



Stetson's English Department Newsletter

New Dean for College of Arts and Sciences

Stetson University recently announced that Elizabeth Skomp, Ph.D., will be the next dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, following a nation-wide search. Currently, Skomp is the Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Inclusion, and professor of Russian at Sewanee University, where she has taught since 2005. Provost Noel Painter characterized the decision in broadly positive terms:

“We are enthusiastic to have a leader who shares a strong commitment to liberal arts education, with demonstrated value for inclusion and equity, join the university. Throughout the search process, the search committee has heard Skomp described as fair, unflappable, prepared, able to navigate a wide range of administrative challenges and someone who can foster work across the diverse disciplines in the college.”

Sewanee is a private Episcopal liberal arts college in Sewanee, Tennessee. From the perspective of English Studies, it is most famous for *The Sewanee Review* (<https://thesewaneeereview.com/>), which was established in 1892. Dr. Skomp’s focus at Sewanee has been faculty development and grant seeking, curricular reform, integrated advising, dialogue across difference, study abroad, and numerous diversity and inclusion initiatives. She chose to emphasize a cluster of priorities for her deanship here: Stetson’s teacher-scholar model, a focus on student success, and an interest in continuing to build a diverse, inclusive, and equitable institution.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

1984

Orwell

Beowulf

The Death of the Moth

Woolf

The Hunger Games

Collins

How to Win Friends and Influence People

Carnegie

The Mysterious Benedict Society

Stewart

The Odyssey

Homer

The Outsiders

Hinton

The Scarlet Letter

Hawthorne

The Scribe was written collaboratively with technical writing students from ENGL 206, Spring 2019. The pictures included are intended to embody wabi-sabi aesthetics and were taken by students on campus (<https://www.hermitary.com/solitude/wabisabi.html>). This issue focuses on reading, in contrast with the previous issue's emphasis on writing.

Skomp also oversaw Sewanee's Center for Teaching, Office of Advising, Office of Undergraduate Research, Writing Across the Curriculum, and the University Art Gallery. She has previously served as chair of the Russian Department, director of the Sewanee Summer in Russia Program, and director of Sewanee's interdisciplinary Humanities Program, and has taught in the Sewanee School of Letters. These priorities should resonate well with Stetson's existing programs and general pedagogical approach.

Currently, Skomp is the president of the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies. Her 2015 book, *Ludmila Ulitskaya and the Art of Tolerance*, stands out among numerous research grants, published articles and reviews, and conference presentations. Skomp previously taught at Williams College, DePauw

University, and the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. She holds a B.A. from Indiana University and a Ph.D. from the University of London, which she attended as a British Marshall Scholar.



Elizabeth Skomp, Ph.D.

WHY BECOME AN ENGLISH MAJOR?

Majoring in English is finding a place among your peers, your idols, and your thoughts to call home. —Sarah Wasser

There is no career in which you will not have writing. Being able to analyze and articulate your own thoughts into words is the most valuable asset of communication and teamwork. It is surprising how poorly some people write and holding a firm grasp of the English language puts you at the skill level above the rest. —Xavier Mulligan

Language itself serves a grand purpose: Communication. As an English major, or minor, one gains a profound understanding for articulation that will aid her the rest of her life, regardless of workplace. —Allison Spaccio

Sigma Tau Delta at Stetson

Sigma Tau Delta is a national Collegiate English Honor Society. If you have immense dedication and a passion for literature, you too can join the 9,000 inducted members since 1924. Once inducted into this prestigious organization, members can publish academic and literary works in the society's annual undergraduate journal, *Sigma Tau Delta Review*.



Stetson University's English Department guides each individual Sigma Tau Delta member



through an educational journey, filled with the totality of enlightenment that the study of English provides.

After completing their undergraduate career, (seen below, left to right) Caroline Williams, Nicole Padgett, Victoria Aldea, and Chyina Powell, proudly wear Sigma Tau Delta's vibrant red graduation stole and medallion.

This student-run organization is facilitated by the faculty advisor, Dr. Joel Davis. Currently, we are interested in forming a book-club, and offering an informational session for academically qualified students majoring or minoring in English studies. If you become involved, you will have the opportunity to take charge of the organization and lead current and future students toward English-centered careers.

Alexander Anthony Matos,

2018 President

Kyle Padgett

2019 President



English Department Faculty

Grady Ballenger, Ph.D., University of North Carolina

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/grady-ballenger.php>

Nancy Barber, M.F.A., University of Florida

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/nancy-barber.php>

Michael Barnes, Ph.D., University of South Carolina

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/michael-barnes.php>

Shawnrece Campbell, Ph.D., Kent State University

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/shawnrece-campbell.php>

Teresa Carmody, Ph.D., University of Denver

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/teresa-carmody.php>

Joel Davis, Ph.D., University of Oregon

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/joel-davis.php>

Nicole Denner, Ph.D., Northwestern University

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/nicole-denner.php>

Leigh Ann Dunning, Ph.D., M.F.A., University of Memphis

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/leigh-ann-dunning.php>

Thomas Farrell, Ph.D., University of Michigan

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/thomas-farrell.php>

Chris Jimenez, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/chris-jimenez.php>

Megan O'Neill, Ph.D., University of New Mexico

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/megan-oneill.php>

Mary Pollock, Ph.D., University of Texas

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/mary-pollock.php>

Gail Radley, M.A., Stetson University

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/gail-radley.php>

Michele Randall, M.F.A., New England College

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/michele-randall.php>

Lori Snook, Ph.D., University of Arizona

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/lori-snook.php>

Terri Witek, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University

<http://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/profiles/therese-witek.php>



(Hulley Tower Bell)

Talk About Talk: Generational Reading Habits

The reading habits of my generation are poor. I believe that they are poor due to technology. I'm not saying that I hate technology and that it is bad for us, but it has made the reading habits of my generation dwindle or even worse disappear. I'm a part of the group whom it has disappeared for. I don't read a book unless it is necessary for a class I am taking and sometimes I still won't read it. We have turned to technology for entertainment now in video games, Netflix, and YouTube.

I believe that reading can expand your vocabulary and make you seem more developed or mature in the context of a conversation or presentation. I personally wish that I read more, but I would much rather watch Netflix or play Fortnite than pick up a book and get invested in it. I think that that is the problem with my generation, and just so you don't think I'm being hypocritical, I am a part of the problem as well. Troy Hall, Technical Writing



(Bricks in Quad)

Many older members of our society have the belief that their young companions don't read. Sorry to burst your decades-old bubble, but this simply ain't true. We do read. It just looks like we don't because the way we read has changed. I'm capable of reading faster now than I was when I would spend hours engulfed in books each and every day. How is this possible? It's simpler than you might think. Let's make a bet: I wager that there are words all around you right now, lurking over your shoulder, hiding in street signs and advertisements and the electronics to which we all so desperately cling.

We are surrounded by the written word. It confronts us at every turn, and we can't go more than a few moments without subconsciously scanning the snippets of information that pervade our global world. Contrary to what you might believe, I spend a hefty chunk of my time reading. But rather than devoting this time to the consumption of novels, I snack on bits and pieces of writing at a time: news articles, e-mail, song titles, texts, anime subtitles, Google searches, tweets, posters, restaurant menus...

Through this constant consumption of the English language, I – and the majority of my peers – have gained the ability to crunch through data in record time. We take in only those words and phrases that are important and push the rest to the side, giving our reading an efficiency that the average old-timer probably couldn't manage. Bethany Hill, Technical Writing

Can Reading Improve Writing?

M.C. Barnes

Imitating the work of another writer seems uncreative to most. What we define as creative is usually assumed to be original, unique, even idiosyncratic. Reading academically in college means active reading (i.e., taking notes, checking definitions, working on a thesis); however, the tradition of stylistic modeling as part of careful reading has become less standard. From a historical perspective, a close reading often meant picking up writing pointers. Have you ever read a passage that sounded so strong that you tried to emulate it in your own paper? Ben Franklin, arguably one of our most idiosyncratic and folksy authors, claimed in his autobiography that he learned his style by copying the most acclaimed newspapers of his time, *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Franklin would read a section and try to copy it verbatim. He repeated the process until his version was an exact replica; then he synthesized the rhetorical strategies at work. Of course, following such a tedious procedure is not necessary to achieve notable improvements in your writing style: all you really need to do is pay attention.

Few authors are overtly imitated today, a trend that is partly influenced by academia's ambivalence toward canons. Apart from fan fiction, Hemingway is arguably one of the few authors in the modern world whose style is modeled, partly because his writing seems so simple (parataxis). In the past, Cicero, Caesar, and the famous historians Herodotus and Plutarch were canonical sources that readers found informational, entertaining, and influential as paragons of style due to their clarity and use of anecdotes. Below is an example of Ciceronian amplification. In *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553), Thomas Wilson argued: "Among all the figures of rhetoric, there is no one that helpeth forward an oration and beautifieth the same with such delightful ornaments as doth amplification." The strategy is also called "incrementum" (e.g. arranging words or clauses in a sequence of increasing force). Can you tell which two sentences qualify as amplification? Would you use such a strategy in your own writing to impart forcefulness?

"When, O Catiline, do you mean to cease abusing our patience? How long is that madness of yours still to mock us? When is there to be an end of that unbridled audacity of yours, swaggering about as it does now? Do not the nightly guards placed on the Palatine Hill—do not the watches posted throughout the city—does not the alarm of the people, and the union of all good men—does not the precaution taken of assembling the senate in this most defensible place—do not the looks and countenances of this venerable body here present, have any effect upon you? Do you not feel that your plans are detected? Do you not see that your conspiracy is already arrested and rendered powerless by the knowledge which everyone here possesses of it? What is there that you did last night, what the night before—where is it that you were—who was there that you summoned to meet you—what design was there which was adopted by you, with which you think that any one of us is unacquainted? (*Against Catiline*)

If this close reading approach to improving your writing style appeals to you, then Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* is an excellent introduction to the schemes and tropes that informed the writings of JFK, MLK, and even the Pillsbury Doughboy. Corbett's examples are drawn from historically important figures (politicians, activists, astronauts) and from marketing and the bible. The historical paragons of style noted above are listed (and linked) below:

Herodotus *The History*

http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/-484_-430,_Herodotus,_The_History,_EN.pdf M. Tullius Cicero: *Against Catiline*

<http://www.sjsu.edu/people/cynthia.rostankowski/courses/HUM1AF14/s3/Lecture-26-Cicero-and-Caesar-Reading.pdf>

Plutarch: *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/674>

Ernest Hemingway, *In Our Time*

<http://web.uvic.ca/~mvp1922/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Hemingway-in-our-time-1924.pdf>

Julius Caesar: *The Gallic Wars*

<http://classics.mit.edu/Caesar/gallic.html>



(Elizabeth Hall Window)

YOUR FUTURE READING LIST

(Courtesy of the Students from Technical Writing)

1984, Orwell

My favorite book is *1984* because it shows how easily people can become manipulated and it is important to stay aware of that. Most of the people in the story believe that they are living their best lives and are actually serving the greater good. In reality, they are actually just brainwashed into thinking this.

The dystopian novel follows the life of the protagonist Winston Smith. In the novel, he figures out that the government or "Big Brother" has control over the whole population; everything in their lives is micromanaged and monitored. Winston realizes that the citizens could take over the government if they band together, but it never happened because the population is too brainwashed. Bottom line: *1984* shows how a big government can easily take over the population even though the government is heavily outnumbered by the people. The book shows that power lies in the people.

Beowulf

I chose *Beowulf* as my favorite reading because of its tragedy. It's a long and epic story full of twists and turns, highs and lows all centered around a Geat warrior named Beowulf who becomes king. I believe tragedy adds an aspect to a story that is very human and can be connected to, making it the most valuable. Also, I am of the belief that all classics should be cherished.

The Death of the Moth, Woolf

Of all the readings I've completed throughout my schooling years, my favorite by far is Virginia Woolf's *The Death of the Moth*. In this short story, the narrator notices a dull-looking day moth fluttering on her windowsill. Though the narrator initially considers the moth boring and insignificant, she nevertheless

becomes overwhelmed by a feeling of wonder; the narrator remarks that the moth is like a bead of life, a minute representation of the force that resides in us all. As she watches the moth zig-zag pointlessly from corner to corner, she realizes that the signs of death are beginning to show in his demeanor. He falls over onto his back, and the narrator reaches out with a pencil to aid him in his struggles only to pull away at the last second. She realizes that nothing can stop death, and it is up to the moth alone to fight his fight. After a few moments, the moth succeeds: He rights himself and stands for a moment before turning completely rigid with death, and the story is over.

With this story, I believe Woolf sought to convey that we, like the moth, are no match against the power of death. However, like the moth, we can still fight against our condition and live our lives to the fullest. We should not flop over on our backs in a metaphorical windowsill and wait for the rigidity of death to take over; instead, we should strive to right ourselves and stand tall, as pointless as this struggle may sometimes feel.

Though it's rather upsetting, this reading is my favorite because it's one of the only readings with which I've truly connected. In fact, I connect with it so much that it actually brought a tear to my eye the first time I read it back in freshman year. I value this little story because it puts the concepts of life and death in terms that can easily be understood. Furthermore, the struggle it depicts is truly universal, and I feel that anyone could relate to it if they only took the time to properly digest what Woolf is trying to convey. On a more practical level, I'm also fond of this story because it's only a few pages long and can be re-read in a matter of minutes. It's very easy to revisit (and I revisit it often)!

The Mysterious Benedict Society, Stewart

My favorite read of all time is **The Mysterious Benedict Society**. This was the first book that I actually enjoyed reading when I was a kid. The novel series is about a select group of kids who are put together to get through physical and mental trials. I feel that everyone can relate with at least one of the characters.

The Odyssey, Homer

My favorite reading of all time is *The Odyssey*. It encompasses all of the best styles of writing all in one book and has one of the best story lines of all time. I have read this book twice in my life and each time I read it gets better. It is quite lengthy but it is action packed and unpredictable.

The Outsiders, Hinton

I have never been one to enjoy reading a book. I would rather be outside playing sports or be on the lake with family and friends. I did enjoy one book though. *The Outsiders* was my favorite book for a while. I liked it because I was able to connect with the characters given that I too was a child at the time when I read it. I haven't connected with a book like it ever since, and sadly that was in 7th grade: "Stay Golden, Ponyboy."

The Hunger Games, Collins

I used to love reading but it could only be certain books that I enjoyed. For example, when the first *Hunger Games* trilogy came out, I finished all three books in less than two weeks, and the books are each well over 300 pages long. It's my favorite series hands down. If I get a plot in a book I can enjoy and follow, then I will sit for hours and won't stop reading it. *The Hunger Games'* plot is extremely interesting in the fact that it is purely fiction. The whole story completely fascinates me because what if this happened one day?

How to Win Friends and Influence People, Carnegie

My favorite reading of all time would have to be *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie. This is one of the first books I read by choice when I was 13 years old. I read this book for a better understanding of how people "work" and to expand my knowledge. My main goal for reading at the time was to learn what made Dale Carnegie incredibly successful and how he positively impacted the lives of others. The teachings in this book continue to have importance in my daily life.

The main things I learned from this book that have had the biggest impact in my life are techniques for handling people, becoming a good listener, smiling more often, and being a leader. These important lessons and values are great to learn especially at a young age. I often credit this book with my success today because it helped me form great habits by practicing these teachings over the years. *How to Win Friends and Influence People* has heavily increased my awareness not only of myself and my behavior, but also how I treat the people around me.

The Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne

Imagine being shamed for your sins in front of a crowd full of people and being resented by every individual in that crowd. Imagine having to wear a letter representing your sins on your chest visible for everyone to see and being unrecognizable without it. This is only some of the many horrors and cruel treatment that Hester had to endure in *The Scarlet Letter*. *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a novel about a woman living in a very strict and moral driven community who commits the societal taboo of adultery. The woman, Hester Prynne, is shamed both publicly and privately for her sins and goes through a great deal of trouble that affects every aspect of her life. When Chillingworth, Hester's husband, arrives in town, things get even worse for Hester and her secret lover.

The Scarlet Letter holds the title as my favorite reading because of the captivating plot. The story that it creates is one like none other and I am in awe with every bit of it. When reading I become so intrigued with how the novel illustrates the mind-boggling journey that Hester faces. With a theme revolved around guilt, remorse, and sin battling forbidden passion the novel hooks you with its dark symbolism. Reading this novel is like solving a mystery or decoding a secret message with a fulfilling reward at the end.



(Quad Sabal Palm)



(Ground Plaque)

Hatter Network

Affiliated with *Touchstone*, Uncouth Hour is a weekly open-mic event in which Stetson University's community of artists are afforded the opportunity to share their work with others in an environment conducive to literature and the arts. Uncouth Hour is held on Thursdays at 9:30 p.m. in Allen Hall. Its sessions are open, welcoming, non-binding. Snacks and cultural credit are also provided.

The Reporter is Florida's oldest collegiate publication. Our job is to keep the Stetson University and the DeLand communities updated on news and events and to give students and faculty alike a voice. You can contact *The Reporter* at reporter@stetson.edu.

Touchstone is Stetson University's annual literary magazine; it functions as a vehicle for student expression, publishing original pieces of fine art, literature, music, digital media and performance art regardless of the author's major, class, standing or academic experience. *Touchstone* prints the best of student submissions, decided by committee; special recognition may be awarded to students whose work in their genre is deemed exceptional by the editing team.

The Library: More Than Just a Quiet Place to Read

LIBRARY SERVICES

- ▶ Wi-Fi, 24-hour study/computer lab on the ground floor
- ▶ 48 computers with Microsoft Office software (Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint), Blackboard and campus network
- ▶ Printers, copier and scanner
- ▶ 3D printers + 3D scanners

ASK A LIBRARIAN

Research Librarians are available to help with finding credible sources, using databases, formatting citations and answering any questions you have about research. Call or text 386-747-9028, or fill out the form on stetson.edu/library/AAL.

INTERLIBRARY LOAN (ILL) SYSTEM

This service is available to Stetson University faculty, students and staff. To aid in your research, we will borrow items from other libraries that are not held in the Stetson Library. Visit stetson.edu/library/ill.

COURSE RESERVE READINGS

Professors' reserve readings are available at the front desk and can be accessed by course name, course number or instructor from the library website. Most reserve materials are "Library Use Only" for two hours.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

Government publications, in print or online, are excellent primary sources of information. Recent government publications are issued online and are linked from OneSearch. A historical collection of print documents is on the lower level of the library.

GROUP STUDY ROOMS

Available for reservation 24 hours in advance or on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit stetson.edu/library/rooms.



(Architectural Detail in Quad)