

*There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,  
The earth, and every common sight  
To me did seem  
Appareled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.*  
—William Wordsworth, “Ode: Intimations of Immortality”

# English Department Capstone Conference



6 December 2024

Kirkhof Center

Grand Valley State University

Allendale, Michigan

# ENG 495 *Capstone Conference*

**6 December 2024**

**Kirkhof Center**

**Grand Valley State University**

**Allendale, Michigan**

## Why a Capstone Conference?

The English Capstone provides several important opportunities for English majors not offered elsewhere in the curriculum: the opportunity to reflect individually on the intellectual impact of majoring in English (intellectual autobiography); the opportunity to engage in the development and writing of an extended paper (senior thesis); and the opportunity to participate in the public presentation of the thesis work (departmental student conference).

Our Capstone course underscores the department's principles and values: to cultivate critical reading and reflection; to produce excellent writing in a variety of forms; to speak, read, and write effectively; and to achieve literary, analytical, pedagogical, and theoretical skills.

This conference is the culminating event for the English Capstone course. It requires that students publicly present a project for which they have been responsible from its inception to its final form. The presentation makes concrete the expertise that students have accrued in the research process and allows them to speak as authorities on their topic. No matter what career our students enter, public speaking is an essential skill, as is the act of distilling complex knowledge into a compact yet comprehensible package. Thus, this final assignment for the Capstone course is the one that perhaps most clearly transitions students out of the major and into the next phase of their lives. We see this element of the course as a way to help students recognize each others' accomplishments—and to help them be proud of their own as they move forward into their various futures.

## Schedule

Session One: 10-10:50 a.m.

*Panel A & B*

Session Two: 11-11:50 p.m.

*Panels C, D & E*

Session Three: 12-12:50 p.m.

*Panels F & G*

Session Four: 1-1:50 p.m.

*Panels H & I*

## Notes

Students will present in the order in which they appear in this program; a question-and-answer session will follow once all students on the panel have presented their papers.

Should you have questions, issues or concerns during today's program, please contact faculty in KC 2264.

**Panel A**  
**KC 2266****Portrayals on the Margin**

Facilitators: Dr. David Álvarez &  
Dr. John Gibbons

**Matt Dwyer**  
**‘Cross Cultural Crime:**  
**Arsene Lupin & the**  
**Phantom Thief from**  
**France to Japan’**

This presentation will examine the archetype of the phantom thief as it becomes an established part of Japanese literature and pop culture. In order to do so, I will focus on one of the most well-known examples of this archetype, Maurice LeBlanc’s Arsene Lupin, and follow this character’s journey from his original French source material, through the translation of said source material into Japanese, and on to the character appearing in original works by Japanese crime fiction authors. In contemporary Japan, Arsene Lupin exists as an established and well-known part of the culture, and the phantom thief archetype propagates itself across Japanese fiction, from respected literature of Edogawa Ranpo, to popular video games like *Persona*, and anime franchises like *Lupin III*.

**Jackson Hicks**  
**‘What Does Normal**  
**Look Like Anymore?**  
**A Close Reading of**  
**Sally Rooney’s**  
***Normal People***

As mental health becomes more widely recognized and discussed in contemporary society, literature has increasingly reflected this understanding, portraying it with greater nuance. In Sally Rooney’s *Normal People*, the mental health and traumas faced by both protagonists, Connell and Marianne, are woven throughout the narrative. This research will analyze the intersection of physical, cognitive, social, and environmental factors influencing mental health, validating the authenticity of *Normal People*’s portrayal of mental health and, in turn, highlighting the significance of reader identification with these experiences. To do so, this research aims to read the text closely, analyze its BBC limited series adaptation, and highlight moments of physical, emotional, and environmental stressors that directly affect each protagonists’ mental wellness to validate its representation as a reader-identifiable representation of mental illness.

**Katherine Phillips**  
**‘The Pressed Woman:  
Female Agency &  
Public Perception in  
*Trifles, Machinal,*  
and *Chicago*’**

At the turn of the 20th century, a new kind of heroine emerged—one who did not endure her circumstances through passive suffering but shattered societal expectations. Amid this female revolution, Susan Glaspell’s *Trifles*, Sophie Treadwell’s *Machinal*, and Maurine Dallas Watkins’ *Chicago* debuted, depicting stories of women who escaped their oppressive lives by killing their lovers. Despite Glaspell, Treadwell, and Watkins publishing their plays within a decade of each other and finding inspiration from the sensationalized murder trials they each reported on, these plays are rarely discussed together. This analysis will examine how these plays explore female agency amid early 20th century anxieties about gender, power, and justice. While the female protagonists found their actions amplified through sensationalized press coverage, their voices remained largely unheard. By highlighting female narratives that are silenced by unsympathetic audiences, these plays explore how public perception shapes the fate of women who resist traditional roles.

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**Panel B**  
**KC 2270**

**Creating Classroom Community**

Facilitators: Mr. Roy Black &  
Dr. Kurt Bullock

**Rachel Paulsen**  
**‘Changing the  
Narrative: Graphic  
Novels as a Primary  
Literary Element in  
Education’**

The use of graphic novels is an important element in education that is often overlooked and disregarded by school teachers and librarians. However, many scholars believe that graphic novels would be a great addition to a classroom, but oftentimes the novels remain unused due to the fear of community backlash and faculty hesitation. Graphic novels allow students to apply and practice their critical thinking skills because of the two analytical components: dialogue and images. Additionally, graphic novels are a great tool to generate discussion surrounding marginalized groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community and women. Bringing in graphic novels that discuss the LGBTQ+ community, such as *Gender Queer*, allows students to dismantle stereotypes and regain a better understanding of the community. Additionally, graphic novels help students analyze how genders are portrayed through the lens of a patriarchal society and as a result dismantle the preconceived stereotypes placed on marginalized groups.

**Elaina Craft**  
**‘Linguistic Uses of  
Non-Binary Pronouns &  
the Importance of  
Gender Neutral  
Language in  
English Ed’**

The non-binary linguistic uses for singular pronouns have been a heated debate for the past decade. This debate often focuses on the use of they/them terminology. I will examine if this debate is caused by misinformation, political leaning, or a lack of knowledge. Such understanding of this current issue is needed, not just in the world, but especially in English education. I believe that when educators are able to implement gender-inclusive language, students will be able to feel more comfortable in class, no matter their personal gender.

**Maria Modaff**  
**‘In the Wake of  
COVID-19:  
Compassionate  
Classrooms’**

Creating compassionate English/Language Arts classrooms is more important now than ever before, considering the collective trauma that students endured during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, many students have grappled with intense emotions stemming from their experiences of that collective trauma, including the loss of loved ones and heightened feelings of loneliness, depression, and anxiety during and after lockdown. Common themes in Young Adult (YA) literature—such as love, bullying, identity, friendship, and grief—elicit a wide range of emotions and often resonate with readers’ own traumatic experiences. My research seeks to explore the emergence of YA literature related to COVID-19 and to identify effective strategies, such as Trauma-Informed Education and Trauma-Informed Writing Pedagogy, to help students navigate these complex themes within the classroom.

**11 a.m.** **SESSION TWO**

**Panel C**  
**KC 2259**

**Analyzing an Environment Transformed**

Facilitators: Dr. Brian Deyo &  
Dr. Lindsay Ellis

**Kallie Crouch**  
**“‘The Birds are Not Birds  
and I am Not Me”:  
Annihilation,  
the New Weird, & a  
Transformative Humanity’**

Jeff VanderMeer’s *Annihilation* is a defining work of speculative fiction’s “New Weird” subgenre. Since its publication in 2014, scholars have debated the role of the biologist, and her interactions with Area X as frameworks for navigating the Anthropocene and an era of “global weirding.” Still, few have looked extensively at the implications of the biologist’s transformation. My research will address this gap by

examining the biologist's metamorphosis from human to one of Area X's nonhuman animals to critique Western colonial concepts of landownership and human exceptionalism. Drawing from Cary Wolfe's work in post-humanist theory, I argue surviving the Anthropocene means adopting a "weird" and transformative humanity that recognizes the interdependence between human and nonhuman lifeforms to adapt to a weirding world.

**Katelyn Templer**  
**'Hawai'ian Poetry**  
**as a Tool for**  
**Environmental**  
**Activism'**

Hawai'i's reputation as a tropical paradise has long made it a tourist destination for adventurers, people craving relaxation, and those wanting to experience a new culture alike. Since the islands were "discovered" in 1778, scientists, hospitality corporations, and tourists looking for a beach vacation have exploited the islands and their culture for their own personal gain, raising prices and pushing Native Hawai'ians out of their homes. Using work from authors both historical and modern, including the writings of Queen Liliuokalani, who served as the Queen of Hawai'i when the islands were illegally taken by the United States government, as well as current Poet Laureates of the State of Hawai'i, Kealoha and Brandy Nalani McDougall, I will explore how poetry has been used as a tool for environmental activism in Hawai'i, and argue its effectiveness.

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**Panel D**  
**KC 2266**

**Narrative Confusion, Consumption & Caste**

Facilitators: Mr. Roy Black & Dr. Dan Brown

**Jenny Mastbergen**  
**'Contemporary**  
**Anxieties &**  
**Psychological Depth:**  
**Riley Sager's Unique**  
**Literary Devices'**

This paper explores the work of Riley Sager, a contemporary author known for his psychological thrillers and horror novels. The primary focus of exploration is on his utilization of unreliable narrators, suspense, and female protagonists. Sager's novels often center around women navigating traumatic or disorienting situations, a narrative choice that enhances both suspense and emotional complexity. By developing unreliable narrators, Sager manipulates reader expectations while creating tension through fragmented truths. This analysis also considers how Sager's work reflects current societal anxieties, particularly involving safety, identity, and psychological



**Savanna Lamb**  
**'Humanity Eats Itself:  
Religion, Hope,  
& Cannibalism in  
*The Road*'**

trauma. Through this lens, I will explore how Sager's use of suspense and ambiguity not only captivates readers, but also speaks to larger cultural concerns.

Cormac McCarthy holds a titular place in American post-apocalyptic fiction in the 21st century with his novel *The Road*. Scholars have thoroughly examined his work, looking at the existence of literal cannibals and how they pose an opposition to what the main characters represent. I examine the importance of cannibalism, both literally and figuratively, as a concept and what it says about consumption under capitalism and human habits. Specifically, I apply the multiple meanings of consumption to understandings of religion, morals, and hope within the novel. Using these explorations, I discover what consumption means for the characters within the novel and how that reflects on the reader.

**Tyler MacAvoy**  
**'Dystopian America:  
Caste & Consumerism  
Represented through  
Dystopian Fiction'**

It's no secret that dystopian fiction is a direct line to the top of the bestseller list, though many don't realize that dystopian fiction has been around for years. In this paper, I will explore the dystopian worlds of both past and present by comparing Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (2008). Though the novels were written in very different time periods and have very different stories, similarities lie in their societal structures, most notably, social class and consumption. These features are increasingly prominent in the structure of the United States; thus, I will analyze how the "accepted" features of fictional dystopian societies are a direct reflection of capitalism in the United States, with attention to caste and consumerism.

**Panel E**  
**KC 2270**

**Busting Stereotypes in Literature,  
Film & TV**

Facilitators: Dr. Dan Knapper &  
Dr. Shinian Wu

**Emma Lelito**  
**'Reimagining**  
**Narratives:**  
**Challenging**  
**Heteronormative**  
**Ideologies in**  
**Literature & Film'**

Heteronormativity is a term used to describe the normal or standard way that individuals are expected to conform sexually in our society. For those individuals who identify within the LGBTQ+ community, the definition that society has deemed as "normal" often excludes them. While some television shows, novels, and films use Queer characters to align with heteronormative ideologies, I argue that the 2019-2023 graphic novels series *Heartstopper* and its Netflix adaptation reimagines how LGBTQ+ characters are portrayed throughout a story. Rather than conforming to the conventional Queer stereotypes, heteronormative concepts, character archetypes, and patterns of bullying and homophobia, *Heartstopper* transcends these categories to provide depictions of young Queer individuals that are reimagined. By raising awareness of heteronormativity and representation for the LGBTQ+ community through mainstream media, it crucially affects aspects of social change and reconstruction of society's deeply grounded concepts.

**Katie Ayers**  
**'Evolving Adolescent**  
**Cognition: Television's**  
**Gender Roles &**  
**Stereotypes from**  
**2000-2020'**

The relationship between adolescents and television has evolved significantly over recent decades. Grasping young minds across the globe, television has become a significant contributing factor influencing their cognitive development and behavior. Since 2000, specifically, television has played a crucial role in sculpting beliefs and behaviors pertaining to traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Focusing on television produced specifically between 2000 and 2020, this presentation evaluates the impact gender roles and stereotypes have on the behavior and inherited attitudes of its viewers. My analysis indicates the presentation of ideology on television clearly reinforces awareness of developing social structures for adolescents.

**Lyndsi Martin**  
**'The Impact of Media  
and Literature on  
Autism Awareness  
and Acceptance'**

The representation of Autism Spectrum Disorder in media and literature reveals pervasive inaccuracies and stereotypes that shape societal perceptions and beliefs about autistic individuals. Despite increasing awareness of autism's complexity, mainstream portrayals often reduce it to narrow tropes, such as the "savant" or "socially inept" archetypes. These representations misinform and perpetuate stigma, limiting understanding of the diverse experiences within the autism spectrum. Analyzing portrayals in popular television shows and films alongside literary examples highlights the distinction between harmful stereotypes and more nuanced representations that reflect autism's complexity. Education also plays a crucial role in combating these stereotypes, serving as a vital tool for promoting accurate representation and fostering empathy. By examining how literature and media influence social discourse, along with the tools educators can utilize, this research advocates for responsible portrayals that uplift autistic voices and contribute to a more informed public perspective.

**12 p.m.**

**SESSION THREE**

**Panel F**  
**KC 2266**

**The Stories We Tell**

Facilitators: Mr. Roy Black &  
Dr. Dan Brown

**Alissa Sayavong**  
**'Serpent Tales: Oral  
Traditions of the  
Naga in Thai and  
Lao Culture'**

Oral storytelling has been around for many centuries. In Thailand and Laos it has been the main resource to retell the story of the water serpent, the Naga. Due to the stories of how the legend is told, the tales of the Naga are there to present many forms of morals and guidance to the lives of the Lao and Thai people. The impact of the Naga has impacted not only the stories but also the renditions of how the legend is perceived in literature, whether it is in novels or even in media like plays and soap operas all around the world. This thesis will explore the fundamental impact of oral storytelling in the 21st century, and explore the lives of those who still follow the impact of the Naga legends.

**Rachel Miller**  
**‘Roll for Narrative:  
Exploring Thematic  
Construction in  
*Dungeons and  
Dragons*’**

Studies surrounding the connection between tabletop roleplaying games (TTRPGs) and literature have attempted to explore their thematic elements. However, recent scholarship in Game Studies has only begun to breach the gap of disagreement between proceduralist views on constructed narratives, narratology views in comparison to other media, and ludologist views on game mechanics in order to articulate the way meaning is produced in a TTRPG; therefore, the element of play as a mode of learning and producer of meaning remains unexplored. With a focus on the TTRPG *Dungeons and Dragons*, I will explore the complex connections between play, mechanics, and relationship to literature as a whole that enhances the overall thematic impact of play, taking into account improvisation, collaborative storytelling, and our collective understanding of how meaning is made. This may provide valuable insight to future analysis, and begin to grasp the unique poetic potential of play in TTRPGs.

**Daniel Pentinga**  
**‘Dynamic Worlds,  
Adaptive Narratives:  
The Role of AI & VR in  
the Future of  
Storytelling’**

This thesis explores the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR) on storytelling within the gaming industry, revealing how these technologies are redefining traditional narrative structures and audience engagement. As AI-driven narratives allow players to shape storylines through choices and interactions, games move beyond static plots to offer dynamic, immersive experiences unique to each user. Through detailed analysis of AI’s role in creating adaptive story worlds and VR’s ability to immerse players within these narratives, this research demonstrates how gaming is pioneering a shift toward interactive, player-driven storytelling. Additionally, this study examines the evolving role of writers, who now collaborate with AI to craft flexible, evolving narratives, and addresses the broader psychological and cultural implications of AI-powered storytelling. These changes underscore the significance of AI and VR in shaping the future of storytelling across interactive media.

**Clara Snyder**  
**‘So We Like Draco**  
**Now? Harry Potter**  
**Fanfiction as a**  
**Disruption of**  
**Normativity’**

Imagine a space where beloved characters can be fleshed out, examined from every angle, and romantically paired with any character of one’s choosing. The fanfiction world exemplifies such a space, in which whole communities can collectively adjust book and movie characters, reimagining them in ways that can be fundamentally different from the officially published source material, yet acknowledged and accepted by the surrounding community. The implications of these romantic pairings and their prospective characterizations, specifically the pairings between protagonists and antagonists, have remained largely unexplored. Fan authors use these antagonists to examine multiple parts of identity including gender and sexuality within characters that are often more flawed and relatable than the protagonists. This thesis analyzes differing fan characterizations of *Harry Potter* antagonists, and how reading these depictions cannot only make individual readers become more accepting and empathetic, but communities as a whole.

**Laura Yonan**  
**‘Fiction’s Favorite**  
**Sacrifice: Questioning**  
**the “Inevitability”**  
**of Queer Deaths**  
**in Fiction’**

The ‘Bury Your Gays’ trope significantly shapes the portrayal of queer characters in literature, often reinforcing harmful stereotypes and marginalizing queer experiences. Analyzing various literary works through the lens of queer theory reveals that the frequent deaths of queer characters reflect a deeper cultural discomfort with non-heteronormative identities. Such portrayals frame queer lives as inherently tragic or expendable, contributing to the erasure and othering of queer identities within the cultural imagination. By exploring the tension between the necessity for representation and the persistence of narratives centered on suffering, this study critiques these restrictive narratives. It highlights how literature both shapes and constrains the portrayal of queer lives, while also identifying instances of resistance against these limiting depictions. Ultimately, the analysis offers new perspectives on the ethical and aesthetic implications of representing queer death, advocating for more nuanced and affirming narratives that honor the complexity of queer identities.

**Panel H**  
**KC 2266****Challenging & Reshaping Genres**

Facilitators: Dr. David Álvarez &  
Dr. Tierney Powell

**Esther Belli**  
**‘line breaks and**  
**lowercase:**  
**Instapoetry/Poetry’**

Instapoetry, stemming from the literary portmanteau “Instagram + poetry,” is a new type of poetry that is emerging on the popular social media platform, Instagram. This subgenre of poetry is changing the way that poetry is read, written, and viewed. Poetry has always pushed boundaries and challenged the norms of literature; however, some critics and poets observe that Instapoetry ignores some of the fundamental aspects that make poetry “poetry.” This paper will expand on such criticisms as well as explore the defenses which are often made regarding this new type of poetry. Additionally, Instapoetry has also made its way onto bookstore shelves with celebrated and popular published collections such as *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur. I will explore this idea that Instapoetry is affecting many aspects of the genre of poetry and altering the manner in which its being presented and sold commercially.

**Meghan Seelye**  
**‘Facts or Fake:**  
**Framing Historical**  
**Memoirs as Fiction’**

Written language enables the transmission of thoughts and ideas to expand across cultures and through generations. What is written is often taken at its face value, especially when referring to historical works of writing. However, due to a variety of factors, historical memoirs in particular should be reevaluated and understood through a fictional lens rather than that of a nonfictional one. More often than not, authors of historical works use elements of fictional writing to enhance their writing, both intentionally and unintentionally. This use of fictitious components does not take away from the writing as historically accurate and informative, but instead seeks to engage readers on a more intimate level and enhance the empathy instilled. By reframing historical memoirs as fiction, a more thorough understanding of memoirs as a genre is created without detracting from the validity of the content.

**Brandon Jonatzke**  
**‘Culture, Adaptation & Representation in Rick Riordan’s Percy Jackson and the Olympians Universe’**

*Percy Jackson and the Olympians* has touched the lives of multiple generations’ worth of people. It has led many children, young adults, and adults alike to explore Greek Mythology and learn more about mythologies that helped to shape our current world. I will argue that the reason for the widespread love of this series comes down to a variety of factors, including representations of LGBTQ+ individuals, African Americans, Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and others; relevant cultural issues such as pollution; the way that the story itself was crafted; and how the Greek myths that it was based on are adapted into modern day. By gaining a better understanding of why *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* has touched so many, and the benefits that it offers to readers, this thesis will demonstrate why this series is a benefit to readers.

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**Panel I**  
**KC 2270**

**Confronting Christian Narratives**

Facilitators: Dr. Lindsay Ellis &  
Dr. Sarah Williams

**Maycey Turner**  
**‘Lost in Translation: A Case Study on the Bible’**

The conversation behind translation, its use, and its purpose have changed over the past few decades. What used to be a full-time job has turned into an action anyone can do with just the push of a button. Many argue that this quick translation has helped the world become more connected. However, just because we can now communicate with one another, do we truly understand each other? Even with today’s advanced technology, there are still translation issues. As alarming as this sounds, we have been dealing with this issue for centuries. Consider the most translated book of all time: The Bible. The way the Bible was translated, through literary and cultural interpretation, is the difference. Through a case study of the first five verses in Genesis, the deeper issues of contemporary translation are revealed: miscommunication and misunderstanding.

**Stephen Vickery**  
**‘The Divine Pull: Exploring the Way Milton’s God and Satan Sway Free Will’**

In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton examines the influence of divine figures on human free will through the representation of God and Satan's influence on Adam and Eve. Milton’s view of the fall occurs after he sends Raphael to Adam and Eve to warn them of their enemy. Raphael’s warning is extra-biblical and prompts a deeper exploration of the divine pull in shaping

human decisions. This added detail echoes a common trope in epic literature: the divine messenger. Divine messengers include Virgil in Dante's *Inferno*; divine enemies also attempt to thwart human plans, such as Poseidon in *The Odyssey*, as Milton's Satan does through his manipulative arguments. Through an analysis of epic tropes and dialogue techniques, interplay between divine figures and humankind can be explored to reveal what Milton considers a fundamental attribute of humanity: free will. "...[T]o stand or fall Free in thine own Arbitrement it lies" (VIII, ll. 641-42).

**Grace Himebook**  
**“She Obeyed**  
**Instantly”:**  
**How Elsie Dismore**  
**Became a Mascot for**  
**Christian Patriarchy’**

Martha Finley's 1886 novel *Elsie Dinsmore* and its companion, *Holidays at Roselands*, have often been called the worst children's books ever written. While Finley intended to impart a Sunday School morality to her young readers, most critics have treated the series as an amusing object lesson in misapplying erotic tropes to the father-daughter relationship. Despite some attempts at feminist reclamation, the series remained in relative obscurity, even going out of print, until its resurrection in the 1990s and 2000s by Christian homeschool publishers. Previous critical treatments of *Elsie Dinsmore* have overlooked or excused this reemergence as the product of naivete on the part of these publishers, ignoring the context in which these books were promoted and consumed. This analysis will explore the ways the *Elsie Dinsmore* series has been used by Christian nationalist organizations, like Vision Forum, to groom girls into systems of patriarchal hierarchy and abuse.



**Honoring Student  
Writing in the  
Persuasive and  
Personal Essay,  
Poetry, Fiction,  
& Drama  
Held in Conjunction  
with the Departments  
of Classics &  
Writing**

Named in honor of former department member E. William Oldenburg, this annual contest offers GVSU students first-place prizes of \$100, second-place prizes of \$75, and third-place prizes of \$50 in each of the following categories:

- Personal, analytical, or persuasive essay written by a freshman;
- Personal essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior;
- Analytical or persuasive essay written by a sophomore, junior, or senior;
- Poetry written by any GVSU undergraduate student (a portfolio of three to five poems would be an appropriate entry, and a single poem would not be considered);
- Fiction written by any GVSU undergraduate student (one short story per entrant);
- Drama written by any GVSU undergraduate student (one short play per entrant);
- Essay, poetry, fiction, or drama written by a GVSU graduate student.

**Entry Requirements:**

- Entries must have been written while enrolled at GVSU;
- Entries should be typed, double-spaced, and submitted with a detachable cover sheet indicating:
  - title of work;
  - category entered (please specify graduate or undergraduate);
  - contestant's name and student ID;
  - address, phone number, and e-mail for March and April of the academic year;
- Place contestant's name on the cover sheet only, not on the entry itself.
- Entries are submitted via the English Department website.

All winners who have not been or currently are a student employee at GVSU must complete an I-9 Form, which may be obtained and turned in to Student Employment (104A STU). Entries are accepted online through the English department website.

**The Robert C.  
Chamberlain  
Scholarship**

**A Tuition Scholarship  
for Junior English  
Majors**

**Demonstrating  
Excellence in Writing**

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Students must be English majors;
- Students must have Junior status;
- Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA;
- Students must be full time;
- Students must demonstrate financial need by filing the FAFSA.

**Application Requirements**

Each student must submit:

- A short letter explaining why the student qualifies for this scholarship;
- Two pieces of writing, at least one from a class at Grand Valley State University.

**The Gilbert R. and  
Patricia K. Davis  
Endowed Merit  
Scholarship**

**A Merit Scholarship  
for Full- or Part-Time  
Junior and Senior  
English Majors**

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Students must be a Junior or Senior declared English major;
- Students must have completed 30 credit hours at GVSU;
- Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA;
- Students may be full or part time (part-time students are especially encouraged to apply);
- Financial need is not a criterion;
- Students who receive the award as Juniors are eligible to receive the award as Seniors if they maintain their eligibility.

**Applications Requirements**

Each student must submit:

- An essay of up to 1000 words explaining why the applicant chose to major in English.

**The English Faculty  
Scholarship for  
New Majors  
A Scholarship Made  
Possible through the  
Generosity of GVSU  
English Department  
Faculty Members**

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Applicants must be a declared English major at the time of application
- Applicants must be a currently-enrolled student with fewer than 60 credit hours completed (1st or 2nd year student) during the semester of application
- Cumulative 2.5 grade point average or better
- First-generation college student

**Application Requirements**

Each student must provide answers to the following questions:

- Are you the first person in your immediate family to pursue a college degree (neither parent/guardian(s) has a four-year degree)?
- In 100-200 words (1-2 paragraphs), explain why you are applying for this scholarship, why you should receive the award, and how it will assist you in achieving your academic goals.

Students must also include an academic writing sample, minimum three full pages in length, submitted for a class during your freshman or sophomore year.

**Dr. Andrew M.C.  
Brown Memorial  
English Scholarship  
A Scholarship  
Created to Assist  
Language &  
Literature Emphasis  
English Majors**

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Candidates should be accepted or currently enrolled at GVSU;
- Must be a senior with a declared major in English with Language & Literature emphasis;
- Must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher;
- Preference will be given to students intending to pursue an advanced English degree.
- Financial need may be considered, as evidenced by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

**Application Requirements**

Each student must:

- Provide a short statement of why you qualify for this scholarship;
- Submit two pieces of writing, at least one from a GVSU English class.

**Robert Franciosi  
American Literature  
Scholarship  
A Scholarship  
Created to Assist  
English Majors who  
Express Interest in  
American Literature**

**Eligibility Requirements**

- Applicants must be accepted for or currently enrolled at Grand Valley State University;
- Applicants must be an undergraduate junior or senior enrolled full-time or part-time with a major in English with Language & Literature or Secondary Education emphasis;
- Applicants must be a resident of Michigan;
- Applicants must have completed 30 credit hours at GVSU with a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA;
- Applicants must be meeting satisfactory academic progress (<https://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/satisfactory-academic-progress-sap-17.htm>).
- Preference will be given to students who demonstrate an interest in American Literature.
- Financial need may be considered and will be demonstrated by the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

**Application Requirements**

- Please describe in 1,000 words or less your experience studying American Literature and why you feel it has been valuable.

Ayers, Katie – 9  
Belli, Esther – 13  
Craft, Elaina — 6  
Crouch, Kallie — 6  
Dwyer, Matt – 4  
Hicks, Jackson – 4  
Himebook, Grace – 15  
Jonatzke, Brandon – 14  
Lamb, Savanna – 8  
Lelito, Emma – 9  
MacAvoy, Tyler – 6  
Martin, Lyndsi – 10  
Mastbergen, Jenny – 7  
Miller, Rachel – 11  
Modaff, Maria – 6  
Paulsen, Rachel – 5  
Pentinga, Daniel – 11  
Phillips, Katherine – 5  
Sayavong, Alissa – 10  
Seelye, Meghan – 13  
Snyder, Clara – 12  
Templer, Katelyn – 7  
Turner, Maycey – 14  
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