

CLAS News

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- FSU to Present Considering Matthew Shepard
- Faculty/Staff Retirements
- CLAS Departments Make **Curricular Changes**
- CLAS Faculty Promoted
- Equipment Upgrades Made for Music Dept. and FSU-TV
- Odone Releasing Book of **Pandemic Work**
- Geography Students and **Faculty Attend Roundtable**
- Theatre and Dance, Athletic Training Partner on **Simulations**
- Hartzog Completes Fellowship in Dean's Office
- CSIT Hosts Project Showcase
- Eleven Students Honored at **Dean's Colloquium**
- Choose Civility Events **Hosted by Communication**
- Alumni Spotlight
- In Memoriam: Dr. Simpson
- Music Lecturer Releases **Debut Solo Album**
- Phi Kappa Phi Chapter **Receives Awards**

FSU to Present Considering Matthew Shepard

The FSU Chamber Singers, in collaboration with the Department of Theatre and Dance and community partners, will proudly present Craig Hella Johnson's Considering Matthew Shepard – a powerful masterwork that explores through music the importance of love and caring for one another.

In 1998, Shepard, an LGBTQ student at On April 12, the Catholic Center on the University of Wyoming, was kidnapped, beaten, tied to a fence, and left to die. With inspirations from Bach to Broadway, the compelling message of this performance is still essential today and shows the significance of unity and recognizing those who feel marginalized.

The performance itself will take place on May 6 at 7:30 p.m. and May 7 at 3PM in the Pealer Recital Hall. On May 8th, there will be a special performance at St. Ignatius Catholic Church in Baltimore. At the Baltimore performance, Matthew Shepard's mother, Judy, will speak, and an event for FSU alumni will also be held.

A number of other events were planned leading up to the performances, to provide context and opportunities for discussion.

On March 10, Dr. Susan Mandell (Counseling Center) and Dr. Joe Freund, one of the first physicians with a special interest in LGBTQ+ patient health, hosted a Zoom discussion on LGBTQ+ mental and physical health, followed by a question and answer session.

On April 3, Susan Mandell and her intern, Talatha Mahmoud, hosted a discussion on trauma, microaggressions, and bullying. Also during the first week of April, Dr. Ernest Harrison, a member of the premier group who presented the work, spent a week on campus working with the FSU performers.

campus hosted a Zoom lecture with Father James Martin, an activist on inclusivity/acceptance. Then on April 21, Robyn Wynder's office sponsored a potluck meal with group discussions at City Place for the community.

Spearheading the effort to bring all of these events to FSU has been Scott Rieker, lecturer in the Music Department. "I performed in Considering Mathew Shepard during graduate school with the University of Southern California singers, and I wanted to share a similar experience with our students," said Rieker.

"This has been a true collaborative effort with many different campus and community partners," said Rieker. Students from the Department of Theatre and Dance are designing the set, lighting, and costumes, with Darrell Rushton set to direct.

Tickets are required, but will be free, as a result of grants from the FSU Foundation, Faculty Development, Women's Studies, and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

For more information, visit the website: www.frostburg.edu/consider.





Seven CLAS Faculty/Staff Retire

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will be losing three of its faculty this spring, with the retirements of Mohsen Chitsaz and Brad Rinard (Computer Science and Information Technologies), and Nazanin Tootoonchi (Mathematics). In addition, three staff members retired at the end of February: Valerie Fritz (Biology), Debbie Koon (Psychology), and Gale Yutzy (Geography and Sociology). At the end of June, the Dean's Office will also be losing long-time Associate Dean Cindy Herzog as she retires to spend time with family.

After serving the department for a decades and heading the department for over 15 years, **Brad Rinard** retired, effective March 1, 2022. Brad ushered multiple programs and courses through the faculty governance. Under his leadership, the department added three new programs and several dozen new courses. In addition, Brad secured several external grants, which helped the students in the department develop professional maturity and apply their computing knowledge. Brad is a well known entity on campus, and his positive outlook on life and education was a fixture across campus. The department wishes Brad the best of luck in his future endeavors.

Nazanin Tootoonchi is retiring from the Department of Mathematics after 19 years of dedicated service. She has sat on the department Curriculum Committee since 2006, four different Search Committees, the Scholarship Committee, and the Department Evaluation Committee. From 2006-2014, she coordinated the MATH 104 course. She also assisted with the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Transition Committee, and the Common Core Standards Transition Committee. She has served on Faculty Senate, Academic Affairs Committee, and as the University Undergraduate Curriculum Requirement Committee secretary. classroom, Nazanin's students consistently rated her as patient and understanding; they appreciate the extra time that she gives to support them outside of class. She expertly developed and delivered content courses for prospective elementary and middle school teachers during her time at FSU. The future teachers in these courses consistently praise the clarity of her instruction, her passion for the subject, and genuine interest in student success. She will be missed by her colleagues and her students.

Valerie Fritz retired February 28th after a 20-year career as laboratory manager in the Biology Department. She has been described by her colleagues as an exemplary employee with a strong work ethic. During her time at FSU, she has handled many challenging tasks, including managing multiple budget accounts, negotiating discounts from vendors, and creatively addressing inventory problems. For 16 years, Valerie also taught the Anatomy and Physiology course. She has served as a mentor to numerous work-study students, providing them with valuable hands-on experiences assisting with the laboratory and greenhouse facilities. Outside of the Biology Department, Valerie has been an active member of the university community, sharing her fiber arts at the Appalachian Festival and serving as co-director of Mountain City Traditional Arts during its early years. She was recognized as the 2020 Staff Member of the Year in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.







Seven CLAS Faculty/Staff Retire

Debbie Koon served for 51 years at FSU, with the last 45 being as administrative assistant in the Department of Psychology. During that time, she impacted all who passed through the department in profound and fundamental ways. Her consistent kindness, caring, and love for the department's mission, and the direct and indirect help that she has provided students, faculty, and fellow staff over the past five decades is aweinspiring. Her smile, her laugh, her making each person she interacts with feel that their needs and concerns are what is truly important in that moment, and her always following up with whatever that concern called for, has made her so incredibly special to each and every one of those who had the honor to work with her.

Gale Yutzy retired in February as administrative assistant for the Departments of Geography and Sociology. She has been employed at FSU since 1987, providing exemplary service and taking on extra duties without complaint. Gale has provided essential help to the Geospatial Lab, the African American Studies Program, and the Sustainability Program, in addition to her service to her departments. She has been easy to work with because of her collegiality, flexibility, creativity, and sense of humor. Gale is also active in the local community as a leader in the Highland Riders' Harley Owners Group, helping to organize fundraisers for children and the community.

Mohsen Chitsaz will retire July 1, 2022 after serving the Department of Computer Science and Information Technology for 34 years. Some of his accomplishments include creating the Master of Science degree in Applied Computer Science, designing a number of undergraduate and graduate courses, establishing and managing the FSU chapter of the International Honor Society for Computing and Information Discipline (Upsilon Pi Epsilon), and designing a 2+2+2 program with the Allegany County Board of Education, Allegany College of Maryland and Frostburg State University. Mohsen created and managed the Silicon Graphic workstation lab and the Sun workstation lab with external funds and matching grants, respectively. He obtained over a million dollars of grants (mostly from external sources) to create and develop programs and software, and to support new initiatives. Mohsen served on numerous campus-wide committees and task forces as a member or chair, and served as a Graduate Research Advisor for several students.

Cindy Herzog will retire at the end of June after working at FSU since 1988, serving since 2003 as Associate Dean of CLAS. During her time as Associate Dean, Cindy navigated a complex faculty evaluation system and expertly guided chairs through the process. She skillfully handled faculty and student concerns, and assisted the Dean with strategic planning. Since its formation in 2018, she has served as Secretary of the FSU Phi Kappa Phi chapter. Prior to her time in the Dean's Office, Cindy served as Psychology Department Chair for four years. She taught a wide range of Psychology courses and advised several student organizations. Cindy received a number of awards, including the Faculty Achievement Award for Teaching (2001), the University Greek Advisor of the Year (1993 and 1995), the University Advisor Award for her work with Psi Chi Psychology Honor Society (2001), and the FSU Honorary Alumna Award in 2017. In addition, she received the Carrie Stahle National Alpha Sigma Tau Advisor Award in 1996 and the Miss America Pageant Woman of Distinction Award in 2006. She will be greatly missed by her coworkers in the Dean's Office. "Cindy is a valued colleague, as well as a friend," said Linda Steele. "Her sense of humor and ability to diffuse difficult situations, both with faculty and students, will be greatly missed. Her departure will leave quite a void in the college."

CLAS Departments Make Curricular Changes, Adding New Options for Students

The Department of Computer **Science** Information and Technologies has developed an interdisciplinary Data Science minor, in response to a growing need for a holistic approach to Data Science and Analysis. The minor will include courses in not only Computer Science but Mathematics, Biology, Geography, Chemistry, and Physics. Its applied nature will prepare students for data integration in their major or an adjacent field. While the minor is currently heavy in the STEM majors, it is designed for any student to complete. It is also flexible enough to allow for future expansion and inclusion of the Social Sciences and other broad areas of study.

The **Department of Sociology** is collaborating with the Department of Management to create a new "Diversity Management" (DIMN). The minor will require students to take three courses in Management and three courses in Sociology from a selection of four courses in each department. The new minor will be in effect starting Summer 2022 and contacts are Dr. Bob Moore (Sociology) Michael Dr. or Monahan (Management). According to Dr. Monahan, "What began as a casual conversation between two department chairs blossomed into a new combined minor. This minor will help students better understand the importance of diversity in the workplace as well as help students

gain knowledge about an organization and how to align its culture with the changing demographics of the U.S. The minor will be listed in both departments and hopes to attract students who may not have considered classes in the parent disciplines. "

The **Philosophy Department** recently revised its curriculum with the goals of increasing program efficiency and attracting more students to the major.

To make the program more efficient, the low enrolled three-credit standalone capstone course, Seminar in Contemporary Metaphysics, was deleted and replaced with a new one-credit "piggyback" capstone. Students will take the new capstone, PHIL 480 Advanced Research Project, in conjunction with a regular three credit upper-division course.

CLAS Faculty Receive Promotions

CLAS is pleased to announce that five faculty were recently promoted to the rank of Professor: Jamil Abdo (Physics and Engineering), Pete Herzfeld (Visual Arts), Karen Keller (Biology), John McMullen (Sociology), and Trina Redmond-Matz (Psychology). Seven faculty were promoted to the rank of Associate Professor: Frank Hughes (Biology), Ying Zheng (Computer Science and Information Technologies), Chung-Chi Huang (Computer Science and Information Technologies), Molly Hartzog (English and Foreign Languages), Kristin Shimmin (English and Foreign Languages), William Wetherholt (Geography), and Matthew Georgeson (Theatre and Dance). Congratulations to all!

Equipment Upgrades Made for Music Department Livestreams, FSU-TV

The Department of Music is thrilled to announce a significant upgrade to Pealer Recital Hall. In December 2021, Brent Weber was contacted by Rick and Dot Nelson of Irvine, California. The Nelsons knew of FSU through Joseph Yungen and were regular viewers of the live-streamed recitals on the Department of Music's Youtube channel. While they were impressed at the audio quality, they felt the video could be improved.

After exhaustive research, Mackenzie LaMont determined the highest quality live-streaming camera system for Pealer Hall. The Nelsons pledged a generous donation to make the purchase of this technology possible. Three HD pan/tilt/zoom mounted cameras were installed in various locations in the Pealer Hall with the capability of television quality broadcasts. Viewers can now tune in to experience improved video, which began in March 2022.

FSU-TV3, Frostburg State University's educational access channel which airs to Comcast channel 3 for subscribers in Frostburg, Mt. Savage, Lonaconing, and Westernport, is being upgraded this spring and summer to include a new way to access the channel's programming. Utilizing the new CASTUS media server, the channel will offer its programming via a custom mobile app that will be available in the Apple and Android stores. Also, programming will be available to stream from the FSU-TV3 website. Viewers will be able to access and play content through an interactive calendar. The mobile app and the website will display live events and playlists of programming. The channel will, also, soon be able to stream live events to the website and mobile app. Basic cable service will continue for those who are Comcast subscribers. The addition of the mobile app and expanded streaming options will allow FSU-TV3 to reach a larger audience of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members near and far. Look out for additional updates and other points of interest via email, the website, and social media platforms. Follow FSU-TV on https://www.instagram.com/fsutv3/, and https://www.joutube.com/channel/UCBYNZFo1rDZdpNzDL1ruREQ.

Odone Releasing Book of Pandemic Work

Jamison Odone (Visual Arts) will release his new book, My First Pandemic, in May. Odone describes it as a collection of drawings, thoughts, poems, comics, anger, happiness, life, and death from a difficult period in our history. "Over the last two years, between crises and quarantines, I have had time time to reflect, to page through old books of poetry, to draw hundreds of rabbit people - for some reason," said Odone. "The loss of a stepfather, followed by the loss of a good friend, gives cause to contemplate one's own mortality. It's strange how the thoughts of 19th-century poets can echo our own. What will we leave behind when our time comes? Sadness, sure, but also wee, silly drawings in honest-to -goodness paper and ink."



Geography Students and Faculty Attend Roundtable Hosted by Congressman Trone and Interior Secretary Haaland

On Monday, November 29, 2021, Congressman David Trone and U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Deb Haaland visited Maryland's Sixth District to tour the C&O Canal National Historical Park. The visit highlighted infrastructure and the Build Back Better agenda, especially as it

relates to climate change and equity. The visit closed with a roundtable discussion with environmental justice advocates focused on how climate change adversely affects underserved communities.



Frostburg State students Laren Lohff (Geography, Climate Science minor) and Colin Eason (Earth Sciences, Climate Science minor) and faculty member, Dr. Tianna Bogart, participated in the roundtable.

Theatre and Dance Continues Partnering with Athletic Training on Concussion Simulations

A partnership between the Department of Theatre and Dance and the Athletic Training program, now in its third year, has provided students with experience acting in simulations.

The THEA 335 course was originally developed in partnership with the Nursing Department back in 2018 to provide student actors with simulation experience as nursing patients. The partnership has since been expanded, with Theatre majors acting as part of hands-on, baseline cardiovascular exams taken by Athletic Training students. As part of a second midterm examination this spring, Theatre students spent three weeks developing a character who plays soccer and incurs a specified injury that the Athletic Training majors must determine how to best treat. Last year's involved a spleen injury, and this year was a concussion.

Jackie Durst, Athletic Program Director, praised the value of this

type of experience for her students, stating, "These objectively structured clinical examinations provide critical learning opportunities for the Athletic Training students to practice their skills in a safe and controlled environment. Theatre and Dance students prepared extensively for their part in portraying the key physical and mental symptoms of a concussed patient. These simulated patient experiences allowed for students to collaborate and support each other's learning in a unique and important way."



Molly Hartzog Finishing Semester as Dean's Office Fellow

The CLAS Dean's Office Fellows' Program provides an opportunity for faculty to experience administrative work on the college level. The inaugural Fellow for the spring 2022 semester is Dr. Molly Hartzog, Associate Professor in the Department of English and Foreign Languages.

Dr. Hartzog has worked part-time in the CLAS Dean's Office for the spring semester assisting with dayto-day tasks regarding assessment, curriculum, and student concerns. She has assisted the Dean's Office with developing online resources for new faculty and students. To be released later in May, these resources will help recruit faculty and students and orient them to teaching and learning in CLAS (CLAS Strategic Goals 4 and 5).

"I saw the CLAS Dean's Office Fellows' Program as an opportunity to learn how university administration can support the transition to post-pandemic teaching and learning. I have



enjoyed learning more about administrative challenges and opportunities in CLAS, and I look forward to bringing my new skillset back to my department."

Computer Science and Information Technologies Hosts Student Showcase

Led by Rebecca Flinn and with the support of many in the department, CSIT had 14 projects to showcase with topics ranging from a VR bowling game to how to hide messages in digital photos. Some of the projects are available to view at: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLobh6IbKCrfr19oifGQtCaVVO75H5Ce7Z. The department thanks the many staff and administrators who showed their support for the students. Six prospective students from the area also attended the event.

Eleven Students Honored at CLAS Dean's Colloquium

A total of 11 students from seven different academic programs throughout the college were recently honored at the annual Dean's Student Colloquium. The event was held in person this year after two years online due to COVID-19. The students were honored with a dinner and presented with certificates for their achievements.

The students nominated were: Joshua Clem (Chemistry); Colin Eason (Earth Science); Matthew Ward (Health Science); Sarah Loveless (Psychology); Sydney Crawford, Cody Yacenech, and Destiny Warnick (Social Work); Christopher Blackwell and Brian Records (Theatre and Dance); and Samina Clark and Michael Lynch (Visual Arts).

Choose Civility Events Hosted by FSU Communication Leadership Lab

The Communication Leadership Lab hosted several events in April as part of the Allegany County Choose Civility series. On April 5, Dr. Chelsea Daggett's CMST 302 Argumentation and Advocacy class facilitated a presentation and discussion titled, "What Did You Meme?" featuring examples of logical fallacies in memes and how misinformation spreads in online spaces.

On April 7, the annual Day of Civility in Allegany County, leader-in-residence Dr. Dorene Ciletti presented on social media civility. She is an associate professor and director of the marketing and sales program, as well as co-founder of the Michael P. Pitterich Sales and Innovation Center and co-director of Women in Industry for the Rowland School of Business, at Point Park University in Pittsburgh. Her presentation was followed by a discussion "Social Media Civility: Influencing Community and Strategy Online and On the Ground" with local panelists Mandela Echefu (owner of Wheelz Up Adventures in Cumberland), Sid Thomas (chair of the Allegany County NAACP Branch Communications Committee), Ashley Swinford '13 (Director of Marketing and Outreach for the Allegany County Library System), and Ashli Workman '08 (Director of Allegany County Tourism).

On that same day, the Communication Leadership Lab and the Choose Civility Allegany chapter collaborated to host a podcast on civil political discourse, with liberals and conservatives talking to each other in a calm manner not often heard these days. The podcast, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyb4xVPfB1M, featured a facilitated discussion among faculty, students, and alumni of FSU and local community members. It was edited by Dr. John Lombardi of the Communication Department.

Alumni Spotlight: Brendan Latimer and Alanzo Chambers

The materials engineering concentration of FSU's B.S. in Engineering program is proud to share that two recent graduates are now doing impressive work in the defense industry: Brendan Latimer ('18), a systems engineer with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Alanzo Chambers ('17) working for the U.S. Army Aberdeen Proving Ground Test Center.

Brendan Latimer is currently providing government contract support for FEMA's National Public Warning System out of Indian Head, Maryland. Because of his diverse engineering background, he has worked at several radio stations alongside seasoned radio frequency and electrical engineers across the country, with the primary goal of designing and building deployable HEMP protected broadcasting shelters. These shelters provide backup equipment in case of a critical systems failure.

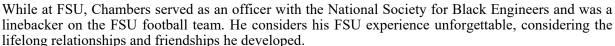


After diligently researching and selectively applying to defense contract positions, Brendan was first recruited as an entry-level systems engineer supporting executive order 13407 under FEMA. Within six months of being hired, he was promoted and given the opportunity to apply for a security clearance. "This was due to my practical application of engineering on the job site and demonstration of technical work ethic," said Latimer.

Latimer credits the mentorship of Dr. Zhen Liu as a major catalyst to his career growth. Since college, his passion has been the application of materials engineering to national defense. He hopes to continue advancing his career in this area.

Alanzo Chambers began his career at Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Virginia, as a Nuclear Engineer/Mechanical Engineer. In that position, he worked with the Refueling and Complex Overhaul Department on Nimitz-class aircraft carriers. Alanzo was responsible for maintaining specific reactor systems during the nuclear overhaul work process.

For the past year and half, Alanzo has been working at the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command, Aberdeen Test Center, as a General Engineer/Test Officer. His current role is to support operational testing, and the planning and execution of various military complex operational test events.





In Memoriam: Dr. Stephen J. Simpson, Department of Political Science

Dr. Stephen J. Simpson, long-time professor of political science, who also served as Provost and Acting Dean of CLAS, passed away on February 20 after a brief battle with pancreatic cancer.

Part of the FSU community since 1978, Dr. Simpson can be credited with many administrative accomplishments during his time as Provost, including facilitating the development of the Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership, as well as course redesign and efforts to bridge the achievement gap. However, Dr. Simpson was proudest of his impact on students through his teaching and mentorship.



"He is leaving a rich legacy, generations of students impassioned about politics and understanding better the world around them, while having enjoyed the benefit of his jokes, his wit, and his command for whatever classes he taught, said his Political Science colleague, Tim Magrath.

Dr. Simpson is survived by his wife, Dr. Lisa Morshead, a former faculty member in the Department of Psychology.



Scott Bingaman, FSU alumnus and third year student at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, presented an Opioid Disorder Seminar on April 8. The session, hosted by the Pre-Professional Medicine Society, focused on the efficiacy of suboxone use and the myth of secondary fentanyl exposure.

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

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Music Lecturer Releases Debut Solo Album

Luke Spence (Lecturer of Trumpet, Department of Music) recently released his debut solo album, "20th Century Art Songs" with Tonsehen records. The album showcases the vocal capabilities of the trumpet/cornet by translating works originally written for voice and piano. Crafted as a miniature "tour" of art song throughout the 20th century, the album highlights compelling vocal repertoire that is seldom explored by instrumentalists. Through his musicianship and deep research into the relationship



between music and text, Spence, along with pianist Andrew Welch, offers a sonic landscape designed to bring listeners on a poetic journey without uttering a single word.

The album will be featured in the spring issues of Fanfare Magazine, the International Trumpet Guild Journal, and the National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors Journal. "20th Century Art Songs" is available for streaming on Spotify, Apple Music, and Amazon Music, or purchase through www.lukespencetrumpet.com and www.tonsehen.com.

Phi Kappa Phi Chapter Receives Awards

The FSU chapter of Phi Kappa Phi was recently recognized as a Circle of Excellence Gold Chapter by the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi – the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines. The award recognizes chapters for their work in promoting excellence on campus and engaging the community of scholars each year.

In addition, the FSU Phi Kappa Phi chapter was selected as the 2021Fall Service Project Division IV winner for their Spirit Night fundraiser at the LaVale Chick-fil-A to benefit the FSU Children's Literature Centre. Nearly 150 people participated, raising \$205 from more than \$1,000 in sales. The money was used by CLC to help fund its annual Storybook Holiday celebration held in December. The additional \$200 in prize money was also donated back to the CLC to help fund their summer Pirates Ahoy event.

The Circle of Excellence Gold honor is given to chapters that scored 95 to 99 percent on a

criteria scale that evaluates chapter health indicators.

Current FSU chapter officers are all CLAS faculty and staff. Linda Steele and Cindy Herzog from the CLAS Dean's Office serve as President and Secretary, respectively. James Saku (Geography) serves as Vice President and Matthew Crawford (Chemistry) is Treasurer. Psychology graduate student Syully Koroh serves as Student Vice President. For more information on criteria for joining, please email lsteele@frostburg.edu.



PKP president Linda Steele and student VP Syully Koroh are pictured donating service project funds to CLC representatives.