Message from Department Chair Marianne Montgomery

I went back and re-read the note I composed for the Fall 2019 issue of this newsletter. It focused on English’s service and engagement, but it reads like a dispatch from another world. A world before most of us knew much about a deadly virus emerging on the other side of the globe. A world before the attention of white people like me was focused where it should have been all along: on the violence and discrimination too often inflicted by police on our Black neighbors and other people of color, and on our own roles in perpetuating systemic racism and injustice.

I invite you to read the department’s statement on racial injustice. Although it was prompted by the present moment, it articulates a sustained commitment. We will be working – individually and collectively – over the coming months and years on concrete actions in our department, at our institution, in our professions, and in our communities. Although our faculty members have advanced degrees, we are never done learning.

A lot has changed in the past few months, but a lot hasn’t. Our faculty still step up in big ways. Faculty and students alike rose to the challenge of moving classes online in March 2020 to flatten the curve, and we’re rising again to the challenge of a fall semester like no other. No matter the delivery method for our classes, we care about our students and will meet them where they are and help them to learn. We’ll meet and gather more often in virtual spaces, but we’ll still do our work: teaching students, researching and writing, and serving our region and beyond.

As we undertake this work, the department leadership team has some new faces: Matt Cox as Director of Graduate Studies and Donna Kain as Director of Undergraduate Studies. Lida Cope moves to the Associate Chair role. I thank outgoing officers Anna Froula and Andrea Kitta for their generous service. I also thank Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs, who is completing her service as chair of the Fixed-Term Faculty Committee and has been a strong voice for fixed-term faculty.

A final note: We are mourning the recent passing of two of our own. Joyce Middleton, who retired in 2017, died after a life of research and advocacy. And Joe Campbell, who received two degrees from ECU English and taught in the department from 2005-2020, died soon after the spring semester ended. Both will be deeply missed by students, colleagues, and friends.
**Publications & Creative Activity**


**Margaret Bauer.** “Man wonders but [Babs] decides / When to kill the Prince of Tides: Taking the Prince Out of *The Prince of Tides*.” *Southern Quarterly Journal*.

**Nikki Caswell.** “What’s Beneath the Demographics? Writing Center Usage and Inequality.” *Intersection: A Journal at the Intersection of Assessment and Learning*.


**Helena Feder.** “Dreaming the Real: An Interview with Marianne Boruch.” *The Writer’s Chronicle*.

**Gabrielle Freeman.** “Ghazal for Decomposition.” *The Los Angeles Press*.

**Gabrielle Freeman.** “In the Turn.” *The Rumpus*.

**Gabrielle Freeman.** “Waking Up Alone.” *The Los Angeles Press*.


**Marame Gueye.** “Fatou Diome’s Le ventre de l’Atlantique: Re-configuring Local Discourses of Emigration.” *Journal of the African Literature Association*.

**Christy Hallberg.** “Winter Women.” *Deep South Magazine*.


**Jim Kirkland.** “Beyond Joy and Sadness.” [A review of Sydney Lea’s *Here.*] *Tar River Poetry*.


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**Kirstin Squint** – associate professor of English at High Point University – has been reappointed for a second term as ECU’s Whichard Visiting Distinguished Professor in the Humanities.

Recently, Squint has had the following works published:


In addition, *Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Responds to Hillbilly Elegy* – to which she was a contributor – won the 2020 Weatherford Award for Best Nonfiction Book about Appalachia by the Appalachian Studies Association. Her creative non-fiction essay is titled “Kentucky, Coming and Going.”

Finally, Squint presented “Native Southern Literature and Choctaw Writer LeAnne Howe” to the Cherokee Studies Program at Western Carolina University.

The professorship is housed in the Harriot College of Arts and Sciences. Squint is being co-hosted by the Department of English and the Gender Studies Program.
NEH-Supported Donne Variorum Project Nearing Completion

Being completely done is within reach for the editing team of the Donne Variorum project. (Sorry – the pun is simply unavoidable.)

Jeffrey Johnson and Tracy McLawhorn Hayes have spent the summer putting the final touches on the last two volumes, which will bring the total number of printed volumes to ten. These final volumes, parts two and three of the Songs and Sonnets, contain all 57 of John Donne's love lyrics; and each of these volumes will total between 1,200 and 1,300 pages.

Published by Indiana University Press, The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne was founded in 1981. During the decades, the National Endowment for the Humanities has supported the Donne project with twelve separate grants that totaled more than $2M.

Over the years, the project has been directed by two general editors – Gary Stringer and Jeffrey Johnson – and some forty textual and commentary editors from eight different countries.

The Donne project has benefitted here at ECU from the support of the Department of English; the Thomas Harriot College of Arts & Sciences; and the Division of Research, Economic Development and Engagement. In turn, the university has received due attention because of its association with this prize-winning and highly touted critical edition.

A recent review by Brian Vickers (The Times Literary Supplement, Feb. 14, 2020) of Volumes 3 (The Satyres), 4.1 (The Songs and Sonnets), and 5 (The Verse Letters) reflects the praise that the Donne project has received from the scholarly community: “These volumes are altogether a formidable achievement. The complex typesetting of manuscript stemmas, tables of editions and variants, pages and pages of textual collations, has been achieved with great clarity and accuracy. The study of Donne’s poetry has been put on an entirely new and solid footing;” and “this is the most innovative modern presentation of a Renaissance poet, setting new standards for an edition from manuscript sources.”
Michelle Eble was selected as one of the 2019-2020 ECU Scholar-Teacher recipients by the ECU Office of Faculty Excellence. The award recognizes faculty members who effectively integrate research and creative activity into classroom teaching.

Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs received the ECU Centennial Award for Excellence: Service for her extensive service to the Gender Studies Program and to the Department of English, including her advocacy for fixed-term faculty.

Timm Hackett was named a recipient of the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Fixed-Term Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award for 2019-2020. He was recognized for his dedication to teaching and mentoring and for his excellent service, including his leadership on teaching with technology, which has been crucial during the pandemic.

Brent Henze was awarded ECU’s 2019-2020 Max Ray Joyner Award for Excellence in Teaching through Distance Education in recognition of his teaching, advising, and mentoring of students in the department’s Technical and Professional Communication MA concentration and certificate.

Amanda Klein received the 2019-2020 ECU Board of Governors Distinguished Professor for Teaching Award for her excellent teaching in Film Studies. The award recognizes and supports superior teaching at East Carolina University.

Tracy Morse was presented the ECU Centennial Award for Excellence: Spirit for her committed leadership of the Writing Foundations program and her work for accessibility and inclusion in writing classes and beyond.

Liza Wieland received the ECU Lifetime Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Activity. Her achievements were celebrated at ECU’s Research and Scholarship Awards ceremony in the spring.
Will Banks and Matt Cox have received the 2020 Lavender Rhetorics Award for Excellence in Queer Scholarship from the Conference on College Composition and Communication. This award recognizes their book Re/Orienting Writing Studies: Queer Methods, Queer Projects, which was co-edited with Caroline Dadas and published by Utah State University Press.

Margaret Bauer and Donna Kain received an ECU Faculty Senate Summer Teaching Grant for their project “Editing/Publishing Training Workshops and Modules for ENGL 3870 and 4890–4891.” The team is working to develop innovative, reusable training modules for lessons on employing style guides, formatting different kinds of content, fact- and quote-checking, editing, acquiring images and permissions, and managing layout.

Michelle Eble received the 2020 Technical and Scientific Communication Award in the category of Best Original Collection of Essays in Technical or Scientific Communication from the Conference on College Composition and Communication. The award recognizes Key Theoretical Frameworks: Teaching Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century, which was co-edited with Angela M. Haas and published by Utah State University Press.

Erin Frost was honored as a Servire Society member for completing 100 or more hours of community service in 2019.

Brian Glover received a $6,000 NEH Summer Stipend for his project “The Boswell Club of Chicago.” He will be writing an article based on his research in the archives of the Boswell Club of Chicago (1944-1972), exploring the role of this society on the American reception of Scottish writer James Boswell.

Marame Gueye received a Harriot College of Arts and Sciences travel grant.

Laura Jolly was honored as a Servire Society member for completing 100 or more hours of community service in 2019.

Andrea Kitta was honored as a Servire Society member for completing 100 or more hours of community service in 2019.

Lucy Wilmer was honored as a Servire Society member for completing 100 or more hours of community service in 2019.

Eddie Moore, Jenn Sisk, and Reggie Watson were celebrated on Valentine’s Day at a “We Love Our Faculty and Staff Lunch” hosted by the Pirate Academic Success Center.

Joyner Recognizes Faculty Authors

Late in the fall 2019 semester, Joyner Library’s Faculty Book Awards celebrated the accomplishments of the following faculty who have “contributed to the prestige of ECU and the creation and dissemination of knowledge through the publication of scholarly books.”

Michael Albers and Suzan Flanagan (co-editors). Editing in the Modern Classroom. Taylor and Francis.

Will Banks and Matthew Cox (co-editors with Carolina Dadas). Re/Orienting Writing Studies: Queer Methods, Queer Projects. Utah State University Press.


Veteran to Scholar Boot Camp Receives 2-Year NEH Grant

East Carolina University’s Veteran to Scholar Boot Camp received a $97,163 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This funding will support two years of the summer bridge program for new student veterans. Participants earn Humanities course credit while learning to navigate student life and prepare for academic success through the study of literature, film, medical humanities, and folklore. They are also assisted by ECU Student Veteran Services staff members who provide guidance on managing veteran benefits.

Established in 2017, the boot camp was developed with funding support from the National Endowment for the Humanities’ Dialogues on the Experience of War initiative. Co-directors of the program are Anna Froula, associate professor in the Department of English, and Sheena Eagan, assistant professor in the Department of Bioethics and Interdisciplinary Studies. Department of English faculty who are active in the program include Andrea Kitta, Sean Morris, and Zack Perkinson. Shown are several veteran-scholars who have recently completed the program.

NSF-Funded HurriCon Brings Natural Disaster Experts to Campus

Donna Kain worked with faculty from across campus to organize and host HurriCon: Science at the Intersection of Hurricanes and the Populated Coast in February. Co-organizers of the National Science Foundation-funded event included Jamie Kruse (Economics), Rachel Gittman (Biology), and Mary Farwell (Biology).

The conference brought together experts whose research focuses on hurricanes, severe weather, coastal flooding, and related issues. The emphasis was on communicating across disciplines and among scientists and stakeholders. The $100,000 grant awarded to ECU for the conference included development of forthcoming proceedings and publications. As part of the second day of the conference, Kain and Carolyn Dunn conducted a workshop on risk communication for science professionals. Dunn is an assistant professor in the Department of Technology Systems and is a graduate of English’s PhD program in Writing, Rhetoric, and Professional Communication.
Folklorist Offers Insight into the Importance of Cultural Literacy

Andrea Kitta – a folklorist with a specialty in medicine, belief, and the supernatural – has been in demand following the recent publication of *The Kiss of Death: Contagion, Contamination, and Folklore* (Utah State University Press) in which she “offers new insight into the nature of vernacular conceptions of health and sickness and how medical and scientific institutions can use cultural literacy to better meet their communities’ needs.”

The book – which is available without cost to educators during the COVID-19 pandemic – has been named the recipient of the 2020 Brian McConnell Book Award by the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research. Kitta’s previous book, *Vaccinations and Public Concern in History: Legend, Rumor, and Risk Perception* (Routledge), received the award in 2012.

Kitta was interviewed by Stitcher and by New Books Network for their respective podcasts; and she designed a popular video to help explain rumors, legends, and conspiracy theories. In addition, she was quoted in the following media:

- “The Charm of Conspiracy Theories: 4 Experts Analyze the Phenomenon of Conspiracy Theories, in the Middle of the Pandemic.” *Huffington Post Greece.*
- “ECU Professor Discusses COVID-19 Conspiracies Following Book Release.” *East Carolinian.*
- “COVID-19: Fact vs. Fiction.” *WNCT-TV.*
- “ECU Professor Say Coronavirus Conspiracy Theories are Nothing New.” *WCTI-TV.*
- “Why are There so Many Conspiracy Theories around the Coronavirus?” *Al Jazeera.*
- “Why the Corona Virus Outbreak Lends Itself Perfectly to Fake News.” *Nederlandsdagblad.*

Donna Kain (above right) appeared on *Dr. Phil* to discuss dealing with and communicating about risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated issues such as social isolation. Her research includes risk communication and natural hazards. Kain was also interviewed by WITN-TV about the #MeToo Movement following the Harvey Weinstein verdict.
Film Festival Creates International Community

The Down East Flick Fest began as the brainchild of a weekly writers' group that met at the former Tipsy Teapot in Uptown Greenville. Now, its reach extends beyond our geographic community with submissions from over 50 countries.

Celestine Davis – the festival’s director since its inception in 2015 – is excited about the growth each year has brought, and she hopes to move forward with the event in late September. “We will offer live streaming and limited seating events that will surpass guidelines and best practices for all viewers' safety. We will announce the details concerning live streaming and seated events closer to the festival dates.”

Beyond providing a platform for a variety of genres, the festival’s Community Impact Film Series promotes cultural literacy, encourages community engagement, and ignites meaningful post-screening discussions between the directors and the audience. A Student Filmmaker Initiative and a COVID-19 Pandemic Reflections category have recently been added.

Anna Froula, Donna Kain, Randall Martoccia, and Gera Miles have served as jurors, panel facilitators, technology managers, and hosts of interactive screening events. Award-winning filmmaker Ken Wyatt from the School of Art & Design has served as the discussion moderator for the Community Impact Film Series and has solicited student volunteers.

Top left: CUNY MFA film student Maggie Kamal with Hani Saqr, writer-director of Black Coffee.

Above: Cast, crew, and supporters of A Cure for Kyle gather during the 2018 festival. Director-screenwriter NaQuia Lowery-Jones is second from the right.
Class “Reacts to the Past” While Learning Research, Writing Skills

After participating in a role-playing workshop last fall, Angela Raper transformed her ENGL 1100 classrooms into 1913 Greenwich Village. Students were assigned historical identities to explore and embody – writers, suffragettes, politicians, and Bohemians – with factions competing against each other for points. Students met in teams, organized debates, and found ways to express what their characters’ beliefs were through speeches and public presentations. Most participants got into the spirit of the game, often meeting outside of class to discuss strategy and to research their characters. Student Sarah Ferguson (right) is shown making a presentation on women’s rights as journalist/playwright Susan Glaspell.

To set the scene, Raper played period music as students arrived in class and often appeared in Bohemian-inspired costumes. Her classes were featured on the ECU Blog.

The fall 2019 workshop – Reacting to the Past: Greenwich Village 1913: Suffrage, Labor, and the New Woman – was hosted and co-facilitated on campus by Kirstin Squint, Whichard Visiting Distinguished Professor in the Humanities: English and Gender Studies.

Scholar Discusses the Importance, Relevance of the Humanities

Timothy Aubry (left) of Baruch College, CUNY, presented “The Humanities!” in February, discussing the current crisis in and student expectations and perceptions of the academic disciplines.

The lecture was co-sponsored by the Whichard Distinguished Visiting Professorship in the Humanities and the Departments of English, Foreign Languages and Literatures, History, and Philosophy and Religious Studies.

ECU Hosts Annual TALGS Conference

The TESOL/Applied Linguistics Graduate Students Conference (TALGS) was held on campus in February. This annual academic event – spearheaded by Mark Johnson – brought together over 70 linguistics and TESOL graduate students, faculty, and practitioners from across the state.

Greensboro College co-hosted the conference under the leadership of Michelle Plaisance, who has been the co-coordinator for TALGS since 2017. Along with Xatli Stox from the NC Department of Public Instruction, she accompanied a delegation of K-12 teacher/presenters through her “Together for ELs” (English Learners) focus group. They spent a good part of the day before the conference working through their presentations and planning future projects.

The keynote speaker was Kent State University’s Ryan T. Miller whose research focuses on the development of second language reading and writing skills.
Panels & Presentations

**Marame Gueye.** “Discourses of Wifing and Gender in Senegalese Popular Culture.” Gender to a Tea. ECU.


**John Hoppenthaler.** “Essential Contemporary Texts in the Classroom: Natasha Trethewey’s *Native Guard.*” Annual Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference. San Antonio, TX. [Panel]


**Jim Kirkland.** “Teaching the Monstrous.” Far West Popular Culture Association Conference. Las Vegas NV.

**Amber Flora Thomas.** “Negative Capability as a Necessary Agency for Inspiration.” NC Poetry Society. Virtual meeting.

Promotions & Title Changes

**Guiseppe Getto** was promoted to Associate Professor.

**Timm Hackett** advanced in title to Senior Teaching Instructor.

**Mark Johnson** was promoted to Associate Professor.

**Gera Miles** advanced in title to Senior Teaching Instructor.

**Carla Pastor** advanced in title to Senior Teaching Instructor.

Transition

**Suzan Flanagan** has accepted a tenure-track position in technical communication and editing at Utah Valley University in Orem, UT.

In Memoriam

**Joyce Middleton,** professor emeritus and former director of ECU’s Ethnic Studies Program, died April 13.

Her publications included *Rhetorics of Whiteness: Post-racial Hauntings in Popular Culture, Social Media, and Education,* “Finding Democracy in Our Argument Culture: Listening to Spike Lee’s Jazz Funeral on the Levees,” and “Orality, Literacy, and Memory in Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon.*”

Dr. Middleton taught courses about film as public pedagogy and contributed to a festschrift that was presented to Morrison in celebration of the author’s 80th birthday.

**Joseph Campbell** died May 25.

Teaching primarily foundation courses at ECU and at Pitt Community College, his research interests included modernist poets, transcendental literature, and queer theory.

He was the faculty advisor for the student activist group, RESIST (Relentlessly Ending Social Injustice through Solidarity & Teaching) and presented workshops on writing and advocacy.

Throughout his career, Campbell served on numerous university and departmental committees.
While spring commencement ceremonies were forced online by COVID-19, the pride we have in our graduates was not diminished. This spring, 2 PhD students, 14 MA students, and 43 BA students received degrees in English. Messages from members of the faculty and words of wisdom from our outstanding undergraduate and graduate students can be found online. Go English!

### Publications & Creative Activity

**Ina Cariño** (BA ’16). “It Feels Good to Cook Rice.” *Waxwing.*

**Ina Cariño** (BA ’16). “Soiled” *Waxwing.*

**Ina Cariño** (BA ’16). “Triptych with Cityscape” *Waxwing.*

**Ina Cariño** (BA ’16). “Watch Animals Closely for Strange Behavior” *Waxwing.*

**Ina Cariño** (BA ’16). “Birthstone” *Waxwing.*

**Al Maginnes** (BA ’84). “Night Deer.” *Bear Review.*

**Al Maginnes** (BA ’84). “Dark History.” *Bear Review.*

**Temptuous Mckoy** (PhD, ’19), **Cecilia D. Shelton** (PhD, ’19), and **Brittany Hull.**


**Autumn Outlaw** (BA ’20). “A Silicon Situation.” *BlazeVOX.*

**Mayee Zhu** (MA ’20). “2112.” *101 Words.*

### Awards & Honors


**Jessica Cory** (MA ’12) was nominated by UNC-Greensboro to participate in the PhD Student Summer Residency at the National Humanities Center.

**Alicia Hatcher** (PhD student). Amplification Award. Association of Teachers of Technical Writing.

**Matthew Jennette** (BA ’20). Robert H. Wright Alumni Leadership Award. ECU.

**Holly Mathews** (MA ’19) has accepted an offer, with funding, from Indiana University-Bloomington to start her PhD in Folklore.

### Professors Emeriti

**Alex Albright** discussed Pitt County herbalist Emma Dupree with the Laupus Library’s Medical History Interest Group.

**Peter Makuck** recently published two poems – “Left” and “Response” – in *Vox Populi.*

Christopher Salerno (BA ’99, MA ’01). Lexi Rudnitsky Editor’s Choice Award. Persea.

June Sylvester Saraceno (BA ’79). Literary Artist Grant. Sierra Arts Foundation.

Outreach & Media Coverage

Ina Cariño (BA ’16) was interviewed by Your Artsy Girl Podcast.

Carleigh Davis (PhD ’18) is featured in a Missouri University of Science and Technology video discussing the differences between technical writing and conventional writing.

Olivia Harvey (MA ’19) and Courntee Nicole Bishop (MA ’19) received special mentions in the ECU Graduate School’s spring newsletter.

Laura Pittman (MA ’20) and her dog Harley were featured in an ECU Blog. Harley works at Vidant Medical Center, sniffing out dangerous bacteria.

Message from TCR Editor Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs

Surreal. I can think of no other word to describe the spring semester. One day, we were excited about our Spring Break plans…and the next, we were frantically redesigning our face-to-face courses to become online ones.

At the same time, we were worried about our friends, our families, our students, and ourselves. And we began to fear for our country and about the coming challenges that would surely alter our collective universe. Late night phone calls to colleagues revolved around how best to communicate with students who had stopped attending, how to be the adult in the (now-virtual) room when we actually wanted to hide under the covers, and…“how are you really – are you ok?”

COVID-19 had only recently entered our vocabularies – a series of news items to add to the drip-drip-drip of daily stressors. However, we quickly became fanatical about The Numbers – and almost as weary of WebEx meetings and canceled events. We became outraged as we heard of Black women and men dying at the hands of rogue officers, and we cried together as we watched families mourn on the evening news. But confined to our homes, many of us found solace and retrospection in the quiet of The New Reality. The pedagogical slate had been unexpectedly washed clean: How could we re-learn how to teach in its purest form? And how could we better serve our students?

Throughout the weeks following our abrupt transition to online teaching, Timm Hackett – ever patient, ever knowledgeable – answered our desperate emails. As chair of the university’s Distance Education and Learning Technology Committee and as liaison to Harriot College for all things Canvas, he helped us to navigate the nuances of this newly adopted software system.

Despite all of the challenges, our work continued. Faculty continued to teach and to publish; our office staff kept the world turning; and the Department of English’s three journals – the North Carolina Literary Review, Tar River Poetry, and The Lookout – met their spring deadlines.

But most importantly, perhaps, we began to feel a bit more hopeful. For the children who had been born during the tragedy of 9/11 had graduated amidst a plague and had made us all deeply proud.

The Fine Print: If we missed any news-worthy events that took place before May 30, 2020, or – gasp! – made an error, please forward a gentle note to editor Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs at dudasikwiggsc@ecu.edu.