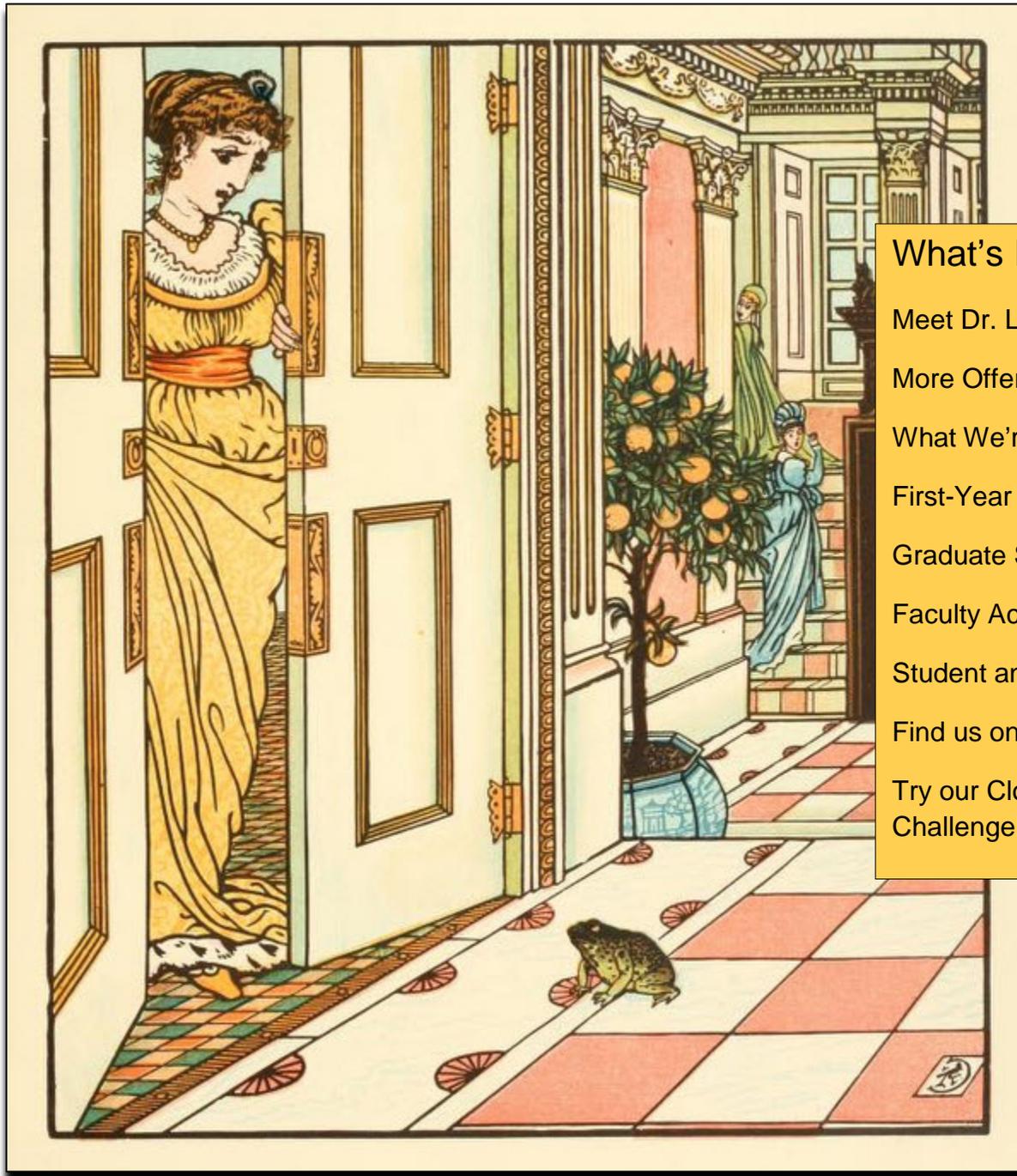


The Vibrant Voice

Department of English Newsletter
Eighth Edition, 2017-18



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Message from the Chair



Greetings from the department chair! The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed about our department. I began serving as chair of the department in July. Before that, I served as Director of First-Year Writing at Clayton State, the Associate Director of Lower Division Studies in English at Georgia State, a history and English teacher at Decatur High School, and an English teacher at Henry County High School in McDonough. I've also worked as a trip leader at a summer camp in Maine (hiking, canoeing, backpacking, cycling), an online writing tutor, an assistant track coach and student council advisor, and a manuscript editor. Currently, I live in Avondale Estates with my wife and three children, Sam (15), Zach (12), and Ellie (11).

The English department offers a minor and major in English and numbers 110 students in three concentrations: literature, writing, and teacher education. We also offer a badge in Professional Writing for any major at CSU.

Students can earn a degree 100% online or seated, or a mix of both. They can also earn a bachelor's and master's degree in 5 years in our new combined, "fast-track" degree.

Students in our program enjoy internships in textbook publishing, publishing the literary magazine, publishing the newsletter, and maintaining our social media. Students can also work as tutors in the Writers' Studio. Our courses cover a range of literature, writing, and teacher education. New offerings this fall include Practical Grammar, Writing for Digital Media, Cultural Rhetorics, and Latina(x) Literatures.

The faculty at CSU are busy teaching, publishing, presenting at conferences, and serving on committees, but we are never too busy for students. In fact, our small classes with an instructor-to-student ratio of 1:20 in most classes make it possible for students to work with professors on projects, publications, and conference presentations. Many of our students have published in our custom textbook *Connections* and our literary magazine *Cygnets*. Others have presented poetry at the Decatur Book Festival and conference papers at professional conferences. Our graduates leave having mastered persuasion and research in the art of a nuanced literary analysis, desktop publishing, and writing for social media. The department prepares students for an array of careers that require flexible, smart thinkers who are excellent writers, astute analysts, skilled researchers, wide readers and deep thinkers, and curious, hard-working professionals. I look forward to working with you!

—Dr. Mary R. Lamb

English Department Increases Online Course Offerings

Due to a growing demand for online courses, the English department has increased the number of courses offered online in recent years. In fact, students can now earn a B.A. in English completely online.

In response to the popularity of online courses, almost all permanent faculty teach at least one course online, and all online faculty must complete Clayton State's Online Academy before they can teach online for the university. Faculty are also encouraged to complete the Quality Matters course for additional professional feedback on their course design. Both trainings aim to help faculty design courses that are user-friendly for students and that are tailored to the courses goals and learning outcomes of a specific course.

Students can find as much variety in online offerings as they do in seated classes. In the spring of 2018, the English department will offer nearly 20 different courses online. Students can take everything from First-Year Writing courses to Introduction to Creative Writing to Contemporary American Literature to the Senior Capstone course.

Along with a variety of course offerings, faculty create unique learning experiences when teaching online. Dr. Fletcher focuses on building community in her First-Year Writing courses through weekly discussions, peer reviews and plenty of personalized comments on assignments. Similarly, Professor Richardson uses discussion boards to allow students to help each other and discuss assignments and other topics that relate to the course. Videos are another popular element of online courses: Dr. Pratt Russell incorporates video lectures featuring puppets to help her students through Critical Theory, while Dr. Greene asks her Practical Grammar students to create animated videos about one theme addressed in the course. Dr. Ritter's Professional and Technical Writing courses give students the option of participating in PACE projects, and Dr. Goodman uses Skype to engage with students in her Medieval Literature course. You can learn more about our online courses at www.clayton.edu/english.

What We're Reading

Dr. Byrd: *March* by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin and Nate Powell and
The Ministry of Utmost Happiness by Arundhatie Roy

Dr. Greene: *The Mothers* by Brit Bennett and *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi

Dr. McNamara: *Aesop's Fables*, trans Olivia and Robert Temple and
Philip Pullman's New English Version of *Fairy Tales from the Brothers Grimm*

Dr. Muller: *Spy Schools: How the CIA, FBI and Foreign Intelligence* Golden

Dr. Parrott: *Room on the Broom* by Julia Donaldson and Axel Sheffler and
In The Woods by Tana French

Dr. Pfeiffer: *Life Studies* and *For the Union Dead* by Robert Lowell

Professor Richardson: *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research,
and Practice* by Geneva Gay

Dr. Smith: *My Dearest Friend: Letters of Abigail and John Adams*

Meet Our Director of First-Year Writing

June 2017 welcomed the appointment of the English Department's new Director of the First-Year Writing Program (FYWP): Dr. Khalilah Ali. Before joining the faculty at CSU, she worked in multiple spaces designing curricula in both high school and college. Dr. Ali earned her doctorate in Educational Studies with a focus on Literacy, Pedagogy, and Culture from Emory University, as well as an M.Ed. in English Education and B.A. in English Literature and African Studies from Georgia State University. She has also studied African retentions and spirituality in hip-hop and researched African diasporic tradition and syncretic spiritualism in Haiti and Trinidad.

When asked about her specific vision for the FYWP, Dr. Ali acknowledges the benefits of inheriting a well-structured program from the previous director, Dr. Mary Lamb, who is now the English Department Chair. Yet, Dr. Ali also projects her own vision “as a creative, always looking for ways to construct engaging programming that has fidelity to the rigorous expectations embedded in the program.” Dr. Ali further affirms that, “the university should be a space to think about and challenge long held and even new ideas—and the FYWP should support that.”

Dr. Ali envisions the FYWP as a space for students to observe, question, and contribute to conversations surrounding social justice as it relates to writing. She contends, “Our writing program should not only produce students who can identify and construct essays representative of the different genres of writing, we should also be instrumental in cultivating students' abilities to question whose voices/rhetorics/cultures get privileged and why.

Also, students should leave us understanding there are multiple perspectives from which one can read and interpret a variety of texts--i.e. books, journal articles, reports, music, news reports, stop signs, films, plays, poems, symbols, dances, etc.”

Dr. Ali's approach to education is influenced by her background: "As a child of the hip-hop generation and a writer, I define myself as an artist-educator-activist; I work with poets, musicians and emcees in projects designed to expose positive hip-hop to a wider audience. My womanist standpoint allows me to envision a world that deals with the effects of hegemony and how dealing with that inequity can help devise steps to afford the world's children an equal playing field.



Dr. Khalilah Ali
Director of First-Year Writing

In addition to her professional interests and projects, Dr. Ali has two sons and a small shih-tzu named Pupi. She loves 90's hip-hop, spoken word and reading and has a music group with her sons called the Lu Dahlin Trio, which is a mix of bluegrass, rock and rap/poetry.

—Stephanie Richardson



Combined Degree Helps Students Accelerate Their Studies

The Department of English and the School of Graduate Studies have an exciting new opportunity for qualified students to plan a curriculum that leads to both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in five years. This Combined Bachelor's and Master's degree will allow students to receive a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies with an English Concentration within a five-year period. Classes can be taken on campus or online. Students could complete most of this degree online if they wish. If on-campus classes are preferred, core classes can be taken on main campus and at several off-site locations; all on-campus upper-level courses are held at the main campus in Morrow, GA.

The program benefits include:

- accelerating degree completion; shortening time to earn both Bachelor's and Master's degrees
- saving students both time and money by completing two degrees in five years
- offering students increased opportunities employment in the contemporary workforce by providing a competitive advantage in the job market
- preparing students for continued academic pursuits

Employers list the top skills that they are seeking as critical thinking, collaboration and teamwork, and strong written and oral communication proficiency. These exact skills are what this Combined Degree offers. Students gain these skills while gaining an understanding of the world in which we live through reading the works that have shaped civilizations and exploring the values of world culture. For further information, please contact:

Dr. Susan Copeland, Director MALS at SusanCopeland@clayton.edu; 678-466-4744

Dr. Barbara Goodman, Coordinator of Combined Degree for English at BarbaraGoodman@clayton.edu; 678-466-4711

Graduate Studies

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) Program at Clayton State

Are you graduating soon and considering graduate school? Consider the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program here at CSU. MALS is a flexible degree program that gives students who love literature and writing an opportunity to earn a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) Program in English, or they can choose among other concentrations such as History, Liberal Arts (Art, Communication and Media Studies, Philosophy, Sociology, Theater), Math, Political Science, or Public Administration. Students in the English track enjoy a broad range of course choices, from Studies in Shakespeare to 19th Century American Literature and Culture, from Advanced Creative Writing to Modern Drama, from Southern Literature to Science Writing.



Dr. Susan Copeland
MALS Program Director

Unlike a 120-hour undergraduate degree program, the MALS graduate degree is completed in 36 hours. All students complete 3 hours in the Introduction to Graduate Studies course, 9 hours in foundational courses, 18 hours of courses in their concentrations, and 6 hours in the capstone courses to complete the degree. The capstone experience has two tracks: a student can conduct thesis research and complete and defend her thesis, or a student can choose to take a comprehensive exam (which he must pass) and present a paper at a conference or submit the paper for publication in a journal. In short, this is a versatile and engaging program for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies student.

The MALS program at Clayton State is special to me for three reasons. First, I contributed in small part to its development, and working in it has been a joy for me. Second, it was the first graduate program on campus. Third, since the program premiered its first courses in Fall 2006, Clayton State has changed. It has transformed from a college with undergraduate students only to flourishing as a university with graduate students who add their own mark with their intellectual and other accomplishments, as can be seen by perusing the display cases on the walls in the University Center's second floor atrium.

Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Secondary Education

The Master of Arts in Teaching English with concentration in secondary English is designed for individuals who hold a bachelor's degree in English or a related area and/or have a provisional teaching certificate in the discipline. This initial certification program will prepare interested persons to receive a master's degree and provide them the opportunity to become certified to teach secondary English. The program consists of English content and methods courses, professional studies classes, and field-based clinical experiences. Most content and professional education courses emphasize the use of technology and action research with pupils in diverse school settings. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are awarded the M.A.T. degree and the opportunity for teacher certification in grades 6-12 English. This program offers evening courses with student teaching during the spring semester. Individuals who are teaching with a provisional certificate in a public school system will be given full-time student teaching status.

While faculty in the Department of English teach the English content and methods courses, faculty from the Department of Teacher Education teach the professional education courses and supervise the clinical and internship experiences along with public school mentor teachers. Our partnership school districts will serve as collaborative sites for field experiences and internships.

Dr. Patricia Smith reports that there is high demand for educators trained in grades 6-12 instruction and local counties: Clayton, Henry, Fayette, Coweta, Rockdale and Dekalb are among the locations where CSU MAT graduates are making a difference.

MAT English Program Goals

This degree offers students opportunities to:

- Develop or hone pedagogical skills for teaching English in a high school or college setting;
- Create meaningful connections between subject matter and teaching methods through practice and reflection of the effects on student learning;
- Discover new approaches and materials to reach diverse learners through Clayton State University's unique resources; and
- Study literature and composition through eighteen hours of intensive graduate coursework in the discipline.



Dr. Patricia Smith
MAT. English Program Coordinator

Faculty Accomplishments



Dr. Brigitte Byrd coordinated Clayton State University's participation in the College Day event at the Decatur Book Festival on September 3. She also read her work as part of the event. She published "The Two Lips People Talk about Fiction" in *Apalachee Review* and "Figment 7" and "Bubble Gum Guilt" in the *Denver Quarterly*. Dr. Byrd also serves as an associate editor for *Tupelo Quarterly*, and has recently finished a book-length poetry collection titled *Onomo, Flaubert!* She is also designing the department's first online "Advanced Poetry Writing" course for Spring 2018. Finally, Dr. Bryd is celebrating 10 years of practicing yoga; she is a member of the Ashtanga yoga community on the Southside of Atlanta.

Dr. Shannon M. Cochran co-edited a special edition of the *Journal of African American Studies* on the late music legend Prince. This journal edition is the first of its kind, as it critically examines Prince, his legacy, and the influence of both on the world. She also contributed to the *St. James Encyclopedia of Hip Hop Culture*, forthcoming March 2018

Dr. Margaret Fletcher presented "Islands: No Person Is an Island but Some Need Help Finding Their Way to the Mainland," which focused on promoting student resilience and success, at the College English Association 2017 Conference at Hilton Head Island, GA. She also presented on Designing and Assessing Student Writing in the Writing across the Curriculum/Writing in the Discipline workshop at Clayton State University in August of 2016.

Dr. Cantice Greene presented “Personal Experience on the Road to Middle Ground” at the National Women’s Studies Association in Montreal, Canada in November of 2016. In August of 2016 she presented “Students Writing to Learn in Your Content Area” at the Writing in Your Discipline Workshop at Clayton State University, and in March of 2016 she presented “Co-requisite Learning Support: Recreating Pedagogical Approaches to Transform Student Writing” at the College English Association in Denver, CO. Dr. Greene and Dr. Klein coauthored “Meeting the World in the Studio: Negotiating Meaning at the Writers’ Studio” in *Writing Program and Writing Center Collaborations: Transcending Boundaries*, Macmillan, 2017. In October 2017, Dr. Greene sped through her third Silver Comet Halloween Half-Marathon, finishing in 1:56:22.

Dr. Mary Lamb presented “Collaborative Reading: Texts, Screen, and Para-readers,” at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Portland, OR on March 16, 2017. She also received a grant with Dr. Sipai Klein from the Department of Education for “Peer Academic Mentors in First-Year Writing.” Dr. Lamb is editing a book, *Blurred Lines: Digital Reading and Writing in Composition Studies*, which is under contract with Routledge/Taylor and Francis. Recently Dr. Lamb baked her very first pie crust from scratch; she was inspired by her 12-year-old daughter, who loves to bake and experiments with new recipes. Dr. Lamb said the experience reminded her that learning takes bravery and enthusiasm and that we are never too old to learn!

Dr. Greg McNamara designed a new course in fairy tales and myth which is now being offered as Great Books at the graduate level and published an article in 2017 on the theatricality of Jacobean shipbuilding in the *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*. He is also thinking about Americana as expressed in local color newspaper columns, training his dog Ginger Snap, and studying Jamaican ska and rocksteady culture of the 1960s.

Dr. David Muller presented on Uchronic Fiction and Alternate History at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association conference in Atlanta, GA on November 5, 2017. He published “Alternate Australia” in *Antipodes* and “Leviathan of the Antipode” in *Common Knowledge*.

Dr. Jennifer Parrott presented “Teaching to Learn: Service-Learning in the Composition Classroom” at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association conference in Atlanta on November 3, 2017. She also presented “Civil Writes: Community Engagement in a First-Year Writing Course” at Computers in Writing, May 2016. She coauthored “Shiny Things: 3D Printing and Pedagogy in the Library” in *A Splendid Torch: Learning and Teaching in Today’s Academic Libraries*, September, 2017.

Dr. Robert Pfeiffer read selections from his poetry at the Decatur Book Festival on September 3, 2017. He also presented “Talking Politics in the Composition Classroom” and read selected poetry at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association conference in Atlanta, GA in November 2017. His latest collection of poetry, *The Inexhaustible Before*, has been accepted for publication by Plain View Press.

Professor Stephanie Richardson presented “Dismantling Dull Sentences” at the Write Right Workshop in the Writers’ Studio at Clayton State University on November 15, 2017. She also delivered an address to the Clayton State OWLS on the significance of self-worth in deconstructing and reconstructing epistemologies of beauty on November 15, 2017.

Dr. Kathryn Pratt Russell presented “Stimulated Bodies: Joanna Baillie’s *Orra* and the Virtual Corpus” at the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism Annual Conference in Ottawa, Canada on August 13, 2017. She also presented “Convergence of Renaissance and Contemporary Money in Harry Potter World” at the Clayton State Library Special Exhibit on Harry Potter’s World: Science, Magic, and Medicine” on March 28, 2017. Additionally, Dr. Pratt Russell has been asked to serve as a peer reviewer for an article under consideration at the *European Romantic Review*, one of the top international journals in the field of British Romantic Studies.

Dr. Eugene Ngezem published numerous articles including “Cultural Identity in the Diaspora” in *LeGideon Magazine*, 2017; “Dissonance and Dissolution of the status quo: Antagonistic Anachronism in the Works of Arthur Miller and Harold Pinter,” in *GNOSIS: An International Journal of English Language and Literature*, 2016; “Chronic Desires and Crippling Cruelty in Sarah Kane’s *Blasted*” in *Philosophy Study*, 2016; “Stars that Never Shine: Seventeenth-Century Women and a Crushing Chauvinistic Culture” in *GNOSIS: An International Journal of English Language and Literature*, 2016. As the CEO of a nonprofit organization, Dr. Ngezem organized an International Summit in Tucson, Arizona in May 2017. It aimed at catering to the needs of the least privileged in Cameroon, and guest speakers included former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and Astronaut Captain Mark Kelly. Additionally, he is a certified soccer coach by the U.S. Soccer Association and has been coaching under 19 boys soccer for the Henry County Soccer association as a pro bono service. The Board of Directors voted him as coach of the month for November 2017, citing his passion and dedication to training young adults in an efficacious manner.

Dr. Patricia Smith presented “Students Writing to Learn in the Content Areas” at the Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Discipline workshop at Clayton State University in August of 2016. She also presented “Preparing Candidates in a Professional Development School: Granting Equal Voice to P-12 Stakeholders” at the Southeastern Regional Professional Development Schools Association in Atlanta, GA in July of 2016. In March of 2016 Dr. Smith presented “Finding the Perfect Match” at the NAPDS National Conference in Washington, D.C. In September 2017 Dr. Smith published “CAEP Standard 1 Accreditation.” Furthermore, she continues to work on the CAEP Board of Examiners, evaluating programs and performing site visits to support accreditation of Education programs across the US. Additionally, she works on the NCTE as a Program Reviewer for English Education programs throughout the US for accreditation. Dr. Smith won the 2016-17 College of Arts and Sciences Gene Hatfield Teacher of the Year Award and was a finalist for the 2017 Alice J. Smith Teaching Excellence Award.

Close Reading Challenge

Notice that the Eighth Edition *Vibrant Voice* cover features a stylized illustration of a popular mythological theme. How many stories from various cultures can you think of that have animals interacting with people as part of a dream quest or rite of passage narrative? Can you think of five? Here’s a clue to one: feathered friends facilitate finding fragile footwear for fond *Fräulein*.

Alumni Spotlight



Andrea Dubose is a CSU graduate ('16) and is pursuing her M.A. in Teaching at CSU. She teaches 9th grade English at Arabia Mountain High School. Her poem "Anise at Dawn" will appear in the anthology *Georgia's Best Emerging Poets* (Z Publishing).

What brought you to Clayton State as an undergraduate?

I came to Clayton State as a Nursing major from Georgia Perimeter since I'd heard great things about Clayton State's Nursing program.

How did you decide to become an English major?

I became an English major after taking intro to creative writing with Dr. Byrd. Dr. Byrd was the first person to compliment me on my writing saying, "You have a way with words." People always discouraged me from being a writer.

What came after graduation? Share your career path.

My first thought was to go to graduate school at Clayton State the semester following getting my Bachelor's in English. I chose teaching because eventually I would like to be a professor.

How did your experience at CSU prepare you for this path?

Clayton State has prepared me in many ways. The convenient night classes really helped me out when I was working multiple jobs to keep myself afloat. After graduation, my professors were patient and helpful with me since I sent them requests for letters of recommendation. Small class sizes allowed me to get close with my colleagues. The English department at Clayton State feels like a family to me.

What would you say to students who are considering an English major at CSU?

I would say do it and commit to it with all your heart. There are always going to be people who will help no matter what.

Are there any professors or courses that were particularly memorable or important to you?

Dr. Byrd, Dr. Copeland, and Dr. Goodman especially! I loved all my English professors. Ms. Deb is the best. Whatever I needed, I knew I could go to her for anything I needed, even now.

What prompted you to return to Clayton State for your graduate work?

I wanted a smooth transition into graduate school. I knew Clayton State would help me with everything I would need. Dr. Smith has been so helpful to me. I know that Clayton State has high standards for their professors.

Anything else you would like to share—accomplishments, advice, memories, etc?

I have worked hard constantly since 17 and it was not until I made the decision to do whatever I wanted that my life really took a turn for the better. I have a career that I enjoy, I am in the process of buying a beautiful home in a beautiful neighborhood, and dreams I never thought possible are finally coming true.

Thank you for picking up *The Vibrant Voice*!

Published annually, *The Vibrant Voice* is the newsletter of the Department of English at Clayton State University. Here you will find news about programs, course offerings, faculty, student, and alumni accomplishments and more. We hope the *Voice* is informative and inviting to the Clayton State community in general. For students, if the *Voice* prompts a question or idea for you, why not visit a member of English faculty to discuss it and expand your subject matter expertise and portfolio? For faculty, alumni, and University colleagues—we hope you learn something new about what’s happening in English and appreciate the pride we take in our work and in one another.

If you have an idea for *The Vibrant Voice*, please don’t hesitate to share it or consider becoming a contributor.

Connect with us on social media:



Don't forget to visit Writers' Studio 224 for writing help, and look for the the latest edition of *Cygnets*, our journal of literature and arts!



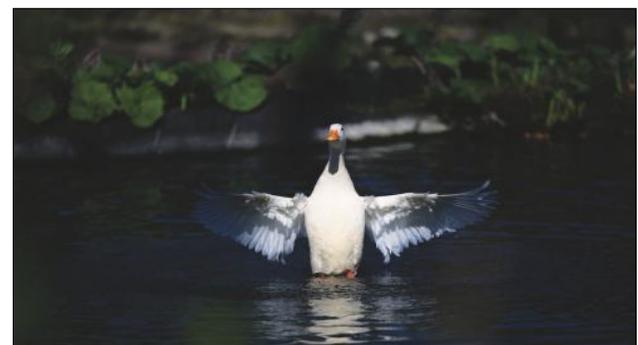
Vibrant Voice Committee, 2017-18

Dr. Greg McNamara, ed.

Dr. Jennifer Parrott, associate ed.

Dr. Margaret Fletcher, contributing ed.

Prof. Stephanie Richardson, contributing ed.



Cover Illustration: Image borrowed from *The Frog Prince*, Illustrated by Walter Crane, 1874. Crane, an English artist and illustrator, combined Asian and European styles and contributed to the Arts and Crafts style which flourished in the Victorian period and informed various expressions of Modernism.