these authors produced their works.

ENGL 547 The Enlightenment **Dr. Debbie Heller**
 (an online course for graduate students with History or English concentrations; interested upper-division undergrads should contact Prof. Heller at hellerd@wnmu.edu to seek permission to take the course for undergraduate credit). *This course is about the massive cultural shift, called the Enlightenment, which began late in the seventeenth century and whose effects are still very much with us today. This shift brought about new notions of equality, gave us concepts of human rights (including, potentially, women's rights and the rights of racial and sexual minorities), incited numerous political revolutions, and inspired the framework and working parts of the system of government known as democracy. It is a challenging and rewarding course for anyone interested in how ideas of human equality and human rights took hold over two centuries ago.*

WR TG 503: Writing the Screenplay **Online** **Staff**
 Advanced practice in writing the screenplay, including critical attention to formatting, dialogue and description. Marketing the finished product will also be emphasized. Students prepare a synopsis, write a screenplay using the proper format, post acts of the play online and review and critique each other's work.

WR TG 509 Memoir Writing **Online** **Dr. Mary Leen**
 Students will use in-depth writing exercises to "mine for memories" which they will use as material for a possible book-length manuscript of non-fiction prose. This is not an autobiography; it is a focused study of one theme in the writer's life. Students will have the opportunity to leave this class with experience and practice of gathering, focusing, composing, editing - and perhaps even submitting for publication - experiences from their own lives in a creative, non-fiction manuscript.

WR TG 512: Literary Journal **Online** **Staff**
 Publications of the OMAIS literacy arts journal. All aspects of publishing a literary journal will be employed, including editing, design and marketing. Students will post calls for submission, participate in online layout and design, promotion and marketing, selection, critique and editing submissions. Survey and analysis of completing journals. Course may be repeated for a max of six credits. Intensive work in expository writing.

WR TG 519: Advanced Composition **Online** **Staff**
 Intensive work in expository writing.

Get Registered early! If you have a question about a course or want to get in touch with an Humanities advisor. Give Estere Lucero a call at (575)-538-6644 or email Estere.Lucero@wnmu.edu