



Stetson's English Department Newsletter

A New University President and the Pandemic

Much has changed since the Fall 2019 newsletter: President Libby retired with President Roellke taking the reins, and the Covid-19 pandemic began, shifting many institutional and educational interactions online. Dr. Libby's influence on the school has been conspicuous, and Dr. Roellke's voice during the pandemic has resonated with shared values. Emily Derrenbacher, English major, emphasized Libby's dedication to diversity, though other students chose to foreground her influence on ROTC and the CUB and/or commons:

"President Libby's commitment to inclusive excellence throughout her eleven years as president of Stetson University has been obvious. As the first female president in Stetson's 136-year history, she made establishing a community based on belonging part of Stetson's mission by forming the Inclusive Implementation Strategy Group to measure and ensure sustained progress toward change, growth, and equity."

"Dr. Libby wanted to please as many students as possible with a renovated Carlton Union Building. Dr. Libby didn't just add more space, she added more windows to allow more natural light into the CUB. Many students say that the extra space and sunlight feels more inviting. The new renovations help the cafeteria look more like a modern university and not like an old restaurant" (Jacob Acevedo).

"Since her start at Stetson, President Libby has allowed the ROTC programs here to expand by nearly 75%. To supplement this, she implemented the growth for ROTC scholarship funding for those seeking to obtain an Army National Scholarship—forming a relationship and working with the Embry-Riddle ROTC Army Recruiter Colonel Oakland McCullough to help make college more affordable for the entirety of a Cadet's freshman year" (Joshua Dicuici).

The Scribe was written collaboratively with technical writing students from ENGL 206, Fall 2020. The photos included are intended to embody wabi-sabi aesthetics and were taken by students on campus (<https://www.hermitary.com/solitude/wabisabi.html>). This issue continues with the Scribe's ongoing focus on the importance of reading and writing well.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

The Crucible

Miller

Paradise Lost

Milton

A Series of Unfortunate

Events

Handler

Twilight

Meyer

Arkham Asylum

Morrison

President Roellke, who comes to us from Vassar College, began his administration with a message to the Stetson community of hope and perseverance:

"Dear Members of the Stetson University Community,

First and foremost, I write today with the hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe and well during this exceptionally challenging time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on all of us in a myriad of ways and the virus has been especially difficult for the most vulnerable members of our community. We are also living in a time of tremendous socio-political unrest, and we have much work ahead of us to promote a diverse and inclusive community. We must be vigilant in our commitment to eradicate racism and injustice at every turn, and to ensure that the lived experience at Stetson is one that is fully aligned with our stated mission and values.

Recent decisions by U.S.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have further complicated our pursuit of equality of educational opportunity for so many highly valued members of our community.

Though I have been your president for less than one week, I do want you to know how much I appreciate the virtual welcoming I have received. Universally, you have reaffirmed for me that Stetson University is filled with caring, thoughtful, and insightful people—all of whom want to make a positive difference in our community and in the world.

It is with all humility and with full acknowledgement of my own limitations as an educator/leader, that I accept the challenge to move our beloved Stetson University forward. I accept this challenge with optimism, with confidence, and with tremendous excitement about Stetson's future."

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. Chesya Burke. 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

Kyo Padgett

2019 President



English Department Faculty

Chesya Burke, PhD, University of Florida

<https://www.stetson.edu/other/faculty/chesya-burke.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>

Grady Ballenger, Emeritus



Flagler Hall Architectural Detail

College Advice Column

The technical writing students solicited advice from alumni and current students regarding how an incoming freshman should approach the struggles of college in the pandemic. Much of the advice is timeless and important regardless of context, but the influences of the current situation are also apparent.

Five College Must-Haves (Jemima Labranche)

When I moved into my dorm during my freshman year of college, I naively thought that I had bought everything I needed. I later learned how wrong I was. Here are five items I think every college student living on campus should have:

- Brita Water Filter
- Over the counter medication.
- Cleaning supplies (I totally forgot)
- Mini Fridge
- Bathrobe or bath wrap

Although these have no direct relationship to each other. They are all (in my opinion) indispensable.

Advice To A New Student (Pavel Yurchenko)

If you want to be a successful student at a university, it is vital to get to know how you operate and what you are best at doing. Since there are a million ways of approaching every situation, understanding yourself is vital for a stress free life and career. Get familiar with what you enjoy, especially when it comes to work. Though sometimes work can be seen as boring or uninteresting, it is often not the work itself but your approach to it that is difficult. First, figure out a way to organize your tasks and classes in a way that is easy to understand at any given time. Organize yourself at the end of every week.

Covid Classes: (Vance Hendryx)

I remember when the coronavirus first seriously impacted America, and people thought that it would only last two, maybe three, weeks. However, now it's October and we've been dealing with the impacts of covid in America for almost 7 months now. Having to adapt to wearing masks was a struggle at first, seeing the numbers of cases and deaths growing on the news was emotionally taxing, and the economic recession put millions in a stressful economic environment. With all that being said, though, I think it's safe to say that America is resilient. I've seen it on the Stetson campus where most everyone is wearing their masks, while simultaneously making and keeping friendships. I've seen people adapt to "smizing" (smiling with their eyes) and maintaining our humanity during a global pandemic.

School during the coronavirus isn't ideal, but it is manageable and I'm proud to see my fellow students and faculty making the best of a bad situation. Advice from a student graduating in three years with two degrees: 1. If there's a box of bullet points/ conclusions at the end of the chapter, read that first. 2. Make sure you break down your essays into two days since two days is better than doing it all in one/ cramming it. Even if you just write one paragraph, put some bullet points on the document of what you want to include. It doesn't have to be perfect; just start the assignment. 3. Ask questions in class even if you feel stupid; get your teacher to know your name. It ensures that your professor will remember your face when it comes to participation grades. 4. Visit office hours! They're so essential. Go twice a semester - MINIMUM! Ask the professor what areas you can work on to improve your writing and grades. Plus, if they see you putting in the effort you'll be remembered/ maybe given some leeway. Get to know your teachers!

The Art of Letter Writing

M.C. Barnes

The art of letter writing has evaporated in the face of speedy communication. Based upon the classical tradition, there are three styles associated with letter writing: low (meant to instruct), middle (meant to please), and high (meant to move). The following letter, from a student in ENGL 220 (Composition and Rhetoric), is "high style" and intended to move the reader to action. The links below offer elaboration on these stylistic approaches to letter writing:

<https://www.thoughtco.com/middle-style-rhetoric-term-1691389>

<https://www.thoughtco.com/grand-style-rhetoric-1690915>

<https://www.thoughtco.com/plain-style-prose-1691632>

Open Letter to the Legislature and Governor of the State of Florida (Melissa Garner):

One of the largest employers in the Orlando area is Disneyworld, billed as "The Happiest Place on Earth." Many of its employees live quite close to their jobs; they live within five miles, in fact. They do not live in fairy cottages, or in many cases, even in a house. They live in outdated, decaying low-budget motels, entire families shoved into the only space they can afford. This tragedy was depicted in some measure in *The Florida Project*, a 2017 film by Sean Baker, and was filmed in one of these exact motels on US Route 92. Orlando is not the only city suffering this embarrassment. It is prevalent in Daytona Beach, in St. Augustine, in Panama City, in Miami and in Jacksonville. Wherever there is tourism, there are motels substituting for homes. How can we expect the happiest places on earth to remain happy if the people who work there don't even have a place to live?

In Florida, those who work in hotels, restaurants, theme parks and retail shops have very little recourse when faced with the many labor issues which arise during a hospitality career. Wage theft and harassment of every kind run rampant within these industries, and with the advent of the ACA, being denied benefits became yet another abuse that seems to be ignored by everyone who is not in that industry, most notably you, our elected officials.

One only needs to look at a few of the issues facing these employees to know that they are being marginalized by the lack of consideration from their representatives. Let's start with the abuse these employees take daily from not only the general public, but from their own employers and sometimes co-workers. Employees are screamed at, endure constant sexual harassment throughout the day, have had things thrown at them and more recently, have even been killed when a customer felt that their food took too long. I have personally been cursed, assaulted both with and without food, and have had to call police because someone whom I was unable to find a table for as quickly as they would have liked waited for me to leave work to confront me.

We can continue by considering the wages, which, simply by virtue of living in Florida, are already among the lowest in the industry. Cooks usually make between minimum wage and ten dollars per hour. While there are those who make more, this is far from the norm. Other back-of-the-house staff (dishwashers, prep cooks) often make minimum wage. Raises for these jobs range from .15 to .50 per hour, taking years to raise ones pay by even a dollar an hour.

Wait staff is even more shortchanged. This sector of our population, arguably one of the poorest to begin with, makes only \$5.54 per hour. Yes, I can already hear your argument, "But they get tips!" thrown out to safeguard against the shame you feel at hearing the situation. This is the argument of the uninformed. Many cultures, in fact, do not tip, and refuse to do so here as tourists.

Let us consider this scenario: Timmy wants a toy at Disneyworld, and Timmy's mom is on a tight budget. The server who just served their breakfast at Denny's gave great service, but there's only so much money. Who do you think will end up on the upper end of that dilemma? I can promise you, it will not be the server. They will get "stiffed," and go home with no cash and \$5.65 per hour for an eight-hour day, because they "get tips." This is not even minimum wage. While there are laws that state the employer must make up the difference if a server makes less than minimum wage, getting those laws enforced is nearly impossible. One must file a lawsuit, which will get them fired, with no recourse or income, because Florida is an at-will state.

Tipping wage also leads to harassment of servers, and they are expected to “just deal with it,” because the customers are “paying for service.” We must just smile and bear the hand on our ass at the table, because otherwise, we don’t get a tip. We must endure the jealous spouse who makes us run back and forth for 45 minutes, only to leave a nasty note instead of a tip because she felt that our politeness was flirting. We go up to a table at least once a day to find a nice pamphlet (usually decorated like money) telling us that we should accept Jesus into our lives, instead of a tip. We smile and laugh as we are subjected to sexual innuendos about our “service.” We watch our tip disappear throughout the meal, as customers lay money on the table and withdraw a dollar for every tiny mistake. It is humiliating, purposefully degrading, and does not occur to only one gender. This is an issue for all servers, regardless of what lies between their legs.

We believed that we would finally be able to have insurance once the ACA became reality. We were quite excited, until our hours began to be cut. The law said anyone “over 30 hours,” so guess how many hours we began to work? We also watched local business owners buy new stores and register them under the names of relatives, to put forth the appearance of different owners, so they could stay under the 50-employee mandate. The one thing we did not see happen was our elected officials taking action to stop it. Oh, and we didn’t see any insurance, either, unless we could afford the \$300 per month and \$6000 deductible required by the “Affordable” Care Act. Spoiler: we couldn’t.

One last thing you need to fix: why do we not have laws mandating breaks for adults in the state of Florida? We have laws for children, as we should. There are, however, no corresponding laws for adults. There is no mandate for lunch, either. Perhaps you think that employers will do what is right, and make sure everyone gets time to eat. You would be wrong in that assumption. Hospitality staff are routinely fired for trying to take breaks, and in some cases, simply for asking. As I am sure that you are uniquely aware, Florida’s economy depends on tourism. Some places have less tourist traffic than others but as a state, Florida would suffer without the many visitors from other places and the dollars they bring with them. The first places a tourist typically visits when they arrive in our state are their motels, and they will spend much of their vacation budget in restaurants and retail shops while they are here. The Department of Economic Opportunity estimated that 1.3 million people have jobs related to the tourism industry. The people in these jobs are who tourists see and interact with most, making them de facto ambassadors to the world. Unfortunately, many of our “ambassadors” remain unprotected by the very laws that protect others, or, even worse, have no law to protect them at all. This must change. We cannot keep expecting these employees to smile and serve tourists if they cannot even afford life’s necessities for themselves.

As our elected officials, these problems are yours to resolve. We do vote, and we do organize. We are not a ball you should drop.



YOUR FUTURE READING LIST

(Courtesy of the Students from Technical Writing)

Shoe Dog Phill Knight (Matthew Clements)

It is fair to say that we own at least one item of clothing on it with the famous Nike Swoosh. Nike is arguably one of the most recognizable brands in the world and the most successful clothing line. *Shoe Dog* is Co-founder of Nike Phill Knight's memoir of building up one of the most successful companies in the world. We are taken on a journey of Phill's life and his early business struggles. *Shoe Dog* is an inspiration as we see the struggles of a young entrepreneur constantly coming up against different challenges. *Shoe Dog* takes you back in time, seeing Nike's humble beginnings when the shoes were first being made with a waffle iron now into a billion-dollar company. "I wanted to build something that was my own, something I could point to and say: I made that. It was the only way I saw to make life meaningful." Phill Knight

A Series of Unfortunate Events (Brianna Ojeda)

This series of books is extremely evil and cruel. They will always keep you on your toes. You never know what's going to happen next because there is never a happy ending. The three Baudelaire children are very unlucky and mostly everything that happens to them is misfortune, misery and despair. But the children are very smart and tend to outdo Count Olaf since he is a troubled man who has taken over the children. The author keeps it very suspenseful because the book is not like your ordinary read. It is very different and toward every ending you think you can predict what will occur next but then BOOM! You were wrong, and it took a dramatic turn. This book has just the right amount of evil humor and darkness.

The Crucible (Lisa Jordan)

The Crucible, a play by Arthur Miller, is a period piece on the Salem Witch Trials. The play follows John and Elizabeth Proctor, a farming family in Salem, and their relationship with their ex-maid Abigail Williams, who is now being accused of witchcraft, along with several other young girls in Salem. The play describes the events leading to the accusation, the trial that ensues, and how other members of the community become entangled in the accusations of witchcraft.

The whole play is an extended metaphor for the "witch-hunt" of prominent public figures, namely in Hollywood, who were being accused of communism during the 1950's. Miller uses the story of the Salem Witch Trials to express his grievances of the blacklisting of writers, directors, and actors for allegedly supporting communism. *The Crucible* is full of fantastic quotes, moments of chaos, solemn scenes, and messages that reign true, even today.

Twilight (Isabelle Caby)

Are you a fan of intricate storytelling and love triangles? Then you have come to the right place. The book you are looking for and need in your life is *Twilight*. *Twilight* is wonderful because there are multiple books which means more reading! This series is filled with vampires, werewolves, and weird love situations. It is certainly a page turner you won't want to put down. But do not just take it from me, take it from the millions of people who love the book! This book is an amazing read and wonderful to say the least.

Batman Arkham Asylum (Kaeman Jones)

The book centers around Batman as he forced to participate in a deadly game of cat and mouse by the psychopathic inmates that have captured the titular hospital. In addition, the book also follows the tragic and haunting story of the hospital's origin, centering on its founder Jeremiah Arkham, and his rapidly deteriorating sanity. This story is notable for its highly abstract art, in which characters are reduced to their base essentials; Batman is depicted as a giant swab of black ink, a demon with crimson eyes. Other characters echo this sentiment, drawn with a frenetic sense of chaos, lost in a landscape fraught with a claustrophobic sense of wonderment. The book functions as a psychological horror piece, taking the reader deeper and deeper into the inner layers of the subconscious. Additionally, the novel is highly mature; with frequent references to torture, mutilation, sexual violation, and other depraved acts, it is a testament to the sophistication the genre has to offer. Although not held in the same traditional literary regard as other famous prose, *Arkham Asylum* is terrific tale that eclipses most of its peers, especially in the superhero genre.

Rum Spring (Noah Szegda)

Rum Spring is the story of two lovers bound by different worlds, the Amish and the American. Although by nature, *Rum Spring* is a simple love story, these characters explore the ideas of love and human connection, while still remaining true to their beliefs. The contrast between the American and the Amish shines through, exemplifying the different worlds each character lives in. The separation of the two worlds only adds to the love and want created between Rebecca and Dylan. This book is truly an experience to read; I finished it in less than a day because I couldn't put the book down. The love between Rebecca Lap, an Amish, and Dylan Mahoney, an American, hooked my interest right away, leaving me wanting more as I finished the book. I recommend *Rum Spring* as an example of love, while still remaining of example of being true to oneself.

Where the Crawdads Sing (Mariella Borges)

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens is a gorgeously written novel that intertwines destined love, nature, a murder mystery, and freedom. Taking place in the coastal marshes of North Carolina, an abandoned child develops into a wise woman who experiences many hardships and discovers the dangers of the world she lives in. Isolation, a feeling that for so long brought pain and bitterness to Kya Clark, blossoms into a feeling of home and peace. The novel keeps all readers on their toes (given the suspense upon the murder investigation) and warms the hearts of those who cheer for two people who love each other and finally find their happy ending. This American literary fiction became a *New York Times* Fiction Best Seller for the years of 2019 and 2020, selling over 4.5 million copies. I highly recommend reading this empowering novel that is both passionately sincere and relevant to our present times.



Paradise Lost (Samuel Hunt)

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* is one of the most important works that contemporary American literary circles have forgotten. Aside from those English students that are deeply vested in linguistic and religious academia, most people are not aware of the content and influence which the book, written in 1667, had in the cultural perception of Christianity, and mainstream depictions of heaven and hell. Despite its ancient origins, *Paradise Lost* provides a story which remains fascinating and alluring to its modern audience, with all of its extravagant vocabulary and syntax, combined with brilliant scenery and a vibrant and fascinating mythology through text. It remains pertinent not only to those interested in the evolution of the Christian religion, but it serves as a prime historical example of the syncretism of various different cultures and religions that can be seen in its content.



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 now CoRadio, a pandemic friendly rendition of Touchstone's popular Cultural Credit event. It is an online "open-mic night" (from 9:30-10:30pm on Thursday nights).

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 Perseveres

Calendar & Hours

Hours of Operation

EFFECTIVE 8/24/20 UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

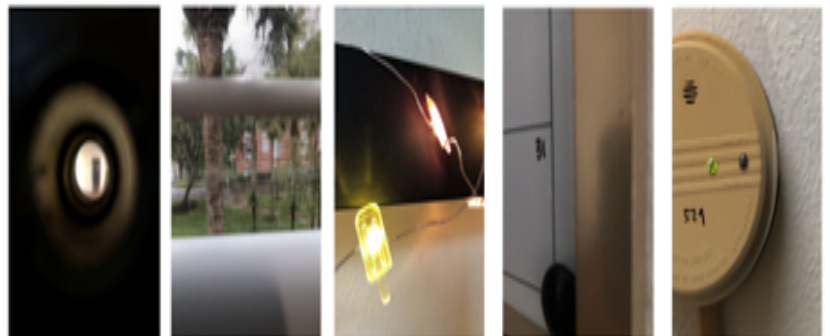
In order to facilitate enhanced safety procedures, the library will be moving to a reduced version of its regular schedule. While we will still be open seven days a week, some openings are later and some closings are earlier. See table below for full hours.

Note also that, while the building is open, capacity will be strictly limited and you may only be allowed in for specific tasks if you arrive at a time when the building has reached its limit.

You must have your Stetson ID to swipe into the building. See the [COVID-19 Services and Resources](#) page for up-to-date information.

DAYS	HOURS
Monday to Thursday	9 AM – 8 PM
Friday	9 AM – 6 PM
Saturday	11 AM – 6 PM
Sunday	11 PM – 8 PM

Research assistance hours differ from the building operating hours. For research assistance business hours, see [Ask A Librarian](#).



(Isolation Represented in Pandemic)