

Anthos

ETSU Department of Literature and Language Newsletter



Upcoming SASCOL Conference

The Southern Appalachian Student Conference on Literature (SASCOL) is currently seeking abstract and paper submissions from graduate and advanced undergraduate students for its 10th annual conference, which will take place on April 18th, 2020 at ETSU's Millennium Center

The keynote speaker SASCOL 2020 is Dr. Erin Presley, Associate Professor of English at Eastern Kentucky University. Dr. Presley earned her B.A. and M.A. from East Tennessee State University, and she will be returning to ETSU to deliver her keynote lecture titled "Horace Kephart's Place in Appalachian Studies."

Student submissions for SASCOL can be about literature from any genre, region, or historic period. Abstracts of 100-250 words should be emailed to the conference organizers, Dr. Joshua Reid (reidjs@etsu.edu) and Dr. Thomas Alan Holmes (holmest@etsu.edu), by March 1st, 2020. In addition to their abstracts, students may submit completed essays of approximately 6-8 double-spaced pages in length by March 1st, 2020, for consideration for

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Fall 2019

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A Note from the Chair

Anthos provides us with the means to reflect back at the exciting stories of our alumni, students, and faculty! In this issue, we celebrate the achievements of alum who continue to inspire our students by sharing their experiences of taking the knowledge they gathered from ETSU to places far from our Appalachian home. We celebrate the lives of our faculty whose immigrant stories inspire our students to see beyond a single narrative. We celebrate our students who believe in memory and honor those whose footprints remain forever with us. In our stories, we see a beautiful and bold future. Our faculty have led students to move beyond paper, taking hold of the digital age by creating blogs and by moving back issues of the *Mockingbird* into a digital archive. We honor the past in order to shape a future of adventure and access.

Literature and Language

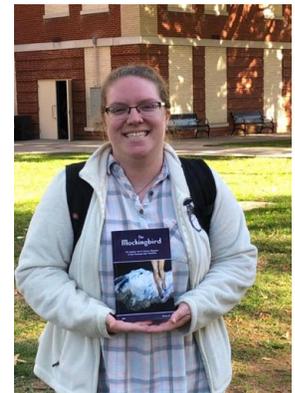
Join Us on Your Journey

At the center of our philosophy is the ancient credo: “know thyself.” To us, the faculty and staff in the Literature and Language Department, that means working to educate the person and the passion through individual student care, a rich diversity of class options, and real world growth opportunities such as internships and study abroad. Our classrooms are everywhere – on campus, abroad, in the workplace and online. Our students succeed because we teach transferable 21st Century skills like written and oral communication, complex reading methods, research techniques, long-term project organization, and cultural competence. We create a nurturing environment that helps build a passionate resilience in our students because they find their unique critical and imaginative voice. Our students discover what motivates and drives their dreams. We seek to facilitate intense engagement with the human wisdom of the past and the possibilities of each individual student’s future. Join us on your journey!



***The Mockingbird* is now digitally archived!**

Thanks to English M.A. student Abby Lewis, issues of The Mockingbird from 1971 until 2016 are now available digitally through the ETSU Digital Commons website. Lewis used her R.A. hours this past summer in Ball Hall using a high-powered scanner to create digital versions of the old texts. Now you can peruse the publications of students past and download a PDF of any issue you choose. Thank you Abby for this valuable service to the department!!



welcome little one

On November 7th, Drs. Matthew and Isabel Fehskens welcomed the newest member of their family to the world: Amalur Najma Fehskens Gómez. Congratulations!



Congratulations to Liv Detwiler!

In 2019, the “Fresh Start Morning Club” began with a recognized need amongst Roosevelt Elementary School students who were arriving at school underprepared for the day. The program provides students with supports such as basic hygiene supplies, a quiet place for breakfast, homework assistance, and a clean set of clothes while theirs get washed.

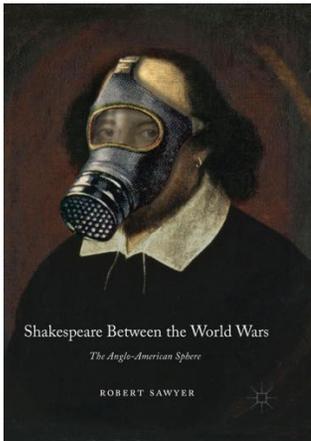
Our vision for ETSU Elevates is to build and improve upon the existing *Fresh Start* program. We will partner with the school’s faculty and staff, local businesses, and other organizations, such as ETSU’s Student Social Work Association. The purpose of this initiative is to



After serving as Dean of the Honors College from 2014-2019, [Dr. Judy Slagle](#) returned to teach English full-time in the Department of Literature and Language in August 2019. Prior to her time as Dean of the Honors College, Judy served as Chair of the Department from 2000-2014.

Dr. Slagle is happy to retire from administration after nearly two decades of service and return to the classroom. The department is glad to welcome her back! In the Spring term 2020, Dr. Slagle will teach a course devoted to early 20th century British detective novels titled, "Murder Between the Wars: The Golden Age of British Crime Fiction."

Shakespeare Between the World Wars (2019) draws parallels between Shakespearean scholarship, criticism, and production from 1920 to 1940 and the chaotic years of the Interwar era. The book begins with the scene in *Hamlet* where the Prince confronts his mother, Gertrude. Just as the closet scene can be read as a productive period bounded by devastation and determination on both sides, [Dr. Robert Sawyer](#) shows that the years between the World Wars were equally positioned. Examining performance and offering detailed textual analyses, Sawyer considers the re-evaluation of Shakespeare in the Anglo-American sphere after the

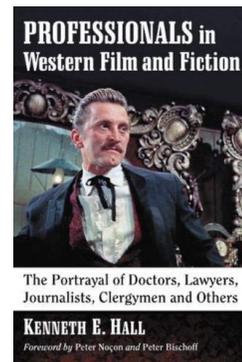


First World War. Instead of the dried, barren earth depicted by T. S. Eliot and others in the 1920s and 1930s, this book argues that the literary landscape resembled a paradoxically fertile wasteland, for just below the arid plain of the time lay the seeds for artistic renewal and rejuvenation which would finally flourish in the later twentieth century.

The Bert C. Bach Creative Writing Initiative hosted two distinguished poets this year for readings from their recently published works. Dr. Joseph Campana, Alan Dugald McKillip Professor of English at Rice University, read from *The Book of Life*, and he also gave a separate lecture on "Shakespeare's Curse." Savannah Sipple, assistant professor of English at Bluegrass Community and Technical College, read from *WWJD and Other Poems*. [Link here for more information about the Bert C. Bach Creative Writing Initiative.](#) [Link here for information about the thriving Creative Writing minor.](#)



[Dr. Ken Hall](#) has published a new book: *Professionals in Western Film and Fiction* (McFarland, 2019). This book compares the roles of civil professionals in most American Westerns to those in work on the 1910 Mexican Revolution. Included are studies on the Santiago Toole novels by Richard Wheeler, *Strange Lady in Town* with Greer Garson and *La sombra del Caudillo* by Martin Luis Guzman.



Sigma Tau Delta, ETSU's chapter of the English Honors Society, sponsored a brand-new series this year: The Sigma Tau Delta Lecture Series. Two Literature and Language professors presented excerpts from their new books at well-attended talks at the Reece Museum. Dr. Robert Sawyer presented "The Othello Music': Celebrating Paul



Robeson's Songs of Freedom" in September from his new book *Shakespeare Between the World Wars* (Palgrave, 2019). Dr. Matthew Holtmeier gave his presentation in October on "Revolution Reconsidered: The Shifting Strategies of Political Cinema" from his book *Contemporary Political Cinema* (Edinburgh University Press, 2019).



Dr. Raluca Negrisanu Takes ETSU Students to TFLTA Conference

On April 6th, 3 ETSU German Majors and one ETSU German Alumni together with Dr. Raluca Negrisanu presented at the TFLTA-Mini Conference in Knoxville, TN at the Sacred Heart Catholic School. Presentation was entitled *Wie Lernen Studenten? Was Funktioniert und was Nicht? How do Students Learn? What Works and What Does Not?*

Presenters: Raluca Negrisanu, Haley Bradshaw, & Marianne Perkins, East Tennessee State University; Andrew Graves, The University of Tennessee

The session was a faculty-student collaborative presentation about innovative and communicative activities that work in the German classes. Students demonstrated the use of *Scribus*, an educational program to create materials, shared their best learning experiences at different language levels and engaged the audience in a discussion on types of activities that are (or not) effective and meaningful in learning German.



Classics graduate Sage Blalock (M.Div. Wake Forest) has a very productive theology podcast called Bite Size Theology. Check it out!
< <https://everydayexiles.com/podcasts/bitesizetheology/>>



Love theology, but don't have the time for big dusty books? Bite Size Theology is just for you! A podcast that explores complex issues in under five minutes!

SASCOL continued from page one

the Achievement in Essay Award. Winners of the Achievement in Essay Award receive a certificate and a cash prize (last year's prize: \$250), as well

as recognition on the conference website. Last year's conference featured 41 presenters from ETSU, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, Emory & Henry College, King University, and Belmont University. SASCOL offers students a welcoming yet professional environment to present their research and to network with faculty and other students in their academic areas. As Samantha Campbell, English M.A. student, said, "Participating in SASCOL is an enriching and enlightening opportunity for students. It gives rising scholars an opportunity to experience academic conferences in a less intimidating environment and allows them opportunities they might not have elsewhere, such as organizing and chairing their own panels, sharing their research, and the possibility of recognition for excellence in academic writing." Also, Seth Lewis presented in 2019 as an undergraduate, and he said about his experience, "SASCOL provided me with the first opportunity to share my research in a conference setting, and in doing so, I gained the knowledge and confidence to continue presenting my work at the professional level."

SASCOL has been supported by the Department of Literature and Language, Dr. Bert C. Bach and the Office of the Provost, and Dr. Brian Chisom, alumnus of ETSU and now Associate Vice President of Roanoke College. For more information link to [SASCOL](#)



Paris

This past June, I went on the trip for the ETSU class on "French Classicism in Contemporary Paris" led by [Dr. Kölzow](#). It goes without saying that it was absolutely wonderful spending three weeks of the summer in Paris, France, but some of the best parts of the trip were due to the



class and organization of it. The incorporation of our observances of the modern day culture with the history we were reading about in the classroom was really neat. I loved how part of the class included us having to navigate through

Paris, and learning about the culture and the city's evolution through doing that. It was great going to the Louvre, also, and having the amazing museum guide that we had made it an even more enriching experience. She taught us so much more about art history in just a couple hours than we could have possibly discovered by just wandering around the enormous place on our own. Another interesting part of the program was the little day trips we took to Versailles, Vaux le Vicomte, and Fontainebleau. I personally could never get tired of spending every minute in Paris, but it was nice to go outside of the city and be around some nature and learn in a different environment for a day. Probably my favorite part about the course was Dr. Kölzow's study tour assignment. It was a fair amount of work and was definitely a challenge in some ways, but it had a profound impact on my overall knowledge of Paris and the historical-modern study goal of the course.

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Liv Detwiler continued from page 2

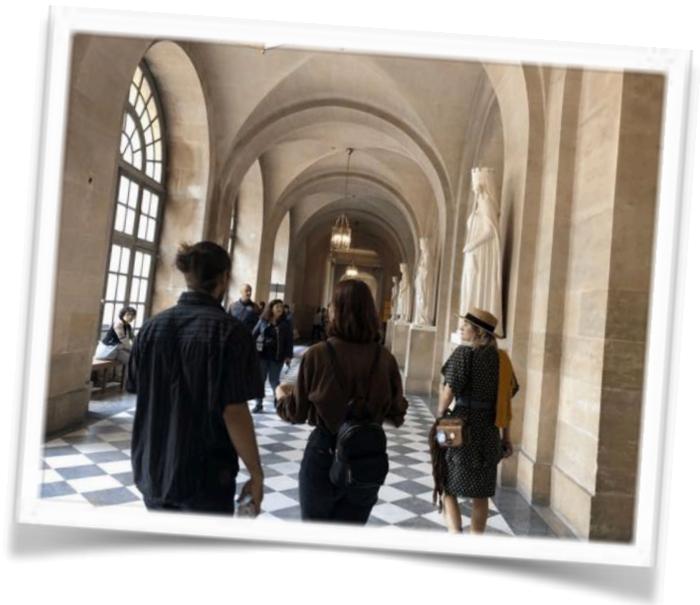
offer a safe space for schoolwork, breakfast, and personal hygiene products to students while educating and encouraging them to establish basic self-care routines.

We will establish a permanent room for *Fresh Start* with the guidance of school faculty and staff. We will supply the room with hygiene products (i.e. toothbrushes/toothpaste, sanitary wipes, dry shampoo, deodorant, etc.) with donations from local businesses, and outfit the space with needed plumbing, storage and fresh paint. We will also enlist volunteers from local organizations, like ETSU's SSWA, to provide homework tutoring, and D-B EXCEL high school students to work on inspirational graphic designs to help make the space come alive.

The goal of this program is to enhance students' educational experience, boost their self-confidence and help them develop a sense of self-worth. We also aim to halt bullying of students that are more likely to be targeted due to lack of cleanliness and confidence that can be a result of disadvantages created by poverty.

Paris continued from page 5

I learned the most from these hands-on experiences and hearing my peers talk about what they found interesting about the history, and it was also a great way to see more spots in Paris that I may not have gone to otherwise! Because of a lot of these assignments and opportunities organized by the program, I feel like I now have a really deep and intimate understanding of Paris, the historic and present, and the culture— and I know that anytime that I go back, I will be able to use everything I gained during this summer's study abroad to help myself or anyone that is with me! In all, I definitely feel like a changed person after going on this trip and I would encourage anyone and everyone to take advantage of all opportunities like this one I had! --Claire Alfonso



 **WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM**
College of Arts & Sciences
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

For all the latest news from Women's Studies, please check out their [ETSU online presence](#) and their [newsletter](#).

Johnson City Film Festival

As programming directors, Drs. Matthew Holtmeier and Chelsea Wessels helped organize



the first ever Johnson City Film Festival, which took place November 8-9 and was an enormous success. They had over 100 film submissions to the festival, and chose just under 50 for participation. In addition to the fifty

filmmakers, 170 audience tickets were sold prior to the festival, with more purchased on site. The festival served as a venue for a rich diversity of independent films, from feature-length to shorts, from documentary to genre filmmaking, from films about Appalachia to foreign films. Attendance for each film was robust, with 100 attending the final screening of *It All Begins with a Song*. In addition to the film screenings, the festival hosted free workshops on topics relating to directing, screenwriting, acting, and filmmaking for kids and teens. “Developing partnerships between ETSU and the community, especially around independent film, is so important, and I’m really happy that it was so successful,” Dr. Wessels said, “We’re already starting to plan for year two.” [Link here](#) for more information about the Festival. You can learn more about the Film Studies minor, which Drs. Wessels and Holtmeier direct.



The Art of the Script

After earning degrees in English and gaining teaching experience at ETSU, Ray Jones (BA 12, MA 14) moved to Boston to earn his MFA in screenwriting at Boston University. He was one of a select few allowed to teach screenwriting to undergraduates at BU, and while in school, he collaborated on a short film titled *Blind* with a fellow ETSU alum, who was attending Savannah College of Art and Design. After graduation, he moved to Los Angeles to participate in an internship program, working at NBCUniversal for Captivate Entertainment, which is responsible for the *Jason Bourne* franchise. There, he worked in development, particularly on the show *Treadstone*, which is currently airing on the USA network. Ray moved back to Tennessee this past August. Since being home, he has returned to his passion for teaching and has begun getting involved with the filmmaking scene in East Tennessee. He recently lead a workshop in screenwriting for the Johnson City Film Festival and hopes to help young independent filmmakers and students navigate the art of the script.



Students in the LCRC Celebrate Día de los Muertos with an Altar to Dr. Ardis Nelson

Students belonging to the Hispanic Culture Club HASCA celebrated Day of the Dead in the LCRC by creating an Altar for Dr. Ardis Nelson, Spanish Professor and founder of the LCRC who passed away in 2017. Students also organized face painting, provided pan de muerto, music, and other traditional food to celebrate.



Click here to learn more about the [Language and Culture Resource Center \(LCRC\)](#).

The LCRC Vision: "To expand community partnerships and to bridge boundaries between the non-English-speaking and English-speaking communities in East Tennessee."

Courtney Skiera-Vaughn and Free the Girls

On April 18, 2019, Courtney Skiera-Vaughn returned to ETSU campus to speak to Katherine Weiss' Themes in Women's Literature class about her work with [Free The Girls](#), a charity organization that helps former victims of sex trafficking find self-sufficiency, empowerment

and agency in building their own business. Free the Girls works with women in Africa and in Central America, providing them with a start-up quantity of new and gently used bras! Bras are considered luxury items in these countries and bring in high dollars when sold on the street. After women have established themselves, they can continue purchasing bras from Free the Girls to sell at a profit. Now a Ph.D. student in Psychology, Skiera-Vaughn shared numerous success stories from her work with Free the Girls. Her talk was inspirational to the students in Dr. Weiss' class and left everyone wanting to find ways to do more to make a positive difference in the world.



<http://voyagehouston.com/interview/meet-courtney-skiera-vaughn-free-girls/>

Avery Hall's Linguistics Adventure

I knew that I always loved language. As an American who grew up in rural Tennessee, even hearing Hindi, or Russian, or Vietnamese spoken anywhere around me was an exciting thing. In high school we were given three options for foreign language: German, French, or Spanish. I settled on French because enough people learn Spanish and most Germans seem to speak English. I fell in love with the language, and I ended up majoring in it at ETSU. With a major in foreign languages, my minor naturally became linguistics. I had no idea what career path that would take me down, I never thought too hard about those questions. However, I knew I loved studying Chomsky's colorless green ideas, and language trees, and breaking down the sentence The magician touched the audience member with the wand into its several ambiguous meanings. I loved every linguistics course I took, and I had no idea that only a few years later I would be applying some of the techniques and theories I learned in actual fieldwork.



Due to some unexpected and exciting events after studying abroad in France, I ended up learning Portuguese. I wanted to put my love of languages to practical use, and so I decided to pursue my master's degree at Boston University in international affairs in the hope of joining the State Department. This led me to being paired with a professor at Boston University who worked in the Brazilian Amazon and needed my language skills. Her work involved documenting and assisting an Indigenous group of Yanomami, an ethnic group native to Brazil, in their efforts to create an ecotourism expedition to the summit of their sacred mountain. I was brought along because of my linguistic background to help record their language and translate the tour guide booklet into English, Portuguese, and Yanomami. The book would contain phrases useful throughout the entirety of the expedition so an American tourist could ask anything from, "I'm hungry" to "Are we there yet?"



I spent 5 weeks in their village of Maturacá, and the entire time there I was absorbing, recording, and learning the Yanomami language as best I could. Their language had been studied in the past by missionaries who had come before, by Spanish speaking academics in Venezuela (Yanomami are native there too), and by some linguists who accompanied NGO's into the Yanomami territory. However, there were no readily available comprehensive sources on their language, and so I had to start from the ground up on breaking down and understanding it to the point we could ensure a good translation for the guide book. I sat down with a Yanomami

community member who was familiar with his language's grammar, and we began work

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translating. I learned about their phonetic system and recorded new words in both their original spelling as well as an IPA equivalent for my understanding. Their language is ergative, and so I worked hard to grasp the grammar by mapping out sentences using sentence structure trees.

There is no way to exaggerate how impossible this task would have been without my linguistics background. Before I even participated in the fieldwork, I made a trip back to ETSU to personally thank professor Elhindi for the skills to be able to participate in something so unique and extraordinary. The curriculum at ETSU provided me with such a strong base of linguistic knowledge from

grammar, to phonology, to sociolinguistics that I conceptually understood everything I was looking for in my fieldwork. It is strange to imagine that the diagrams we practiced in class would eventually spring up in my life. Talking through my knowledge of linguistics was what put me ahead of other potential Portuguese speakers to participate in this fieldwork. Not only that, but in the end my professor was delighted with the linguistic data we returned with. More than simply sharing my own experience of how my ETSU linguistics background played a role in my life, I hope that I can encourage others to dive into entry level linguistics and see how fun and rewarding studying this uniquely human ability is. Who knows? You may even end up in a village in the Amazon.



Raluca Negrisanu: Everyone Has a Story

The Story Town and The Language and Culture Research Center organized a series of storytelling events titled *Everyone has a Story* at the McKinney Center in Jonesborough. One of the guest speakers was Dr. Raluca Negrisanu, who told her immigration story on March 26th. She talked about growing up in Romania during the communist dictatorship of Ceausescu, learning German and English at a very young age, and later studying language at the college level. Raluca arrived in the US in 2001 as a foreign student at UT Knoxville, where she graduated with a PhD in German. She entertained the audience with stories of cultural shock when she first arrived in the US, with thoughts about identity and what it means to be a first generation immigrant in East Tennessee.



We Want to Hear From You!

The Department of Literature and Languages would appreciate receiving news items for the next LILA newsletter, Spring 20. Visit the [department web site](#) for more information about the department.

Anthos Newsletter

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