

# CLAS News

NOVEMBER 2020

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 24

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## CLAS Departments Express Commitment to Anti-Bias

In response to recent incidences of police brutality, two departments within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences have begun taking steps to have difficult conversations on race, equity, and inclusion.

The Department of English and Foreign Languages developed an anti-racism statement and action plan which has been published on their website. They also formed a faculty learning community focused on race and writing pedagogy. On Tuesday October 20th, the learning community welcomed its first speaker, Dr. Bonnie J. Williams-Farrier, to discuss black linguistic justice via Zoom.

Dr. Williams-Farrier is an associate professor of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics at California State University, Fullerton, where she is the Writing Center Director. Her research in composition studies includes African American literature and rhetorical traditions. She spoke with the department about the need for writing and language arts teachers to stop using so-called standard English as the accepted communicative norm. Rather, she emphasized the importance of moving beyond “code-switching” to acknowledging the rhetorical power of Black Language features, which in turn will develop a Black Linguistic Consciousness.

This event was sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the African American Studies program, and University Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The Department looks forward to the University’s future financial support for more speakers to continue to learn and practice anti-racist pedagogy and to affirm that Black Lives Matter.

The Department’s Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.frostburg.edu/academics/colleges-and-departments/english/Statement%20on%20Anti-Racism%20and%20Action%20Plan.php>

The Department of Communication hosted two virtual conversations to invite input on the drafting of a department code of ethics as the department strives toward an anti-racist and anti-sexist learning environment. Students, alumni, faculty and staff, as well as prospective majors and their parents, were invited to join the Zoom discussions. Students and faculty from the Department of Communication and the Communication Leadership Lab served as facilitators. Department faculty and staff will be meeting to draft a plan based on the input received during these sessions, as well as review of other sample plans. The goal is to share a draft more widely for further input sometime after the election.

“CLAS strongly supports efforts to promote anti-racist thought and behavior,” said Dean Hixson. “I appreciate our departments taking an active role in condemning police brutality and systemic racism.”

## CLAS Faculty and Staff Members Set to Retire

Six members of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will retire in December. CLAS will be losing Associate Dean Scott Fritz, department chairs Sally Boniece (History) and Terry Russell (Social Work), along with Gerry Snelson and Ralph Brewer (English and Foreign Languages), and administrative assistant Patty Stutzman of the Departments of Sociology and Social Work.



The members of the Department of History warmly congratulate their chair, **Dr. Sally Boniece**, on her upcoming retirement from Frostburg State University in December 2020. During her 26 years at FSU, Sally taught a wide array of popular courses that examined not only her specialty of Russian/Soviet history, but also Modern Europe, Eastern Europe, the history of terrorism, women's history, global history, international studies, historical research methods, the history capstone, and Reacting to the Past. In addition, she served in key leadership roles such as the Coordinator of International Studies, Coordinator of the Women's Studies minor, Chair of the Institutional Priorities and Resources (IPR) Committee, and Chair of the President's Advisory Council on Diversity. After becoming Chair of the History Department in 2015, Sally ably led new departmental assessment efforts, and lent her expertise to the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences' assessment work as a key member of the CLAS Assessment Council. She recently co-chaired the General Education Review Committee, where she had been working with colleagues throughout the campus to re-envision the future of the liberal arts at FSU. We applaud Sally for her many contributions as a classroom instructor and leader in the Department of History as well as so many other areas, and we wish her only the best in this new chapter of her life.



**Ralph Brewer** is retiring at the end of the fall 2020 semester after having taught in the Department of English and Foreign languages for 50 years. With his retirement, FSU loses a walking, talking institutional memory of the department, campus and community. Over the years, Ralph has participated in service at all levels of the university. He was president of the Faculty Assembly, chair of the University Senate, chair of the Faculty Appeals Committee, and chair of the University Athletics Committee. He was also chair of the English Department and served on every departmental committee. Ralph served as the university's Athletic Director for several years and was instrumental in moving FSU from Division III status to Division II status. In 1995 he received the Faculty Achievement Award for University and Community Service, and in 2006 he received the Allegany Country Branch NAACP Community Service Award. As a teacher, he mentored many, many aspiring secondary English teachers and was honored and respected by the staffs and administrations of the schools he visited regularly to work with teachers and nervous teachers-to-be. Ralph has been a highly collegial colleague and a fixture in the department, and he will be missed by many.



**Scott Fritz** joined the faculty of the Biology Department in 2000, where he also served as graduate program coordinator. He established an outstanding record of university service during that time, including chairing the CLAS Curriculum Committee, serving on Graduate Council, and developing the IDIS 160 course as part of the Undergraduate Education Initiative. In 2012, he became Assistant Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and was subsequently promoted to Associate Dean for Curriculum and Outreach in 2016. Scott played a key role in creating the Health Science major and initially coordinated the program. He was also pivotal to the development of the Physician Assistant Medicine Program. He has effectively overseen the IDIS courses and FSU Connections scheduling, as well as serving as co-organizer of the annual Western Maryland STEM Festival. His honest feedback and sense of humor will be greatly missed.

## CLAS Faculty and Staff Members Set to Retire



**Terry Russell** joined the Department of Social Work in 1996, spending that first year camping at local parks and in the Stadium Center parking lot until he and his family were able to permanently relocate to Frostburg. For the past 24 years, Terry has taught the Statistics and Research Methods for Social Work majors every semester. Terry has served as chair of the department and has played an instrumental role in helping the program to maintain its accreditation. He also laid the foundation for the Sociology Department's current learning goals that they use in their assessment process. While Terry has a long list of professional achievements, his personal accomplishments are equally noteworthy. An avid motorcycle rider, Terry has completed a number of long journeys, with the longest being from Maine to San Diego. Active with the local Salem's Children's Trust, Terry rides as part of fundraisers for that organization and has participated in a number of 9/11 anniversary rides. All of these achievements earned him membership in the national Iron Butt Association. In addition to motorcycle riding, Terry spends much of his free time volunteering with First Presbyterian Church and has been active in their ESL program, helping to teach English to students from at least 30 countries.



**Gerry Snelson** is retiring from the Department of English and Foreign Languages at the end of the fall 2020 semester after having taught and served at FSU for over 30 years. His record of service to the Department, College, and University is enormous. Gerry served on virtually all committees open to him, most notably the Faculty Senate for all the allowable years of his career, and on the CLAS Curriculum since its beginning, and the UUCR for its duration. Decades ago, he was appointed by Dr. Catherine Gira to be chair of the Middle States Evaluation Committee. Gerry also served more than 25 years as Associate Chair of the Department, assisting new chair after new chair, all of whom were grateful for his support and guidance. He served on every hiring committee, shaping the department not only for expertise but for collegiality. Despite all of the impressive service work, Gerry's greatest accomplishments happened in the classroom. Beloved by students, he taught numerous courses in British and American literature. A man of many hobbies and a talented artist, Gerry even taught a course in the Theater Department on the art of puppetry. From teaching to administrating, Gerry does everything, and does it expertly. There needs to be a new saying, just for him: Jack of all trades, master of every one. Each day, he could be seen working with students one-on-one, his open-door policy an indication of his willingness to help students succeed. He always put his students first. Throughout the years, Gerry's colleagues were constantly asking his advice on everything from teaching to administrative procedures to which detective series we should watch. Gerry has been more than a teacher, more than a scholar, and more than a colleague. Friend, experienced pro, guiding light, constant lunch companion to many. Gerry has been all of these and more. Without Gerry, neither the Department nor the University will ever be the same. He is irreplaceable. Gerry's service to and support for his colleagues and institution are too numerous to mention. Suffice it to say that none of his colleagues can ever match what he has accomplished. We will all be lesser without him in the halls.



**Patty Stutzman** retires as administrative assistant for the Departments of Sociology and Social Work, where she has worked since 2006. She has played a key role in the planning of the annual Appalachian Festival. In her retirement, Patty will have more time to spend with her grandchildren and to enjoy her hobbies, which include watching bull riding and riding motorcycles.

## Students Helping Giant “Snot Otters” Nest Safely

By Chris Hlidreth '20

Going by the unpleasant nicknames of "snot otter" or "lasagna lizard," the hellbender salamander is one of the lesser known animals in our ecosystem. While its looks, size -- they can grow to more than two feet long -- and unfriendly nicknames might lead someone to believe they are dangerous, they pose no threat to humans, but humans are posing a threat to them.

These animals, which are found across the East Coast, are now officially endangered due to constant disruptions of their habitats, which are found beneath large rocks in streams and rivers. These animals are extremely dependent on their habitats, so simply lifting the rock that is its home can be detrimental, according to Dr. Daniel Hocking, former assistant professor in the Department of Biology.

In the state of Maryland, just five hellbenders were found last year. While there are almost certainly more of them out there, this is a staggeringly low number for a species. Jarring statistics like this is what motivated Hocking and his students at FSU to take action.

To reverse the trend of the disruption

of the hellbender salamander habitat, FSU students began a program to build nesting boxes that can serve as temporary habitats for the animals.

One of the FSU students involved in this project is **Kodi Bowers '20**, a recent wildlife and fisheries graduate, who is participating in the project as part of his independent research.

"I've always been interested reptiles and amphibians. Then one day I found a hellbender here at FSU and was instantly hooked," Bowers said.

These nesting boxes are being made by students and placed at various sites where the hellbenders are thought to live. These nesting boxes use a hydrodynamic design that is built to survive being placed in running water, Bowers said. Each weighs around 70 pounds. They will be equipped with a compartment for the salamanders to easily enter and exit, as well as a camera so they can be monitored without disturbing the habitat.

The short-term plans for these nesting boxes is for them to be installed this summer and surveyed in the fall. Students hope to get the



*Above, Kodi Bowers '20 pours mixed concrete into forms to create hellbender nesting boxes*

animals to use the boxes and develop a population estimate once they've achieved this.

"In the long term, we hope to partner with regional zoos or aquariums to raise hellbender eggs and release them into the wild in a process known as 'head starting,'" Hocking said. He would also like to have some students attend the hellbender symposium held in Virginia. The next symposium is in June 2021.

With the help of the FSU Biology Department, they hope these unique creatures can begin to thrive in their ecosystem. This project has the potential to not only move the hellbender salamander further from extinction, but also to perform research on a reclusive and little-studied species.

## Computer Science Continuing Partnership with College of Education on Computational Thinking Micro-Credential

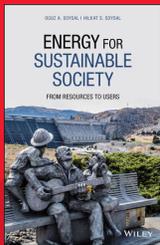
The Department of Computer Science and Information Technologies (CSIT) continues their work with the College of Education to improve the Computer Science and Computational Thinking pipeline for Maryland. Through the fall and spring semester, CSIT is collaborating with the College of Education to develop a Computational Thinking Micro-credential for the resident students

who are part of the Maryland Accelerates grant.

Micro-credentials are an emerging way for teachers to demonstrate their knowledge and/or skill in a particular topic through competency-based evidence. The Micro-credentials can lead to Continuing Professional Development credits for teachers and serve as evidence toward teacher certification.

In October 2019, the U.S. Department of Education awarded FSU nearly \$4.1 million over five years for the Maryland Accelerates program, a partnership that is designed to increase the number of certified teachers in Maryland schools, especially in the sciences, mathematics and computer science. The program is in partnership with Frederick County and Garrett County public school systems and FSU's Master of Arts in Teaching degree.

## Two CLAS Faculty Publish Books



A textbook co-authored by Physics and Engineering professor Oguz Soysal and his wife, Hilka, was recently published by Wiley. The book, entitled “Energy for Sustainable Society: From Resources to Users,” is intended for upper-division interdisciplinary courses on energy science and engineering. Soysal wrote the book over four years, with his 2017 sabbatical leave spent visiting energy-related facilities in the U.S. and Canada as part of the writing process.



Jamison Odone, Visual Arts, released his newest book, A Man in the Painter’s Room. The book is a 132-page color graphic novel based on the first-hand account of Adeline Ravoux, an innkeeper’s daughter with whom Vincent Van Gogh shared a special bond. The story is set after his release from the Saint-Paul asylum in 1890, with Van Gogh wandering the French countryside before stumbling upon a quaint little inn where he found some peace despite his mental illness, painting over 75 works of art in just three months. The book is available on Amazon and through bookstores.

## Life-Cycle Facilities Management Program Set to Accept Students for Spring 2021

The Maryland Higher Education Commission recently granted FSU approval to begin offering a new Life-Cycle Facilities Management degree program focused on climate-change and emergency preparedness. Recruiting has begun and the first students will begin taking classes in spring 2021.

Thomas Cadenazzi serves as coordinator of the interdisciplinary program which is housed within CLAS and reports directly to the Dean’s Office. The curriculum includes courses from the Departments of Geography, Management, and Physics and Engineering.

Life-cycle facilities management is field that is rapidly evolving from construction management. The program will prepare graduates for a variety of employment opportunities, such as Construction Manager, Cost Estimator, Cost Analyst, Product Life-Cycle Manager or Specialist, Fleet Life Cycle Manager or Specialist, Building and Systems Analyst, Environmental Manager or Specialist, Sustainability Manager or Specialist. Potential employers include general contractors, sub-contractors, projects and construction management firms, real estate developers, architectural engineering firms, research firms, manufacturing companies, and technology solution companies.

Dr. Cadenazzi has been working with the Office of News and Media Services to develop program marketing materials and website content. Online promotional materials will be available by late fall.

## Math Student Project Helps Mineral County EMS Shorten Response Times

Bailey Brewer, Jay Collins, Andrew Kastner, and Will Macomber, who were students in Spring 2020's MATH 470 - Mathematical Models and Applications, completed a project called "Redistricting Mineral County EMS Box Areas." This project was supported by the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) Preparing for Industrial Careers in Mathematics (PIC Math) program.

For this project, they analyzed the response times for Mineral County’s emergency medical services, and updated the so-called box area map that identifies which EMS station will be the first responder to emergencies based on their geographic location. Comparing the old box area map to the new box area map, 95% of the addresses did not change, but for the addresses that did change, response times were shortened by one

minute, on average. What’s even more impressive is that they coordinated and completed this work remotely, during the pandemic lockdown!

The students were originally going to present their findings at the MAA MathFest conference in August, but since that was cancelled, they presented online for a MAA PIC Math Showcase. The video of their presentation, and their reflections on the project, can be found here: <https://youtu.be/GHpbsPK6hQE>.

Their results were presented to the Director of Emergency Services in Mineral County WV, and their updated map is slated to be voted on soon by the appropriate bodies.

## Partnerships and Technology Allow the Show to Go On

Through the collaborative efforts of multiple campus departments, students in the performing arts have been able to continue to practice their craft while balancing the need for safety amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Together with the Guests on Campus working group, the performing arts departments within CLAS adapted the COVID-19 guidance for Fall 2020 meetings and events to create a framework for performances. Audience sizes are limited to 50 people from the campus community only, with seats given out on a first come, first served basis. Performers are masked, with the exception of those playing wind instruments. Anyone attending a performance is

required to check in using the campus COVID-19 app.

Most of the performances this semester are either being livestreamed or recorded and shown via YouTube. According to Brent Weber, chair of the Music Department, “The conversation got started by Mike Flinn in the Department of Computer Science and Information Technologies. Video for the events is being produced by Keith Terry and Melanie Lombardi in the Department of Communication, with help from student interns. Music students are actually running sound for the events. This has proven to be a great partnership, giving the students hands

on experience in event production at the same time.”

The Theatre and Dance Department was able to perform *Charlotte's Web* before a live audience with cast members wearing masks. The production was originally intended for local K-5 children through the Roundabout Children's Theatre tour, but instead received an adult FSU-based audience due to guidelines and restrictions placed on performance. A second production, *Spoon River Anthology*, began rehearsals but was ultimately postponed until spring 2021 when it can hopefully be performed once the pandemic subsides.

## Engineering Students Create Public Art for City of Frostburg

FrostburgFirst, in partnership with the City of Frostburg, recently installed new public art in the Parish Parking Lot in downtown Frostburg. The art installation was comprised of three metal sculptures designed to represent bodies in motion. The project began when **Dustin Davis**, a professor from FSU's Visual Arts Department who has since retired, worked with the Physics and Engineering Department to salvage the metal pieces from surplus playground equipment and decided to get creative. The sculptures were created by five FSU engineering students, **Hunter Frank**,



**Nick Harris**, **Nathaniel Owens**, **Kyle Sharpless** and **Joshua Smith**, over a period of two semesters.

Davis contacted FrostburgFirst at the end of July to offer the sculptures, and within a few weeks, they were collected and installed by the City of Frostburg Department of



Parks and Recreation. The sculptures make their home in the parklet attached to the Parish Parking Lot, which offers free parking to those visiting the downtown area.

Additional projects to seasonally paint the installation and create a plaque describing the project are planned in the coming months.

## Engineering Programs Receive Renewed Accreditation

The B.S. in Engineering programs offered on both the main FSU campus and at the Arundel Mills Regional Higher Education Center were recently reaccredited by the Accreditation Commission of ABET, the global accreditor of college and university programs in applied and natural science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology. The program on the main campus, which includes both the materials and electrical engi-

neering concentrations, is accredited to 2026. The program at Arundel Mills has been accredited to September 30, 2022.

ABET accreditation assures that programs meet standards to produce graduates ready to enter critical technical fields that are leading the way in innovation and emerging technologies, and anticipating the welfare and safety needs of the public.

Sought worldwide, ABET's volun-

tary peer-review process is highly respected because it adds critical value to academic programs in the technical disciplines, where quality, precision, and safety are of the utmost importance.

ABET is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization with ISO 9001:2015 certification. It currently accredits 4,144 programs at 812 colleges and universities in 32 countries.



*Ten Theatre students recently passed their skills proficiency test in Single Sword Stage Combat. Guest Artist Robb Hunter from the Society of American Fight Directors led the adjudication.*

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Have any interesting news items about faculty, staff, or students in your department? Submit them to Linda Steele (lsteale@frostburg.edu) for the next issue.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



## FSU Selected for Global Civic Literacy Project

The Global Civic Literacy Project is a collaboration between Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and the J. Glenn Beall Institute. Under the aegis of Dr. Tom Bowling, Bill Mandicott, Joan Serafin Andorfer, and Tim Magrath, FSU was selected as one of ten universities in the country to receive this grant to raise awareness and encourage action about international issues.

There are several initiatives associated with the program including access to World 101, a learning resource developed by the Council on Foreign Affairs. World 101 is an excellent resource on current global issues like world health and the impact of globalization and is free to faculty and students at <https://world101.cfr.org>

A second prong of the program is to encourage students to become

actively engaged in solving issues which cross national boundaries. Last spring, students were selected as the first class of Global Civic Leaders. Their charge is to develop projects that not only raise awareness about an issue of their choice but to create an action plan to address that issue locally, nationally, or internationally. Talks are underway with alumnus, Justin van Fleet '02, for the Global Civic Leaders to become involved with the international children's charity, TheirWorld, that he directs.

The program is open to students of all majors regardless of GPA. The Global Civic Leaders program is looking for students who are interested in turning their passions into impacts. For more information, please contact Bill Mandicott, Joan Serafin Andorfer, or Tim Magrath.

## Chemistry Department Now Offering Pre-Pharmacy Track

The Chemistry Department is excited to announce that our pre-pharmacy track within the Chemistry major is now available to students. The pre-pharmacy track was developed to help those students that are considering pharmacy as a career path. The track provides students the opportunity to complete the pre-requisite course work necessary to

enroll in a pharmacy school program while earning their Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from FSU. Any student who is interested or has questions please contact Dr. Matthew Crawford, Chemistry Department Chair at 301-687-4940 or email [mjrcrawford@frostburg.edu](mailto:mjrcrawford@frostburg.edu).

## Family Nurse Practitioner Program Graduates First Student Cohort

The Family Nurse Practitioner program in the Department of Nursing graduated its first student cohort in summer 2020. After graduating, all five students passed their Board Exam on their first attempt. Congratulations to these new graduates!



From left, FNP graduates Jessica Miller, Shannon Martin, Amy Ratke, Ruby Sabina, and Stephanie McVicker